

Supported by ARAN, RAR, GFR, & NARN

Issue for May 2023

FastTrack Assessment Process

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.

~~~~~

Regards,

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

## **FastTrack Assessment Process**

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

The Fast Track Assessment Process for determining refugee status, introduced by the Abbott Government in 2014, drastically changed the refugee determination process, removing a fair review process, and employing very short timeframes for lodging applications. It was introduced as a measure to increase the rate of rejections and deter people from travelling by boat to seek asylum in Australia.

Because the Fast Track process is not thorough, and does not provide proper review processes, there is a high risk of people in need of protection are being returned to face persecution in violation of the UN Refugee Convention- many people are in fear of being deported to danger.

**Background***Note, this issue has a level of complexity, so this kit is a little longer than usual.*

In February 2023, the Albanese Government announced that approximately 19,000 people who hold Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV) will be permitted to apply for permanent protection visas, referred to as RoS – Resolution of Status visas.

Approximately 9-10,000 people still have no certainty about their future. These are mostly people who arrived by boat before July 2013 (after which time most people arriving by boat were sent offshore). Of these it is understood that around 1,500 are still waiting on a first decision on their refugee status, and around 5,500 are appealing a negative decision under the flawed 'Fast Track' system. If they are successful, they will be eligible for permanent visas. It is believed that around 2,500 people have completed the appeal process (in either the courts or at the IAA) and have been refused. Their only hope is Ministerial intervention. In addition, more than 1000 people transferred from PNG and Nauru to Australia for medical treatment are not eligible to apply for permanent visas- under the current policy they will remain on short term Bridging Visas - the Fast Track process does not apply to anyone who arrived by boat after 19 July 2013.

<https://theconversation.com/changes-to-temporary-protection-visas-are-a-welcome-development-and-they-wont-encourage-people-smugglers-199763>

The Refugee Council of Australia has proposed that alternative visa options be considered where there is a case for Complementary Pathways– see paper Dec 2022:

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/joint-submission-complementary-pathways/>.

If adopted this would potentially provide options for many of those refused under the Fast Track system.

### **Problems with Fast Track Assessment**

Prior to the Fast Track process, the rate of acceptance for asylum applicants who arrived by boat was consistently around 90%. Since the implementation of the Fast Track process, that figure has fallen to 66.7 %.

[\(https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/fast-tracking-statistics/6/](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/fast-tracking-statistics/6/)

When the Abbott Government introduced the Fast Track system, it scrapped access to funded legal services to assist people in their claims for asylum. Without access to specialist legal assistance, the chances of a positive decision were significantly reduced.

Except in very limited circumstances, the current review processes do not allow new information about the individual or their homeland to be presented. Many people with rejected claims for asylum are from Iran, where the situation has deteriorated significantly, and from persecuted minority groups in Afghanistan and northern Pakistan for whom persecution and violence has escalated under the return of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Under the Fast Track process very few Tamils from Sri Lanka have been granted protection. The United Nations and other non-government agencies continue to report the ongoing persecution of the Tamil minority by the current government. The Nadesalingam family were granted permanent visas and other must also be given protection.

Minister Giles has advised that, until the new system is operating, people who have received negative determinations should continue with court processes and Ministerial Intervention Requests. Appeal rights are very limited as courts can only consider procedural fairness. The court process is lengthy and expensive. People remain in uncertainty for years. The courts are overloaded, and in some cases, even when favourable court decisions have been returned to the Immigration Assessment Authority the claim for protection has still been rejected by IAA.

However, Ministerial Intervention Requests (MIRs) are inaccessible for most people in the Fast Track system. Since 2016, some cases where Ministerial Intervention was requested were blocked by Home Affairs staff and were not passed on to the Minister for decision. However, a recent High Court judgment on 12 April gives some hope that Home Affairs will change their practice in this regard.

See <https://the-riotact.com/home-affairs-broke-the-law-in-obeying-ministerial-instructions-over-visas-high-court-rules/654015>

### What Labor says about the Fast Track system

Labor acknowledges that the Fast Track system is flawed and unfair. The 2021 Labor Policy Platform states: *“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.”*

In its Policy Platform the ALP states that it *“will create an independent Refugee Review Tribunal and abolish the Immigration Assessment Authority. The Tribunal will allow for procedurally fair, simple, affordable and accessible processes and procedures, including in relation to adverse credibility findings, for the review of refugee related decisions.”*

In December 2022, the Albanese government announced that it would introduce legislation in 2023 to abolish the AAT (the government authority under which the Immigration Assessment Authority operates) and create a new federal administrative review body. A dedicated taskforce established within the [Attorney General’s department has released an issues paper and is conducting public consultations](#) to inform the design of the new body.

**Immediate action is required to address the situation of those still subject to Fast Track assessment, as they remain in limbo and are at risk of being denied protection.**

### **What is needed:**

- A recommitment by Australia to the UN Refugee Convention by providing fair processes and granting asylum regardless of how people arrive in Australia.
- Abolition of the Fast Track process as promised in the ALP platform
- Establishment of a dedicated and adequately resourced body such as the Refugee Review Tribunal to hear appeals against immigration decisions
- Reconsideration of claims rejected under the Fast Track Assessment process, allowing fresh applications taking into account changed circumstances in countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Myanmar.
- Allowing people disadvantaged by the fast track system to apply for other visas (such as partner visas for those who share their lives with partners who have permanent residency)
- Allowing Ministerial intervention for people whose appeals have been unsuccessful under the current inadequate appeals process.
- Granting of open-ended bridging visas to provide a level of security for those in the determination and appeals processes, with work rights, access to education, access to Medicare and basic income support either through the SRSS or Centrelink
