



# ADI

ALFRED DEAKIN INSTITUTE FOR  
CITIZENSHIP AND GLOBALISATION



## **Alfred Deakin Institute Seminar:**

### ***Securing Circulation, Cruelty to Children: logistics, border security, offshore detention***

**Dr Peter Chambers, ADI, Deakin University**

**Monday 5 September, 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm**

**Venue:** Deakin University

Burwood Campus: Burwood Corporate Centre, level 2, building BC, 221 Burwood Hwy, Burwood.

Melbourne City Campus: Level 3, 550 Bourke Street, Melbourne

Waurin Ponds Campus: ic1.108, Deakin University Waurin Ponds Campus, 75 Pigdons Road, Waurin Ponds

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#### **Abstract:**

The national development of Australian border security since its regional emergence in the late 90s has been undertaken in line with the goals and values of global logistics.

Border security's primary alignment is not to the people on the move most affected by it— whether onshore citizens or offshore asylum seekers — but to what Deborah Cowen has described as the citizenship of 'stuff in motion'. Australian border security's primary purpose is not to 'stop the boats', as the victorious onshore slogan of Operation Sovereign Borders posits, but to secure circulation within and for the global space of logistics.

When applied as border security within the Australian maritime area of interest, global logistics' way of thinking about 'stuff in motion' gets applied to people. As this happens, vulnerable people seeking protection become thinglike objects that can be moved around, screened, stopped, and stored, in order to secure circulation so that recognised interests can continue to undertake their activities without impedance, both onshore and offshore.

As I explore through the probable return of 37 young children to indefinite offshore detention on Nauru, this raises fundamental political questions of responsibility, agency, and justice. As constitutive blindspots of Border Forces' logistical thinking, such questions also comprise negated horizons of global justice.

As elements of the Australian policy spread back to Europe, I offer this experience of global logistics' political effects for what it discloses about how national sovereignty, enacted as border security by Border Force, has constructed legally durable categories of person who can be warehoused indefinitely, beyond the shores of politics and horizons of justice, and what this says about nearly invisible role of securing circulation in shaping the political present.

[Click here to find out more about Dr Peter Chambers.](#)