



# FROM FLEET STREET TO OFFICIAL TWEET

THE EVOLUTION OF VICE-REGAL COMMUNICATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

CHRIS PIGGOTT-MCKELLAR, OFFICE OF THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNOR



# THE JOURNEY FROM FLEET STREET TO OFFICIAL TWEET

1. Chart the history and purpose of vice-regal public communications
  - 'Vice-regal notices'
  - Social media use
2. Overview how vice-regal offices are using social media to communicate their constitutional duties
3. Use the 2015 Queensland election as a case study – how social media can explain the workings of the constitution



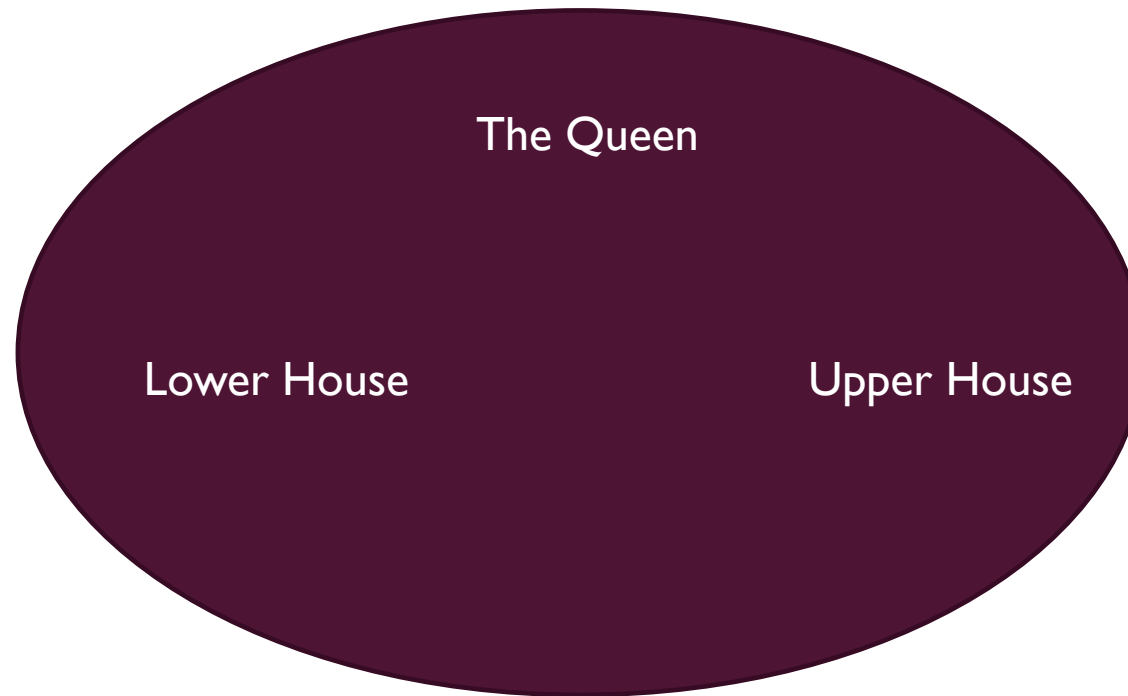
**Governor of Queensland** ✓

@QldGovernor

2/2 I will commission new Premier following  
[#qldvotes](#) polls declaration. PdeJ

11:55 AM · Feb 10, 2015 · [Twitter Web Client](#)

# THE SOVEREIGN AS A CONSTITUENT PART OF PARLIAMENT



- The Crown is a constituent part of the federal and state parliaments in Australia, expressed as 'the Queen' everywhere except Tasmania (where it is explicitly 'the Governor') and South Australia.

## FROM FLEET STREET...

- 1803 - King George III became irritated by the failure of the press to accurately report the movements of the Royal Family
- Creates the position of 'Court Newsman', whose "job consisted solely of supplying the daily newspapers with accurate information on Royal movements."
- Continue to be published in The Times, The Daily Telegraph and The Scotsman



## FROM FLEET STREET...

- Practice adopted in Australia at least since 1840s (The Brisbane Courier) for colonial Governors
- Often appeared in the 'social sections' of newspapers/magazines
- Reached a high water mark in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, when all metropolitan markets published 'vice-regal notices'
- Not always a 'source of truth' – but important in placing on the record moments of constitutional import

### VICE-REGAL

The Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, and Lady Kerr attended the Remembrance Day commemoration ceremony at the Australian War Memorial yesterday morning.

