



AUSTRALASIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP

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ASPG NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2004

As part of the celebrations of the 150th year of the Swan River Settlement and celebrations of the 100th Year of the Parliamentary Buildings, the WA Chapter of the ASPG is hosting the 2004 ASPG National Conference in the Legislative Assembly Chamber, in the Parliament of Western Australia, on Friday 28 May and Saturday 29 May 2004.

CONFERENCE THEME

The Role of Parliament in Constitution Making and Constitutional Amendment

What have been the major changes and developments since the 19th century constitution making? What are the dimensions and challenges for the 21st century?

Issues such as the following will be encompassed -

- The parameters of the definition of 'constitution' and 'constitutional' in terms of Parliament's role?
- What forms of constitutional provision are/should be entrenched/double entrenched?
- What are the constitutional powers of houses and the relationships between them in bicameral legislatures?
- What are the size and terms of houses of Parliament?
- What are the constitutional provisions for Parliament's role in methods of election and election districting?
- What are the constitutional provisions for referendums and plebiscites?
- What are Parliament's roles in the selection of heads of state at both the federal and state/territorial level?
- What are Parliament's roles and responsibility in the holding of constitutional conventions/meetings?

It is envisaged that addressing the theme will lead to papers from the various States and Territories including:

- Parliament's role in the steps towards statehood in the Northern Territory.
- Parliament's role in the quest for one vote, one value legislation in Western Australia.
- Parliament's role in constitutional reform in Victoria.
- Parliament's role in the current changes in South Australia.
- Lessons to be derived from the republican convention and subsequent referendum.

Consideration is also being given to seeking the presentation of a paper on constitutional change in the United Kingdom encompassing the significance of devolution, reform of the House of Lords and links to the European Parliament.

A further update, which includes a draft program, will be circulated towards the end of 2003.

It is expected that by the end of January 2004 we will call for expressions of interest in presenting papers at the conference.

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