



**AUSTRALIAN  
VALUES  
PARTY**

# AustralianValues.org.au

## *Politics - Leadership*

### **Introduction**

Our society is constantly changing but recently this has been accelerated by the outbreak of COVID and the Federal and State governments' responses. The steps taken to combat the virus have involved the curtailing of many of the freedoms we have taken for granted. The processes used to implement these measures have bypassed the parliaments and the otherwise accepted methods of implementing regulations based on acts of parliament. Unprecedented power is being exercised by unelected administrative officials at the invitation of the Prime Minister and Premiers. Suffice to say, the usual checks and balances that preserve the accepted boundaries between powers conferred by the will of the people and the imposition of measures unilaterally by the executive, are absent. The concept of 'sovereign individuals' willingly curtailing some of their freedoms for the common good is rapidly being replaced by a doctrine of the Government being all powerful and dispensing 'rights' to its citizens (rights that it can revoke at will).

The restoration of our accepted democratic purposes requires ordinary people to become active in the way our representatives are elected and perform in their elected position as ministers, ordinary MPs or at the local level, councillors. It is for this reason we seek to mobilise support from the community to protect and enhance the freedoms we enjoy and our way of life. This is the underlying reason 'Australian Values Party' has been formed. It will give the opportunity for ordinary Australians to speak into the way our Nation is governed once again.

## Our Values

The Federal Department of Home Affairs maintains the Australian Values Statement <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/social-cohesion/australian-values>

These Australian Values are those which are expected and must be agreed to by anyone seeking to visit or applying for a Visa to live in Australia and they include:

- Respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual.
- Freedom of religion (including the freedom not to follow a particular religion), freedom of speech, and freedom of association.
- Commitment to the rule of law, which means that all people are subject to the law and should obey it.
- Parliamentary democracy whereby our laws are determined by parliaments elected by the people, those laws being paramount and overriding any other inconsistent religious or secular “laws”.
- Equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, or national or ethnic origin.
- A 'fair go' for all that embraces:
  - mutual respect
  - tolerance
  - compassion for those in need
  - equality of opportunity for all
- recognising the English language as the national language, and as an important unifying element of Australian society.

Reading through these values, it is clear to now see that we no longer abide by these values within Australia despite mandating these to our new citizens and those visiting to work in Australia. We can not stand by and watch this hypocrisy.

These values are built on a foundation of egalitarianism and “mateship”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mateship is an Australian cultural idiom that embodies equality, loyalty and friendship. The concept is central to the Australian people. It encompasses unconditional acceptance, mutual and self-respect. It is based on trust and selflessness and absolute interdependence.

## Our Mission & Purpose

**The mission of AVP is to protect and progress Australia and our way of life.**

The purpose of the Australian Values Party is to promote a government with a sense of responsibility and accountability to the Australian people, to protect the Australian values and promote the welfare of our Australian people.

In setting to task, AVP will add and asks all Australians to join in our additional values to do their

### **PART:**

- P**ursuit of excellence - in all that we do
- A**ccountability - in actions and words
- R**esponsibility - not entitlement
- T**eamwork - united in purpose, all in this together

## Our Vision

- Consolidate our position of strength and community in the Asia-Pacific region
- A self-sustainable economy
- Thriving home grown manufacturing, agriculture and innovation industries
- Affordable & accessible education
- Communities celebrating individual diversity, united with a collective national identity
- Supporting and developing our local global community (Asia-Pacific)

## How we will get it done

AVP will employ a Personal Conduct and Professional Standards policy that will outline and set mandatory requirements for all elected officials and staff. All will be required to meet expert standards of planning, leadership and management competencies, with ongoing development and innovation of these at the core of this policy. Elected officials will be expected to have expert leadership and planning skills, along with their political responsibilities, bringing about the expertise expectations that should accompany such appointment with Australian Parliaments. Additionally, this policy will include focused requirements and resourcing for selection, training and professional development processes, in addition to mandatory fitness, wellness and community engagement initiatives.

## Allegiance to the Australian People

AVP is committed to ensure decisions are to be made to protect and progress the Australian people - not a political party or person. Our focus is to make meaningful and positive impacts for the Australians of today and tomorrow.

