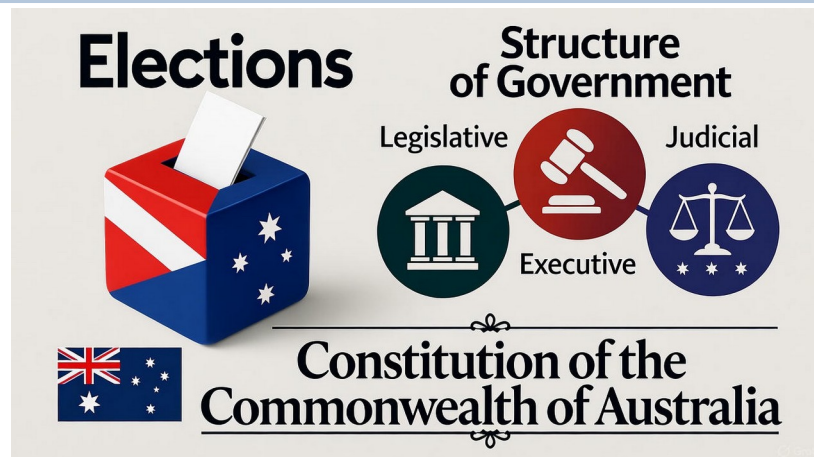


Presentation on Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD)



Fixing the system that is failing Australians

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 1 of 44

Good evening everyone – welcome to this presentation on Reforming Our Australian Democracy.

Tonight I'm going to show you why our system of government is broken... and what we can actually do to fix it.

Let's get started!

ABG



&



The Differences:

ABG	ROAD
Membership costs \$35.00 per year .	Membership is free .
Registered in NSW as an incorporated association	Registered in Australia as a Public Company limited by Guarantee
President of a Board of Directors.	Chairman of a Board of Directors
Members are censored. Very tight control. Minimum voting age is one such example.	Members can say what they like. The "correct" position is whatever the majority say it is.
Limited ideas but good at publicity	Unlimited depth of ideas – all are welcome. Gradual, methodical buildup.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 2 of 44

Many of you will remember me presenting with Australians for Better Government (ABG); in the company of Steven Tripp who is now ABG's President.

I've left ABG and formed Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD). Here's how the two organisations differ — and why I felt a new, more open approach was needed.

The summary of this situation is that neither organisation is competing with the other. Both, hopefully, will create an awareness in the minds of as many Australians as possible.

Disclaimer

The purpose of this movement, called 'Reforming Our Australian Democracy', is to stimulate nationwide discussion about Electoral, Governmental and Constitutional reform. Our goal is to reach a majority national consensus on the changes needed to fix a democratic system that has never served Australians well.

- **General Position of the ROAD Board.** The Board does not present itself as having the perfect answer to anything but we all agree there is an urgent need to review the present arrangements by which Australians are governed.
- **Conventions.** We intend to cause conventions at which "straw-men" will be proffered and, after thorough debate, consensus positions reached; leading to a series of Referenda aimed at effecting agreed reforms.
- **My Thoughts & Opinions.** What you are about to hear are **my personal view**. This is intended to stimulate discussion. I welcome debate should you disagree, think these ideas could be improved upon or have other ideas you believe have merit. My wish is to harness the intellect of the nation to arrive at something which is better than any one of us could, on our own, conceive.

Here's a quick disclaimer: [point to slide and smile]

I'm a ROAD founder, but I do NOT speak for the movement; indeed, only the membership can do that. Everyone is entitled under this model to have their own views no matter how fantastical, offensive or, on the positive side, constructive they may be. That is the beauty of ROAD.

Everything you see here is my personal view – straw men to be debated, improved, or even discarded. If we all agree, someone isn't thinking. So please, feel free challenge anything I say – that's why we're here."

Something is badly wrong!

- 1) \$1.3 trillion public debt, profligate spending and nothing to show for it.
- 2) Climate policies that have driven electricity prices many times higher than in the past.
- 3) COVID mismanagement, denial of early treatment and excess mortality from vaccines coupled with WHO Pandemic Treaty should cause great alarm.
- 4) Housing & rentals unaffordable.
- 5) Australia de-industrialised and not self-sufficient in liquid fuels.
- 6) Treaties that generally forfeit Australia's sovereignty – Activist High Court.
- 7) Suppression of free speech.
- 8) The danger inherent in Digital ID & a Central Bank Digital Currency.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 4 of 44

If you talk to ordinary Australians – tradies, nurses, farmers, small-business owners, grandparents – the same question keeps coming up: “How on earth did we let things get this bad?”

Look at this list. In there you will find at least two or three things that keep you awake at night.

And the worst part? Labor, Liberal, Nationals – all the major parties have helped create this mess.

These are symptoms. Tonight I'm going to show you the cause: a democratic system that has always been dysfunctional and, is now, frankly, dangerous.

Until we address the cause, the symptoms will just keep coming – and get worse.

The Real Disease

A hopelessly flawed democratic system that consistently delivers:

1. Low-quality candidates, participating in;
2. Defective, overly expensive (and sometimes rigged) elections, resulting in;
3. Low-quality politicians with ***far too much*** concentrated power...because of:
 - No effective separation between the Legislative, Executive & Judicial Branches of Government, exacerbated by;
 - Constitutions that favour control by the political class at the expense of citizens' rights.

This is largely the product of historical accident rather than deliberate design.

What has brought us to the brink is not one bad government but a system that reliably produces low-quality candidates who run in defective, expensive, and sometimes rigged elections. The result? Unexceptional politicians with ***far too much power***.

