

Australian referendums 1906–1999



Using this CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums 1906–1988

Referendum 1999

The Constitution

AEC contacts

AEC publications

Search

Exit

Using this CD-Rom

Welcome from the Electoral Commissioner

Navigation of this CD-Rom

Using Acrobat Reader's tool bar

Map landmarks and navigation

About this CD-Rom

Copyright

Acknowledgements

Disclaimer

Feedback

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Welcome from the Electoral Commissioner

I am pleased to present the Australian Electoral Commission's CD-Rom of the 1999 Referendum Statistics. This CD-Rom also contains statistical and voting processes information relating to all Federal Constitutional Referendums held since 1906.

Conducting a federal referendum is one of the largest logistical activities that any nation undertakes. While most of us take it for granted that polling places will open on polling day and everything will be there to enable us to vote, a lot of hard work and planning goes on behind the scenes.

For most Australian electors, their key contact with the AEC occurs when they vote at their local polling places and are assisted by one of our casual staff. The AEC acknowledges the dedication and work of this 'casual army' who help us to successfully conduct federal elections and referendums. In 1999 the AEC hired some 60 000 polling officials to assist over 12 million electors to vote in over 8 000 polling places. Many of these 60 000 polling officials have worked for the AEC for many years over many events and take great pride in their role.

This CD-Rom also contains information on the procedures that have been followed in the conduct of referendums over the years, including recording of results at a divisional level.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



The electoral boundary changes from the first referendum in 1906 through to the 1999 referendums have also been documented in a new series of electronic maps which scroll through the referendum years and provide colour-coded information on how each electorate voted for each referendum question.

The 1999 section tells the story, from the AEC's perspective, of much of the work that went on behind the scenes for the 1999 referendum. On referendum night the ballot papers were counted after the polls closed and the results were entered into the AEC's computerised referendum management system. There was no tally room at this referendum, instead the 'virtual tally room' on the AEC's internet web site was the main means of disseminating results. The web site has enhanced the accessibility and timeliness of the release of results and proved very popular with approximately 154 000 people downloading over 1.3 million page views on referendum night alone.

The web site is just one example of how the AEC is taking advantage of the latest technology to enhance the way that we conduct elections. Much of the calculation and publication of results is already computerised and in 1999, for the first time ever at a referendum, we issued postal votes using an automated system. An electronic interactive desktop information system was used by staff in AEC telephone enquiry centres across Australia.

Whatever the future, the AEC will continue in its role of working 'behind the scenes' to provide an efficient and effective electoral administration of which Australia can be proud.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



While the traditional paper ballot is not obsolete yet, and in fact has very tangible advantages for recounts, the AEC keeps a watching brief on developments in the area of computerised voting. There has been much change in the past 20 years and, while there will be more in the future, some large logistical and resource issues have to be solved before computerised voting becomes a fact of electoral life.

There are many ways to find out more about Australia's electoral system and the services of the AEC. You can phone our national enquiry service on 13 23 26, visit our web site at www.aec.gov.au, or visit your nearest Divisional Office or the Electoral Education Centres in Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide or Perth.

Andy Becker

Electoral Commissioner

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Navigation of this CD-Rom

Welcome to the Australian Referendums 1906–1999 CD-Rom. Below is a set of instructions on how to use this CD-Rom. The information contained on this CD-ROM has been divided into yearly sections containing historical and statistical information regarding Federal Referendums conducted since 1906.



General information

For ease of navigation, standard layouts and buttons are used, allowing the user to access detailed information and then navigate back to the home page or referendum front page from anywhere within the CD-Rom.

The navigation bar at the bottom-right of each page (except the home page) has a house icon on it that may be used to return to the home page from anywhere within the CD-Rom.



Other standard icon buttons available at the bottom-right of each screen include a:

- back button, which links back to the last page viewed 
- exit button, which links to the exit screen 
- Left and right arrow icons will navigate to the previous and next page in the section that you are viewing.



