

Tough on Drugs

Strengthening

the Fight

Tough on Drugs - The Coalition will build on the Prime Minister's Tough on Drugs initiative with stronger law enforcement, more funds for treatment and a greater commitment to anti-drug education for a stronger Australia.

Tough on Drugs –

Strengthening the Fight

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Executive Summary

The Coalition will build on the Prime Minister's *Tough on Drugs* policy with a \$75 million package for stronger law enforcement, more funds for treatment and an even greater commitment to anti-drug education for a stronger Australia.

Busting the Dealers

The Coalition will:

- **commit \$23.4 million over four years to the Australian Federal Police for another four mobile strike teams** to strengthen the fight against international drug trafficking in Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and northern Australia, based in Cairns.

Educating our Children

The Coalition will:

- commit an additional \$10 million over four years for **school drug education** programmes to further educate our children on the dangers of taking drugs.

Protecting our Borders

The Coalition will:

- provide \$18.4 million over four years for state of the art **mobile x-ray search equipment** to enhance capacity for drug interception at our borders;
- commit \$9.5 million over four years for **new ship and aircraft search teams to improve drug detection** and seizure at Australian ports and airports; and
- provide \$3.75 million over three years to crew an additional vessel to patrol the Torres Strait Islands.

Kicking the Habit

The Coalition will:

- provide a further \$10 million over four years to support more proven, effective treatment programmes.

Labor's Record

A Problem That Refused To Go Away

Crime and drug use increased, with no plan for customs and law enforcement measures to address the crisis.

More and more families experienced the heartbreak of drug use. Only limited treatment options were available for those families and addicts who wanted to kick the habit and get on with their lives.

Under Labor the flow of drugs into Australia reached record levels.

Labor failed to halt the distribution of drugs in Australia by criminals.

Labor failed to educate our children about the risks of drug use.

Even worse, Labor failed the victims of drugs, offering only neglect – not assistance to kick the habit.

Highlights of the Government's Achievements

The Coalition's *Tough on Drugs* policy is the biggest, single anti-drugs initiative ever undertaken in this country. \$215 million has been committed to a strategy covering treatment, customs, law enforcement and anti-drug education.

Kicking the habit

Around \$95 million has been provided for programmes to assist drug users to kick the habit, and to provide support for families.

The Australian National Council on Drugs, chaired by

Major Brian Watters of the Salvation Army, was established in March 1998 to ensure that the expertise of non-government organisations and individuals working in the drugs field reaches all levels of government.

Measures also include:

- \$50.3 million over four years has been provided to support non-government treatment services;
- \$4.9 million over four years has been committed to a community grants programme for local drug prevention and education projects;
- \$7.7 million over four years will promote better research into Australia's illicit drug problem;
- \$4.5 million over four years will be spent to train health providers in best practice for treating drug abuse;
- \$3.7 million over four years has been provided to support health data collection and monitoring.

The Coalition recently announced a \$30 million first instalment for grants to 24 communities and 60 non-government organisations for

community education programmes and treatment services.

Recipients include church groups, parents' associations, schools, the police and local businesses who have formed partnerships to fight drug use. For example:

- The Ted Noffs Foundation will receive \$1.5 million to establish a new, non-residential treatment service in Sydney specifically for 12-18 year olds. Treatment services have generally been unavailable for this age group;
- The Salvation Army in Preston, Victoria, will receive \$1.5 million for a residential rehabilitation facility for women and their children, and provide a live-in, therapeutic community for women who have serious drug problems, primarily with illicit substances;
- Perth City Mission will receive \$536,000 for an after-hours programme for adolescent youth;
- The Hindmarsh Youth Centre, in South Australia, will receive over \$660,000 for a non-medical detoxification centre for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, who are affected by drugs; and
- Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjanjatjara, Yankunytjajara Womens Council in Central Australia, will receive more than \$800,000 to work with petrol-sniffers and their families.

Other examples include new or expanded services such as assessment and referral, case management, residential and non-residential care, outreach counselling, home detoxification and rehabilitation services.

This new Community Partnerships Initiative gives people an opportunity to contribute to the prevention and reduction of illicit drugs in their own communities.

The *Tough on Drugs* approach provides for a wide range of treatment options, from abstinence-based programmes to strategies aimed at limiting the harmful consequences of drug use.

