


**NOTICE OF PARTY REGISTRATION DECISION
APPLICATION TO REGISTER A PARTY IN THE REGISTER OF
POLITICAL PARTIES APPROVED
VOICES FOR THE SENATE**

**Notice of decision under s 133(1) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*
(‘the Electoral Act’) and Statement of Reasons**

1. I am writing in accordance with s 133(1) of the Electoral Act to notify you of the determination of the application to register Voices for the Senate (‘the Party’), a non-Parliamentary party, in the *Register of Political Parties* (‘the Register’).
2. I am authorised to determine this application for party registration (‘the Application’) under Part XI of the Electoral Act as a delegate of the Electoral Commission.

Decision

3. I have decided to approve the Application. Consequently, I have entered the following Party in the Register:

Name of party:	Voices for the Senate
Party abbreviation:	VOICES4SENATE
Registered Officer:	Ms Fionn Elizabeth Phemie Bowd
Registered Officer’s address:	Unit 1009, 25 Edinburgh Avenue CANBERRA ACT 2601
Party logo:	
The party stated that it wishes to receive election funding.	Yes

Materials I have taken into account

4. In making this decision, I had regard to:
 - the Application received by the Australian Electoral Commission (‘the AEC’) on 16 January 2022;
 - the results of the testing of the Party’s membership list conducted by the AEC in accordance with the sampling methodology developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (‘the ABS’);
 - Parts I and XI of the Electoral Act;
 - the Register and the Register of Political Parties of each Australian State and Territory;
 - the *Commonwealth Electoral (Logo Requirements) Determination 2016*;
 - internet searches of trademarked and licenced logos undertaken by a service provider engaged by the AEC;
 - the 2022 federal election;
 - the AEC’s *Guide for registering a party*.

Findings of Fact and Consideration

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

Procedural application requirements

6. I am satisfied that the Application meets the requirements of ss 126(2)(a)–(g) of the Electoral Act. The Application:

- was in writing, signed by the applicants (s 126(2));
- set out the name of the Party (s 126(2)(a));
- set out an abbreviation of the name of the Party (s 126(2)(b));
- set out a logo of the Party (s 126(2)(ba));
- set out the name and address of the person who is to be the Registered Officer of the Party for the purposes of the Electoral Act (s 126(2)(c));
- included a list of the names of at least 1,500 members of the Party to be relied on for the purposes of registration (s 126(2)(ca));
- stated that the Party wishes to receive moneys under Division 3 of Part XX of the Electoral Act (s 126(2)(d));
- set out the names and addresses of the applicants and particulars of the capacity in which each applicant makes the Application (s 126(2)(e));
- was accompanied by a copy of the constitution of the Party (s 126(2)(f)); and
- was accompanied by a fee of \$500 (s 126(2)(g)).

Membership list

7. The membership list submitted for the Application supplied on 16 January 2022 contained 1,612 names of people that the Party considers to be current members (referred to as 'members' below). AEC staff cross-checked this membership list with the Commonwealth Electoral Roll ('electoral roll'), as required by the meaning of 'member of a political party' in s 123(3) of the Electoral Act.

Submitted membership list	1,612
Automatically matched to the electoral roll	1,490
Manually matched to the electoral roll	113
Unable to be matched or not enrolled on the electoral roll	(9)
Deceased	0
Total	1,603

8. Of the 1,603 members matched to the electoral roll, the following were identified as duplicates within the membership list or as duplicate members who have previously supported the registration of a registered political party (or parties):

Total matched to the electoral roll	1,603
Under 18 years old	0
Duplicates identified in the membership list provided by the Party	(4)
Members identified as also supporting the registration of another party	(48)
Total	1,551

9. In accordance with the random sampling formula provided by the ABS, a list of 1,551 members requires contact with a random sample of 38 individuals on the membership list, and up to three denials of membership are permitted by the individuals contacted. The Electoral Commission's view is that, absent of any relevant factors to the contrary, a failure to satisfy the test provided by the ABS alone constitutes reasonable grounds upon which the

delegate of the Electoral Commission can be satisfied that a non-Parliamentary political party does not have the required 1,500 members.

The relevant numbers for this membership test were:	Members
The random sample size	38
Denials Permitted	3
The AEC attempted to contact*	54
The highest 38 responses were:	
- Confirmed Membership of the Party	38
- Denied Membership of the Party	0
PASS/FAIL	PASS

*as some members were uncontactable, or provided a neutral response

10. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the Party has at least 1,500 members and the Application meets the requirements of s 126(2)(ca) of the Electoral Act.

Party constitution

11. A copy of the constitution of the Party accompanied the Application as required by s 126(2)(f) of the Electoral Act. The constitution provided in the Application:
- is in writing; and
 - sets out the aims of the Party, at least one of which being the promotion of the election of its candidates to the Senate and/or House of Representatives.

12. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the Party meets the requirements of having a written constitution in accordance with the definition of *eligible political party* at s 123(1) of the Electoral Act and the definition of *political party* at s 4 of the Electoral Act.

Party name and abbreviation

13. When undertaking an initial assessment of the Application, I considered the Party's proposed name and proposed abbreviation against the requirements of s 129 of the Electoral Act, and reviewed the Register and the registers for each State and Territory for parties with a similar name, abbreviation or acronym.

