



Refugee Council of Australia

BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

17 April 2014

Welcome to the latest bulletin from the Refugee Council of Australia. We welcome feedback, ideas or information worth sharing. Please contact us at admin@refugeecouncil.org.au.

Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia

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NEWS FROM THE REFUGEE COUNCIL

Restrictions on funded legal assistance restrictions raise dangers for asylum seekers

RCOA expressed fears for the safety of asylum seekers following the Australian Government's decision to restrict access to funded legal assistance under the Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS). In a statement, RCOA president Phil Glendenning said the changes increased the risk of people being returned to persecution and danger and undermined the integrity of Australia's legal system. He said the changes placed the most vulnerable asylum seekers in a "survival of the fittest" scenario and warned that weakening Australia's system of determining refugee status was a matter of life and death. "The likelihood of an asylum seeker in need of protection being sent back to danger because they were not given a fair chance to put their case is real and the consequences are deadly. This something every fair-minded Australian should be very concerned about." Read the statement at http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/140331_LegalAssistance.pdf

HSS funding confirmed until 2017 but SGP funding still uncertain

Nearly all of the current Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) contractors have had contracts to provide on-arrival settlement services for resettled refugees confirmed for another three years. The Australian Government has extended contracts for 15 service providers until April 2017, confirming funding of almost \$275 million for the HSS program over three years. The only region where the current HSS arrangements were not confirmed was the Northern Perth and WA region where RCOA understands that the Government wished to find a single provider for the settlement services and housing components of HSS in that region (PVS Workfind and Multicultural Services Centre of WA held separate contracts). A tender round for HSS services over the next three years in that region closed on 25 February. Read the statement from Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Services Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells at <http://concettafierravantiwells.dss.gov.au/media-releases/36>

RCOA has raised concerns with the Department of Social Services and the Government about the failure to confirm Settlement Grants Program (SGP) funding for the coming financial year. While many services have some SGP program funding for 2014-15 confirmed in previous years through multi-year funding arrangements, the future of many one-year SGP projects and multi-year funding arrangements which conclude in June 2014 is still unknown. RCOA understands that no announcements about the future of SGP funding will be made prior to the Federal Budget on 13 May, just seven weeks before many current projects end. As no grant application process for new projects in 2014-15 has begun, quick decisions about future funding cannot be made after the Budget announcement. RCOA is concerned that, unless the Government decides to extend funding on a short-term basis while a funding round is conducted, vital settlement support services to refugees and vulnerable migrants may cease because of Government indecision about funding.

Australia's post-war expulsion of Asian refugees recalled

RCOA recalled the 65th anniversary of a High Court case that set in motion the downfall of the White Australia Policy. In an opinion article for The Guardian Australia, chief executive officer Paul Power recounted the case of Annie O'Keefe and her family, which made national and international headlines, and highlighted the cruel implementation of Australia's race-based immigration laws. The action in the

High Court was the first successful legal challenge to the White Australia Policy and was perhaps the first step towards the policy's ultimate abolition 24 years later. Read the article at <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/18/annie-white-australia-policy>

Bright Ideas profiles "Work and Welcome"

The latest profile in our Bright Ideas series, "Work and Welcome" explores an employment program that provides refugees and migrants with paid work experience funded through a workplace giving scheme. The program was founded in Brisbane and now includes 14 partner workplaces in Queensland and Sydney. To view our summary of this project and other "Bright Ideas", visit <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/brightideas.php>

Former refugees share experiences with school students in RCOA pilot program

RCOA is continuing to roll out its pilot program to increase awareness in schools of the experiences and contributions of former refugees. Presentations have now been made in 12 schools in Sydney, Wollongong and Melbourne, as well as to trainee teachers at Sydney University. Supported by the Australian Government's Diversity and Social Cohesion Program, the pilot program has seen the training of 12 co-presenters of refugee background to work with RCOA staff in presentations between February and May in Sydney, Wollongong and Melbourne. After the pilot program is completed and the current funding ends, RCOA will continue the program on a fee-for-service basis in the greater Sydney and Melbourne areas. Schools can express interest in being part of the program by contacting Eileen Wahab at RCOA's Sydney office on (02) 9211 9333 or by email to projects@refugeecouncil.org.au

Hawkesbury City becomes Australia's 90th Refugee Welcome Zone

The Refugee Welcome Zone initiative celebrated its 90th member with Hawkesbury City Council, in Sydney's north-west voting to express a commitment in spirit to welcome refugees into the community. To find out more about the Refugee Welcome Zone initiative, visit: <http://refugeecouncil.org.au/g/rwz.php>

Nominations close soon for John Gibson Refugee Community Leadership Grant

Nominations are open for the annual John Gibson Refugee Community Leadership Grant, which supports advocates from refugee backgrounds to take part in high-level international advocacy on refugee issues. One advocate is selected each year to join the Australian NGO team at the annual consultations between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and NGOs in Geneva, Switzerland from 17 to 19 June, 2014. Nominations are open and close at 5.00pm, Monday, 28 April, 2014. For further details visit http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/2014_JGibsonGrant.pdf

Invitation for submissions to 2014 UNHCR-NGO consultations

Individuals and refugee community groups are invited to lodge submissions on current issues of concern for people living in refugee situations overseas, as part of the annual UNHCR-NGO consultations to be held in Geneva, Switzerland in June. The submissions are being sought by the Australian Refugee Rights Alliance (ARRA) - a coalition of Australian NGOs, refugee advocates and academics who engage in advocacy at an international level with and on behalf of refugees in Australia and the region. The submission deadline has been extended to Monday, 12 May 2014. Find out more about the submission process at http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/2014_UNHCRsub.pdf

RCOA explores stronger links with New Zealand NGOs

Earlier this month, RCOA CEO Paul Power travelled to Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland to explore ways of strengthening links between Australian and New Zealand NGOs working on refugee issues. Paul spoke at meetings organised by the NZ National Refugee Network, outlining recent changes in Australian policy and discussing options for greater sharing of information on settlement practice and on Asia-Pacific refugee protection issues. The NZ National Refugee Network and RCOA currently co-chair the Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Working Group of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN). In coming weeks, this Working Group will finalise plans to improve Australia-NZ cooperation, based on feedback received during Paul's visit.

