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Issue for February 2023
Nobody Left behind

Available to download at –

- <https://aran.net.au/resources/letter-writing/>
- <https://ruralaustraliansforrefugees.org.au/write-a-letter>



Included in this kit is the information you need to create your own letters or use the proformas

- Guide and Background notes prepared by ARAN’s Letter Writing Network.
- Postal Addresses for MPs and Senators
- Email addresses for MPs and Senators
- A proforma letter that you can copy (and personalise) to send by post or email.

Personalised letters are best –

- You might like to use the **AIDA** principle
 - **A - Attention** - grab the recipient's attention. Say something positive about the reader that is directed towards the focus of your letter. Stimulate the recipient's curiosity
 - **I – Interest & Information**- encourage the recipient to read on.
 - **D - Desire** - Getting the reader to want to do what you are seeking - in their interest to do so.
 - **A - Action**- inform the reader of the action you want them to take.

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Regards,  
The ARAN Letter Writing Network  
[austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

### Why it is important to write about this issue

Although the Albanese Government announced on 13 February that refugees who have TPVs and SHEVs will have a pathway to permanency, advocates including the Refugee Council of Australia, have expressed concern that no decision has been made about a further 12,000 people in the “legacy caseload” who remain on bridging visas.

Under the so called Fast Track system, most people seeking asylum wait years for their application for refugee protection to be processed. Bridging visas do not provide the right to study or access to Centrelink support. Some people on Bridging Visas, including those who are in an appeals process may be denied the right to work.

Many are haunted by poverty, and past and present trauma. There is the constant fear of deportation if Bridging Visas expires, or if people are refused refugees status, even though the assessment and appeals processes are deeply flawed and unfair.

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### Background

Extract from AHRC. *Lives on Hold*. 2019. <sup>1</sup>

*The **Legacy Caseload** is a group of approximately 30,000 asylum seekers who arrived in Australia by boat prior to 1 January 2014 and were permitted to remain in Australia in order to lodge applications for visas, but had not had their [refugee] status resolved by this date.*

*People in the Legacy Caseload [came] from many countries ... including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar), Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Vietnam. A significant number [were] stateless.<sup>2</sup>*

*... ... [If permitted by the Minister to apply for a visa]... asylum seekers who arrived unauthorised by boat between 13 August 2012 and 1 January 2014 [were put] through the ‘fast track’ assessment process<sup>3</sup>.*

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Under the **Fast Track** process the legacy caseload applicants had to wait for the Immigration Minister to formally invite them to apply for asylum, then submit a written visa application to Home Affairs and to undergo an interview. Many people who arrived between 13 August 2012 and 1 January 2014 were barred from making an application for protection for **up to four years** following their arrival. They were **not** permitted to apply for any permanent visas.

In **2014**, the government also abolished funding legal assistance in spite of the complexity of Australia’s immigration law. Many asylum seekers were vulnerable without support networks and with language and cultural barriers.

In May **2017**, the government announced that all asylum seekers in the legacy caseload were required to lodge an application for protection by 1 October 2017 or be deported from Australia immediately. This placed significant pressure on individuals and families, and also the pro bono legal services that assisted them, to complete the complex application claim for protection that detailed experiences of trauma and harm.

In early **2018**, these challenges were exacerbated by the government’s decision to withdraw income support which had been provided through the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) for most people seeking asylum, except those who met the extremely high threshold of vulnerability (and even where an extremely vulnerable person was granted access to income support, the payment amounts were below the poverty line).

This income support scheme previously provided a basic allowance to people waiting for their protection claims to be decided, at a rate below the poverty line.<sup>4</sup>

Unless people living on Bridging Visas are able to sustain enough employment to support themselves, they are entirely dependent on charities for their housing and living costs. With thousands of people on the visas, charities are struggling to provide adequate support.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *Lives on Hold*. 2019. – [https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/AHRC\\_Lives\\_on\\_hold\\_2019\\_summary.pdf](https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/AHRC_Lives_on_hold_2019_summary.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Department of Home Affairs, *IMA Legacy Caseload: Report on the Processing Status and Outcomes*. 2018. pp3–5. <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/ima-legacy-caseload-dec-2018.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The so-called *Fast Track* assessment process was established by the Abbott Government in 2014.

<sup>4</sup> SRSS - This income support scheme had previously provided a basic allowance (at a rate below the poverty line) to people waiting for their protection claims to be decided.

