OUR PLAN

TO PROTECT OUR BORDERS AND TO KEEP AUSTRALIANS SAFE
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KEY POINTS

To keep Australians safe and secure, we need to keep our economy strong.

The Liberal and Nationals Government’s economic management underpins the investments needed to protect our borders and keep Australians safe.

We will not compromise our three proven border protection policies which have stopped the boats: regional processing, turn-backs where it is safe to do so, and temporary protection visas.

By sticking to our plan, the Liberal and National Government has ended the deaths at sea, nullified the threat from people smugglers and removed all children from detention.

By contrast, when the last Labor government dismantled our strong and effective policies, chaos erupted.

The human tragedy was immense - at least 1,200 deaths at sea and thousands of children languishing in detention.

When Labor was last in government:

- Over 50,000 illegal arrivals on over 800 boats.
- There were 1200 deaths at sea (that we know of).
- Over 8000 children were detained.
- Seventeen onshore detention centres were opened.
- Two offshore processing centres were opened.
- Their border protection failures have cost taxpayers $16 billion and counting.

Under our strong border protection policies, we have:

- Ended the deaths at sea under Operation Sovereign Borders.
- Closed 19 detention centres.
- Removed all children from detention and from Manus and Nauru.
- Successfully resettled or returned more than 1,250 people, including 38 children and their families under the US resettlement arrangement.

By closing detention centres, we returned $638 million to the Budget and reclaimed control of the refugee and humanitarian program from criminal syndicates.

We have increased Australia’s humanitarian intake to 18,750 in 2018-19, and welcomed to Australia an additional 12,000 persecuted minority refugees from the conflict in Syria and Iraq.
We have strengthened border security through the establishment of the Australian Border Force (ABF) Counter Terrorism Units and enhanced aviation security.

And by investing in better intelligence and technologies, such as Smartgates, we are making it easier for legitimate travellers and traders – and harder for criminal and security threats.

We are protecting the community from visa-holders who commit crimes by strengthening the character requirements of non-citizens – and with the mandatory cancellation of visas of non-citizens who commit serious crimes.

Our policies have restored public confidence in the integrity of our borders. However, the threat from people smugglers and other criminals can never be dismissed.

A re-elected Liberal and Nationals Government will ensure Australia’s borders remain safe and secure by:

- Maintaining Operation Sovereign Borders to tackle people smuggling and irregular migration.
- Sustaining the three vital pillars of secure borders: regional processing, boat turn-backs where it is safe to do so and temporary protection visas.
- Repealing the reckless Labor-Greens ‘Medivac’ legislation, which undermines our strong border protection policies.
- Investing in intelligence capability and technology to facilitate legitimate trade and travellers and deter the illicit, including drugs and firearms.
- Continuing to ensure that dangerous foreign criminals who commit serious crimes will have their visa cancelled and be kicked out of Australia.
- Strengthening the character test for foreign criminals even further to enable visa cancellations where a non-citizen has been convicted of a broader range of violent and sexual offences, even where the sentence is less than 12 months.
- Changing the law to ensure terrorist fighters are prevented from returning to our shores until public safety can be assured.

**OUR PLAN**

**Tackling people smuggling**

Only the Liberal and Nationals Government guarantees to continue the successful Operation Sovereign Borders and its underpinning policies: regional processing, boat turn-backs where it is safe to do so and temporary protection visas.

People smugglers are determined to restart their vile trade and some never stopped.
Under Operations Sovereign Borders, 34 people smuggling boats have been intercepted or returned.

A further 80 planned ventures have been disrupted by joint operations with our security partners in the region.

The threat from people smuggling endures.

That’s why a strong border protection policy is vital to our country’s security.

Labor can’t be trusted to deliver.

Labor’s border chaos and dysfunction relinquished control to the people smugglers and tied our border and other agencies in knots.

This resulted in over 50,000 illegal arrivals on over 800 boats.

Tragically, under Labor’s policies, over 1200 people died at sea and over 8,000 children were put into detention.

And yet they have learned nothing.

**Labor has already promised to dismantle our successful border policies**

The Liberal and Nationals Government is determined not to let the people smugglers get back into business.

We will continue to work with our regional partners to combat people smugglers and disrupt irregular migration, as well as provide targeted assistance through the nearly $40 million Regional Cooperation Agreement.

This commitment also helps ensure Australia delivers a humanitarian program that is targeted to those most in need of resettlement.

Labor and Greens forced ‘Medivac’ legislation through the Parliament giving asylum seekers easier access to Australia and undermining our strong border protection policies. Labor never learn their lesson, they are weak on border security. Only a Liberal and Nationals Government guarantees to repeal this reckless legislation to ensure that the boats remain stopped.