There is nothing noble about being superior to your fellow person; True nobility is being superior to your former self. We must get back to basics and be better than what we have become as a Nation.

AVP promises to lead by example - always. We don't claim to be perfect – but promise authenticity and determination in the pursuit of our goals. Our abiding interest is to help provide positive and intelligent Leadership in public office rather than play political games. AVP commits to being purpose focused and mission aligned - mindful of the saying *“Be wary when there is no war outside the wire - because that is when conflict will come from within”*.

## Our Governing Structure and Approach

We must shift our political mindset to progress beyond 3 year elections cycles and seek to stabilize and harmonise all sides of government to achieve empowered collective planning efforts to produce and review policies and strategies with maximum bi, tri and multi-partisan support. Successive governments, regardless of political title, must be able to continue in our National strategic progression as opposed to the constant seesaw of party-preferred policies and failing to optimise the experience and expertise potential within all the offices of Parliament.

The Australian Values Party is constituted with the ability to form a coalition and focused to operate in collaboration with any and all political parties to achieve what needs to be done.

**If something needs to be done, we will do it. If this means we need to accept risk, change legislation, seek consideration or even referendum - we will do it, to abide by our constitutional requirements and the democratic rights of our people. This may indeed cause the need for change, but in considering or completing this we will do so as a nation informed and empowered - not divided or deceived.**

# **Our Political Approach = Our Principles**

## **Accountability focus**

In order to restore trust and integrity to our political system, accountability must be achieved for many failings of the recent government, including:

- COVID-19 containment failures - these include the separation & conflict of our States and Territories; the focus on physical & financial factors (overstatements); current and future mental health crisis, culture-cancer. divorce rates, substance abuse, self harm, suicide, mental health treatment and prognosis, relationship failures, domestic violence, public confidence, emergency services confidence & perception (Police & Ambulance); the stress and impacts on our front line workers.
- Our Aged care system failures and the deaths in Victoria caused by State Government policy and quarantine implementation failures.
- Robo-debt - including the impact on mental health and suicide.
- The 2019/20 Bushfires crisis.
- The handling of the Brereton report Release and the leadership failures by senior ADF commanders.
- The ongoing trial-by-media persecuting our Veterans and those unable to 'afford the cost of justice' that is now only achievable by those with their wealth or resources to defend their innocence before guilt by public opinion.
- Our failed Withdrawal from Afghanistan, abandonment of those we have a moral responsibility for, and the ongoing suffering for those Australian citizens and their families caught in this ongoing crisis.

**These actions have Damaged the soul of our nation and our standing in the International community.**

## **Our Policy Principles**

We will work to establish our nation as a strong and responsible country cooperating with our neighbours within the Asia Pacific region. Our foreign policy will focus on establishing strong relationships and even alliances with the countries in the Indo & Asia Pacific regions. We will promote closer relations with our cousins in NZ.

We respect and celebrate our differences and will not use them to divide and exclude. We must unite as Australians - this includes all of our First Nation people, those from our early settlers, those who have travelled from lands beyond, all those who are Australians - we must actually become “one” and free. This will be the context and guiding principle for all social considerations of legislation, and public policy.

We will be alert to preserve the freedoms of our nation, supported by the Constitution and sustained by generations of ADF members

We will work as a priority to establish our self-sustainment potential and promote home grown industry, agriculture, technology and innovation.

## **Workforce Policy**

AVP will employ a Personal Conduct and Professional Standards policy that will outline and mandate requirements for all elected officials and staff. Elected officials will need to meet exacting ethical and moral standards , in exercising political responsibilities, bringing about the expertise expectations that should accompany such appointment with the Australian Parliament. All will be required to meet expert standards of planning, leadership, management and teamwork competencies, with ongoing development and innovation of these at the core of this policy. Additionally, this policy will include focused requirements and resourcing for selection, training and professional development processes, in addition to mandatory fitness, wellness and community engagement initiatives. All elected officials and staff will be required to agree to drug and alcohol testing as a condition of their employment.

