

Institutional reform stocktake: Background materials

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About this document

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Purpose of this document

The Main report for this work, *Institutional Reform Stocktake*, identified potential institutional reforms for Australia.

These Background materials provide detailed analysis of each reform that we investigated, outlining the key reasons for our rating of its impact, evidence base and feasibility. This detailed analysis is consistent with the table in Appendix 2 of *Institutional Reform Stocktake*.

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The reforms in these Background materials follow the order and categorisation in which they appear in Appendix 2 of the Main report. The index below, in alphabetical order, provides the relevant page number in this report, using the reform titles in the Main body report in Figures 1 to 3.

References in the Endnotes are to the Bibliography of the Main report.

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Political donations and campaign finance

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce overall gift cap to \$150,000 within an election cycle and reduce cap on third party spending to \$2m • Reduce threshold for donation disclosure from \$5k to \$1k¹ • Create new standing expert commission on electoral matters,² with initial brief to reconsider caps on campaign spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Controls on political donations crucial to democracy and government in public interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Competitive elections are a basic feature of any conception of democracy;³ – Spending correlates with electoral outcomes⁴ ✓ Political donations significantly affect perception (and to some extent, reality) of undue influence and therefore quality of policymaking and trust in government⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Legislated rules will still permit donations of up to \$1.6m, which will still create perceptions of undue influence ✓ Legislated rules likely to undermine competitive elections by entrenching incumbency and party advantage, and contributing to public concerns about 'level playing field' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Parties can more easily use existing infrastructure in all States and Territories to receive large donation from a single donor⁶ – Parties can use existing nominated entities to circumvent donations rules⁷ – Parties can outspend independents by flooding marginal seats with general party advertising⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Need for controls on donations and campaign finance well documented.⁹ ✓ Key elements of further reform required in Australia broadly recognised and well defined <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Loopholes for major party donations and nominated entities recognised¹⁰ – Some uncertainty about how legislated rules will work in operation ↪ Further work needed on campaign finance caps,¹¹ particularly the interaction between overall and individual seat spending¹² ↪ Further work needed on design of public funding for new entrants with limited literature in the Australian context, although some documentation available covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Start-up fund for new parties and candidates;¹³ – Vouchers in use in the City of Seattle;¹⁴ – Higher spending caps for new entrants than for sitting members of Parliament;¹⁵ – Potential public (and hybrid public-private) funding models, including vouchers, and anonymous donations¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Further reforms align with principles with strong public support, including concern about a level playing field¹⁷ ✓ Significant public concern about recent legislated rules¹⁸ ✗ Major parties likely to strongly resist important elements of further reforms • Reforms championed by independents and multiple civil society organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the short-term, further define the detail of caps and mechanisms to prevent 'piling in'¹⁹ • Further explore alternative models of public funding in the Australian context²⁰

Secretary appointment and termination

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislate to require appointment from shortlist selected and assessed by Public Service Commissioner and Secretary of Prime Minister and Cabinet (with Prime Minister able to add person to shortlist)²¹ Require annual reporting on how often candidates were specifically shortlisted by the Prime Minister, and how often successful candidates had been assessed as 'not suitable' Legislate to limit grounds on which Secretary can be terminated²² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Important foundation to increase independence and promote better advice,²³ although not a panacea for longer-term thinking²⁴ ✓ Affects broad range of policy portfolios, more than 185,000 Australian Public Service employees²⁵ ↪ Independent panels can be subject to other biases e.g., elitism or cronyism,²⁶ but appropriate controls like published criteria, formal processes and review mechanisms can mitigate this risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong expert view, and Robodebt symbolic, that pendulum has swung too far from Australian Public Service independence to responsiveness;²⁷ and anecdotal, independent findings of "creeping politicisation" in Victoria demonstrate serious risks created by lack of checks and balances²⁸ ✓ Good evidence that better appointment and termination processes promote more independent advice²⁹ ✓ Options, design choices well-researched³⁰ and strong precedent from other OECD countries for most elements of proposed changes.³¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Thodey Review explicitly considered New Zealand's model and adopted elements (e.g. stronger role for APSC)³² ↪ More work will be needed to establish a mechanism to review how Secretary appointment and termination processes operate in practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Polling limited but public likely to support given polling in support of more independent government board appointments³³ ↪ Politically divided: Coalition resists;³⁴ ALP has largely implemented in practice but hasn't committed;³⁵ likely cross-bench support ↪ No active champion, although Sophie Scamps MP championing reform to public appointments more broadly³⁶ ✓ Thodey Review strongly supportive ↪ Prof Andrew Podger has consistently advocated to policy audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse additional mechanisms to encourage Secretaries to provide independent advice such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Amendments to current guidelines that require most submissions to parliamentary committees to be cleared with the minister³⁷ – Creating additional opportunities for Secretaries to publicly issue long-term policy advice, such as recently introduced Long-term Insights Briefings mechanism³⁸ – A statement of expectations outlining circumstances in which Secretary contributions to public understanding of policy issues is encouraged Develop mechanism to review how Secretary appointment and termination processes operate in practice

Fixed three-year terms

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislate to fix Commonwealth Parliament terms at three years³⁹ unless government loses confidence or is unable to pass supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Could support level playing field for elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fixed terms currently give party in government the unilateral ability to choose the election date whenever it perceives an election will be most advantageous⁴⁰ ✓ Could reduce procedural compromise and disruption to planning processes affecting wide range of policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Uncertainty creates issues for the parliamentary timetable, policy implementation, and investment planning for the private and public sectors⁴¹ – Fixing at 3 years would increase time for incumbents to govern because average Commonwealth parliamentary term is 2 years and 8 months⁴² ✓ State and Territory legislation demonstrates that flexibility for a political crisis can be incorporated,⁴³ arguably outweighing concerns raised by the <i>Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011</i> in the UK⁴⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Problems with variable terms well-documented in theory and anecdotally⁴⁵ ✓ Strong precedents for effective implementation in state jurisdictions⁴⁶ – Some design choices to be resolved, but there is good analysis from state committee reports on issues such as election timing, transition period, and synchronisation with other elections⁴⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Publicly supported (58-63% in favour based on polling done in 2016 in Queensland, South Australia and the electorate of New England)⁴⁸ ✓ Public supports level playing field for elections⁴⁹ ✓ Supported by Greens⁵⁰ and ALP,⁵¹ Other cross-bench likely to support, Coalition may support⁵² – Some concerns about constitutionality, although legislation likely to be effective in practice⁵³ would need to determine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation, especially text on exceptions Specify position on other design choices including election timing, transition period, and synchronisation with other elections

Civics education

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require min number of teaching hours for civics in years 9 and 10⁵⁴ Mandate civics course for years 11 and 12⁵⁵ Develop and disseminate teacher professional development resources⁵⁶ Set up national research centre to promote effective civics education⁵⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School students have low and falling levels of civics knowledge; adult knowledge patchy; in 2024, only 28% of year 10 students were at the proficient standard, the worst outcome since testing began in 2004;⁵⁸ and less than half the electorate correctly answer true/false to statements about the basis for Senate elections, the length of Parliamentary terms and the number of House of Representatives MPs⁵⁹ ✓ Civics education improves knowledge, attitudes, participation,⁶⁰ including for lower socioeconomic students (closing the 'civic gap')⁶¹ ✓ Strong correlation with trust in democracy, although correlation is not causation (53% of survey participants with civics education reported robust understanding of democracy versus 35% without; 72% with civics education satisfied with democracy in Australia versus 52% without)⁶² ✓ Prevention tends to be the best cure for misinformation⁶³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – School Interventions only affect entire electorate over a long period of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Poor current civics understanding,⁶⁴ teaching quality⁶⁵ and options for high-level interventions well-documented in 2025 JSCEM parliamentary inquiry (which received 132 submissions)⁶⁶ ✓ Modest decreases in traditional forms of political participation⁶⁷ and support for democracy amongst younger Australians⁶⁸ well-documented ✓ Good evidence of positive impacts of high quality school civics education⁶⁹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More work required on designing interventions e.g., focusing on 'open classroom climate' approaches,⁷⁰ combining with 'supply-side' opportunities for students to participate,⁷¹ but several no regrets steps – Few ideas on how to provide civics education after formal education completed⁷² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Polling data limited, but public likely to support given public belief in the institution of democracy and appetite to protect it⁷³ ✓ Largely overlapping support from major parties (ALP notes support in its 2023 National Platform,⁷⁴ Coalition supports but expresses concern about politicisation and recommends curriculum design by the AEC⁷⁵) and cross-bench⁷⁶ ✗ Significant implementation challenge to make room in school curriculum, implement national approach and to train teachers to deliver effectively (at some cost) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop options for combining civics education as a 'demand side' response with 'supply side' opportunities for young people to engage with their representative given the well-recognised issue that unless voters feel their vote will have a significant impact, they have limited incentive to invest in informing themselves⁷⁷ • Identify interventions that are supported by robust evidence in the Australian context (e.g., through running randomised controlled trials on promising existing approaches from other jurisdictions and measuring key outcomes such as intention to participate, engagement, practical understanding of how to vote) • Research and pilot models for providing civics education after formal education is completed

Parliamentary committees

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate membership and chairs of House of Representatives proportionate to membership of the House⁷⁸ Require responsible minister to table response within four months of publication of a parliamentary committee report, and require the responsible minister and departmental secretary to attend a committee hearing if no report is tabled, and once the response is tabled⁷⁹ Require a non-government chair for oversight committees such as Public Accounts and Audit Committee⁸⁰ Conduct comprehensive review of committee system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Positive impact of committees widely acknowledged: they provide a vital forum for deliberative, evidence-informed and multi-partisan discussion about salient policy issues⁸¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – They undertake a very large volume of work e.g., 712 reports were issued in the 43rd Parliament⁸² – 2010 committee reforms facilitated one of the most legislatively productive periods⁸³ ✓ Other contemporary Westminster parliaments (UK, Scotland, New Zealand) have stronger committee systems⁸⁴ ✓ Committee recommendations can ultimately be ignored, but a crossbench that is less constrained by existing party positions may be more receptive to championing recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Some obvious improvements have multiple precedents (proportionate lower house committee membership across the board;⁸⁵ integrity and oversight committee chairs;⁸⁶ legislatively required responses) ✓ Recurring problems noted in the literature include less consensus-driven committees with a rise in dissenting reports⁸⁷ and executive dominance and party political allegiances overriding other considerations⁸⁸ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No comprehensive parliamentary review since 2010, which canvassed various reform options;⁸⁹ ✓ Three significant reports have recently proposed some specific, well-researched reforms⁹⁰ ✓ International practice offers a range of options for strengthening the committee system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Championed by crossbench⁹¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Polling limited, but public unlikely to oppose – Major parties may resist, but 2010 precedent for agreement⁹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmark and evaluate innovations from other jurisdictions e.g., mixed legislative committees,⁹³ consensus decision-making, used more frequently in Norway⁹⁴ [see also list of potential reforms for investigation at section 4.5.3 of main report] Consider how potential reforms to the committee system would interact and draft a coherent package, identifying highest priority reforms and alternatives that may be more feasible Develop and fund additional committee training programs e.g., on how to effectively evaluate evidence from the community and collaborate across parties⁹⁵ Review resourcing and determine additional resourcing needs⁹⁶

Private members' bills

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule parliamentary time for regular debate and votes on private Members' bills⁹⁷ Prioritise vote on private member's bill when supported by substantial minority of the House of Representatives Selection Committee⁹⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Private members' bills almost never debated or voted on,⁹⁹ so marginal improvement could be significant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No private members' bills voted on in the 47th Parliament¹⁰⁰ ✓ Significant breadth; nearly 90 private Members' bills were introduced across a wide range of issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Range of legislation with strong public support, e.g. political donations,¹⁰¹ gambling reform¹⁰² ✓ Important tool for enabling agenda-setting that reflects proportionality¹⁰³ ✗ Parties may game new rules, but difficult to predict how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Precedent of 2010 agreement set aside more time for PMBs,¹⁰⁴ but votes relied on government support for scheduling and procedural motions¹⁰⁵ ✓ Specific design choices proposed in recent report¹⁰⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Polling unclear; public may be indifferent, but likely greater support in crossbench and opposition electorates ↪ Crossbench likely to strongly support; ↪ Major parties likely to oppose, but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Precedent for reform as price of power in 2010¹⁰⁷ – Reforms would help the opposition and some government backbenchers may support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft guidelines so as to minimise loopholes and/or accompany them with appropriate commitments to honour the intent of reforms¹⁰⁸

MP resourcing

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase personal staffing levels for independent MPs, particularly if they hold the balance of power • Conduct and implement review to define criteria for appropriate staffing levels and to define independent process for allocating resources¹⁰⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Significant impact on quality of crossbench legislative interventions (much more important if hold balance of power)¹¹⁰ ✓ Significant impact on ability of crossbench to add new proposals to public agenda,¹¹¹ particularly on questions of institutional reform (e.g., lobbying,¹¹² public appointments¹¹³) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PM discretion over staffing an anomaly relative to other jurisdictions, including Australian State and Territory parliaments¹¹⁴ and Westminster systems¹¹⁵ ✗ More work to be done to define alternative process and principles for allocation (e.g. structure and remit of an independent entity such as the Remuneration Tribunal or Independent Parliamentary Standards Commission)¹¹⁶ ✗ Recent review of the <i>Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984 (MOPS Act)</i> “was done behind closed doors by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet”¹¹⁷ and there do not appear to be plans to make public the recent review of staffing undertaken by Parliamentary Workplace Support Services.¹¹⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Unlikely to be a major public concern; intuitive resistance to increasing public service numbers; though cost is likely relatively low¹¹⁹ ✗ Major parties likely resistant¹²⁰ ✓ Championed by independents¹²¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define optimal process for allocating staffers, which might draw on experience in other jurisdictions • Define principles to guide allocation of staffers (e.g., whether allocation should increase based on who holds balance of power,¹²² how to appropriately promote economies of scale through pooling resources) • Explore alternative resources for independent MPs, including additional Parliamentary Library or think tank resources, taking into account the principles noted above and a thorough analysis of existing resources available to parties and independents for policy work¹²³

