

REPUBLICAN PARTY of AUSTRALIA (The RPA)

(Established 10 January, 1982 in Sydney)

MISSION STATEMENT Incorporating Its PRINCIPLES and STRATEGIES...an Agenda for Commonwealth Constitutional, Parliamentary, Government System and Electoral Reform

1. The RPA will initiate a process which will eventually deliver a true Multi-Party Democracy in Australia. The RPA will pursue a continuing campaign of Direct Choice to achieve this end. Direct Choice essentially amounts to a system of multi-member electorates for The House of Representatives with a maximum of nine members in each electorate but with a minimum of seven members to allow for all substantial minority views to be represented.
2. The RPA endorses the concept of optional preferential voting i.e. the right of Australian voters **not** to have to place a number in every box on the official ballot papers in House of Representatives elections, by-elections and re-elections. The RPA will stay equal to this endorsement until a system of multi-member electorates for The House of Representatives comes into existence whereupon the Senate-style proportional voting system will (then) apply.
3. The RPA contends that, in the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the House of Representatives, the Senate system of replacement should apply i.e. a nominee from the same *registered* Political Party – obviating the need for time-wasting and resources-wasting federal by-elections.
4. The RPA will defend the existing proportional voting system operative for Senate elections whether they be for half-Senate or full-Senate (Double Dissolution) Elections.
5. The RPA will remain committed to the paramount importance of each Australian elector's vote being of equal value, regardless of residential geography.
6. The RPA adheres to the principle and practice of Compulsory Voting.
7. The RPA, furthermore, adheres to the principle and practice of Compulsory Enrolment of Electors.
8. The RPA insists that the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) be funded adequately by the Federal Treasury so that the Commission can:
 - (a) employ all reasonable, non-coercive means to ensure elimination of inadvertent non-enrolment and maximum eligible voter registration and participation in the Commonwealth electoral processes;
 - (b) issue cd-rom updates of the Commonwealth Electoral Roll every month to registered political parties;
 - (c) have Divisional Electorate Offices located in each and every federal electorate;
 - (d) print and disseminate booklets containing two-page statements of all federally-registered political parties' aims, objectives and primary policies and mail these to each and every household in the nation during the fortnight before a Federal election, by-election, re-election or referendum as the case may be;
 - (e) register all how-to-vote cards prior to printing, publication and distribution per the Divisional Returning Officers appointed in each State and Territory and that these be of a uniform size and of the same format for ALL federally-registered political parties;
 - (f) ensure that there is an end to the practice of distribution of how-to-vote cards at polling places on federal election, by-election, re-election and referendum days;
 - (g) place all registered how-to-vote cards in ALL booths of ALL pre-poll voting stations and ALL *actual* federal election day voting stations;
 - (h) issue only black pens to voters with which to cast their votes/mark their ballot papers.
9. The RPA believes that the only authority that should be involved in the issuing and processing of pre-poll and postal votes is the Australian Electoral Commission. Insofar, The RPA wants the practice of federally-registered political parties and agents of federally-registered political parties being involved in the issuing and processing of pre-poll and postal votes to be made illegal and, consequently, banned.

10. The RPA holds that Commonwealth-enrolled voters only be issued with their voting papers by authorised electoral officials upon the production of photographic identification.
11. The RPA will champion four-year fixed terms of The House of Representatives commensurate with four-year fixed terms of The Senate.
12. The RPA proposes a course of procedure in the event of a Motion of No Confidence being moved, seconded and carried apropos the Government of the Day as follows: The incumbent Government continues in the capacity of Caretaker Government for a maximum of five weeks. During this time, the House of Representatives convenes weekly until a simple majority of signatures expressing confidence in a new Government team is arrived at and formally voted on. Should an alternative Government not be able to be formed to complete the four-year fixed term after the allotted five weeks, then writs are to be issued for a General Election for a new full four-year fixed term in a further five weeks time for both the House of Representatives and the entire Senate.
13. The RPA will steadfastly resist any Commonwealth-initiated referendum proposal, by whichever majoritarian political party, to enable Joint Sittings of the Federal Parliament to be held merely following the holding of a normal Half-Senate election;
14. The RPA will propose that appointments to Ministries of State from The Senate be made unconstitutional;
15. The RPA, fairly and sensibly, seeks the removal of the “grandfather” clause in the Commonwealth Electoral Act which allows mainly British permanent residents (since pre-26 January, 1984) who are not Australian Citizens to vote in Australian federal elections, by-elections, re-elections and referenda without, in any way, being committed to Australia’s constitutional future. This proposal is inherently welcoming of dual-nationalities providing that the first loyalty of dual-nationals when in Australia is to Australia.
16. The RPA opts absolutely for a uniquely Australian Republican system of democracy whereby the people are collectively sovereign and the people directly/popularly elect their Presidency.
17. The RPA agrees that the Commonwealth Government should have full constitutional jurisdiction over the Murray-Darling Basin, indeed all national waterways, estuaries, tributaries, dams and catchments. As a corollary, The RPA wants sections #51 and #100 of the Australian Constitution amended to give the necessary powers to an expanded Murray-Darling Basin Commission for effective, indeed world’s best management practices to be employed in securing safe, distributive water assets and appropriate, complementary land conservation for all Australians – now and in the future.
18. The RPA will lobby the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) for an Inquiry into the Federal System as a whole with a view to the streamlining of the governance structures in this country and the introduction of a new system of governance overall comprised of two tiers of government instead of the present three. The text of the proposal The RPA will put in submission form to COAG will be as follows:
 - “There be a Parliamentary Inquiry into the three-tier system of governance in Australia with the resources for same to be furnished in equal parts from the treasuries of the Commonwealth Government and the six State Governments combined”;
 - “The terms of reference for such Inquiry include the fullest investigation possible into the economic, environmental and social impacts of eliminating the middle tier of governance (namely the Australian State governments) and the third tier of government (namely Local Government) so that a new, two-tiered system of National and Regional Government may be established to take their place”;
 - “The report of the findings of the Parliamentary Inquiry be published and forwarded to each and every public library in the land so that interested members of the citizenry may make considered responses to COAG”.
19. The RPA will, in furtherance to the Australian Capital Territory and Victorian governments’ initiatives, campaign for an Australian statutory Charter of Rights, Freedoms, Choices, Values and Responsibilities.