

Tips to get the most from your vote

- **Number more squares.** The ballot paper will instruct you to number seven squares in Molonglo, or five in Brindabella and Ginninderra. Your chances of having the whole of your vote help elect one or more candidates improve as you write more numbers. Marking later preferences can't harm those you voted for first.
- **Ignore party "how-to-vote" cards.** These will reflect the wishes of the political parties and their factions - rather than your own interests. Find out about the candidates and choose those you want to represent you. Do not be afraid to vote for less popular candidates, or in more than one column, as your vote can be transferred until it helps to elect someone.
- **Vote "YES" in the Referendum** - to ensure that you continue to decide who gets elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly under the fairest voting system available.

Need more information?

For more information on the conduct of the Election or the Referendum contact:

- ACT Electoral Commission 205 0033

For information on why you should vote "YES", or how the Hare-Clark system works contact:

- Proportional Representation Society of Australia (ACT Branch) 249 8546

Why should I vote "YES" in the Referendum?

The ACT now has the world's fairest electoral system - Hare-Clark. Voters, rather than political parties, decide who is elected.

In particular, this system provides:

- genuine **proportional representation**. Political parties and groupings are represented according to the amount of support they attract. No one can manipulate electorate sizes or boundaries to improve a party's result.
- the right to full **preferential voting**. You can choose whether or not to express a preference for every candidate. If the candidate you support most strongly cannot be elected, your vote need not be wasted.
- **minimal political party control**. Parties cannot specify the order of candidates' names on the ballot paper. There are also no above-the-line boxes which are controlled by political parties. Candidates can only be elected by the conscious choice of voters.

A "no" vote in the Referendum would leave our Hare-Clark electoral system vulnerable to the whims of self-serving politicians.

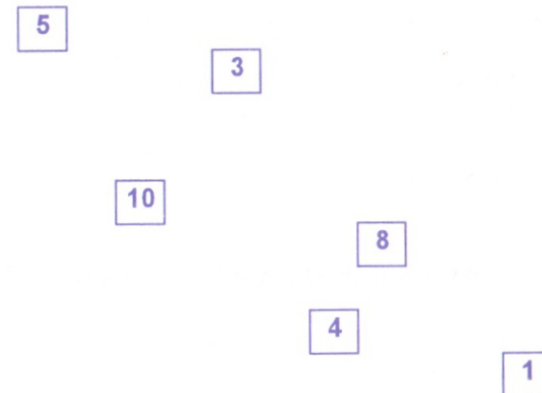
"The new [Hare-Clark] system allows for local representation and will ensure close contact with the community."

Rosemary Follett MLA
Chief Minister

Hare-Clark

... simply the best

Why you should vote "YES" in February's Referendum



some advice from
the Proportional Representation Society
on the ACT Referendum and Election
to be held on Saturday 18 February 1995

Why *another* referendum?

At the 1992 ACT election, we also voted in a referendum on which electoral system the ACT should have. In that referendum two-thirds of Canberrans supported the Hare-Clark system, based on that used in Tasmania.

However, despite the strong vote in favour, this was only an advisory referendum. Late in 1993, **the Follett Government introduced legislation undermining the Robson Rotation feature designed to give voters real influence.** Only public outrage stopped them sabotaging the electorate's choice.

Your approval in this new **binding** referendum will ensure the key features of our Hare-Clark electoral system can only be changed through another referendum, or agreement by two-thirds of the Legislative Assembly.

A **"YES"** vote will prevent any group of politicians rigging the electoral system to favour themselves. It will safeguard your future say in things that are important.

A **"YES"** vote will also prevent the size of the Assembly being increased (should the Commonwealth delegate this power), and entrench compulsory voting as it now stands.

Who supports the **"YES"** case?

The **"YES"** case was supported 16-1 by the current members of the ACT Legislative Assembly. It is supported by the major political parties in the ACT, including the:

- Australian Labor Party
- Liberal Party
- Moore Independents
- Australian Democrats
- ACT Greens

THE HARE-CLARK ELECTORAL SYSTEM

How do I vote?

The Assembly ballot paper will instruct you to **number** boxes from 1 to 5 (or 7), after which you may express further preferences in the remaining boxes. Provided you mark a clear first preference, any errors later in the numbering will not invalidate your vote.

A separate ballot paper will be issued for the referendum. **To protect your power over who gets elected, write "YES".**

What will the Assembly ballot paper look like?

Party or group columns on the different ballot papers in each electorate will always be in the same place, clearly labelled. Names within individual columns are rotated in a special way (**Robson Rotation**) to ensure each candidate appears in the best places within the column on the same number of ballot papers.

Any party how-to-vote card is likely to list candidates in a different order from how they appear on your ballot paper. Your ballot paper will also be different from those of the people immediately before and after you in the queue.

What is the point of Robson Rotation?

Robson Rotation puts individual voters, rather than parties, in charge of deciding who gets elected. Votes straight down a party column are shared evenly among those candidates, so no one gains an advantage from the party or "donkey" vote.

Only those candidates with strong personal support will be elected. No one will ever be able to take election or re-election for granted by relying on favourable ballot-paper position.

How are the ballot papers counted?

After the polls close, the ACT Electoral Commission counts the formal votes.

Candidates with a quota of first preferences (just over 1/8 of the vote in the seven-member electorate, and just over 1/6 in the five-member electorates) are certain of election. Any surplus of votes over the quota is distributed in accordance with the further preferences on each of those ballot papers. This helps keep vote wastage to a minimum.

In the absence of surpluses, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded. His or her votes are distributed to the next available preference on each of those ballot papers, or set aside as exhausted if there is no such preference. It is therefore in your interest to mark more preferences than the minimum.

The process of distributing surpluses or excluding candidates continues until all vacancies have been filled.

How are by-elections avoided?

Any casual vacancy during the life of an Assembly is filled by re-examination of the votes for the elected candidate who no longer holds that seat. This countback provides stability and means you also get a much wider choice of party candidates at the election.