

FREEDOM. FAIRNESS. SAFETY. FOR ALL REFUGEES

YOUR IMPACT IN ACTION

SEPTEMBER 2026

“Work rights are vital for people. We are all hardworking people. We just want to have a simple life, that’s it.”

Parisa

Former ASRC client Parisa rebuilt her life in Australia. Now she’s calling for everyone seeking asylum to have the right to work.

Hope survives because of people like you

When I sat down to write this message, I was reminded that hope only survives because people like you refuse to let it go.

This past year, the ASRC helped uncover a web of corruption surrounding offshore processing in Naoero (previously Nauru), stood with whistleblowers who risked everything to speak out, and gave evidence to a Senate Inquiry into offshore processing, giving voice to people who've been silenced for 13 years.

We fought for the 700 people still trapped on exit visas despite being recognised as refugees and living as part of our community and for the 15,000 denied the simple dignity of work.

We provided access to fresh and culturally appropriate food for thousands of families through our Foodbanks and trained a new generation of refugee leaders to tell their own stories, on their own terms.

None of this is possible without you.

When I meet the people you've helped – like Wasim, like Parisa – I see your generosity reflected back in their resilience and their determination to build a life in safety.

Thank you for refusing to look away.
Thank you for staying in this fight with us.



Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM
CEO and Founder
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

FREEDOM: OFF-SHORE DETENTION

For 13 years, ASRC supporters have advocated alongside people trapped in Australia's offshore detention system, exposing injustice, providing support and campaigning to end one of Australia's cruellest policies.

Today, our Detention Rights Advocacy team continues to support around 90 people in Naoero (previously Nauru) and 32 in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

People in PNG are denied healthcare, children have missed years of schooling, and many families are too afraid to leave their accommodation due to violence. In Naoero, people face regular food insecurity, violence and worsening mental health.

Since 2012, Australian governments have spent more than \$14.35 billion on brutal offshore detention regime while more than 14 people have died in a system repeatedly condemned by the UN and other international bodies.

There are still no resettlement pathways for people in Naoero, and many continue to experience severe anxiety, depression and complex trauma.

With your support, ASRC continues to fight to bring everyone in Naoero and PNG to safety, end offshore detention and secure permanent protection.

“Still I am like a cracked mirror trying to collect all the pieces and put myself back together. Offshore detention hurt us so badly that it takes many years to recover.”

– **Betelhem Tibebu,**
Human rights advocate and refugee formerly detained in Naoero

Sep 2025

Labor and Coalition pass the Anti-Fairness Bill

ASRC mobilises the refugee sector and supporters against a brutal Bill – 26,000 emails and thousands of calls to MPs in two weeks.

Nov 2025

Corruption and cover-up allegations in Naoero

ASRC supports and coordinates with whistleblowers around the *60 Minutes* investigation into offshore detention, including hosting a press conference in Melbourne.

Nov 2025

Naoero refolement plans exposed

ASRC travelled to Canberra to brief MPs, Senators and crossbenchers on new evidence, including a suppressed interview with Naoero's President, read into the Senate Hansard.



Budapest Hotel, refugee accommodation in Naoero..

A Web of Secrecy and Corruption in Offshore Detention

In November 2025, whistleblower testimony aired on *60 Minutes* exposed fresh allegations of corruption, cover-ups and criminal infiltration as part of Australia’s brutal offshore detention regime. The investigation alleged millions of taxpayer dollars had been funnelled through secretive contracts while people seeking asylum continued to suffer violence, neglect and indefinite detention.

Working alongside courageous whistleblowers, journalists and legal advisers, ASRC helped bring these allegations into the national spotlight. We coordinated a national press conference with one of the whistleblowers and Monique Ryan MP, generating widespread media coverage and increasing public and parliamentary scrutiny.

ASRC also secured a translation of a previously suppressed interview with Naoero’s President, briefed MPs and Senators, and worked with Senators David Pocock and Senator David Shoebridge to have the transcript entered into Senate Hansard under parliamentary privilege.

