

Redistributions commence *cont.*

The determination of representation entitlements was made under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* which requires the Electoral Commissioner to ascertain the population of the Commonwealth and the States and Territories within the tenth month after the first meeting of the newly elected House of Representatives.

The Redistribution Committees for each State consist of the Electoral Commissioner, the Australian Electoral Officer for the State, the Surveyor-General for the State and the Auditor-General for the State (or equivalent officers). The public are invited to make comments and suggestions before and after the Redistribution Committee makes its proposals. Objections to these proposals are then examined by an augmented Electoral Commission which consists of the Redistribution Committee plus the two additional members of the Australian Electoral Commission, the Chairman, Mr Justice Morling, and part-time member, Mr Ian Castles.

The determination of representation entitlements is one of three triggers for an electoral redistribution (see *opposite*). The *Commonwealth Electoral Act* also requires that redistributions be held every seven years, and it is this trigger which will require redistributions to be held later this year in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory which were last subject to a redistribution in 1984. Victoria and Western Australia were last redistributed in 1989 and will therefore not be subject to a redistribution at this time.

The redistributions in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia are expected to be concluded by the end of the year, but the new boundaries do not come into effect until the election for the next Parliament.

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What causes a redistribution?

There are three triggers that can cause a redistribution to be held as defined in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* (s.59).

1. The passage of time

A redistribution must occur in each State/Territory at least every seven years.

2. Equality of Divisions

If more than one third of the Divisions in a State/Territory depart from the State average by more than 10% for more than 2 consecutive months, then a redistribution must be conducted in that State/Territory.

3. Population of the States

The Electoral Commissioner must, within the tenth month after the first meeting of the House of Representatives, ascertain the number of people in the Commonwealth (excluding the Territories) and divide this figure by twice the number of Senators for each State to obtain a quota. The population of each State is then divided by the quota to determine the State's representation. To determine the representation entitlements of the Territories, the population of the Territories is divided by the quota. If a State's entitlement is altered the redistribution process is initiated.

The triggers for the 1991 Redistributions

Redistributions have been triggered in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia by the third criteria.

A redistribution will begin in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory in September/October this year as a result of the first criteria. (The Northern Territory is one Division.)

In 1989 the redrawing of boundaries in Victoria and Western Australia was triggered by the third of these criteria. In 1991 these States will not be subject to a redistribution as they are not now effected by any of the above criteria.

The determination of representation entitlements, 1 March 1991

The Population

State	Number of People
New South Wales	5 827 373
Victoria	4 379 981
Queensland	2 906 838
Western Australia	1 633 896
South Australia	1 439 157
Tasmania	456 663
The Commonwealth (excluding the Territories)	16 643 908
Australian Capital Territory ¹	284 985
Northern Territory	159 179

The Quota

The population of the Commonwealth divided by twice the number of Senators for the States.

$$\frac{16\ 643\ 908}{72 \times 2} = 115\ 583$$

The Entitlement

The number of members to be chosen in each State for the House of Representatives, determined by dividing the number of people of each State by the quota, rounding up where there is a remainder greater than one-half of the quota. The populations of the Territories are also divided by the quota.

State/Territory	Number of Members of the House of Representatives to be chosen.	Change
New South Wales	50	- 1
Victoria	38	0
Queensland	25	+ 1
Western Australia	14	0
South Australia	12	- 1
Tasmania ²	5	0
Australian Capital Territory	2	0
Northern Territory	1	0
Total	147	- 1

1. The population figure for the Australian Capital Territory includes Jervis Bay, and that for the Northern Territory includes Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island.

2. Section 24 of the Constitution provides that at least five members shall be chosen from each of the founding States.