

The Election Process

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Candidates and Political Parties

On this CD-ROM the names of candidates appear in the same form and order as on the ballot paper. The party affiliation of each candidate is indicated by the political party code. A list of the codes used for each party is shown in the table [Codes for Political Parties](#).

A small number of candidates had no party affiliation listed on the ballot paper. These are candidates who were not endorsed by a political party registered with the Australian Electoral Commission and who also did not request to be identified as 'Independent'.

In the Senate, most candidates are 'grouped' on the ballot paper. Each group of candidates appears on the ballot paper in a unique column and is identified by a single letter; with the group in the left-hand column on the ballot paper being group 'A', the second left-hand column being group 'B', and so on.

Groups may be made up of candidates endorsed by a registered political party. Some groups include candidates who have been endorsed by more than one political party; for example the Liberal and National Parties have a 'joint ticket' in NSW and VIC. A group may also be made up of candidates

who have not been endorsed by a registered political party and, therefore, no party affiliation is shown on the ballot paper.

Incumbent Senators can appear on the ballot paper in the same manner as grouped candidates, that is in a column on their own. With this exception, only grouped candidates can appear in separate columns.

Each group, whether endorsed by a registered party or not, or an incumbent Senator, is entitled to have a box 'above the line' on the ballot paper as long as they lodge a Group Voting Ticket within 24 hours of the public declaration of nominations.

Apart from incumbent Senators, all candidates who are not grouped are included in one or more columns on the right hand side of the ballot paper. Ungrouped candidates can have a registered party affiliation shown next to their names, or the word 'Independent', or no affiliation may be shown.

Enrolment

The enrolment figures shown on this CD-ROM represent the number of electors eligible to vote on polling day, 10 November 2001.

These figures comprise enrolment at the close of rolls on 15 October 2001 with subsequent amendments such as the death of an elector prior to polling day, a provisionally enrolled elector turning 18 by polling day, or the reinstatement of an eligible elector previously removed from the roll.

Types of Votes

There are five methods of casting a vote:

Ordinary Vote - a vote cast in the elector's enrolled division on polling day;

Absent Vote - a vote cast by an elector outside their enrolled division but still within their home State or Territory on polling day;

Pre-Poll or Postal Vote - a vote cast before polling day at a pre-poll voting centre or by post. These votes can be cast by electors who will not be within their State or Territory on polling day, are seriously ill, infirm, unable to leave work, or for religious reasons are unable to attend a polling place on polling day. Electors who are not within their State or Territory can have a pre-poll vote on polling day at a pre-poll voting centre;

Provisional Vote - a vote cast in circumstances where an elector's name cannot be found on the roll but the elector claims the right to vote; or the name has already been marked off the roll but the elector claims to have not voted before in the election. The vote cannot be counted until a careful check of records and entitlements has been made;

Mobile Polling - Electors in many hospitals and similar institutions, some prisons, and in remote areas, can cast their vote when visited by a mobile polling team. Mobile polling is carried out in the 12 days up to and/or including polling day.

Counting the Votes for the House of Representatives

House of Representatives elections are conducted on the basis of single-member constituencies. To be elected, a candidate must obtain an absolute majority (that is, 50% plus 1 vote) of the formal votes cast in the division for which he or she is standing.

First, all of the number '1' votes are counted for each candidate. If a candidate gets more than half the total formal first preference votes, that candidate will be elected. If, however, no candidate has more than half of the votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded. This candidate's votes are transferred to the remaining candidates according to the second preference shown on the ballot papers.

If still no candidate has more than half the votes, the candidate who now has the fewest votes is excluded and the votes are transferred to the remaining candidates according to the next preference shown. This process continues until one candidate has more than half the formal votes remaining in the count and is declared elected.

A distribution of preferences takes place in every division, even where a candidate already has an absolute majority of first preference votes. The result of this full distribution of preferences is used to calculate the two party preferred (TPP)

statistics for divisions that have ALP and Coalition as the final two candidates. In divisions that do not have the ALP and Coalition as the final two candidates, a Scrutiny for Information is conducted to determine the two party preferred result. A Scrutiny for Information in such cases is a notional distribution of preferences to find the result of preference flows to the ALP and Coalition candidates.

Two Party Preferred (TPP) Calculation

The TPP result is calculated, by convention, between the ALP and the Coalition (LP/NP/CLP). This differs from the Two Candidate Preferred (TCP) result which shows the number of votes for the final two candidates from the distribution of preferences. In those divisions where the ALP and Coalition were not the final two candidates, a further Scrutiny for Information is conducted to obtain a notional ALP and Coalition two party preferred result.

A national distribution of preferences to establish the TPP result was conducted during the 2001 election for the following divisions:

Calare (NSW), Farrer (NSW), New England (NSW), Warringah (NSW), Kennedy (QLD).

Counting the Votes for the Senate

The Senate count is more complicated than a count for the House of Representatives. Counting of first preferences begins on election night but the full count cannot be completed until several weeks after the election.

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Ticket Votes

Within 24 hours of the declaration of nominations for the Senate, groups may lodge a **Group Voting Ticket (GVT)** which shows the order in which they want their preferences distributed.

A "Ticket Vote" refers to a voter choosing to put the number "1" in one of the boxes above the line on the Senate ballot paper, all the preferences will be distributed according to that group's GVT. Electors may choose to vote according to their own preferences below the line.

Working out the Quota

To be elected to the Senate, a candidate needs to gain a quota of the formal votes. The quota is calculated by dividing the total number of formal ballot papers by one more than the number of Senators to be elected, and adding '1' to the result (ignoring any remainder). This is how the quota for New South Wales was calculated at the 2001 Senate election:

$$\frac{3,879,443}{(6 + 1)} + 1 = 554,207$$

Therefore the quota, or number of votes required to be elected, in New South Wales at the 2001 election was 554,207.

Counting the First Preference Votes

This is done as for a House of Representatives election; the papers are sorted according to which candidate has received the number '1' preference on each ballot paper. Candidates who receive a quota, or more, of these first preference votes are elected immediately.

When a candidate is elected with a surplus of votes, that surplus is transferred before any exclusions are undertaken.

Transferring the Surplus

Any surplus votes these elected candidates receive (i.e. votes in excess of the quota they needed) are transferred to the candidates who were the second choice of voters. Because it is not possible to determine which votes actually elected the candidate and which votes are surplus all the elected candidate's ballot papers are transferred at a reduced value.

For example:

Candidate A gains 1,000,000 votes. If the required quota were 500,000 the surplus would be 500,000.

The transfer value therefore would be:

$$\frac{500,000}{1,000,000} = 0.5$$

Candidate A's ballot papers (1,000,000) are then re-examined in order to determine the number of votes for the second choice candidates.

If Candidate A's ballot papers gave 900,000 second preferences to Candidate B, he would receive $900,000 \times 0.5 = 450,000$ votes which are added to the votes he received in count one.

If Candidate B is over the quota, then he is elected and his surplus votes transferred in the same way.

As a result of this process of transferring surplus votes, other candidates may be elected. If, however, all surplus votes from elected candidates are transferred and there are still some unfilled positions, further counting is undertaken.

Exclusion of Unsuccessful Candidates

Starting with the candidate who has the lowest number of votes, unelected candidates are excluded from the count and their ballot papers are distributed to the remaining candidates to whom the voters have given their preferences. If any of the remaining candidates obtains a quota through this process of distribution, he or she is declared elected. Their surplus (if any) is transferred before any other candidates are excluded.

The above processes continue until all Senate positions are filled.