

# **Premier of Western Australia**

The Premier of Western Australia is the head of the executive government. Following a general election, the Premier, who is the leader of the party or coalition of parties holding a majority in the Legislative Assembly, is by convention commissioned by the Governor to form government.

## **History**

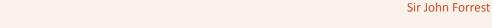
When Western Australia first commenced responsible government in 1890, the word 'Premier' was merely a courtesy title and the position was not recognised constitutionally. In fact, the office was not formally listed as one of the executive positions until the appointment of Ross McLarty in 1947. Today, Sir John Forrest is officially regarded as being the first Premier Western Australia when he took office in 1890. Carmen Lawrence. on 12 1990, became the first woman to hold this office in Australia.

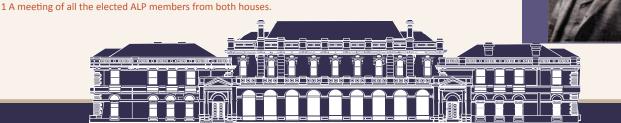
### Role

Although the Premier does have ministerial responsibilities, one of the most important tasks is to oversee and coordinate the work of other ministers. In Labor governments, the Premier is the leader of the parliamentary party and is chosen by the caucus<sup>1</sup>. The Premier allocates portfolios to those members who are elected to the ministry by the caucus. In Liberal and National Party coalition or alliance governments, the Premier is usually chosen by the parliamentary members of the dominant party in the coalition (Liberal selects the ministry Party). The Premier and allocates the portfolios. An agreement between the Liberal and National Parties indicate how many ministerial posts are held by the respective parties.

The Premier leads the government and takes a major part in parliamentary debates and speaking to the media about government policy. The roles of the Premier include:

- leading the government in the state;
- · chairing cabinet meetings;
- providing advice to His Majesty the King on the exercise of powers and functions of the Governor;
- choosing ministers and allocating portfolios
  (Liberal and National) or allocating portfolios to ministers chosen by caucus (Labor);
- setting out the principal ministerial responsibilities of ministers and the acts they will administer (through Executive Council (EXCO);
- authorising a minister to perform the duties and functions of another minister (through EXCO);
- advising the Governor as to the opening day of a session and the proroguing of Parliament prior to a general election;
- ensuring adherence to caretaker government conventions and practices following a general election announcement;
- being the prime communicator between the Governor and cabinet, the Western Australian government and federal, state and territory governments, and between the Western Australian government and overseas governments; and
- as a member of Parliament, representing his/her electorate.







# **Premier of Western Australia**



Richard Fairfax Court



Geoffrey lan Gallop



Alan James Carpenter



Colin James **Barnett** 



McGowan

**Premiers of Western Australia** Rt Hon. Sir John Forrest, PC, GCMG George Throssell, CMG George Leake, KC, CMG **Alfred Edward Morgans** George Leake, KC, CMG Sir W.H. James KC, KCMG **Henry Daglish** Sir Cornthwaite H. Rason Sir Newton J. Moore, KCMG Frank Wilson, CMG John Scaddan, CMG Frank Wilson, CMG Sir Henry B. Lefroy, KCMG Sir Hal. P. Colebatch, CMG3 Sir James Mitchell, GCMG **Philip Collier** Sir James Mitchell, GCMG **Philip Collier John Collings Willcock** Frank J.S. Wise, AO Ross McLarty, KBE, MM Albert R.G. Hawke Sir David Brand, KCMG John Trezise Tonkin, AC

Sir Charles W.M. Court, AK, KCMG, OBE Raymond James O'Connor **Brian Thomas Burke** Peter M'Callum Dowding **Dr Carmen Mary Lawrence Richard Fairfax Court** Dr Geoffrey Ian Gallop **Alan James Carpenter Colin James Barnett** Mark McGowan

#### **Party** Period of Office

20 December 1890 - 14 February 1901 Forrest 14 February 1901 - 27 May 1901 Forrest Opposition 27 May 1901 - 21 November 1901 Ministerialist 21 November 1901 - 23 December 1901 **Opposition2** 23 December 1901 - 1 July 1902 Liberal 1 July 1902 - 10 August 1904 Labor

10 August 1904 - 25 August 1905 Liberal 25 August 1905 - 1 May 1906 Liberal 7 May 1906 - 16 September 1910 Liberal 16 September 1910 - 7 October 1911 Labor 7 October 1911 - 27 July 1916 Liberal 27 July 1916 - 28 June 1917 Nationalist 28 June 1917 - 17 April 1919 **Nationalist** 17 April 1919 - 17 May 1919 **Nationalist** 17 May 1919 - 16 April 1924 Labor 17 April 1924 - 23 April 1930 **Nationalist** 24 April 1930 - 24 April 1933 Labor 24 April 1933 - 20 August 1936

Labor 20 August 1936 - 31 July 1945 Labor 31 July 1945 - 1 April 1947 Liberal 1 April 1947 - 23 February 1953 Labor 23 February 1953 - 2 April 1959 Liberal 2 April 1959 - 3 March 1971 Labor 3 March 1971 - 8 April 1974 Liberal 8 April 1974 - 25 January 1982 Liberal 25 January 1982 - 25 February 1983 Labor 25 February 1983 - 25 February 1988 Labor 25 February 1988 - 12 February 1990 12 February 1990 - 16 February 1993 Labor Liberal 16 February 1993 - 10 February 2001 10 February 2001 - 25 January 2006 Labor Labor 25 January 2006 - 23 September 2008

23 September 2008 - 11 March 2017

11 March 2017 - Still in Office



Liberal

Labor