

Fact Sheet 2

Governor's Constitutional Role



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
QUEENSLAND



Symbolic of the position of the Crown, the Governor delivers the opening address of Parliament in the former Legislative Council Chamber and not the Legislative Assembly.



The Governor grants Royal Assent to bills of the Queensland Parliament before they become law.

Governor's Constitutional Role

The Governor is the representative in Queensland of the Head of State, Her Majesty The Queen.

The Governor's constitutional role is determined by his or her commission of appointment, legislation and by convention – that is, by accepted constitutional practices and protocols that have developed over time.

The Governor acts on the advice of the government of the time, irrespective of which political grouping is in power. The central body that advises the Governor is the Executive Council, which is made up of government ministers. The Governor also receives advice from the Premier – the 'chief minister' – for certain decisions such as the dissolving of Parliament prior to an election.

Together, the Governor and the Executive Council are called the 'Governor in Council', and it is

this body which gives formal legal authority to Queensland Government actions and decisions.

Among the Governor's constitutional duties in this context are granting Royal Assent to bills passed by the Parliament, and formally appointing Ministers of the Crown (who in Queensland are also members of the Executive Council). The Governor also summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament, and issues writs that set Queensland State elections in motion, and elections of Queensland senators in the Federal Parliament.

In the event that a Queensland State election does not produce a clear majority, the Governor may be required to independently decide, on the basis of constitutional principle and convention, which political grouping to invite to form government and test its majority in the Queensland Parliament.



Despatch Box – Important constitutional and administrative documents are conveyed to the Governor via despatch boxes. The boxes were handcrafted in Queensland.

'Above politics'

The Governor is an independent and non-political figure who does not take part in party political activities such as election campaigns and policy debates. For this reason, the Governor's role is sometimes described as being 'above politics'.

In performing this constitutional role, the Governor's goal is at all times to ensure that Queensland enjoys stable government.

