



WWF

AUSTRALIA



TECHNICAL REPORT

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THE 2024 THREATENED SPECIES REPORT CARD

In September 2022, WWF-Australia launched its first Threatened Species Report Card, which provided a simple but scientifically robust way to track and communicate Australia's progress in recovering our threatened species.

The methods behind the report card were developed in collaboration with conservation scientists from the University of Queensland. After the 2022 launch, the methods were improved through a peer review process, and published as a scientific paper in an international journal ([Ward et al. 2024](#)).

We have now refreshed the report card grades with 2024 data and have compared them with the 2022 results outlined in the scientific paper.

WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE OUR 2022 REPORT CARD?*

- 163 species have been newly listed as threatened
- 40 species have had their threatened status upgraded, e.g., from Vulnerable to Endangered
- 3 species have had a genuine improvement in their threat status, because the rate of their decline has slowed or stopped. These are:
 - The Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) which moved from Endangered to Vulnerable
 - The Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*), which moved from Critically Endangered to Vulnerable
 - The Northern Siberian Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica menzbieri*), which moved from Critically Endangered to Endangered
- There have been no new extinction listings since our 2022 Report Card. However, 15 species have been listed as extinct or extinct in the wild in the last 10 years.

*Includes listing changes between 8 March 2022 and 30 June 2024

OUR APPROACH

We calculated five report card indicators for 1963 threatened species and 8 recently delisted species that fell within the scope of the analysis (see 2024 Report Card Methods section for details). We then aggregated indicators at national, state and territory, federal electorate, and local government scales based on overlap of these jurisdictions with threatened species habitat maps or records. While the indicators themselves reflect the degree that species recovery is supported by the Australian federal government, aggregating them at different spatial scales highlights areas where threatened species need the most action, or gaps where national efforts are lacking and local or state efforts could be directed to compensate. For the largest spatial scales (states and territories) we assign responsibility for a species among all jurisdictions containing with more than 10% of their habitat. For smaller spatial scales (federal electorates, local government areas) we assign responsibility to a species among all jurisdictions containing any habitat.

The Report Card uses only data that is available consistently at a national level for all EPBC listed threatened species. In addition to highlighting Australia's lack of progress in threatened species recovery, it highlights a shortfall in consistent, transparent information about threatened species recovery at the federal level. This includes the quality of nationally available habitat maps, as well as a lack of consistently recorded funding information for each species. Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on threatened species at the federal level requires a transparent system where recovery actions are identified for every threatened species, funded, implemented, and the outcomes are monitored for effectiveness and adaptation. This is needed for effective threatened species recovery, to contribute to [State of Environment reporting](#), and for better tracking of progress towards the [Global Biodiversity Framework 2030 targets](#), to which Australia is a signatory.

THE INDICATORS

Funding

This indicator measures the adequacy of current funding for threatened species recovery.

- 186 threatened species (9%) received dedicated funding from the Australian government in the last 5 years. Most (97) of these species had only 1 funded conservation project, 88 species had between 2 and 18 projects, while one species (koala) had 81 funded projects.
- 27 species received enough funding to enable their future recovery.

See [Ward et al. \(2024\)](#) for more information on how we collated funding data and estimated the cost of recovering each species.

Recovery plans

This indicator measures the number of species that have a current recovery plan (written within the last 10 years). Recovery plans are documents outlining the threats facing a species and the actions needed to recover them. Under the current system, the Minister must not make decisions (e.g., development approvals) that are inconsistent with a recovery plan. Threats and actions can also be outlined in a shorter document called a conservation advice, however, these do not have the same legal power.

- 133 threatened species (7%) have a current recovery plan.

Habitat protection

This indicator measures whether each species has enough of its habitat protected.

- 427 threatened species (22%) had adequate habitat protection, and another 152 (8%) met more than 90% of their protection target.
- 113 species (6%) had no habitat protection. Most of these (95) were plants.

See [Ward et al. \(2024\)](#) for more information on how we set protection targets for each species, and calculated how much area is protected within each species' habitat.

