



Caring for Country	
Party:	Australian Greens
<p>Summary of proposal:</p> <p>The proposal involves three components:</p> <p>First Nations ranger programs</p> <p>Reverse the Indigenous Ranger Program Expansion measure announced in the 2022-23 Budget. Funding for the existing Indigenous Ranger Program Extension would be made ongoing and tripled. The current program would be separated into three categories of rangers, each receiving the full allocation of existing funding. The three categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ocean and sea rangers• river and lakes rangers• bush and land rangers. <p>Indigenous Protected Areas</p> <p>\$30 million in funding would be allocated to consultation on new Indigenous Protected Areas and the revival of the Competitive Grant Round on New Indigenous Protected Areas Program (program ceased 30 April 2019). The funding would be distributed equally between Northern Australia and Southern Australia.</p> <p>Fire and land management practices</p> <p>Funding for the existing Indigenous Fire and Land Workshops program would be made ongoing and doubled.</p> <p>All three components in this costing would be indexed to the Consumer Price Index. The proposal would start on 1 July 2022.</p>	

Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$734 million over the 2022-23 Budget forward estimates period. This impact reflects an increase in administered expenses of \$712.8 million and an increase in departmental expenses of \$21.4 million.

The proposal would have an ongoing impact beyond the 2022-23 Budget forward estimates period. A breakdown of the financial implications (including separate public debt interest (PDI) tables) over the period to 2032-33 is provided at Attachment A.

Table 1: Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total to 2025-26
Fiscal balance	-249.3	-195.6	-167.9	-121.4	-734.2
Underlying cash balance	-249.3	-195.6	-167.9	-121.4	-734.2

(a) A positive number represents an increase in the relevant budget balance; a negative number represents a decrease.

(b) PDI impacts are not included in the totals.

- Indicates nil.

Key assumptions

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has made the following assumptions in costing this proposal.

- Additional departmental expenses for the National Indigenous Australians Agency would be required to administer the First Nations Rangers Programs and Indigenous Protected Areas components of the proposal.
- Additional departmental expenses for the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment would be required to administer the Fire and Land Management Practices components of the proposal.
- Indigenous ranger funding in place before the 2022-23 Budget is assumed to finish after 2027-28.

Methodology

- Administered funding was allocated as specified in the policy.
- Departmental expenses were calculated using data on ratios between employee expenses and grant levels sourced from a 2017 Australian National Audit Office performance audit report.

Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules as outlined on the PBO Costings and budget information webpage.¹

Data sources

Funding Announcement for Indigenous Ranger Program [Online] available at: <https://ministers.pmc.gov.au/wyatt/2020/funding-certainty-indigenous-rangers> [Accessed 11.04.2022]

Information on Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) [Online] available at: <https://www.environment.gov.au/land/indigenous-protected-areas> [Accessed 11.04.2022]

Grants for Fire and Land Management Workshops [Online] available at: <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/indigenous-fire-and-land-management-workshops> [Accessed 11.04.2022]

Australian National Audit Office 2017. *Efficiency of the Australia Council's administration of grants* [Online] available at: https://www.anao.gov.au/sites/default/files/ANAO_Report_2017-2018_7.pdf [Accessed 11.04.2022]

¹ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Budget_Office/Costings_and_budget_information

Attachment A – Caring for Country – financial implications

Table A1: Caring for Country – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^(a)

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	Total to 2025-26	Total to 2032-33
Expenses													
Administered													
<i>Indigenous Rangers Program - ocean and sea</i>	-109.0	-105.0	-107.0	-109.0	-111.0	-112.0	-115.0	-118.0	-121.0	-124.0	-127.0	-430.0	-1,258.0
<i>Indigenous Rangers Program - rivers and lakes</i>	-109.0	-105.0	-107.0	-109.0	-111.0	-112.0	-115.0	-118.0	-121.0	-124.0	-127.0	-430.0	-1,258.0
<i>Indigenous Rangers Program - bush and land</i>	-109.0	-105.0	-107.0	-109.0	-111.0	-112.0	-115.0	-118.0	-121.0	-124.0	-127.0	-430.0	-1,258.0
<i>Indigenous Ranger Program - offset from existing funding</i>	109.0	105.0	107.0	109.0	111.0	112.0	-	-	-	-	-	430.0	653.0
<i>Reversal of Indigenous Ranger Program Expansion</i>	10.0	55.0	87.0	137.0	148.0	144.0	-	-	-	-	-	289.0	581.0
<i>Northern Australia Indigenous Protected Areas</i>	-15.0	-15.4	-15.9	-16.3	-16.7	-17.1	-17.5	-17.9	-18.4	-18.9	-19.3	-62.6	-188.4
<i>Southern Australia Indigenous Protected Areas</i>	-15.0	-15.4	-15.9	-16.3	-16.7	-17.1	-17.5	-17.9	-18.4	-18.9	-19.3	-62.6	-188.4
<i>Indigenous Fire and Land Management Workshops</i>	-4.0	-4.1	-4.2	-4.3	-4.5	-4.6	-4.7	-4.8	-4.9	-5.0	-5.2	-16.6	-50.3
Total – administered	-242.0	-189.9	-163.0	-117.9	-111.9	-118.8	-384.7	-394.6	-404.7	-414.8	-424.8	-712.8	-2,967.1
Departmental													
<i>National Indigenous Australians Agency</i>	-7.2	-5.6	-4.8	-3.4	-3.2	-3.4	-11.4	-11.7	-12.0	-12.3	-12.6	-21.0	-87.6
<i>Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment</i>	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4	-1.3
Total – departmental	-7.3	-5.7	-4.9	-3.5	-3.3	-3.5	-11.5	-11.8	-12.1	-12.5	-12.8	-21.4	-88.9
Total – expenses	-249.3	-195.6	-167.9	-121.4	-115.2	-122.3	-396.2	-406.4	-416.8	-427.3	-437.6	-734.2	-3,056.0
Total (excluding PDI)	-249.3	-195.6	-167.9	-121.4	-115.2	-122.3	-396.2	-406.4	-416.8	-427.3	-437.6	-734.2	-3,056.0

(a) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

- Indicates nil.

Table A2: Caring for Country – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	Total to 2025-26	Total to 2032-33
<i>Fiscal balance</i>	-2.8	-8.0	-12.3	-15.9	-19.0	-22.6	-30.5	-43.3	-57.7	-73.8	-93.5	-39.0	-379.4
<i>Underlying cash balance</i>	-2.5	-7.4	-11.8	-15.4	-18.7	-22.2	-29.6	-41.8	-55.9	-71.8	-91.1	-37.1	-368.2

- (a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals in the tables above. This is consistent with the approach taken in the budget where the budget impact of most measures is presented excluding the impact on PDI. If the reader would like a complete picture of the total aggregate, then these figures would need to be added to the figures above. For further information on government borrowing and financing please refer to the PBO's online budget glossary².
- (b) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.
- Indicates nil.

² [Online budget glossary – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](https://aph.gov.au)