

## MODEL SYSTEMS

The following is a summary of models of possible reformed electoral systems. They divide into two groups, one based on multi-member constituencies, the other incorporating single-member constituencies with "topping-up" on a proportional basis. None of the models can be considered to be definitive, and all have a measure of arbitrariness and other weaknesses associated with hypothetical solutions. However, these problems are understood and accepted and the principle on which they are based remains intact.

### Multi-member Constituencies

The criteria for the first group - multi-member constituencies - is as follows: current electorate boundaries were used to construct constituencies containing from 1 to 7 current electorates of various combinations; constraints of the Constitution were taken into account for purposes of State allocations and combinations of constituencies; in general, urban areas were considered to be suited to constituencies with more members, and rural areas to constituencies with less members; the method of casting and counting votes was considered to be similar to that used in the Senate, with some variations for comparative purposes; voting patterns have been deemed to be the same for the purpose of comparison; one model was supplied by the Proportional Representation Society based on similar criteria.

Weaknesses recognised in the methodology include: (i) the impractical nature of some boundaries and the size of electorates due to the necessity of using current electorate boundaries. This would not be a problem in reality since new boundaries would be set by an Electoral Commission in a similar way as at present, and in general, results have not been affected due to evening out processes. (ii) The assumption of consistent voting patterns: tactics of political parties would change to fit the new system and voters' preferences

would also adapt to new perceptions and possibilities. Again, there would be a roundabout and swings effect. (iii) There are a number of close results in each model which would easily change given small variations in preference distributions. These results have been affected by intuition as much as by the actual figures. As a consequence, there is a margin of error in each model for each party (not shown in the tables).

In each model Tasmania and the two Territories remain constant, each being treated as one electorate: given the history of Tasmanian federal representation it would be fair to assume that one seat in each model could be won (from the Liberals) by an "independent" candidate, the situation being perhaps more comparable to Senate voting. The position in the Northern Territory would be no different than it is at present, there being only one representative elected.

The variation noted in the other States among the models (shown as "most likely result") is caused principally by two factors: the combination of electorates and the number of representatives coming from each multi-member constituency. There are no other variables and the variations should not be construed as stemming from the application of the electoral principles involved.

<u>N.S.W.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	18	16	9	0	43
Model A Estimate:	22	16	5	0	43
Model B Estimate:	22	16	5	0	43
Model C Estimate:	24	15	4	0	43
Model D Estimate:	22	17	4	0	43
Model E Estimate:	21	18	4	0	43
Model F Estimate:	21	17	5	0	43
Model G Estimate:	23	16	4	0	43
Model H Estimate:	22	17	4	0	43
Model PRS Estimate:	21	16	5	1	43
Most likely result:	22	17	4	0	
Proportional Entitlement:	22	16	5	-	
Deviation:	±2	±2	±1	-	

<u>VICTORIA</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	17	13	3	0	33
Model A Estimate:	17	14	2	0	33
Model B Estimate:	17	13	2	1	33
Model C Estimate:	17	13	2	1	33
Model D Estimate:	18	14	1	0	33
Model E Estimate:	17	15	1	0	33
Model F Estimate:	16	14	2	1	33
Model G Estimate:	16	14	3	0	33
Model H Estimate:	17	15	1	0	33
Model PRS Estimate:	17	13	2	1	33
Most likely result:	17	14	2	0	
Proportional Entitlement:	17	14	2	-	
Deviation:	±1	±1	±1	-	

<u>QLD</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	5	7	7	0	19
Model A Estimate:	8	6	5	0	19
Model B Estimate:	7	7	5	0	19
Model C Estimate:	7	7	5	0	19
Model D Estimate:	7	7	5	0	19
Model E Estimate:	7	7	5	0	19
Model F Estimate:	9	5	5	0	19
Model G Estimate:	8	6	5	0	19
Model H Estimate:	8	6	5	0	19
Model PRS Estimate:	8	7	4	0	19
Most likely result:	8	6	5	0	
Proportional Entitlement:	9	6	4	-	
Deviation:	±1	±1	±1	-	

<u>S.A.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	6	5	0	0	11
Model A Estimate:	6	5	0	0	11
Model B Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model C Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model D Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model E Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model F Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model G Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model H Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model PRS Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11
Most likely result:	5	6	0	0	
Proportional Entitlement:	5½	5½	0	-	
Deviation:	±½	±½	-	-	

	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>W.A. Actual:</u>					
1980 Actual:	3	8	0	0	11
Model A Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model B Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model C Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model D Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model E Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model F Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model G Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model H Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model PRS Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11

	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Most likely result:	5	6	0	0	11
Proportional Entitlement:	5	6	0	0	11
Deviation:	-	-	-	-	-

<u>TASMANIA</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	0	5	0	0	5
Model A Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model B Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model C Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model D Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model E Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model F Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model G Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model H Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model PRS Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5

(Detailed information is available on each model on request.)

