

NORTH QUEENSLAND FIRST

CONSTITUTION

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(NQF)**

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1. Name:

- (a) the name of the “Party” is: North Queensland First.
- (b) the accepted abbreviation of the name of the “Party” is: NQF
- (c) The “Party” can also be referred to as NQ First.

2. Objectives:

- (a) to promote and deliver Self-Government and Statehood for North Queensland;
- (b) the election of MPs to the Queensland Parliament;
- (c) to give specific voice in the Queensland Parliament to the desires and expectations of the people of North Queensland.

3. Values & Ethos:

- (a) NQF is a conservative, pro-North Queensland political party and believes that Queensland and Australia was founded on traditional Christian values, notwithstanding our respect for people from non-Christian backgrounds.
- (b) NQF also recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first Australians and pay our respects to elders – past, present and emerging
- (c) NQF believes in all Queenslanders and Australians getting a ‘fair go’, especially those people living in regional, rural and remote communities, and furthermore, we believe in the uniquely Australian concept of “mateship”.

- (d) NQF believes in Statehood for North Queensland to ensure the economic prosperity and well-being of people living in North Queensland.
- (e) NQF also believes in freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the rule of law, equal opportunity, personal responsibility, support for those individuals who are genuinely in need of support, the right for an individual to have access to quality education and health care and the over-riding principle of putting North Queensland and the people of North Queensland first.

4. Membership:

- (a) is open to anyone, aged 18 or older who must be registered electors within the State of Queensland;
- (b) is available in the following categories – (i) single; (ii) couple; (iii) pensioner; (iv) student;
- (c) is available by submitting a completed application to the party, either physical or digital/electronic, providing relevant personal information and paying the required fee;
- (d) is available only to individuals who are members in their own right and are not a member of another political party;
- (e) A person is prohibited from becoming a member of the Party if that person has been convicted of a disqualifying electoral offence within ten (10) years before the person applies to become a member;
- (f) No member who is convicted of a disqualifying electoral offence may continue to be a member. Their membership will be deemed to have immediately ceased upon conviction;
- (g) The Party Management Committee may, by simple majority of the Committee, terminate the membership of any party member for a material breach of this Constitution, for serious misconduct or any other conduct which the Management considers brings the Party into disrepute or is considered to be an action contrary to the objectives of the Party;

- (h) A Party member whose membership is intended to be ended by the Party Management Committee shall be advised in writing and afforded 14 days in which to make written representations as to why the membership should not be ended. The Management Committee is to make a final determination within 14 days of having received such representations. The decision of the Management shall be final.
- (i) A non-financial Party member shall not have voting rights at any election with the Party.
- (j) A member may, at any time by notice in writing to the Secretary, resign their membership of the Party but may be liable for any unpaid fees and other unpaid monies which are due and unpaid at the date of resignation.
- (k) Members with fees in arrears are still determined to retain their membership until they advise the party in writing that they wish to resign their membership, or their membership is terminated by Party Management.

PARTY STRUCTURE, MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

The party shall consist of Branches and a Management Committee.

5. Branches:

- (a) Branches, may, with the approval of the Party Management Committee be formed anywhere within the State of Queensland but must have a minimum of 12 financial members who must be registered electors within the State of Queensland;
- (b) No person may be a member of more than one (1) branch at any given time.;
- (c) The Party Management Committee will oversee the establishment of any new Branch included the chairing of an inaugural Branch meeting;
- (d) The closure of any Branch or the combining of any Branches, is at the sole discretion of the Management Committee.

6. **Branch Management:**

Each Branch shall be managed by a Committee formed of the following office-holders:-

Chair
Vice Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Membership Officer

Branch Office holders shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Branch. All nominations must be proposed and seconded by financial members of that Branch. Election shall be by simple majority of all financial members in attendance at the Annual General Meeting. If a ballot is required, it shall be by secret ballot.

7. **Management Committee:**

The Party shall be managed by a Committee consisting of:

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Parliamentary Representative

All members of the Party Management Committee shall, at all times, be a financial member of the Party.

A member of the Management Committee may not, concurrently, hold an elected position within a Branch of the Party.

8. Election of Party Management Committee:

All members of the Party Management Committee, with the exception of the Parliamentary Representative, shall be elected annually by simple majority of all financial party members. Nominations for Party Management Committee Office shall only be accepted from members who are financial. If a ballot is required for any office it shall be by secret postal ballot of all financial members conducted no earlier than 30 days prior to an Annual General Meeting.

The Parliamentary Representative shall be elected by a simple ballot of all elected Party Members of the Queensland Parliament. A secret ballot shall be held if called for by an elected member of Parliament.