Threat status improvement

This indicator measures whether species are showing enough signs of recovery to warrant a change in their listed threat status, e.g., moving from Critically Endangered to Endangered, or moving from Vulnerable to being delisted.

- Only 11 species (0.6%) have been assigned to a better threat status, while 432 (22%) have worsened in their threat status in the last 10 years, either by having their status upgraded or moving onto the list.

Persistence

This indicator measures how likely our threatened species are to persist in the short-term (the next 20 years), based on their listed threat status.

- 782 species were Vulnerable, 794 species were Endangered, 386 species were Critically Endangered, and 1 species was listed as Extinct in the Wild.

See [Ward et al. \(2024\)](#) for more information on how we calculated the probability each species will persist for the next 20 years.

GRADING

We calculated a score between 0 and 1 for each indicator, where 1 is the ideal scenario. We then assigned grades using equal intervals, where:

- an A grade is greater than 0.83,
- a B grade is 0.67 to 0.82,
- a C grade is 0.5 to 0.66,
- a D grade is 0.33 to 0.49,
- an E grade is from 0.17 to 0.32, and
- an F grade is less than 0.16.

THE NATIONAL REPORT CARD

Australia as a whole is still receiving the lowest possible grade of an 'F' for funding, recovery planning, and threat status improvements. This shows that threatened species do not have the essentials needed for recovery (funding and recovery planning) and that as a consequence, we are not seeing improvements in their threat status.

One grade has improved since the last report card - the grade for habitat protection has inched over the line from a 'D' to a 'C'. This reflects an increase in terrestrial protected areas since the last report card, which now cover 22% of Australia's land area (up from 20%) according to the [Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database](#). Despite this progress, our report card shows that more is needed to sufficiently protect the habitat of threatened species. Australia has committed to protecting 30% of land area by 2030 under the [Global Biodiversity Framework](#), which is an additional 60 million ha.

The grade for persistence, which measures how likely our threatened species are to go extinct in the next 20 years, remains at a 'B'. This is the highest grade of any indicator and reflects the fact that there is hope for our threatened species, and still time to act for their recovery.

To protect and recover our threatened species, the Australian government needs to:

- Fix broken nature laws to prioritise the protection of nature. We need nature laws that protect threatened species habitat and ensure there is a strong plan for their recovery,
 - Fund threatened species recovery actions to ensure their survival for future generations,
 - Increase Australia's protected areas in line with domestic and international commitments,
 - Take action on climate change to minimise the impact on Australia's unique wildlife and landscapes.
- [Recent research showed](#) that at least 232 EPBC listed species are threatened by climate change. The first mammal in the world to become extinct due to climate change was an Australian species, the [Bramble Cay melomys](#) (*Melomys rubicola*), which was declared extinct in 2016.