The transcript raised serious concerns that Australia may be enabling the return of refugees to countries they fled and contradicted the Government’s public timeline for negotiating its offshore detention agreement with Naoero.

For more than a decade, secrecy has protected a system built on cruelty and deception. With your support, ASRC continues to expose the truth and hold governments to account.



In November 2025, a 60 Minutes report exposed allegations of corruption, cover-ups and criminal infiltration in Australia’s offshore detention regime.

Dec 2025 Polling shows public support for fairness

Poll conducted for the ASRC finds 71% oppose funding private offshore detention contractors and 58% believe Australia has a responsibility to accept people seeking asylum.

Jan 2026 Consultations for people seeking asylum without permanent visas

ASRC runs consultations with people who have been part of the Australian community for over a decade without permanency, building leadership and advocacy partnerships.

Jan 2026 ASRC coordinates submissions to the Senate Inquiry into offshore processing

ASRC coordinates sector-wide submissions - briefing partners, developing templates and supporting people impacted by offshore detention to prepare and lodge their own.

Inquiry into Offshore Detention

Sustained public pressure, driven by whistleblowers, people with lived experience and organisations including ASRC, helped secure a Senate Inquiry into Australia's offshore detention arrangements.

ASRC worked across the sector to support people with lived experience, including people still detained offshore, to safely share their stories. We gave evidence alongside a person with lived experience, and supported 13 people to provide evidence directly to the Inquiry.

Our submission found that 95% of people currently held in Naoero were experiencing mental health conditions and 93% physical health conditions. People described violence, hunger, inadequate healthcare and the lasting trauma of offshore detention.

While the Labor dominated Inquiry documented overwhelming evidence of trauma, family separation and medical neglect, it stopped short of recommending the action needed to end these harms.

With your support, ASRC will continue pushing for a Royal Commission into Australia's immigration detention system so the truth can be exposed and those responsible held to account.



Jana Favero, Deputy CEO of ASRC, gives evidence at the Senate Inquiry into offshore detention.

Salim's story

Salim* sought safety in Australia by sea in 2024. Today, he struggles to meet his most basic needs because of inadequate food, unsafe drinking water and financial hardship in offshore detention on Naoero.

International Health and Medical Services (IHMS) has confirmed Salim is experiencing dehydration.

Although he has been advised to buy bottled water, it is unaffordable on his allowance. Boiling and storing tap

water is difficult in his accommodation, and even then, he says drinking it often causes vomiting.

Salim is forced to choose between safe drinking water and food. Even on a highly restricted diet, he says his allowance runs out halfway through the month, leaving no money for fruit, vegetables or bottled water.

He fears the long-term health impacts of chronic dehydration and drinking unsafe water.

* Name changed to protect privacy

Feb 2026 ASRC delegation to Canberra

ASRC delegation, powered by our supporters, meets with a large number of MPs and Senators to build support for ASRC's key advocacy priorities, including work rights, permanency, ending offshore detention and combating racist narratives.

Mar 2026 ASRC launches Together Against Racism appeal

A 7-day critical appeal is designed to fund national messaging research and community mobilisation to counter the growing rise of racism and anti-migrant and anti-refugee narratives in Australia.