Ministerial advisers

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require at least half of ministerial advisers to be drawn from the public service¹²⁴ Legislate code of conduct¹²⁵ Apply accountability mechanisms including publishing names and roles of senior staff,¹²⁶ and explicitly subjecting to accountability mechanisms such as the Ombudsman, Auditor-General, and parliamentary committees¹²⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Significant and growing impact across broad range of issues on policy advice,¹²⁸ executive accountability¹²⁹ and professionalisation of parties¹³⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Number of ministerial advisers has grown from 210 in 1983 to 471 in 2023¹³¹ – Advisers can increase focus on short-term political considerations, short-term media-outcomes¹³² and immediate media management¹³³ ✓ Widespread but disputed view that reform would improve long-term policy advice¹³⁴ ✓ Some concerns (not widely shared) that greater accountability inappropriate given principles of ministerial accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good evidence of impact on policy approach and contestability (academic literature confirms that advisers can ‘crowd out’ policy advice from the public sector)¹³⁵, executive accountability,¹³⁶ and party dynamics¹³⁷ ✓ Strong set of options identified by multiple materials with good precedents for most reforms in other international jurisdictions¹³⁸ ↪ Some more work to be done to craft workable, coherent package in Australian context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Major parties likely to strongly resist significant reforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Current Government explicitly rejected the Thodey Review recommendation to have at least half of ministerial policy advisers with public service experience);¹³⁹ – Advisers have become entrenched in the political system¹⁴⁰ ↪ Likely aligns with crossbench support for independent public appointments¹⁴¹ ↪ Limited polling, and public not particularly engaged ✓ Several aspects of reform supported by Thodey Review,¹⁴² led by independent panel including current Secretary of the APS and Public Service Commissioner¹⁴³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft a workable, coherent package of reforms based on proposals put forward to-date • Further work through the detail of several proposals that are currently expressed at a relatively high level

Four-year terms

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend House of Representatives terms to 4 years¹⁴⁴ (which would also be fixed) Align to Senate terms of 8 years¹⁴⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In theory should increase ability to plan and execute coherent longer-term agenda¹⁴⁶ ↪ Debatable whether longer terms increase democratic accountability,¹⁴⁷ although requirement to implement through referendum provides some comfort¹⁴⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Evidence typically based on stakeholder views and theoretical arguments¹⁴⁹ ✗ Despite adoption in most States, limited empirical evidence that four-year terms have substantially improved long-term policy making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Requires referendum which is likely to struggle as public support only 51% as at March 2024 (with other polls finding lower levels of support)¹⁵⁰ ✗ Tentative bipartisan support could provide foundation for long-term advocacy and a successful referendum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cues from major party leaders can shape voting behaviour¹⁵¹ – However drivers of referendum success are complex and require more than bipartisanship,¹⁵² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematically review and gather evidence (qualitative or quantitative) on impacts from state moves to four-year terms

Deliberative democracy

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run deliberative democracy process on well-defined specific issues that are politically intractable¹⁵³ Consider other deliberative processes (e.g., smaller-scale electorate-level processes) to build trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Significant potential impact on democratic engagement for participants: can stimulate political interest, civic identity and support for deliberative processes; enhance feelings of political efficacy; and increase knowledge and understanding of political issues¹⁵⁴ ~ Mixed evidence about impact on general public more broadly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – some promising results,¹⁵⁵ – other studies show limited impact on trust and political support, particularly when governments do not take up important recommendations¹⁵⁶ ~ Not yet attempted in Australia at the national level (via a government-commissioned process) but could improve consensus on targeted well-defined issues that are politically intractable, based on international examples¹⁵⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Growing body of international examples of successful impact on targeted issues¹⁵⁸ ✓ Significant examples of domestic application at local and state levels¹⁵⁹ ~ More work to be done in Australian context to pilot and evaluate strategies to engage public in process and outcome, particularly given there is mixed evidence about whether assemblies can deepen trust in the general public at large:¹⁶⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Amplify has already run one deliberative engagement process at the national level, which could provide a foundation for further research, – there is a need to address the potential for backlash if a proposal is not adopted with a careful communications strategy with appropriate political and public support¹⁶¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Promising levels of public support (~57% probably or definitely support in 2017)¹⁶² ✗ Limited support from major parties (deliberative democracy generally unpopular with politicians, with 14% of politicians thinking citizens' juries are a way to help them out of a malaise, while 64% think the opposite)¹⁶³ ✓ Crossbench has championed¹⁶⁴ ~ Successful implementation depends on developing good models of broader public engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot and evaluate strategies for engaging the broader public with the results of deliberative experiments on national issues; consult with leaders of national deliberative processes elsewhere to understand what works Pilot small-scale deliberative experiments to promote engagement at the electorate level

New independent expert bodies

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish additional expert advisory bodies that are separate from government departments, and are not directly controlled by a Minister, in challenging policy areas that require a long-term perspective¹⁶⁵ (e.g., tax, migration, climate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Independent expert bodies inherently take longer-term views, and in practice have significant impact on parliamentarians and reducing influence of vested interests¹⁶⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Particularly valuable in the context of an increasingly responsive public service¹⁶⁷ with a diminished policy advisory role,¹⁶⁸ and concerns about loss of institutional memory¹⁶⁹ ↪ Incremental impact depends on scope and design, which should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Balance the need to be relevant and useful, while keeping sufficient distance to maintain reality and perception of independence¹⁷⁰ – Take into account biases within policy advisory bodies (e.g. parsimonious economic assumptions¹⁷¹) ↪ Need to avoid danger of ‘crowding out’ of strategic policy advice on appropriate issues by the APS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Options for new bodies (what policy areas, what powers, and how designed) understudied in Australia,¹⁷² although some useful UK work¹⁷³ ✓ There are many examples to inform future design, including current, historical (e.g., the National Hospital and Health Services Commission, Bureau of Immigration, Population and Multicultural Research¹⁷⁴) and international (e.g., the UK Climate Change Committee, Netherland Advisory Council on Migration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Crossbench likely to support depending on remit (e.g., Allegra Spender championed tax reform commission¹⁷⁵), ↪ Government may be lukewarm as independent bodies sometimes be perceived as threats to incumbents¹⁷⁶ ↪ Moderate cost to establish new body (depending on size e.g., \$4M for Australian Law Reform Commission¹⁷⁷ to \$76M for Productivity Commission¹⁷⁸) ↪ Public support for existing bodies varies (e.g., strong trust in Australian Electoral Commission and Human Rights Commission but low trust in the Reserve Bank of Australia);¹⁷⁹ support for new body depends on remit ↪ Successful implementation dependent on strong appointments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally articulate criteria for independent expert bodies Identify where the greatest need for additional independent policy advice might lie In areas of greatest potential need, propose detailed design choices relating to structure, governance (noting initial view of certain features put forward in some proposals¹⁸⁰) Consider consultation mechanisms for building broad public support for reforms

Public appointments

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislate a transparent, merit-based process for all statutory body appointments¹⁸¹ Advertise all statutory appointments, along with selection criteria for each position¹⁸² Appoint an independent panel, including the relevant departmental secretary and a new Public Appointments Commissioner, to assess applications against the selection criteria and provide a shortlist of suitable candidates to the Minister¹⁸³ Require the Minister to select from the recommended shortlist¹⁸⁴ Establish a joint cross-party parliamentary committee to supervise¹⁸⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Would affect large number of public bodies, including several with integrity/monitory functions (e.g., ANAO), although less broad and salient than APS generally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reform would potentially affect 101 non-corporate Commonwealth entities, 71 corporate Commonwealth entities and 15 Commonwealth companies¹⁸⁶ – AAT process already reformed – Public service responsible for substantive policy areas that typically affect social and economic outcomes more directly than statutory bodies ↪ Concerns that better appointment process may be subverted unless Ministerial overrides not permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – E.g. exceptions in the ABC appointment process allowed for continued Ministerial over-ride, which was used repeatedly, compromising the intended ‘arm’s length, merited based’ process¹⁸⁷ – Key reform proposals (e.g., CPI, Grattan) would require Minister to appoint from independently selected short list ✗ Termination processes generally already satisfactory, confined to defined limited grounds (e.g. greater checks on removal of Commissioners in the Productivity Commission¹⁸⁸) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Incidence of political appointments well-documented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – As at 2022, among all federal government agencies, 7 per cent had a direct political connection;¹⁸⁹ and several case studies exist of gaps in processes¹⁹⁰ ✓ Detailed options and design choices identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Grattan Institute¹⁹¹ and Centre for Public Integrity¹⁹² made very similar recommendations and design choices¹⁹³ ✓ Transparent and Quality Public Appointments Bill 2023 (Cth) drafted with support from Centre for Public Integrity, largely reflecting these proposals and identifying a clean legislative mechanism for stipulating process across all public bodies via the Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth) ↪ Briggs Review intended to examine public sector boards,¹⁹⁴ but not yet published but report has not yet been published ↪ Review mechanism needed to understand any loopholes and minimise any unintended consequences, but not yet designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong public support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 68% think government should be limited to appointing candidates shortlisted by an independent selection panel¹⁹⁵ ✓ Sophie Scamps actively championing with draft bill¹⁹⁶ ✗ Major parties likely to resist (e.g., ALP has delayed publishing Briggs Report)¹⁹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish / request publication of Briggs Report to understand any recommended changes to draft legislation based on consultation with public and private sectors about likely operation of reforms in practice Review current protections for termination Continuously review operation of laws to understand any loopholes and minimise unintended consequences

Discretionary grant-making

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislate requirements for publication of criteria, advice from officials on the merits of grants relative to guidelines, reporting of exceptions to parliament¹⁹⁸ Shorten timeframes for reporting on exceptions to parliament¹⁹⁹ Establish a parliamentary oversight committee²⁰⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ New Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles ('CGRPs') already in place and likely to reduce historic abuses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CGRPs require publication of criteria;²⁰¹ advice from officials on the merits of grants relative to guidelines;²⁰² and reporting of exceptions to parliament²⁰³ – These requirements were the core of the Accountability of Grants, Investment Mandates and Use of Public Resources Amendment (End Pork Barrelling Bill) 2024 ('End Pork Barrelling Bill'), ✓ Issues remain (and could be better addressed by the <i>End Pork Barrelling Bill</i>) because code not legislated, allows for a greater reporting lag, does not apply to grants made via States and Territories or through a statutory authority, and is are not overseen by a parliamentary committee ✗ Grant rules would affect material spending of about \$8b/yr,²⁰⁴ although impact on improving policy outcomes would be marginal because the <i>net</i> impact on welfare of making a grant to one recipient rather than another is often limited ✗ Partisan allocation of funding does not seem to have much impact on <i>electoral outcomes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Evidence from other jurisdictions is at best mixed,²⁰⁵ – Latest study from Australia would suggest minimal impact²⁰⁶ ✓ Better process could improve public trust because it could reduce widespread <i>perception</i> of abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good evidence that governments disproportionately make grants to own seats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – e.g., under the Morrison Government, more than twice as much as in discretionary grant funding was allocated to government seats compared to opposition ones,²⁰⁷ – Australia's political institutions are 'ideally suited to pork-barrelling'²⁰⁸ ✓ Research and academic papers²⁰⁹ identify a relatively comprehensive set of options (transferring responsibility for grants administration from politicians to public servants or an independent statutory body,²¹⁰ monitory mechanisms, a range of compliance and sanction mechanisms²¹¹) and design choices (e.g., 'clear' criteria, quarterly reporting to a multipartisan parliamentary committee²¹²) ✓ A 2023 parliamentary inquiry into Commonwealth grants administration²¹³ received 24 submissions and 25 supplementary submissions and conducted four public hearings ⤵ However, more work is needed to design mechanisms to deal with election promises and bailouts²¹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong public support for reform (81% consider grants in marginal seats to win votes to be corrupt conduct)²¹⁵ ✓ Strong support from the cross-bench²¹⁶ ✓ ALP has already introduced guidelines (but not legislation) to improve processes ✓ End Pork Barrelling Bill 2024 introduced (although does not address election promises) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design provisions to deal with election promises²¹⁷ and 'bailout' announcements that preordain certain grant decisions, covered by neither draft legislation nor guidelines²¹⁸