- Using CD-Rom
- Referendum processes
- Referendums
- Referendum 99
- Constitution
- Search



Standard navigation buttons on the right-hand side of each page include the:

- Using CD-Rom button, linked to the contents list of user information
- Referendum processes, linked to a history of changes to enrolment and voting processes
- Referendums button, linked to the referendum timeline
- Referendum 99 button, linked to the front page of the 1999 referendum pages, which provides voting processes information, information on the highlights of Referendum 99, information campaigns implemented and statistical results to polling place level
- Constitution button, linked to background information on the Constitution and a Microsoft Word 95 version of the annotated Constitution that includes all amendments resulting from past referendums carried
- Search button, which links to the Adobe Acrobat Reader index of the contents of this CD-Rom.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

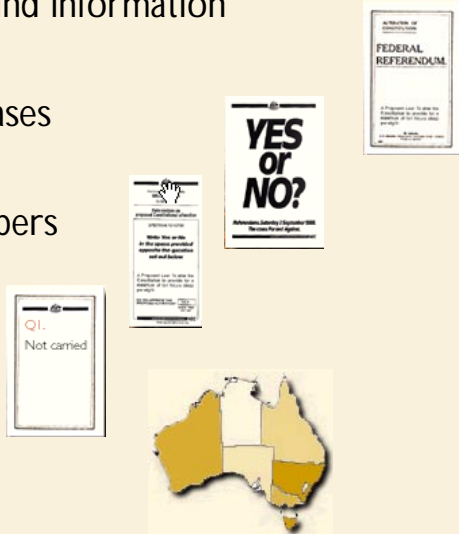
Constitution

Search



Within individual referendum years, another group of buttons on the right-hand side and icons across the bottom of the front page can be used to access:

- individual home pages for each year
- background information
- yes/no cases
- ballot papers
- results
- maps.



- 1997 content
- Background
- Yes/No
- Ballot
- Results

All of the above buttons are designed to 'grey out' when accessed to provide a visual prompt as to the section of the CD-Rom currently in use.

- Using CD-Rom
- Referendum processes
- Referendums
- Referendum 99
- Constitution
- Search

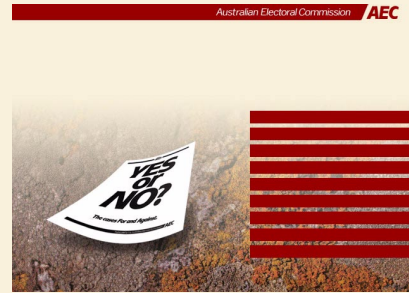


Contents explanation

Home page

The home page provides access to:

- information on using this CD-Rom
- the timeline of referendums from 1906–1999
- a separate section on the 1999 referendum
- the annotated Constitution
- voting processes information
- AEC contact information
- a complete list of referendum-related AEC publications
- the exit screen.



Timeline page

This page provides access to the front page of each referendum year and identifies which eight of the 44 proposed alterations to the Constitution were carried in referendums. Each referendum year contains an individual front page.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Front page for each referendum year

The front page for each referendum year contains:

- the four images across the bottom of the front page which are clickable and take the user to:
 - background information about enrolment and voting processes for the referendums of that year
 - information and images of the yes/no case for that year
 - information and images of the ballot papers for that year
 - statistical results tables for that year
- a map, which is clickable, provides access to detailed levels of State maps – these screens provide pictorial representation of how the nation voted in each referendum for that year and a national summary of statistics.



Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums


Referendum 99

Constitution


Search




Using Acrobat Reader's tool bar (see top of screen)




jump to beginning of the file (first page) move to previous page move to next page jump to end of the file (final page)




view at 100% fit page to screen fit page to screen width



move to last page you were viewing (like on a web browser)



Zoom tool
(can view document at up to 800%)