Why? Because there is no real separation between the Legislative, the Executive and the Judicial branches of Government... and because our Constitutions give the political class far more control than they give ordinary citizens.

This isn't malice — it's largely the result of historical accident. But it's now dangerous. So we must fix it.

Flowing from that realisation...

We must reform three things. These are:

- 1.the Electoral System;**
- 2.the Structure of Government; and**
- 3.the Constitutions at every level within the Commonwealth** so as to codify these reforms and limit the power of Government over the citizenry.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 6 of 44

So, flowing from that realisation... we don't need to tinker around the edges. We must reform three core things:

- 1)The Electoral System;
- 2)The Structure of Government and, finally;
- 3)The Constitutions at every level so these changes are locked in and government power is finally limited.

That's exactly what ROAD was formed to achieve.

Part 1

Electoral Reform

The goal of which is to get the highest-quality people into Parliament.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 7 of 44

So let's start with the matter of Electoral Reform.

The whole goal of this section is simple: get the highest-quality people into Parliament.

What I'm about to present is a rapid overview — time won't allow every detail — but I'll walk you through the key reforms that would dramatically improve the quality of our candidates and our elections.

The Two Essentials

To get high-quality parliamentarians we need two things:

- Exceptional candidates willing to run
- Elections decided **ONLY** by mature, informed voters casting a vote after some deliberation.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 8 of 44

Any fair-minded Australian wants the best possible people in Parliament.

To achieve that, most people would agree we need two simple criteria:

First, exceptional candidates who are actually willing to run.

Second, and just as important, elections that are decided **ONLY** by mature, informed voters who have given thought as to which candidate would best represent their interests and concerns....What I call a 'Considered Vote'.

The proposed reforms that follow in this presentation are designed to deliver exactly these two outcomes.

Finding High Quality Candidates

Countering the corrupting influence of a biased Media, Mobs & Money (the “3M”).

- 1) Require **ALL** members of a political party’s branch to vote in preselections, with strong protections against last-minute “branch stacking”. All members must also vote for the Party leader.
- 2) **Make it easier** for good people to become known to the electorate by expanding the role of Electoral Commissions, or a similar neutral body; thereby countering the corrupting influence of a biased Media, Mobs & Money — the 3M.

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Here are two practical ways we can counter the corrupting power of media, money and mobs.






First, require every member of a party branch to vote in preselections — with strong rules to stop last-minute branch stacking. It is also vitally important members vote directly for their party leader; not some cliquey Party Executive.

Second, help good candidates become known without needing massive war-chests or media friends. Electoral Commissions could run intensive, nation or State-wide advertising about their free, completely unbiased service — a neutral, one-stop website where every candidate’s information is presented per the candidate’s wishes and voters can create their own anonymous ‘How-to-Vote’ cards in private.

That levels the playing field dramatically. Instead of big-money interests flooding the airwaves with slick ads pushing their favoured choices, ordinary Australians finally get easy, unbiased access to real information — so the ‘common’ person can make up their own mind what is best for them.

The Borda System

A more exact, simpler voting system

1234567890		Please circle one number in each row to indicate your preference. No two candidates can have the same number.				
Candidate 1		1	2	3	4	5
Candidate 2		1	2	3	4	5
Candidate 3		1	2	3	4	5
Candidate 4		1	2	3	4	5
Candidate 5		1	2	3	4	5

Points awarded = (Number of candidates + 1) – rank given
 (e.g. for 5 candidates: 1st = 5 pts, 2nd = 4 pts, 3rd=3pts, 4th=2pts, 5th = 1 pt)

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I'd like to introduce you to a superior preferential voting system first proposed by Jean-Charles de Borda in 1770 — a French mathematician and naval engineer.

This is a points-based system that truly reflects the electorate's real preferences and is fast to count.

In this example:

- Candidate 1 gets a '3' which is $6 - 3 = 3$ points
- Candidate 2 gets a '2' giving 4 points ...and so on.

The candidate with the most total points wins.

It's ideal for machine tabulation, with manual checks by scrutineers. Most importantly, it stops the current system's flaw where a candidate with possibly the least first-preference votes can lose because of how preferences flow even though they are the most preferred overall.

Note also the barcodes on every ballot. They allow secure numbering for auditing and checking, and they help candidates and scrutineers with fast, accurate tabulation.

A more exact, simpler voting system

VOTE →	No OF BALLOTS WITH 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 IN THEM					TOTAL POINTS	PLACE
	1	2	3	4	5		
Candidate 1	30,000	8,600	5,000	30,000	27,400	286,800	4
Candidate 2	32,000	3,200	15,500	20,000	30,300	289,600	3
Candidate 3	17,000	13,000	20,500	25,900	24,600	274,900	5
Candidate 4	12,000	16,000	40,000	15,200	17,800	292,200	2
Candidate 5	10,000	60,200	20,000	9,900	900	371,500	1
TOTAL BALLOTS	101,000	101,000	101,000	101,000	101,000		

Result: *Candidate 5 wins even though they had the fewest first-preference votes because they were the electorate's most-preferred overall choice .*

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Here is what could happen if you use the Borda system.

Candidate 2 obtained the most ballots with a 1 next to their name, followed by Candidate 1, then 3, 4 and 5.

Now look at who received the most No. 2 rankings — Candidate 5 by a mile. The electorate is saying, 'If we can't have our first choice, this is the person we prefer.'