Mar 2026 ASRC delegation to Canberra demands permanency

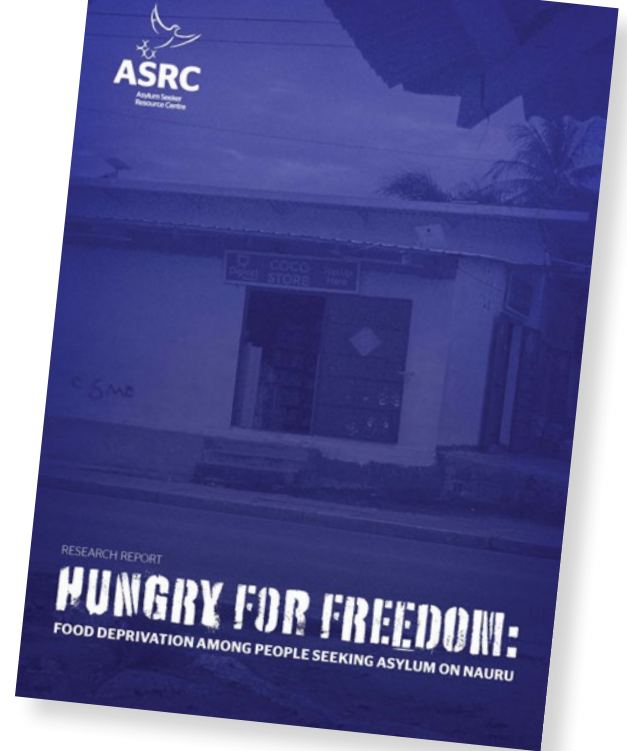
ASRC delegation, including three Iranian refugees with lived experience of offshore detention, joined by crossbench MPs, demands permanent protection after over eight years in Australia.

Hungry for Freedom report:

“When we first came to Nauru [Naoero] we were healthy. The longer we are here, the more sick we become and we cannot get treatment here in Nauru [Naoero].

We cannot afford to eat three meals a day. There is no resettlement for us. We are scared and we don't know what will happen to us.”

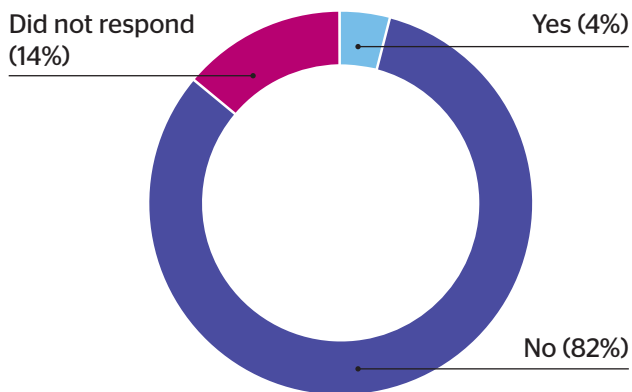
- Anonymous person seeking asylum



Thanks to the support of our community, ASRC continued shining a light on one of the least visible consequences of offshore detention: people simply not having enough food to survive.

In July 2026, ASRC released its Hungry for Freedom report, revealing that almost every person seeking asylum in Naoero cannot afford enough food, 13 years after Australia re-started its brutal offshore processing regime.

Is free, clean drinking water easily accessible to you?



Most survive on just \$260 AUD per fortnight and are denied the right to work. Based on interviews with 78 people, ASRC found:

99%
could not afford enough food.

68%
rarely or never had access to fresh fruit, vegetables or meat.

82%
did not have easy access to free, clean drinking water.



People described skipping meals, surviving on rice or dry biscuits, eating expired food and losing dangerous amounts of weight simply to survive.

No one should go hungry because of government policy. With your support, ASRC will continue fighting until everyone trapped in offshore detention has access to safety, dignity and the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

Apr 2026 ASRC launches #LetThemStayForGood campaign

Young refugees, formerly detained in Naoero and later sent to Australia, speak about life in limbo, calling on the Government to grant 700 people permanent visas.

Apr 2026 Refugee Leadership Program in Launceston

Funded through the support of our community, our Refugee Leadership Program (RLP) launches in Launceston for the first time, creating new opportunities for people with lived experience to build skills and leadership capacity.

May 2026 ASRC gives evidence to the Senate Inquiry into offshore processing

ASRC travels to Canberra to give evidence to the Senate Inquiry, documenting harm experienced at the hands of successive Australian governments.

