



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

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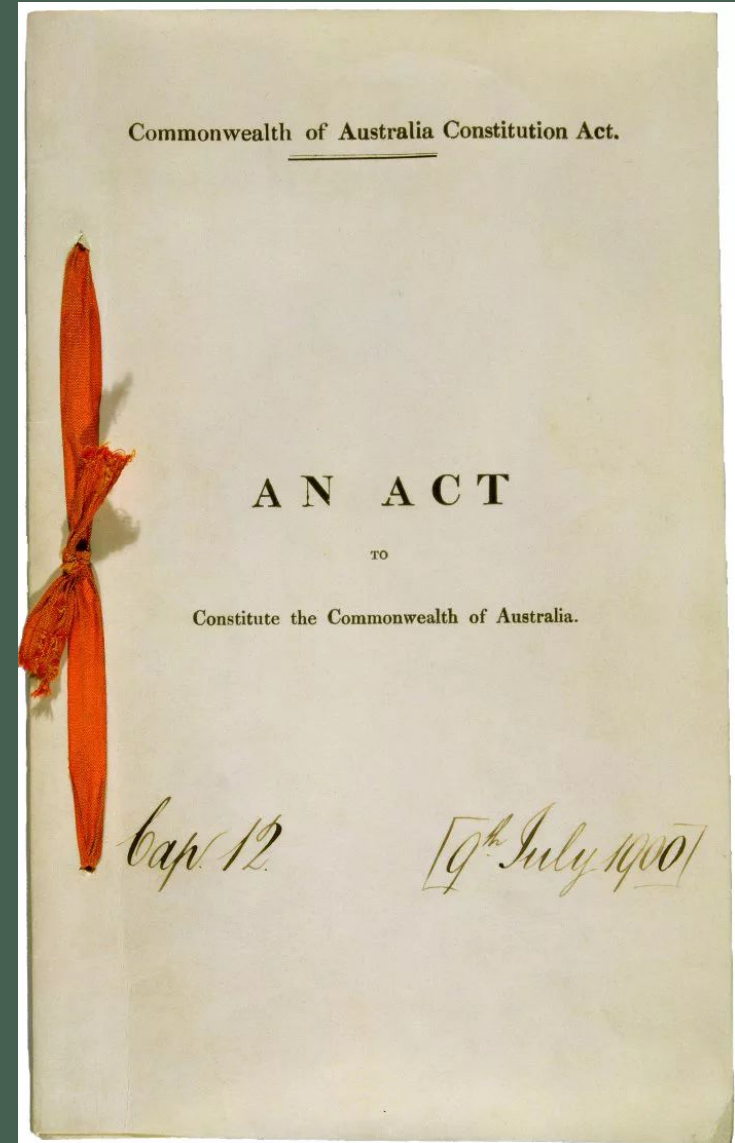
The **Senate** is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of Australia, the lower house being the House of Representatives. The composition and powers of the Senate are established in Chapter I of the Constitution of Australia. There are a total of 76 Senators: 12 are elected from each of the six Australian states regardless of population and 2 from each of the two autonomous internal Australian territories (the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory). Senators are popularly elected under the single transferable vote system of proportional representation.



Unlike upper houses in other Westminster-style parliamentary systems, the Senate is vested with significant powers, including the capacity to reject all bills, including budget and appropriation bills, initiated by the government in the House of Representatives, making it a distinctive hybrid of British Westminster bicameralism and United States-style bicameralism. As a result of proportional representation, the chamber features a multitude of parties vying for power. The governing party or coalition, which has to maintain the confidence of the lower house, has not held a majority in the Senate since 2005-2007 (and before that since 1981) and usually needs to negotiate with other parties and independents to get legislation passed.

Origins and role

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (Imp.) of 1900 established the Senate as part of the system of dominion government in newly federated Australia. From a comparative governmental perspective, the Australian Senate exhibits distinctive characteristics. Unlike upper Houses in other Westminster system governments, the Senate is not a vestigial body with limited legislative power. Rather it was intended to play – and does play – an active role in legislation. Rather than being modeled solely after the House of Lords, as the Senate of Canada was, the Australian Senate was in part modeled after the United States Senate, by giving equal representation to each state and equal powers with the lower house. The Constitution intended to give less populous states added voice in a Federal legislature, while also providing for the revising role of an upper house in the Westminster system.

