



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

North West security jeopardised by Rudd's immigration policy

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Residents of Western Australia's North West are on the front line of the Rudd Government's failed immigration policy, with security concerns mounting as the flood of asylum seekers continues.

Western Australian Senator Alan Eggleston expressed his ongoing unease at Labor's reluctance to amend their flawed immigration policy, as the 100th illegal vessel arrived in Australian waters under the watch of the Rudd Government.

"Clearly we are reaching a crisis point, with boat arrivals increasing week by week and the Labor Government isn't letting the frequency of the arrivals worry them in the slightest," Senator Eggleston said.

"The relaxed immigration policy delivered by the Federal Government is putting those living in WA's North West in grave danger of being exposed to biological and security threats as a result of unauthorised arrivals.

"Our country has a proud history of stringent biological and quarantine controls when entering Australia; however with the Rudd Government's policy effectively attracting illegal immigrants, we expose our nation to serious biological outbreaks from animals aboard these boats, including Newcastle Disease, Foot and Mouth and rabies.

"The figures speak for themselves - 100 boats and over 4,500 people since August 2008 – which directly points to the time when immigration policy was changed to make Australia an easy target for people smugglers.

"Urgent action is needed to reverse the Labor Government's lax immigration policy, to ensure the security of our borders is maintained and the apparent lure of a weak stance on people smuggling is eradicated.

"Under the Howard Government, by engaging in a regional solution and working with countries such as Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the policy provided a disincentive for people smugglers to attempt to reach our shores.

"One wonders what embarrassing milestone we must reach before the Rudd Government reverses their deeply flawed immigration policy and revisits a proven regional scheme.

"The people of Durack should expect better of their Government and given that the Border Protection Command have their resources stretched to the limit, there is a real concern that in light of the growing flood of illegal immigrants, the North West coastline is facing a significant security risk," Senator Eggleston said.

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