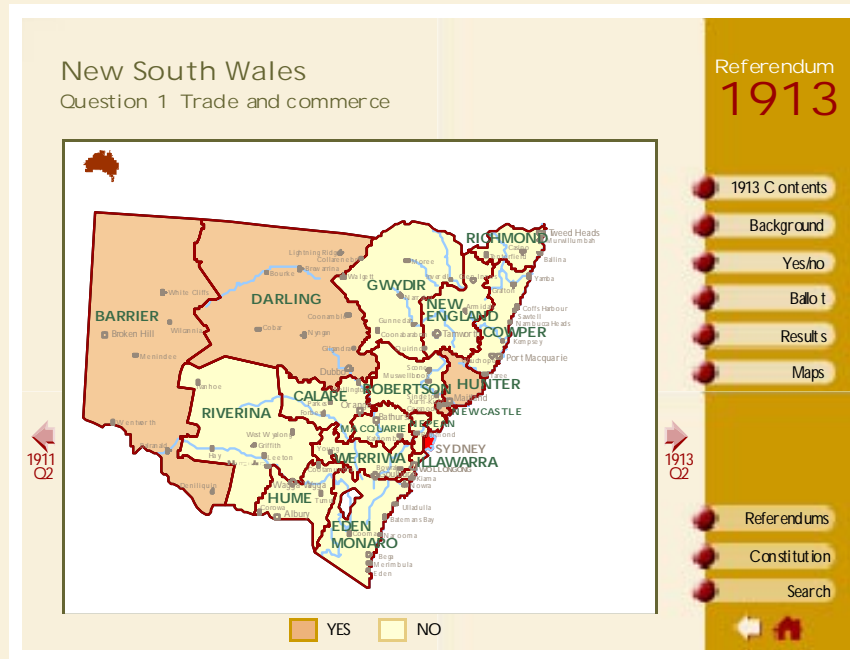


Find command
(can search for a particular word in the PDF file)

- Using CD-Rom
- Referendum processes
- Referendums
- Referendum 99
- Constitution
- Search

Map landmarks and navigation

The mapping component of this CD-Rom has been included to show the changes to electoral boundaries since 1906 and the voting preferences of each of the electorates for each referendum question. In order to ensure that accurate comparisons between electoral boundaries can be made, we have included consistent landmarks that exist today in all maps throughout the years. These landmarks include present day towns and suburbs which may not necessarily have been in existence in earlier years. Therefore some of the inner urban maps for the early years contain suburbs in the outer areas which did not exist in the earlier years and were therefore not included in any electorate at that time.



Guide your cursor over this example of an electoral boundary map to display information on how to use the mapping component of the CD-Rom

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



About this CD-Rom

The Australian Referendums 1906-1999 CD-Rom in electronic form is the official publication of the results of the referendum held on 6 November 1999. Statistical data is presented at national and divisional level for referendums held between 1906 and 1988, and at national, divisional and polling place level for 1999.

The text of historical documents on this CD-Rom is presented as Microsoft Word 97 and Rich Text Format files. The statistics on this CD-Rom consist of Microsoft Excel 5 and text files.

Copyright

© Commonwealth of Australia 2000

This work is copyright. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 all other rights are reserved. Requests for further authorisation should be directed to the Manager, Legislative Services, AusInfo, GPO Box 1920, Canberra, ACT 2601.

Acknowledgements

The AEC is grateful for assistance and written and pictorial material received for this CD-Rom from the National Archives of Australia and the National Library of Australia.

The Supertext logo is a trademark of the Australian Caption Centre.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Disclaimer

The text of the yes/no cases and statistical tables contained in this CD-Rom have been generated by re-keying of original published volumes of the official AEC yes/no cases and referendum statistics. This process may have caused errors in the text which have not been identified by checking procedures. Before citing from this source, data should be checked against the original documents.

The language used throughout the yes/no cases and in the background information write-ups and visual material for each referendum event reflect the attitudes and language of the time of each referendum. Most of this information has been sourced from legislation and (in the case of visual articles) newspaper editorial of the time. The attitudes reflected in this material are not reflective of the AEC's current corporate policy.