- A moratorium on deportation of refugees and asylum seekers until such time as their claims have been properly determined and/or reviewed under a new, fair review process.

## Addresses for your letters:

---

### 1. The Prime Minister

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, 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. Clare O'Neil, Minister for Home Affairs

The Hon Clare O'Neil MP, Minister for Home Affairs  
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Email: [Clare.Oneil.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Clare.Oneil.MP@aph.gov.au)

Or use the Contact Form: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Contact\\_Senator\\_or\\_Member?MPID=140590](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Contact_Senator_or_Member?MPID=140590)

### 3. Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration

The Hon Andrew Giles MP  
Minister for Immigration  
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 Contact Form: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Contact\\_Senator\\_or\\_Member?MPID=243690](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Contact_Senator_or_Member?MPID=243690)

---

## 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)
- Friends of Refugees Parliamentary Group - via the 4 co-chairs -
  1. Kate Thwaites MP (*Labor*) - [Kate.Thwaites.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Kate.Thwaites.MP@aph.gov.au)
  2. Zoe Daniel MP (*Independent*) - [Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au)
  3. Senator Nick McKim (*Australian Greens*) - [senator.mckim@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mckim@aph.gov.au)
  4. Dan Tehan MP (*Liberal*) - [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Contact\\_Senator\\_or\\_Member?MPID=210911](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Contact_Senator_or_Member?MPID=210911)

### 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

---

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

## EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR ALL SENATORS - UPDATED MAY 2023

---

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.david.pocock@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.david.pocock@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);  
[senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.mcallister@aph.gov.au); [senator.oneill@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.oneill@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.payne@aph.gov.au); [senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au); [senator.shoebridge@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.shoebridge@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.allman-payne@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.allman-payne@aph.gov.au); [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.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 **Tasmanian** 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.tyrrrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.tyrrrell@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.ciccone@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ciccone@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.payman@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.payman@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.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

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 ... .. *FastTrack Assessment Process***

---

SAMPLE LETTER (on next page):

Sample Letter for PM, Minister for Home Affairs, and Minister for Immigration.

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

*Just a reminder ... to consider who you are writing to, and the likely level of their understanding of the issues. We would assume that local MPs and Senators are less familiar with the detail than Government Ministers would be.*

**Date**

Dear Prime Minister/Minister O'Neil/Minister Giles,

The announcement to transition some 19,000 people who hold Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEVs) to permanent visas is a welcome one. This will give security to many people who came to Australia seeking asylum, and who have been living in limbo for many years.

However, this does not resolve the uncertainty for the approximately 10,000 people in the so-called 'legacy caseload' who are not included in this decision. It is of great concern to me that this group has been left without access to a fair assessment of their claims for asylum, having been subject to the 'Fast Track Assessment Process', a system that Labor agrees is flawed and unfair. This means that people who are in genuine need of protection may be unfairly rejected and forced return to their homelands where they would be at great risk of further persecution and violence.

Many of those seeking protection are Tamils from Sri Lanka, like the Nadesalingam family from Biloela. Tamil asylum seekers have been particularly disadvantaged under the fast track system. The United Nations continues to report the ongoing persecution of the Tamil minority by the current Sri Lankan government. Many others subject to fast track assessment are from Iran, where the situation has seriously deteriorated, or from minority groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan for whom persecution and violence has escalated since the return of the Taliban to rule in Afghanistan.

Members of the Albanese Government often assert this government's commitment to 'being strong on borders without being weak on humanity'. Providing people on TPVs and SHEVs with a pathway to permanence and citizenship is a welcome first step in fulfilling that commitment. But there is still a long way to go before Australia's treatment of refugees can be described as humane.

Thousands of people who have been caught up in the flawed and unfair Fast Track system have been living in and contributing to the Australian community for 10 years or more. They have been establishing families, working, paying taxes, and are valued members of their local communities, but they remain in limbo. It is time to bring fairness to those who have been unjustly disadvantaged by the Fast Track Assessment Process.

I therefore call on you to urge the Minister to: *(We suggest you select just some of these points)*

- Abolish the Fast Track process as promised in the ALP platform
- Recommit to the UN Refugee Convention by providing fair assessment and review processes to people seeking asylum regardless of how they arrive in Australia
- Establish a dedicated and adequately resourced body such as the Refugee Review Tribunal to hear appeals against immigration decisions
- Reconsider claims rejected under the Fast Track Assessment process, allowing fresh applications taking into account changed circumstances in countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Myanmar
- Allow people rejected by the fast track system to apply for other types of visas
- Grant open-ended bridging visas to provide a level of security for those in the determination and appeals processes, with work rights, access to education, access to Medicare and basic income support either through the SRSS or Centrelink
- Declare a moratorium on deportation of refugees and asylum seekers until such time as their claims have been properly determined and/or reviewed under a new, fair review process

Yours sincerely

***(Your name and address)***