Most likely result:	2	3	0	0	5
Proportional Entitlement:	2	3	0	0	5
Deviation:	-	-	-	-	-

<u>ACT</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	2	0	0	0	2
All Models Estimates:	1	1	0	0	2
Most likely result:	1	1	0	0	
Proportional Entitlement:	1	1	-	-	
Deviation:	-	-	-	-	

<u>N.T.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	0	0	1	0	1
All Models Estimates:	0	0	1	0	1

<u>AUSTRALIA</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	51	54	20	0	125
Model A Estimate:	61	51	13	0	125
Model B Estimate:	59	52	13	1	125
Model C Estimate:	61	51	12	1	125
Model D Estimate:	60	54	11	0	125
Model E Estimate:	58	56	11	0	125
Model F Estimate:	59	52	13	1	125
Model G Estimate:	60	52	13	0	125
Model H Estimate:	60	54	11	0	125
Model PRS Estimate:	59	51	12	3	125
Most likely result:	60	53	12	0	125
Proportional Entitlement: (National)	61	52	12	-	
Deviation (National):	±2	±3	±1	-	

(Detailed information is available on each model on request.)

Complementary Proportional Representation

The method for the second group - complementary to

proportional representation - is

to allocate seats to the parties which have not

achieved their proportional share of seats.

There are two major conclusions to be drawn from these figures. Firstly, there is a high consistency in the results despite the variations in electorate combinations and numbers of representatives per multi-member constituency. Secondly, this consistency corresponds closely to proportionality of voting. In consequence of this, the ALP gains seats overall, the NCP loses seats and the Liberals remain much the same. However, there is still an inbuilt threshold which effectively prevents minor parties from gaining seats. When the same calculations are done for the same models for the elections of 1975 and 1977, the results are even more starkly consistent, proportional, and to the ALP's favour. Victory would have been possible in 1969 and yet not endangered in 1972 or 1974. They are all, in short, more equitable.

It should be emphasised here once again that these models are severely affected by the practical necessity of using current electoral boundaries and the election results as applied to them. This causes distortions which would not be present once proper multi-member constituency boundaries are drawn up by an independent, public Electoral Commission.

Calculations using as an alternative the D'Hondt method of seat allocation give a slightly greater bias to the ALP primarily because it is weighted against smaller parties and eliminates exchange of preferences which normally favours the conservatives. Models with a greater number of representatives per multi-member constituency will give greater representation to small parties which can muster sufficient votes in those constituencies. In a 7-member constituency this can be achieved with about 12% of the formal vote using the D'Hondt method and less with the Droop STV method. But this rises to about 16% in 5-member constituencies and to about 25% in 3-member constituencies.

#### Compensatory Proportional Representation

The method for the second group - compensatory or "topping-up" style proportional representation - is as follows: current electorates were combined, either 2 into 1 or 3 into 2, and the "spare" seats were placed in a "pool" of seats for that State; the only rule for the combination

of seats was that they be, as far as possible, physically contiguous; constraints of the Constitution were taken into account for purposes of State allocations; the combined constituency seats were allocated to the party with the largest combined vote after distribution of preferences; "pool" seats were allocated on a State-wide basis to compensate for any deviation from proportionality in the constituency results; the method of casting and counting votes was considered to be similar to that used in the Senate; voting patterns have been deemed to be the same for the purpose of comparison.

A variation on the results can be achieved by introducing one extra criterion, i.e., that a party must secure one constituency seat before being eligible for any seats from the State "pool". This effectively eliminates all small party representation, and in the models this could be re-allocated to the major parties.

Weaknesses in the methodology are less than in the first group. The results in all cases correspond closely to full proportionality and there is little deviation from this. If smaller parties are eliminated by some mechanics of threshold, then the larger parties have their representation swollen accordingly.

Model W in this group assumes a threshold of 5% or one constituency seat before allocation of "pool seats"; the other models have a threshold determined only by the number of pool seats available.