Ministerial inquiries

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new form of official inquiry with powers to require production of documents or appearance but short of full Royal Commissioner powers²¹⁹ • Produce guidelines on what forms of inquiry (e.g., single expert, expert panel, official inquiry, Royal Commission) are appropriate in what circumstances²²⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alternative models (particularly bodies with powers to gather evidence that are not royal commissions) may make more useful recommendations²²¹ ✗ Nothing to stop government commissioning different forms of inquiry when it wants to do so (although currently no framework for conferring power to collect evidence),²²² and ALRC consultation ultimately didn't recommend legislating circumstances in which to use other forms of inquiry²²³ ✗ Governments may prefer to use Royal Commissions (even where inappropriate) because of brand recognition, and preference for a process that is inherently slow when it is a controversial issue²²⁴ ✗ Better inquiry format would ultimately have limited impact – a government could still ignore inconvenient recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good evidence that Royal Commissions have limited impact, particularly on policy-focused inquiries (e.g., a recent study found that 35 royal commissions with a policy focus ultimately had little policy influence)²²⁵ – Australian Law Reform Commission's 2009 consultation extensively examined potential legal models²²⁶ (including, but two-tiered legal proposal doesn't address broader suite of models or what model should be used when e.g. single expert, new standing body, citizens' panel, different mechanisms for referring to existing bodies), deferring this question to a proposed Inquiries Handbook²²⁷ ✗ Legislation not actually drafted by ALRC (in line with their policy)²²⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Public may support alternative models because they are cheaper²²⁹ ✓ Crossbench may support and major parties may be prepared to support (given discretion to use Royal Commission would be effectively retained under proposed model) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft principles to guide when it might be appropriate to use different types of inquiry (e.g., single expert, new standing body, citizens' panel)

Lobbying

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Ministerial diaries²³⁰ • Include in-house lobbyists on the federal lobbying register²³¹ • Ban former Ministers and their senior staff from becoming lobbyists for three years after leaving Parliament²³² • Introduce enforcement mechanisms and penalties via the National Anti-Corruption Commission²³³ 	<p>✓ While lobbying is an important part of democracy,²³⁴ disproportionate influence is possible, real and breeds distrust in government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is potential for undue influence through quid pro quo corruption, and regulatory capture;²³⁵ – Some industries have a regularly revolving door,²³⁶ highly regulated industries appear to affect decision making in their favour²³⁷ – ‘Overwhelmingly’ popular notion that ‘ordinary people should have more influence in political decision-making than big companies that only want to make profits,’²³⁸ <p>✗ However, it is not clear that proposed reforms would have a strong impact on behaviour, outcomes, or public perceptions²³⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diary disclosure requirements typically disclose little meaningful information,²⁴⁰ as illustrated by federal Ministerial diaries recently disclosed under FOI, with a large volume of information redacted under exemptions e.g., s 33(a) (national security), s 34 (Cabinet documents) and s 37 (exemptions – law enforcement and public safety)²⁴¹ <p>✗ Proposed reforms would also allow continued lobbying through less regulated channels such as astroturfing,²⁴² and corridor meetings</p>	<p>✓ Good data on prevalence of lobbying activity itself e.g., coverage of professional lobbyists,²⁴³ revolving door in certain industries,²⁴⁴ extent of lobbyist donations²⁴⁵</p> <p>✓ Good qualitative evidence that lobbying can affect decision-making on major issues like sugar consumption,²⁴⁶ alcohol²⁴⁷</p> <p>✓ Strong analysis of options (e.g., banning, positive and negative ethical requirements through Codes of Conduct, increased transparency, appropriate sanctions)²⁴⁸ and design choices (e.g., within enforcement, warnings, fines and bans on future registration)²⁴⁹</p> <p>✗ Limited evidence that specific regulatory controls on lobbying produce better outcomes²⁵⁰</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not obvious that NSW, QLD, Victorian reforms have significantly altered outcomes 	<p>✓ Does not seem to be direct opinion polling, but strong public interest: 2024 Senate Inquiry received nearly 350 submissions,²⁵¹ and Clean Up Politics campaign active;²⁵² polling from other international jurisdictions may be indicative²⁵³</p> <p>~ Strong support from the cross-bench (see below) but not from major parties</p> <p>✓ Several champions, including Monique Ryan and David Pocock²⁵⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore options for ensuring that subject matter of disclosed meetings includes sufficient detail to be meaningful e.g., commentators have expressed concern about the level of detail disclosed via Ministerial diaries in NSW,²⁵⁵ lobbying registries in Canada and France may provide better examples of appropriate detail for further analysis²⁵⁶ • Consider how to ensure the registry and diaries allow for adequate synthesis, aggregation and reporting²⁵⁷

Constitutional review body

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a standing expert Constitutional Commission to develop proposals for referenda on constitutional changes²⁵⁸ • Hold periodic Constitutional Conventions about every 10 years, involving citizens and experts, to consider proposals for referenda on constitutional changes²⁵⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Not clear that ongoing process would increase prospects of successful referenda (given failure of 1988 referenda despite Constitutional Commission and Convention²⁶⁰), and in general, high risk that referendum proposals ultimately fail²⁶¹ ↪ While a range of substantive proposals have been put forward,²⁶² whether substantive proposals would promote public interest is contested²⁶³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear that there is no established, regular or systematic process for constitutional review²⁶⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No department or agency of the Australian Government mandated to proactively consider or coordinate such review; ✓ Lack of process limits potential to change the Constitution to meet the needs and interests of contemporary Australians²⁶⁵ ✓ Significant precedents and recent analysis for systematic process of constitutional review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There are Australian precedents for temporary advisory bodies on the Constitution,²⁶⁶ – There are several international comparator bodies for an ongoing convention²⁶⁷ – 2021 inquiry canvassed variety of approaches (i.e., Commission, parliamentary committee, Convention, including experts and/or citizens)²⁶⁸ and their costs and benefits ✗ More analysis needed on key design choices (e.g., nomination process, selection of members for a Commission; options for the structure of a Constitutional Convention, taking into account the specific structure of Australia's federation)²⁶⁹ ✗ Not much evidence on whether different mechanisms would increase prospects of referenda (e.g. Williams emphasizes the need for broad and inclusive membership, extending to members of the broader community, in his proposal for a Constitutional Commission, but analysis of how this would drive large-scale public buy-in is limited)²⁷⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inquiry recommendation for ongoing review appeared to have had bipartisan support within the committee;²⁷¹ ALP more enthusiastic about idea of ongoing conventions²⁷² ✓ Some research suggests the public is 'not as averse to constitutional reform as has commonly been assumed, provided sufficient background information is provided'²⁷³ ↪ No current politicians actively championing (although Prof George Williams a prominent civil society advocate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research new approaches to engaging the public on proposals

Government advertising

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit government advertising campaigns only where they are necessary to encourage specific actions or drive behaviour change²⁷⁴ • Establish an independent panel to assess government advertising campaigns before they are launched²⁷⁵ • Make governing parties liable to repay the cost of a campaign launched without certification from the independent panel (as determined by the Auditor-General)²⁷⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Government advertising (and therefore reform on advertising) has limited impact on electoral outcomes,²⁷⁷ particularly relative to more traditional forms of campaigning like personal door-to-door campaigning,²⁷⁸ and total advertising spend is small relative to total government spending ↪ May improve trust in government as many voters cynical about government advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Rigorous analysis shows that between 2008-09 and 2020-21, a quarter of all taxpayer money spent on campaign advertising was spent on politicised campaigns²⁷⁹ and advertising spikes close to elections²⁸⁰ ✓ Most key options laid out (e.g., legislate rules, ensure independent review of advertising material, limit Ministerial intervention, confine campaigns to behaviour change)²⁸¹ and design choices specified for most options (in particular, on nature of the independent review mechanism, historically the subject of some controversy²⁸²) ↪ More could be done to analyse pre-election ban option²⁸³ (e.g., analysing its impact in NSW) ✓ UK explicitly prohibits taxpayer-funded advertising campaigns that promote government policies and achievements²⁸⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 85% of Australians (including 47% who strongly agreed) agreed that government advertising paid for by taxpayers should only be used to inform²⁸⁵ ↪ Crossbench-aligned, but no current champion ✗ Major parties likely to oppose as government advertising inherently an advantage for major parties relative to other politicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further analyse nature of recent government advertising, particularly on social media

Existing expert bodies

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For existing independent expert advisory bodies including the Productivity Commission, Australian Law Reform Commission, Australian Human Rights Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase resourcing for public consultation and communication, especially for ‘hard-to-sell’ reforms – Allow additional self-initiated inquiries – Provide for single annual appropriation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Existing bodies generally reasonably resourced, so additional funds may only have incremental impact ✗ Some existing institutions close to realpolitik limits of intruding into core executive government functions²⁸⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited work to systematically document current resourcing and needs²⁸⁷ ✗ Limited literature on what works in the Australian context, although some commentary on some bodies such as the Productivity Commission²⁸⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Many independent advisory institutions (e.g. AEC, AHRC) have strong public support²⁸⁹ ↪ Crossbench aligned²⁹⁰ but major parties may oppose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a systematic review of the resourcing, powers and policy impact of independent expert policy advisory bodies in Australia, including current and historical, to understand which models are currently working most effectively, and where there may be gaps

Truth in political advertising

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislate to prohibit misleading statements of fact in political advertising,²⁹¹ applying broadly to all forms of political advertising, including social media²⁹² Applies at all times, not just to election campaign period²⁹³ Applies to anyone seeking to affect the outcome of an election, including third party campaigners²⁹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited impact if restrictions confined to statements of fact, and broader reforms likely to have constitutional problems²⁹⁵ ✗ Restrictions would be relatively easily to evade by framing ideas as opinions or predictions²⁹⁶ ✗ There are already significant protections against untruthful political advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Political participants largely aim to ensure the accuracy of their advertising and campaign material as it is embarrassing to be found to have lied – Electoral Commissions are taking active steps to combat electoral misinformation and disinformation²⁹⁷ ↪ Attack ads typically reduce trust in government, so tighter restrictions may improve perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong analysis of options and broader alternatives (e.g., bans on materially deceptive AI-generated audio), ✓ Very detailed analysis of design choices on truth in political advertising laws (e.g., substance, form, temporality, materiality) ✓ Evidence from SA experience that impact is relatively small,²⁹⁸ notwithstanding cultural shifts in degree of scrutiny of wording of political ads as a matter of course²⁹⁹ ✓ Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Communications) Bill 2024 drafted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Nine in ten Australians believe Australia should pass TiPA laws³⁰⁰ ✓ Labor promised introduction prior to 2025 election,³⁰¹ Coalition has indicated in-principle support,³⁰² multiple cross-benchers have consistently supported³⁰³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further analyse bans on the distribution of materially deceptive AI-generated audio or visual media in carrying out an election for the purpose of influencing an election, transparency requirements for deepfakes and AI-generated images, blackouts periods, obligations on digital platforms, a disinformation register (all 'further reform options' set out by Ng (2024c)³⁰⁴)

Whistleblowers

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Whistleblower Protection Authority³⁰⁵ Clarify immunities from prosecution, including for preparatory acts³⁰⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Commonwealth already has a strong baseline for whistleblower protection compared to other jurisdictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Australia's ranked better than or equal to all other G20 countries³⁰⁷ in 2014 – Commonwealth ranked better than any of the states and territories in 2017³⁰⁸ ✓ Whistleblowers can still suffer serious repercussions under current rules, and these would be reduced by an Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Around 56% of public interest whistleblowers suffer repercussions;³⁰⁹ – A Whistleblower Protection Authority could protect these individuals more³¹⁰ ↪ A Whistleblower Protection Authority could in theory encourage more reporting of public sector corruption, and action on reports by relevant organisations; but impact in practice isn't clear; organisational culture and leadership appear to be more important drivers of reporting and responses³¹¹ ✗ There are substantial collateral impacts: broader protections increase the risk of whistleblower rules being used inappropriately as a tool in workplace disputes³¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Of whistleblower claims before the Ombudsman, only 20% meet the threshold for public interest disclosure³¹³ (although there may be under-reporting³¹⁴) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Significant analysis and advocacy from academia and civil society about the nature of the problem and potential solutions³¹⁵ ✓ AGD has undertaken extensive consultation, receiving 56 submissions on the second stage of reforms³¹⁶ ✓ Model exists with <i>Whistleblower Protection Authority Bill 2025</i> and design principles for a Whistleblower Protection Authority (including pro-protection purpose, remedies, mediation and administrative redress, and legal actions)³¹⁷ ✓ Other jurisdictions have established bodies, with the closest analogy the US Office of Special Counsel³¹⁸ ↪ Questions remain about likely impact of Whistleblower Protection Authority, potential for other design options (e.g. a Whistleblower Protection Commissioner operating within the NACC³¹⁹) and trade-offs with other interests such as protecting employers and institutions from unfounded claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 79% of public in favour of creating WPA (and 84% more broadly supporting stronger legal protection for whistleblowers)³²⁰ ✓ Crossbench pushing for reform, letter from 30 MPs to Albanese government;³²¹ ALP supportive in principle of further reform and previously included a WPA as part of its 2019 policy platform but hasn't yet established one³²² ✓ Consistent research and advocacy from multiple civil society organisations e.g., Transparency International,³²³ Griffith University,³²⁴ Human Rights Law Centre³²⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider investing more in organisational processes to promote whistleblower protection and a culture of speaking up, starting from the top, consistent with the research³²⁶ (e.g., via additional public service training)