Under our present preferential voting system, Candidate 5 would be the first eliminated and their preferences would flow on to the remaining candidates. That's a failing of the current system — it does not properly reflect the electorate's true preference.

Under Borda, however, Candidate 5 wins the election, even though Candidate 2 had the most primary votes but, in actuality, was the electorate's third preference.

Compulsory or Voluntary Voting?

The Virtues of Compulsory Voting are:

- Money matters less.
- Greater participation improves public awareness.
- Everyone participates → governments serve the majority, not just the most zealous or loudest
- Involving everyone has a moderating effect on the complexion of Government, ie, fewer wild swings of policy, hence greater stability.

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The next issue we must address is whether voting should be compulsory or voluntary. Here are the main virtues of compulsory voting:

- 1. Money matters less** — billionaires and single-issue groups have less chance to buy or hijack elections.
- 2. Greater participation:**
 - improves public awareness, and
 - therefore gives more chance that governments serve the broad majority rather than just the rich, the most zealous or the loudest voices.
- 3. Involving everyone has a moderating effect** on the complexion of Government resulting in fewer wild swings of policy that could lead to instability.

Borrowing from Churchill's famous quip about democracy: 'It is the worst system — until you consider the alternatives.'

The One Disadvantage of Compulsory Voting

- The ideal we seek is that **mature informed electors** cast a well considered vote resistant to money, mobs and the media(3M)
- Compulsory voting works **against this ideal**. Often **uninterested voters** determine the outcome of an election, resulting in poor quality candidates being elected.

Our challenge:

How do we keep the benefits of high turnout while ensuring only mature, considered votes decide the result?

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So what is the problem with compulsory voting?

Remember, at the beginning of my presentation on election reform I said that all reasonable people would agree with the sentiment that the outcome of any election should be the result of **mature, informed electors** casting a well considered vote that is resistant to money, mobs and the media — the 3M.

Compulsory voting works against this ideal in that a significant number of uninterested people turn up simply because they were compelled to do so, not because they wanted to.

Our challenge, then, is how to reduce the effect that the lazy, uninterested, often ignorant and indoctrinated voter will have on the outcome of an election while still keeping the benefits of high turnout.

Let's do that now.

In Pursuit of the Ideal

Remember, we want to *create the conditions* where mature, informed electors cast a well-considered vote resistant to chance, money, mobs and the media (the 3M).

How can we do this?

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I repeat again:

The ideal we seek is that the outcome of an election is decided by mature, informed electors casting a well-considered vote — one that is resistant to chance, money, mobs and the media, the 3M.

[Pause, look around the room, make eye contact]

Does anyone feel that this is not a worthwhile aspiration — one that could lead to a dramatic improvement in the quality of our parliamentarians and therefore the Government of Australia?

The challenge, therefore, is to create the conditions where there is a better possibility of this being achieved than is presently the case with our current electoral system.

Reform 1 - A Mature Voter

What should be the minimum the Voting Age?

This matter should be decided by the Australian People, NOT by politicians.

- Remember you want a mature, informed voter casting a well considered vote.
- At what age are people intellectually mature? (Psychologists 25 → 30 years of age)
- The “quid pro quo”. It is only fair that if a citizen is not allowed to vote they should:
 - not have to pay tax, and
 - not be eligible to be conscripted to serve in combat.

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So let's start at the top.

Remember our ideal — we want mature, informed electors casting a well-considered vote.

Do you want your Government to be the result of voting decisions made by 18-year-olds fresh out of high school?

Psychologists tell us that intellectual maturity arrives somewhere between 25 and 30 years of age. So should the voting age be 25?

This is a decision that should only be made by the Australian People in a Referendum — not by politicians.

And if citizens cannot vote until they are 25, it is only fair they should be exempt from paying tax and from being conscripted into combat. That's the quid pro quo.

I've now spoken to a lot of people younger than 25. Almost all of them think this is a great idea — especially the part about not having to pay tax until they can actually vote.

Reform 2 - An Informed Voter

The Role of Electoral Commissions

Electoral Commissions could play a vital dual role:

1. Helping electors become far better informed, and
2. Levelling the playing field so under-resourced candidates are no longer swamped by big money and media.

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Electoral Commissions could play a vital dual role.

First, they could become a completely neutral, one-stop website where every candidate's information is fairly presented and voters can create their own anonymous 'How-to-Vote' cards in private. In this it is most important that the Electoral Commission is forbidden from altering the wording provided by candidates even if there are spelling or English errors.

Second, to make sure this free service is actually used, the Electoral Commissions could run intensive, nationwide advertising campaigns — exactly the kind of reach that big-money interests currently use to push their favoured candidates.

As an extra incentive, anyone who creates their own How-to-Vote card online could receive an 'express lane' ticket at polling places.

This single reform would dramatically reduce the influence of money and media while helping every voter become properly informed.

It could also reduce the incidence of informal votes plus speed up the processing of voters at polling places as well as reduce the cost of operating polling places. This saving could be spent on advertising.

Reform 3 – An Informed Voter

Allocate Public Land for Display of Electoral Material

Makes it easier for minor players to compete and by having more informed electors it improves the “quality” of the vote.

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Self evident. At present Councils do not allow candidates to display their election corflutes on public land. This means they have to seek the permission of landowners. In many cases, landowners are not keen to show any sort of preference to any candidates for fear they may cause offence to their neighbours.

Allocating public land by lot-draw overcomes this problem and helps candidates become known to the electorate. This is in the interests of all.

