



Let's make 2025 the year of justice & fairness for refugees

Context...

- Infamous 'Tampa Affair' August 2001... followed by 24 years of demonizing and harm to asylum seekers and refugees, by successive Australian governments. The policy aim was to deter new boat arrivals by doing **harm** to those who had already made it to our shores; harm that contravenes international laws and covenants.
- Political obsession about people seeking asylum arriving by boat - incorrectly termed "illegal" - whilst turning a blind eye to the mounting number of asylum-seeker arrivals by plane. (Note: since 2022 under Labor boat arrivals at least became "irregular" arrivals)
- Both major parties continue to avoid being wedged on refugee politics by appearing to be tougher than the other, resulting in harmful and egregious policies such as the July 2013 Rudd announcement which declared that people who arrived by boat could never settle in Australia.
- The reactive Migration Act amendment Bills at the end of 2024, which furthered the harm.
- Constant bombardment of the Australian community, by mainstream media, with negative stories about refugees and their families (see ABC Media Watch, Feb 3); with glaring errors rarely corrected.

An election strategy with a focus on the marginal seat of Sturt

While Justice for Refugees SA encourages all members to be active in raising refugee issues with the candidates in their electorate, J4RSA will:

- Focus efforts on the most marginal seat of **Sturt**, given the potential for this seat to be held by a community-minded independent candidate. This presents a clear opportunity for fundamental change in harmful refugee policy.
- Approach all candidates in **Sturt** with the same basic "asks" on refugee policies and processing of claims to be implemented in the 48th Australian Parliament and seek a formal written response from all candidates.
- Attend community/public forums for all candidates in Sturt leading up to the election and raise refugee and asylum seeker policy.
- Work closely with other refugee advocacy groups on a coordinated national campaign.

Justice for Refugees SA election 'asks'...

In the 48th Parliament of Australia, will you do all within your sphere of influence to end the unnecessary cruelty of Australia's refugee and asylum seeker policy? In particular, will you work to:

- Provide people seeking asylum, currently living in Australia who arrived by boat after July 2013, with a pathway to permanency. We argue that after years living in our communities and contributing to our society, people should be given a secure future.
- Ensure these refugees and people seeking asylum are given an ongoing bridging visa with work and study rights, continuous Medicare coverage, affordable legal assistance and basic income support.
- Establish a clear and transparent pathway so people can engage in a process for gaining a permanent visa and regain hope.
- Boost the resources of the Immigration Section of the Department of Home Affairs so that processing of people left in limbo can occur *post-haste*.
- End offshore detention and processing.