

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



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CONSTITUTION

Name of Society

1. The name of the Society shall be Proportional Representation Society of Australia.

Objective

2. The objective of the Society is to secure the adoption of the quota-preferential method of Proportional Representation for the election of representative bodies.

Members

3. Subject to this Constitution, the members of the Society shall be members of the organizations listed in Schedule 1, and such organizations shall hereinafter be called Branches. These organizations shall have, as an essential aim, the advocacy of the use of the quota-preferential method of Proportional Representation for the election of representative bodies. A Branch shall not be or remain listed in Schedule 1, if it is controlled by a committee elected by a method other than that prescribed by the 1977 edition of the [Proportional Representation Manual](#), and with vacancies filled by recount, or if it does not advocate the adoption of such electoral methods for the election of representative bodies.
4. The Society shall be deemed to have been formed twelve months after two or more organizations supporting the objective of the Society have resolved to be listed in Schedule 1 and they shall thereupon be listed. Their resolution to be listed shall be deemed to be an adoption of this Constitution on behalf of their members.
5. Except as provided by Clause 6, an organization shall not be added to or removed from Schedule 1 after the formation of the Society except by the vote of a majority of those voting at a postal ballot of members.
6. No organization shall be listed in Schedule 1 unless it has first resolved to become a Branch of the Society. An organization which has resolved to cease being a Branch of the Society shall cease to be listed in Schedule 1 upon notice in writing of such resolution being received by the Secretary of the Society.
7. The Society shall adopt and promote policies on electoral methods and procedures consistent with its objective except that for electoral methods and procedures subject to State legislation, policies shall not be adopted by the Society unless they have been approved in the postal ballot for their adoption by a majority of members voting in the State in question.

Policies

8. The Society shall not adopt or amend policies except by the vote of a majority of members voting by postal ballot. A policy may be rescinded by the vote of a majority of those voting at a postal ballot. Policies thus adopted shall be allocated a Serial Number and Short Title by the President, a copy thereof shall be posted to each member, and policies thus adopted and circulated shall be binding on all Branches.

9. A Branch shall not adopt, advocate or retain any policy on electoral matters not subject to State legislation that is inconsistent with a policy adopted by the Society.

Decisions

10. The President of the Society, on behalf of the Society, a Branch or any twenty members of the Society may, in writing, require the Secretary to conduct a postal ballot of all members on any question including the amendment of this Constitution provided the costs of the ballot and associated expenses are paid in advance by the party requesting the ballot. A question shall not be resolved except by the vote of a majority of members voting in the ballot.

Officers

11. The **officers** of the Society shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Any committee formed by the officers shall have no powers or standing in the affairs of the Society.
12. The officers shall hold office for a period of two years after their election and shall be eligible for re-election. Each office shall be filled by a preferential secret postal ballot of members with marking of preferences being optional. The Returning Officer shall be, each two years in turn, one of the Secretaries of the Branches excluding at the time any who may be candidates. The intervals between calling for nomination in writing from each member and the published close of nominations, and the interval between posting ballot papers and the close of the poll shall be in each case normally five weeks. Members shall be advised in writing that any candidate may submit a statement of up to one hundred words to the Returning Officer, who shall submit it to voters with the ballot papers.
13. The President shall be the principal spokesperson for the Society and shall promote its policies. The other Office-bearers and Branch Office-bearers may act as spokespersons with the authority of the President. All correspondence shall be managed by the Secretary and all funds by the Treasurer, each being directed by the President or by the Vice-President acting with the authority of the President.
14. The Secretary shall:
- (i) maintain a Register of names and addresses of members by Branch. Branch Secretaries shall furnish him or her with current names and addresses of all members of their Branch at his or her request,
 - (ii) maintain a record of the nominations and any voting at each election and other postal ballots and shall promptly inform each Branch of the details thereof in writing,
 - (iii) make available a copy of this Constitution to any member who requests it, and
 - (iv) conduct postal ballots other than elections.
15. The Treasurer shall:
- (i) maintain a cheque account in the name of the Society operable jointly by his or her signature and that of any other Office-bearer,
 - (ii) ensure that all income and expenditure of the Society are transacted through the cheque account,
 - (iii) furnish to each Branch annually in writing an audited statement of income and expenditure and assets and liabilities of the Society.

16. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by a recount of the votes at the previous election conducted by the then Returning Officer or, if he or she is not available, the next Branch Secretary in turn. If this method does not result in filling of the vacancy by the next available candidate selected by the original voters, it shall be filled by a nominee of the Branch to which the vacating member belonged.

Funding

17. The Society shall be funded by grants from Branches and other donors as they see fit and by levies or annual subscriptions upon Branches or members that may be resolved by postal ballot of the members.

Postal Ballots

18. For any postal ballot, each member shall be posted one and not more than one ballot-paper. For postal ballots other than elections, the Secretary shall distribute with each ballot-paper a statement of up to 800 words submitted by the parties jointly initiating the ballot and by any officer of the Society opposing the question. The Secretary shall promptly inform each officer of each question submitted for ballot as soon as he or she receives it.

Winding Up

19. The Society shall be wound up automatically if the number of Branches becomes less than two and a majority of those voting at a postal ballot favour its winding up. In such an event, the assets of the Society shall pass to the remaining Branch.

Regulations

20. The President and Secretary may jointly make serially-numbered [Regulations](#) not inconsistent with this Constitution that when adopted shall be binding on members and Branches, but no such Regulations shall have any force or effect until ninety days after notice of the serial number, title and full text of the Regulation has been posted to the Secretary of each Branch, and notice of the serial number, the title, the general purport of the Regulation, and a statement that a copy of the full text will be posted to any member on written request, has been posted to the members of the Society. If before the Regulation can take effect a written request by any two members for a postal ballot of members has been received by the Secretary, the Regulation shall have no force or effect unless and until it has been approved at a postal ballot of the members.

Schedule 1

1. [Proportional Representation Society of Australia \(New South Wales Branch\)](#)
2. [Proportional Representation Society of Australia \(Victorian Branch\)](#)
3. [Electoral Reform Society of South Australia](#)
4. [Electoral Reform Society of Western Australia](#)
5. [Proportional Representation Society of Australia \(Queensland Branch\)](#)
6. [Proportional Representation Society of Australia \(Australian Capital Territory Branch\)](#)
