

# Federal Executive Council



The formal, constitutional legal body to advise the Governor General, and holds the power of ratifying executive acts (laws)



Made up of current and former Commonwealth Ministers. The Governor-General presides over meetings



The formal, constitutional and legal body responsible for advising the Governor-General

The Federal Executive Council has **de jure** executive authority: *having the legal power of ratifying executive acts*. Government decisions are documented and legally validated under the Australian Constitution.

**De jure - acting in law and government**

Established in the Australian Constitution (section 62), the Council's sole responsibility is to meet, endorse and give legal force to decisions made by the Cabinet thereby adhering to the conventions of the Westminster system.

Members are appointed by the Governor-General and remain members for life. As many councillors no longer hold executive office, members who are current Ministers of State or Parliamentary Secretaries are summoned to Council meetings.

Matters dealt with include recommendations by Ministers.

*For example, a regulation may need to be made, a treaty ratified, or a person be appointed to a position. The processes involves bringing each matter before the Council to ensure proper documentation and action with legal authority.*

Some laws require the Governor-General to be in the presence and with the authority of the Executive Council, as opposed to by the Minister acting alone. These can include:

- appointing, renewing and removing statutory officers
- appointing judges to the Commonwealth courts
- determining the use of Crown land
- making regulations