Future Generations Commissioner

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a Future Generations Commissioner³²⁷ • Create legislative obligation for public bodies to consider the interests of future generations in their decision-making³²⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Impact of Welsh Commissioner in securing concrete policy change appears to be limited (e.g., its most recent impact statement was focused on processes rather than substantive policy change³²⁹), and it ultimately focuses on 'convening, advising and advocating'³³⁰ ↪ Limited enforceability mechanisms beyond reporting³³¹ ↪ More potential in identifying concrete drivers of intergenerational inequity (e.g., tax, productivity, housing, climate, health) and exploring more direct mechanisms for tackling these issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Problem of intergenerational inequity is clearly established, and political drivers of short-termism are also well-studied and documented³³² ↪ Some reporting on Welsh mechanism,³³³ but limited evidence of concrete change ↪ Would be helpful to systematically examine broader range of mechanisms for 'futures work' such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – further development of the <i>Measuring What Matters</i> framework, – wellbeing budget, – long-term insights briefing mechanism recently introduced in the Australian Public Service – option to tackle key drivers such as recent work by Centre for Policy Development³³⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ~78% want to see Future Generations Commissioner established³³⁵ ✓ Sophie Scamps MP championing, and could garner support from ALP (based on support for Measuring What Matters Framework); Bridget Archer supporting from the Coalition³³⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify concrete drivers of intergenerational inequity (e.g., tax, productivity, housing, climate, health) and explore more direct mechanisms for tackling these issues (e.g., creating new, dedicated expert bodies on tax, climate)

Question Time

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disallow questions about alternative approaches³³⁷ Allow one immediate supplementary question for each primary question³³⁸ Ensure minimum number of constituency, opposition and non-aligned questions³³⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Question Time remains an important accountability mechanism with significant reach and visibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Average audience of around 44,000 Australians³⁴⁰ – More visible in the media than most aspects of parliament³⁴¹ – Covers a large number of questions (~1400 questions per year);³⁴² over a broad range – Remains a central mechanism for holding the government of the day to account³⁴³ ✗ Rules to encourage better answers likely to be largely circumvented in practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There will always be room for manipulation and selective application of the ‘rules’ that govern Question Time³⁴⁴ – It is difficult to anticipate how such rules might be circumvented ✗ Feasible changes to the nature of MP questions likely to have only marginal impact on policy outcomes³⁴⁵ without making more substantial reforms that currently face feasibility challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Empirical academic literature shows the quality of Question Time is “highly variable”³⁴⁶ ✓ House of Reps Procedure Committee 2019 Inquiry noted poor public perceptions, and considered potential options and design choices,³⁴⁷ recommending limiting alternative approaches, rostering questions across opposition, government, non-aligned members and constituency questions, and setting time limits for answers³⁴⁸ ✓ Recent work published by SMF recommended similar reforms (focusing on supplementary questions, simplifying question requirements, limiting points of order, taking note of answers, reducing duration of Question Time)³⁴⁹ – Not much analysis of ultimate policy impact of reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Indications of strong public support for reform from inquiry survey (though not representative)³⁵⁰ ✓ Crossbench has championed reform³⁵¹ – 2019 committee recommendations were ultimately bipartisan, although major parties do not appear to actively support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider next tranche of reforms to make Question Time “freer flowing and more responsive,” considering broader practices from other jurisdictions like the UK,³⁵² (e.g. UK House of Commons has implemented departmental question sessions,³⁵³ where specific days are allocated to questions for particular government departments and opposition-led questioning rotations³⁵⁴)

National Anti-Corruption Commission reform

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the NACC to hold public hearings whenever it believes it would be in the public interest (not just in 'exceptional circumstances')³⁵⁵ Bring forward statutory review of the NACC³⁵⁶ Expand the Inspector's powers to review more of the NACC's operations³⁵⁷ Ensure no party has a majority vote on the NACC's parliamentary committee³⁵⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More frequent public hearings (broader than in 'exceptional circumstances') may increase citizen trust through transparency, and strengthen incentives for public officials and politicians to behave well Given baseline of independence (e.g., independent Inspector) and review (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the National Anti-Corruption Commission),³⁵⁹ additional features (public hearings, strengthened inspector powers) may only marginally improve administration and policy Ultimately NACC primarily deals with the 'pointy end' of corruption and only incidentally affects broader questions of policy, governance and institutional reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State jurisdictions e.g., NSW ICAC, provide good precedents for more frequent public hearings (all NSW public hearings have been part of investigations that ultimately found significant wrongdoing);³⁶⁰ although some argue their scope is too wide ✓ Strong case in principle for changing the 'exceptional circumstances' test on the basis that if a public hearing is in the 'public interest', then by definition it should occur even if there are no 'exceptional circumstances',³⁶¹ ↪ There is only anecdotal evidence that the statutory review should be expedited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Critiques of individual processes (except for formally investigated aspects of the Robodebt referral) such as the Operation Bannister inquiry³⁶² are ultimately speculative; – the Report of the Inspector on the Robodebt Royal Commission referrals identified particular procedural errors,³⁶³ rather than a structural issue. – Others have argued the NACC is too "supine"³⁶⁴ and adopting a "weak, inaccurate interpretation of corruption"³⁶⁵ ↪ Proposed broadening of NACC inspector powers³⁶⁶ requires clearer design choices e.g., how those powers would be broadened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 67% of public say hearings should be held when in public interest³⁶⁷ ✗ Attempts to broaden circumstances for public hearings have previously failed³⁶⁸ ✓ Helen Haines MP is championing further reform³⁶⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct review after more data is available regarding the operation of the NACC

FOI

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding to FOI teams and FOI commission to clear backlog and reduce response times³⁷⁰ • Set up independent external review of the functionality of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner³⁷¹ • Develop proactive information release policies tailored to individual government agencies³⁷² • Improve electronic records management in government agencies³⁷³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear demand for reforms to reduce existing backlog, with more than 2,200 outstanding FOI reviews as at Feb 2024 (half more than 12 months old,³⁷⁴ and 20% made more than 90 days late³⁷⁵) ✓ FOI disclosures have uncovered some salient issues, such as:³⁷⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sports Rorts' in 2020; – Potential influence of mining industry on delays to reform of <i>Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> – Treasury advice on Stage 3 tax cuts ↪ FOI disclosures inherently ad hoc; so it may be better to require more proactive disclosure of defined information (e.g. discretionary grant criteria and allocation), although these may not prevent 'chronic obfuscation by decision-making agencies'³⁷⁷ ✗ Strong doubts about impact of broadening exemptions: many claim it would discourage written advice,³⁷⁸ degrade the quality of deliberation and favour special interest groups rather than the citizenry,³⁷⁹ though others suggest it could lead to more rigorous and independent advice³⁸⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good quantitative evidence about backlog and delays per Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), and about 'obstructionist tactics' as a significant cause³⁸¹ ✓ Options for resourcing, operating model and review timeframes (e.g., separation of FOI review and regulatory functions from OAIC, implementation of statutory timeframes, strategic review to consider additional funding) were canvassed broadly and robustly;³⁸² inquiry received over 40 submissions³⁸³ ✗ However, options relating to proactive disclosure and greater legislative transparency not addressed in detail by 2023 inquiry³⁸⁴ ✗ Many design choices for reform not yet defined (e.g., appropriate statutory timeframes for review, operational requirements to resolve backlog). Design choices do not seem to have been translated into detailed legislation or policy ↪ Evidence of collateral impact of reform inherently hard to obtain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Limited public confidence in current system (only 20% confident that FOI gives Australians access to info entitled to)³⁸⁵ ✓ Cross-bench are strong advocates (with Sen Rex Patrick championing reform)³⁸⁶ ✓ ALP MPs called for comprehensive reform in dissenting parliamentary report in 2023³⁸⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider targeted circumstances in which greater proactive disclosure may be beneficial³⁸⁸

Electoral information packs

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Australian Electoral Commission-issued candidate information packs for elections³⁸⁹ • Include a formal policy manifesto document from each party/candidate, a candidate statement, the candidate's business interests and affiliations, and total amount and source of donations received by each candidate³⁹⁰ • Disseminate packs online, mail to homes and make available at the ballot box on voting day³⁹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Provision of electoral information packs is unlikely to change the nature and quality of candidates' communications about their policy because it is hard to police quality and contents ✗ May have limited impact on voting decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recent research about the 2023 Voice referendum (while a different context to an election), found that while interpersonal communication mattered, government-supplied information and mass media exposure had no effect³⁹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Civil society actors make good argument in principle that 'good democracy depends on citizens being able to make informed decisions when voting'³⁹³ ✗ However, limited evidence that information packs affect voting much <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research on the degree to which voting is informed in Australia is outdated,³⁹⁴ notwithstanding more recent aggregate information about the extent to which Australians access different sources to inform their vote³⁹⁵ and analysis of the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum³⁹⁶ ✓ Some precedent in other jurisdictions e.g., Victoria³⁹⁷ ✗ Limited work on other options, key design choices (e.g., timing, format, oversight, enforcement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↪ Difficult to predict public opinion, but measures to improve access to information may be generally popular ↪ Difficult to predict view of crossbench and major parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct updated research into the ways in which Australians inform themselves during election campaigns • Systematically review literature on whether and how government issued information packs can affect voting intention.

Voting age

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower the voting age to 16³⁹⁸ Make enrolment and voting for the new age bracket compulsory³⁹⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Inherently small impact on overall electoral outcomes because small proportion of electorate ~ May have marginal impacts on younger voter engagement and trust, (based on mixed international record⁴⁰⁰) but only likely if coupled with other initiatives like civics education⁴⁰¹ and registration⁴⁰² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – AEC has already substantially increased youth voter registration to 92%,⁴⁰³ the highest in nearly 10 years⁴⁰⁴ ✓ Strong rights arguments in favour of voting for 16-17 year olds⁴⁰⁵ ✓ There are limited unintended consequences⁴⁰⁶ and 16-17 year olds have similar cognitive capacity to cast informed vote as older cohorts⁴⁰⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Declining traditional political participation well-documented⁴⁰⁸ ✓ Significant academic literature on impacts in international jurisdictions, but mostly in jurisdictions without compulsory voting (or optional voting for 16 and 17 year-olds)⁴⁰⁹ ✓ Strong arguments in favour of compulsory voting and against optional voting, which could undermine compulsory voting and create unfairness (by shifting campaigning methods for younger voters towards modes seen in the USA)⁴¹⁰ ~ More work to be done on potential impact if combined with other initiatives such as civics education⁴¹¹ ~ Greens have introduced several bills (for optional 16-17 year-old voting)⁴¹² ✓ 97 submissions made to the inquiry into the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering Voting Age and Increasing Voter Participation) Bill 2018⁴¹³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ 86% Australians oppose,⁴¹⁴ although in other jurisdictions (such as Scotland), the public has become more supportive after seeing the change in practice⁴¹⁵ ✓ Make it 16 campaign is advocating for reform⁴¹⁶ ~ Mixed political attitudes: Labor supports if voting compulsory;⁴¹⁷ Greens support optional voting;⁴¹⁸ Monique Ryan MP has championed;⁴¹⁹ other crossbench attitudes may vary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how lowering the vote age could be combined with other initiatives like civics education to maximise impact on engagement and trust⁴²⁰ and continued strengthening of registration⁴²¹

Governance Commission

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an independent expert commission to make advisory public reports on non-constitutional institutional reforms⁴²² Require the Commission to investigate some (but not all) of the proposals submitted to it by parties and candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommendations would promote institutional reform agenda itself (with 'multiplier' effects on substantive policy outcomes) ✗ Recommendations likely to be ignored unless strongly supported by civil society⁴²³ ✗ Independent not-for-profit may be more effective than official body because vested interests less able to control agenda, and body would have greater ability to influence public opinion⁴²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Absence of institutional reform body well recognised and models proposed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 'there is no one with clear responsibility for addressing flaws apparent in our democracy; the result is that little progress occurs'⁴²⁵ – Accountability Round Table put forward a high-level proposal for 'an enduring national Governance Reform Commission', which would 'review all aspects of governance make recommendations to Parliament'⁴²⁶ – Carson (newDemocracy Foundation) put forward a commission to 'explore methods for maintaining and improving the core pillars of democracy: trust, legitimacy, transparency and representation'⁴²⁷ – Models of independent advisory body, as well as detailed design choices (e.g., composition, agenda-setting, referral mechanisms) would need to be considered in detail – More work is needed to systematically identify gaps relative to existing bodies such as JSCEM, ANAO and NACC, and civil society organisations ✓ Precedents in Qld Electoral and Administrative Review Commission, Canada (Special Committee on Electoral Reform which examined alternative voting systems and how to improve Canadian democracy)⁴²⁸ and Scotland⁴²⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Crossbench likely aligned (e.g., based on support for bodies like NACC); major parties unlikely to support ✗ Not likely to gain strong public support without strong political / civil society push⁴³⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically review existing bodies (e.g., JSCEM, ANAO, NACC), any gaps in their responsibility for overseeing and recommending changes Review civil society organisations making recommendations on institutional reform and any gaps Continue to strengthen collaboration across civil society, with a view to targeting institutional reforms efficiently

Free votes

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce more free votes to Parliament⁴³¹ through a parliamentary convention that joint committees can nominate issues to be put to a free vote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Likely won't make much difference as many MPs likely to vote down party lines anyway⁴³² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the major predictor of how parliamentarians vote when given a free vote is their party, even on conscience issues where ideology often cleaves along party lines⁴³³ ↪ May not increase trust much as likely to focus on moral/conscience issues where MP positions more likely to be influenced by personal position than constituency view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good evidence that votes along party lines reduce the wisdom of crowds,⁴³⁴ focus on electoral mechanics at the expense of good policy,⁴³⁵ follow 'shibboleths',⁴³⁶ and excessively weight short-term popularity rather than trying to lead public opinion⁴³⁷ ✗ Little literature that compares designated free votes to other parliamentary voting options (such as the UK convention that party whips designate a variable level of expected compliance for each bill⁴³⁸), or details design choices ↪ Some UK precedent,⁴³⁹ but limited applicability in Australia where back-benchers have higher chances of promotion, and so more incentive to vote along party lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Likely to be resisted by major parties ✗ Very hard in practice to prevent a party imposing a de facto direction ↪ No current political champion although John Brumby a civil society champion,⁴⁴⁰ and idea championed collectively by civil society organisations and prominent individuals in 2019⁴⁴¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