Under the flawed 'Fast Track' system, many asylum seekers in the legacy caseload have waited years for their asylum claims to be assessed. Many have faced prolonged periods in extreme financial hardship. This coupled with the prolonged uncertainty of their situation has a profound impact on families and the physical and mental health and well-being of adults and children.

In addition, people seeking asylum who arrived by boat after 19 July 2013 who have been held offshore but have been brought to Australia for medical or other reasons, are given BVEs (Final Departure Bridging Visas). Although BVEs allow people to live in the community, they are short-term visas (usually only for 6 months), and do not allow for any income support, housing assistance, or study rights. At this stage these people (around 1,000) are unable to apply for permanent protection in Australia, even though the majority are actually refugees and are owed protection.

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Labor's policy platform acknowledges that the Fast Track process is not fair:

Extract from the Labor Party Platform 2021 - page 132

- *The existing fast track assessment process under the auspices of the Immigration Assessment Authority and the limitation of appeal rights does not provide a fair, thorough and robust assessment process for persons seeking asylum.*
  - *Labor will abolish this fast-track assessment process*
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**Rally - Permanent Visas for ALL refugees - Canberra - 12.30pm, Monday, 6 March –**

<https://www.facebook.com/events/626714459216838/>

**Palm Sunday, 2 April 2023 - A call for a National Day of Action - Permanent Protection for ALL**

Further details will be available on the ARAN website: <https://aran.net.au/palm-sunday-2023/>

Email - Send details of **your** local action to ARAN - [austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

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#### Sources

1. Lives on Hold. AHRC. 2019. - [https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/AHRC\\_Lives\\_on\\_hold\\_2019\\_summary.pdf](https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/AHRC_Lives_on_hold_2019_summary.pdf)
  2. The Legacy Caseload. Kaldor Centre. 2020. - <https://www.kaldorcentre.unsw.edu.au/publication/legacy-caseload>
  3. ALP Platform 2021 - <https://www.alp.org.au/about/national-platform/>
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#### Points for your letters

- It is encouraging that around 19,000 refugees currently on TPVs and SHEVs now have a pathway to permanency in Australia
- However, some refugees and people seeking asylum are being left behind - ALL refugees in Australia should
  - be granted Permanent Protection
  - be granted the right to request family reunion
  - have a pathway to citizenship
- There should be fair and thorough processes to determine claims for refugee status.
  - In line with the Labor policy platform, the government should replace the 'Fast Track' system with a fair process, including a thorough and timely appeal process
- All people on Bridging Visas should have the right to work.
- All people should be eligible for income support (either through Centrelink or the SRSS program) if they are unable to support themselves through paid employment.

**Letters in your own words are best.**

**If you decide to use the sample letter, please use your own words where possible so that not all the letters are the same.**

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## Addresses for your letters:

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### 1. The Prime Minister

Prime Minister  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

You cannot email the PM. Use the following link to the PM's Contact Form.

<https://www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm>

### 2. Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services & Multicultural Affairs

The Hon Andrew Giles,  
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services & Multicultural Affairs  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Email: [Andrew.Giles.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.Giles.MP@aph.gov.au)

Or use the following link to the Contact Form:

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Contact\\_Senator\\_or\\_Member?MPID=243609](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Contact_Senator_or_Member?MPID=243609)

### You may also like to send a copy of your email to:

- Your local MP - [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)
  - Greens Senator Nick McKim [senator.mckim@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckim@aph.gov.au)
- 

### Canberra Postal Address for all Senators

PO Box 6100  
Senate,  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Canberra Postal Address for all MPs

PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

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Find electorate postal and email addresses for your local MP: [https://www.aph.gov.au/senators\\_and\\_members/members](https://www.aph.gov.au/senators_and_members/members)

Email addresses for MPs and Senators - <https://aran.net.au/resources/letter-writing/>

**Email addresses for all Senators are on the next page**

You may also send a copy of your letter to Senators in your state:

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#### EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR ALL SENATORS - UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2022

Email addresses for all **ACT** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au); [senator.seselja@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.seselja@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **NSW** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.ayres@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ayres@aph.gov.au); [senator.bragg@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bragg@aph.gov.au); [senator.cadell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cadell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.davey@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.davey@aph.gov.au); [senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.faruqi@aph.gov.au); [senator.hughes@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hughes@aph.gov.au);  
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[senator.payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.payne@aph.gov.au); [senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au); [senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au);

