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MTWTF--

Refugee findings will disturb

Every year, thousands of people flee their homelands to escape war and persecution.

The people who make it to Australia end up in detention centres while their claims for asylum are processed.

This can take months, if not years and can lead to a sense of profound uncertainty.

The Australian Government eventually sends back asylum seekers it does not think are refugees, and who cannot prove they have "a well-founded fear" for their safety.

International law stipulates that people shouldn't be sent to unsafe locations.

But, like many countries that deport asylum seekers, the Federal Government doesn't monitor what happens to the people they send back – they don't regard it as their responsibility.

On Wednesday, November 19 at

8.30pm, SBS will screen *A Well-Founded Fear* which follows the work of a small group of committed Australians who have made it their mission to find the asylum seekers Australia has rejected.

Phil Glendenning, director of the Edmund Rice Centre, a small social justice agency, has been travelling the globe in search of rejected asylum seekers.

To date, he and his colleagues have tracked down over 250 returnees in 22 countries.

What they have found has troubled and disturbed Glendenning.

A Well-Founded Fear follows Glendenning as he searches for returned asylum seekers on a recent trip to Afghanistan and the Middle East.

In Afghanistan he meets a group of Hazara men who all spent time in detention on Nauru, the Pacific Island Australia paid to detain asylum seek-

ers offshore.

When the Taliban lost government in late 2001, Australian authorities told these men their homeland was now safe. But Glendenning learns of at least nine Afghan deportees who were killed when they were sent back.

He also learns Australia has been deporting people to Syria on short-term visas who are not Syrian.

When their Syrian visas run out they must go into hiding.

Equally disturbing is evidence that Australia has been knowingly using false passports to deport the returnees.

The film's producer Anne Delaney wanted to discover what motivated Glendenning to do what no one else had done.

"I wanted to show the policies, practices and attitudes that have put people's lives in danger," she said.

"I believe the film shows humanity at its best, and worst."



DISTURBING: Phil Glendenning is passionate about the plight of refugees who have been ejected from Australia and tells some of their stories in *A Well-Founded Fear*.