

NORTHERN BEACHES REFUGEE SANCTUARY LTD

32 Aitken Ave Queenscliff NSW 2096

Website: www.nbrs.org.au

Email address: nbrs@optusnet.com.au

ABN 98625737868

Welcome to the NBRS Summer 2025 Newsletter

We have seen an increase in requests for assistance in the last six months. This has led to an increased waiting list, currently about 5 weeks.

We have paid 316 airfares since July 1st. The families we've supported have come from **Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Burundi, and Congo**. There has been a noticeable increase in requests for assistance from the Afghan community and a decrease in requests from Iraq and Syria. Afghanistan now accounts for about 50% of Special Humanitarian Visas granted.

In the last year we assisted approximately **12% of people granted Special Humanitarian Visas**, excluding those under the Community Sponsorship Program.

About **90%** of the families we helped in this six months, came from **Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq**.

Since the Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary welcomed its first family in **June 2003**, we have now helped **9,739 people from 49 different nationalities**.

We have had some particularly challenging in the last six months. We helped a Congolese family of 12 coming from Kampala. It had taken a long time to finalise the visa. The sponsor contacted us to see if we could help with about half the airfares. We agreed and asked The International Organization for Migration to arrange the travel. The family had to arrange for the IMMI cards (their travel documents) to be sent from the Australian High Commission (AHC) in Nairobi to IOM Kampala. Unfortunately one of the IMMI cards had the wrong gender on a five-year-old. They were due to fly in a few days. Urgent emails were sent to AHC who replied immediately and were very helpful at finding a solution. The child's aunt had also been granted a visa but they were waiting for the IMMI cards. She agreed to bring the extra child with her family. We are very grateful for the rapid assistance from the AHC as well as IOM. The family has arrived and is enjoying Australia.

We helped an Afghan sponsor who had worked with the Australian Defense Force. He had been granted a visa some years ago. When the Taliban returned his family fled to Pakistan. He applied for the rest of his siblings as they were now in danger. He is working but has a child with extra needs, so his wife isn't in paid employment. He called to say that his three siblings and their families had just received their visas. He was delighted but the Pakistan Government was deporting Afghan refugees. Their Pakistan visas had all expired and so they were in Pakistan illegally. They needed to get exit permits urgently which would allow them to leave and fly to Australia. He was able to fund some of the exit permits, but the airfares were very expensive, over \$45,000. He had no way of borrowing the funds and was so stressed as were the families in Pakistan. We were able to help, and they have now arrived.

This was an email from one of the refugee support groups. Although addressed to me because I am the contact person, it is really to thank the donors who have made it possible.

“I am writing to extend my deepest gratitude for your incredible support in helping refugee families gain access to interest-free airfare loan. Your kindness and generosity have made an enormous difference in their lives, offering them hope and the chance to reunite with loved ones or build new lives in safety. Your efforts are truly inspiring and deeply appreciated by all who have benefited from this initiative

As we approach the holiday season, I wanted to take a moment to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May this festive season bring you joy, peace, and fulfillment, and may the year ahead be filled with continued success and happiness.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support. It has made such a positive impact, and we are incredibly fortunate to have you in our corner.”

I met an Iraqi refugee recently who came to Australia as a 6-year-old on a boat. He is a medical professional with a PHD. We didn't help his family, but he is such a wise man that I would like to pass on some of his wisdom.

He said that when he is asked if he feels Iraqi or Australian he gave me the most beautiful answer. “Iraqi is my beautiful mother who loved me but was sick and couldn't raise me. She sent me to another beautiful mother Australia who loved me and raised me. I have two mothers and love them both.” He is a wonderful man who has contributed a lot to Australia, as has his family.

In 2024 only about 90,000 refugees were granted permanent visas, to resettle in a Western Country. Australia took about 20% of them. There are 43 million refugees in the world currently. Sadly, this number continues to grow. Iran and Pakistan have deported 1.9 million Afghans this year, sending them back to Afghanistan and into the hands of the Taliban.

The situations in Ukraine, DRC and Sudan are dire.

There is very little compassion or help for refugees.

I am very proud to be Australian.

We are actively seeking donations.

If you would like to support our work, please consider making a contribution to our account.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary. Your generosity changes lives.

The Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary Ltd

Commonwealth Bank.

BSB 062197

Account 10993154

Reference “your name”

Please email nbrs@optus.com.au your details so that I can email you a tax receipt.

You can also donate via our website www.nbrs.org.au

Go to the donation page and hit Donate

David Addington

04/06/2025

If you no longer want to receive this newsletter, can you reply with unsubscribe.