

**NOTICE OF DECISION ON PARTY REGISTRATION
APPLICATION TO REGISTER A NON-PARLIAMENTARY PARTY IN
THE REGISTER OF POLITICAL PARTIES REFUSED
THE NO TAX FREE ELECTRICITY.COM**

Notice of decision under subsection 133(3) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and Statement of Reasons

I am writing in accordance with subsection 133(3) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the Electoral Act) to notify you of the determination of the application to register The No Tax Free Electricity.com (the Party) as a non-Parliamentary party in the *Register of Political Parties*.

I am authorised to determine this application for party registration under section 133 of the Electoral Act as a delegate of the Electoral Commission.

On 8 May 2018, I issued the Party a notice in accordance with subsection 131(1) of the Electoral Act to notify the Party that, after initial consideration of the application for the registration of the Party, I was of the opinion that I was required to refuse the application, and invited the Party to lodge with the Electoral Commission a written request to:

- vary the application by submitting a revised membership list; or
- proceed with the application in the form in which it was lodged.

On 8 August 2018, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) received a written request signed by the applicant to vary the application by providing a revised membership list.

Accordingly, my determination was based on the application for party registration as varied.

Decision

I have determined that the application to register the Party as a non-Parliamentary party on the *Register of Political Parties* should be refused.

Materials I have taken into account

In making my decision, I have had regard to:

- the application to register as a non-Parliamentary party as varied, received by the AEC on 8 August 2018;
- the results of the testing of the Party's membership list conducted by the AEC in accordance with the sampling methodology developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS);
- Part XI of the Electoral Act;
- the *Register of Political Parties* of each Australian state and territory; and
- the AEC *Party Registration Guide*.

Findings of Fact

On the material before me, I make the following findings:

Party name and abbreviation

The Party Name :

- does not comprise more than 6 words;
- is not obscene;
- is not the name, or an abbreviation or acronym of the name of another political party (not being a political party that is related to the Party) that is a recognised political party;
- does not so nearly resemble the name, abbreviation or acronym of the name of another political party (not being a political party that is related to the Party) that is a recognised political party that is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that name or that abbreviation or acronym;
- is not one that a reasonable person would think suggests that a connection or relationship exists between the Party and a registered party;
- does not comprise the words “Independent Party”;
- does not contain the word “Independent” and the:
 - name, or abbreviation or acronym of the name of a recognised political party;
or
 - matter that so nearly resembles the name or an abbreviation or acronym of a recognised political party that the matter is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that name or that abbreviation or acronym.

Accordingly, on the basis of the materials before me, I am satisfied that the proposed name and abbreviation meet the requirements of section 129 of the Electoral Act.

Membership list

The membership list submitted by the Party contained 550 members. AEC staff cross-checked this membership with the Commonwealth Electoral Roll (the Roll), as required by subsection 123(3) of the Electoral Act.

These searches identified that:

- Nine of the 550 submitted members were unable to be matched to the Roll;
- No members as being duplicated within the membership list; and
- One member as also being a member of other political parties.

Due to an administrative error, one entry in the membership list was removed from the membership list during testing, and was not included in the total enrolled members. This error did not affect the statistical confidence in the membership testing.

Accordingly, 539 of the 550 members on the list supplied by the Party were able to be matched to the Roll.

In accordance with the random sampling formula provided by the ABS, a list of 539 members requires a random sample of 44 contactable members to confirm they are members of the Party, with up to five denials of membership, in order for me to have statistical confidence that the Party has 500 members.

The AEC attempted to contact 72 members, as some were unable to be contacted or provided a neutral response. Of the responses received, 12 members confirmed their membership, while 32 denied membership of the Party.

As the number of denials exceeded the five permitted for a sample of this size in accordance with the sampling methodology developed by the ABS, I am not satisfied the Party meets the requirements of paragraph 126(2)(ca) of the Electoral Act.

Party constitution

The constitution provided in the application for registration

- is in writing; and
- sets out the aims of the Party, at least one of which being promoting the election of its candidates to the Senate and/or House of Representatives.

I am satisfied that the Party's constitution meets the requirements of having a written constitution set out in the definition of an *eligible political party* in subsection 123(1) of the Electoral Act.

Other procedural application requirements

The application for registration as a political party

- was in writing, signed by the applicant and the person who is to be the registered officer of the Party;
- set out the name and address of the person who is to be the registered officer of the Party for the purposes of the Electoral Act;
- advised whether the Party wishes to receive moneys under Division 3 of Part XX of the Electoral Act;
- set out the name and address of the applicants and particulars of the capacity in which each applicant makes the application; and
- was accompanied by a fee of \$500.

Accordingly, I am satisfied that the application for party registration meets the requirements of paragraphs 126(2)(c), 126(2)(d), 126(2)(e) and 126(2)(g) of the Electoral Act.

Your review rights

Under subsection 141(2) of the Electoral Act, a person (including an organisation) affected by the decision who is dissatisfied with the decision may make a written application to the Electoral Commission for internal review of this decision within 28 days after the day on which the decision first comes to the notice of that person. There is no fee payable for requesting an internal review.

Requests for review of this decision should be addressed to Mr Tom Rogers, Australian Electoral Commissioner and emailed to commission.secretariat@aec.gov.au or posted to Locked Bag 4007, Canberra City ACT 2601.

How do I request an internal review?

In accordance with subsections 141(2) and 141(3) of the Electoral Act, an application for review must:

- be in writing;
- specify the name of the applicant; and
- set out the reasons for making the application.

If you wish to apply for additional time beyond the 28 days to make an application for review of the delegate's decision, please also include the reasons for the application for additional time.

Who conducts an internal review?

The Electoral Commission, which is comprised of three members, the Australian Electoral Commissioner, a judicial member and a non-judicial member, conducts internal reviews.

Under subsection 141(4) of the Electoral Act, the Electoral Commission review an application for review and make a decision to either:

- affirm the decision under review;
- vary the decision under review; or
- set aside the decision under review and make a decision in substitution for the decision set aside.

What can I do if I disagree with the outcome of an internal review?

If an internal review decision has been made by the Electoral Commission and you do not agree with that decision, a person whose interests are affected, and who are dissatisfied with the decision made by the Electoral Commission may apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) for an external merits review of the decision. More information on how to apply to the AAT and any applicable fees can be found on their website:

www.aat.gov.au/applying-for-a-review/how-to-apply.

Freedom of Information

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act) any person has the right to request access to documents held by the AEC. For more information about access to documents under the FOI Act please visit the AEC's "Access to AEC information" webpage at: www.aec.gov.au/information-access/index.htm.

Should you have any queries regarding party registration, please contact the AEC on 02 6271 4552, visit www.aec.gov.au or email fad@aec.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

(signed)

Gabrielle Paten
Assistant Commissioner
Delegate of the Electoral Commission

21 February 2019