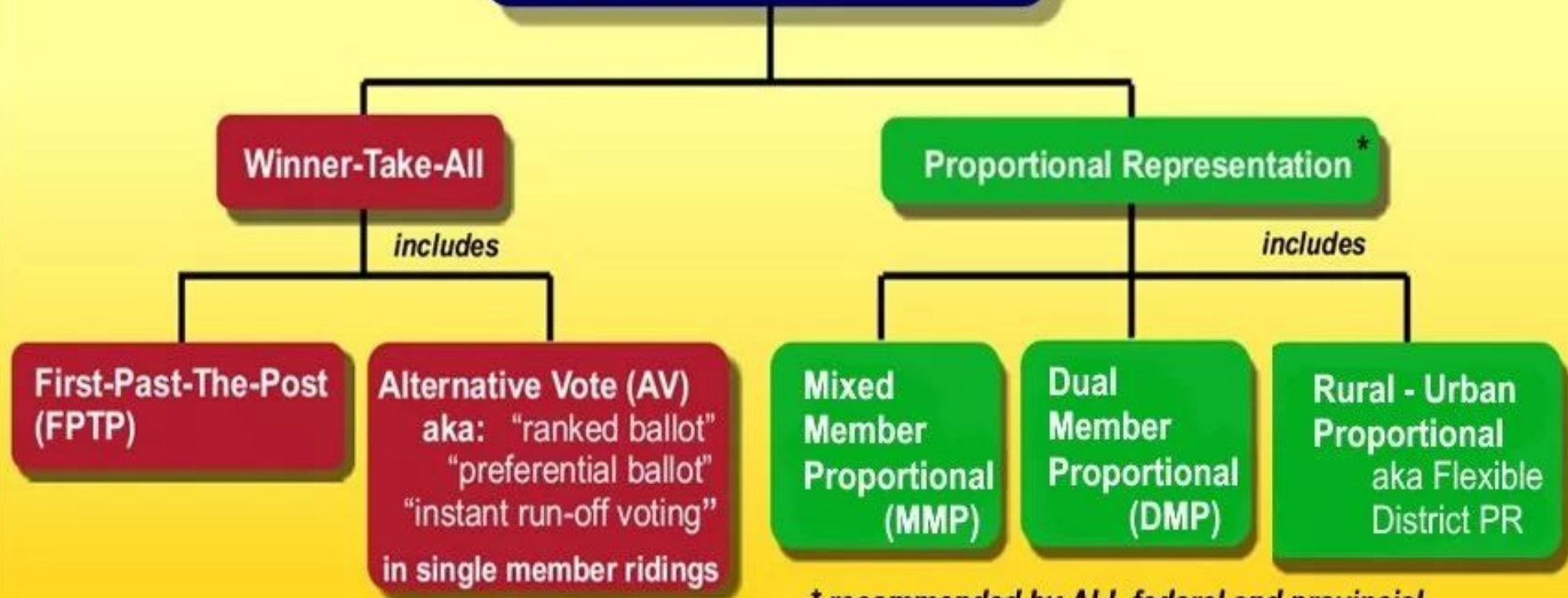


Although the Prime Minister of Australia and Treasurer of Australia, by convention, are members of the House of Representatives (after John Gorton was appointed prime minister in 1968, he resigned from the Senate and was elected to the House), other members of the Cabinet of Australia may come from either house,[3] and the two Houses have almost equal legislative power.[2] As with most upper chambers in bicameral parliaments, the Senate cannot introduce or amend appropriation bills (bills that authorise government expenditure of public revenue) or bills that impose taxation, that role being reserved for the lower house; it can only approve, reject or defer them. That degree of equality between the Senate and House of Representatives reflects the desire of the Constitution's authors to address smaller states' desire for strong powers for the Senate as a way of ensuring that the interests of more populous states as represented in the House of Representatives did not totally dominate the government. This situation was also partly due to the age of the Australian constitution it was enacted before the confrontation in 1909 in Britain between the House of Commons of the United Kingdom and the House of Lords, which ultimately resulted in the restrictions placed on the powers of the House of Lords by the Parliament Acts 1911 and 1949.