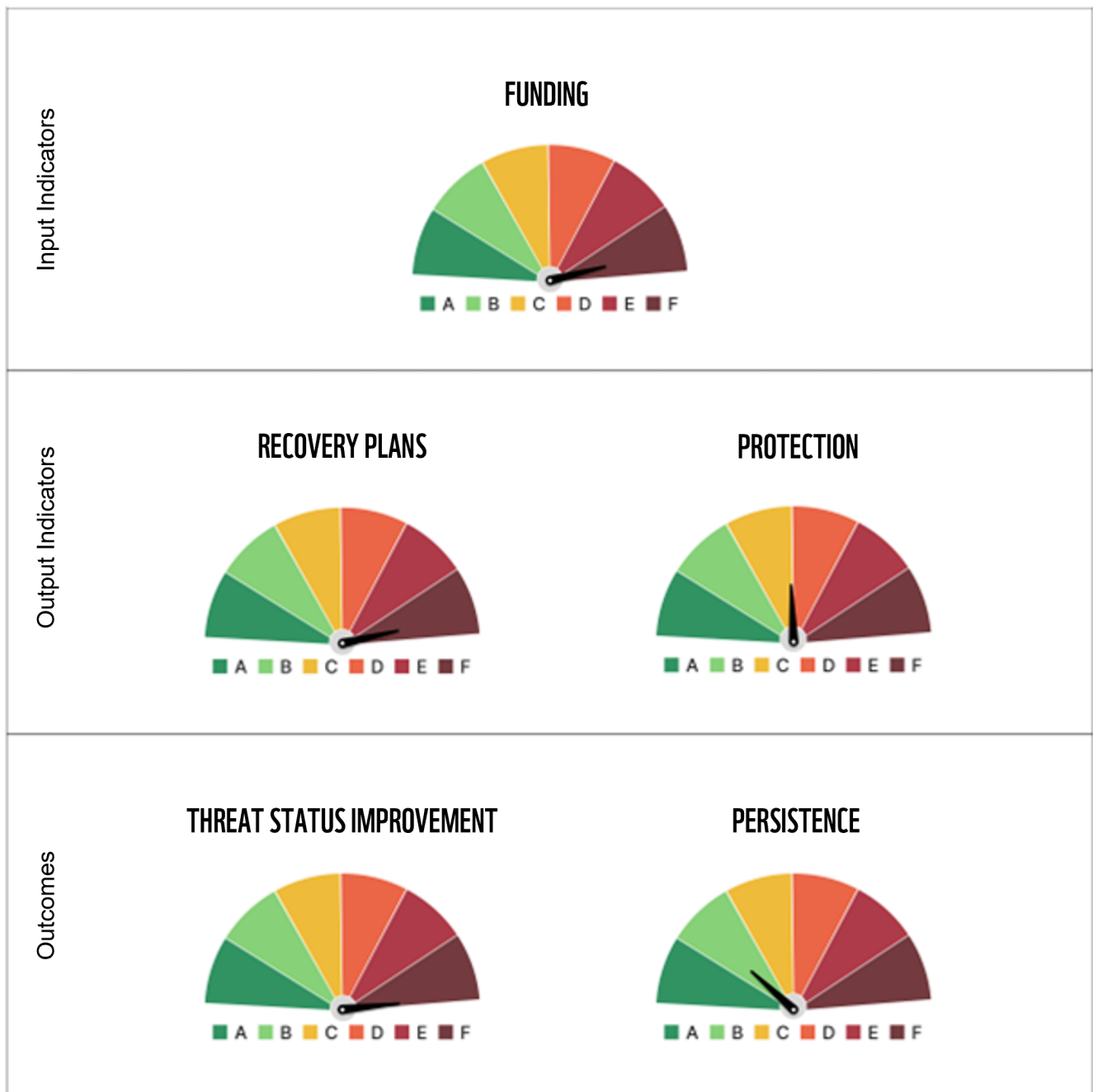


Figure 1: The national report card grading for each indicator

STATES AND TERRITORIES

Across all indicators, state and territory grades have stayed the same or worsened since our 2022 Report Card, with the Australian Capital Territory experiencing the largest decrease in both the recovery plan and protection indicators (Table 1, Figure 2). Tasmania still has the highest proportion of species with current recovery plans, while the Northern Territory now scores the highest on habitat protection. Several states have worsened in their persistence scores, so now all states and territories are graded 'B'.

State or territory	Funding	Recovery plans	Protection	Threat status improvement	Persistence
Australian Capital Territory	F	F↓	C↓	F	B
New South Wales	F	F	C	F	B
Northern Territory	F	F	B	F	B↓
Queensland	F	F	C	F	B↓
South Australia	F	F↓	C	F	B↓
Tasmania	F	D	C	F	B
Victoria	F	F	C	F	B↓
Western Australia	F	F	D	F	B

Table 1: State and territory grades for each indicator. Symbols indicate where a grade has improved (↑) or worsened (↓) since our last Report Card.

