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Issue for September 2022 Offshore Processing in PNG and Nauru

Available to download at –

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



Picture courtesy of the ASRC

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)

## BACKGROUND NOTES for OFFSHORE PROCESSING IN PNG AND NAURU

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- *Each individual refugee [in PNG] is the responsibility of the Australian government.*  
Peter O’Neill, former PM of PNG.
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- *To keep people for so many years in this kind of limbo, to the point of driving people to totally irreversible mental health, driving people to serious self-harm, driving people to suicide, to take things to this extreme. ... There is no concern on whatever amount of suffering may be inflicted on them for the sake of this deterrence (policy).*  
Father Giorgio (General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG)
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### Background

In 2013 offshore processing was introduced by Rudd Labor government as a short-term measure to deal with people seeking asylum in Australia who arrived by boat. Later that year, the Coalition government decided to keep offshore processing, claiming it was a deterrence for people arriving by boat. The Albanese government has committed to maintaining a policy of offshore processing.

People subject to offshore processing have been detained in 2 remote locations: PNG and Nauru.

They have been separated from their families, denied basic human rights and prevented from rebuilding their lives. They have lived in terrible conditions and have been subject to abuse and neglect. Their suffering has been enormous, resulting in a very high incidence of physical and mental illness.

After 9 years of Australia’s current offshore processing regime, 216 people remain trapped in PNG and Nauru. They are stranded and left in limbo without any certainty of a permanent resettlement solution.

United Nations rapporteurs have said Australia has a "clear and undeniable" responsibility for people that Australia sent to PNG and Nauru for offshore processing.

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### PNG

- 104 male refugees and asylum seekers remain in PNG

The Australian government announced an end to offshore processing in PNG in October 2021, and declared Australia no longer responsible for the men being detained there. However, the Dept of Home Affairs has confirmed that Australian taxpayers still are funding accommodation, food, and other costs for the men in PNG, despite officially withdrawing from the arrangement on 31 December 2021, but Home Affairs will not confirm the cost or for how long it would last.

- In 2021 the men received a letter from PNG’s country’s chief migration officer Stanis Hulahau, who gave the former Manus detainees 3 options: Go home: Go to Nauru: or remain and be “managed” by the PNG government. (Family groups were not allowed to relocate to Nauru.)
- The conditions some of the remaining men have endured has been described as “appalling”.  
NB - Current Australian government travel advice warns PNG is a dangerous place.

- Father Giorgio (Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG) has assisted in the resettlement of hundreds of the Manus refugees to third countries and is damning of the process.

*“... they were brought to PNG by Australia in exchange for money and projects; these people have been trafficked ... From what I understand by domestic laws of the two countries and international law, all this is illegal.”*

- Canada and New Zealand **may** take some people from PNG under separate arrangements. Father Giorgio estimates about 30 men may get resettlement in a third country, leaving about 70 asylum seekers behind. About 10 have severe and debilitating mental health issues.

For further information and the personal story of one of the men left in PNG see:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/what-will-happen-to-the-asylum-seekers-who-australia-refused-to-let-in/5er5c9twl>

## **Nauru**

- 112 refugees and asylum seekers are still on Nauru
- On Nauru there have been substantiated cases of violence against detainees, sexual abuse of children, inadequate medical and psychiatric care, and incidents of suicide and self-harm.
- In recent months, Nauru has had a strong surge of COVID-19, leaving the men and women trapped there in an even more vulnerable state. Refugees have struggled to access necessities like food, medicine and clean water.  
<https://www.smh.com.au/national/we-drink-from-the-sink-refugees-struggle-to-access-fresh-water-as-covid-cripples-nauru-20220706-p5azie.html>
- No new arrivals have been sent to Nauru since 2014, but the cost of running the operations there has remained between \$35m and \$40m per month. According to the government, the cost to hold a single refugee on Nauru in 2021 was more than \$4.3m annually - more than \$350,000 a month.
- In March 2022, Australia accepted New Zealand’s longstanding offer to resettle refugees from its offshore regime. Those transfers have not yet started.

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## Sources:

- SBS News: What will happen to the asylum seekers who Australia refused to let in? <https://bit.ly/3D2HgdN>
- Guardian Australia, 5 Sept 2022: The ‘egregious’ history of likely new Nauru operator includes allegations of gang rape and murder in its US prisons <https://bit.ly/3RivRn0>
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre: [Minister O’Neil must urgently evacuate refugees held offshore on the ninth anniversary](#)
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre - [Evacuate PNG & Nauru. Let refugees rebuild their lives.](#)
- The Saturday Paper: “I am hopeless now”: Australia’s \$9.65 billion torture camps <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2022/09/10/i-am-hopeless-now-australias-965-billion-torture-camps>

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## **Ask**

- Evacuate all people abandoned in Nauru and PNG immediately, with an assurance they will not be detained, and can live safely in the Australian community while awaiting permanent resettlement.
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Send your letter to: **The Hon Clare O'Neil, Minister for Home Affairs**

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

or

Email: [clare.oneil.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:clare.oneil.mp@aph.gov.au)

or

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)

- The Minister has the power to evacuate people abandoned on PNG and Nauru

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Also send a copy of your letter to your own MP /Senators in your state, and add:

*I ask you to contact the Minister for Home Affairs, Clare O'Neil, on my behalf and urge her to evacuate all people abandoned in Nauru and PNG immediately, with an assurance they will not be detained, and can live safely in the Australian community while awaiting permanent resettlement.*

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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.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);  
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[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.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);  
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[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);

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[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);

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[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);

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[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)

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[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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**Proforma letter to Clare O'Neil, Minister for Home Affairs - Please write in your own words**

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Also send a copy of your letter to **your own MP /Senators in your state**, and add:

*I ask you to contact the Minister for Home Affairs, Clare O'Neil, on my behalf and urge her to evacuate all people abandoned in Nauru and PNG immediately, with an assurance they will not be detained, and can live safely in the Australian community while awaiting permanent resettlement.*

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*Date*

Dear Minister O'Neil.

Labor claims that it intended offshore processing to be a short-term arrangement.

The former government's decision to delay accepting New Zealand's offer to resettle 150 refugees per year means that people abandoned in PNG and Nauru have now endured more than **nine years** in limbo, much of this time in harsh detention conditions. While no longer held in detention centres, they continue to be denied their liberty as they are unable to leave PNG or Nauru.

They have been separated from their families, denied basic human rights and prevented from rebuilding their lives. They have lived in terrible conditions and have been subject to abuse and neglect. Their suffering has been enormous, resulting in a very high incidence of physical and mental illness, including suicides and self-harm.

In addition to the unacceptable human cost, the financial cost<sup>1</sup> of holding these people in limbo is outrageous - and the interests of contractors must not be held above the rights and welfare of refugees and people seeking our protection.

I ask that you ensure that those in need of medical or mental health support receive this immediately in Australia.

I ask that the remaining people in Nauru and PNG be brought to Australia, with an assurance they will not be detained, and can live safely in our community with work rights while awaiting permanent resettlement (including those on a pathway to NZ, Canada or the US).

Yours sincerely

*Your name and address*

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<sup>1</sup> The Saturday Paper: "I am hopeless now": Australia's \$9.65 billion torture camps

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2022/09/10/i-am-hopeless-now-australias-965-billion-torture-camps>