

The NT has a fully elected Legislative Assembly, an elected executive made up of the Chief Minister, 8 other ministers and the (unelected) Administrator, and an independent judiciary.

The *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act* is essentially a Constitution and grants the NT state like powers (law and decision making powers).

Since 1977, Territorians are able to vote in constitutional referendums and are counted in the majority of voters like all state voters.

The NT was part of South Australia from 1863 – 1911. For most of this time NT residents could vote in and had representation in both chambers of the SA parliament.

To form government in the NT, a party or coalition must win 13 out of the 25 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The NT's Legislative Assembly has 5 members who are Aboriginal. This is 20%, fairly close to the approx. 25 - 30% of the NT's population who are Aboriginal.

The NT's Legislative Assembly has 12 female members (48%) (second highest in Australia) and its Cabinet has 6 female ministers out of 9 (two thirds), the highest proportion of women in a cabinet in Australia.

In the Northern Territory, legislative assembly elections are a set date every 4 years, as are council elections (in legislation).

There are a number of ways Territorians can be actively involved in the NT's democracy: vote, sign petitions, respond to parliamentary committee inquiries, view parliament live or online, meet with members, attend public consultation meetings, respond to online consultation forums, etc.

The NT does not have a constitution like all Australian states do. It has the *NT (Self Government) Act*, legislation which is easy to change, unlike a Constitution which is deliberately difficult to change.

The *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act* specifically prevents the NT from making these normally state decisions: Aboriginal land rights, Kakadu and Uluru (national park) management, uranium mining, industrial relations, euthanasia.

To pass a constitutional referendum there must be a majority of voters as a whole, and a majority of states who vote yes. Only states, not Territories, are included in the 'majority of states' count.

In 1911, NT was transferred to Commonwealth control, meaning all its decisions were made by the Federal Parliament. NT had no representation in this parliament.

1922: First NT federal representative, they could not vote
1936: NT rep given limited veto powers, minor NT matters only
1959: NT rep permitted to vote, but only on NT matters
It was not until 1968 that the NT federal representative was granted full voting rights.

Pre 1947: no NT based decision making body (state or local)
1947 – 1974: partly elected Legislative Council with limited law making powers (e.g. no power to make any financial decisions)

The federal parliament (which has 4 NT representatives out of a total of 225) can overrule any legislation made by the NT Legislative Assembly for any reason, at any time.

The Northern Territory has two federal senators who serve 3 year variable terms linked to the House of Representatives. States each have 12 senators who serve fixed 6 year terms.

The Northern Territory Parliament is unicameral. There is no upper house to scrutinise government.

DEMOCRATIC

UNDEMOCRATIC