

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Tourism and Culture

Ranger groups resources and authority

1. What is being done to expand the powers of ranger groups, including authority around trespassing so that they can protect the country?
2. Please advise what consultation is being done on this process?
3. Please advise funds and resources will be made available in this budget to assist further rangers?

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1. *Protecting Country, Creating Jobs* is the name of the Northern Territory Government's policy initiative to recognise and support Aboriginal ranger groups in the work they do to protect and conserve their land and sea country. The Department of Tourism and Culture is leading the initiative to develop ways to grant Aboriginal ranger groups legal powers of enforcement to be negotiated on a case by case basis. An initial round of consultation has been completed for 42 Aboriginal ranger groups. Unauthorised access on Aboriginal land is a key issue. There will be further consultation with the land councils and legal advice is being sought to help determine the most appropriate means to deal with this issue.
 2. A Discussion Paper was released in November 2017, as the basis for interview-based consultations that have been carried out with 42 ranger groups. Written submissions from the Discussion Paper have also been received from the Northern Land Council, Charles Darwin University and various organisations representing Aboriginal ranger groups. A public report on ranger group consultation is being prepared.
 3. Under *Protecting Country, Creating Jobs* the Northern Territory Government has set aside \$4.1 million for capital grants for ranger groups to purchase essential items, such as, boats and vehicles with \$2 million budgeted for 2018-19. An \$8 million land management and conservation fund will also improve ranger groups' conservation practices, employment outcomes and partnerships with others, with \$2 million budgeted for 2018-19. \$2 million over four years is also invested in the Indigenous Carbon Unit in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to grow carbon abatement projects on Aboriginal land. Territory ranger groups will also benefit from the Australian Government's \$30 million Capacity Building for Indigenous Rangers Strategy.