NGOs mourn Malaysia's human rights champion Irene Fernandez

Irene Fernandez, a tireless advocate for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia, died from heart failure on 31 March, aged 67. Irene, the founder of Kuala Lumpur-based human rights

organisation Tenaganita, was well-known for her work in exposing the mistreatment of refugees and migrant workers. A 1995 report she released on the violence experienced by people in immigration detention in Malaysia led to years of harassment by Malaysian authorities, which ended 13 years later when her conviction under the Printing Presses and Publications Act was overturned. RCOA joined the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network and many other organisations in paying tribute to Irene. Human Rights Watch's tribute is at <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/31/tribute-irene-fernandez>.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

The best way to keep up with RCOA is through Facebook and Twitter. We regularly publish links to new RCOA statements and research and to interesting articles in the media on refugee issues. Our Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/pages/Refugee-Council-of-Australia-RCOA/157472830949702. Our Twitter feed is @OzRefugeeCounc.

COMING EVENTS

Road to Refuge's Understanding Asylum Workshop (for adults)

Tuesday 22 April, Melbourne VIC

This workshop will provide participants with the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to have constructive, reasoned conversations about asylum with friends and family and bust myths about asylum seekers.

Details: entry by gold coin donation; 5:45pm-7:45pm; Loop Bar, 23 Meyers Place, Melbourne; RSVP by 16 April to roadtorefuge@gmail.com

Foundation House workshop: The Refugee and Asylum Seeker Experience - An Introduction to working with refugees and asylum seekers

Thursday 24 April, Brunswick VIC

This interactive one-day workshop provides a comprehensive introduction to working with people from a refugee background, including asylum seekers. Participants will gain knowledge of the refugee and asylum seeker experience and ways of working with this highly vulnerable group. Establishing positive working relationships and maintaining worker resilience in a highly challenging policy environment are covered.

Details: \$210.00; 9:30am-4:30pm; 4 Gardiner Street, Brunswick; for further information visit http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm.

UWS Open Forum: The Rohingya People of Burma

Thursday 24 April, Parramatta NSW

Speakers at this event will include the Hon Philip Ruddock MP, Chief Government Whip and Federal Member for Berowra; and Dr Graham Thom, Refugee Coordinator, Amnesty International Australia.

Details: 6:00pm for a 6:30pm start; Room G.06, Building EB, University of Western Sydney Parramatta South Campus; RSVP via http://www.uws.edu.au/equity_diversity/rsvp or call (02) 9678 7374.

STARTTS workshop: Core concepts in working with people from refugee backgrounds

Tuesday 29 April, Newcastle NSW

This one-day introductory workshop is designed to put a framework of understanding around working with refugees and asylum seekers. It focuses on understanding the link between what refugees have been through, the sorts of issues and behaviours they may present with, and how to work in a way that fosters feelings of trust, safety and control, while minimising the risk of re-traumatisation. Participants will be encouraged to think about how to apply the concepts to their own workplace, and will leave the workshop feeling more confident in utilising their skills and experience with refugee and asylum seeker clients.

Details: \$149.00 (students \$99.00); 9:30am-4:30pm; Building M, Newcastle TAFE Campus, Maitland Road, Tighes Hill, Newcastle; for further information and to register, visit <http://www.startts.org.au/training>.

STARTTS workshop: 'Accidental' counsellors - Responding to refugee trauma-related behaviours

Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 April, Newcastle NSW

This two-day workshop has been designed to give workers not trained as counsellors some basic tips and skills for how to recognise and deal with difficult behaviours in trauma clients in the workplace. The first day will give an understanding of the complex issues faced by refugee clients, how to recognise

refugee trauma and how to work with clients in ways that promote a sense of safety and control. The second day will be mostly practical focusing on a series of case studies and role plays to develop skills in dealing with trauma reactions.

Details: \$249.00 (students \$149.00) for two days, \$149.00 (students \$99.00) for one day; 9:30am-4:30pm; Building M, Newcastle TAFE Campus, Maitland Road, Tighes Hill, Newcastle; for further information and to register, visit <http://www.startts.org.au/training>.

MYAN forum: Sport and multicultural young people

Tuesday 29 April, Homebush NSW

Hosted by the Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) NSW and the GWS Giants, this professional development forum will bring together a selection of special guests, those who work with multicultural young people, sporting organisations and community organisations to focus on the concept of sport as an engagement tool for multicultural young people.

Details: 10:00am-2:00pm; Learning Life Centre, 1 Olympic Boulevard, Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush; to RSVP, go to

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/sport-and-multicultural-young-people-tickets-10847574387>

Befriending asylum seekers

Tuesday 29 April, Wayville SA

Following a screening of the documentary "Mary Meets Mohammad", two people from refugee backgrounds will share their experiences, including life in detention, particularly the support and friendship they received from visitors to the Inverbrackie detention facility, and in the Adelaide community. Handouts will be available with information of how to become a visitor at Inverbrackie and how to support refugees in the community.

Details: tickets \$15.00 (\$10.00 concession); 7:30pm-9:30pm; 26 King William Road, Wayville; to book tickets, visit

<http://www.effectiveliving.org/events/befriending-asylum-seekers> or call (08) 8271 0329.

CEH workshop: Evaluation planning for CALD community projects

Wednesday 30 April, Richmond VIC

This workshop focuses on assessing the social impact of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) health and wellbeing projects with merit and validity, to build an evidence base, inform future directions and ensure ongoing improvement. It will provide skills in designing an evaluation plan that makes use of appropriate research methods, data sources and collection tools. Hosted by the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH).

Details: \$250.00; 9:30am-4:30pm; 23 Lennox Street, Richmond; for more information and to register, visit <http://ceh.org.au/training/workshops>.

Authors forum: "A Country Too Far"

Wednesday 30 April, Sydney NSW

"A Country Too Far" is an anthology of 29 stories, memoirs and poetry from some of Australia's leading writers, on what has become one of the moral challenges of our time: seeking asylum in Australia. At this forum, the editors of the anthology, Thomas Keneally and Dr Rosie Scott, will speak about their work.

Details: 4:00pm-6:00pm; Room 2.40, Level 2, UTS Building 4, Broadway; RSVP via ccs@uts.edu.au.

Foundation House workshop: Course for incidental counsellors working with people of refugee background

Thursday 1 and Thursday 8 May, Brunswick VIC

This two-day workshop provides an approach to working with people from a refugee and asylum seeker background in a range of settings. Participants will gain incidental counselling and other skills for handling difficult and distressing situations. The workshop involves presentations, practical exercises, role-plays and discussions in large and small groups.

Details: \$330.00; 9:30am-4:30pm; 4 Gardiner Street, Brunswick; for further information visit http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm.

Whittlesea Community Connections annual trivia night

Friday 2 May, South Morang VIC

Funds raised will support activities run by Whittlesea Community Connections including homework and learning programs and community group activities. BYO food (drinks will be available for purchase) and spare change.

Details: tickets \$20.00; 7:00pm; Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre, Ferres Boulevard, South Morang; for further details and to book tickets, call (03) 9401 6666 or email pfualau@whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au.