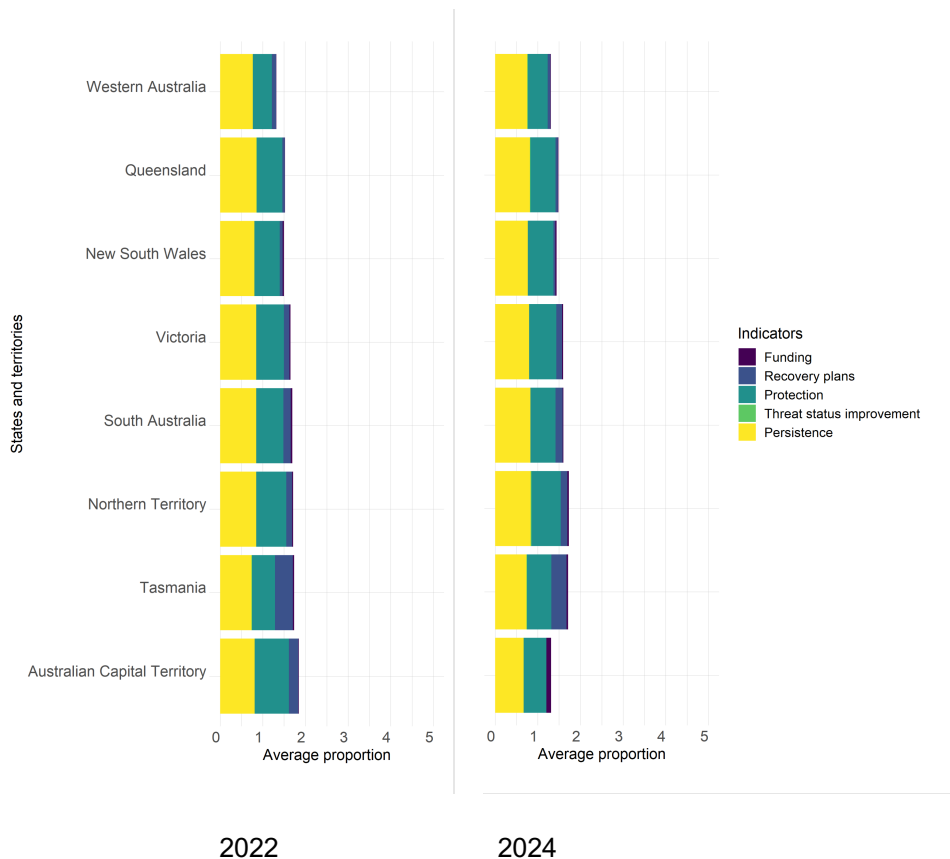


Figure 2: The average indicator scores for the threatened species occurring in each state and territory. Ideally each state and territory would score 1 for each indicator, giving a summed total of 5. 2022 results (left panel) also appear in Ward et al. (2024).

FEDERAL ELECTORATES

All 151 electorates scored a 'F' on funding (< 0.16, Figure 3), but the electorate with the lowest score was Solomon in the Northern Territory, where none of the species received adequate funding and only 15% received any dedicated funding. The highest scoring electorate for funding was Casey in Victoria, in which one species (the Critically Endangered Helmeted Honeyeater) received adequate funding.

The electorate with the lowest score for recovery plans was New England in New South Wales. It scored an 'F' because only 6% (0.06) of its 181 species have a current recovery plan. The electorate with the highest score was Goldstein in Victoria, where 48% (0.48) of species have a current recovery plan, giving it a 'D'.

The electorate with the lowest score for habitat protection was Durack, which just got over the line for a 'C' with a score of 0.51. There are 290 species that live or could live in Durack, and 94 of these (32%) have enough habitat protected, while 24 (8%) have none protected. The electorate with the highest score for habitat protection was Petrie in Queensland, which was graded 'A' with a score of 0.98. All but one species in Petrie met their habitat protection target.

With only 11 species ever improving in threat status, all electorates scored an 'F' on threat status improvement (<0.16, Figure 3). The highest scoring electorate was Cowan in Western Australia, in which 3 species had improved in threat status, giving it a score of 0.11.

The electorate that scored lowest on persistence was Bean in the ACT, which was graded 'B' with a score of 0.75. Out of the 133 species that live or could live in Bean, 43% are Vulnerable, 34% Endangered, and 23% Critically Endangered. The highest scoring electorate was Adelaide in South Australia, which was graded 'A' with a score of 0.91. A large proportion of the species that live or could live in Adelaide (59%) are in the lowest threat category, Vulnerable, and there are no Critically Endangered species.

