

NORTHERN BEACHES REFUGEE SANCTUARY LTD

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Welcome to the NBRS Winter 2025 Newsletter

We've had a very busy six months, with a large number of people requesting assistance. This led to a long waiting list and a lot of stress. Thankfully, demand has recently slowed, and as repayments came in, we were able to clear the waiting list.

In the last six months, we paid for **359 airfares**, bringing the **year-to-date total to 638**, with still four weeks remaining. This is already our **busiest year ever**.

We assist approximately **15% of people granted Special Humanitarian Visas**, excluding those under the Community Sponsorship Program.

The families we've supported have come from **Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Iran, Tajikistan, and Congo**. About **95%** of the families arrived from **Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq**.

Since the Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary welcomed its first family in **June 2003**, we have now helped **9,423 people from 49 different nationalities**.

I received the following message from a family we recently helped — a family of nine, spanning three generations. Although the email is addressed to me personally, it's really thanks to all of *you* who have supported us that we are able to provide this kind of assistance:

"I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the generous assistance provided by Mr. David.

My name is Raz, and I am a resident of Melbourne, Australia. My brother and his family, who had obtained Australian humanitarian visas, were stranded in Pakistan. Due to the high cost of airfare and the size of his family, we were unable to afford the travel expenses.

During this challenging time, I reached out to Mr. David for help. He graciously agreed and covered all airfare expenses for my brother and his entire family. Thanks to his kindness and generosity, they arrived safely and in good condition in Australia.

I am deeply thankful for Mr. David's invaluable support. His selfless and swift action had a profound impact on our lives. I will always remember his compassion and generosity.

With sincere appreciation,
Raz"

We work closely with several Afghan community groups and travel agents. Most of the Afghans we assist are currently in **Pakistan or Iran**, both of which require exit permits. Fortunately, the travel agents we partner with are able to arrange both exit permits and flights, which simplifies the process significantly.

We do our best to help everyone who contacts us. When there's a waiting list, we generally assist people in the order they applied, although some cases with higher risks are prioritized.

Recently, we assisted an Afghan family who were living in Iran without legal status. After their Australian visas were granted, they applied for exit permits but were detained and deported to Afghanistan. They had originally fled the Taliban. Their sponsor was terrified for their safety and couldn't afford the airfares. We were urgently asked to help and were able to prioritize the case. The family will arrive in Australia **tomorrow**, just four days after we agreed to help.

With so many families now arriving across all states and territories, I rarely get to meet them in person. However, I recently had the chance to reconnect with **three Syrian families** I met in 2016. Back then, I had spoken with the sponsor before their visas were approved and was invited to visit after they arrived. The children, all under eight at the time, were just starting school. The sponsor, who spoke excellent English, served as interpreter.

Now, one of those families — **Abdul's** — has successfully sponsored his brother. The family, living in Türkiye, was about to become homeless and needed urgent help. We were able to provide a loan for their travel, and they arrived in Australia this week.

Catching up with Abdul was a joy. His English is now excellent, and his voice was full of happiness. The children I met nine years ago are all thriving and speak with Australian accents. Abdul told me how much he loves Australia — how safe and friendly it feels. We've arranged to meet again later this year.

We currently have **no loans causing concern**, and our only ongoing costs are **Centrelink fees**.

We lent just over \$1,075,000 this year, 96% was from loan repayments. The average airfare was about \$1,700.

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
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David Addington
04/06/2025

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