Will history's judgement vindicate our treatment of boat people?

Tuesday 6 May, Sydney NSW

Presented by St James Ethics Centre, this debate will consider whether Australia's asylum seeker policies will stand up to the test of time. The case for the motion will be argued by former Minister for Immigration the Hon. Philip Ruddock MP and Editor of The Spectator Tom Switzer. The case against the motion will be argued by former refugee and award-winning author Carina Hoang and Sydney Morning Herald columnist Richard Ackland.

Details: tickets \$32.00 (\$25.00 concession); 6:45pm-8:30pm; City Recital Hall Angel Place, 2 Angel Place, Sydney; for further details and to book tickets, visit <http://iq2oz.com/debates/historys-judgement-will-be-to-vindicate-our-treatment-of-boat-people->.

Refugee Leaders Lecture Series: Carina Hoang

Wednesday 7 May, Kensington NSW

Carina Hoang is a former Vietnamese refugee and award-winning author. At the age of sixteen Carina escaped Vietnam on a wooden boat with her two siblings and 370 other people. She survived the harrowing journey and the extreme challenges that followed in a primitive refugee camp, and ultimately were accepted for resettlement in the United States. Carina now volunteers to assist families from different parts of the world to search for graves of their loved ones in former Indonesian refugee camps. She also is pursuing a PhD in History and Cultural Studies at Murdoch University.

Details: 5:00pm-6:00pm; Staff Common Room, Law Building, University of NSW Kensington Campus; RSVP essential through <http://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/Carina%20Hoang>.

Foundation House workshop: School's In for Refugee Background Students

Thursday 8 May, Dandenong VIC

This comprehensive introduction is recommended as the foundational professional development from Foundation House for those working with refugee background students. It is appropriate for those working in and with schools and other educational settings, at early childhood, primary, secondary and post-compulsory levels.

Details: 9:30am-4:30pm; 155 Foster Street, Dandenong; for further information and to register, visit http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm.

CMY training: Multicultural youth work in the family and community context

Thursday 8 May, Carlton VIC

Presented by the Centre for Multicultural Youth, this training will enable participants to: reflect on the importance of family and community connectedness in the lives of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds; explore how the young person can remain your central client whilst supporting family and community connectedness; and apply culturally inclusive strategies when working with young people within their family and community setting.

Details: \$231.00 plus booking fee; 9:00am-4:30pm; CMY Carlton, 304 Drummond Street, Carlton; for further information and to register, visit <http://www.cmy.net.au/EventCalendar>.

Human Rights Arts and Film Festival

May, June and August, across Australia

The Human Rights Arts and Film Festival (HRAFF) is a Melbourne-based not-for-profit organisation devoted to the exploration of human rights issues through an annual film and arts festival and an ongoing schools and community program. HRAFF selects its arts and film to engage and inform people on human rights issues. The HRAFF will kick off in Melbourne before touring Sydney, Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, Alice Springs and Darwin.

Details: for further information and festival dates, visit <http://hraff.org.au/>.

Fundraiser for Hobsons Bay Refugee Network and West Welcome Wagon

Thursday 8 May, Yarraville VIC

This event will feature a screening of "Healing", a new Australian film starring Hugo Weaving and Don Hany. Proceeds will go towards local refugee relief.

Details: tickets \$20.00; 7:00pm; Sun Theatre, 8 Ballarat Street, Yarraville; to book tickets, go to www.trybooking.com/ENLS; for further details, call Neil Tolliday on 0402 817 673 or email Bek Ayres at hbrnevents@gmail.com.

A celebration of motherhood**Friday 9 May, Sydney NSW**

Presented by Australia for UNHCR, this Mother's Day lunch will celebrate and honour the role of mothers and highlight the ways we can make a life-changing difference to refugee women. The lunch will be hosted by journalist, author and comedian Wendy Harmer. Funds raised will support the work of UNHCR.

Details: tickets \$180.00 (includes two-course lunch, complimentary drinks and a gift bag; 12:00pm-2:30pm; The Ivy Ballroom, The Ivy, 320-330 George Street, Sydney; to book tickets, email rsvp@unrefugees.org.au.

Film screening: "A Well-Founded Fear"**Saturday 10 May, Rapid Creek NT**

"A Well-Founded Fear" is a moving documentary film about RCOA President Phil Glendenning's search for the asylum seekers Australia rejected. The film follows him as he travels through Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Iran and Canada to find out about the fate of asylum seekers deported by Australia. Hosted by DASSAN.

Details: 6:00pm; Nightcliff Uniting Church, Cummins Street, Rapid Creek.

CEH workshop: Understanding the sexual health and wellbeing needs of refugee young people**Wednesday 14 May, Richmond VIC**

The migration and refugee experience often means young people miss out on sexual health and wellbeing education prior to settlement in Australia. The stigma surrounding sexually transmitted infections and other sexual health issues, along with low English proficiency, can be a major barrier to help-seeking. This workshop will help you build refugee and migrant young people's knowledge, their access to services and their capacity to make informed decisions. Hosted by the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH).

Details: \$150.00; 9:15am-1:00pm; 23 Lennox Street, Richmond; for more information and to register, visit <http://ceh.org.au/training/workshops>.

Foundation House workshop: Exploring chronic pain for nurses and allied health professionals**Thursday 15 May, Brunswick VIC**

Chronic pain is an extremely difficult condition to live with and is exacerbated for some refugees and asylum seekers by the challenges of navigating a complex and often fragmented health system. Understanding how to deliver a culturally appropriate, bio-psychosocial, multidisciplinary model to assist with assessment and treatment of chronic pain will make a significant impact on the experiences and health outcomes of refugees and asylum seekers with chronic pain.

Details: 9:30am-4:30pm; 4 Gardiner Street, Brunswick; for further information and to register, visit http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm.

"Tree of Life" theatre performances**Thursday 15 and Friday 16 May, Casula NSW**

Witness the true life stories of young refugees from Iraq and Somalia who attend Miller Technology High School and Intensive English Centre.

Details: tickets \$25.00 (concession \$15.00, school groups \$5.00 per student); Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 1 Powerhouse Road, Casula; book online at <http://www.casulapowerhouse.com/theatre/book-now.aspx>; for more information, call the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre on (02) 9824 1121.

STARTTS workshop: Core concepts in working with people from refugee backgrounds**Friday 16 May, Carramar NSW**

This one-day introductory workshop is designed to put a framework of understanding around working with refugees and asylum seekers. It focuses on understanding the link between what refugees have

been through, the sorts of issues and behaviours they may present with, and how to work in a way that fosters feelings of trust, safety and control, while minimising the risk of re-traumatisation. Participants will be encouraged to think about how to apply the concepts to their own workplace, and will leave the workshop feeling more confident in utilising their skills and experience with refugee and asylum seeker clients.