AVP will campaign for the introduction of an Australian Parliamentary Discipline Act (APDA) to bring in greater accountability for all politicians and parliamentary staff.

## **Government Structure**

The present constitutional arrangements have provided a sound basis for the structure of government for over 100 years. However the advance of technology and the gradual transfer of responsibilities between the Federal and State parliaments has led to a situation where there is now a mismatch of taxing and spending powers between these levels of government. This situation has been graphically highlighted as the governments respond to the spread of COVID-19. The country is witnessing premiers acting primarily in the interests of their respective states rather than for the benefit of the whole nation. State governments are making decisions impacting their economies and expecting the Federal Government to meet the financial costs of their decisions without adequate consultation with federal authorities. Provisions of the constitution binding the nation together are being bypassed without

challenge and we are in danger of becoming a group of separate entities sharing our continent rather than a coherent nation.

A major impact of these aspects has been the exponential growth of bureaucracy with a consequential increase of regulatory imposts on the community as well as increased costs to be paid from more onerous taxation of the general public.

The principle of accountability for decisions made by those who make them has been so diluted as to in effect render this ineffective. In addition the political system has now become corrupted. Our elected representatives, rather than seeing their responsibility as serving the people who elected them, regard their involvement in public office as a profession with progress and success being measured by climbing the “corporate ladder” to gain ministerial appointments of increasingly prestigious levels.

There is an undeniable case for;

- A critical review of our system of government to provide a structure of government suitable to meet Australia’s future needs.
- A review of the ethical standards and level of integrity those in elected office are required to meet.
- Establishment of a code of conduct and standards to be adhered to by all those in public office (elected & appointed).
- Establishment of a professional development structure for all elected officials.

## Defence

The defence of Australia, our people and our way of life are fundamental responsibilities of the Federal Government. The characteristics of the continent in which we live and our population level result in unique challenges for Australia’s security needs and arrangements. Over reliance on powerful allies and conventional military assets will not be enough for the developing challenges to our security in an increasingly unstable part of the world. Nor will the current level of reliance on overseas manufacturers and supply chains be feasible.

Whilst it will always fall to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to assist in national emergencies, the formation of a ‘Peace Corps’<sup>2</sup> like capability will provide an alternative capability to render assistance in emergency situations limiting the continued need to use the ADF, allowing it to focus on its primary role.

Defence personnel are an important element contributing to the nation’s defence capability. Because they are not ‘employees’ as defined in the Fair Work Act, there must be official recognition of an independent body to directly advocate on their behalf. This must entail a complete review of the current Department of Defence and ADF personnel policies and Ex-Service Support Organisations including the establishment of a peak body to regulate the effectiveness of these organisations in supporting our Veterans.

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<sup>2</sup> See comment under Foreign Affairs.

Learning from the poor handling and release of the IGADF (Brereton) Inquiry into Afghanistan, legislation must be passed to better protect our service men and women, and their families, from 'trial by media'. Given the unique nature of service in the ADF, and stresses from operational service incidents, inquiries or investigations must be conducted out of the 'public square' so as to ensure that the Rule of Law and presumption of innocence are achieved. The additional unique circumstances of operational service require expert analysis and appreciation not found within regular civil society. We have a national responsibility and obligation to our service men and women to implement additional measures to ensure that only proven accuracies are provided to the Australian public, once they have met the rules of evidence and completed our constitutional legal processes in full.

The population numbers from which we draw potential ADF members is limited compared to the requirement, so there needs to be an innovative approach to the nation's defence strategy. Robotics and unmanned weapon platforms along with early adoption of emerging technologies provide a possible way ahead. We should also better study the defence strategies of other 'like' countries to help guide our defence planners. Additionally, our industrial and manufacturing policies must have an integral defence aspect as fundamental to all development and review.

Defence / DVA transition doctrine, structure and processes require a complete overhaul including the junior and senior leadership responsibilities towards personnel they command to prepare them for employment in commerce and industry or for a role in the voluntary sector on discharge.