Later, Sir John received Mr Whitlam at Government House and determined his commission as Prime Minister.

Afterwards, he received Mr Fraser, and administered the requisite oath of office as Prime Minister.

In the afternoon, Sir John received the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, and Mr C. W. Harders, Secretary, Attorney-General's Department, at Government House.

Later, he received the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Scholes, at Government House.

## ...TO OFFICIAL TWEET

- In 21<sup>st</sup> century, 'vice-regal notices' ceased being published at a federal level (Governor-General), and in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia
- Vice-regal offices have looked to other mediums to record official programmes



## VICE-REGAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Jurisdiction	Website	Twitter	Facebook	Instagram
Governor-General	✓		✓	✓
Queensland	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Australia	✓			
Tasmania	✓		✓	
Victoria	✓	✓		✓
Western Australia	✓	✓		
New South Wales	✓		✓	✓



## ... TO OFFICIAL TWEET

- In all jurisdictions, the website is used to publish 'vice-regal notices'
- In Queensland, Twitter has also replaced the 'vice-regal notices' as an accurate record (a Tweet for every programme element)
- In all jurisdictions, social media is used to highlight aspects of the vice-regal programme





#### **Governor of New South Wales**

Thursday morning's announcement of the Federal Election resulted in an important Constitutional step being taken by the Governor of New South Wales. In the afternoon, the Governor presided at a meeting of the Executive Council which approved the Premier's recommendation to issue an Order and Writ for the election of six Senators for New South Wales.

Writs for the election of Senators of the Parliament of the Commonwealth are issued by each State or Territory.

More information about the election of Senators is here:  
<https://bit.ly/2lq73jt>

Timeline Photos · 12 Apr ·

# ISSUE OF SENATE WRITS 2019

# GRANTING OF ASSENT

- Does not replace the legal authority of gazettal
- But provides real-time notification of Assent



**Governor of Queensland** ✓ @QldGovernor · Sep 26

This afternoon the Governor received the Clerk of the Parliament and granted Assent to the following @QueenslandParl1 Bills [bit.ly/2IHHu4A](https://bit.ly/2IHHu4A)







**qldgovernor** He may have missed out on becoming a QPS Dog, but Gavel clearly has the characteristics necessary to be Queensland's official Vice-Regal Dog [#maroontothebone](#) 🍌

122w



**thesweeterspot** He's found his calling in life!

120w

Reply



**rominainc** I find this dog inspirational! Keep up the great work Gavel! [@ronscarano](#) agreed! Gavel needs his



2,030 likes

MAY 31, 2017

Log in to like or comment.

# 2015 QUEENSLAND STATE ELECTION

- 31 Jan 2015 – Election day
- 5 Feb 2015 – Governor receives Premier (LNP), Attorney-General, Solicitor-General
- 5 Feb 2015 – Independent MP releases public statement supporting ALP on supply and confidence
- 10 Feb 2015 – Governor receives Premier; tenders resignation pending the appointment of a new Premier
- 10 Feb 2015 – Governor receives Opposition Leader for a courtesy call
- 13 Feb 2015 – Electoral Commission declares all 89 seats (ALP 44 seats; LNP 42 seats; KAP 2 seats; Ind 1 seat)
- 13 Feb 2015 – Governor receives the newly elected Leader of the LNP
- 13 Feb 2015 – Governor receives and invites Ms Palaszczuk to form government



# 10 FEBRUARY 2015



**Governor of Queensland** ✓  
@QldGovernor



1/2 Premier Newman [@theqldpremier](#) this morning tendered to me his resignation with effect from appointment of new Premier.

11:54 AM · Feb 10, 2015 · [Twitter Web Client](#)

||| [View Tweet activity](#)



**Governor of Queensland** ✓  
@QldGovernor



2/2 I will commission new Premier following [#qldvotes](#) polls declaration. PdeJ

11:55 AM · Feb 10, 2015 · [Twitter Web Client](#)

||| [View Tweet activity](#)



**Governor of Queensland** ✓

@QldGovernor



This afternoon I received [@AnnastaciaMP](#) and invited her to form government. PdeJ



4:46 PM · Feb 13, 2015 · iOS

13 FEBRUARY  
2015

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Vice-regal communications shift with the times
- Important that programmes are publicly available – transparency, accuracy and understanding
- Social media isn't always a disruptive force – can be 'source of truth'