Details: \$149.00 (students \$99.00); 9:30am-4:30pm; 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; for further information and to register, visit <http://www.startts.org.au/training>.

STARTTS workshop: Clinical practice and new developments in the treatment of refugee trauma
Friday 16, Thursday 22 and Friday 23 May, Carramar NSW

This three-day workshop aims to orient clinicians to how they can transfer their skills and experience to working with refugee trauma. The first day covers the introductory concepts, and will help clinicians better understand the complexity of issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers, as well as STARTTS' service provision model. The final two days will focus specifically on an overview of clinical assessment and treatment in the context of refugee trauma and cross-cultural work.

Details: \$349.00 (students \$219.00) for three days, \$249.00 (\$149.00 students) for two days; 9:30am-4:30pm; 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; for further information and to register, visit <http://www.startts.org.au/training>.

Paediatric Refugee Health Conference 2014

Friday 16 May, Westmead NSW

This conference will mark the tenth anniversary of Health Assessment for Refugee Kids (HARK). Key speakers will include Gillian Triggs, President of the Australian Human Rights Commission; Robert Tickner, CEO of the Australian Red Cross; David Manne, Director of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre; Richard Bryant, Director of the Traumatic Stress Clinic, Westmead Hospitals; Mark Isaacs, author of "The Undesirables"; Georgia Paxton, paediatrician, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne; Mitchell Smith, Director of the NSW Refugee Health Service; Ben Marais, paediatrician and international expert on childhood tuberculosis; and Angela Dixon, Head of Psychological Medicine, Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Details: registration \$100.00; 8:15am-5:00pm; Lorimer Dods Lecture Theatre, The Children's Hospital at Westmead; for further information, go to <http://bit.ly/1meOMCc>

Foundation House workshop: Asylum seekers in education settings

Monday 19 May, Dandenong VIC

This interactive workshop explores ways in which schools and other education settings can better support students and families who have arrived in the community seeking asylum in Australia. Building on the knowledge gained in the workshop 'School's In for Refugee Background Students', participants will consider the range of experiences which asylum seekers may have had and the psychosocial impact of torture and trauma. Emphasis will be placed on the skills and knowledge needed to work with this highly vulnerable group, which will include the effects of prolonged detention, uncertainty and family separation on young people seeking asylum. Establishing relationships, catering for educational needs and modifying policies and procedures whilst maintaining worker resilience will also be discussed.

Details: 4:00pm-7:00pm; 155 Foster Street, Dandenong; for further information and to register, visit http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/professional_development/index.htm

NEW RESEARCH, STATEMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Research on asylum seekers living in the community

Research conducted by UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania has identified asylum seekers living in the community as a major community group at serious risk of disadvantage, isolation and marginalisation. The report includes recommendations to better support asylum seekers. Read the report at:

<http://bit.ly/1eeSY4I>

Fieldwork report on regional refugee protection in South-East Asia

Australian National University researchers Penelope Mathew and Tristan Harley's fieldwork report on refugee protection and regional cooperation in South-East Asia examines the treatment of refugees in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia and makes a number of short, medium and long-term recommendations. Read the report at <http://bit.ly/1dhplKI>

School resource on asylum seekers and refugees

The Edmund Rice Centre's free publication "Asylum Seekers and Refugees Education Resource" provides activities for students which are practical, engaging and focused on increasing awareness about human rights and advocacy. The resource offers 35 cross-curricular activities, adaptable to all year levels in secondary school. Some activities can also be used with primary classes, students with special needs and with community groups. Students are encouraged to think about asylum seekers and refugees with compassion, to move their understanding from the head to the heart. Access the resource at http://www.erc.org.au/?module=pagemaster&PAGE_user_op=view_page&PAGE_id=177

Data update and literature review of transition to employment for refugee youth

The Centre for Multicultural Youth's "Facilitating the Transition to Employment for Refugee Young People" provides a data update and literature review with a focus on what works well. The report is intended to guide the development of future programs. Access the report at http://gallery.mailchimp.com/7195f465e2ddfb560ce39cd77/files/Transitions_to_Employment_Report.pdf

Framework for Mental Health In Multicultural Australia

An important new mental health resource, the "Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia", provides public, private and community mental health services with easy to use practical strategies, tools and resources that will increase their cultural responsiveness. The introduction of online access to the Framework ensures everyone has the latest information on current mental health standards and national safety and quality health standards. The Framework has been closely aligned with current Commonwealth, state and territory plans and policies in mental health and multicultural affairs. It also introduces an important new rating scale that enables new and existing services to measure cultural responsiveness and better meet the needs of culturally diverse communities. Access the report at <http://www.mhima.org.au/mhima-latest-news/important-new-resource-for-mental-health-services>

Finding our Way – understanding mental health issues facing refugees

Mental Health in Multicultural Australia (MHIMA) has collected the inspiring personal stories of people living with emotional and mental health issues, created during a four-day workshop led by experienced film-makers. At the workshop, refugees and migrants wrote, voiced, created and edited the films. Find out more at <http://www.mhima.org.au/finding-our-way>

Afghanistan In Limbo: Islamic Relief report on Afghanistan

A report on the future of Afghanistan following the withdrawal of international forces is the subject of a report from Islamic Relief Australia. Read the report at <https://islamic-relief.com.au/2633/afghanistan-limbo/>

Challenge of protecting refugees from South Sudan

The International Refugee Rights Initiative report "Conflict in South Sudan: Refugees seek protection in Uganda and a way home" draws on interviews with Ugandan officials and refugees reflecting on the cause of their displacement. The report makes recommendations to the government of Uganda, the international community and international media on how to ensure that the refugees' rights are protected, as well recommendations around how to address the conflict in order to best facilitate the their return. It also raises the question of whether the "settlement policy" that puts refugees into camps - which is both expensive and inefficient for the state and makes the refugees economically vulnerable and at a greater risk from a security perspective - should be reconsidered. Access the report at <http://bit.ly/Pslvan>

UNHCR Protection Manual online

The online manual is UNHCR's repository of protection policy and guidance documents. It contains more than 1,000 documents. Download the manual at www.refworld.org/protectionmanual.html

AMES survey of migrants and refugees

A survey of newly-arrived migrants and refugees by AMES provides insight into the hopes, concerns of 400 respondents in Melbourne and Sydney. A summary of the research is available at <http://bit.ly/1iiXWKT> while the survey can be accessed at <http://www.ames.net.au/files/file/Research/Migrant%20Refugee%20survey-findings%281%29.pdf>