House of Representatives Proportionate Representation

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce mixed-member proportional representation for elections to the House of Reps with multi-member divisions and representation in proportion to the support of parties in each division⁴⁴² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate impact on proportionality and greater representation of voter preferences (which political scientists suggest is desirable in theory, but creates understudied trade-offs in practice),⁴⁴³ noting Senate already provides proportionate representation in Australia Significant reduction in local connection of MPs,⁴⁴⁴ engagement with local electorate⁴⁴⁵ and accountability of individual politicians⁴⁴⁶ Closed party lists can further strengthen party leader control;⁴⁴⁷ although party-voter linkages may be weaker with open-list PR⁴⁴⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large literature about the theoretical advantages and disadvantages of different voting systems in the light of basic principles such as proportionality, effective government, accountability, constituency service, minority representation and cohesive parties;⁴⁴⁹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant trade-off between proportionality and effective government (because proportionality tends to lead to coalition government and multi-party politics);⁴⁵⁰ Significant trade-off between proportionality and constituency service Trade-offs between mixed member proportional representation and single transferable vote contested in the literature⁴⁵¹ Mixed member proportional representation understudied in the context of the Commonwealth Parliament,⁴⁵² with many non-trivial design choices to be worked through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> balance between “lower tier” and “upper tier” seats,⁴⁵³ because district seats can strengthen territorial representation, improve personalisation of elections and weaken the power of central party offices;⁴⁵⁴ whether there should be a minimum vote threshold before a party gains seats in the legislature;⁴⁵⁵ whether and to what extent to increase the size of the House of Representatives;⁴⁵⁶ whether to use closed or open party lists⁴⁵⁷ Precedent from other jurisdictions (including New Zealand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independents likely to strongly oppose given current electoral outcomes Coalition likely to strongly oppose but ALP may be more equivocal;⁴⁵⁸ Greens likely to support⁴⁵⁹ Would not require constitutional change;⁴⁶⁰ but unlikely to win popular support Limited champions from civil society Significant cost to educate, train citizens on system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

Parliamentary Policy Office

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Parliamentary Policy Office (PPO) that on request provides confidential advice to MPs (which they may choose to publish) on proposed policy initiatives⁴⁶¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliamentary research services already provide factual analysis to support decision-making Will be difficult for strictly independent parliamentary service to provide useful advice on controversial policy issues Policy proposals with limited evidence typically motivated by political reasons rather than lack of access to evidence, so unlikely to have big impact on policy outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good evidence that policy proposals with a poor evidence base are proposed despite ample access to well-tested policy research and ideas⁴⁶² More analysis needed on actual demand from parliamentarians More analysis needed comparing PPO to other options and of design choices (e.g., remit, relationship to the PBO, prioritisation criteria, method of referral and any limitations on referral, size and resourcing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to predict public support; public may support on grounds of promoting evidence-based policy⁴⁶³ Crossbench may have appetite given limited resourcing; may be some appetite from major parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine demand for a Parliamentary Policy Office, together with demand for increased resourcing for existing services (e.g., Parliamentary Research Services, PBO), increased MP resourcing

Executive priorities and commitments

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require Government to table statement of legislative intent at the start of a parliamentary term/calendar year, setting out the Government's priorities⁴⁶⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to see how rules could be designed to create stronger incentives for laying out policy priorities than existing mechanisms (e.g., Governor-General's Speech⁴⁶⁵), or for promoting adherence to promises Without further detail on proposed mechanisms for holding accountable, could be easily ignored; could be argued that it is important to retain the flexibility to break promises Other mechanisms include budget speech and fiscal papers, election promises and platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of problem is weak – reasonable evidence suggests promises are regularly kept, and there are ample existing requirements for governments to lay out priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2010 election campaign analysis shows, 232 promises were made and 87% were kept;⁴⁶⁶ Limited analysis of current state, options or design choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited public opinion data, but may receive some support as an additional accountability mechanism May be crossbench-aligned, but unlikely to attract strong support from parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate whether there is a need for alternative mechanisms to promote a coherent, forward-looking legislative agenda

Independent Chamber leaders

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the offices of Speaker and President quasi-judicial⁴⁶⁷ • Appoint officers for set terms of service⁴⁶⁸ • Select officers based on expertise and understanding of parliamentary practice via a bipartisan parliamentary committee⁴⁶⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ultimate impact on policy likely marginal without further reform to procedural rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Presiding Officer's role is to interpret and rule on matters that are not clear or not provided for in standing orders:⁴⁷⁰ this latitude can result in inconsistencies, particularly in Question Time,⁴⁷¹ but the permissiveness of the rules themselves creates the greatest opportunity for politicking in ways that undermine deliberative discussion⁴⁷² – The Presiding Officer is responsible for ejecting members⁴⁷³ and is frequently accused of political bias in doing so,⁴⁷⁴ but this rarely changes the substantive debate or outcomes ✗ Direct public engagement with parliamentary proceedings is limited, so unlikely to affect trust in government much 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Limited rigorous analysis of whether Presiding officers biased, or the impact of bias – Data on ejections from Question Time suggests that opposition members ejected more often,⁴⁷⁵ however this does not demonstrate partisanship, as members in opposition may tend to behave differently to members in government – More analysis required of alternative mechanisms (e.g. a government member who severs party ties and is expected to behave quasi-judicially, or a non-government member)⁴⁷⁶ – UK model of Speaker who severs ties with former party may be unviable in Australia because House of Representatives is much smaller⁴⁷⁷ – Non-government members may still have biases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 50% of Australians think Senate should choose an independent or minor party senator to be President,⁴⁷⁸ 60% think a 2/3 majority should elect the Speaker⁴⁷⁹ (although unlikely to garner significant public attention) – Crossbench may support ✗ Parties unlikely to support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise reforming the substantive rules governing Question Time

Deadlock procedure

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the government to identify measures blocked by the Senate before an election, which it can put to a joint sitting of Parliament for passage if it wins the election⁴⁸⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited impact as Senate has not been a key blocker for many major reforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of 73 unsuccessful reforms in Grattan Institute sample, only 5 involved the Senate blocking reform or supporting retrograde change⁴⁸¹ ✗ Would expand executive power by reducing Senate leverage to pursue amendments⁴⁸² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ General consensus that current double dissolution procedure for deadlocks is dysfunctional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used more for short-term electoral advantage than to resolve deadlocks⁴⁸³ Current procedure is disruptive and disproportionate relative to the 'deadlock' problem it looks to solve⁴⁸⁴ ↪ Australian literature discusses three significant options, but many design choices not yet worked through (e.g., how would issues to be put to a joint sitting be tabled, how might governments be held accountable for such promises, what happens if the joint sitting doesn't resolve the matter) ↪ Options of mediation or conference committee (e.g., US, Germany)⁴⁸⁵ warrant further analysis; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Would require referendum, with limited prospects of success⁴⁸⁶ ↪ Public attitude unclear ✗ Minor parties likely to oppose because it would weaken their leverage in the Senate ↪ Coalition has been strongest advocate in recent years⁴⁸⁷ although the ALP has historically been interested in reform to weaken the Senate⁴⁸⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further explore options of using mediation or conference committee before allowing joint sitting

MP benefits

Reform	Impact	Evidence base	Feasibility	Further work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduce the defined parliamentary superannuation scheme conditional on not taking conflicting appointment post politics⁴⁸⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ May undermine public trust given unpopularity with electorate ✗ Unclear whether increasing benefits would reduce revolving door, and unlikely to impact other governance outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Little evidence – and inherently hard to show – impact on incentives to enter politics or choice of post-political career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Likely to be very unpopular with the electorate, and inherently high profile ✗ Likely material cost relative to total remuneration of parliamentarians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

Endnotes

- ¹ Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2025) recommend that all cash-for-access and corporate donations be disclosed, regardless of size (p. 1.)
- ² Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2025) recommend establishment of an independent expert Commission in the style of Queensland's former Electoral and Administrative Review Commission (p. 1).
- ³ See, e.g., Mackie, G. (2009). "Schumpeter's leadership democracy". *Political Theory*, 37(1), 128-153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591708326642>, emphasizing the canonical nature of Schumpeter's minimalist theory (and characterising competitive elections for the purpose of his own theory as a necessary condition of democracy).
- ⁴ Rayner (2019), p. 150.
- ⁵ Wood and Griffiths (2018)
- ⁶ See main body report, section 4.1.3.
- ⁷ See main body report, section 4.1.3.
- ⁸ See discussion at pp. 25-29 of main report.
- ⁹ See, e.g., Wood and Griffiths (2018); Wood and Griffiths (2022); Centre for Public Integrity (2022a); Rayner (2019), p. 150.
- ¹⁰ In some cases, commentary relates to the *Electoral Reform Bill* but most of the criticised elements of the Bill remained in the Act; see, e.g., Browne (2024); Twomey (2024a); Tham (2024); Whealy (2024); Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2024).
- ¹¹ Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2025) recognise that this requires more work, calling for a Commission to report on the setting of relevant caps.
- ¹² E.g., there are important design questions about how to prevent excessive deployment of general party advertising to individual seats. A proposal has been put forward by Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2025) to revise s 302ALC to require all spending to be allocated to seat caps, according to distribution of electoral matter.
- ¹³ See, e.g., Tham (2024).
- ¹⁴ Browne (2024).
- ¹⁵ See, e.g., Browne (2024).
- ¹⁶ See, e.g., Bonotti and Nwokora (2024), pp. 701-704.
- ¹⁷ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2023).
- ¹⁸ The Australia Institute (2024c).
- ¹⁹ See Centre for Public Integrity et al. (2025), pp. 1-2.
- ²⁰ See Bonotti and Nwokora (2024), pp. 703-704.
- ²¹ Thodey (2019), p. 294, recommendation 39a recommends publication of a written policy entailing published selection criteria, wide consultation and rigorous consideration of potential candidates against criteria, but does not recommend legislation of this policy. Podger (2024)

recommends consideration of amending legislation to create a presumption in favour of advertising, and provide for the independent APS Commissioner to be joint author with the Secretary of PM&C of advice to the Prime Minister on Secretary appointments (p. 9).

²² Thodey (2019), p. 296, recommendation 39c (recommending amendment of the *Public Service Act 1999* to require termination only on specific legislated grounds or agreement by the APS Commissioner and PM&C Secretary to agree and publish a policy setting out steps to be undertaken prior to advising to the Prime Minister on a proposed termination).

²³ See, e.g., Thodey (2019), p. 22.

²⁴ See, e.g., Podger (2024b).

²⁵ As at 30 June 2024, there were 185,343 APS employees: APSC (2024).

²⁶ See, e.g., Hood and Lodge (2006), p. 23.

²⁷ See, e.g., Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 18 noting concerns regarding Ministers' drive to assert political control over policy; Podger (2018), p. 7 regarding evidence of ministerial departments focusing more on the immediate demands of ministers and their advisers than on longer-term issues; Prasser (2023), p. 2.

²⁸ Victorian Ombudsman (2023).

²⁹ See, e.g., Lopes and Viera (2023), p. 161.

³⁰ See, e.g., Gerson (2020), canvassing other options like parliamentary/congressional confirmation; Podger (2024a), Podger (2024b), canvassing the option of increasing tenure.

³¹ Gerson (2020).

³² Thodey (2019), p. 288.

³³ Two in three Australians (68%) think that the Government should be limited to appointing candidates who have been shortlisted by an independent selection panel, four times as many as think the Government should be able to appoint whomever it likes (15%): The Australia Institute 2023.

³⁴ Thodey's recommendation 39 was not supported by the Coalition: Jenkins (2019).

³⁵ The Government has indicated that most recommendations on appointments and terminations is 'underway': APS Reform (2023b), pp. 28-29.

³⁶ See the Transparent and Quality Public Appointments ('Ending Jobs for Mates') Bill

³⁷ Parliament of Australia (2015), cl 2.4, p. 5.

³⁸ See Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2024).

³⁹ See The Australia Institute (2025), p. 20.

⁴⁰ Tingle (2024).

⁴¹ The Australian Collaboration (2013), p. 1; Queensland Finance and Administration References Committee (2015), p. 32.

⁴² Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025), p. 8.

⁴³ See, e.g., Queensland Finance and Administration Committee (2015), pp. 40-43; *Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Act 2015* (Qld).

⁴⁴ See Schleiter and Issar (2016).

⁴⁵ The Australian Collaboration (2013).

⁴⁶ See, e.g., Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003 (Vic); Constitution Amendment (Fixed Term Parliaments) Act 1995 (NSW); Constitution (Fixed Term Parliament) Amendment Act 2015 (Qld).

⁴⁷ E.g., Queensland Finance and Administration Committee (2015) on election timing (p. 39); mechanisms for early elections in exceptional circumstances (p. 31); transition period (p. 59); synchronisation with other elections (p. 45).

⁴⁸ ReachTEL (2016).

⁴⁹ JWS Research (2023), p. 10.

⁵⁰ JSCEM (2022), p. 125.

⁵¹ JSCEM (2022), p. 125.

⁵² The Coalition's view does not appear to have been explicitly referred to in JSCEM (2022) although the NSW Nationals concurred that fixed terms could provide greater certainty, particularly around campaign finance and expenditure: Coorey (2024).

⁵³ Grattan (2016a).

⁵⁴ JSCEM (2025), p. xiii (recommendation 3).

⁵⁵ JSCEM (2025), p. xiii (recommendation 4).