Reform 4 - Eliminate Chance

Rotate the Order of Presentation of Candidates on the Ballots

1. Neutralises the Donkey Voter and confuses the lazy, unprepared, uninterested voter.
2. Removes “Chance” as something that could influence the outcome of an election.

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This is called “the Robson Rotation” and it was “invented” by Neil Robson who was the member for the Tasmanian seat of Bass 1976–1989.

Robson Rotation is the practice of rotating the order of candidates' names during the printing of the ballot papers for an election, so that the advantage of being listed at the top of the paper is spread equally among all candidates.

An added bonus to this is that there is no time-wasting and expensive drawing of candidates from a basket to determine the order of presentation of candidates on a ballot.

Most importantly, coupled with another reform I shall deal with in the next slide, it further neutralises the effect that lazy, ill-informed and uninterested voters might have on the outcome of an election.

Reform 5 - An Informed Voter Ban Pre-poll

- 1) Ensures all people going to vote have been subjected to the full election campaign and are therefore informed to the maximum.
- 2) Makes it easier for minor players to compete
- 3) Significantly reduces the cost of elections.

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The slide says it all.

Pre-poll should never have been allowed. The big parties love it because it advantages the established Parties and existing Parliamentarians but it severely disadvantages those candidates that do not have the same resources and particularly independents..

Indeed, it is impossible for independent candidates and those belonging to the smaller Parties to man polling places handing out how to vote cards for two full weeks.

Reform 6 - A Considered Vote No Electoral Material nor Campaigning near Polling Places

1. Neutralises the effect of “Mobs” influencing the Uninterested Voters, who arrive at polling places, ignorant of who is running for election.
2. Therefore neutralises the effect of the Uninterested Voter.
3. Reduces the cost of running for election.

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Which brings us to Reform Number Four.

Banning all electoral material and campaigning at polling places neutralises the effect that “Mobs” have on the outcome of an election. It levels the playing field and would cause voters to spend more time learning about the candidates.

Those that didn't, namely the uninterested voters, would arrive at a polling place and not have any visual prompts as to how they should vote.

Importantly, it eliminates the effect that mobs, gathered around polling places might have on the last minute decisions made by uninterested voters. We want the best candidate to win. Not the one who can assemble the greatest crowds at polling places.

Lastly and importantly, it reduces the cost of conducting an election, plebiscite or referendum where, often, cost is a disincentive to holding them. This and prepoll works in favour of the large parties and it should not be allowed.

Reform 7 – A Considered Vote

No Party Name nor Logo on Ballot Next to any Candidate's Name

Coupled with:

- 1) the Robson Rotation,
 - 2) no prepoll, and
 - 3) no campaigning at polling places;
- this further neutralises the effect that lazy, uninterested voters have on an election's outcome.

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As the slide says, “Coupled with the effect of the Robson Rotation and no campaigning or electoral material at a polling place, plus no prepoll, not allowing a party logo or any other form of emblem next to a candidate's name further neutralises the effect that the lazy, ill-informed, uninterested voter will have on the outcome of an election.

If an elector does not know to which party candidates belongs, they have not done any preparation before coming to vote.

I think most reasonable Australians would agree that they do not want this type of elector influencing the outcome of an election.

Reform 8 – A Considered Vote No Above & Below the Line Voting

Candidates run as Individuals on their own merits. Political Parties should not decide the order of presentation of Candidates for Election.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 22 of 44

Chapter 1, Part II, paragraph 7 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia requires that electors must vote directly for candidates.

With the present system of above and below the line voting, over 90% of electors, for convenience, vote above the line which results in political parties determining who will be elected to public office. This is against what the framers of the Australian Constitution intended. Since this system was introduced in 1984, there has not been one single truly independent candidate elected to the Senate. This is not good for our democracy as the Senate is supposed to be a house of review. When the same Parties are dominant in the Upper and Lower Houses, legislation is not critically and exhaustively reviewed. This is very bad for the people of Australia.

Reform 9 – Level the “Playing Field” Reform Donation Laws

Unions must hold secret ballots where a member indicates to whom they want their portion of the total donation to go.

The same should apply to publicly listed companies and, indeed, to all organisations that donate to political parties.

Remove ban on developers and people in Liquor & Gaming Industry.

Donations over a certain limit, say, Average Monthly Wage, should be publicly exposed but there should be no limits placed on the size of donations if the other reforms, such as having the Electoral Commissions impartially advertise on behalf of all candidates, are implemented.

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Here are some top-level reforms that should be made regarding donations to political parties. [Read from the slide]

Reform 10 – Reduce Queues at Polling Modernise Voter Registration at Polling Places

Aim for a **2 minute registration at Polling Places as a Key Performance Indicator** which will:

1. Reduce the cost of elections.
2. Reduce inconvenience for voters.
3. Encourage people to use Electoral Commission facility to create HTV leaflet to obtain an “Express Pass”.

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As most of you would know, on election day there can be long queues at polling places. There is no excuse for this. The reason for this delay is the voter registration process at the polling place. This should be automated with the requirement that voters provide ID.

I have numerous suggestions as to how this might be done. Time, here, does not permit me to go into the detail of this. Any person interested in this, please ask me later.

End of Part 1 - Electoral Reform

Part 2

Reforming the Structure of Government

Restoring True Separation of Powers with a Constitutional Assembly

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 25 of 44

That brings us to the end of the 10 reforms to our electoral system. You might have others that you feel are important and we at ROAD look forward to those suggestions.

Now we move to the second big pillar: reforming the very structure of government itself.

