

## What is the difference between a State and a Territory?

There are **three** main differences between a State and a Territory which makes Territorians less than equal to the people of the States.

### Difference One – National Representation for Territorians



Territorians do not have constitutional rights to representation in the Commonwealth (Australian) Parliament.

The Northern Territory currently has 4 representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament : 2 Members in the House of Representatives and 2 Senators in the Senate. These positions have been created by Commonwealth laws which could be changed by the Commonwealth Parliament at any time.

States have guaranteed representation in the Commonwealth Parliament under the Australian Constitution. Each State has a minimum of 5 members in the House of Representatives and 12 Senators in the Senate.

By becoming a State, Territorians will have a guarantee of representation at the national level of government.

### Difference Two – Territorians' Say in National Referendums



Territorians must vote in national referendums but our votes do not count equally in the final assessment of any change. Only States' votes are counted in the final determination of a majority support for change.

By becoming a State, Territorians have a guarantee that their vote will fully count in national referendums and therefore give Territorians a stronger say on national affairs.

### Difference Three – Control of Territory Parliament and Territory laws

The Commonwealth (Australian) Parliament has more legal control over a Territory than a State.

The States have final authority over their legal areas of responsibility. This means

that a law made by a State government can only be changed by a State government.

The Territory does not have the same control over the laws it makes. Even with Self-Government which created the Northern Territory Parliament in 1978, the Territory Parliament and people are under the final control of the Commonwealth Parliament.

- Because of this control, the Commonwealth can cancel a law made by the Northern Territory Parliament without asking Territorians.
- Because of this control, the Commonwealth can also change the powers the Northern Territory Parliament has been given without asking Territorians.
- Because of this control, the Commonwealth can dissolve the Northern Territory Parliament without asking Territorians.



## What is Statehood?

The Northern Territory is not a State of Australia. Statehood is about the goal of becoming a State and the process involved.

A State and a Territory have different powers under the Australian Constitution.

These differences mean that the Territory is limited in its ability to make laws and the Commonwealth (Australian) Parliament has more control. As a result Territorians do not have the same rights to govern themselves as people who live in States.

By becoming a State, Territorians will have the same powers to govern themselves and end the power of the Australian Government to override the democratic process of the Territory Parliament.

## Want more information on Statehood?

Then contact the NT Statehood Steering Committee:

**Phone:** 1800 237 909  
**Email:** [statehood@nt.gov.au](mailto:statehood@nt.gov.au)  
**Post:** GPO Box 3721,  
Darwin NT 0801  
**Web:** [www.statehood.nt.gov.au](http://www.statehood.nt.gov.au)

## What is the Statehood Steering Committee?



The NT Statehood Steering Committee was formed in 2005 to support discussion on Statehood and to hear Territorians' views.

The Committee is made up of 23 Territorians from different backgrounds and perspectives. It produces education materials about Statehood.

## Want to get involved in the Statehood debate?

**Come** to our 2009 Statehood Workshops in your area. In 2009 the Committee will host workshops in major towns and with key interest groups – call us, email us or go to our website to find out more.

**Subscribe** to our e-newsletter through our web site [www.statehood.nt.gov.au](http://www.statehood.nt.gov.au)

**Sign** a “foot” at our events. This is our symbol of participation as we “Walk together towards Statehood”.

# WHAT IS STATEHOOD?



A quick guide to Statehood  
by the Northern Territory  
Statehood Steering  
Committee

[www.statehood.nt.gov.au](http://www.statehood.nt.gov.au)