The general distribution of electorate scores across indicators (Figure 3) did not change significantly from the 2022 Report Card, although individual electorates changed their scores and grades (see Table 2 in Additional Results).

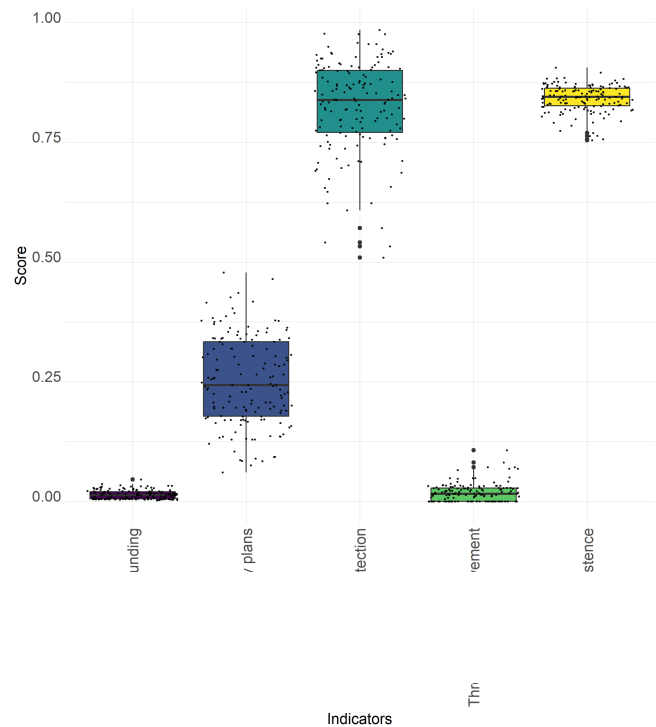


Figure 3: Box plots showing the variation in indicator scores between electorates

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

While the indicator scores for the 547 Australian local government areas (LGAs) show similar patterns to the electorate scores (Figure 4), the smaller size of LGAs mean they typically overlap with the habitat of fewer species and therefore have more variation in indicator scores. All LGAs were graded 'F' for funding with scores between 0 (Coober Pedy and Richmond) and 0.13 (Pingelly). Fourteen LGAs had no species with a current recovery plan and were graded 'F'. The highest scoring LGA for recovery plans was Cocos Islands, which was graded 'C' with 66% (0.66) of species with a current recovery plan.

The LGA with the lowest score for habitat protection was Victoria Plains, which was graded 'E' with a score of 0.31. Thirteen LGAs had a habitat protection score of 1, which means all the species that live or have habitat within those LGAs have enough of their habitat protected across their range.

All LGAs were graded 'F' for threat status improvement and 315 LGAs had no species that had improved in their threat status. Persistence scores ranged between 0.68 (Gnowangerup) and 0.95 (Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara).

The general distribution of LGA scores across indicators (Figure 4) did not change significantly from the 2022 Report Card (see Ward et al. 2024).

