

## URGENT LETTER SUGGESTION:

### In limbo for 12 Years – it’s time for certainty – Permanent Visas Now

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 Senator and contact form for Minister and Prime Minister
- Sample letter and/or Suggested points to mention in your letter 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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The ARAN Letter Writing Network

Contact: [austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:austrefugeenetwork@gmail.com)

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### Why it’s important to write about this issue (again) - and now

You may have heard about the protests by refugees in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, and now also in Adelaide and Perth. The request is to write to express solidarity with the hundreds of people who are protesting 24/7 to draw attention to the unfairness of the Fast Track process and calling for Permanent Visas. Over 8,000 people have had their claims for protection rejected under the fast-track assessment process. They have been living here in our communities on short term bridging visas, with limited or no rights to work, education or financial support.

Crossbenchers have written to the Minister – see [Letter to the Minister signed by 25 crossbenchers](#): “ We call on our government to rise above the politics of fear and provide a clear and timely pathway to permanency for all of those who were failed by the Fast Track system by providing them with permanent residency or implementing an expedited re-application process.”

**There is mounting pressure on the government – ADD your voice now!** Let the Minister know you support the call for permanent visas.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

People who have been in limbo on short term bridging visas for more than 11 years here in Australia are protesting – they want certainty and safe futures. In Melbourne the 24/7 protest at the Home Affairs office is now over 8 weeks, the Sydney protest at Minister Burke’s office commenced on 8 August, in Brisbane a protest began at Jim Chalmer’s office on 19 August, and protests began in Perth and Adelaide in the first week of September.

The Fast Track Assessment Process for determining refugee status was introduced by the Coalition Government in 2014. It drastically altered the refugee determination process for people who arrived by boat from 2012. Fast Track gave very short timeframes for lodging applications without the necessary legal supports, interpreters, etc. It also removed the possibility of a merits review if claims were rejected. In opposition, the ALP acknowledged that the Fast Track System does not provide a fair, thorough and robust assessment process for persons seeking protection, and that a merits review process is needed. But so far, no action has been taken to on behalf of those impacted by unfair decisions.

It is understood that nearly 8,000 people have had their claims for protection rejected under the fast-track assessment process. For more than 11 years they have been in limbo, with no secure visa status and no permanent resettlement solution. Anxiety and depression are common, and people are at risk of suicide. Tragically, a young man, Mano Yogalingam took his life in Melbourne in early September.

Trapped in a state of uncertainty and with limited rights, many of these people are unable to support themselves and their families. They live with the heartache and anxiety of being separated for years from loved ones who are still in situations of great uncertainty or danger.

- Most young people on a bridging visa cannot study at university, even though they have done all their schooling in Australia.
- No one on a Bridging Visa can access the safety net of Centrelink supports. Increasing numbers of people are at risk of homelessness.
- Some people have had no visa at all – for years – they have no workrights or access to Medicare.

See also [Overview of Campaign for Permanency Aug 2024](#). The Permanency and Family Reunion Network has sent a [Letter to Minister outlining Key Asks for permanency 2 Sept](#):

Other Media reports here: ASRC media release 20 August: [Refugee protests build momentum as people demand an end to life in limbo](#)     [Refugees, asylum seekers camp outside Home Affairs for the right to 'call Australia home' - ABC News](#)     [SBS News story 31 August](#)

### Send emails to:

The Hon Tony Burke, Minister for Home Affairs: use [Contact Form for Minister Burke](#)

Email a copy of your letter to:

- the Prime Minister: <https://www.pm.gov.au/contact>
- The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP, Assistant Minister for Immigration [matt.thistlethwaite.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:matt.thistlethwaite.mp@aph.gov.au)
- Your **local MP** (if Labor or supportive Independent and **all Federal Labor & Greens Senators in your state** [contact details of all MPs and Senators here](#) *this list can be sorted by state and political party - note: there are 2 worksheets – see separate tabs at the bottom of the document for MPs and Senators.*