Our goal is simple — to replace the current Westminster muddle with three genuinely independent, co-equal branches whose powers are clearly defined, plus introduce a new concept and that is the creation of a Constitutional Assembly sitting above them all as the people's final safeguard. Let's start by looking at what's wrong with the system we have today.

The Westminster System

Why it puts too much power into incompetent hands.

There is NO independence between any of the branches of Government so power is too concentrated. Serious defects are:

- Elected politicians are not competent to run Govt Depts. (They cannot give 100% to constituents and 100% to Govt Dept. Something has to give!)
- The Public Servants often achieve high rank by never doing anything innovative and by “being a team player”.
- Unions are permitted in the Public Service allowing the Labor Party to be permanently embedded in a vital organ of Government.
- Because of the Above & Below the Line Voting system no true independents have been elected to the Senate since 1984.
- As a consequence, the Bicameral System is neutered by Political Parties.
- Attorney General is a member of the Legislature, Executive & Judiciary

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 26 of 44

This slide sums up the core problem in one clear sentence: there is no real independence between the Legislative, Executive and Judicial branches — so power is dangerously concentrated in the hands of people who are often not qualified to wield it.

Elected politicians are expected to be both full-time representatives and competent heads of billion-dollar government departments — an impossible dual role.

Public servants rise to the top not by merit or bold ideas, but by being safe ‘team players’ who never rock the boat.

Unions are allowed inside the public service, permanently embedding the Labor Party in a vital organ of government.

Above-and-below-the-line voting has made it virtually impossible for true independents to reach the Senate since 1984, so the upper house no longer acts as a proper house of review. When the same parties dominate both houses, legislation simply gets waved through without serious scrutiny.

The result? Chronic mismanagement and abuse — exactly what we’ve seen with COVID policies, the collapse of manufacturing, energy disasters, and the mismanagement of water rights. Australians are literally being sold out by a system that was never deliberately designed this way — it just evolved into this mess.

How to Fix

Creating a Genuine Separation of Powers

- 1) Elect the Governors & Governor Generals
- 2) Elect the Attorney Generals with caveat.
- 3) Let them select the Heads & Deputy Heads of their Departments from anywhere in the world.
- 4) All candidates for the Upper Houses must run as Independents.
- 5) Sole responsibility of members of the Legislature is to represent their constituents.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 27 of 44

The solution is straightforward and bold.

We popularly elect the Governor-General, the State Governors and the Attorneys-Generals. The Legislature should have no say in who holds these critical oversight roles.

Attorneys-General must never have been part of the legal fraternity. They cannot be part of system they are meant to oversee. Their role is analogous to that of jury in English law. They must be independent.

Likewise, the elected Governors should never have been part of the Judiciary nor the Legislature.

These Governors are empowered by the people to **choose the best heads and deputy heads of departments** from anywhere in the world; competent professionals, not politicians.

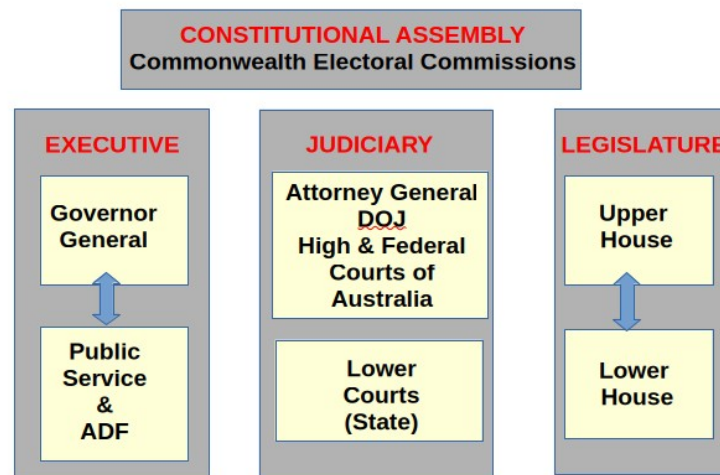
Governors also decide what departments are actually needed to carry out Parliament's wishes.

Upper House candidates must **run as independents**. They have to quit any political party or politically aligned organisation before they can stand.

Members of the Legislature have only one job: faithfully represent their constituents. Nothing else!

One Possible “End State”

Three Co-Equal Branches + a People’s Constitutional Assy



Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 28 of 44

Here is the vision: Three genuinely independent, co-equal branches, Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, none able to dominate the others. Each with clearly delineated powers conferred upon them by the people.

Sitting above them is what I have called, for want of a better title, a Constitutional Assembly.

I will deal in greater detail with its role on the next slide.

Importantly, given that each branch is co-equal, it is not appropriate that, for example, the Governor-General can dissolve the Parliament. That is the role of a Monarch and we have long consigned the idea of inherited divine rights to the dustbin of history. We seek Government by the People for the People.

Similarly, from the experience of the COVID debacle and the manipulation of the voting system to favour Parties, there has to be a superior body that could reliably bring any misbehaving member of the three branches to account.

The Concept of a Constitutional Assembly

The People's Guardian and Final Safeguard

- History teaches us that Executives, Politicians and Judges cannot be trusted.
- Branches are co-equal and, being so, cannot possess reserve powers to dismiss.
- Therefore there is a need for a small, popularly elected body to:
 - control all matters related to elections, plebiscites and referenda,
 - dispute High Court rulings which might be contrary to the wishes of the framers.
 - refer anyone in the three branches of Government for impeachment.
 - mediate disputes between the branches. (Most importantly, all unresolvable matters **must** be referred to the people by way of elections, plebiscites or referenda)
- In extremis, the Military, assisted by the Police, will, on behalf of the Constitutional Assembly, enforce the Constitution.