Mapping Social Cohesion reports

The Scanlon Foundation has published two reports gauging public opinion on immigration. The Recent Arrivals report surveys the attitudes and outlook of skilled and highly educated entrants to Australia, taking into consideration experiences in Australia. This report is available at http://www.scanlonfoundation.org.au/docs/Recent_Arrivals_report.pdf. A Local Areas report surveys local community attitudes to immigration and can be accessed at http://www.scanlonfoundation.org.au/docs/Local_Areas_report.pdf

New website for Jesuit Refugee Service Australia

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia has launched a new website which aims to use stories and images to publicise the work it does and to advocate on behalf of the refugees and asylum seekers with whom it works. The new site is at <http://www.jrs.org.au/new-website-jrs/>

OPPORTUNITIES

For employment opportunities, go to <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/g/job.php>. For volunteering opportunities, go to <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/g/vol.php>.

Young people's views on advocacy sought

The Multicultural Youth Advisory Network (MYAN) and Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) is seeking young people's views on advocacy to inform the development of a toolkit to assist young people create change in their communities. Further details are available by contacting Nadine Liddy at nadine@myan.org.au or Jacqui McKenzie at Jacqui@ayac.org.au. Complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MYANYPCC>

Paediatric refugee health conference In Sydney

Health Assessment for Refugee Kids (HARK) is celebrating its tenth year in operation with a paediatric health conference at The Children's Hospital at Westmead, in Sydney on Friday, 16 May. Key speakers include: Australian Human Rights Commission chair Gillian Triggs, Australian Red Cross CEO Robert Tickner and lawyer David Manne. The conference will be held at the hospital's Lorimer Dods Lecture Theatre between 8.15am and 5.00pm. For further information, contact 02 9845 3566

Refugee stories sought for World Refugee Day

UNHCR is giving refugees the opportunity to write their story as part of World Refugee Day celebrations on 20 June. Stories about the circumstances that led to people becoming refugees and what happened to people when they resettled in a new country will be central to the World Refugee Day theme. Contact Lynne Minion at minion@unhcr.org for further details.

Lead to Achieve Youth Program needs young people

Melbourne's Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre is seeking expressions of interest from young people of refugee and migrant background to join its Lead to Achieve Young Program. The program is looking for young people aged 18 to 25 years to participate in creative arts, sports, events, workshops and forums. Find out more at <https://www.facebook.com/LeadtoAchieve>. Contact GabrielleO@spectrumvic.org.au, 03 9496 0228 or 0419 175 081 for further details.

Global Forum on Statelessness

The Statelessness Programme is organising the first Global Forum on Statelessness in cooperation with the UNHCR, to be held between 15 and 17 September at The Hague, The Netherlands. The main themes will be focusing on stateless children, statelessness and security and responses to statelessness. For more information on the conference, please visit <http://www.tilburguniversity.edu/research/institutes-and-research-groups/statelessness/news/forum/>

Online courses on protection of refugees and stateless people

The Human Rights Centre of the United Nations mandated University for Peace (UPEACE) has announced four exciting new online courses to be offered in 2014 on important topics related to protection of human rights, including Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons. The six-week certificate courses are aimed at professionals working with the United Nations and its specialized

agencies, government officials, NGO staff, development workers, human rights advocates, academics and students. For more details visit www.hrc.upeace.org and www.upeace.org.

Have your say on World Refugee Day celebrations In Brisbane

Mercy Community Services and a number of partners are seeking submissions for a one-day conference on social justice and human rights approaches and responses to the needs of people who travel to Australia to seek asylum, to be held at Brisbane in June. Further details are available by contacting marcela.moreno@mercy.org.au

REFUGEE ISSUES IN THE MEDIA

A busy person's digest of some recent media coverage of refugee issues:

(Inclusion in this summary does not imply that RCOA agrees with the article's content or vouches for its accuracy)

Manus operator G4S paid no 2012 tax but got a refund

The sacked operator of the controversial immigration detention centre at Manus Island, G4S, paid no Australian tax in 2012, Fairfax Media has learnt. Financial reports filed with the corporate regulator show the ATO in fact paid G4S a cash refund of \$2.2 million. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 1 March) <http://www.smh.com.au/national/manus-operator-g4s-paid-no-2012-tax-but-got-a-refund-20140228-33rgs.html>

Scott Morrison has 66 spin doctors

The Immigration Department employs a 66-strong team of spin doctors, dwarfing the 39 media and communications staff employed by Prime Minister Tony Abbott and the ministers on his frontbench. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 2 March) <http://bit.ly/1dJ3AZH>

PNG Judge to visit Manus Island to check on rights

A Papua New Guinea judge, David Cannings, will visit Manus Island on March 10 to evaluate the human rights situation at the asylum-seeker detention centre there. (The Australian, 2 March) <http://bit.ly/1s0eeik>

Scott Morrison heads to PNG to iron out 'bumps' in Manus refugee deal

The immigration minister, Scott Morrison, headed to Papua New Guinea on Friday to discuss Manus Island violence and refugee resettlement and to iron out what the PNG foreign minister, Rimbink Pato, describes as "bumps" in an asylum policy partnership that is still intact. (The Guardian, 3 March) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/scott-morrison-heads-to-png-to-iron-out-bumps-in-manus-refugee-deal>

Manus Island riot to be early focus of monthly PNG meetings

Australia and Papua New Guinea will work to "synthesise" the various inquiries into the recent riot on Manus Island as part of monthly meetings on the asylum-seeker deal between the two countries. (The Australian, 3 March) <http://bit.ly/1s0eyh2>

PNG local working for Salvation Army accused of Manus death

A PNG local employed by the Salvation Army has been accused of being a key assailant in the attack that resulted in the death of Iranian asylum seeker Reza Barati, according to staff employed at the Manus Island detention centre. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 3 March) <http://bit.ly/1Irf9WJ>

\$3.5m spent on Manus Island detention centre's kitchen defended

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection has defended paying \$3.5 million to Toll Holdings for a tent kitchen at its Manus Island detention centre. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 3 March) <http://bit.ly/1hcXICr>

Scott Morrison to hold monthly talks with PNG over refugee resettlement

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison has announced a new monthly ministers' forum with Papua New Guinean officials to coordinate investigations into the recent violence on Manus Island and oversee the resettling of refugees in PNG. (The West Australian, 3 March) <http://yhoo.it/1jtBCAQ>