## **Veterans**

Members of the ADF sign up to a period of service that involves the abolition of their inalienable human rights and give the government the right to send them into lethal situations with no right of redress. In these circumstances the government automatically assumes the responsibility for the welfare of ADF members to overcome or cope with effects of their service during and after their service. The provision of this support should flow on from separation from the ADF in the form of life long health support for all those who serve for a complete first term (4 years), those who are medically discharged and those who have been deployed into an appropriate operational area. Implicit in this is the need for a full overhaul of the structure and function of the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) to structure it in a way that clearly details its various responsibilities, streamlines its processes and provides clear lines of accountability.

The Defence/DVA health support and compensation systems are overly complex and produce contrasting outcomes for similar scenarios. This is a real concern for veterans and contributes to a deterioration of the mental health of veterans in too many instances. A whole of government review is needed to streamline the system to bring consistency and fairness of outcomes including associated tax aspects.

Defence / DVA transition doctrine, structure and processes require a complete overhaul including the junior and senior leadership responsibilities towards personnel they command to prepare them for employment in commerce and industry or for a role in the voluntary sector on discharge.

## **Foreign Affairs**

The nation's foreign affairs policies should have a focus on bolstering our national safety by building and maintaining alliances with regional powers that have similar national outlooks and also assist in cementing our status within the family of democratic nations. Special emphasis towards New Zealand as one of our closest neighbours and partners since federation must be an ongoing element of any foreign policy we contemplate or adopt. Since we are situated in the Indo/Pacific/SE Asia region, our foreign policies need to better reflect that. Our national and defence assistance activities should be focussed on the South Pacific. Notwithstanding that the ANZUS and AUKUS treaties will remain the bedrock of our current foreign and defence policy formulation.

The formation of a 'Peace Corps' like capability must be an element of our nation's foreign aid capability. This would also have a positive impact on school leavers providing opportunities to develop trade and other skills in an environment where their contribution would benefit national priorities as well as personal development and global care. Personal and national value would also be derived from the opportunities presented by such capabilities. It would provide for sustained engagement across all population demographics including our ageing community and the sustained positive contribution to society this will bring.

## **National Border Protection and Bio-security**

Protection of our native flora and fauna is fundamental to the future of our agricultural and fishing sectors. These industries are areas in which Australia excels. Our food production is fundamental to the needs of the population as well as our export success. Protection of our ecosystem from foreign pests and diseases, and the maritime zone from pollution, illegal fishing and pollution requires an effective quarantine system and a strong border protection force separate from the ADF.

## **Climate & Environment Policy**

We must focus to off-set emissions and improve practices to achieve a scalable net-zero strategy that not only meets international quotas and expectations, but safeguards our future generation with surplus capabilities for further sustainable and responsible expansion. Our capabilities and focus must be expanded to facilitate greater pollution reduction (not just carbon) including conversion initiatives through the close integration of this policy with the Energy policy and continued expansion through collaboration, not competition, within this.

This policy will also have close integration within the Defence and Foreign Affairs Policies to achieve greater protection of Australia's maritime zone - to optimise the exponential benefits our oceans and marine systems provide to carbon reduction and global sustainment. We will not compromise on these standards for any foreign commercial gain, and will enforce these standards and practices as fundamentals to this policy.

We must focus and expand sustainable initiatives within our foreign affairs policy. Specifically focusing on the Indo/Asia-Pacific region to seek opportunities and responsibilities to support our developing

neighbours to achieve such development within early and often sustainable pathways including partnering industrial programs and supporting ecosystem innovations and conservation obligations.

This must be developed into an actionable and accountable strategic plan, under constant review and innovation, that will set the conditions for our national excellence within a global ecosystem.

## **Energy**

Reliable energy sources are fundamental to the nation's ability to maintain and grow its economy. We need to harness all available capabilities and technologies and ensure stable, diverse and cheaper energy for all Australians long into the future. This policy must be driven by technology and the future needs of Australia.

