



Australian Democrats Press Releases

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Australian Democrats spokesperson for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

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SIEV-X Anniversary

The Australian Democrats today acknowledge the fourth anniversary of the sinking of the SIEV-X where the lives of 353 people were lost.

Democrat Spokesperson for Immigration, Senator Andrew Bartlett, said "The SIEV-X incident is another reminder of the deliberate attempts by the Howard Government to mislead the Australian public.

"The period around the time of the children overboard affair was one of cover ups, lies and a general disregard for human life and suffering, perpetuated by the Federal Government.

The Democrats were responsible for broadening the scope of the Select Committee Inquiry into a Certain Maritime Incident to investigate not only allegations made in 2001 by the Federal Government regarding children overboard, but also the detail of the expensive and inhumane Pacific Solution.

"I met and spoke with husbands in Perth last year who lost their wives and children on the SIEV-X and was greatly saddened by their loss and the grief they continue to suffer.

"The fact that they are still on TPVs and Bridging Visa Es only adds to their suffering and their inability to get on with rebuilding their lives.

"In the light of promised rhetoric from the Government on a culture change in DIMIA, I repeat our call for TPVs to be abolished and for permanent visas to be given to refugees, concluded Senator Bartlett.