

AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE ASSOCIATION

Response to malicious claims that refugees receive large amounts of money from Centrelink

These claims are totally unfounded and incorrect.

Refugees receive Centrelink benefits on the same basis as any other Australian permanent resident with one exception. Because they are not entitled to receive any benefit until two weeks after arrival and they almost always have no money when they get here, they receive the equivalent of one week's benefit on arrival.

In recognition of the dislocation, impoverishment, persecution and forced exile that refugees have suffered before arriving in Australia, the Department of Immigration provides rent subsidy for the first four weeks, some bus tickets and some basic furniture. They are also able to get practical help in relation to living in Australia, and English classes but no other financial assistance. Refugees get no special treatment by Centrelink other than the once off payment as stated above.

This malicious document has been circulating for some years and is totally without foundation.

Anyone who wishes to discuss this further is welcome to call me on 8161 3313.

Kevin Liston

Director