Protecting our Borders

The Coalition has committed more than \$23 million under the *Tough on Drugs* initiative to Custom's vital role in protecting the community from illegal drugs, including:

- \$9 million to increase drug import detection by enhancing the capacity of the analysis and examination facilities in Sydney; and
- \$6.7 million to improve coastal surveillance and detection capacity in the Torres Strait.
- \$8.1 million over four years for better communication between law enforcement agencies and information technology.

Busting the Dealers

The Coalition has provided additional funding of more than \$75 million to attack the illegal drug trade through our national law enforcement agencies.

Additional funding for law enforcement measures include:

- \$27.6 million for the formation of six Australian Federal Police anti-drug mobile strike teams. The teams are based in Sydney (three teams), Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane to respond rapidly to intelligence about the importation of illegal drugs;
- \$3.9 million for witness protection and information gathering;
- \$21 million to target drug importation through the National Crime Authority's investigation of Australian organised crime syndicates with overseas links, and \$11.6 million to increase the Australian Federal Police presence in neighbouring countries;
- \$1.5 million for tackling money-laundering operations;
- working with the States and Territories to achieve uniform, nationally consistent drug laws, and ensure that those who organise and profit from the drug trade can be successfully prosecuted and their assets seized.

Educating our Children

The Coalition supports a national goal of zero tolerance of illicit drugs in our schools.

The Coalition is determined to stamp out drugs in our schools.

A happy and safe school environment is an essential part of effective

schooling. Drugs have no place in the lives of our young people, particularly in our schools.

The Coalition has provided additional funding of \$7.5 million to develop and implement a comprehensive school drug education strategy.

Strengthening the Fight

The Coalition will build on the Prime Minister's *Tough on Drugs* initiative, with stronger law enforcement, more funds for treatment and a greater commitment to anti-drug education for a stronger Australia.

A Protecting our borders

The Coalition will increase funding for border protection by \$31.6 million over the next four years, directing \$18.4 million to buy and operate state of the art mobile x-ray search trucks and \$13.2 million to support new ship and aircraft search teams.

This new equipment will improve Australia's capacity to identify and intercept drug shipments before they enter the country. With nearly all of the illegal narcotics used in Australia grown and manufactured in other parts of the world, the successful interception of drug imports will result in Australia being a less attractive target for international cartels.

The Coalition also will improve surveillance of Australia's borders by focussing additional resources in high-risk areas such as the Torres Strait and Sydney.

B Educating our Children

The *Tough on Drugs* education programmes in schools has the goal of no illicit drugs in schools.

To support this goal the Coalition will provide an additional \$10 million for the National School Drug Education Strategy, more than doubling the initial commitment and providing a total of \$17.5 million.

Teachers and parents are at the forefront in educating school students about the dangers of illicit drugs. They need support and education to ensure the message of no illicit drugs in schools is delivered. Involving the community, particularly parents, in drug education in

schools is extremely important.

The additional funding will be used to:

- increase teachers' skills and competence in drug education through professional development for teachers and enhancing drug education for pre-service teachers;
- inform and educate parents; and
- fund school and community education programmes which will include the extension of existing drug education strategies to other students and new ways of delivering drug education and information about healthy life styles.

Examples of projects might include peer support groups, use of role models, involvement of local doctors and other health professionals, and encouragement of alternative recreational activities.

C Kicking the Habit

The Coalition will allocate an additional \$10 million for expanded treatment services, particularly for our youth, people in country areas, women with children, and people using multiple drugs.

The Coalition will continue to call upon the highly successful Australian National Council on Drugs to advise on funding priorities.

D Busting the Dealers

The Coalition will further strengthen the Australian Federal Police's fight against drugs by providing additional funding of \$23.4 million over three years for another four mobile strike teams to target international drug trafficking.

Mobile strike teams can respond rapidly to intelligence about drug trafficking activity, moving to the location where the threat of illegal activity is greatest.

Four additional strike teams will bring the total number of teams to 10, in Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and northern Australia, based in Cairns. This will significantly increase the Australian Federal Police's capacity to mount long term, pro-active operations needed to uncover international syndicates and achieve major seizures.

The Liberal and National Parties are also determined that drug criminals who profit from the misery they inflict on our community are forced to pay back their illegal gains and pay appropriate compensation to victims.

Under our law reform agenda, we have given the Australian Law Reform Commission a new reference to investigate the adequacy of current laws relating to recovering the proceeds of crime. Upon receiving the Commission's recommendations, we will consult with the States and Territories to strengthen these laws.

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