

The Current Situation and Recommendations



Detained in Australia

At 30 April 2023, only 168 of the 1128 in closed detention had come by boat. Most were people who had overstayed their visas or had their visas cancelled because of criminal convictions.

The bigger numbers, including 1367 children, are those

living in the community on bridging visas. Some people on these visas have access to a variety of supports through SRSS. but the budget allocation for SRSS has been reduced year by year since 2016, from \$300 million to \$15 million.

SRSS - Status Resolution Support Services - is the government-funded support program for people waiting for their protection claims to be decided. If the application succeeds it can provide access to case management, financial assistance and help with housing, health care, and education for school aged children. Currently, many in desperate need do not receive SRSS.

At the end of 2022 there were 538 people including 95 children in community detention: this means they live in the community but in a specified place determined by the government. They need permission to spend a night elsewhere and are subject to curfews and other supervision arrangements.

Above information taken from [Department of Home Affairs](#)

Offshore processing

As at June 30 2023, there are no longer any people detained on Nauru, as they have been resettled in another country or brought to Australia temporarily. Despite this, the monetary arrangements remain in place, as a very expensive contingency plan.

On 30 April 2023, there were 84 people left in PNG. At the end of 2021 Australia ended its arrangement with PNG and the numbers are no longer published. However, the Department of Home Affairs has noted that all men have now been released from the Bomana Detention Centre and that some of the men in PNG now live in Goroka.

CAPSA on support for people as they try to rebuild their lives in the community

The change of government in 2022 has brought an undertaking to get people off temporary visas and to improve the systems for processing applications. CAPSA supports the government in these commitments and recommends that they:

- Ensure the transition of TPV and SHEV holders to permanency begins as soon as possible but no later than the 2023-24 Budget. Further, this should be facilitated through adequate funding across visa processing, community assistance and support, swift family reunion and support during the transition to permanency, including free legal assistance.
- Devote adequate resources and make the required administrative changes to the SRSS program so it can provide ongoing support to those who need it most. This would include revising the eligibility criteria to be based on need, rather than employability and other factors.
- Reverse the ministerial discretion preventing children medevaced from offshore detention to attend university and provide sufficient funds to allow for the supported resettlement of the Medevac cohort in Australia, including independent legal and psychosocial support.

See just a list of recommendations see [here](#): included are recommendations for a more generous humanitarian program and the ending of offshore detention.

See full CAPSA submission to the Federal Government Budget 2023-24 [here](#).