

# We can beat Abbott and win refugee rights

Abbott's election win is a loss for refugees, but overwhelmingly people voted against Labor—not for the Coalition. Adam Bandt for the Greens retained his seat with an 8% swing to him on a pro-refugee platform. Paul Power, of the Refugee Council of Australia said of Abbott's win, "I'm not convinced that the broader population ... is committed to his harder line on refugees. In many ways they [asylum seekers] have become a proxy for other issues like infrastructure and traffic congestion".

Abbott is determined to go on the offensive against refugees and asylum seekers, but he can be beaten. A vibrant refugee movement forced John Howard back in the past. We shifted public opinion - in 2001 a Newspoll found that 47% of people thought any asylum boats should be allowed to land, by 2004 it was 61%. John Howard was forced to release children and long term detainees from detention due to political pressure in 2004/2005.

The anger displayed at mass rallies since Rudd announced the PNG deal can be turned on Abbott and the Coalition and used to build the refugee campaign in the community and in the unions. After July 2014 the balance of power in the Senate will be held by right wing minor parties friendly to the Coalition. We have to rebuild the refugee rights movement outside of parliament, in the streets, suburbs and workplaces. Help us do it.

**GET INVOLVED WITH THE REFUGEE ACTION COLLECTIVE:** We meet every Monday from 6.30pm at the Australian Nurses Federation 540 Elizabeth Street, just north of the Victoria Markets.  
**Web:** <http://rac-vic.org> **Email:** [refugeeactioncollective@gmail.com](mailto:refugeeactioncollective@gmail.com) **Facebook:** Refugee Action Collective (Victoria) **Twitter:** racvictoria **Phone:** Chris 0403 013 183 or Sue 0413 377 978 or Liz 0405 736 265

## Abbott has declared Australia “open for business” but shut for refugees.

The Abbott government want to re-introduce temporary protection visas so that asylum seekers, even if found to be refugees, will be left in limbo. After three years they will have to re-apply for another temporary protection visa. Unless this is granted, they will face deportation. Whilst they wait they have no family reunion access, no right of re-entry into Australia, and must work for the dole. This will be psychologically damaging, force families to use boats to reunite, and result in poverty and helplessness.

Abbott intends to use the navy to tow boats back to Indonesia. Asylum seekers have died during previous attempts to tow back boats. Abbott also wants to remove the right of refugees to appeal visa decisions in court, and end funding legal assistance for their asylum applications. This will result in more asylum seekers being deported to danger without a fair hearing. By abolishing even Labor's pitiful Stone review, Abbott will remove any chance of the 52 refugees with negative ASIO security assessments ever being released; they are being detained indefinitely without charge.

Abbott will reduce the humanitarian refugee intake by 6250 places. There was never a “queue”, but Abbott is making certain refugees will have no other choice but to take a boats.

Abbott will also keep in place Kevin Rudd's inhumane Papua New Guinea (PNG) deal and expand offshore processing on Nauru. Neither PNG nor Nauru is able to provide safe and adequate conditions for asylum seekers and they have no credible arrangements to assess claims, or resettle refugees.

Asylum seekers need our assistance, not detention and further harm. They should be processed in the Australian community with the right to work, which would be more humane, more practical and much less expensive.

We demand the government

- **Provide permanent not temporary visas**
- **Close Manus Island and Nauru - no offshore processing**
- **Welcome refugees – don't tow back the boats**
- **Maintain legal rights, funding and work rights for asylum seekers**
- **Don't cut the humanitarian intake - increase refugee intake from Indonesia**

