

MINISTERIAL EXPERT COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM

The Terms of Reference given to this Committee appear to be twofold. Firstly in the use of preferential voting and secondly the make up of regions for the constituent base.

ELECTORAL EQUALITY IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The instances quoted by the instigator of this enquiry are presumably the areas which are thought to be of *inequality*.

If the method of voting is to be altered from a preferential system a much greater debate will be required. The method of the lower house election must also be brought into the equation.

Over the past two decades (not this COVID era) pre election polling by the parties themselves and the media suggests that the major established parties have had the following approximate % of first preference votes as a whole.

Labor	20% - 30%
Liberal	20% - 30%
National	7% - 11%
Greens	7% - 11%
Others	10% - 18%

These figures will naturally vary from region to region, and in fact the major parties have seen a quite markedly decline in first preference, with minor parties (**Others**) increasing. Possibly this is a result of the greater education of the population.

From this we can assume that some 20% of the voting population DO NOT SUBSCRIBE to the established parties. This figure can not be ignored and is reinforced in the following tables.

The past changes from individuals voting for all candidates was changed by the major political parties to allow for a vote for a party and the preferences distributed according to their dictate. Various arguments were given at the time and may be revisited. The members of this committee will of course be familiar with *this below and above the line* method of voting.

Evidence is provided in the manner in which the preferences were distributed. The Votes remaining column shows the unattached votes after a full quota has been met.

INSTANCE 1.

Electoral result of the **Mining and Pastoral** region.

The total number of eligible votes in this electorate were 49,064.
A quota of votes was 7010 for successful election.

Total Votes	<u>49,064</u>	<u>Quota</u>	<u>7,010</u>	
		% of total	Quotas	Votes remaining
Labor	28,002	57.07	3.99	6,901
Liberal	5,250	10.70	0.75	5,250
National	5,032	10.26	0.72	5,032
Green	2,431	4.95	0.35	2,431
Others (16 parties)	<u>8,349</u> <u>49,064</u>	17.02	1.19	8,349

Labour was entitled to an immediate 3 seats.

Despite having 98.5% of the votes needed for an additional quota, it received its 4th seat only after all the **Others**, representing 8349 votes, sending it 76 votes (0.9%) and then the Greens final 33 required votes for a quota.

It is to be noted that the **Greens** and **Labour** are cross preferential partners, as were the Others amongst themselves. It must be noted that **Others** represent 1.19 quotas.

INSTANCE 2.

Electoral result of the **North Metropolitan** region.

The total number of eligible votes in this electorate were 366,229.

A quota of votes was 52,319 for successful election.

Total Votes	<u>366229</u>	<u>Quota</u>	<u>52319</u>	
		% of total	Quotas	Votes remaining
Labor	214,997	58.71	4.11	5,721
Liberal	85,379	23.31	1.63	33,060
National				
Green	27,077	7.39	0.52	27,077
Others (19 parties)	<u>38,776</u> <u>366,229</u>	10.59	0.74	38,776

Labour was entitled to an immediate 4 seats, as were the **Liberals** 1 seat.

It is noted again that the **Others** again preferred themselves before considering the established parties. Also, that after the election of its candidate, the remaining votes

for the **Liberals** exceeded the first votes for the **Greens**, who only benefited from one party's preferences in the distribution of the **Others**.

The Terms of Reference suggesting the **Greens** at a disadvantage were mischievous and I have no doubt the members investigating this will agree.

The **Nationals** did not offer any candidates, hence the votes for the **Liberals** most probably reflect this.

INSTANCE 3.

Electoral result of the **Agricultural** region.

The total number of eligible votes in this electorate were 86,493.

A quota of votes was 12,357 for successful election.

Total Votes	86493	Quota	12357	
		% of total	Quotas	Votes remaining
Labor	39,263	45.39	3.18	1,292
Liberal	10,672	12.34	0.86	10,672
National	22,999	26.59	1.86	10,642
Green	2,579	2.98	0.21	2,579
Others	10,980	12.69	0.89	10,980
(21 parties)	86,493			

Labour was entitled to an immediate 3 seats, as were the **Nationals** 1 seat.