# REFUGEE SECTOR LETTER KIT

September 2024



You may also like to send a copy of your letter to the crossbenchers who wrote to the Minister, with a note of thanks for their support:

**Independents:** Kylea Tink MP, Dr Sophie Scamps MP, Dr Helen Haines MP, Dr Monique Ryan MP, Elizabeth Watson-Brown MP, Kate Chaney MP, Zali Steggall OAM MP

Zoe Daniel MP - Senator David Pocock (ACT), Senator David Van (Vic), Senator Lidia Thorpe (Vic)

**Greens:** Adam Bandt MP, Max Chandler-Mather MP, Stephen Bates MP, Senator David Shoebridge (NSW), Senator Mehreen Faruqi (NSW), Senator Larissa Waters (QLD), Senator Sarah Hanson-Young (SA), Senator Nick McKim (TAS), Senator Jordon Steele-John (WA), Senator Dorinda Cox (WA), Senator Penny-Allman-Payne (QLD), Senator Peter Whish-Wilson (TAS), Senator Barbara Pocock (SA), Senator Steph Hodgins-May (VIC)

**Find postal addresses for electoral offices MPs and Senators** here: [contact list of all MPs and Senators here](#) or use search function on parliamentary website [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members)

**Letters to PM and Ministers** should be posted to PO Box 6022, Parliament House, Canberra 2600

## Addresses for letters:

### Canberra Postal Address for all SENATORS

PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Canberra Postal Address for all MPs

PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

**ACT Labor senator** - [senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au);

**NSW Labor senators** - [senator.ayres@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ayres@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.sheldon@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sheldon@aph.gov.au);

**NT Labor senator** [Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au](mailto:Senator.McCarthy@aph.gov.au);

**Queensland Labor senators:** [senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.chisholm@aph.gov.au); [senator.green@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.green@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.watt@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.watt@aph.gov.au)

**SA Labor senators:** [senator.farrell@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.farrell@aph.gov.au); [senator.grogan@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.grogan@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)

**Tasmania Labor senators:** [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.polley@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.polley@aph.gov.au); [senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au);

**Victorian Labor senators:** [senator.ciccione@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ciccione@aph.gov.au); [senator.stewart@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.stewart@aph.gov.au);  
[senator.walsh@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.walsh@aph.gov.au)

**WA Labor senators:** [senator.ghosh@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.ghosh@aph.gov.au); [senator.lines@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.lines@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.sterle@aph.gov.au](mailto:senator.sterle@aph.gov.au)

NOTE: When sending emails be sure to **include** your NAME and ADDRESS

# REFUGEE SECTOR LETTER KIT

September 2024



## SAMPLE LETTER

Hon Tony Burke MP  
Minister for Home Affairs and Immigration and Multicultural Affairs  
PO Box 156  
Punchbowl NSW 2196

(date)

Dear Minister Burke

### **People denied protection under the unfair Fast Track process need permanent visas**

I am writing to express my concern about the thousands of people who sought refugee protection in Australia more than 10 years ago but were refused under the unfair Fast Track process. People did not have access to a fair assessment of their claims for protection and were denied an independent review of their protection claim decision. We know that for some, the anxiety of being in this long-term limbo has been too much, and sadly there have been too many suicides, as people just give up.

People have been living in this terrible limbo for such a long time. I fully support the efforts of those protesting in Melbourne, Sydney and other cities who are calling for permanent visas.

I am very aware that in opposition, Labor recognised that the Fast Track process was flawed and unfair. No one can have confidence in decisions made by unfair processes. It's now time for Labor to make sure everyone has a fair go.

Everyone who was refused protection under the unfair Fast Track process needs to be provided with a clear and timely pathway to permanency. Given so many people have no visas at all, it is important to ensure that everyone has a continuous bridging visa with work and study rights, access to Medicare, and basic income support if they are unable to work, while participating in any required processes to secure permanency.

I urge you to put processes in place to enable all those living in limbo for more than 10 long years to get a pathway to permanency. They need a secure future for themselves and their families in the Australian community.

I look forward to your rapid action to resolve this situation.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

(Address)