Kevin Rudd defends Labor's asylum-seeker policy In speech at Oxford

Former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has admitted the hard-line asylum-seeker policy Labor implemented in mid-2013 was "not a perfect answer" but says his government was facing a practical, moral and political dilemma. (The Australian, 3 March) <http://bit.ly/1gVDgvD>

Catholic bishops call for Manus closure

Australia's detention centre on Manus Island should be shut down say PNG's Catholic Bishops, as investigations continue into riot. (SBS News, 3 March)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/03/catholic-bishops-call-manus-closure>

Manus Island won't take asylum seekers

Manus Island will not welcome asylum seekers as permanent settlers, the island's governor has warned, blaming the threat of climate change and rising sea waters. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 4 March)

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/manus-island-wont-take-asylum-seekers-20140303-340jd.html>

Manus riot: G4S employee contradicts leaked PNG police report into violence

An Australian employee of the G4S security firm on Manus Island says PNG police stood back and allowed locals to break into the compound last month, did nothing to stop them beating detainees, and in some cases participated in the violence and intimidation. (ABC News, 4 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-04/g4s-employee-contradicts-png-police-report-into-manus-riot/5295740>

Uniting Church offers to take child asylum seekers on Christmas Island

The Uniting Church is offering to look after asylum seeker children without parents living on Christmas Island. (ABC News, 4 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-04/uniting-church-offers-to-take-child-asylum-seekers-on-christmas/5298352>

Asylum seeker study reveals 'extreme' distress

The first study of asylum seekers living in the community on bridging visas has revealed extreme emotional and financial distress among participants. (SBS News, 4 March)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/04/asylum-seeker-study-reveals-extreme-distress>

Church slams 'cold blooded' treatment of asylum seeker children

The Uniting Church has slammed the "cold blooded" treatment of asylum seeker children in detention, offering housing for children who are being forcibly moved from Christmas Island to Australia's second processing centre on Nauru Island. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 5 March) <http://bit.ly/1ljDQHT>

Parliament to probe Manus Island riot

Asylum seekers will be invited to give their witness accounts of the recent deadly violence on Manus Island to a parliamentary committee that will free public servants and contractors from confidentiality clauses in their employment contracts. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 5 March) <http://bit.ly/1oJlqWm>

PNG plans quick decisions for 'failed' refugees

Papua New Guinea's Foreign and Immigration Minister Rimbink Pato has indicated his country will prioritize the processing of asylum-seekers with weak claims, saying failed refugees could be dealt with "easily". (The Australian, 5 March) <http://bit.ly/1sOgyGO>

UN human rights Chief Navi Pillay to call for review of PNG asylum seeker processing

The United Nations high commissioner for human rights will call on Australia to review its treatment of asylum seekers and its agreement with Papua New Guinea after last month's violence on Manus Island. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 5 March) <http://bit.ly/1e64aLB>

Scott Morrison brings back cap on asylum-seeker protection visas

Immigration minister sets limit at 2,773 permanent visas, months after previous limit was revoked ahead of a legal challenge. (The Guardian, 6 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/06/scott-morrison-brings-back-cap-on-asylum-seeker-protection-visas>

"Colonial' bid to inspect Manus: Morrison

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison says Australian politicians would be treating Papua New Guinea as a colony with their request to visit the Manus Island detention centre. (The Australian, 7 March) <http://bit.ly/1ljhdOO>

Budget blowout on Christmas Island

The cost of housing Immigration Department staff on Christmas Island has blown out by \$11 million since December, despite the number of asylum seekers detained on the island falling by more than 430 people in that time. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 9 March) <http://bit.ly/1lz1xtm>

Manus Island riot: full report by Australian official may not be released

Australians may not see the full report by Robert Cornall into the fatal riot on Manus Island, because both the Australian and Papua New Guinean governments will receive an account in which immigration officials have already “merged” the findings of investigations being undertaken in each country. (The Guardian, 10 March) <http://bit.ly/1mshYVI>

Australian doctor to investigate Manus

A PNG court has appointed an Australian doctor to investigate whether human rights are being afforded to asylum seekers on Manus Island. (SBS News, 10 March) <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/10/australian-doctor-investigate-manus>

Australian police declined to interview ‘tortured’ Sri Lankan asylum seeker

The Australian federal police declined the opportunity to interview a Sri Lankan asylum seeker sent back from Christmas Island who alleged he had been “severely tortured” by local police on his return, a cable obtained under freedom of information laws has revealed. (The Guardian, 11 March) <http://bit.ly/1nFilb2>

Abbott government spent \$15,000 on weekly boats media conferences

The Abbott government spent more than \$15,000 flying Operation Sovereign Borders commander Angus Campbell and other officials to Sydney for weekly media briefings before abandoning the practice. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 11 March) <http://bit.ly/1flK6Er>

Manus Island local staff ‘locked out’ amid security fears

Manus Island detainees say they are being threatened with violence as food shortages strike, with some asylum seekers forced to skip meals amid deteriorating conditions. (SBS News, 11 March) <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/11/manus-island-local-staff-locked-out-amid-security-fears>

Gerald Stone releases audit into ABC’s coverage of asylum seekers

An independent audit of the ABC’s asylum seeker coverage has uncovered isolated examples that could be perceived as biased – including a television report whose “one purpose” was to elicit sympathy for people smugglers. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 12 March) <http://bit.ly/1fhOShk>

Manus Island unrest sparked riot squad preparation weeks before asylum death

Daily protests on Manus Island resulted in local G4S riot squads “gearing up” a number of times before the unrest that resulted in the death of the Iranian asylum seeker Reza Barati on 17 February. (The Guardian, 12 March) <http://bit.ly/PcaUS9>

Julie Bishop asked about ‘inhumane’ asylum centres in BBC interview

Julie Bishop has faced accusations that Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers is “inhumane” and “uncivilized” during a hostile BBC interview in London. (The Guardian, 12 March) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/12/julie-bishop-asked-about-inhumane-asylum-centres-in-bbc-interview>

Australia’s relationship with Sri Lanka puts asylum seekers at risk: report

Australia’s co-operation with Sri Lanka has been seriously questioned in a new report by international human rights lawyers, who say that it is deeply flawed and jeopardises asylum seekers’ attempts to seek safety. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 12 March) <http://bit.ly/1pC3S6i>

Australia to buy US-made drones to patrol borders, detect asylum seekers

Australia yesterday announced plans to buy a fleet of unmanned drones to help patrol the nation's borders and monitor its offshore energy infrastructure. (South China Morning Post, 13 March)

<http://www.scmp.com/news/world/article/1447935/australia-buy-us-made-drones-patrol-borders-detect-asylum-seekers>

'Enormous support' for border protection policy in Sutherland Shire, says Morrison