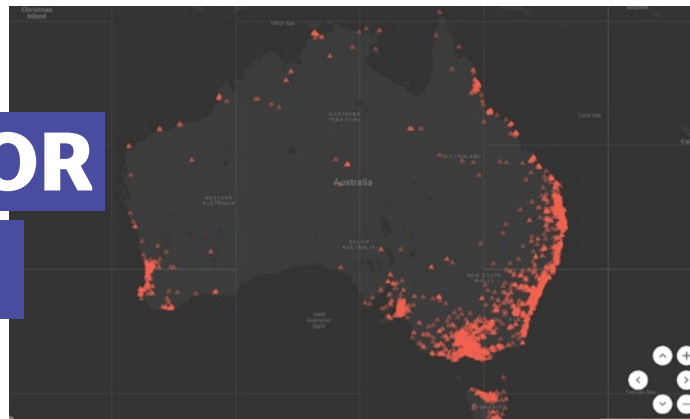
FAIRNESS: LET THEM STAY FOR GOOD CAMPAIGN

Everyone deserves the certainty of a place to call home. Yet more than 700 refugees who arrived in Australia over a decade ago remain trapped in legal limbo, despite rebuilding their lives here. Many work, run businesses, raise Australian-born children and contribute to their communities, but are still denied permanent protection.

With the support of our community, ASRC ensured people directly affected led this campaign. In March 2026, we organised a delegation of three Iranian refugees to travel to Canberra, where they met with parliamentarians from across the political spectrum to share their experiences and call for permanent protection.

Many arrived in Australia as children before being transferred to offshore detention on Naoero or PNG. Between 2015 and 2018, ASRC helped secure their evacuation to Australia.

Today, despite being recognised as refugees, they remain



This map shows the nationwide support behind #LetThemStayForGood, with almost 60,000 Australians signing the petition.

on temporary visas with no pathway to permanency.

The delegation also held a national press conference, while ASRC supported one of the young refugees to share their story on A Current Affair, helping thousands of Australians better understand the human cost of cruel government policies.

Together with GetUp and the Human Rights Law Centre, ASRC's #LetThemStayForGood campaign has been backed by almost 60,000 Australians. With your support, we will keep fighting until these families have the certainty of permanent protection.

Wasim's story

Wasim was just 10 years old when he fled the Iranian regime with his family. Although recognised as refugees, they were sent to offshore detention on Naoero, where Wasim witnessed things no child should ever have to see.

Brought to Australia for urgent medical treatment in 2018, Wasim has now spent the past eight years rebuilding his life. He works in retail management, pays taxes, plays sport and contributes to his community.

Yet, like around 700 other refugees, he still has no pathway to permanent protection and must reapply for a visa every six months.

"I'm already 24 and I should be starting my life, building my dreams and my future," Wasim says. Instead, his greatest wish is simply to live without uncertainty.

"Permanency could really change my life. As a kid my dream was to be a soccer player or a big business owner, but now all I can think of is getting safety, stability and permanency."

"That's my only dream. I don't dare think about anything else anymore."



May 2026 ASRC re-launches Work Rights Campaign

ASRC calls on Minister Burke to guarantee work and study rights for people seeking asylum and give people the chance to contribute and live with dignity.

May 2026 Federal Budget response

ASRC travels to Canberra to respond to the Federal Budget, criticising the Government for leaving refugees behind while allowing spending on offshore detention to blow out by almost \$400 million.

Jun 2026 UN confirms Australia's legal responsibility offshore

A UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants report, extensively referencing ASRC's contribution, confirms Australia has legal responsibility for the people it sends offshore.



In May 2026, ASRC re-launched its Work Rights Campaign at Trades Hall in Melbourne.

SAFETY: WORK RIGHTS

Safety means ensuring people seeking asylum can rebuild their lives with dignity through the right to work and study, giving them the chance to support their families, contribute to their communities and build a future.

Right now, around 15,000 people seeking asylum in Australia are still denied these basic rights while waiting for a decision on their protection visa, forcing many into unnecessary poverty despite having the skills and determination to contribute.

When the Albanese Government was elected, we believed this was one of the most achievable reforms. Yet despite sustained advocacy from ASRC and our partners, thousands remain locked out of work, education and independence.

