



**COUNTRY
NEEDS
PEOPLE**

Protecting nature,
transforming lives

WORKING FOR QUEENSLAND

We are calling on the government to double the number of Indigenous ranger jobs:

-  To meet environmental need
-  To meet demand from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
-  To be reinforced by quality delivery and support from government.

Indigenous rangers are delivering results for the environment and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: every Queenslanders benefits from State Government investment in this success. The Queensland Government's Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program represents leading practice in Australia by working hand in hand with local Indigenous community organisations to support the delivery of ranger work in caring for country across some of the most ecologically special environments in the world. But there is a clear need to build on this success and meet the demand of nature and communities by growing Indigenous ranger jobs and the operational funding required to ensure the continued success of the program.

“Commitments by political parties and others feel like recognition of the fact that, as an Aboriginal Ranger, I am making a huge contribution to the health of our country and our people.”

Clinton Williams, Pormpuraaw Senior Ranger

Read more about the work of Pormpuraaw Land and Sea Rangers on the back page

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LEADERSHIP ON COUNTRY

Ranger work addresses priorities shared and driven by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the protection of natural and cultural values on land and sea country. The work is developed and applied in consultation with, and under the guidance of, senior traditional owners. In partnership with the Queensland Government, Indigenous ranger jobs combine Indigenous ecological and traditional knowledge with contemporary science to protect natural and cultural values, recognising the commitment, unique skills, cultures, stewardship and geographic knowledge traditional owners bring to conservation.

Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers differ from rangers working as employees of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. While Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers can and do work on parks at times, they are funded through a separate, tailored funding stream from the Department of Environment and Science, which acknowledges the value of community-based ranger work. This results in greater ownership and support at the local community level and acknowledges the important leadership role of local Indigenous organisations. Rangers are often a key means of facilitating Elders' reconnection to country, and fostering knowledge transfer between older and younger community members.

PROTECTING NATURE

Indigenous rangers are protecting nature for the benefit of all Queenslanders. Rangers work to sustain biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions by limiting dangerous wildfires, controlling the spread of weeds and the threat of feral animals, protecting threatened species on land and sea, as well as maintaining cultural sites, tourism facilities, and more.

Across the vast and often most ecologically healthy landscapes of Queensland, Indigenous rangers are at the frontline of protecting our state's natural assets.

TRANSFORMING LIVES

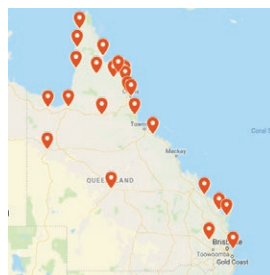
Indigenous ranger jobs have significant social and economic benefits. Undertaking meaningful work that people are proud to do has individual, family and community benefits. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people working as rangers report better physical and mental health, higher confidence levels, improved justice outcomes, the development of community role models and positive engagement with young people, relevant training and education for career progression and more women's employment.

QUEENSLAND INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA RANGER PROGRAM

As of 2019, over 100 Indigenous rangers are supported through the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program delivered by the Department of Environment and Science. Approximately \$11 million annually is allocated to:

- assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to employ ranger teams; and
- deliver training, networking and partnership support through the Department of Environment and Science

Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers are based in 23 regional and remote locations around the state. Demand from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and community members has consistently far exceeded



the number of funded ranger jobs, demonstrating consistent grassroots demand and the ongoing success of the program.

Indigenous ranger jobs are run by local Indigenous community-managed organisations. This

is a key element of the success of the program: ranger work is owned and guided by traditional owners and local communities, and supported in partnership with the Queensland Government.



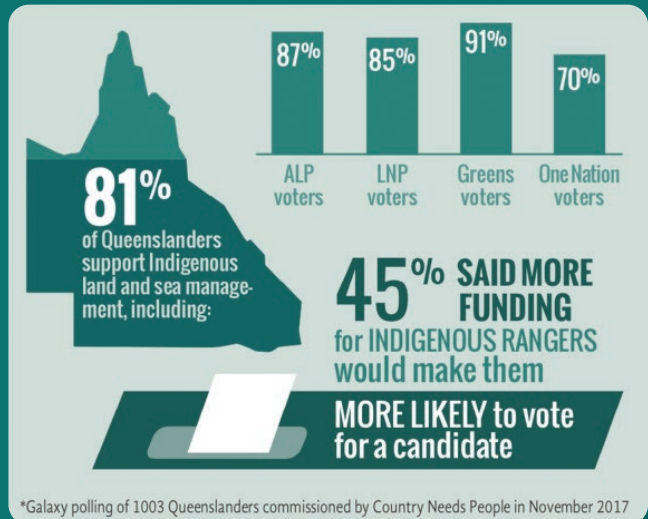
BACKED BY QUEENSLANDERS

A poll conducted in 2017 found that 81% of Queenslanders, including 85% of LNP voters and 70% of One Nation voters, support the work of Indigenous Land and Sea rangers. 88% of Queenslanders also supported a proposal to create 200 new full time ranger jobs over 10 years. 45% of people polled said that support for Indigenous rangers would make them more likely to vote for a candidate.