14. The Party name, Voices for the Senate, and abbreviation, VOICES4SENATE:

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

- matter that so nearly resembles the name, or an abbreviation or acronym of the name, of a recognised political party that the matter is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that name or that abbreviation or acronym.
- do not contain a word that is in the name, or the abbreviation of the name, of a registered political party that requires consent from an existing registered political party.

15. Accordingly, I am satisfied on the materials before me that there is no basis to refuse the Application under s 129 of the Electoral Act.

Party logo

16. The logo set out in the Application:

- is not obscene;
- is not the logo of any other person;
- does not so nearly resemble the logo of any other person that it is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that logo;
- is not one that a reasonable person would think suggests that a connection or relationship exists between the Party and a registered political party if that connection or relationship does not in fact exist;
- does not comprise the words “Independent Party”;
- does not comprise or contain the word “Independent” and the:
 - name, or abbreviation or acronym of the name, of a recognised political party;
 - or
 - matter that so nearly resembles the name, or an abbreviation or acronym of the name, of a recognised political party that the matter is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that name or that abbreviation or acronym;
- does not contain a word that is in the name, or the abbreviation of the name, of a registered political party and therefore does not require consent from an existing registered political party;
- is in black and white;
- is in a vector graphic in electronic format;
- is 100% black in a CMYK colour space;
- is contained within a frame of 10 mm by 10 mm;
- is able to be reproduced correctly within a frame of 7 mm by 7 mm;
- does not include live text, transparency, overprinting, custom halftone, transfer curve or colour profile settings; and
- is in a PDF file, of less than 5 megabytes, that complies with International Standard ISO 32000-1:2008 as in force at the time of the commencement of the *Commonwealth Electoral (Logo Requirements) Determination 2016*.

17. Accordingly, on the basis of the materials before me, I am satisfied that the proposed logo submitted with the Application meets the requirements of s 126(2AA) of the Electoral Act and the specifications described in *Commonwealth Electoral (Logo Requirements) Determination 2016* and that there is no basis to refuse to enter the Party’s logo in the Register under s 129A of the Electoral Act.

Written particulars

18. Section 132(2)(b) of the Electoral Act provides that a person can only submit written particulars objecting to an application to register a party (or a logo in the case of point (iv)) on the following grounds:
- (i) the application does not relate to an eligible political party; or
 - (ii) the application is not in accordance with s 126 of the Electoral Act; or
 - (iii) the application should be refused under s 129 of the Electoral Act; or
 - (iv) the Electoral Commission should refuse to enter a logo of the party in the Register under s 129A of the Electoral Act.
19. Section 132(7) of the Electoral Act provides that the Electoral Commission shall not register a political party unless it has considered any particulars submitted objecting to a party's registration, and any reply to particulars that may have been submitted. Section 132 of the Electoral Act also outlines the requirements for submitting and processing objections to an application.
20. On 11 March 2022, the application was advertised in 10 major newspapers circulating in each State and Territory of Australia and published on the AEC website. The advertised closing date for objections was 11 April 2022.
21. The application was suspended from 11 April 2022 to 23 June 2022, due to the operation of s 127 of the Electoral Act as a result of the 2022 federal election. The objection period was extended accordingly to 24 June 2022.
22. The AEC received no written particulars objecting to the Party's application.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons outlined above, I approve the application from Voices for the Senate for registration in the Register, as a delegate of the Electoral Commission for the purposes of ss 126(3) and 133(1) of the Electoral Act.

Your Review rights

24. Under s 141(2) of the Electoral Act, a person (including an organisation) affected by the decision who is dissatisfied with the decision may make a written application to the Electoral Commission for internal review of this decision within 28 days after the day on which the decision first comes to the notice of that person. There is no fee payable for requesting an internal review.
25. Requests for review of this decision should be addressed to Mr Tom Rogers, Australian Electoral Commissioner, and emailed to commission.secretariat@aec.gov.au or posted to Locked Bag 4007, Canberra City ACT 2601.

How do I request an internal review?

26. In accordance with ss 141(2) and 141(3) of the Electoral Act, an application for review must:
- be in writing;
 - specify the name of the applicant;
 - specify an address of the applicant; and
 - set out the reasons for making the application.

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

Who conducts an internal review?

28. The Electoral Commission, which is comprised of three members, the Electoral Commissioner, a judicial member and a non-judicial member, conducts internal reviews.
29. Under s 141(4) of the Electoral Act, the Electoral Commission shall review an application and make a decision to either:
- affirm the decision under review;
 - vary the decision under review; or
 - set aside the decision under review and make a decision in substitution for the decision set aside.

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

30. If an internal review decision has been made by the Electoral Commission a person whose interests are affected, and who is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Electoral Commission, may apply to the AAT for an external merits review of the decision. More information on how to apply to the AAT and any applicable fees can be found on its website: www.aat.gov.au/applying-for-a-review/how-to-apply.

Freedom of Information

31. Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* ('the FOI Act') any person has the right to request access to documents held by the AEC. For more information about access to documents under the FOI Act please visit the AEC's "Access to AEC information" webpage at: www.aec.gov.au/information-access/index.htm.
32. Should you have any queries regarding party registration, please contact the AEC on 02 6271 4552, visit www.aec.gov.au or email fad@aec.gov.au.

(signed)

Joanne Reid
Assistant Commissioner
Delegate of the Electoral Commission
1 July 2022