Reforming Our Australian Democracy (ROAD) | Slide 29 of 44

History teaches us that Executives, politicians and judges cannot be trusted to police themselves when their own power is at stake.

Because the three branches are co-equal, none of them can rightly hold the old reserve powers that Governors once exercised.

That is why we need a small, directly elected Constitutional Assembly — a fourth, neutral body that sits above the three branches.

It is not a veto body. It is a neutral referral and mediation body which:

- refers any member of the three branches for an impeachment hearing should they misbehave or seriously fail in their duties,
- mediates deadlocks between the branches,
- if mediation fails, puts the question to the Australian people by way of a binding plebiscite or referendum, with all arguments fairly presented beforehand — or by dissolving the Government and calling for a general election, and
- controls electoral commissions and all matters relating to elections.

In the last resort, the police and the military exist to protect the Constitution. As such, all police and armed forces personnel must swear allegiance to the Constitution itself. They must never obey any order that is contrary to the Constitution and will, if called upon, enforce the resolution powers of the Constitutional Assembly.

Questioning 3 Levels of Government

Why Australia's Structure Was Never Designed

- Australia has 6 States, two territories and a Federal Government.
- This was not designed. It happened through expediency and evolution.
- Compare that to the 50 States that make up the United States of America.

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Australia actually has only two real tiers of Government — Federal and State. Territories are a special situation and their existence as Territories has to be questioned. Local Governments are really just administrative entities of the States.

The ACT was never intended to have any form of self-government, just like the District of Columbia where the US Capital, Washington, resides.

Importantly, what we have in Australia has evolved. It was never deliberately designed.

Australia has a similar land mass to the USA, which is comprised of 49 mainland States. Could that be one of the reasons why the USA is far more developed and prosperous than Australia?

Some Guiding Principles for Establishing a Good Democracy

Guiding Principles:

- Government should be as close as possible to the people it serves.
- Government should facilitate and only as a last resort, regulate.
- Representatives cannot have two masters and be both representatives and leaders of Government Departments.
- Legislation should be a tortuous process where bills are exhaustively considered and only those things which are really important become law.
- Branches of Government must be co-equal so, through competition, they keep each other in check.

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Here are some principles that should be adopted if one is to have a system of democracy which will endure and faithfully serves the interests of the people.

Proximity is vital. Representatives must be in touch with their constituents and experience, personally, the consequences of their decisions.

It is not possible for an elected person to be a representative and an executive. The two roles are incompatible and the personality type needed for each role is dissimilar.

Always remember that it is the nature of Government to grow. Every law they pass infringes on the liberty of citizens and therefore should not be lightly agreed.

Lastly, always be mindful that “men are not angels!”

The Foundation for National Renewal (FNR)

- Registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission in 2000
- A not for profit, non-party-political, voluntary organisation with Australia-wide membership.
- It took a “Grass-roots approach” in trying to create a new Constitution for the Commonwealth.
- ROAD can be regarded as the child of the FNR

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I will now introduce you to a significant organisation that is the predecessor of ROAD. It is the Foundation for National Renewal founded by LtCol Charles Mollison and Ross Garrad around the year 2000. In its hey-day, it had over 100 members.

Charles had a long and distinguished career in the Australian Army and was the Company Commander of A company of 6 RAR during the battle of Long Tan in Viet Nam. His company went to the rescue of D Company during that engagement.

FNR sought to create a new Constitution by taking what it called a grass-roots approach.

Charles is now a valued consultant to and member of ROAD.

The Work of the FNR



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Here are the two books which record the work of the Foundation for National Renewal.

Book 1 is a substantial piece of research being 492 pages long. It consists of a record of the deliberations of the membership on many different subjects which were seen to be of such importance they should be part of any future constitution.

Such things as:

- 1) whether there should be a preamble in the Constitution and what form it should take.
 - 2) Citizens' rights and responsibilities
 - 3) Elections
 - 4) The Courts and trial by Jury
- and so on. Each of these issues were investigated by posing assignments for the membership and, through that means seeking their opinion.

Book 2 is a distillation of the work and results of Book 1.

A Radically Different Approach

- Disperse the power and the population.
- Divide Australia into 96 Regions demarcated by ridge-lines, not rivers.
- Divide Regions into 50 electorates of approximately 5,000 to 7,000 electors; giving a total of 50 representatives in each regional assembly.
- Elect one person from each Region to serve in a Federal Parliament. The country elects One person to be the Chief Executive and one person to be the Attorney General of the country.
- No Federal Bill is passed without the agreement of the majority of the Regions – A truly bicameral system.
- The total elected positions under this arrangement is $50 \times 96 + 96 = 4896$ plus 51 Chief Executives and 51 Attorney Generals giving a total of 4998 elected persons.

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[Read the Slide then elaborate per below]

One of the striking things to come out of the FNR's musings was a radically different approach to the structure of Government.

As previously mentioned, Australia originated from one military detachment established near what is now Sydney. From there other colonies developed. There was no real planning.

Capital cities result in uneven sharing of taxpayer funds and actually stymie national development.

In this day of precision guided long range munitions, capital cities are a security vulnerability. 9 Thermo-nuclear devices would wipe out 78% of Australia's population and what little is left of its industrial capability. The rest of Australia would then be free to settle.

Here's a radically different approach to the present three tiered system of Government operating in Australia.