We will conduct an in-depth analysis review of all available energy sources, systems and stockpiles within the first 90 days of office. Greater transparency is required on the complete environmental, economic and social considerations to provide factual baselines from which practical and pragmatic actions can be tailed and measured for decisions. Capabilities must be expanded to facilitate greater sovereign autonomy and reliability, while offset through parallel carbon reduction and conversion initiatives through the Climate Policy integration. This must be developed into an actionable and accountable strategic plan that will set the conditions for our national excellence within a global ecosystem, without compromising our developing potential or capabilities.

Our National energy policy must detail the extensive Whole of Government requirements to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in all departments with a combined purpose and focus towards reliable and sustainable outcomes with surge and safeguard contingencies.

## **Commerce and Industry**

The economic and defence security of Australia depends, to a large extent, on strong manufacturing and agricultural sectors as well expertise in our logistic and transport infrastructure. Technological expertise and capability are fundamental to take advantage of future advances in these areas. Governments at all levels must encourage the industrial and technology industries to develop and grow with the appropriate, but not excessive, regulatory frameworks. The taxation system must be able to facilitate growth in technology, industry and research.

We must invest our efforts into the development of Australian manufacturing and agriculture to further establish our prominence within the Indo-Asia Pacific region and economy. Our geography, resources and people provide us with the potential to develop and provide supply chains that will enable greater success across all other policy areas. This policy will also work to enable our regional partners the opportunities for mutual trading arrangements allowing them to concentrate their own areas of expertise complementing each other and help provide the potential to adopt more sustainable and collaborative pathways forward.

## Education

Our school systems are in regular conflict with conversations and policies concerning fundamental skills and ideology based topics creating this tension. Topics and issues once regarded as being a family assumption are becoming increasingly considered as an education responsibility. Regardless of any beliefs either way, the education outcomes across our nation are falling behind other OECD countries which has the potential to impact our ability to compete in the world economy.

State and Federal Governments must invest in the development of voluntary social support projects and initiatives for parents and families. These should focus to better facilitate access and exposure to current and future social considerations to better enable parents and families access to ideological conversations and the ability to take ownership of these within their own households.

State and Federal Governments must also invest in junior community programs including team sports, military cadets, environmental & emergency service cadets, outdoor and adventure training providing beneficial skills, resilience and awareness opportunities for our Australian youth. This investment will also create greater opportunities for positive community engagement through collective values and purpose focused initiatives.

Childcare costs are increasingly a barrier to the employment of women but they make up a large proportion of the potential overall workforce whose skills are an asset to Australia. Measures to remove this barrier are needed, including looking to initiatives that will better support the integration of our aging population to provide unique and complimentary family care opportunities.

Investment in tertiary education needs to be focussed primarily on equipping students for professional employment, research & development pathways. This requires greater focus on the transition pathways between secondary education, tertiary education and employment opportunities so as to better facilitate the performance and potential of our National workforce.

## Policies still in Development

- Sporting Excellence Development Program - glidepath to the 2032 Olympics.
- Media Accountability Reforms - including a review of Taxpayer funding.
- National Transport & Connectivity - We must plan and develop greater transportation connectivity within Australia including high-speed rail networks and more reliable telecommunications infrastructure to service all areas of Australia.
- National Crisis Response Reforms - Federal Quarantine responsibilities.

## What Needs to be Done Now

We don't have deep pockets and will not be bought or bribed into any deals. The best part about elections is that every individual Australian gets to show their support and make their own decisions.

Advertising costs money, but word of mouth is free. We will rely on donations and individual action to ensure that our purpose and messaging reaches all Australians. This will be a huge team effort, and will set the tone for our new legacy together.

Our Registration Application was submitted to the Australian Electoral Committee on 17 September 2021. Once approved, we will then be authorised to conduct fundraising activities. Until then, we need your voice and support to spread the word and help bring hope to renew our Australian Values and dedication to responsible and accountable leadership in Australia.

Stay connected with us via our temporary website [AustralianValues.org.au](https://AustralianValues.org.au) while our full version is under construction and if you haven't already, subscribe to our mailing list via our website to be first to hear about any and all updates.

Forward this to a friend so we can continue to grow our numbers and prepare to do what needs to be done. Thank you for taking action and believing in what we can achieve together.

Yours in Service,

Heston Russell  
Australian Values Party

