

24 August 2021

The Hon Alex Hawke
Minister for Immigration
PO Box 1173
Castle Hill NSW 1765
Via email: alex.hawke.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister,

RE: Taskira required for refugee's citizenship application

The New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties is gravely concerned by an article that appeared in the Guardian concerning a Hazara Afghani, for ten years a permanent resident in Australia and a recognised refugee¹. It is alleged that he was asked to obtain a taskira as part of his citizenship application; but that the document he received and submitted could not be verified, and he was threatened with the cancellation of his visa.

If the allegation is correct, then we assume that this situation arose as a result of an error by one of your delegates, and that the situation has been fixed. (The Guardian has yet to publish an update). We are puzzled about the section of the Migration Act under which the visa could have been cancelled. The man was not seeking a visa, but citizenship, and most of the relevant sections of the Act are explicitly about visa applications. Arguably, even those that are not explicitly about visa applications are nevertheless intended to deal with visa applications.

The situation in Afghanistan has of course changed dramatically since the threat was made, making it all the more important that this recognised refugee be allowed to stay in Australia. We hope to hear from you that the man's application for citizenship has been accepted.

Yours sincerely,



Pauline Wright
President
NSW Council for Civil Liberties

1: [Afghan refugee may lose permanent residency in Australia – for supplying identity document](#) *The Guardian* 8 August 2021