No of Elected Persons in Australia

- At present:
 1. Local Councils ~5,500
 2. Territory & State Parliaments 621
 3. Federal Parliament 226
- **Total in present structure = ~6,347**
- **Number in new structure = 4998 (1,349 less)**

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When first exposed to this idea, my first concern was that there would be a lot more elected representatives and therefore a bigger Government. But that is not the case. In fact there are 1,349 less.

A key advantage of the proposed structure is that electors would likely have a personal knowledge of their elected representatives.

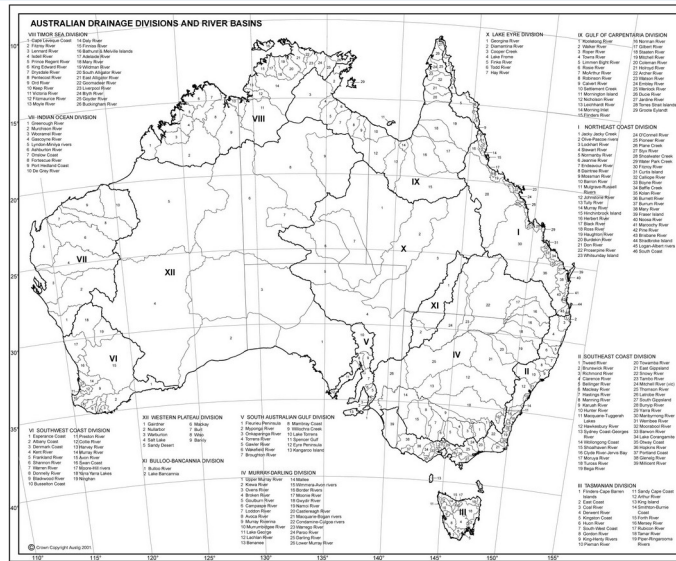
You have a true bicameral system with Regional Assemblies acting as guardians of the estate and also as a house of review as was intended by having a Senate.

Political Parties would not have anything like the same influence they do now on Australian politics and representation of constituents.

The scary thing about this idea is the more you look at it, the more sensible and attractive it becomes.

IT IS CERTAINLY FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

An Experiment Using AI



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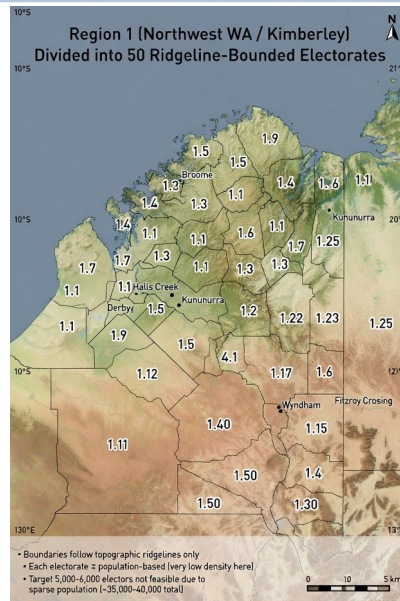
I use an AI tool called Grok as an assistant for research. Grok is amazing in terms of what it can do.

You have to be careful with it though because it is obviously influenced by what it finds on the web and does not have the capacity for critical thought.

In this instance, though, I said that I wanted to divide up Australia into 100 regions and to have within each region having 50 electorates of between 5,000 and 7,000 electors. The regions were to be demarcated by ridgelines, not waterways.

This is the first map that Grok drew for me.

An Experiment Using AI

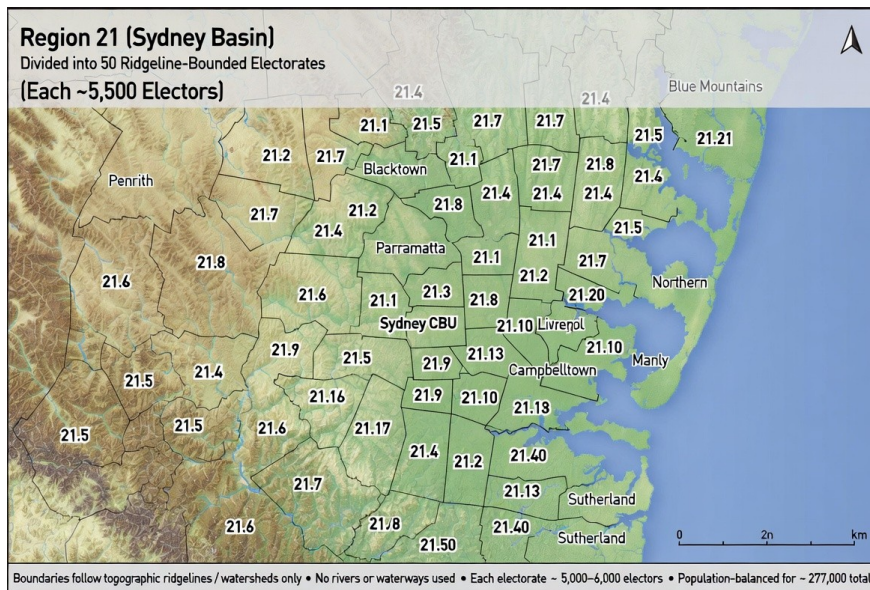


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You really couldn't see all that much in the map of Australia but you could then ask Grok to show you a region. So I asked to be shown the 1st region, Region Number 1.

This is what I got.

An Experiment Using AI



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Further to that, I asked for the Sydney Basin which happened to be Region 21.

So you can see that, by using AI, it is feasible to divide up Australia into 100 regions and 50 electorates within these 100 regions having around 5,540 people in each electorate; thereby comprehending the total population of 27.7 million Australians.