Feedback

Comments and questions related to these statistics can be addressed to Gabrielle Reid, Australian Electoral Commission, PO Box E201, Kingston, ACT 2604 or email gabe.reid@aec.gov.au.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Referendums, Plebiscites and Polls

- **1906 Carried**
 - Senate elections
- **1910**
 - Finance
 - State debts **Carried**
- **1911**
 - Legislative powers
 - Monopolies
- **1913**
 - Trade and commerce
 - Corporations
 - Industrial matters
 - Railway disputes
 - Trusts
 - Nationalisation of monopolies
- **1916**
 - Military service (plebiscite)
- **1917**
 - Military service (plebiscite)
- **1919**
 - Legislative powers
 - Nationalisation of monopolies
- **1926**
 - Industry and commerce
 - Essential services
- **1928**
 - State debts **Carried**
- **1937**
 - Aviation
 - Marketing
- **1944**
 - Post-war reconstruction and democratic rights
- **1946**
 - Social services **Carried**
 - Organised marketing
 - Industrial employment
- **1948**
 - Rents and prices
- **1951**
 - Communism
- **1967**
 - Parliament
 - Aborigines **Carried**
- **1973**
 - Prices
 - Incomes
- **1974**
 - Simultaneous elections
 - Mode of altering Constitution
 - Democratic elections
 - Local government bodies
- **1977**
 - National Song Poll
 - Simultaneous elections
 - Senate casual vacancies **Carried**
 - Referendums **Carried**
 - Retirement of judges **Carried**
- **1984**
 - Terms of Senators
 - Interchange of powers
- **1988**
 - Parliamentary terms
 - Fair elections
 - Local government
 - Rights and freedoms
- **1999**
 - Preamble to Constitution
 - Republic

● Using CD-Rom

● Referendum processes

● Referendums

● Referendum 99

● Constitution

● Search



Constitution

The Australian Constitution can be amended only with the approval of Australian electors. Any proposed alteration must be put to the vote of all electors at a referendum. The proposed amendments to the Constitution have only been carried in eight cases.

Altering the Constitution

The Australian Constitution is a framework that defines the Australian system of national government and establishes the legal basis for Federal Parliament to make laws. The Constitution itself guarantees that the only way this framework can be changed is by a referendum – that is, by asking all eligible electors whether or not they approve of the proposed law to change the Constitution.

Before a referendum can be held, a Bill must become a proposed law by being passed by both Houses of Federal Parliament or passed twice in either the House of Representatives or the Senate. The proposed law is then submitted to the direct vote of the Australian electors at a referendum between two and six months after the Bill is passed by Parliament.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



To become law, a proposed change to the Constitution must be approved by a 'double majority' of electors voting for the proposed change. That is:

- a national majority of electors from all States and Territories, and
- a majority of electors in a majority of the States (that is, at least four of the six States).

The votes of people living in any of Australia's internal or external territories only count towards the national majority.

The annotated Constitution (as amended 1906–1999)

The following text is based on the official copy of **the Constitution**** that is published on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Material omitted from the Constitution is 'struck-through', while material inserted is underlined. All explanatory notes about changes to the Constitution agreed at referendums since 1906 are included as endnotes to this publication. All 22 endnotes are indicated by subscript numbers within the text; just click on the subscript number for access to the endnote.

**Clicking this link will open the Constitution in Microsoft Word.

To return to this page, return to Adobe Acrobat.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Referendum processes (1906–99)

The enrolment and voting processes for a referendum event have changed in a number of ways since the first referendum in 1906. The various topics below indicate when legislative procedures changed and how these changes impacted on the voters. For a more detailed account of enrolment and voting processes at each referendum event, select a year from **Referendums**.

The Constitution

The writ

Voting

Results

When referendums can be held

Summary of changes to referendum voting processes

Costs of referendums

Plebiscites

National song poll

Role of the AEC

Structure of the AEC

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



The Constitution

Amending the Constitution

An Act to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia was enacted on 9 July 1900. This Act is commonly known as the Australian Constitution. The Constitution is a 'framework' which defines the Australian system of national government and establishes the legal basis for Federal Parliament to make laws.

How does a referendum affect the Constitution?

The Constitution can only be amended if the Australian people give approval to a proposed alteration to the Constitution by casting a vote in a referendum.

The Constitution itself guarantees that the only way this framework can be changed is by a referendum – that is, by asking all eligible electors whether or not they approve of the proposed laws to change the Constitution.