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison says he has received "enormous support" from his Sutherland Shire constituents over the government's hardline policies aimed at stopping asylum-seekers from coming to Australia by boat. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 March)

<http://bit.ly/1lyW990>

Reza Berati murder arrests expected within days

Manus Island police say they are poised to charge several men with the murder of Reza Barati, the asylum seeker killed in a violent confrontation at the island's detention centre. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 March) <http://bit.ly/1s0usbc>

ASIO highlights refugee concerns in new review

ASIO had "discomfort" over the number of asylum seekers the Gillard government placed in community detention with limited security checks. (The Daily Telegraph, 14 March) <http://bit.ly/1i99Ne9>

Immigration Department sends apology letter to asylum seekers

The Department of Immigration is writing to asylum seekers detained across Australia to inform them their personal details were publicly disclosed in a massive data breach, with sources alleging the department is coercing them to sign for receipt of the letter. (The Guardian, 14 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/14/asylum-data-breach-immigration-department-sends-apology-letter>

Transfield funds are still being used for Biennale of Sydney

Transfield money will help fund this year's Biennale of Sydney, despite last week's declaration from the board that ties had been severed with the founding partner "effective immediately". (The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 March) <http://bit.ly/Py4n4R>

Immigration Minister not immune to his job's hardline stance on asylum seekers

Scott Morrison knows the public thinks he's hard when he's dealing with asylum seekers. He makes no apologies for that. (Herald Sun, 14 March) <http://bit.ly/1e6oLiM>

George Brandis urges penalty for arts organisations rejecting corporate sponsorship

Arts Minister George Brandis has promoted moves to block government funding for organisations that refuse corporate sponsorship following the "preposterously unreasonable" termination of Transfield's sponsorship of the Sydney Biennale. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 March) <http://bit.ly/1fif303>

Syrians on Manus offered repatriation despite prospect of 'certain death'

The Department of Immigration offered repatriation to two Syrian asylum seekers on Manus Island, despite one saying he faced "certain death" if returned, according to leaked case manager documents obtained by Guardian Australia. (The Guardian, 15 March) <http://bit.ly/1ksHlKF>

Australia asylum: PNG judge probes rights at detention camp

Papua New Guinea's Supreme Court has begun a human rights inquiry into Australia's immigration detention centre on Manus Island. (BBC News, 17 March) <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26575474>

Asylum seekers give details on Operation Sovereign Borders lifeboat turn-back

Asylum seekers who were forcibly returned to Indonesia by lifeboat have been given the first detailed account of their ordeal, and a unique insight into the Federal Government's Operation Sovereign Borders. (ABC News, 18 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-17/asylum-seekers-give-details-on-operation-sovereign-borders/5326546>

Scott Morrison acknowledges boat turn-backs as UN interviews asylum seekers

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison has explicitly acknowledged that the Government is turning back asylum seeker boats, despite having a policy of not confirming or denying what takes place on water during Operation Sovereign Borders. (ABC News, 18 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-18/morrison-acknowledges-asylum-boat-turn-backs/5327802>

Changes to act would allow Scott Morrison to 'play God'

Changes to a core migration act, which critics argue could allow Scott Morrison to "play God" and decide the fate of asylum seekers, have been investigated by a Senate committee. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 19 March) <http://bit.ly/1fDzo8>

Indonesian Immigration say they've stopped 1000 asylum-seekers

Indonesian immigration officers in the area where asylum-seekers set off for Australia – and where the first orange lifeboat came back – say they are undermanned and overwhelmed, but still stopped almost 1000 people risking their lives last year. (The Australian, 19 March) <http://bit.ly/Oa0amj>

Australia will 'live to regret' asylum seeker treatment

President of the Refugee Council of Australia Phil Glendenning said the country needed to change its attitude towards refugees and migrants. (SBS News, 19 March)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/19/australia-will-live-regret-asylum-seeker-treatment>

Immigration ordered asylum seeker children out of Victorian schools at 18

Asylum seekers reportedly were kicked out of Victorian schools when they turned 18 last year, on the advice of the Immigration Department. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 19 March) <http://bit.ly/1ok6mZy>

Detainees at Manus centre fed worm-infested bread, asylum seeker tells inquiry

An asylum seeker has described prison-like conditions and eating bread infested with worms at the Manus Island detention centre in Papua New Guinea. (Radio Australia, 19 March)

<http://bit.ly/1ok7M6m>

Three Manus Island detainees try to take their own lives

Three Manus Island detainees are thought to have attempted suicide, apparently in protest against poor conditions at the offshore detention centre and the lack of progress in processing their asylum claims. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 March) <http://bit.ly/1gJl2wk>

United Nations to throw spotlight on Nauru detention centres

The United Nations intends to investigate any cases of arbitrary detention on Nauru, the tiny Pacific nation where Australia funds an immigration detention centre. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 March)

<http://bit.ly/1kNn278>

Cost of Abbott government's lifeboats to tow back asylum seekers trebles to \$7.5m

The Abbott government has tripled the amount of money spent on the large orange lifeboats used to tow back asylum seekers breaching Australian waters to Indonesia to \$7.5 million as part of its tough border control policy. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 March) <http://bit.ly/1gW9wys>

Asylum seekers told they will foot the bill if their data-breach cases fail

Asylum seekers involved in court proceedings over a data breach which publicly disclosed the personal information of almost 10,000 people in immigration detention have been told by lawyers representing immigration minister Scott Morrison they will be billed for legal costs should their cases fail. (The Guardian, 20 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/20/asylum-seekers-told-they-will-foot-the-bill-if-their-data-breach-cases-fail>

Australian lawyer prevented from representing asylum seekers at Manus inquiry

A request by an Australian lawyer to represent asylum seekers at an inquiry into the Manus Island detention centre has been refused. (Radio Australia, 20 March)

<http://bit.ly/ODXA8y>

Tony Abbott wants PNG to speed up processing of asylum seekers on Manus Island

Prime Minister Tony Abbott is pressing Papua New Guinea to speed up the processing of asylum seekers held in detention on Manus Island. (ABC News, 21 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-21/abbott-wants-png-to-speed-up-processing-of-asylum-seekers/5335676>

Australia resists pressure on Sri Lanka war crimes probe

The government is resisting a push by its closest allies to establish a United Nations investigation into war crimes and human rights abuses in Sri Lanka. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 21 March) <http://bit.ly/1I80WPK>

Protesters arrested after praying in Morrison's office

A number of people have been arrested after holding a prayer vigil in protest against the government's asylum seeker policy outside the Sydney office of Immigration Minister Scott Morrison. (SBS News, 21 March)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/03/21/protesters-arrested-after-praying-morrison-office>

