

WA Senate result: 5 Liberals, 4 Labor, 2 Greens, 1 One Nation

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Today, the “Button” was pressed to distribute preferences for the WA Senate. 5 Liberals, 4 Labor, 2 Greens and 1 One Nation were elected. The WA and Tasmanian Senate results mean it is likely that Labor and the Greens will hold 36 of 76 Senate seats, with 30 likely for the Coalition. The Coalition would then need nine of ten crossbenchers to pass legislation opposed by Labor and the Greens.

In WA, [final primary votes](#) gave the Liberals 5.00 quotas, Labor 3.67, the Greens 1.37, One Nation 0.52, the Nationals 0.33 and the NXT 0.28. On these primary votes, 5 Liberals, 4 Labor, 1 Green and 1 One Nation were very likely to win, and the final seat was seen as a close contest between the Greens' No. 2, Rachel Siewert, and the Nationals' Kado Muir.

In the event, Siewert won the final seat for the Greens, and it was not close. [Siewert defeated Muir by about 25,600 votes](#) or about 0.24 of a quota, well up from her primary vote margin of 0.04 of a quota.

Labor's Louise Pratt won Labor's final seat, after missing out in the 2013 and subsequent 2014 re-election, when Labor only returned one WA Senator. Pratt had been placed behind Joe Bullock on Labor's ticket at both elections.

One Nation's [Rodney Culleton may be ineligible](#) to take his Senate position, as he has been convicted of an alleged theft that carries a maximum penalty of more than a year's jail. If he is disqualified, the seat will go to his brother-in-law, the No. 2 on One Nation's ticket.

In SA, final primary votes give the Liberals 4.24 quotas, Labor 3.55, the NXT 2.83, the Greens 0.76, One Nation 0.39 and Family First 0.37. 4 Liberals, 3 Labor, 3 NXT and 1 Green are very likely to win, with the last seat seen as likely to go to Labor, but with some chance for either Family First or One Nation, especially with Liberal How to Vote cards favouring Family First.

I expected the button press for SA today, but it appears that this will happen tomorrow instead.

Victoria, Queensland and NSW Senate results should be finalised this week. So far, [parties with higher primary votes](#) are attracting more preferences, and this behaviour gives One Nation's No. 2 in Queensland a chance to chase down the Liberal Democrats' 0.18 quota lead. In Victoria, the Coalition has dropped to 4.32 quotas on late counting, and it is possible, but still unlikely, that the fifth Coalition candidate could be beaten by One Nation or a left wing micro party.

Labor officially wins Herbert by 37 votes

Yesterday, the distribution of preferences was completed in the Queensland seat of Herbert, and Labor's Cathy O'Toole [won by 37 votes](#). O'Toole's margin increased from eight votes on the initial count. This result means the Coalition will have only a bare majority of 76 of the 150 House seats. After providing a Speaker, the Coalition will have 75 of 149 votes on the floor.

Results for all House and Senate seats are likely to be declared by next Monday. The Liberals have 40 days from this declaration to lodge a challenge to the Herbert result in the High Court, sitting as the Court of Disputed Returns. A challenge is likely to be based on allegations that some soldiers and hospital patients were denied votes through mess-ups. The [Poll Bludger](#) has a lengthy discussion of the legal issues involved in such a challenge.

Until the court decides, O'Toole will be seated as the Member for Herbert. The court could dismiss the challenge, order a by-election, or reverse the result. However, a reversal is very unlikely; the only way this could happen is if the court reviewed challenged ballot papers, and its rulings heavily favoured the Coalition.

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