Click here for more information on changes to the Constitution and the processes involved.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Changes to the Constitution

Since Federation eight out of 44 proposals to amend the Constitution have been approved by the Australian people:

- Senate Elections in 1906
- State Debts in 1910
- State Debts in 1928
- Social Services in 1946
- Aborigines in 1967
- Casual Vacancies in 1977
- Territory Votes in 1977
- Retirement of Judges in 1977.

Detailed historical information about referendums held from 1906–99, including statistical results at the national, State/Territory and divisional levels and also by vote type, may be accessed from **Referendums**. The 1999 statistics are also provided by polling place.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



The writ

The issue of the writ by the Governor-General triggers the referendum process and polling day must be more than 33 days and less than 58 days after it is issued. The writ is a document directing that a referendum be held and contains dates for the close of rolls, the day of voting (which must be a Saturday), and the return of the writ. Separate writs are issued for each question as, technically, each of the proposed changes to the Constitution is a separate referendum. The writ must also contain:

- the text of the proposed laws to alter the Constitution;
- the original text of the Constitution that is to be altered;
- the proposed alterations or additions to the text.

When the results of the referendum are calculated, the writ and the results are returned to the Governor-General who gives Royal Assent to any referendum that is carried.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Voting

Marking the ballot paper

Since 1924 voting has been compulsory for those on the Commonwealth electoral roll. Any proposed alteration must be put to the direct vote of the entire electorate in a referendum. In this way, Australian citizens can exercise their right to approve or reject any proposed changes to the Constitution put forward in a Bill of Amendment passed by Parliament.

Since 1967 eligible voters have been asked to write 'yes' or 'no' to the question posed on the ballot papers. From 1906–26 voters marked a cross against yes or no on the ballot paper. From 1928–51 voters were asked to write '1' and '2' against yes and no on the ballot paper.

However the ballot papers were marked, the outcome remained the same. The proposals and the proposed changes to the Constitution had to be approved by a 'double majority' of voters, that is, a majority of voters in all States and Territories* and a majority of voters in a majority of the States (that is, at least four of the six States).

*People living in any of Australia's internal or external territories have only been allowed to vote at referendums since 1984 and their votes only count towards the national majority.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Formal and informal voting

Ballot papers correctly marked (according to the rules for voting at the time) are called formal votes and only formal votes contribute to determining the results of a referendum. Since the 1906 referendum ballot papers that were not correctly marked according to the rules were regarded as informal and, after their total was tallied, they were excluded from any counting.

The voting and enrolment processes section for each referendum details informality rules for that event.

Results

Historical referendum results

The results of previous referendums show that the requirement for a 'double majority' has proven difficult to achieve.

Since Federation, on 1 January 1901, there have been 44 proposals for constitutional change put to Australian voters but only eight proposals have received the double majority required to be passed. A further five proposals, while receiving an overall majority of votes, did not gain a majority in a majority of the States.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



See **Referendums** for statistical information about referendums held from 1906–99 including results at the national, State/Territory and divisional levels and also by vote type. The 1999 statistics are also provided by polling place.

When can referendums be held?

Referendums do not have to be held in conjunction with elections. Referendums held in 1911, 1926, 1937, 1944, 1948, 1951, 1967, 1973, 1977, 1988 and 1999 were not held in conjunction with either House of Representatives or Senate election events.

Summary of changes to referendum voting processes

The following list is a brief summary of changes to the voting and enrolment procedures that were in place for referendums from 1906 to 1999. Further details about these changes, can be accessed by using the Referendum button at right, and selecting an event between 1906-1988 or selecting the Referendum 99 button for the 1999 event. Then see the detailed background information section of the referendum for details of relevant changes.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Compulsory enrolment and voting

- 1906 Enrolment and voting were not compulsory
- 1913 Compulsory enrolment introduced in 1911 but voting was not yet compulsory
- 1926 First referendum held under compulsory voting law introduced in 1924