The 5th seat was awarded to **Liberals** from the **Others** votes as was the **Nationals** for the 6th seat. Each party needed less than 20% of the **Others** votes in the distribution.

INSTANCE 4.

Electoral result of the **South Metropolitan** region.

The total number of eligible votes in this electorate were 380,110.

A quota of votes was 54,302 for successful election.

Total Votes	380,110	Quota	54,302	
		% of total	Quotas	Votes remaining
Labor	239,248	62.94	4.41	22,040
Liberal	67,000	17.63	1.23	12,698
National				
Green	26,257	6.91	0.48	26,257

Others	<u>47,605</u>	12.52	0.88	47,605
(23 parties)	<u>380,110</u>			

Labour was entitled to an immediate 4 seats, as were the **Liberals** 1 seat.

The **Greens** in winning the 6th seat benefited from their preference deal with **Labour**. Additionally it is noted that the Greens had an advantage of 25% of a quota ahead of the Liberals remaining votes. The comment in the Terms of Reference again point to a mischievous intent on the part of the instigator of the enquiry.

It has been noted that in general the *above the line votes* for **Labour** are 99%, **Liberal** and **National** 2% and **Others** range from 5% to 10+%

From the above it can be seen that all parties have benefited from preference deals. Which when exposed to the public is accepted. Proof of this is in the number of persons voting above the line especially for the **Others**.

The two other regions not listed as having any abnormality, **South West** and **Eastern Metropolitan**, have shown that preferences from **Others** are similarly distributed to their fellow candidates. However these two regions were not listed in the initial reference. Why? The voting patterns were substantially the same and the **Liberalise Cannabis** party was successful in having a candidate elected in each of hem.

If a single base was used for the election of members to the Council rather than regions a total of 36 seats would be voted on.

In viewing the table it must be noted that the two major parties are not affected to any great extent. The two smaller *major parties* are affected. A more detailed examination would be necessary.

No. of seats 30						
Total						
Votes	<u>1,439,168</u>	Quota	<u>38,897</u>			
		%	Quotas	Votes remaining	THEORY	ACTUAL
		of total				
Labor	868,374	60.34	22.32	12,640	22	22
Liberal	254,380	17.68	6.54	20,998	6	7
National	40,285	2.80	1.04	1,388	1	3
Green	91,849	6.38	2.36	14,055	2	1
Others	<u>184,280</u>	12.80	4.74	184,280	5*	3*
All <,2%	<u>1,439,168</u>					

*The **Others** represent a Daylight **Saving** , and 2 **Legalise Cannabis** candidates from geographical areas of concerned interest. With the Theory number of 5 to be elected ,

a preferential distribution would most probably bring this about. The writer would actually prefer more Others as it would represent a more accurate State demographic.

As a result we can be sure that an educated population is aware of and is using its right to fully utilise the benefits of preferential voting.

FUNCTION of COUNCIL

The other aspect alluded to must be the function of the Council.
The Council is created to be a House of Review.

From the millennia past there has been a saying that futility is to appeal to Caesar from a decision of Caesar. So in the interests of justice, a legislative house must be chosen from a different electorate.

In the fields of the judiciary we have completely separate Courts in both the State and the Commonwealth to handle appeals. There is no current action to change this.

Within the world's leading democracies such as UK , Canada, USA and many European countries which have two legislative houses, all have vastly different voting bases for the bi-cameral legislature.

It is noted that in Australia the upper house, Senate, consists of 12 senators from each state plus two from each territory. The states vary both in size, population and income earning activities . This is a fact and common knowledge.

In the United States of America, the Senate(a house of review) is composed of two persons from each of the fifty states. Again the states vary in area, population and work activities.

With this proven formula of a successful house of review it is only logical that this state follows a similar path. The Government, Executive and Judiciary must be kept separate or anarchy could be encouraged. The house of review is necessary to separate the government and the Executive.

The regions which are set in this state cover the spectrum adequately.

Alternatively, if the instigator of this enquiry who is on record as proclaiming "one vote one value" and a genuine house of review from the entire electorate is required, then there is only one answer. The Council must be voted on by all voters. An election of 36 members by the one region – the State.