



Deliver a National Gas Plan – halve environmental approval timelines and reform offshore gas regulations

Party: The Coalition

Summary of proposal:

The proposal would:

- halve environmental approval timelines while keeping standards high, including by accrediting the states and territories to provide approvals which meet Commonwealth legislative requirements
- reform offshore gas regulations to streamline approvals, and mandate timeframes and arrangements.

The proposal would start on 1 July 2025.

Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$7.5 million over the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period (see Table 1). This impact reflects an increase in departmental expenses.

The proposal would not be expected to have an impact beyond the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period, other than for public debt interest (PDI) costs. A breakdown of the financial implications (including separate PDI tables) over the period to 2035-36 is provided at Attachment A.

Table 1: Deliver a National Gas Plan – halve environmental approval timelines and reform offshore gas regulations – Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Fiscal balance	-2.5	-5.0	-	-	-7.5
Underlying cash balance	-2.5	-5.0	-	-	-7.5

(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 resources would be required in 2025-26 and 2026-27 for the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).
- Departmental expenses for each agency would grow in line with the Wage Cost Index 3 (WCI-3).

- The states and territories would cooperate with the Commonwealth on the proposal, including absorbing any costs incurred to achieve accreditation from the Commonwealth to provide environmental approvals.

Methodology

Departmental expenses for DISR and DCCEEW were estimated based on the staffing requirements of similar programs using the PBO's departmental costs calculator, which includes indexation to the WCI-3 less an efficiency dividend.

Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.¹

Data sources

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources provided information on the staffing profile of the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Environmental Management Review.

Commonwealth of Australia (2025) *Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2025*, Commonwealth of Australia.

¹ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Attachment A – Deliver a National Gas Plan – halve environmental approval timelines and reform offshore gas regulations – Financial implications

Table A1: Deliver a National Gas Plan – halve environmental approval timelines and reform offshore gas regulations – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^(a)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Expenses													
Total – departmental	-2.5	-5.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-7.5	-7.5
Total (excluding PDI)	-2.5	-5.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-7.5	-7.5

- (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: Deliver a National Gas Plan – halve environmental approval timelines and reform offshore gas regulations – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Fiscal balance	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-1.0	-4.0
Underlying cash balance	..	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.9	-3.9

- (a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals 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 glossary.²
- (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.
- .. Not zero but rounded to zero.

² [Online budget glossary – Parliamentary Budget Office \(pbo.gov.au\)](https://pbo.gov.au/online-budget-glossary)