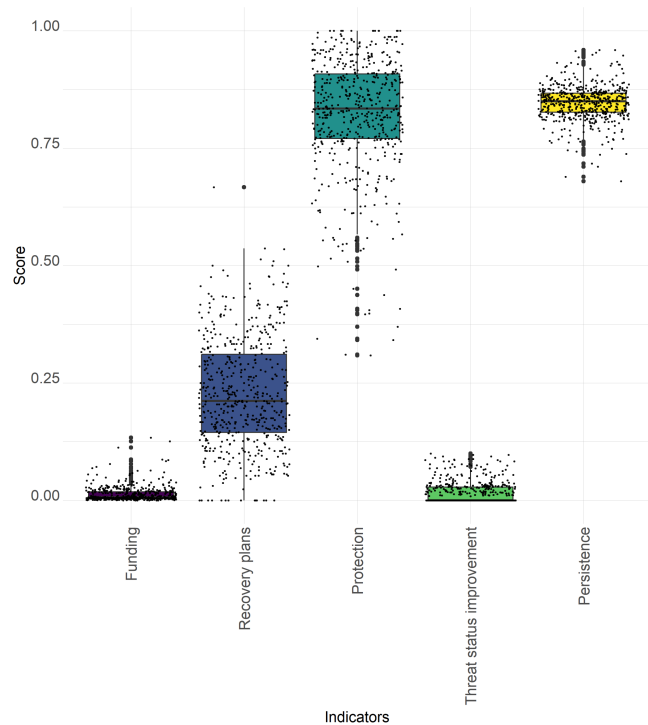


Figure 4: Box plots showing the variation in indicator scores between LGAs

2024 REPORT CARD METHODS

Our report card covers species listed under the federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Protection (EPBC) Act as Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild, and recently delisted species, as of 30 June 2024. We limited the scope to species whose range overlaps with terrestrial Australia, i.e., predominantly terrestrial and freshwater species, but including estuarine species, marine turtles, seals and sealions.

We included species for which we could obtain consistent spatial maps or data at the national level. For threatened species this was limited to species with available [Species of National Environmental Significance habitat maps](#) (last updated 6 Feb 2024). For recently delisted species this included species with records in the [Atlas of Living Australia](#). For protected area data we used [the Collaborative Australian Protected Area Database 2022 – Terrestrial](#) (last updated 28 July 2023). We used Australia, state and territory, Commonwealth Electoral Division, and local government area spatial boundaries from the [Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard Edition 3](#) (last updated 20 July 2021).

ADDITIONAL RESULTS

[My Backyard](#) displays a simplified version of the Report Card results for each federal electorate, which is calculated by averaging across the five indicators. The electorate grade for each indicator and whether the grade has improved (↑) or worsened (↓) since 2022 can be found below.

Electorate name	Funding	Recovery plans	Protection	Threat status improvement	Persistence
Adelaide	F	E ↑	B	F	A
Aston	F	E	A	F	B
Ballarat	F	F ↓	B	F	B
Banks	F	E	A	F	A
Barker	F	E	B	F	A
Barton	F	D ↑	A	F	A
Bass	F	D ↑	B	F	A ↑
Bean	F	F	C	F	B
Bendigo	F	E ↑	B	F	A ↑
Bennelong	F	E	A	F	A
Berowra	F	E ↑	B	F	A
Blair	F	E	B	F	A
Blaxland	F	D ↑	A	F	A ↑
Bonner	F	E	A	F	B
Boothby	F	E ↑	A	F	A
Bowman	F	E	A	F	A ↑
Braddon	F	D	B	F	B
Bradfield	F	E	A	F	A
Brand	F	E	A	F	B
Brisbane	F	D ↑	A	F	B
Bruce	F	E	A	F	A
Burt	F	F	C	F	B
Calare	F	F	B	F	B ↓
Calwell	F	E	B	F	B
Canberra	F	E	B	F	B
Canning	F	E	B ↑	F	B
Capricornia	F	F	C	F	A
Casey	F	F ↓	B	F	B
Chifley	F	E	B	F	A
Chisholm	F	E	A	F	A ↑
Clark	F	D ↑	B	F	B
Cook	F	E	A	F	A
Cooper	F	F ↓	B	F	A
Corangamite	F	E	A	F	A ↑
Corio	F	D ↑	A ↑	F	A ↑
Cowan	F	E ↑	A ↑	F	B
Cowper	F	E ↑	A	F	A
Cunningham	F	E	A	F	A
Curtin	F	D ↑	A	F	A ↑
Dawson	F	E ↑	A ↑	F	A
Deakin	F	E	A	F	A ↑
Dickson	F	E	A	F	A

