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MEDIA RELEASE

TONY ABBOTT - CLEARING LABOR'S 30,000 ILLEGAL ARRIVALS BACKLOG

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If elected, the Coalition will act immediately to clear Labor's backlog of 30,000 illegal boat arrivals currently awaiting a claim for permanent visas, and, in doing so, help to restore faith in our immigration program.

Click here to read our policy.

There are now up to 30,000 people who have entered Australia illegally by boat and who will receive a permanent visa in Australia if Labor is re-elected, with family reunion rights and a pathway to citizenship.

The choice is clear:

- If the Coalition is elected, no-one who arrives illegally by boat will receive permanent residency.
- If Labor is re-elected, up to 30,000 people who have arrived illegally will be granted permanent residency – sending the worst possible signal to those considering traveling to Australia by boat.

The Coalition will deny permanent residency through a robust new assessment regime and the reintroduction of temporary protection visas.

The Coalition will also reserve Australia's Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visa quota for genuine applicants who apply through the proper process.

Temporary protection visas strike an appropriate balance between genuine need for a safe haven from persecution, disincentive for illegal arrival and a response to changing circumstances in a person's home country.

If elected, the Coalition will also deny illegal boat arrivals that are reasonably believed to have deliberately destroyed their documentation the benefit of the doubt on their refugee claims.

Unlike Labor's policy the Coalition will put those who deliberately seek to frustrate our refugee assessment process not at the back of the queue, but out of the queue altogether.

The Coalition will also end Labor's 'tick and flick' refugee assessment process of illegal boat arrivals, which has seen 90 per cent of those arriving receiving permanent visas.

If elected, the Coalition will:

- Undertake a rapid audit of the refugee assessment process, drawing on current reviews, with the aim of removing access to the Refugee Review Tribunal and returning to single case officer reviews for those arriving by boat with failed claims, as practiced by the UNHCR.
- Establish a new fast track assessment and removal process based on the United Kingdom's Detained Fast Track system to have protection claims assessed, immigration status resolved and removals undertaken as quickly as possible.
- Establish specialist country based assessment cells within the Department of Immigration and Citizenship with country information used for refugee assessments continually updated and regularly vetted.

Three more years of Labor will mean three more years of cost, chaos and tragedy on our borders including boat arrivals granted permanent visas.

Australians deserve a government that will take control of our borders and restore faith in our immigration system.

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