Voting entitlements

- 1906 Any British subject or naturalised Australian citizen over 21 entitled to vote since 1902
- 1916 Electors living in the Northern Territory, the Territory of Papua, the Territory for the Seat of Government or the Territory of Norfolk Island who satisfied all other electoral provisions were granted the vote in the 1916 and 1917 military plebiscites
Servicemen were given special enrolment and voting rights under the Electoral (War-Time) Act
Many naturalised British subjects were denied the vote under the Electoral (War-Time) Act
- 1951 Some Aboriginal people given the right to enrol and vote in 1949
- 1952 Overseas voting facilities became available for eligible voters
- 1967 Voluntary enrolment and voting was extended to all Aboriginal people in 1962
- 1973 Voting age lowered from 21 years to 18 years

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Voting entitlements

1984 Electors in the ACT and NT were allowed to vote for the first time in a referendum but their vote counted only toward the national majority figure

Changes to Australian citizenship laws and electoral enrolment entitlements resulted in only those British subjects on the roll immediately before 26 January 1984 retaining enrolment rights

Enrolment and voting for Aboriginal Australians became compulsory

Close of enrolment period changed to seven days after the issue of the writ

Special enrolment provisions introduced before 1984 allowed voting as:

- general postal voter
- itinerant electors
- Antarctic electors
- silent electors.

1999 First referendum held which allowed Australians to enrol from overseas provided they satisfied certain eligibility requirements

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Voting provisions

For further information on the types of votes cast see detailed information in the background information section for the relevant year

1906 Ordinary vote

Form Q vote

Absent vote

Postal vote

1910 Postal vote provisions changed

1913 Form Q vote provisions removed

Absent vote provisions removed (electors able to vote in any polling booth within the Commonwealth)

Postal vote provisions removed (electors were able to vote in any polling booth within the Commonwealth)

1916 Territory electors allowed a vote in the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites

Two types of absent voting provisions introduced – on polling day and before polling day

Voting was not compulsory for members of overseas forces but special enrolment & voting provisions allowed them a vote

Commonwealth Returning Officers were assigned to conduct polling at overseas military posts for these plebiscites (note that for the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites, if the enrolled electors member of forces 'normal' place of living was in the Territories, they were eligible to vote in the plebiscites)

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Voting provisions

For further information on the types of votes cast see detailed information in the background information section for the relevant year

1919 Absent vote only available on polling day

Section 121 vote introduced

Postal vote provisions changed

1926 Section 91A vote introduced

Section 115(3) vote introduced

Section 121A vote introduced

1928 Section 115(3) vote provisions removed

Postal vote provisions changed

1944 Voting was not compulsory for members of overseas forces but special enrolment and voting provisions allowed them a vote

Commonwealth Returning Officers were assigned to conduct polling at overseas military posts for this referendum (note that for all referendums held, apart from the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites, if the member of the forces 'normal' place of living was in NT or ACT, they were ineligible to vote in the referendums)

1951 Voting was not compulsory for members of overseas forces but special enrolment and voting provisions allowed them a vote (note that for all referendums held, apart from the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites, if the member of the forces 'normal' place of living was in NT or ACT, they were ineligible to vote in the referendums)

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Voting provisions

For further information on the types of votes cast see detailed information in the background information section for the relevant year

- 1952 Voting facilities were made available to eligible electors outside Australia
- 1967 Voting was not compulsory for members of overseas forces but special enrolment and voting provisions allowed them a vote (note that for all referendums held, apart from the 1916 and 1917 plebiscites, if the member of the forces 'normal' place of living was in NT or ACT, they were ineligible to vote in the referendums)
- 1984 Postal voting provisions changed to allow oral and written postal votes
- Provisional voting introduced (replaced section voting)
- Mobile polling introduced for any person who was at a special hospital either on polling day or in the 5 days before polling day. – mobile polling could be conducted in places in the 12 days preceding polling day
- Australians living or travelling overseas are able to cast a vote at Australian embassies, consulates and high commissions or they can vote by post
- Mobile polling introduced at some prisons

