



Coalition Policies

The Coalition has a range of policies with respect to asylum seekers and refugees.

Operation Sovereign Borders

Operation Sovereign Borders is the military-style policy that the Coalition has enacted to deal with people smuggling and to stop boats arriving in Australian territory. The policy goes far beyond what was envisaged by the Expert Panel led by Angus Houston and in some respects, goes directly against it.

At the heart of the policy is turning boats back to Indonesia when they enter Australia's maritime territory.

Read more on [Operation Sovereign Borders](#).

Offshore Processing

The Coalition has continued the ALP's offshore processing policy and continued to send asylum seekers to Nauru and Manus Island.

Read more on [Offshore Processing](#), [Nauru Processing Centre](#), and [the Manus Island Processing Centre](#).

Withdrawal of government-funded legal advice

The Coalition remains committed to removing the provision of legal assistance for all those asylum seekers that attempt to reach Australia by boat.¹ This will include all asylum seekers in offshore detention. Those asylum seekers are still able to have legal advice, but it will no longer be provided for by the Government.

Refugee and Humanitarian Program

The Coalition has cited that it intends to reduce the humanitarian intake of refugees to 13,750, down from 20,000 and the projected 27,000 under Labor.

The Coalition has frozen the granting of permanent protection visas, placing more than 30,000 asylum seekers in limbo. These asylum seekers are in Australia under community detention and are currently having their rights processed. The freeze lasts until 30 June 2014, which is the day before the new Senate takes up their positions.

The visa freeze was in response to the Senate's decision to disallow the reintroduction of Temporary Protection Visas.

Temporary Protection Visas and other Temporary Visas

The Coalition remains committed to reinstating Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs). The introduction of TPVs was disallowed by the Senate in December 2013. However, after July 1 2014 a new composition of the Senate will sit and TPVs may be allowed if the Senate votes in favour.

TPVs place asylum seekers on a three year visa which gives them no chance of being granted a permanent protection visa. After the three year period is finished, an asylum seeker may reapply for another TPV but cannot apply for a permanent visa.

¹<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query%3DId%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F2703122%22>

In response to the Senate disallowing TPVs, the Coalition has sought to use other visa sub-classes to get around the disallowance. The Coalition is attempting to use the Temporary Humanitarian Concern Visas (THCV) which last for 4 years and work similarly to TPVs. The use of these visas is the subject of a High Court challenge which will be heard in May 2014.

Read more on [TPVs](#) and [THCVs](#).

Removal of Complementary Protection

The Coalition is currently seeking to repeal the complementary protection measures in the Migration Act, a measure it took to the 2013 Federal Election.

Currently those measures allow the awarding of a protection visa to those found to have a genuine fear or likelihood of being subjected to arbitrary deprivation of life, the death penalty, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Since the introduction of a statutory provision allowing the granting of protection visas for complementary protection, 57 have been granted.

If the repeal passes, the decision on awarding complimentary protection will rest purely with an administrative arm under the executive (such as the Department of Immigration and Border Protection or the Minister). While the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection detailed in his second reading speech that Australia would not contravene its non-refoulement obligations under the ICCPR and Convention Against Torture, he provided no specific detail on how people would be treated.