

## **Three new boats mark anniversary of 'Malaysia solution'**

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**By Jessica Wright**

Three boats carrying a total of 305 suspected asylum seekers were intercepted in Australian waters yesterday.

The arrivals come on the first anniversary of the announcement of the government's so-called Malaysia solution, which proposed sending 800 asylum seekers to Malaysia in exchange for Australia accepting 4000 processed and verified refugees.

A statement from Home Affairs Minister Jason Clare said the first two vessels were intercepted by HMAS Wollongong yesterday after a maritime patrol plane spotted them.

One was carrying 103 passengers and two crew, and the other had 138 people on board.

The third boat, carrying about 64 people, was found by ACV Triton last night, north of Ashmore Islands.

The suspected asylum seekers were being transferred to Christmas Island for security and health checks, Mr Clare said.

Opposition immigration spokesman Scott Morrison seized on the first two arrivals as evidence of Labor's "failed border security policy" and said that 80 boats had turned up since the Malaysia policy had been announced.

"Things just go from bad to worse," he said. "With 17,000 people having arrived on Labor's watch, people smugglers have grossed, we estimate, some \$165 million since Labor got rid of the policies that worked under the Howard government."

The opposition has refused to meet Labor halfway on border protection policy and has demanded that Labor reopen Nauru as an offshore processing centre.

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