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Polling dates

- 1906 Polling day could be any day as notified in the writ, it did not have to be a Saturday
Polling booths were open from 8am to 7pm
- 1913 Polling day had to be on a Saturday
Polling booth hours changed to 8am to 8pm
- 1984 Polling booth hours changes to 8am to 6pm

Ballot papers

- 1906 Voters indicated their preference in a referendum by marking a cross next to either the yes or the no box on the ballot paper
- 1910 Separate ballot papers for each of the questions
- 1913 Changed to a single ballot paper containing all questions
- 1928 Changed from marking crosses against yes or no on the ballot paper to writing '1' and '2' against yes and no
- 1967 Changed from marking 1 and 2 on the ballot paper to writing the words 'yes' or 'no' against each question
- 1999 Changed to separate ballot papers for each of the questions

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Scrutineers

- 1906 Scrutineers could be appointed by the Governor of a State
- 1913 Scrutineers could now be appointed by the Governor-General as well as State Governors

Yes/No cases

- 1913 The first Yes/No case booklets to argue the cases for and against each of the proposals were printed and distributed
- 1916 An argument for and against was not required for the military plebiscites as there were not proposals to change constitution law, but issues put before the electorate by the Government which did not affect the Constitution

Special note:

Arguments for and against the proposed laws were also printed for the referendums held in 1937, 1944, 1946, 1948, 1951, 1967, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1984, 1988 and 1999.

Arguments for and against the proposed laws were not printed and distributed in 1906, 1910, 1911, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1926 and 1928.

Other referendum events

- 1915 Referendum not held. Writ was withdrawn via issue of proclamation
- 1966 Referendum scheduled for 28 May 1966 not held. Deferred to 27 May 1967

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Costs of referendums 1906–1999

Date	Event	Cost
1906	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendum	£48 177
1910	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendums	£59 281
1911	Referendums	£51 774
1913	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendums	£91 438
1916	Military Plebiscite	£81 113
1917	Military Plebiscite	£83 755
1919	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendums	£96 955
1926	Referendums	£105 365
1928	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendum	£118 844
1937	Referendums	£95 893
1944	Referendum	£102 771
1946	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendums	£154 848
1948	Referendum	£146 660
1951	Referendum	£222 704
1967	Referendums	\$1 041 000 [#]

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Date	Event	Cost
1973	Referendums	\$2 900 000
1974	Double Dissolution and Referendums	\$3 166 000 [#]
1977	Referendums and National Song Poll	not available
1984	House of Representatives, Senate and Referendums	\$38 430 000
1988	Referendums	\$34 447 200
1999	Referendums	\$66 233 682

Estimated

- Using CD-Rom
- Referendum processes
- Referendums
- Referendum 99
- Constitution
- Search



Plebiscites

Plebiscites are advisory referendums to test whether the Australian voters support or oppose a government's proposed action on an issue. Plebiscites are not proposals to amend the Constitution and the government is therefore not bound by the result. Only two plebiscites have been held since Federation; they were the military service referendums in 1916 and 1917. Both plebiscites sought a mandate on conscription and both were defeated. Voting was compulsory and electors in all Federal Territories were permitted to vote.*

*Electors in Federal Territories were not permitted to vote in referendums until the Referendum held in 1984. Proposed changes to the Constitution to allow electors in the Territories to vote in referendums were passed in the 1977 Referendum.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



National song poll

In 1977 a national issue which was not a referendum or a plebiscite was put to the vote of the Australian people. The national song poll was held to determine which song was preferred as Australia's national anthem. Voting in the national song poll was not compulsory and ACT and NT residents were allowed a vote. Voters indicated their preferences from 1 to 4 on the ballot paper (with 1 being the preferred choice of national song). After completion of the distribution of preferences the most favoured song, Advance Australia Fair, was declared to be the national anthem and non-sexist words were adopted.

(To be initialed on back by
Presiding Officer before issue)

BALLOT-PAPER

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
STATE OF TASMANIA
A POLL FOR A NATIONAL SONG

Against the background that 'GOD SAVE THE QUEEN' is the NATIONAL ANTHEM to be played on Regal and Vice-Regal occasions, electors may indicate their preferences as to which of the TUNES OF THE SONGS listed below they would prefer to be played on other occasions.

