



The Hon. Peter Dutton MP
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection

MEDIA RELEASE

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**OPERATION SOVEREIGN BORDERS DELIVERS SIX MONTHS WITHOUT A
SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE SMUGGLING VENTURE**

Another six months has passed without a successful people smuggling venture to Australia.

More than a year ago on 19 December 2013, Operation Sovereign Borders began turning back boats seeking to enter Australia illegally – delivering on a key Coalition election promise.

Up until today 15 ventures with 429 potential illegal immigrants aboard have been intercepted and returned.

In 2014 only one people smuggling venture made it to Australia, with all of its passengers transferred to Nauru.

This is in stark contrast to Labor's last year in office. In the 12 months before Operation Sovereign Borders was established there were 401 successful people smuggling ventures with 26,543 people aboard.

Crucially, there has been no loss of life at sea under Operation Sovereign Borders. In contrast, in the last year under Labor, more than 300 people were missing, confirmed or presumed lost at sea.

When the Rudd and Gillard Governments abolished the Howard Government's proven border protection policies more than 50,000 people illegally entered Australia on more than 800 boats.

Operation Sovereign Borders and our turn-back policy has restored the integrity of our borders.

I commend our Defence and Border Protection personnel, and all agencies who continue to work together to ensure the success of Operation Sovereign Borders.

We need to be ever vigilant because the smugglers and crime gangs that engage in people smuggling are looking constantly for opportunities to subvert our efforts.

This Government's policy and message to people smugglers is crystal clear – any vessel which seeks to illegally enter Australian waters will continue to be intercepted and safely removed beyond Australian waters.

Anyone who comes to Australia illegally by boat without a visa will never be settled in Australia.

Our policy applies to everyone.

The Government will not waiver on this policy and we remain as committed as ever to Operation Sovereign Borders.

Further information: Contact the Minister's office on 02 6277 7860

