



## ANTI-PEOPLE SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN

s. 33(a)(iii)

### PERFORMANCE SINCE 2019



41M  
reached



31M video  
views



541M  
impressions



5.9M  
clicks

s. 33(a)(iii)



## Annex D

# OPERATION SOVEREIGN BORDERS ENDURING TALKING POINTS

s. 47E(d)

Last reviewed: 17 May 2021

### **KEY MESSAGES**

- Between 2008 and 2013, more than 50,000 people travelled illegally to Australia on more than 820 individual boat voyages.
- During this period, more than 1200 people drowned in the attempt to reach Australia on small and often unseaworthy vessels that were unsuited to long voyages across the open ocean.  
s. 47C(1)  
[REDACTED]
- Under Operation Sovereign Borders potential illegal immigrants have zero chance of getting to Australia illegally by boat.
- Operation Sovereign Borders has built a multi-layered system of:
  1. Deterrence and disruption;
  2. Detection, interception and returns;
  3. Regional processing and third country resettlement.
- Australia's turn back policy remains in place. We will continue to detect and intercept anyone who attempts an illegal boat voyage to Australia and return them to their country of departure or origin, where it is safe to do so.
  - People who cannot be returned will continue to be transferred to a regional processing country for protection claims assessment.
- Regional processing supports the Australian Government's strong border protection policies.
- Individuals under regional processing arrangements in Papua New Guinea and Nauru are the responsibility of the governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru. Their protection claims are assessed by the respective governments and are undertaken in accordance with each country's respective laws and processes.
- The Australian Government works closely with the governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru to support transferee access to health, welfare and support services. This includes extensive physical and mental healthcare, free accommodation and utilities, allowances and employment services.
- To preserve our strong border protection approach to illegal maritime arrivals, Australia maintains the policy setting that persons who travel illegally to Australia by boat will not permanently settle in Australia.

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- Operation Sovereign Borders is about defeating people smugglers who manipulate vulnerable men, women and children to risk their lives at sea.

## **DETERRENCE AND DISRUPTION**

### **The difference between operational modes of return**

- A **turn back** involves the safe removal of a vessel from Australian waters.
- **Assisted returns:** In some circumstances Australian Government vessels might be called upon to assist persons in a Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) situation.
- A **take back** is where Australia returns people to their country of departure or origin in cooperation with the government of that country.
- The approach and equipment used is determined by the circumstances and safety considerations of each operation.

### **International interest in Operation Sovereign Borders**

- Australia's border protection policies respond to our unique regional and geographic circumstances.
- It is a matter for other governments and regions to determine the most appropriate responses to their particular circumstances.

## **ON-WATER OPERATIONS**

### **Australia's policy**

- The Australian Government's policy is to intercept any vessel seeking to reach Australia illegally and to safely return those on board to their point of departure or country of origin.
- Since the implementation of Australia's toughest ever border protection measures in 2013, Australia has returned 873 people from 38 people smuggling boats to their country of departure or their home country.
- Australia maintains a robust operational capability to detect and respond to any people smuggling boat to ensure that no illegal maritime venture makes it to Australia.
- Our message is clear – Australia's borders are closed to illegal immigration. The tough border protection policies that have secured Australia's borders against the threat of people smuggling and prevented people from dying at sea remain in place.
- Australia remains committed to protecting its borders, stamping out criminal people smuggling and preventing vulnerable people from risking their lives at sea.
  - It has been more than seven years since the last death at sea resulting from maritime people smuggling to Australia.
  - The last successful maritime people smuggling venture to Australia was more than six years ago.
- The only way to travel to Australia is legally, with an Australian visa.
  - To find out more about options for safe and lawful travel to Australia, visit the Australian Immigration and Citizenship website at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

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### **Implementation of Australia's border protection policy**

- Measures and safeguards are in place to enable actions and activities to be undertaken in a manner consistent with Australian domestic law and Australia's obligations under international law.
- The overriding priority for all agencies involved in Operation Sovereign Borders is the safety of all involved, including potential illegal immigrants and vessel crews as well as Australian personnel.
- Australia respects the sovereignty of other nations and will continue to do so in the implementation of policy.
- Australia has strong collaborative relationships with our regional partners to deter and disrupt maritime people smuggling ventures before they result in boats on the water.

