

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Australian Electoral Commission

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing – October 2006

Question: F10

Outcome 2, Output 2.1.2

Topic: Benefits of party registration

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Senator Nash asked:

Senator Nash—I think it would be quite useful for the committee to have a list of things they are not allowed to do if they are not registered as a political party. Could you provide a complete list of that to the committee.

Mr Bodel—Absolutely.

Answer:

Political parties are registered for federal elections under Part XI of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. A political party must be registered to participate in federal elections.

Registration has the following benefits for a political party that are not available to unregistered political parties or organised groups of independent candidates:

- registered parties are permitted regular copies of the electoral roll for those states and territories in which they are organised;
- registered parties are permitted voting information after each election for the states and territories in which they are organised;
- registered parties are permitted to nominate all endorsed candidates for the House of Representatives in a state or territory in a single 'bulk' nomination under a single signature (the registered officer of the party);
- registered parties can have their names or abbreviations printed underneath the names of their endorsed candidate for House of Representatives elections;
- registered parties can have their names or abbreviations printed under the box above the line on the Senate ballot paper and under the name of each endorsed candidate below the line on the Senate ballot paper;
- registered parties may nominate to be paid election funding for all endorsed candidates who are eligible to receive funding;
- where a party is being paid election funding, it may determine the distribution of election funding between its state and territory branches and the national body of the party;
- candidates endorsed by registered parties may submit 'nil' election returns, permitting the central administration of finances; and
- registered parties are not required to make election returns – election returns are disclosed in the relevant annual returns.