End - Part 2
Governmental Reform
Part 3
Constitutional Reform

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That concludes the section on Governmental reform.

[This would be a good time to break if this has become a long session.]

Are there any questions before we take a quick break?]

What should be in a Constitution

- The Constitution is a **Master-Servant Contract**.
- **Codifies** Government structure, operation & dispute resolution.
- **Guarantees** the inalienable rights of citizens.
- **Limits the power** of the Government over “The People”.
- Requires all **States to conform** to this general structure.
- **Enforceable**. No one in Government should be immune from prosecution. There must be a codified way of handling suspected misbehaviour/criminality of any member of Government, including members of the Judiciary.

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This brings us to the point of what should be in a Constitution.

There has been much past discussion on a preamble to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, some suggesting “fluffy” words acknowledging the first inhabitants of this country. That would be a huge mistake as it would then be used by the nefarious to imply there was a some special status to the relatives of these “first inhabitants” of this country. Instead, the preamble, like the US Constitution should make it clear that Government is the servant of the people and that the people are not the subjects of the Government. That should set the tone for what follows; namely the guarantee of the rights of the people, the limits of power of the Government over the people, the structure the Government must take and the critical processes, especially those relating to dispute resolution, between the three branches, that the occupiers must follow.

Essentials clauses in a Constitution - Rights

Guaranteed Inalienable Rights.

- Free speech with truth being the ultimate protection from sanction.
- The right to self-defence.
- Bodily autonomy.
- No discrimination of any sort on the basis of race, sex or ancestry.
- No compulsory resumption of property without just compensation.
- No control of wages in consensual employer-employee arrangements.
- Only a properly constituted court of law may punish a citizen.
- No arrest or detention without a formal charge.
- A speedy trial by a jury of one's peers should there be the prospect of incarceration or significant financial penalty to be specified in terms of average monthly wage.
- All laws must be reasonable laws and punishments must also be reasonable (not cruel or excessive).

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Here are a list of some things that should be considered for inclusion into a Constitution. These are aimed at limiting the ability of any Government to abuse "The People" or cause long-term harm to the nation.

This list is not exhaustive and would be the subject of much discussion at the proposed Constitutional Conventions.

Essential Clauses in a Constitution – Limits of Powers

Limits to the delegated powers of the politicians:

- 1 No emergency may be declared without “The People’s” consent given by way of a binding plebiscite.
- 2 No sale or destruction of significant, publicly owned assets or infrastructure without “The People’s” consent. This creates the concept of “a Gazetted Asset”.
- 3 No binding international treaties affecting sovereignty without “The People’s” consent.
- 4 No discrimination of any sort on the basis of race, sex or ancestry.
- 5 A limit on public debt which cannot be breached without “The People’s” consent.
- 6 Term limits for all.
- 7 No tax on wealth, only on actual earnings. Levies strictly on basis of service received
- 8 No person in Government service (incl Defence Force & Police) may belong to a union nor strike.

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Here are a list of some things that should be considered for limiting the ability of any Government to abuse”The People” or cause long-term harm to the nation.

This list is not exhaustive and, once again, would be the subject of much discussion at the proposed Constitutional Conventions.

The 1999 Referendum Results should Australia be a Republic

Choice	Votes	%
✓ Yes	5,273,024	45.13%
✗ No	6,410,787	54.87%
Valid votes	11,683,811	99.14%
Invalid or blank votes	101,189	0.86%
Total votes^[2]	11,785,000	100.00%
Registered voters/turnout	12,392,040	95.1%

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I show this because some may say that what we aspire to is impossible to achieve.

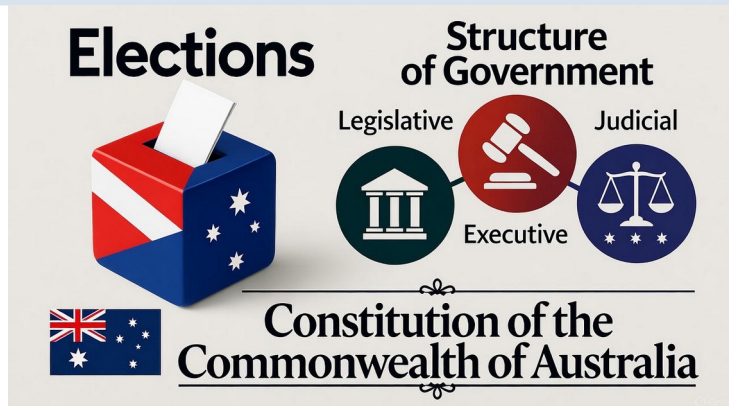
In 1999 Australians voted on whether Australia should become a Republic.

The presented concept was that the President would be selected by a 2/3rds vote of the Parliament. No detail was provided.

Despite how badly the question was framed (some say, deliberately!), it came within 5% of succeeding!

I mention this because, in my opinion, we are offering here a detailed concept of how Australians could arrive at a system of Government that is markedly superior to that under which we presently labour. Given this, I believe that Australians, once fully informed, would overwhelmingly vote for what is being proposed.

Questions?



Reforming Our Australian Democracy

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And that, ladies and gentlemen, is what “Reforming Our Australian Democracy” is about

What I have presented here is a top level view of what is a very involved matter requiring a great deal of debate and consideration.

Importantly it must be a product of the people of Australia and must eventually be agreed by the majority of Australians; most likely through a series of Referenda on contentious issues and finally, the finished Constitution.

I’ll now invite you to pose questions.