**Stronger borders, 24/7**

The Liberal and Nationals Government is determined to keep Australia’s borders safe and secure,
24 hours a day, seven days a week.

We will continue to deliver the visa intelligence system to better protect Australia and promote migration with improved visa and citizenship decision-making.

Border and immigration data will be fused in real time, leading to identification of threats before they arrive at the border.

This is in addition to specialist counter-terrorism units (CTU) at Australia’s international airports. CTUs assess and intercept inbound and outbound national security risks. Already, the units have conducted more than 940,000 real time assessments, resulting in 2394 referrals to security agencies.

We have also responded to the failed terrorist attempt to down an A380 passenger jet departing from Sydney.

One of the most effective defences against terrorist threats to aviation is enhanced technology for screening passengers and baggage.

Our Government has directed airports to upgrade to new technology capable of detecting sophisticated explosive threats to aircraft. A $50 million Regional Airport Security Screening Fund will support stronger security for regional travellers.

**Stopping drugs and illicit tobacco**

The Liberal and Nationals Government is increasing efforts to stop drugs and illicit tobacco at the border through the 10-year National Drugs Strategy.

We will boost law enforcement to counter the drug trade, particularly in methamphetamine (ICE) and opioids.

We will strengthen action against crime gangs that peddle these harmful drugs, with a renewed funding commitment to the National Anti-Gangs Squad.

Criminals use a variety of means to import illicit drugs, including the mail system. Under the Liberal and Nationals Government, the Australian Border Force will receive $9.7 million to boost intelligence-backed screening of international mail.

With around 70 per cent of organised criminals who target Australia based off-shore, we need to work with our foreign partners.
In a first, the Liberal and Nationals Government established a special task force (Taskforce Blaze) between agencies in Australia and China. Taskforce Blaze has seized more than 20 tonnes of drugs and precursors destined for Australia – including 7.8 tonnes of methamphetamine.

We are also tackling the trade in illicit tobacco.

We established the ABF-led Illicit Tobacco Taskforce (ITTF) and invested $70 million over four years to investigate, prosecute and dismantle organised crime syndicates and networks using the proceeds of illicit tobacco to fund other criminal activity.

Illicit tobacco reduces Commonwealth revenue by around $600 million a year – money that could be used to deliver essential services to the community.

Our policy is already working: last financial year the ABF made more than 110,000 detections of illicit tobacco at the border. This included almost 240 million cigarettes and 217 tonnes of tobacco, worth more than $356 million in evaded duty.

Cancelling the visas of non-citizen criminals

The Liberal and Nationals Government has been highly successful in kicking foreign criminals out of Australia.

In total, the Government has cancelled the visas of over 4,400 non-citizen criminals, including 780 drug offenders, more than 1,300 violent offenders, 341 child sex offenders, 200 outlaw motorcycle gang members, 187 rapists and 84 murderers.

If re-elected, we will introduce new legislation to toughen the character test. This will enable visa cancellations where a non-citizen has been convicted of offences involving violence against a person, weapons, breaching of an apprehended violence order (or similar) or non-consensual sexual acts, even when the sentence is less than 12 months.

This legislation will help keep the community safe from non-citizen criminals who have been convicted of violent and sexual crimes.

THE CHOICE

Only the Liberal and Nationals Government can be trusted to keep Australia’s border secure.

We have restored Australia’s border security, through Operation Sovereign Borders and the three core policies of regional processing, turn-backs where it is safe to do so and temporary protection visas.
We have restored vital resources to our border agencies, along with technology to enhance passenger screening and automation.

And we have worked steadfastly on community protections by strengthening the character requirements of visa holders and introducing the mandatory cancellation of visas of non-citizens who commit serious crimes.

In total, we have cancelled the visas of over 4,400 non-citizen criminals.

By contrast, Labor’s promise to dismantle our proven three pillars of border protection will hand control of our border back to the people smugglers.

Last time they were in government, Labor’s policies hamstrung our border and security agencies and undermined public confidence in the migration program.

Labor hasn’t learnt their lesson and is seeking to return to these dangerous policies. At every turn, Labor has sought to water down the Government’s laws to protect the Australian community.

In office, they would go further still.

Labor’s ‘Medivac’ legislation proves that they cannot be trusted with border protection. Only the Liberal and Nationals Government has the necessary suite of proven policies to keep Australians safe and our borders secure.

Only the Liberal and Nationals Government will repeal Labor’s reckless ‘Medivac’ legislation. You simply cannot trust Labor on border protection.

**THE COST**

The Liberal and Nationals Government’s plan for strong borders will not place additional costs on the Budget.