

Annual boat arrivals in Australian waters 2011

Below is the table of asylum boat arrivals in Australian waters during the year 2011. The table was compiled by Project SafeCom Inc.¹ from web-based media statements by the Federal Minister for Home Affairs. Some additional details have been provided from media reports.

The Malaysia Refugee Swap Deal

On Saturday May 7, 2011 the Gillard government announced its “Malaysian refugee swap deal”. Under this agreement all boat arrivals, starting with the first 800 asylum seekers arriving from midnight July 26 2011 would be “deported” to Malaysia. The government intended quarantining all maritime arrivals for this purpose – starting with the July 31 vessel.

However, a successful High Court challenge saw this agreement scuttled on 31 August 2011. The government responded by drafting amendments to the 1958 Migration Act to circumvent the High Court ruling so it could proceed with its original agreement. This Bill however was not brought to a vote following fierce opposition by the Greens, the Liberal-National Coalition and Independent MP Tony Crook (Pearce). On 13 October 2011, the Gillard government accepted its defeat by stopping progress of its legislation in the House of Representatives. Instead, it announced that all maritime asylum seekers would now be processed “onshore” in Australia while insisting its plans for the refugee swap deal would be maintained.

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	press release date ²	passengers	crew ³	location
1	January 5	90	2	west of Ashmore Islands
2	January 8	77	4	east of the Ashmore Islands
3	February 7	48	4	north west of Ashmore Islands
4	February 8	53	2	north of Christmas Island
5	February 19	44	2	northeast of Christmas Island
6	February 26	102	3	north of Ashmore Islands
7	March 4	18	0	west of Christmas Island
8	March 5	23	2	southwest of Ashmore Island
9	March 12	35	0	85nm north west of Broome
10	March 16	48	2	Media Report - north of Ashmore Islands
11	March 17	145	0	Media Report - at Ashmore Islands
12	March 21	57	4	east of Ashmore Islands
13	March 30	37	2	north of Ashmore Island
14	April 9	51	2	north of Christmas Island
15	April 12	44	2	east of Christmas Island
16	April 17	53	2	north east of Christmas Island
17	April 22	50	3	north-west of Christmas Island
18	April 22	81	0	(Sri Lanka) 100m from Cocos Island
19	April 29	77	3	north west of Ashmore Islands
20	May 6	63	0	north of Broome
21	May 7	85	2	north east of Christmas Island
22	May 14	32	1	off Scott Reef, north of Broome
23	May 16	55	2	northwest of Christmas Island
24	May 17	20	1	north west of Ashmore Islands
25	May 30	52	4	north of Ashmore Reef
26	June 4	57	2	north west of Christmas Island
27	June 7	59	2	southeast of Christmas Island
28	June 24	65	2	north east of Christmas Island
29	July 8	66	4	south east of Christmas Island
30	July 21	52	2	north east of Christmas Island

¹ Homepage for this document is <http://www.safecom.org.au/ref-documents.htm#boats>

² Hon Brendan O'Connor, Minister for Home Affairs, Media Releases: <http://www.ministerhomeaffairs.gov.au/>

³ Zero crew in this table means “no crew mentioned in ministerial press release”.

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	press release date ²	passengers	crew ³	location
31	July 21	62	2	Media reports – no confirmation from Minister
32	July 24	47	4	(Afghanis, Iraqis and Iranians) north of Ashmore Islands
33	July 31	55	2	(Afghanis) north-west of Scott Reef
34	August 7	50	2	(Afghanis) north east of Christmas Island
35	August 11	102	4	north east of Christmas Island
36	August 12	59	2	north-west of Christmas Island
37	August 19	71	2	north of Christmas Island
38	September 9	72	2	near Christmas Island
39	September 23	66	2	100NM north of Christmas Island (distress)
40	September 23	109	4	north-east of Christmas Island
41	September 28	75	2	north of Christmas Island
42	October 1	70	2	north of Christmas Island
43	October 19	51	4	north-east of Scott Reef
44	October 22	15	1	west of Ashmore Islands
45	October 23	79	2	(RAAF P3 aircraft) north of Christmas Island
46	October 23	44	3	east of Christmas Island
47	October 30	57	0	south-west of Browse Island
48	November 1	92	2	unassisted arrival at Christmas Island
49	November 2	49	2	north-west of Ashmore Island
50	November 6	56	4	south east of Ashmore Islands
51	November 8	54	3	north east of Christmas Island
52	November 14	93	2	90 NM north of Christmas Island
53	November 21	78	1	(captain jumps overboard) 1.5NM east of Christmas Island
54	November 22	116	5	north of Christmas Island
55	November 23	40	4	west of Ashmore Islands
56	November 23	98	2	north of Christmas Island
57	December 1	110	4	north-east of Christmas Island
58	December 1	103	2	north of Christmas Island
59	December 3	19	3	northeast of Ashmore Island
60	December 3	75	3	west of Christmas Island
61	December 6	54	2	west of Lacedpede Islands off Dampier
62	December 6	167	0	(Afghans, Syrians, Iraqis and Palestinians) north east of Christmas Island
63	December 8	78	2	near Christmas Island
64	December 9	49	3	near Ashmore Islands
65	December 9	72	2	south-east of Ashmore Islands
66	December 13	54	4	north-west of Ashmore Islands
67	December 14	100	2	north of Christmas Island
68	December 16	76	3	west of Ashmore Islands
69	December 24	116	2	north of Christmas Island
totals		4572	158	