<u>N.S.W.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	18	16	9	0	43
Model W Estimate:	22	16	5	0	43
Model X Estimate:	20	15	6	2	43
Model Y Estimate:	20	15	6	2	43
Model Z Estimate:	21	16	4	2	43

Proportional Entitlement (threshold):	22	16	5	-	
Proportional Entitlement (no threshold):	20	16	5	2	

<u>VIC</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	17	13	3	0	33
Model W Estimate:	17	13	3	0	33
Model X Estimate:	15	13	2	3	33
Model Y Estimate:	15	13	2	3	33
Model Z Estimate:	16	13	1	3	33

Proportional Entitlement (threshold):	17	14	2	0	
Proportional Entitlement (no threshold):	15	13	2	3	

<u>QLD</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	5	7	7	0	19
Model W Estimate:	8	6	5	0	19
Model X Estimate:	8	6	4	1	19
Model Y Estimate:	8	5	5	1	19
Model Z Estimate:	9	5	4	1	19

Proportional Entitlement (threshold):	9	6	4	0	
Proportional Entitlement (no threshold):	8	6	4	1	

<u>S.A.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	6	5	0	0	11
Model W Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model X Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11
Model Y Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11
Model Z Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11

Proportional Entitlement  
(threshold):

5      6      0      0

Proportional Entitlement  
(no threshold):

5      5      0      1

<u>W.A.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	3	8	0	0	11
Model W Estimate:	5	6	0	0	11
Model X Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11
Model Y Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11
Model Z Estimate:	5	5	0	1	11

Proportional Entitlement  
(threshold):

5      6      0      0

Proportional Entitlement  
(no threshold):

5      5      0      1

<u>TAS</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	0	5	0	0	5
Model W Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model X Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model Y Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5
Model Z Estimate:	2	3	0	0	5

Proportional Entitlement  
(threshold):

2      3      0      0

Proportional Entitlement  
(no threshold):

2      3      0      0

<u>ACT</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	2	0	0	0	2
All Models Estimates:	1	1	0	0	2
Proportional Entitlements:	1	1	0	0	

<u>I.T.</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	0	0	1	0	1
All Models Estimates:	0	0	1	0	1

<u>AUSTRALIA</u>	<u>ALP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980 Actual:	51	54	20	0	125
Model W Estimate:	60	51	14	0	125
Model X Estimate:	56	48	13	8	125
Model Y Estimate:	57	48	13	7	125
Model Z Estimate:	59	48	10	8	125
Proportional Entitlement (threshold):	61	52	12	0	-
Proportional Entitlement (no threshold):	56	49	12	8	-

(Detailed information is available on each model on request).

Assuming that smaller parties would not gain representation due to some threshold requirement, the consequences of this type of electoral system would be similar to those of multi-member constituencies. Indeed, proportionality would be even more consistent. The Labor Party would make considerable gains overall, the Liberals would lose slightly, and the NCP would be considerably reduced. Again, victory would have been possible in 1969, but not endangered in 1972 or 1974.

However, it is considered that there are disadvantages in this type of system for Australian conditions. Firstly, it would require a considerable step away from accepted practices and historical continuity. Secondly, it appears to be a more complex system involving mathematical calculations which are confusing to the uninitiated; thirdly, it creates two classes of representatives which at this stage would be difficult to assimilate; fourthly, it would not find

as much support from other political parties and pressure groups; and, lastly, it would be more difficult to implement without increasing the size of the House, and would exacerbate the present problems facing members when representing single-member constituencies.

In the more mobile world of today, this last point (usually advanced by the National/Country Party) is not as valid as suggested. The principal role of Members of Parliament is to govern the country, give leadership and help solve the nation's problems of growth, development, inequality and change. Constituency representation has become part of the single-member constituency syndrome largely in the absence of flexibility and the application of rigidity on the part of the bureaucracy.

number constituency system, an anachronistic legacy of British tradition and hegemony, has failed to provide the means by which these principles of Labour platform can be realized. We have had governments by the minority, we have had little recognition of minorities' rights and we have not seen elections based on one-vote-one-value. Nor, as has been shown, is the single-member constituency system capable of providing these ends. Some measure of proportionality must be introduced into the electoral system for the House of Representatives. At the same time, steps must be taken to secure the democratic rights of people to have their political will expressed and credited, by reducing informality, eliminating the financial and media bias in favour of the conservatives, and removing those other factors leading to confusion and frustration of which the conservative forces take electoral advantage.

The purpose of this paper is to show how an electoral system can make every vote as effective as possible. No one vote should have greater or lesser value than another. The existing system places a higher or lower value on a vote depending on where a person lives. A non-metropolitan vote has more value than a city vote. A regional voter has more importance