Dobell	F	E	A	F	A↑
Dunkley	F	D↑	A	F	A
Durack	F	F	C↑	F	B
Eden-Monaro	F	F	B	F	B
Fadden	F	E	A	F	A
Fairfax	F	E	B	F	A↑
Farrer	F	E	B	F	A
Fenner	F	E	A	F	A
Fisher	F	E	B	F	B
Flinders	F	D↑	A	F	A
Flynn	F	F	C	F	A
Forde	F	E	B	F	B↓
Forrest	F	E↑	C	F	B
Fowler	F	E	A↑	F	B
Franklin	F	D	B	F	B
Fraser	F	D↑	A↑	F	B
Fremantle	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Gellibrand	F	D↑	A	F	B
Gilmore	F	E↑	A	F	A↑
Gippsland	F	E↑	A	F	B↓
Goldstein	F	D↑	A	F	A
Gorton	F	E	B	F	B
Grayndler	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Greenway	F	E	B	F	A↑
Grey	F	E↑	B↑	F	A
Griffith	F	D↑	A	F	B
Groom	F	F	B	F	A
Hasluck	F	E	C	F	A
Hawke	F	E	B	F	A
Herbert	F	E	A	F	A
Higgins	F	E	A	F	A↑
Hindmarsh	F	D↑	A	F	A
Hinkler	F	E	A	F	A
Holt	F	D↑	A	F	A
Hotham	F	E	A	F	A
Hughes	F	E	A	F	A
Hume	F	F	B	F	A
Hunter	F	E↑	B	F	A
Indi	F	F	B	F	B
Isaacs	F	D↑	A	F	A
Jagajaga	F	E	B	F	A
Kennedy	F	F	B	F	B
Kingsford Smith	F	D↑	A	F	A
Kingston	F	D↑	B	F	A↑
Kooyong	F	E	B	F	A
La Trobe	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Lalor	F	D↑	A↑	F	A↑
Leichhardt	F	F	A	F	B
Lilley	F	D↑	A	F	B

Lindsay	F	E	B	F	A
Lingiari	F	F	B	F	B
Longman	F	E	A	F	B↓
Lyne	F	E↑	A↑	F	A
Lyons	F	D	C	F	B
Macarthur	F	E	A	F	A
Mackellar	F	E	A	F	A
Macnamara	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Macquarie	F	E↑	B	F	A
Makin	F	E↑	A↑	F	A
Mallee	F	F	B	F	B
Maranoa	F	F	C	F	A
Maribyrnong	F	D↑	B	F	A
Mayo	F	E	B	F	B
McEwen	F	E	B	F	B
McMahon	F	E	B	F	A
McPherson	F	E↑	B	F	B↓
Melbourne	F	D↑	A	F	A
Menzies	F	E	B	F	A↑
Mitchell	F	F↓	B	F	A
Monash	F	E↑	A	F	B
Moncrieff	F	E	A	F	A↑
Moore	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Moreton	F	D↑	A	F	B
New England	F	F	B	F	B
Newcastle	F	E	A	F	A
Nicholls	F	E↑	B↑	F	B
North Sydney	F	D↑	A	F	A
O'Connor	F	F	C	F	B
Oxley	F	D↑	A	F	B
Page	F	F	B	F	A
Parkes	F	F↓	B	F	A
Parramatta	F	D↑	A	F	A
Paterson	F	E	A	F	A
Pearce	F	E	B	F	A
Perth	F	E	A	F	A↑
Petrie	F	D↑	A	F	B
Rankin	F	E	A	F	B
Reid	F	D↑	A	F	A
Richmond	F	F	B	F	B
Riverina	F	E	B	F	B
Robertson	F	E↑	A	F	A
Ryan	F	E	A	F	B↓
Scullin	F	F↓	B	F	B
Shortland	F	E	A	F	A↑
Solomon	F	E	A	F	A
Spence	F	E↑	B	F	A↑
Sturt	F	F	B	F	A
Swan	F	E↑	B↑	F	B

Sydney	F	E↑	A	F	B
Tangney	F	E	B	F	B
Wannon	F	E	B	F	A
Warringah	F	D↑	A	F	A↑
Watson	F	D↑	A	F	A
Wentworth	F	D↑	A	F	A
Werriwa	F	E	A↑	F	A
Whitlam	F	E	B	F	A
Wide Bay	F	E↑	B	F	A
Wills	F	E	B	F	B
Wright	F	F	B	F	B↓