

Basic Detail Report



00054782

Title

Framed collage presented to MV TAMPA from the Australian Special Air Service Regiment

Date

2001

Medium

Ink on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 670 x 670 x 35 mm Image: 525 x 525 mm

Name

Collage

History

On 26 August 2001 the crew of the Norwegian cargo ship MV TAMPA rescued 433 asylum seekers from their stricken fishing boat, KM PALAPA 1, in the Indian Ocean. Although TAMPA was not licensed to carry more than 50 people its captain, Arne Rinnan, changed course to help the asylum seekers, who were mainly from Afghanistan, which was then under Taliban rule. Under pressure from some of the desperate asylum seekers Captain Rinnan headed for the offshore Australian territory of Christmas Island, but was denied permission to enter Australian waters. When the health of some passengers deteriorated Captain Rinnan sent a Mayday signal and sailed toward Christmas Island. TAMPA was boarded by Australian special forces who ordered the ship to turn around. Following an intense political standoff the asylum seekers were transferred to HMAS MANOORA. Most were taken to the Pacific island of Nauru as part of Australia's 'Pacific Solution' (2001-08). This aimed to prevent refugees from reaching Australian territory, where they could legally claim asylum, to detain and process them offshore in cooperating foreign countries. A small number of asylum seekers from TAMPA were eventually granted refugee status and resettled in Australia. In 2002 Captain Rinnan and TAMPA's crew and owner received the Nansen Refugee Award from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The award honoured their commitment to the principle of rescue at sea, despite the risk of long delays and large financial losses for the ship's operator Wallenius Wilhelmsen.