⁵⁶ JSCEM (2025), p. xiii (recommendation 5).

⁵⁷ As supported by Print (2024), p. 5; Heggart (2024); p. 2; Dr Neoh (SCEAA), *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 16 October 2024, p. 13.

⁵⁸ Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (2025).

⁵⁹ McAllister et al. (2022).

⁶⁰ Smith et al. (2015).

⁶¹ Jerome et al. (2024).

⁶² APSC (2023a), p. 2.

⁶³ Huitema et al. (2018).

⁶⁴ See statistics under 'impact'.

⁶⁵ Smith et al. (2015).

⁶⁶ JSCEM (2025).

⁶⁷ Fu et al. (2021), p. 12.

⁶⁸ Sheppard et al. (2018), p. 6.

⁶⁹ Smith et al. (2015).

⁷⁰ Campbell (2019), p. 37.

⁷¹ See, e.g., Smith et al. (2015), p. 6.

⁷² E.g., JSCEM (2025) notes that there are few opportunities for the broader adult population to access civics education beyond programs addressed to diverse and remote communities: p. 47.

⁷³ 4 in 5 Australians believe it is worth trying to fix the problems our democracy may have - APS Reform (2023), p. 4.

⁷⁴ ALP (2023), p. 40.

⁷⁵ JSCEM (2022), p. 207.

⁷⁶ See, e.g., JSCEM (2025), p. 147.

⁷⁷ See, e.g., Smith et al. (2015), pp. 6, 51. See also Kate Chaney's additional comments at JSCEM (2025), p. 147.

⁷⁸ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b).

⁷⁹ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b), p. 17; NB: Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b) suggests that Standing Orders should allow a committee to call the relevant Minister if the government fails to respond by the deadline.

⁸⁰ The Centre for Public Integrity (2025) [forthcoming], p. 46.

⁸¹ Marsh and Halpin (2015), p. 138; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010b), p. viii.

⁸² Marsh and Halpin (2015), p. 137.

⁸³ Evershed (2013).

⁸⁴ Marsh and Halpin (2015), p. 137.

⁸⁵ See, e.g., Senate Standing Order 25.

⁸⁶ E.g., in the UK, Standing Order No 122B(8)(f) provides that the Public Accounts Committee Chair must be a member of the Official Opposition; and in Canada, Standing Order 106(2) provides for a non-government Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

⁸⁷ For the decade 2000-2009, the Senate recorded 709 dissenting and minority reports for the committees it administered, compared with 228 for the previous decade (a more than twofold increase): Halligan and Reid (2015), p. 2.

⁸⁸ See, e.g., Moulds (2024a), p. 238.

⁸⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010a); House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010b).

⁹⁰ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b); Centre for Public Integrity (2025) (forthcoming); Moulds (2021).

⁹¹ The Australia Institute (2025).

⁹² House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010), p. 5.

⁹³ Moskovic et al. (2020).

⁹⁴ The Storting (n.d.)

⁹⁵ E.g., McKinnon Institute has incorporated some learning on how committees can effectively take evidence.

⁹⁶ Moulds (2021), p. 81.

⁹⁷ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b), p. 22.

⁹⁸ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b), p. 22 for a more nuanced articulation of specific proposed amendments to Standing Orders.

⁹⁹ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025) (forthcoming), p. 21.

¹⁰⁰ Parliament of Australia (2022), pp. 31-36.

¹⁰¹ E.g., *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering the Donation Disclosure Threshold) Bill 2019*; 78% public support for immediate, real-time disclosure of donations in 2023: JWS Research (2023), p. 14.

¹⁰² E.g., *Gambling Harm Reduction (Protecting Problem Gamblers and Other Measures Bill 2016)*; there was 70% support for precommitment technology in 2011: ANU (2011).

¹⁰³ See, e.g., Dixon (2004), p. 89.

¹⁰⁴ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010a), p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025) (forthcoming), p. 21, citing House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia, *House of Representatives Standing and Sessional Orders* (20 October 2010)

¹⁰⁶ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025) (forthcoming), p. 23.

¹⁰⁷ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010a), p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ E.g., as per the principles articulated in the 2010 Agreement: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2010a), p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ See, e.g., Maley and Sawyer (2022).

¹¹⁰ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), pp. 48-52. The Review of the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* suggested that independent staffers may face unreasonable workloads, which would suggest that there is significant demand for greater support to scrutinise and propose amendments to legislation.

¹¹¹ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), pp. 48-52. Likewise, heavy workloads would suggest significant demand for greater support to propose legislation.

¹¹² Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023.

¹¹³ Transparent and Quality Public Appointments Bill 2023.

¹¹⁴ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), pp. 54, 56-57.

¹¹⁵ Maley and Sawyer (2022); Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), p. 57.

¹¹⁶ As suggested by Senator Pocock: Grattan (2024).

¹¹⁷ Maley and Sawyer (2022)

¹¹⁸ Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (2023b).

¹¹⁹ E.g., increasing personal employee allocations from 1 to 4 for current independents, as a rough ballpark, conservatively assuming senior advisor salaries of ~\$140,000 p.a: Talent.com (2025) across 19 members would cost ~\$8M.

¹²⁰ A report by the Parliamentary Workplace Support Services considering personal staffing levels was completed in 2024, but not released: Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (2023a).

¹²¹ See, e.g., Coorey (2022).

¹²² See, e.g., Madden (2022), who notes that the number of staffers provided to crossbenchers could be seen to relate to their position in the balance of power.

¹²³ Including research services provided by the Parliamentary Library, as well as the existing landscape of think tanks, including right-leaning and left-leaning think tanks (four 'large' institutes on the right and six 'large' institutes on the left: Hagland (2021), p. 72) with close connections to parties: Hagland (2021), p. 128.

¹²⁴ Thodey et al. (2019), pp. 134-136, 312; Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 25.

¹²⁵ Ng (2018), p. 180; Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), p. 96; Thodey et al. (2019), p. 137.

¹²⁶ Maley (2019), p. 3.

¹²⁷ Ng (2018), p. 180; Centre for Public Integrity (2025) [forthcoming], p. 54.

¹²⁸ Connaughton (2015).

¹²⁹ Ng (2018), p. 118. 178.

¹³⁰ Daley (2021), p. 47.

¹³¹ Daley (2021), p. 47; Department of Finance (2023).

¹³² As suggested by former Secretary of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Martin Parkinson: quoted in Tingle (2015), p. 24.

¹³³ Ng (2018), p. 55, 176.

¹³⁴ Ng (2018), Maley (2019), Tiernan et al. (2019), Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022), and Centre for Public Integrity (2025), but cf Australian Public Service Reform (2023).

¹³⁵ Shaw and Eichbaum (2020).

¹³⁶ See, e.g., Moran (2013), p. 5; Tiernan et al (2019), p. 26; Ng (2018); but cf Shergold (2015, p. 33).

¹³⁷ E.g., advisers may intervene to extract partisan advantage from public service processes that should be conducted for the public interest e.g., intervening in FOI requests to expedite the release of information to favoured channels that will embarrass the Opposition: Ng (2018), p. 177.

¹³⁸ Ng (2018), Maley (2019), Tiernan et al. (2019), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (2022) and Centre for Public Integrity (2025).

¹³⁹ APS Reform (2023b), pp. 11-12.

¹⁴⁰ Ng (2018), pp. 8-10.

¹⁴¹ See Transparent and Quality Public Appointments Bill 2023.

¹⁴² Thodey (2019), p. 137.

¹⁴³ Thodey (2019), p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025a), pp. 11-14 for a catalogue of where the reform has been raised.

¹⁴⁵ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025a), p. 25 for an outline of this option (noting that Susan McKinnon Foundation equally canvasses options of retaining the current six-year Senate term and reducing the Senate term to four years).

¹⁴⁶ See, e.g., Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025a), pp. 17-18; Gersbach et al (2019), p. 6.

¹⁴⁷ See, e.g., Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025a), p. 20.

¹⁴⁸ See Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025), p. 19.

¹⁴⁹ See, e.g., Queensland Finance and Administration Committee (2015), Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025), pp. 17-21; JCSEM (2000); JSCM (2003); JCSEM (2005).

¹⁵⁰ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025), p. 28.

¹⁵¹ McAllister and Biddle (2024).

¹⁵² Goot (2024).

¹⁵³ See, e.g., Reece et al. (2019), pp. 8-9.

¹⁵⁴ See, e.g., Paulis and Pospieszna (2024), pp. 4-5.

¹⁵⁵ See, e.g., Pow et al (2020).

¹⁵⁶ See, e.g., Van Dijk and Lefevre (2022).

¹⁵⁷ See, e.g., the UK and France's assemblies on climate change: UK Parliament (n.d.) and Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat (n.d.); Chile's assembly on health care: Fishkin et al. (n.d.) Germany's assembly on misinformation: Burgerrat (2024), and Belgium's assembly on political party funding: Burgerrat (2023).

¹⁵⁸ OECD (2020); see also notes and references under 'impact'.

¹⁵⁹ See, e.g., Ryan M.D. (2023), describing South Australia's deliberative and participatory pilots.

¹⁶⁰ See, e.g., Benoit-Pilet et al. (2022).

¹⁶¹ Shanahan (2025).

¹⁶² newDemocracy Foundation (2017).

¹⁶³ See, e.g., Carson and Schechter (2019), p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ See, e.g., Spender (n.d.).

¹⁶⁵ Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 17.

¹⁶⁶ Stewart and Prasser (2015) write that expert policy advisory bodies "have played an important role in the evolution of policy ideas and in presenting well-worked options for change when the time for change has come": Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 162.

¹⁶⁷ Refer to detail on appointment and termination of Departmental Secretaries.

¹⁶⁸ Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 16.

¹⁶⁹ Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 19.

¹⁷⁰ Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 153.

¹⁷¹ Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 162.

¹⁷² There are no official criteria for when an independent advisory body would be appropriate: Department of Finance (2020). Other literature is thin: Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 156.

¹⁷³ Gill and Dalton (2023)

¹⁷⁴ The National Hospital and Health Services Commission, Social Welfare Commission and Cities Commission are examples of bodies established under Whitlam, while the Bureau of Immigration, Population and Multicultural Research replaced the Institute of Multicultural Affairs established under the Fraser government: Stewart and Prasser (2015), pp. 155-156.

¹⁷⁵ Spender (2024), pp. 45-46.

¹⁷⁶ See, e.g., Banks (1998), p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ Productivity Commission (2023b), p. 203.

¹⁷⁸ Productivity Commission (2023b), p. 375.

¹⁷⁹ APS Reform (2024), p. 20 (more than 60% of Australians trust the AEC and HRC; RBA ranks second lowest behind political parties).

¹⁸⁰ Tiernan et al. (2019), p. 19.

¹⁸¹ Wood et al. (2022), p. 4; Centre for Public Integrity (2022d), p. 1.

¹⁸² Wood et al. (2022), p.4 ; Centre for Public Integrity (2022d), p. 1.

¹⁸³ Wood et al. (2022), p. 4; Centre for Public Integrity (2022d), p. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Wood et al. (2022), pp. 4, 29 suggest that if there are circumstances where shortlisted candidates are no longer suitable or job requirements have changed, the minister should publish new selection criteria.

¹⁸⁵ Centre for Public Integrity (2022b), p. 1.

¹⁸⁶ Department of Finance (2024).

¹⁸⁷ E.g., the process allows for consultation with the Leader of the Opposition that is not bona fide (process should require at a minimum provision of information about the recruitment process and any alternative nominee); the Minister or Prime Minister is responsible for assessing whether a proposed appointee has met the criteria if the appointment is made under subsection 24X(1) or (4) of the *Australian Broadcasting Act 1983 (Cth)*.

¹⁸⁸ Banks (2011), p. 4.

¹⁸⁹ Wood et al. (2022), p. 3.

¹⁹⁰ Wood et al. (2022), p. 24.

¹⁹¹ Wood et al (2022).

¹⁹² Centre for Public Integrity (2022).

¹⁹³ One exception is whether the Minister has any discretion to depart from or alter shortlist; while CPI does not recommend any exceptions: Centre for Public Integrity (2022), p. 3, Grattan recommends that the Minister may redefine or republish selection criteria in circumstances where shortlisted candidates are no longer suitable or the job requirements have changed: Wood et al. (2022), p. 29.

¹⁹⁴ Australian Public Service Commission (2023).

¹⁹⁵ The Australia Institute (2023).

¹⁹⁶ Scamps (2024).

¹⁹⁷ See Scamps (2024); The Treasurer did not answer the question of when the report will be released publicly but indicated that “the report is with government for consideration”.

¹⁹⁸ Wood et al. (2022c), p. 4; Centre for Public Integrity (2022f), pp. 2-3; End Pork Barrelling Bill, Part 3.

¹⁹⁹ See End Pork Barrelling Bill 2022 s 15.

²⁰⁰ Wood et al. (2022c), p. 4. End Pork Barrelling Bill 2022, Part 5.

²⁰¹ End Pork Barrelling Bill s 18(1); CGRPs 2024 ss 5.2, 13.3.

²⁰² End Pork Barrelling Bill s 13(2); Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles 2024 ss 4.6-4.7.

²⁰³ End Pork Barrelling Bill s 16(2)(b); CGRPs 2024 s 4.13.

²⁰⁴ Between December 2017 and June 2021, the Commonwealth government awarded approximately 42% of its grants by value through closed, non-competitive processes, amounting to about \$25B: Australian National Audit Office (2021), p. 13.

²⁰⁵ See, e.g., Berry et al. (2010) on the US and Scheiner (2005) on Japan

²⁰⁶ McAllister (2022).