Refugee Tri Nguyen marches on Canberra with a boat and a message

Tri Nguyen is walking from Melbourne to Canberra towing a wooden boat in his own quiet plea for better treatment of asylum seekers. (The Age, 21 March) <http://bit.ly/1s0QF8Z>

Papua New Guinea reaffirms vow to resettle refugees

Papua New Guinea expects to start resettling refugees detained in Australia's offshore processing centre on Manus Island as early as May. (The Australian, 21 March) <http://bit.ly/1kIVbcU>

Asylum seekers claim Reza Berati was thrown off a balcony at the Manus centre

Asylum seekers detained on Manus Island say Reza Berati was thrown off a balcony before being beaten to death. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 21 March) <http://bit.ly/Ocj2RF>

Tony Abbott: most Manus asylum seekers won't be declared genuine

Tony Abbott has backed his Papua New Guinea counterpart's suspicions that most detainees on Manus Island will not be found to be refugees. (The Guardian, 22 March) <http://bit.ly/1mGBOHE>

ALP powerbroker Sam Dastyari lashes party's asylum seeker policy

NSW Labor powerbroker Sam Dastyari has lashed his own party's asylum seeker policies and predicted Australians will one day be as embarrassed by offshore processing as they now are by the White Australia Policy. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 22 March)

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/alp-powerbroker-sam-dastyari-lashes-partys-asylum-seeker-policy-20140321-358ql.html>

Manus Island: barrister visits asylum seekers but inquiry under threat

The Sydney barrister Jay Williams spent the weekend at the Manus Island detention centre taking evidence from 75 asylum seekers who claim their human rights have been violated – but this inquiry could be shut down by the Papua New Guinea government on Monday. (The Guardian, 23 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/23/manus-island-barrister-visits-asylum-seekers-but-inquiry-under-threat>

Morrison defends move by PNG to call halt to Manus Island detention centre inquiry

Immigration Minister Scott Morrison has defended Papua New Guinea's moves to end a judicial inquiry into human rights inside the Manus Island detention centre. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 24 March)

<http://bit.ly/1iUqdZS>

Truss: Pacific should share refugee burden

The deputy prime minister has revealed that Australia is approaching other countries to resettle the asylum seekers currently detained on Manus Island. (Radio National, 24 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/warren-truss-on-mh-370-search/5340140>

People smugglers offering discounts, multi-buys to combat asylum seeker policies

Discounts, multi-buys and new ways to travel are just some of the methods people smuggling syndicates are using to respond to Australian policy changes, as they attempt to cling onto their market. (Radio Australia, 24 March) <http://bit.ly/1pH43vd>

Coalition tight-lipped on whether it will support inquiry into Sri Lankan war crimes

The Coalition government is continuing to sidestep whether it will support an international investigation into war crimes in Sri Lanka, despite Labor and the Greens now both backing it. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 24 March) <http://bit.ly/1gWqgG4>

Asylum seekers describe boat turn-back at centre of burns allegations

An asylum seeker whose boat was turned back to Indonesia by Australia has given the ABC a detailed first-person account alleging he was deliberately burned by Australian military personnel while in their custody. (ABC News, 25 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-24/asylum-seekers-describe-boat-turn-back/5342210>

Asylum seekers on Manus Island launch new legal bid for freedom

Asylum seekers facing indefinite detention on Manus Island have launched a new legal bid for freedom. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 25 March) <http://bit.ly/Pczbrk>

Children neglected on Christmas Island, human rights inquiry finds

An inquiry into the treatment of asylum seeker children on Christmas Island detention centre has found children in a state of gross neglect, with little or no access to education. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 25 March) <http://bit.ly/1lafJGP>

Scott Morrison calls renewed asylum seeker burning claims ‘baseless’

Scott Morrison has dismissed the “baseless” account of an asylum seeker who claims Australian navy personnel deliberately burned his hands, saying the “matter is closed”.

(The Guardian, 25 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/25/scott-morrison-calls-renewed-asylum-seeker-burning-claims-baseless>

Fight to expose footage of asylum seeker burns fails in Senate

A Senate motion to make public footage of an asylum seeker boat turnback which resulted in three asylum seekers saying they had their hands burned by Australian navy personnel has failed, with both Labor and the Coalition voting against it. (The Guardian, 26 March)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/26/fight-to-expose-footage-of-asylum-seeker-burns-fails-in-senate/print>

Safe asylum boat turnbacks may not be possible, Senate committee finds

It may be impossible for the government to safely pursue its policy of turning back boats carrying asylum seekers without crossing into Indonesia’s territorial waters, a Senate inquiry into six Australian naval incursions has found. (The Guardian, 27 March) <http://bit.ly/OcgBOP>

Scott Morrison falls again to bring back temporary visas for asylum seekers

The move by the immigration minister, Scott Morrison, to reintroduce a form of temporary protection visas was struck down on Thursday by Labor and the Greens in the Senate. (The Guardian, 27 March)

<http://bit.ly/1j92ea4>

Lawyer ordered out as PNG stops another Manus Inquiry

The PNG government has moved to shut down a second probe into human rights at the Manus Island detention centre, with Australian lawyer Jay Williams ordered to leave the centre on Thursday. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 28 March) <http://bit.ly/1laiUy5>

More than 600 asylum seekers return home voluntarily

More than 600 asylum seekers have returned home voluntarily or through forced repatriation since the Coalition declared Australia’s borders closed. (The Sunday Telegraph, 29 March) <http://bit.ly/1gK3znA>

Australian lawyer Jay Williams deported from PNG following ejection from Manus

An Australian lawyer representing 75 detainees on Manus Island has been forced to leave PNG after being threatened with arrest. (ABC News, 29 March)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-29/australian-lawyer-forced-to-leave-png/5354230>

Operation Sovereign Borders: PM marks 100 days without asylum seeker boat arrival

Prime Minister Tony Abbott has declared the way is closed for people smugglers as the Government marks 100 days since a boat arrived in Australia’s territory. (Radio Australia, 30 March)

<http://bit.ly/1dLsIV7>

Manus Island was mission impossible: ex-Salvos worker

The Salvation Army was a poor cultural fit and ill-equipped to manage the difficult situation on the Manus Island detention centre, a former worker has alleged. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 30 March)

<http://bit.ly/1dLtXhl>

Lawyers, Labor slam cuts to migrant advice

Lawyers will pick up the slack and provide immigration advice to asylum seekers, following the federal government's withdrawal of a taxpayer-funded service. (The Australian, 31 March)

<http://bit.ly/1fnWW9o>