



# Media Release

## Senator Alan Eggleston

### Liberal Patron Senator for Swan

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#### **SENATOR EGGLESTON WELCOMES MILITARY PRESENCE OFF NW COAST TO DEAL WITH ILLEGAL INDONESIAN FISHERMEN**

WA Liberal Senator, Alan Eggleston, has welcomed the more hard-lined approach from new Defence Minister, Brendan Nelson, toward dealing with the illegal Indonesian fishing problem off Australia's Northwest Coast.

Senator Eggleston said that he had long been worried about the effects illegal Indonesian fishing vessels had on Australian fish supplies and livestock and has been calling for an increased naval presence and aerial surveillance over the area since September 2005.

"Brendan Nelson's approach will result in illegal Indonesian fishing boats being caught once they enter Australian waters and the military presence will deter illegal fishermen from entering into Australian waters in the first place," the Senator said.

"The criminal business organisations behind the Indonesian fishing boats will soon learn they run little chance of getting away with illegal fishing activities while inside Australian waters."

Senator Eggleston said the Australian Government's new approach comes just in time following reports last year of an Australian boat being fired at by an illegal Indonesian fishing vessel from within Australian waters.

"Now there are even reports that Indonesian fishermen no longer flee the scene of their crimes when spotted by Australian commercial fishermen, but actually continue to fish while in their presence."

Senator Eggleston concluded: "It was obvious Australia's previous approach was not working and I am hopeful that the Government's new, cooperative approach with the Indonesian Government will produce better outcomes."