



Special envoy for arbitrarily detained Australians	
Party:	Australian Greens
Summary of proposal:  The proposal would establish a Special Envoy for Arbitrarily Detained Australians overseas to focus on political and arbitrarily detained cases within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).  The proposal would start on 1 July 2026 and be ongoing.	
Additional information (based on further advice provided):  This role would be funded similar to that of the Special Envoy for Southeast Asia.	

## Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$4.2 million over the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period (see Table 1). This impact reflects an increase in departmental expenses.

The proposal would 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) has not made any assessment as to whether the specified funding would be sufficient to meet the objectives of the proposal.

**Table 1: Special envoy for arbitrarily detained Australians – Financial implications (\$m)<sup>(a)(b)</sup>**

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Fiscal balance	-	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-4.2
Underlying cash balance	-	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-4.2

(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 PBO has made the following assumptions in costing this proposal.

- There would be a team of 7 full time equivalent staff which is consistent with arrangements for the Special Envoy of Southeast Asia.
- DFAT would have sufficient physical space in its existing property footprint to accommodate staff for the new special envoy without needing to acquire or fit-out new office space.

## Methodology

Departmental expenses were estimated using the PBO's departmental cost calculator, with staff costs indexed by Wage Cost Index 3 less an efficiency dividend.

Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.<sup>1</sup>

## Data sources

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provided information on the staffing profile for the Special Envoy of Southeast Asia.

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

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

## Attachment A – Special envoy for arbitrarily detained Australians – Financial implications

**Table A1: Special envoy for arbitrarily detained Australians – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)<sup>(a)</sup>**

	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
<b>Expenses</b>													
<b>Total – departmental</b>	-	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.6	-1.6	-4.2	-14.9
<b>Total (excluding PDI)</b>	-	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.6	-1.6	-4.2	-14.9

- (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: Special envoy for arbitrarily detained Australians – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)<sup>(a)(b)</sup>**

	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
<b>Fiscal balance</b>	-	..	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.6	-0.7	-0.8	-0.3	-3.8
<b>Underlying cash balance</b>	-	..	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.7	-0.2	-3.4

- (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.<sup>2</sup>
- (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.
- .. Not zero but rounded to zero.

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