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AARE Refugee Statement

The [Australian Association for Research in Education](http://www.aare.edu.au) (AARE) is deeply concerned about the severe impact and harm being caused to refugees in immigration detention in Australia. We add our voice to the list of associations, organisations and professions that condemn the current situation on Manus Island and Nauru, and Australian refugee and asylum seeker policies more generally.

It is now more difficult to accurately ascertain how many people remain in the offshore processing system because of how the Australian Government reports on: issues related to asylum seekers; numbers of people living in ‘regional processing centres’; and those left living outside the ‘regional processing centres’. However, other sources indicate that the situation remains dire. [Amnesty International](http://www.amnesty.org) estimates that the Australian government has ‘indefinitely trapped over 1,200 men, women and children on Nauru and over 800 men on Manus Island’, and the [Refugee Council](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au) estimates that there are more than 900 people left in Nauru and more than 700 left in Papua New Guinea.

AARE is the national association for fostering educational research in Australia. Established in 1970, AARE promotes, supports and improves research and scholarship in education to enhance educational processes, policy and practice at all levels, for the public good.

The following statement was signed by over 200 AARE members and sent to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Department of Home Affairs and the leader of the Opposition late in 2017. A year later it seems that little has changed. This situation seems indefensible and we call for the well-being of those who remain within the asylum seeker offshore detention system to take priority as a human rights issue over politics.

STATEMENT:

The Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) condemns the inhumane treatment of refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island.

We demand that the Australian government urgently provide medical services, food, water, and other services to those in need, and to take immediate action to resettle these asylum seekers and refugees safely.

We believe that the current situation whereby asylum seekers and refugees have been abandoned is a breach of their basic human rights. We regard the current situation on Manus Island to be the product of an indefensible refugee policy. We call on the Federal Government and the Opposition to make immediate changes to Australia's refugee and asylum seeker policies, including a review of practices related to off shore detention within centres on locations such as Manus Island and Nauru. Children, families and adults are currently being held in detention for long periods of time under Australian authority, and as educators we condemn this policy.

Thanks to the many AARE members who supported this statement and particularly those members who first presented this as a motion at the AGM and who helped write the original Statement.