Electoral system

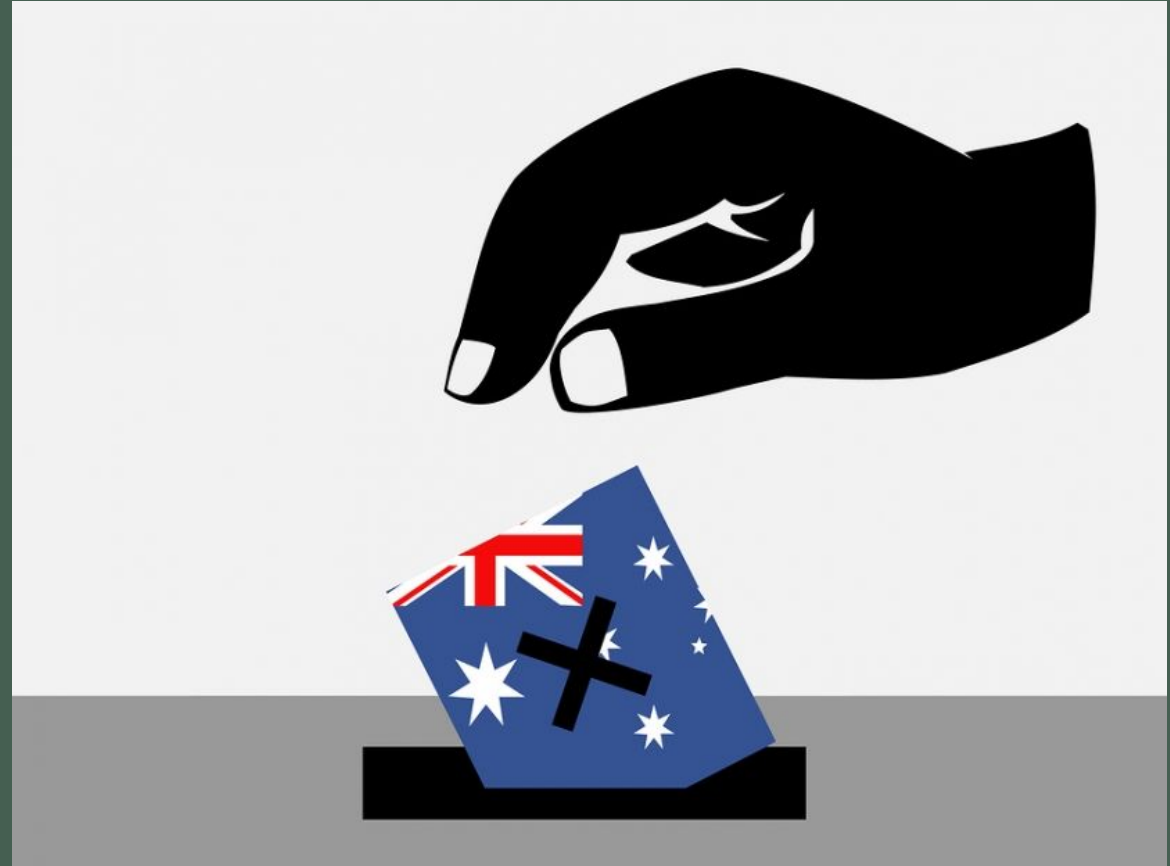
- The system for electing senators has changed several times since Federation. The original arrangement involved a first-past-the-post and block voting or "winner takes all" system, on a state-by-state basis. This was replaced in 1919 by preferential block voting. Block voting tended to produce landslide majorities and even "wipe-outs". For instance, from 1920 to 1923 the Nationalist Party held all but one of the 36 seats, and from 1947 to 1950, the Australian Labor Party held all but three.
- In 1948, single transferable vote with proportional representation on a state-by-state basis became the method for electing Senators. This had the effect of limiting the government's ability to control the chamber, and has helped the rise of Australian minor parties.

Electoral Systems



** recommended by ALL federal and provincial assemblies and commissions on electoral reform*

From the 1984 election onwards, group ticket voting was introduced, in order to reduce a high rate of informal voting that arose from the requirement that each candidate be given a preference, and to allow small parties and independent candidates a reasonable chance of winning a seat. This allowed voters to select a single party "Above the Line" to distribute their preferences on their behalf, but voters were still able to vote directly for individual candidates and distribute their own preferences if they wished "Below the Line" by numbering every box.



You may
vote in one of
two ways

Either

Above the line

By numbering at least 8
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice)

