

Information paper

Calculating representation entitlements of states and territories

Under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the Electoral Act), the Electoral Commissioner is required to use the latest official published statistics of the Commonwealth to ascertain the Australian population on the day after the one year anniversary of the first meeting of the House of Representatives. This date is 3 July 2020.

The Electoral Commissioner then makes a determination of the number of members of the House of Representatives each state is entitled to. A similar exercise is used to calculate the entitlements of the territories.

State and territory entitlements are calculated by dividing the total population figure for the Commonwealth, excluding territory populations, by twice the number of Senators for the states to obtain the population quota.

Population quota

Total population of the six states	=	Population quota
Number of Senators for the states x 2		

The population of each state and territory is then divided by the population quota, and the result rounded to the nearest whole number to determine the number of members of the House of the Representatives the state or territory is entitled to.

Number of House of Representatives members per state or territory

Total population of individual state or territory	=	Number of members
Population quota		

Note: In calculating the number of members of the House of Representatives for a state or territory, if the remainder is more than 0.5, the figure for the number of members is rounded up. If the remainder is less than or equal to 0.5, the figure is rounded down (i.e. 2.5 = 2 members, and 2.52 = 3 members).

1. Population of the Commonwealth

The number of the people of the Commonwealth and of the several states and territories were ascertained to be as outlined in the table below.

State/territory	Number of the people ¹
States	
New South Wales	8,128,984
Victoria	6,651,074
Queensland	5,129,996
Western Australia	2,639,080
South Australia	1,759,184
Tasmania	537,012
Territories	
Australian Capital Territory ^{2 3}	440,253
Northern Territory ⁴	247,280
Norfolk Island	1,742
The Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands	563
The Territory of Christmas Island	1,956
Australian Antarctic Territory	220
Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands	0
Coral Sea Islands Territory	4
Territory of Ashmore and Cartier Islands	0
The Commonwealth ⁵	24,845,330

¹This ascertainment has been made using statistics supplied to the Electoral Commissioner by the Australian Statistician on 18 June 2020 in accordance with section 47 of the Electoral Act and published in the Australian Demographic Statistics, December Quarter 2019 (ABS cat. no. 3101.0) on 18 June 2020.

²Under 38A of the Electoral Act, the Australian Capital Territory includes the Jervis Bay Territory.

³Pursuant to sub-section 48(2C) of the Electoral Act, as Norfolk Island is not entitled to a member of the House of Representatives, the population is added to the population of the Australian Capital Territory and the number of members of the House of Representatives to which the Australian Capital Territory is entitled is recalculated.

⁴Pursuant to sub-section 48(2C) of the Electoral Act, as the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and the Territory of Christmas Island are not entitled to a member of the House of Representatives, the populations of both are added to the population of the Northern Territory and the number of members of the House of Representatives to which the Northern Territory is entitled is recalculated.

⁵Under section 45 of the Electoral Act the total number of people of the Commonwealth does not include the numbers of people of the territories.

2. The population quota

Under section 48(2)(a) of the Electoral Act, the population quota is the number of the people of the Commonwealth divided by twice the number of Senators for the states.

Number of people of the Commonwealth (total population of the six states)	=	24,845,330
Twice the number of Senators for the states	=	144
Population quota	=	172,537.013889

3. The entitlement determination

The number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen in each state and territory is determined by dividing the number of people in each state and territory by the quota and rounding the result to the nearest whole number.

State/territory	Total population	Population quota	Result	Members	Change
New South Wales	8,128,984	172,537.01389	47.11443543	47	
Victoria	6,651,074	172,537.01389	38.54867921	39	+1
Queensland	5,129,996	172,537.01389	29.7327274	30	
Western Australia	2,639,080	172,537.01389	15.29573244	15	-1
South Australia	1,759,184	172,537.01389	10.19598033	10	
Tasmania ⁶	537,012	172,537.01389	3.112445196	5	

State/territory	Total population	Population quota	Result	Members	Change
Australian Capital Territory ⁷	440,253	172,537.01389	2.55164379	3	
Northern Territory ⁸	247,280	172,537.01389	1.43319972	1	-1
Total number of members of the House of Representatives				150	-1

⁶Tasmania is guaranteed a minimum of five members under section 24 of the Constitution.

⁷Under sub-section 4(1) of the Electoral Act the Jervis Bay territory is taken to be part of the ACT. Under sub-section 48(2C) of the Electoral Act, Norfolk Island taken for the purposes of this determination to be part of the ACT because it lacks sufficient population to qualify for representation in its own right.

⁸Under sub-section 48(2C) of the Electoral Act, the territories of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island are taken for the purposes of this determination to be part of the Northern Territory because they lack sufficient population to qualify for representation in their own right.