### **Detention of potential illegal immigrants on Australian vessels**

- People are held lawfully in secure, safe, humane, and appropriate conditions.
- Persons are appropriately cared for while detained by Australian Border Force and Australian Defence Force personnel.
- All persons are treated humanely and with respect for their dignity at all times.
- Sufficient food and water, as well as appropriate accommodation, ablutions facilities and medical care are provided.

### **Appointment of a new Commander**

- On 15 December 2020 the Minister for Home Affairs, the Honourable Peter Dutton MP, announced that Rear Admiral Mark Hill CSC, RAN had been appointed as the Commander Joint Agency Task Force Operation Sovereign Borders.
- To strengthen Australia's strong position on border management, Rear Admiral Hill was also appointed as the Commander Maritime Border Command.
  - This will ensure Operation Sovereign Borders has access to a wider range of resources and expertise ensuring greater engagement with our international partners.

### **Joint Agency Task Force Operation Sovereign Borders**

- The Joint Agency Task Force (JATF) Operation Sovereign Borders is a military-led, border security operation supported and assisted by a wide range of Australian Government agencies.
  - HQJATF is located in Canberra.
- There is a dedicated campaign website for members of the public to access, which contains information on Operation Sovereign Borders in a variety of languages, found at: <https://osb.homeaffairs.gov.au/>
- All media enquiries relating to Operation Sovereign Borders should be referred in writing to the Department of Home Affairs Media and Engagement Branch at: [media@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:media@homeaffairs.gov.au)

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## **REGIONAL PROCESSING**

- The Australian Government is committed to supporting the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Nauru to identify enduring solutions for the regional processing cohort as a priority.
  - Under current regional processing arrangements, refugees have permanent resettlement options and are being resettled.
  - PNG-determined refugees can settle in PNG and all refugees can seek resettlement in the United States.
  - Transferees may return home voluntarily or to another country in which they have a right to reside, and will receive assistance to do so.

### **Medical transfers**

- Transitory persons may be brought to PNG, Taiwan or Australia for a temporary purpose for medical or psychiatric assessment or treatment.
- Medical transfer to Australia is not a pathway to settlement in Australia.
- Transitory persons in Nauru or PNG brought to Australia for a medical purpose are not eligible to apply for a valid visa, including permanent residence, or citizenship in Australia.
- Transitory persons in Australia are expected to engage in processes to resolve their immigration status, including third country resettlement and voluntary returns.
  - Assistance is available to transitory persons to return home voluntarily, or to another country in which they have a right to reside.

### **US resettlement arrangement**

- The United States resettlement arrangement provides refugees under the regional processing arrangement with an opportunity to commence the next stage of their lives.
- Refugees determined by the governments of Nauru or Papua New Guinea to be refugees are eligible to express interest in United States resettlement.
  - Resettlement is considered by the United States on a case-by-case basis, subject to United States processes.
  - Time to assess cases can vary, depending on the individual circumstances.
  - Refugees temporarily in Australia can continue their United States resettlement process from Australia and, for those found to be refugees, depart to the United States from Australia.
- Australia and the United States remain fully committed to the United States resettlement arrangement.
  - The Australian Government continues to work with United States authorities to resettle refugees in the US.
- Refugees are required to undertake a range of US mandated pre-departure preparations. Further questions about these preparations should be directed to US authorities.

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## **CLO NETWORK ENGAGEMENT**

- The Department of Home Affairs' Community Liaison Officer (CLO) network engages with multicultural communities across Australia to build collaborative relationships and create an open dialogue for relevant information.
- This engagement allows the Department to better support multicultural communities by providing relevant policy and program information, and the opportunity for community feedback.
- Operation Sovereign Borders provides accurate policy information to be disseminated as part of the CLO network engagement to dispel any rumours associated with Australia's border protection policies, and encourage safe and lawful travel to friends and/or family overseas.

