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**6 August 2013**

**People in need of protection could also be settled in Nauru**

Under a new arrangement between Australia and Nauru, it will now be possible for asylum seekers who travel to Australia by boat without a visa to be settled in Nauru if they are found to be in need of protection.

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd signed the arrangement – a Memorandum of Understanding – with the President of the Republic of Nauru Baron Waqa on 3 August.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is broadly similar to the arrangement signed by Australia and Papua New Guinea on 19 July, known as the Regional Settlement Arrangement.

The MOU strengthens the regional approach taken by the Australian Government.

Nauru is a nation with a small population. Australia would only expect modest numbers to ever be involved in settlement and Australia’s expectation is that they would be family groups and unaccompanied minors.

Australia and Nauru are working together to identify appropriate locations for family accommodation.

The significance of the MOU is not the numbers involved, but that Australia is adding an extra layer to a comprehensive regional approach.

A cornerstone of this approach is to ensure people smugglers do not have a product to sell because people that come by boat without a visa will not be settled in Australia.

**Transfer of asylum seekers to Manus Island**

On 31 July a group of 40 asylum seekers who had travelled to Australia by boat without a visa departed Australia for Manus Island in Papua New Guinea.

This was the first transfer of asylum seekers under the Regional Settlement Arrangement between Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Refugee claims will be assessed under the laws of Papua New Guinea. Those found to be refugees will be settled in Papua New Guinea.

This demonstrates that if you come to Australia by boat without a visa, you will not be settled in Australia. Transfers to Manus Island will continue regularly.

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