The Party Management Committee shall be collectively responsible for all matters related to the proper functioning of the Party including, but not limited to: -

- (a) Observing the Electoral Act 1992 and any other law related to political parties in the State of Queensland procedures;
- (b) Good governance of the Party, including the oversight of all Branch activities;
- (c) Proper financial management;
- (d) The establishment of any Rules for Party Management or functioning made pursuant to this Constitution;
- (e) The final endorsement of any pre-selected candidate for any seat in the State of Queensland;
- (f) The establishment and closure of any Branch;
- (g) The management of all campaigning;
- (h) The establishment of Management sub-Committees for specific purposes; eg finance, discipline, campaigning;
- (i) The employment of paid staff.

9. **State Electorate Conference:**

The Party Management Committee may, if it so desires, establish in any State Electorate a Conference of Branch Representatives (SEC). In such case, every Branch within the State Electorate may elect two (2) delegates to meetings of the SEC. Election of delegates to SEC shall be conducted at Branch Annual General Meetings concurrent with the election of Branch Office Bearers.

10. **Internal Affairs:**

The Party Management Committee shall establish policies and procedures for the proper management of all internal Party affairs. Such Policies and Procedures shall be in writing and distributed to all Branches.

11. **Annual General Meetings:**

Annual General Meetings of the Party or Branches of the party are to be held annually. The secretary of the Party or Branches must provide 30 days' clear notice of the meeting. The meeting notice must include all details of vacant positions for the election of office-bearers and provide nomination notices to enable those positions to be filled by financial members.

12. **General Meetings:**

General meetings of the Party or Branches of the Party can be held during the course of the year as deemed necessary but there must be a minimum of two (2) such meetings annually, excluding the annual general meeting. The Secretary of the Party or Secretary of the Branch of the Party must provide 14 days' clear notice of the meeting.

13. Pre-Selection of Candidates:

- (a) The party welcomes prospective candidates from all walks of life to contest State seats in North Queensland and adjacent communities.
- (b) All prospective candidates for any State seat must be financial members of the Party.
- (c) If necessary, whereby more than one (1) individual seeks NQF endorsement for a seat, a formal pre-selection process, by secret ballot, will be arranged by the Party Management Committee.
- (d) Any preselection ballot is to satisfy the general principles of free and democratic elections, which are:
 - (e) Only members of the Party who are electors may vote;
 - (f) Only members of the Party who are eligible to vote in the ballot under the Party's Constitution may vote;
 - (g) Each member only has 1 vote;
 - (h) Voting must be done by secret ballot;
 - (i) A member must not be improperly influenced in voting;
 - (j) A member's ballot paper must be counted if the member's intention is clear;
 - (k) Members' votes must be accurately counted;
 - (l) Each person who is seeking selection may be present personally, or may be represented by another person, at the ballot and for the scrutiny, and counting, of votes.

Eligible to vote in a pre-selection ballot are:

- (a) the elected representatives of each Branch of the Party within the State Electorate. Each Branch within a State Electorate shall elect two (2) financial members of their Branch at a General Meeting thereof. Details of elected representatives shall be advised to the Party Management Committee prior to the conduct of a Pre-selection;
- (b) Members of the Party Management Committee.

The selected candidate of any such pre-selection will then go before the Party Management Committee for final approval before endorsement is granted. Final approval is to involve an interview of the pre-selected candidate during which the Management Committee is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the candidate meets all necessary criteria under the Electoral Act 1992 and, in all other regards, meets the Party's requirements, standards and expectations.

14. Economic Platform:

NQF will focus on economic growth and jobs in the following key industries:

- (a) Agriculture
- (b) Construction
- (c) Resources
- (d) Tourism
- (e) Infrastructure

15. Dispute Resolution:

The Party Management will be responsible for the appointment of a disputes panel, which will comprise of the following:

- Party President
- Party Secretary
- Party Member

The Disputes Panel will investigate any complaints and disputes in accordance with statute law and the principles of natural justice.

16. Disposal of Assets:

The party may be wound up by a special resolution of the Party Management.

Any surplus funds and property or assets of any kind, after the payment of all debts and expenses, will be distributed as directed by the Party Management as they see fit. The constitution can be amended by way of special resolution.

17. Constitutional Amendment:

Any amendments to the Constitution will need to be approved by the Party Management before being presented at an Annual General Meeting whereby a vote of 75% of members in attendance will be needed to affect any change. Thirty (30) days' notice is required to be given to members as notification of any intention to move the resolution.

18. Financial Year:

The financial year of the Party shall end on 30 June each year. The accounts of the Party and any party units shall be rendered in accordance with relevant electoral laws in Queensland.

19. Auditors:

The financial accounts and books kept by the party and any party units shall be provided for an annual audit, with the auditor to be appointed by the Party Management pursuant to the electoral laws of Queensland.

20. Matters Not Covered by This Constitution:

In cases where a subject is not covered by this Constitution, the matter shall be brought before the party whereby the State Executive will have the binding decision to action such matters. The matter/s can then be reviewed at the next Annual General Meeting and if necessary, amend the Constitution.