Or

Below the line

By numbering at least 12
of these boxes in the order
of your choice (with number
1 as your first choice)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DERRYN HINCH'S JUSTICE PARTY		ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY	AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY	SCIENCE PARTY/ CYCLISTS PARTY	PALMER UNITED PARTY	JACQUI LAMBIE NETWORK	AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIANS	SUSTAINABLE AUSTRALIA	PIRATE PARTY	SOCIALIST EQUALITY PARTY	HEALTH AUSTRALIA PARTY	RENEWABLE ENERGY PARTY	VOTEFLUX.ORG UPGRADE DEMOCRACY!	FAMILY FIRST PARTY	CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (FRED NILE GROUP)	THE ARTS PARTY	DLP DEMOCRATIC LABOUR	CITIZENS ELECTORAL COUNCIL	SECULAR PARTY OF AUSTRALIA			
<input type="checkbox"/> HINCH Deryn	<input type="checkbox"/> COLLIER David	<input type="checkbox"/> POON Bruce	<input type="checkbox"/> CARR Kim	<input type="checkbox"/> JAMES Lore SCIENCE PARTY	<input type="checkbox"/> THOLIN Cecilia	<input type="checkbox"/> DOLAN Hugh	<input type="checkbox"/> JACKSON Vicki	<input type="checkbox"/> NICHOLLS Georgia	<input type="checkbox"/> SIMPSON Lectian	<input type="checkbox"/> SINEMA Chris	<input type="checkbox"/> GOLDEN Isaac	<input type="checkbox"/> ASKEY Graham	<input type="checkbox"/> LEWIS Danielle	<input type="checkbox"/> BAIN Peter Timothy	<input type="checkbox"/> HANNA May	<input type="checkbox"/> DODGE Rose	<input type="checkbox"/> VEREKEN Stephen	<input type="checkbox"/> SHERWOOD Craig	<input type="checkbox"/> PERKINS John			
<input type="checkbox"/> GRIMLEY Shaun	<input type="checkbox"/> MITCHELL-COOK Wanda	<input type="checkbox"/> EDGEcombe Jacqueline	<input type="checkbox"/> CONROY Stephen Michael	<input type="checkbox"/> DOW Nia CYCLISTS PARTY	<input type="checkbox"/> HICKEY Cameron	<input type="checkbox"/> TIMSON Mutt	<input type="checkbox"/> ARAPOGLOU Eleni	<input type="checkbox"/> ARMSTRONG Steven	<input type="checkbox"/> BURLEIGH Richard	<input type="checkbox"/> BYRNE Peter	<input type="checkbox"/> BREAKWELL Kathryn	<input type="checkbox"/> WILSON Gail	<input type="checkbox"/> MILNE Shaun James	<input type="checkbox"/> GREEN Randall	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTROS Debra	<input type="checkbox"/> KENSON James Christopher	<input type="checkbox"/> FREEMAN Michael	<input type="checkbox"/> PEIT Gabrielle	<input type="checkbox"/> CARR Alice			
			<input type="checkbox"/> COLLINS Jacinta				<input type="checkbox"/> DEKUMU Anne							<input type="checkbox"/> MANNERS Craig	<input type="checkbox"/> ANDREW Maureen J							
			<input type="checkbox"/> MARSHALL Gavin																			
			<input type="checkbox"/> YANG Chen-Hui																			
			<input type="checkbox"/> PERSE Laurie																			
			<input type="checkbox"/> KENT Steve																			
			<input type="checkbox"/> TARCZEN Lara																			