²⁰⁷ Wood et al. (2022c), p. 3; McAllister (2022).

²⁰⁸ McAllister (2022).

²⁰⁹ Especially Wood et al. (2022c) and Ng (2023).

²¹⁰ See, e.g., Ng (2023), p. 228; Mulgan (2024).

²¹¹ See, e.g., Ng (2023), p. 229.

²¹² See, e.g., Wood et al. (2022c), p. 4.

²¹³ Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (2022).

²¹⁴ Twomey (2022), pp. 3-4.

²¹⁵ The Australia Institute (2023b).

²¹⁶ Helen Haines MP is championing the reform, while Monique Ryan MP and David Pocock have both thrown support behind the *End Pork Barrelling Bill*: Ng (2024a).

²¹⁷ Twomey (2022), pp. 3-4.

²¹⁸ The bill and guidelines may make greater parliamentary scrutiny more likely after the fact but as long as criteria can be retrospectively force-fit to the promise, the problem is likely to persist. There may be merit in legislating a requirement that Ministers act fairly (including “not agreeing to make a grant to a body before it has applied for it or before the scheme has even opened”) and impartially (e.g., “not acting to favour projects in electorates held by a particular party, or targeting marginal electorates with additional funding”): Twomey (2022), pp. 6-7.

²¹⁹ Australian Law Reform Commission (2009), p. 11 (Recommendation 5-1).

²²⁰ Australian Law Refrom Commission (2009), p. 12 (Recommendation 6-1), recommending the development and publication of an *Inquiries Handbook* containing information regarding establishment of inquiries, appointment of inquiry members, administration of inquiries, powers, protections and procedural aspects of inquiries and use and protection of national security information by inquiries.

²²¹ See Mintrom et al. (2020), p. 85 regarding limited policy impact to-date of policy-focused Royal Commissions.

²²² E.g., the Garnaut Climate Change Review, Henry Tax Review.

²²³ It ultimately concluded that this would be to expose a political judgment to judicial scrutiny: Australian Law Reform Commission (2010), p. 125.

²²⁴ E.g., Keane (2023) characterises six royal commissions held since 2016 as “political management devices”.

²²⁵ Mintrom et al. (2020), p. 85.

²²⁶ Including through an extensive consultative phase, which asked all stakeholders 47 questions and separately conducted over 70 consultation meetings and roundtables around Australia: Australian Law Reform Commission (2009), pp. 44-45.

²²⁷ Australian Law Reform Commission (2009), p. 12.

²²⁸ Australian Law Reform Commission (2009), p. 49.

²²⁹ To cite three illustrative examples, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Royal Commission cost \$104M: Australian Law Reform Commission (2010), p. 49; the Banking Royal Commission, \$75M: Ziffer (2024); and the Disability Royal Commission \$600M: Lunn (2024). It is difficult to find direct public opinion polling on reform proposals but there is some indicative polling to suggest that some of the public think they are established “to attack political opponents”: The Australia Institute (2018), p. 9.

²³⁰ Wood et al. (2018), p. 4; Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023 s 23.

²³¹ Wood et al. (2018), p. 4 ; Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023 s 11.

²³² Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023 s 12.

²³³ Wood et al. (2018), p. 4; Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023 s 26.

²³⁴ Ng (2020), p. 508.

²³⁵ Ng (2020), p. 10.

²³⁶ E.g., over half of the lobbyists working at firms contracted by tobacco companies had held positions in government: Watts (2024).

²³⁷ E.g., success of the food and beverages industry in avoiding a sugar tax: Wood and Griffiths (2018), p. 72; successful lobbying by the alcohol industry to delay mandated pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products: Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2024), p. 2.

²³⁸ APS Reform (2023), p. 20.

²³⁹ See, e.g., De Figueiredo and Kelleher-Richter (2014); Juillet (2019), p. 11.

²⁴⁰ Lobbying registries typically do not offer any information about more substantive aspects of procedural fairness: whether competing preferences and arguments have been given due consideration in an impartial manner: Juillet (2019), p. 11. Monique Ryan's *Lobbying (Improving Government Honesty and Trust) Bill 2023* requires (i) in the case of the Register, quarterly returns stating the number of lobbying activities undertaken; the topic of the activity and desired outcomes; and names of Government representatives as well as persons directing and undertaking the activity (amongst other procedural details): s 17; (ii) in the case of Ministerial diaries, all meetings with stakeholders, external organisations and lobbyists that relate to the Minister's responsibilities, including details of who attended each meeting and the key matters discussed: s 23.

²⁴¹ See, e.g., Wilson (2025), publishing Ministerial diaries obtained through FOI.

²⁴² Ng (2020), p. 510.

²⁴³ It is estimated that the federal Register of Lobbyists covers approximately 20% of professional lobbyists: Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration (2024), p. 8.

²⁴⁴ E.g., over half of the lobbyists working at firms contracted by tobacco companies had held positions in government: Watts (2024); see also Robertson et al. (2023).

²⁴⁵ There has been an increase in real terms of lobbyist donations of 555% over the past 25 years: Centre for Public Integrity (2024b), p. 2.

²⁴⁶ E.g., success of the food and beverages industry in avoiding a sugar tax: Wood and Griffiths (2018), p. 72.

²⁴⁷ E.g., successful lobbying by the alcohol industry to delay mandated pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products: Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2024), p. 2.

²⁴⁸ Ng (2020), pp. 516-519.

²⁴⁹ Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration (2024), p. 8.

²⁵⁰ See, e.g., De Figueiredo and Kelleher-Richter (2014); Juillet (2019), p. 11.

²⁵¹ Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration (2024), p. 3.

²⁵² The campaign has generated just over 10,000 signatures and has support from various civil society organisations, including CPI, Transparency International and Australian Democracy Network: Ryan (2024).

²⁵³ E.g., polling from the EU indicates that 80% of citizens in that jurisdiction agree that there should be mandatory regulation of lobbying to ensure balanced participation of different interests in decision-making: EU Citizens (2013), p. 6.

²⁵⁴ See, e.g., Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration (2024), p. 65.

²⁵⁵ See, e.g., Nicholls (2014).

²⁵⁶ See, e.g., Juillet (2019), p. 10.

²⁵⁷ See, e.g., Juillet (2019), p. 10.

²⁵⁸ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. x.

²⁵⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. 48, recommendation 4 recommends that the Joint Standing Committee on Constitutional Matters be required to consider and make recommendations to Parliament relating to establishment of conventions. Williams (2021), p. 2, recommends a constitutional convention each decade.

²⁶⁰ Galligan and Nethercote (1989) note that the 'political significance' of the 1988 Constitutional Commission was 'rather minimal...Except for Attorney-General Bowen who was its instigator, the Commission received little enthusiasm or support from the Hawke Government, nor did it attract much attention from the public' (p. 132).

²⁶¹ Australian Electoral Commission (2023a) catalogues historical referenda outcomes

²⁶² The ALRC has identified human rights, Indigenous recognition, taxation, federalism, heads of power and separation of powers: ALRC (2019).

²⁶³ For example, there are strong arguments against enshrining any potential Bill of Rights in the Constitution (namely that constitutionality would not better protect human rights): The Australian Collaboration (2013), p. 2.

²⁶⁴ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. 27.

²⁶⁵ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. 30.

²⁶⁶ E.g., New Zealand's Constitutional Advisory Panel: Constitutional Advisory Panel of New Zealand (2013), and the European Commission for Democracy through Law: Council of Europe (n.d.).

²⁶⁷ Renwick and Hazell (2017), p. 2.

²⁶⁸ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), pp. 31, 33, 41-43.

²⁶⁹ Cf Renwick and Hazell (2017), p. 35.

²⁷⁰ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. 33.

²⁷¹ No mention made of Commission in ALP's 'Additional Comments'.

²⁷² House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021), p. 85.

²⁷³ Harris (2014), p. 142.

²⁷⁴ Wood et al. (2022b), p. 4.

²⁷⁵ Wood et al. (2022b), p. 4.

²⁷⁶ Wood et al. (2022b), p. 4.

²⁷⁷ Beknaza-Yuzbashev and Stalinski (2022).

²⁷⁸ E.g., Baum and Owens (2023) show that personal door-to-door campaigning can increase a candidate's vote by 3 percentage points and the vote margin by 6 percentage points in a two-candidate race.

²⁷⁹ Wood et al. (2022), p. 21.

²⁸⁰ Wood et al. (2022), p. 17.

²⁸¹ Wood et al. (2022), p. 29.

²⁸² There was a question about whether the Auditor-General should carry out the function due to the potential for this to compromise perception of independence: Browne (2022), p. 6.

²⁸³ Wood et al. (2022) suggest that a pre-election ban would be harder to implement at a federal level where the government has substantial discretion as to when to call an election and hamper the government's ability to run legitimate campaigns for substantial periods, and suggest that "the changes we recommend to rules and processes for advertising are more targeted and we think obviate the need for pre-election bans": Wood et al. (2022), p. 24.

²⁸⁴ Communications Act 2003 (UK) s 321(2)(b).

²⁸⁵ Browne (2022), p. 10.

²⁸⁶ See, e.g., Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 153, who write that "managing this kind of body is a delicate balancing act" and bodies "may have to fight for their places in the sun, as they may be perceived as a threat (in Westminster systems"; Banks (2011), p. 10, noting that the survival of independent bodies like the Productivity Commission is not a *fait accompli*.

²⁸⁷ Stewart and Prasser (2015) note that research on expert policy advisory bodies in Australia is thin: p. 156. As at 2015, they suggested that the most recent assessment of the activities of advisory bodies was conducted in 1994, and there does not seem to have been further detailed, systematic assessment since 2015.

²⁸⁸ See, e.g., Banks (2011).

²⁸⁹ 62% of Australians trust the Australian Electoral Commission, and 61% the Human Rights Commission (vs 50% the Commonwealth/federal government): APSC (2023), p. 20, but note comparatively low trust in the Reserve Bank of Australia: APSC (2023), p. 20.

²⁹⁰ E.g., Zali Steggall has advocated for a Climate Change Commission: Steggall (n.d.), Allegra Spender for a Tax Reform Commission: Spender (2024), pp. 45-46, and David Pocock for the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee: Pocock (2023).

²⁹¹ Ng (2024c), p. 7 (recommendation 1).

²⁹² Ng (2024c), p. 7 (recommendation 2).

²⁹³ Ng (2024c), p. 7 (recommendation 4).

²⁹⁴ Ng (2024c), p. 7 (recommendation 5).

²⁹⁵ Ng (2024c), p. 35. According to Ng, examples of statements that would not be covered by TIPA laws include "the Liberals will privatise Medicare" and "the Liberal Party is a good economic manager."

²⁹⁶ Ng (2024c), p. 63.

²⁹⁷ Ng (2024c), p. 6.

²⁹⁸ The relative number of complaints resulting in retractions and requests for no further publication has been small: Ng (2024c), p. 44, and penalties may not sufficiently incentivise behaviour change: Ng (2024c), p. 57.

²⁹⁹ Ng (2024c), p. 31.

³⁰⁰ The Australia Institute (2020), p. 1.

³⁰¹ Ng (2024c), p. 12, citing Karp (2022).

³⁰² See, e.g., Karp (2024).

³⁰³ See, e.g., Pocock (2024b).

³⁰⁴ Ng (2024c), pp. 69-71.

³⁰⁵ Transparency International et al. (2024), p. 3.

³⁰⁶ Transparency International et al. (2024), p. 12.

³⁰⁷ Wolfe et al (2014), p. 6.

³⁰⁸ Brown and Lawrence (2017), p. ii.

³⁰⁹ According to managers and governance staff: Griffith University et al. (2022), p. 18.

³¹⁰ See Transparency International et al. (2024), pp. 8-10, highlighting the potential for a Whistleblower Protection Authority to provide mediation and administrative redress, legal actions, compensation and financial support.

³¹¹ See, e.g., Brown et al. (2019), p. 32 on the importance of ethical leadership (NB: this reference does not relate to the proposition that a whistleblower protection authority may not be effective to increase reporting rates).

³¹² 157 of the 684 decisions to allocate or not allocate a PID addressed work-related grievances: Attorney-General's Department (2024), p. 14.

³¹³ Attorney-General's Department (2024), p. 1 i.e., there were only findings of disclosable conduct in 20% of finalised Ombudsman investigations.

³¹⁴ Olsen and Brown (2024), p. 17.

³¹⁵ See, e.g., Olsen and Brown (2024); Human Rights Law Centre (2024); Griffith University et al. (2022).

³¹⁶ Attorney-General's Department (2024).

³¹⁷ Transparency International et al. (2024), p. 3.

³¹⁸ Transparency International et al. (2024), p. 10.

³¹⁹ As proposed in former independent MP Cathy McGowan's *National Integrity Commission Bill 2018*; Griffith University et al. (2024), p. 5.

³²⁰ The Australia Institute (2023a).

³²¹ Olbrycht-Plamer (2024).

³²² Shorten (2019).

³²³ Transparency International et al. (2024).

³²⁴ Griffith University et al. (2022).

³²⁵ Human Rights Law Centre (2024).

³²⁶ See, e.g., Brown et al. (2019).

³²⁷ Griffith University (2022). *Future Generations Bills 2025*, s 11.

³²⁸ *Future Generations Bills 2025*, s 8.

³²⁹ The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2024), p. 21.

³³⁰ The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2024), p. 21.

³³¹ *Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill 2025*, s 26 requires preparation of a wellbeing for Australia insights report on one or more matters concerning the wellbeing of Australia; and s 9 requires half-yearly reporting on progress towards wellbeing objectives.