## **IF ASKED QUESTIONS**

***If asked: What is the Government doing to counter the messaging from people smugglers?***

- The Australian Government continues to implement a dynamic targeted messaging campaign through a range of advertising and community engagement channels offshore to deter illegal maritime travel to Australia.
- The campaign seeks to:
  - Raise awareness of Australia's strong border protection policies
  - Alert potential illegal immigrants to the dangers of attempting sea journeys
  - Alert potential illegal immigrants to the criminal disregard people smugglers have of their welfare.
- Offshore deterrence messaging is a critical component of Operation Sovereign Borders' multi-layered approach.
- The current iteration of the anti-people smuggling campaign is 'Zero Chance', launched by the Commander Joint Agency Task Force Operation Sovereign Borders in June 2019 during an official visit to Sri Lanka.
  - The campaigns message is simple – there is zero chance of illegal migration to Australia.
  - Backed by research, it is a targeted suite of advertising and community engagement activities aimed at instigating behavioural change offshore.

***If asked: How is the Australian Government working with Sri Lanka to combat people smuggling?***

- Operation Sovereign Borders cooperates closely with the Sri Lankan Government to return people who have been intercepted trying to reach Australia illegally.
  - We have returned 38 Sri Lankan nationals across three vessels since March 2019.
  - Every Sri Lankan people smuggling boat that has entered Australian waters in the past six and a half years has been stopped, and all those on board returned to Sri Lanka.

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***If asked: Which Government is responsible for delivering services in PNG and Nauru?***

- Regional processing arrangements, and the management of transferees under arrangements in Nauru and Papua New Guinea, are the responsibility of the respective governments.
- Under respective memoranda of understanding, Nauru and Papua New Guinea have committed to treating transferees with dignity and respect and in accordance with relevant human rights standards.

***If asked: How does Operation Sovereign Borders work with countries in our region to turn back vessels?***

- Australia has strong collaborative relationships with our regional partners to deter and disrupt maritime people smuggling ventures before they result in boats on the water.
- Australia respects the sovereignty of other nations and continues to do so in the implementation of Australia's border protection policies.
- Operation Sovereign Borders has a wide range of measures and options available to undertake operations.
- The Australian Government values its ongoing close working relationships with countries in our region on mutual issues of concern, including transnational issues of irregular movement of people.

***If asked: Why hasn't Australia accepted New Zealand's resettlement offer?***

- Australia appreciates the offer from the New Zealand Government to resettle refugees under regional processing arrangements.
- Australia remains focused on maximising resettlement under the United States resettlement arrangement.
- Australia's border protection policies have removed the incentive for people to join dangerous and illegal people smuggling ventures to Australia.
- The Australian Government remains mindful of not undoing efforts to combat people smuggling.

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# Script – Joint Agency Task Force Operation Sovereign Borders Strategic Communication

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**SUBJECT:** Minister's deterrence message for the 'Zero Chance' campaign

**DATE AND  
TIME** 31/03/2021 09:00

**LOCATION:** APH

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## Title

A message from the new Minister for Home Affairs

## Script

As the new Minister for Home Affairs, keeping the boats stopped is my highest priority.

The Australian Government remains resolute and Australia's border protection policies have not changed.

Do not attempt an illegal boat journey to Australia. You will be intercepted and returned. You will never settle in Australia.

You have zero chance of success.

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**We value your contribution**

Australia is a proud, multicultural society who values the contribution of all Australians, including those born here and those who have migrated.

We need the support of all Australian communities to help prevent vulnerable people risking their lives attempting illegal migration.

Family and friends around the world might see your life in Australia and seek to join you. It is important to remind them that Australia's strong border policies have not changed. People smugglers cannot get anyone to Australia and illegal journeys will never succeed.

**Australia's strong border policies have not changed**

Australia is committed to protecting its borders. Anyone who attempts an illegal maritime venture will be intercepted, returned or taken to an offshore immigration facility.

Nobody who tries to migrate illegally will be settled in Australia.

**Legal migration is the only way**

The only way to enter Australia legally is with a valid Australian visa.

Those seeking humanitarian protection should consider if they are eligible to apply for the Australian Refugee and Humanitarian Program.

For more information:

[australia.gov.au/zerochance](http://australia.gov.au/zerochance)

[homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)