God Save The Queen

Advance Australia Fair

Song Of Australia

Waltzing Matilda

DIRECTIONS—

1. Mark your vote on this ballot-paper by placing the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the squares respectively opposite the tunes of songs so as to indicate the order of your preference for them.

2. Voting in the Poll for a National Song is voluntary. If you do not wish to vote in this Poll please return this ballot-paper to the Presiding Officer.

T. J. Hughes, Government Printer, Tasmania.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



The role of the AEC

The AEC's role for a referendum is to provide voting services to the electors of Australia to enable them to have their say on the proposed laws to alter the Constitution. The AEC is an independent statutory authority and is responsible for the machinery of the referendum only. It has no involvement with the campaigns for or against the proposed changes to the Constitution.

Procedures for voting at the referendum are substantially similar to those which operate at federal elections except that electors mark the ballot papers to indicate a yes or no vote for the referendum proposal.

The AEC also organises the printing and distribution to every elector of the yes/no case booklets for each referendum. These yes/no case booklets contain the proposed alterations to the Constitution and the 'yes' and 'no' cases that are prepared by the members of the parliament who supported or opposed the proposals.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



At the 1999 referendum, the AEC provided the following enrolment and voting services:

- processing enrolment cards
- compiling certified lists of voters
- printing ballot papers
- setting up and staffing polling places
- coordinating pre-poll voting, postal voting, overseas voting, Antarctic voting and mobile polling
- conducting a public information campaign associated with the process of enrolment and voting
- producing and delivering the yes/no case pamphlet
- counting the votes
- releasing the results.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



The structure of the AEC

At the time of the 1999 Referendum the AEC was organised on a geographic basis, with the central office in Canberra, a head office in each State capital and Darwin, and a divisional office in or near each of the 148 electoral divisions.

The AEC is headed by a Commission consisting of a Chairperson (who must be a judge or a retired judge of the Federal Court), the Electoral Commissioner (who performs the functions of a chief executive officer) and a part-time non-judicial member (usually the Australian Statistician).

In each State and the Northern Territory the Australian Electoral Officer is responsible for the management of electoral activities within that State or Territory. An Australian Electoral Officer for the Australian Capital Territory is temporarily appointed for each election and referendum period.

Each electoral division has a permanent Divisional Returning Officer, who is responsible for electoral administration in their division. The Divisional Returning Officer was the returning officer for the 1999 referendum in their division.

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



AEC contacts

Telephone 13 23 26

Web site www.aec.gov.au

E-mail info@aec.gov.au

Postal address Australian Electoral Commission
PO Box E201
Kingston ACT 2604
AUSTRALIA

CD-Rom assistance Gabrielle Reid
Phone: 02 6271 4548
Fax: 02 6271 4558
E-mail: gabe.reid@aec.gov.au

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



AEC publications

The AEC produces a number of publications relevant to the conduct of a referendum.

All referendum publications are available on the AEC web sites at www.aec.gov.au and referendum.aec.gov.au.

If you would like to add your name to our mailing list for publications, such as Electoral Newsfile, you can either e-mail (info@aec.gov.au) us your name, address and what publications you are interested in or you can write to us at PO Box E201, Kingston, ACT, 2604.

The following publications were produced for the 1999 referendums:

- Scrutineers Handbook
- Electoral Newsfiles
 - No.84 Referendum 1999 'Information Guide'
 - No.85 Referendum 1999 'Close of Rolls'
 - No.86 Referendum 1999 'The Votes and the Count'
 - No.87 Referendum 1999 'Results Guide'
- Education information pamphlet
- Electoral backgrounder
 - No.10 Referendum Advertising

Using CD-Rom

Referendum processes

Referendums

Referendum 99

Constitution

Search



Are you sure you want to exit this CD-Rom?

Return to previous page

Return to home page

Exit

- Using CD-Rom
- Referendum processes
- Referendums
- Referendum 99
- Constitution
- Search