³³² Ogami (2024), pp. 2-4.

³³³ The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (2024).

³³⁴ Gaukroger et al. (2025).

³³⁵ EveryGen Coalition (2024).

³³⁶ Foundations for Tomorrow (n.d.).

³³⁷ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. xvii (recommendation 1).

³³⁸ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025b), p. 9.

³³⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. xvii (recommendation 3).

³⁴⁰ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. 26.

³⁴¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. 20.

³⁴² An average of 21 questions had been asked in the 46th Parliament as at February 2021: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. 78, with an average of 67 sitting days per year in the Lower House

³⁴³ Hebden and Perche (2023), p. 345.

³⁴⁴ Hebden and Perche (2023), p. 358.

³⁴⁵ See, e.g., Melleuish (2021).

³⁴⁶ Hebden and Perche (2023), p. 343.

³⁴⁷ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), pp. 38-39.

³⁴⁸ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), pp. xvii-xix.

³⁴⁹ Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025), pp. 9-11.

³⁵⁰ More than 95% of respondents to public survey conducted by the 2021 inquiry indicated that they thought the House should change how Question Time operates: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. 14.

³⁵¹ For example, Adam Bandt recently moved that “an answer must directly answer the question,” supported by Max Chandler-Mather MP, Kate Chaney MP, Zoe Daniel MP, Monique Ryan MP, Allegra Spender MP, Zali Steggall MP and Andrew Gee MP: Parliament of Australia (2023b).

³⁵² Susan McKinnon Foundation (2025) [forthcoming], p. 9.

³⁵³ See, e.g., UK Parliament (2025).

³⁵⁴ See, e.g., UK Parliament (2024).

³⁵⁵ The Australia Institute (2024a). The Australia Institute (2025), p. 35.

³⁵⁶ The Australia Institute (2024a). The Australia Institute (2025), p. 35.

³⁵⁷ The Australia Institute (2024a). The Australia Institute (2025), p. 36.

³⁵⁸ The Australia Institute (2024a). The Australia Institute (2025), p. 36.

³⁵⁹ National Anti-Corruption Commission (2024).

³⁶⁰ E.g., Centre for Public Integrity argues that the NSW ICAC experience demonstrates how a public interest test, combined with a requirement that a public hearing can only be held with the agreement of at least the Chief Commissioner and one other Commissioner, has resulted in public hearings which have all found corrupt conduct, serious corrupt conduct or other wrongdoing: Centre for Public Integrity (2022b).

³⁶¹ Centre for Public Integrity (2022c), noting its “specious circularity”; and The Australia Institute (2022c), noting that “if it is in the public interest that a particular hearing be held in public, then it cannot be in the public interest to foreclose such a hearing because “exceptional circumstances” do not exist.

³⁶² Feik (2024).

³⁶³ National Anti-Corruption Commission (2024).

³⁶⁴ The Australia Institute (2022c).

³⁶⁵ Morton (2024).

³⁶⁶ See Australia Institute (2024a).

³⁶⁷ The Australia Institute (2024b).

³⁶⁸ Karp (2022).

³⁶⁹ Haines (2025).

³⁷⁰ Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. xii (recommendation 12); Lidberg et al. (2024), p. 8.

³⁷¹ Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. xii (recommendation 11).

³⁷² Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. xii (recommendation 11). Note that the Committee recommended a review to consider opportunities for increasing the use of proactive disclosures by decision-making agencies; Lidberg et al. (2024), p. 8 (recommendation 1 under FOI administration).

³⁷³ See Lidberg, J. et al. (2024), pp. 7-8, 96.

³⁷⁴ Skatsoon (2024).

³⁷⁵ Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. 50.

³⁷⁶ Ng (2023).

³⁷⁷ Browne (2023), p. 22.

³⁷⁸ Ng and O'Sullivan (2023), p. 7.

³⁷⁹ See, e.g., Harden and Kirkland (2022).

³⁸⁰ Ng and O'Sullivan (2023), p. 13.

³⁸¹ See, e.g., Crikey (2023), p. 2.

³⁸² Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. ix.

³⁸³ Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. 1.

³⁸⁴ E.g., Prof John McMillan noted in his submission to the inquiry that there was "an absence of policy in this area", recommending that the OAIC consider how "proactive disclosure and disclosure by design can operate in a practical manner": Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. 78.

³⁸⁵ Browne (2023), p. 16.

³⁸⁶ Napier-Raman (2019).

³⁸⁷ Dissenting report recommended that "the Government carefully considers the issues raised during the course of this inquiry and recommendations from previous reviews to identify appropriate options for reform to ensure the effective operation of the FOI system": Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. 108.

³⁸⁸ Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee (2023), p. xii (recommendation 11). Note that the Committee recommended a review to consider opportunities for increasing the use of proactive disclosures by decision-making agencies; Lidberg et al. (2024), p. 8 (recommendation 1 under FOI administration).

³⁸⁹ Reece et al. (2019). *Reforming Our Democracy: Options for Renewing Democracy in Australia*. <https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Reforming-our-Democracy.pdf>.

³⁹⁰ Reece et al. (2019). *Reforming Our Democracy: Options for Renewing Democracy in Australia*. <https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Reforming-our-Democracy.pdf>.

³⁹¹ Reece et al. (2019). *Reforming Our Democracy: Options for Renewing Democracy in Australia*. <https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Reforming-our-Democracy.pdf>.

³⁹² McAllister and Biddle (2023).

³⁹³ Reece et al. (2019), p. 7.

³⁹⁴ See Kildea and Smith (2016).

³⁹⁵ Cameron and McAllister (2022), p. 14-16, noting, for example, percentages of Australians who followed the election in mass media, watched the leaders' debate, or accessed different kinds of websites during the election campaign.

³⁹⁶ McAllister and Biddle (2024).

³⁹⁷ See Victorian Electoral Commission (2024), p. 33 on the "candidate questionnaire".

³⁹⁸ See The Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Lowering Voting Age and Increasing Voter Participation) Bill 2018.

³⁹⁹ Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (2019), p. 19 ("despite the thoughtfulness of some of the arguments put forward in favour of voluntary voting...the Committee as a whole does not believe it would be of any benefit to the electoral system to create two classes of voters").

⁴⁰⁰ Eichhorn and Berg (2021) find that "overall, the impact appears to not be negative and often positive in terms of political engagement and civic attitudes. However, the comprehensiveness of effects varies" (p. 507). E.g., in Austria, lowering the voting age did not contribute to increased turnout over time: Graf et al. (2024), correcting a previous study that found an effect, while there may be a substantial positive effect on turnout in South America, although "effects are somewhat imprecisely measured, because of limitations in the data": Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 514.

⁴⁰¹ Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 516, noting that "positive effects...are more likely to materialize when civic education is extensive, as could be seen in Scotland".

⁴⁰² Chowdhury (2023).

⁴⁰³ Australian Electoral Commission (2025).

⁴⁰⁴ Australian Electoral Commission (2024b).

⁴⁰⁵ Nojournian, N. (2023). "The Case for Lowering the Voting Age in Australia". UNSW Law Journal Student Series No 23-7. <https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/UNSWLawJLStuS/2023/7.html>.

⁴⁰⁶ Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 507.

⁴⁰⁷ Nojournian (2023), p. 17.

⁴⁰⁸ E.g., there is good evidence that young people are disillusioned with party politics: Ammassari et al. (2025), p. 17.

⁴⁰⁹ See Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 514.

⁴¹⁰ Ghazarian & Laughland-Booy (2019), p. 40.

⁴¹¹ Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 516, noting that “positive effects...are more likely to materialize when civic education is extensive, as could be seen in Scotland”.

⁴¹² See, e.g., the Electoral Legislation Amendment (Lowering the Voting Age) Bill 2023, Electoral Amendment (Lowering the Voting Age and Increasing Voter Participation) Bill 2018.

⁴¹³ McGrath et al. (2019).

⁴¹⁴ Cameron and McAllister (2022), p. 109.

⁴¹⁵ Eichhorn and Berg (2020), p. 134.

⁴¹⁶ Make it 16 (2023).

⁴¹⁷ McGrath et al. (2019).

⁴¹⁸ See the Electoral Legislation Amendment (Lowering the Voting Age) Bill 2023, Electoral Amendment (Lowering the Voting Age and Increasing Voter Participation) Bill 2018.

⁴¹⁹ Ryan (2023).

⁴²⁰ Eichhorn and Berg (2021), p. 516.

⁴²¹ Chowdhury (2021).

⁴²² Accountability Round Table (2021), p. 7; Carson (2022), p. 1.

⁴²³ See, e.g., Stewart and Prasser (2015), p. 153.

⁴²⁴ Keane (2018), p. 23 notes the vital role of “monitory” actors in civil society, which he argues are fundamental features of modern democratic systems (rather than merely tangential actors that cannot play the same protective roles as formal public institutions).

⁴²⁵ Carson (2022), p. 1.

⁴²⁶ Accountability Round Table (2021), p. 7.

⁴²⁷ Carson (2022), p. 1.

⁴²⁸ Parliament of Canada (2016).

⁴²⁹ Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (2017).

⁴³⁰ While support for the NACC was strong, this was accompanied by a strong public advocacy campaign: see, e.g., The Australia Institute (2017).

⁴³¹ Reece et al. (2019), p. 6.

⁴³² Plumb (2014), p. 574.

⁴³³ Griffith (2014), pp. 8-10.

⁴³⁴ Brumby et al. (2024).

⁴³⁵ Gauja (2015), p. 202.

⁴³⁶ Daley (2021), p. 3.

⁴³⁷ Daley (2021), p. 3.

⁴³⁸ Reece et al. (2019), p. 6.

⁴³⁹ UK Parliament (2020): whips of political parties can instruct all their MPs to urgently attend Parliament for an essential vote.

⁴⁴⁰ Brumby et al. (2024).

⁴⁴¹ Reece et al. (2019), p. 6.

⁴⁴² Lee (2022).

⁴⁴³ See notes in “evidence base” column.

⁴⁴⁴ Norris (2004), p. 20.

⁴⁴⁵ Norris (2004), p. 8.

⁴⁴⁶ Norris (2004), p. 8.

⁴⁴⁷ Norris (2004), p. 3.

⁴⁴⁸ Norris (2004), p. 6.

⁴⁴⁹ See, e.g., Bowler and Farrell (2006), p. 450.

⁴⁵⁰ Bowler and Farrell (2006), p. 449.

⁴⁵¹ Bowler and Farrell (2006), p. 457.

⁴⁵² Lee (2022).

⁴⁵³ Boschler (2023).

⁴⁵⁴ Boschler (2023).

⁴⁵⁵ Bowler and Farrell (2006), p. 449.

⁴⁵⁶ E.g., Raue (2022) assumes an increase in the size of the House to 175 seats in his model.

⁴⁵⁷ See, e.g., Norris (2004), p. 8.

⁴⁵⁸ Raue (2022) models several scenarios in which based on vote-shares from 2019 and 2022, MMPV is likely to favour the Greens (and therefore Labor if they were to enter into a governing coalition).

⁴⁵⁹ Modelling by Raue (2022) would suggest that MMPV would be favourable to the Greens.

⁴⁶⁰ Lee (2022).

⁴⁶¹ Trounson (2016), citing Terry Moran.

⁴⁶² See, e.g., Gauja (2015), p. 202, observing that policymaking is often obscured by the realities of political players operating as electoral machines. See Hagland (2022) for a discussion of the broad think tank landscape in Australia.

⁴⁶³ Noted as a driver of public trust in government according to the OECD (2024), p. 144.

⁴⁶⁴ Wilkie and Gillard (2010), p. 2 (“the parties acknowledge specifically that reform proposals are being developed on...producing a statement of legislative intent at the beginning of each Parliamentary Sitting to set out the Government’s legislative program”).

⁴⁶⁵ See, e.g., Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia (2022).

⁴⁶⁶ Carson et al. (2018).

⁴⁶⁷ Reece et al. (2019), p. 5.

⁴⁶⁸ Reece et al. (2019), p. 5.

⁴⁶⁹ Reece et al. (2019), p. 5.

⁴⁷⁰ Parliament of Australia (2022b), Standing Order 3(e), p. 12.

⁴⁷¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021), p. 32.

⁴⁷² See generally House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure (2021).

⁴⁷³ Parliament of Australia (2022b), Standing 94(a), p 49.

⁴⁷⁴ Robinson (2014)

⁴⁷⁵ Ireland and Sakkal (2024).

⁴⁷⁶ Parliamentary Education Office (n.d.).

⁴⁷⁷ Gascoigne (2010).

⁴⁷⁸ The Australia Institute (2022e), p. 1.

⁴⁷⁹ Harris (2014), p. 129.

⁴⁸⁰ Williams (2017).

⁴⁸¹ Daley (2021), p. 34.

⁴⁸² See, e.g., McCudden and Walton (2003), p. 9.

⁴⁸³ Of the seven double dissolution elections that have been held, only one joint sitting has been held following the election (the conditions of further rejection by the Senate having been met): Elder and Fowler (2018), p. 470.

⁴⁸⁴ See, e.g., Williams (2017).

⁴⁸⁵ See, e.g., Koggel (2016).

⁴⁸⁶ Section 57 of the Constitution establishes clear preconditions for a joint sitting: *Victoria v Commonwealth* (1975) 134 CLR 81.

⁴⁸⁷ Abbott (2017).

⁴⁸⁸ Faulkner (1999), noting that at the time of writing the Labor Party platform supported “constitutional reform to prevent the Senate rejecting, deferring or blocking appropriation bills”.

⁴⁸⁹ Badham (2021); Chan (2017)