

PRESS RELEASE

29 August 2007

MEMORIAL GROUP SEEKS NAMES OF DEAD

A group representing 300 schools and churches from around Australia has written to Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty asking him to release a list of names of those who drowned on the refugee boat SIEVX.

The group will open a spectacular 300 metre memorial on the Canberra lakeshore this Sunday afternoon at 2pm at Weston Park, Yarralumla. They have only been able to name about 150 of the memorial poles created by school children to remember the children and parents who died in the horrific tragedy at the height of the 2001 Federal election campaign. Two hundred names remain unknown.

Most of the dead were women and children whose husbands had travelled ahead and were detained under our changed visa laws, leaving them easy prey for people smugglers.

ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope is a supporter of the memorial project and will open the memorial to the public. Psychologist Steve Biddulph who cofounded the project four years ago says "already families and relatives of those who drowned, living across the world are learning about the memorial and are deeply moved that Australians have done this. We need to know all of the names of those who died, and also much more has to be investigated about how the tragedy took place.

Two years ago the Commissioner refused to release the names for 'operational reasons'. We believe those reasons are no longer current.

The memorial is one of the most beautiful and haunting sights in Australia, and we are awed that it is now standing in the National Capital."

The memorial event will feature live music, a talk by Steve Biddulph and Chief Minister Stanhope, and the first viewing of the completed memorial.

Quality aerial photography and broadcast quality video footage of the memorial is available to recognized news media.

Steve Biddulph available for interview.

Phone 0428 622 309 or email dpforest@bigpond.com
www.sievxmemorial.com

**Memorial Launch Event:
2pm Sunday September 2nd at Weston Park, Yarralumla.**