



TORRES STRAIT ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

Lot 12 Francis Road Hammond Island QLD 4875
p: (07) 4048 6009 f: (07) 4069 1692 e: records@tsirc.qld.gov.au

PO Box 7336 Cairns QLD 4870
ABN 15 292 645 165

MEDIA RELEASE

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REDUCTION IN HOME AFFAIRS BUDGET – DOWNSTREAM EFFECT TO TORRES STRAIT REGION BORDER PROTECTION

Issued in response to recent media commentary, specifically Sydney Morning Herald Article “Leaks show Border Force slashing airport staff at Christmas as budget cuts bite” 07/12/18.

Cr. Fred Gela, Mayor of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council stated:

“We have been deeply alarmed to hear of the potential reductions to the Home Affairs budget, in particular the downstream effect this will have on border patrol and protection operations.”

“Here in the Torres Straits we have a unique geographical positioning and international boarder proximity, which opens the door to illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and a unique vulnerability to biosecurity risk. Border breaches could have an irreversible effect on our ecosystem, cultural places and communities.”

“Two high-speed vessels, with shallow hulls were specifically funded for this region, given the complexity of our waters and reef systems, with the foresight of the potential risk we have as a doorway to the rest of the nation. The absence of these vessels, will put a fundamental hole in Australia’s National border protection.”

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Media Enquires:

Luke Ranga, Head of Corporate Affairs

Email. corporate.affairs@tsirc.qld.gov.au

