



Establish a Royal Commission into Australia's immigration detention regime	
Party:	Australian Greens
Summary of proposal: The proposal would establish a Royal Commission into Australia's immigration detention regime, including past and present onshore and offshore facilities. The proposal would start from 1 July 2026.	

Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$44.0 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. A breakdown of the financial implications (including separate public debt interest (PDI) tables) over the period to 2035-36 is provided at Attachment A.

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) notes that there is uncertainty in the costs of the proposal, as the terms of reference for the Royal Commission, including the detail of its scope, are not yet determined. A wider scope than PBO have assumed would potentially increase the costs and the expected duration of the activity.

Table 1: Establish a Royal Commission into Australia's immigration detention regime – Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Fiscal balance	-	-29.0	-15.0	-	-44.0
Underlying cash balance	-	-29.0	-15.0	-	-44.0

(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 and methodology

The proposal would establish a Royal Commission that would be completed over 2 years. Departmental expenses were estimated based on the cost of administering similar initiatives. No funds allocated to a given year would be left unspent.

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

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

Data sources

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

Departmental expenses were informed by similar measures in the Commonwealth budgets from 2015-16 to 2021-22.

Attachment A – Establish a Royal Commission into Australia’s immigration detention regime – Financial implications

Table A1: Establish a Royal Commission into Australia’s immigration detention regime – 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													
<i>Departmental cost</i>	-	-29.0	-15.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-44.0	-44.0
Total (excluding PDI)	-	-29.0	-15.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-44.0	-44.0

(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: Establish a Royal Commission into Australia’s immigration detention regime – 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	-	-0.6	-1.6	-2.0	-2.1	-2.2	-2.3	-2.4	-2.6	-2.7	-2.8	-4.2	-21.3
Underlying cash balance	-	-0.5	-1.4	-1.9	-2.1	-2.2	-2.3	-2.4	-2.5	-2.6	-2.8	-3.8	-20.7

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