DEPARTMENTAL AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers are accountable for their work to the Department of Environment and Science through annual work planning and review processes. This is not simply a reporting and accountability relationship; DES supplies mentoring, training, networking and support services to help both individual rangers and their host organisations deliver agreed program outcomes.

Funding arrangements are about more than simply ranger wages. They also include operational and administrative funding and tailored support from DES staff, and funding security is improved by contract renewal on a rolling basis creating more predictable funding environment for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Ranger teams cannot run on wages alone. Engaged support by DES underpins the quality and reputation for success of the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers and, as such, it is particularly important that operational funding and additional support to the program is sustained to ensure ongoing success.



LONG TERM SECURITY

Security of funding encourages retention of dedicated staff, forward planning and increased capacity to strengthen governance. It also sends an unambiguous signal that Queenslanders value Indigenous land and sea management work and its potential. Indigenous ranger work is not simply project based or start-stop work. Reinforcing the success of Indigenous rangers requires ongoing commitment, with core funding for wages, vehicles, training, operational funds and administration to deliver success for people and nature. Long term funding, with accountability, is vital to sustaining and growing local capacity, and associated environmental, cultural, social and economic benefits.





“What is important for us is that feeling of being on country, of being connected to each other, of being Lama Lama - and we are all equal, we all bring something to the job of looking after land and sea, and passing down our knowledge to the next generations.”

Karen Liddy, Lama Lama Ranger



Our country, our land and our sea has always taken care of us in the past and it is now our job as rangers to do the same.”

Karen Liddy, Lama Lama Ranger and chairperson of Lama Lama Land Trust

Growing up, Karen Liddy watched and learnt from the tireless commitment shown by her Elders to bring Lama Lama families back to country.

She says the Indigenous ranger program has become a platform for maintaining this commitment, engaging young and old members of the community in caring for country and working together.

The Queensland Government supported Lama Lama Rangers specialise in sea country management, working with research partners to protect mangrove seagrass and coral reef ecosystems in their traditional sea country within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

“I found out that I liked working outside and contributing to something bigger than myself. I saw it as an opportunity to test my limits and I pulled through when I thought I wouldn’t last a week... I feel more confident and more independent.”

Mikayla Down, Engagement, Communications and Finance Officer, began work as a Lama Lama trainee ranger and has now progressed to coordinating communications and administration for the Yintjingga Aboriginal Corporation.

Country Needs People

Country Needs People is a growing alliance of more than 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and the Pew Charitable Trusts, alongside more than 96 000 Australians, including over 25 000 Queenslanders. Together, we are calling on governments to grow and secure Indigenous ranger jobs and Indigenous Protected Areas for the benefit of people and nature.

Country Needs People partner organisations consistently report the need for more Indigenous ranger positions to most effectively manage environmental and cultural heritage priorities. They also report high demand for Indigenous ranger jobs within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, where applicants are 'queueing up' for positions when they become vacant.



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Protecting nature for all of us

Saving endangered turtles on the western Cape

On the west coast of the Cape York Peninsula, Pormpuraaw Land and Sea Management Rangers care for country featuring ten healthy river systems, two major wetlands of national importance and over 114 nationally listed threatened species.

The Pormpuraaw Land and Sea Management Rangers have had internationally-acclaimed success protecting threatened Olive Ridley hatchlings. Each year, feral pigs prey on local Olive Ridley turtle nests, devouring eggs and hatchlings. Pormpuraaw Rangers began monitoring Olive Ridley nests along 85 kilometres of their remote coastline in 2009. From 2009 to 2013, feral pigs were recorded destroying more than 90% of turtle nests every year. The rangers responded with a strategic and innovative program of feral pig aerial culling and baiting, building turtle nest protective barriers, wildlife monitoring and marine debris clean ups. As a direct result of their work, Pormpuraaw Rangers have reduced annual turtle hatchling predation to close to zero.

It's a source of pride for the entire Pormpuraaw community, and it delivers an important environmental outcome for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