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
AUSTRALIAN LIBERTY ALLIANCE	NICK XENOPHON TEAM	AUSTRALIAN MOTORING ENTHUSIASTS PARTY	MARRIAGE EQUALITY	PAULINE HANSON'S ONE NATION	SOCIALIST ALLIANCE	AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY PARTY	MFP	DRUG LAW REFORM	VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA PARTY	MATURE AUSTRALIA	LIBERAL/ THE NATIONALS	SHOOTERS, FISHERS AND FARMERS	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	RISE UP AUSTRALIA PARTY	AUSTRALIAN PROGRESSIVES	THE GREENS	AUSTRALIAN SEX PARTY						
<input type="checkbox"/> JONES Daniel	<input type="checkbox"/> HALPERN Naomi	<input type="checkbox"/> MUIR Ricky	<input type="checkbox"/> THAZON- MCCREYNE Jenny	<input type="checkbox"/> ROYLANCE Simon Peter	<input type="checkbox"/> CHELLIAN Latifa	<input type="checkbox"/> KERR Garry	<input type="checkbox"/> MADIGAN John	<input type="checkbox"/> CHIPP Greg	<input type="checkbox"/> SCANLON David James	<input type="checkbox"/> MCCARTHY Graham	<input type="checkbox"/> FIFIELD Mitch Lillian	<input type="checkbox"/> WILSON Jane	<input type="checkbox"/> SPENDER Duncan	<input type="checkbox"/> MALLON Damon	<input type="checkbox"/> KNIGHT David	<input type="checkbox"/> DI NATALE Richard	<input type="checkbox"/> DODG Meredith	<input type="checkbox"/> JUNKASZ Stephen	<input type="checkbox"/> LORIE Meredith				
<input type="checkbox"/> NICHOLLS Kenneth	<input type="checkbox"/> LEE Justin	<input type="checkbox"/> MACKLEY Aaron	<input type="checkbox"/> TOMLINS Jacqueline	<input type="checkbox"/> CAMERON Ian John	<input type="checkbox"/> GOODEN Tim	<input type="checkbox"/> LARKIN Phil	<input type="checkbox"/> GEORGE Mark	<input type="checkbox"/> SHERMAN John	<input type="checkbox"/> JONES Morinda	<input type="checkbox"/> RIDGE Ray	<input type="checkbox"/> MCKENZIE Bridget the NATIONALS	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSTANTINO Dylan	<input type="checkbox"/> LIMBRICK David	<input type="checkbox"/> CRESTANI Rosalie	<input type="checkbox"/> GILMORE Josh	<input type="checkbox"/> RICE Janet	<input type="checkbox"/> MULLCAHY Amy	<input type="checkbox"/> ARAGU Kathia	<input type="checkbox"/> EYE Trevor William				
											<input type="checkbox"/> RYAN Scott James	<input type="checkbox"/> PATTERSON James Lillian	<input type="checkbox"/> ALME James Daniel	<input type="checkbox"/> OESTEL Kathia Lillian	<input type="checkbox"/> THRELKAR Melinda the NATIONALS	<input type="checkbox"/> COLEMAN Malia	<input type="checkbox"/> KLEIN Eliot	<input type="checkbox"/> CRABE Anna	<input type="checkbox"/> HALL Dennis	<input type="checkbox"/> SPASQUEVIC Dana	<input type="checkbox"/> HARKINS Peter John		
																<input type="checkbox"/> SEARLE James	<input type="checkbox"/> ENAGAWARDIE John	<input type="checkbox"/> LUTZ Gerard	<input type="checkbox"/> SPASQUEVIC Dana	<input type="checkbox"/> BESLIS Christopher			
																<input type="checkbox"/> MURPHY Tanya	<input type="checkbox"/> ALDEN Chris	<input type="checkbox"/> MULL Alan	<input type="checkbox"/> RYAN Chris	<input type="checkbox"/> VADARLIS Eric			
																<input type="checkbox"/> CAMERON Judy	<input type="checkbox"/> VADARLIS Eric	<input type="checkbox"/> DICKINSON Mark Francis	<input type="checkbox"/> SHIMUEL Immanuel	<input type="checkbox"/> FLOYD Gavin			
																<input type="checkbox"/> BURNIN Gurni	<input type="checkbox"/> SHIMUEL Immanuel	<input type="checkbox"/> FLOYD Gavin					
																<input type="checkbox"/> MAGUIRE- ROSEN Josephine	<input type="checkbox"/> READ Rose						

In 2016, group tickets were abolished to avoid undue influence of preference deals amongst parties that were seen as distorting election results[6] and a form of optional preferential voting was introduced. As a result of the changes, voters may assign their preferences for parties above the line (numbering as many boxes as they wish), or individual candidates below the line, and are not required to fill all of the boxes. Both above and below the line voting now use optional preferential voting. For above the line, voters are instructed to number at least their first six preferences; however, a "savings provision" is in place to ensure that ballots will still be counted if less than six are given. For below the line, voters are required to number at least their first 12 preferences. Voters are free to continue numbering as many preferences as they like beyond the minimum number specified. Another savings provision allows ballot papers with at least 6 below the line preferences to be formal. The voting changes make it more difficult for new small parties and independent candidates to be elected to the Senate, but also allow a voter to voluntarily "exhaust" preferences — that is, to ensure their vote cannot flow to specific candidates or Parties — in the event that none of the voter's candidates preferences are elected.

Membership

Under sections 7 and 8 of the Australian Constitution:

- The Senate must comprise an equal number of senators from each original state,
- each original state shall have at least six senators, and
- the Senate must be elected in a way that is not discriminatory among the states.
- These conditions have periodically been the source of debate, and within these conditions, the composition and rules of the Senate have varied significantly since federation.



Quota Size

The number of votes that a candidate must receive to be elected to the senate is referred to as a 'Quota'. The quota is worked out by dividing the number of formal votes by one more than the number of vacancies to be filled and then adding one to the result. The 2019 senate election was a half senate election, so 6 senate vacancies were contested in each state. At this election, the quotas in each state were:

State	2019 Quota	% of the NSW 2019 Quota	2016 Quota ^[18]
NSW	670,761	100%	345,554
Vic	534,207	80%	269,250
Qld	414,495	62%	209,475
WA	206,661	31%	105,091
SA	156,404	23%	81,629
Tas	50,285	7%	26,090