Public support for this reform is strong across the political spectrum, and at a time of workforce shortages it would benefit everyone.

With your support, ASRC continues to campaign for a simple change to the Migration Regulations that would restore work and study rights for thousands of people. The solution exists. What is needed now is the political will to act.

Parisa's Story

Parisa arrived in Australia by sea in 2012 with her husband and young daughter, fleeing persecution.

Back in Iran, Parisa was a teacher and English interpreter. She found the ASRC in 2015 and quickly became, in her words, "a loyal friend."

When COVID hit, she started working at the ASRC through the Working for Victoria program, providing a stable income and a sense of security during one of the hardest periods of her life.

That opportunity became a turning point. ASRC's Employment team later helped Parisa secure a job with Metro Trains, where she still works today. "I owe it all to ASRC," she says. "If it wasn't for ASRC, I wouldn't be working for Metro, and I really love my job."

Today, Parisa is settled and independent. But she knows many people seeking asylum are still denied that same chance.

"If people have work rights, they won't come and knock on the door for the Foodbank," she says. "You're giving someone a life."



Jul 2026 Senate Inquiry into immigration detention report falls short

ASRC calls for a Royal Commission into Immigration Detention after the Senate Inquiry report fails to deliver the truth or recommend concrete action.

Jul 2026 Hungry for Freedom report

ASRC publishes *Hungry for Freedom* report, exposing the severity of food deprivation experienced by people seeking asylum in Naoero.

Jul 2026 ASRC at the Labor National Conference

ASRC hosts a panel at the Labor National Conference with business, union and lived experience voices calling for work and study rights for people seeking asylum.

Turning Compassion into Action

This year, ASRC brought communities together through food drives across Melbourne that stocked our Foodbanks while building support for restoring work rights.

ASRC's food drives in St Kilda, Coburg and Dandenong collected essential, culturally appropriate food and toiletries for our two Foodbanks, which provide support to around 1,000 people seeking asylum every month.

Together, supporters donated more than 6,100 essential items, worth almost \$25,000, helping families meet their basic needs.

Each food drive also strengthened the work rights campaign, with MPs, councillors and community members signing petitions calling on Minister Burke to restore work and study rights and taking campaign materials back to their own communities.



ASRC held a series of Food Drives to collect donations and engage supporters in the work rights campaign.

ASRC at Labor National Conference

Building on this growing community support, ASRC took the campaign directly to the Australian Labor Party's National Conference.

Over two days, our ASRC representatives met with delegates and hosted a busy side event featuring IKEA Australia, the Electrical Trades Union and a refugee-owned small business, demonstrating that work rights benefit people seeking asylum, employers and the broader community.

By bringing together business, unions and people with lived experience, ASRC helped put work and study rights firmly on Labor's national agenda, building momentum for change.



Ogy Simic, ASRC's Head of Refugee Leadership, Advocacy and Communication, at the Labor National Conference in Adelaide.

Refugee Leadership Program

Real change happens when people with lived experience are given the opportunity to lead. Now in its seventh year, ASRC's Refugee Leadership Program (RLP) equips people with lived experience of seeking asylum with the skills, confidence and networks to become powerful advocates, shaping public debate, influencing decision-makers and driving change.

Participants develop skills in advocacy, storytelling, public speaking, media engagement and community organising, then put them into practice through public events, media opportunities and campaigns. Over seven years, graduates have addressed national audiences, met with parliamentarians and led community advocacy across Australia.

This year, Masterclasses were delivered in Sydney, Brisbane, Launceston, Perth, Melbourne, Adelaide and online, with the first full RLP training held in Launceston. This impact continues thanks to the enduring legacy from the gift left in the will of the late Pete and Pat.



Graduates of the 2025 Melbourne Refugee Leadership Program.

**For an update about the work you are supporting, contact
Dugald McNaughtan, Philanthropy Lead on dugald.m@asrc.org.au
or 03 7068 8062.**



Because we care, we only print on paper made from recycled material.