Email addresses for all **NT** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au); [senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.nampijinpaprice@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **Queensland** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.canavan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.canavan@aph.gov.au); [senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au); [senator.green@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.green@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.hanson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcdonald@aph.gov.au); [senator.mcgrath@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcgrath@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.rennick@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rennick@aph.gov.au); [senator.roberts@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.roberts@aph.gov.au); [senator.scarr@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.scarr@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.stoker@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.stoker@aph.gov.au); [senator.waters@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.waters@aph.gov.au); [senator.watt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.watt@aph.gov.au);

Email addresses for all **SA** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.antic@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.antic@aph.gov.au); [senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.birmingham@aph.gov.au); [senator.farrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.farrell@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au); [senator.grogan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.grogan@aph.gov.au); [senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.liddle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.liddle@aph.gov.au); [senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mclachlan@aph.gov.au); [senator.pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pocock@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.ruston@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ruston@aph.gov.au); [senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.marielle.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.wong@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.wong@aph.gov.au);

Email addresses for all **Tasmania** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.askew@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.askew@aph.gov.au); [senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.bilyk@aph.gov.au); [senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.carol.brown@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.chandler@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chandler@aph.gov.au); [senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.colbeck@aph.gov.au); [senator.duniam@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.duniam@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.lambie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lambie@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckim@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckim@aph.gov.au); [senator.polley@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.polley@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.tyrrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.tyrrell@aph.gov.au); [senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au); [senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.whish-wilson@aph.gov.au);

Email addresses for all **Victorian** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.babet@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.babet@aph.gov.au); [senator.ciccione@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ciccione@aph.gov.au); [senator.henderson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.henderson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.hume@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.hume@aph.gov.au); [senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckenzie@aph.gov.au); [senator.paterson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.paterson@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.rice@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.rice@aph.gov.au); [senator.stewart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.stewart@aph.gov.au); [senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.thorpe@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.van@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.van@aph.gov.au); [senator.walsh@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.walsh@aph.gov.au); [senator.white@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.white@aph.gov.au)

Email addresses for all **WA** senators - ready to copy and paste into "TO" section of your email:

[senator.brockman@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.brockman@aph.gov.au); [senator.cash@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cash@aph.gov.au); [senator.cox@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.cox@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.dodson@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.dodson@aph.gov.au); [senator.lines@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lines@aph.gov.au); [senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.matt.o'sullivan@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.pratt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.pratt@aph.gov.au); [senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.reynolds@aph.gov.au); [senator.small@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.small@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.smith@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.smith@aph.gov.au); [senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.steele-john@aph.gov.au); [senator.sterle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sterle@aph.gov.au)

**NOTE:** If you are sending an email be sure to include your NAME and ADDRESS

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Email addresses for MPs and Senators - [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators and Members/Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)

The Subject line of your email could be -

**CALL TO ACTION ... .. Call to Action - Nobody Left behind**

## Sample Letter - Nobody left Behind

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February 2023

Dear Minister Giles

I write to thank you as Immigration Minister, and the Albanese Labor Government, for this week's announcement that ensures permanent protection for so many people on TPVs and SHEVs.

*"This decision is momentous. It's Impactful. It's life-changing."*- Sarah Dale, Principal Solicitor, RACS

In offering permanent protection for these people, in ending the inhumane refugee policy of temporary protection visas that has haunted Australia for a decade and caused great distress and trauma to people who sought our protection, the Government has begun the long-awaited and desperately needed process of reform.

It has been an anxious time for people waiting for Labor to deliver on its promise. I am pleased that I can finally say 'Thank you'.

As Professor Jane McAdam (Kaldor Centre) wrote a decade ago in words very similar to your own:

*Refugees granted permanent protection have been among Australia's most successful economic and social contributors. Denying them this opportunity not only compounds their loss, but our society's as well.*

But ... and there is always a but ...

There are many people still without a pathway to permanency and safety. Around 12,000 people who came seeking our protection are living on Bridging Visas in uncertainty, and fear of deportation. They live in poverty if they are unable to work to support themselves and their families. All people on Bridging Visas need to have access to an income safety net, if they are not able to work to support themselves and their families.

It has been 10 years of hardship for these people - they must not be left behind.

Subjected to the Fast Track assessment process, people have been denied a just assessment and appeal process. For many years, Labor MPs and Senators have acknowledged the unfairness of the Fast Track process.

I urge you to urgently replace the Fast Track process with a fair and timely assessment process for all those still waiting for a resolution to their claims for asylum.

As we heartily celebrate this recent step towards humane refugee policies, we implore you to provide hope and certainty of a safe and productive future for ALL refugees in Australia.

Yours sincerely

**Name and Address**