

COUNTRY ALLIANCE

RURAL - REGIONAL - RECREATIONAL

Did you vote for Colleen?

Nothing would be worse than the thought of people who think the Greens are extremists, accidentally voting *for* them.

Let's be clear about this—the Greens have policies that specifically seek to ban hunting and rodeos. They have other policies to restrict recreational fishing, camping and a tariff policy to make using four wheel vehicles more expensive.

Their animal welfare policy includes an end to the 'live display of animals'. That will severely affect the annual shows held across Victoria -including the Royal Melbourne Show!

Yet, if you are one of the more than two hundred thousand people from Melbourne's western suburbs who followed the "How To Vote" card for the Labor Party at the last state election, then you're in for a big surprise—you *probably helped vote a Greens candidate into parliament!*

How did that happen?

The reason for how this happened revolves around the 'quota' system now used for election to the upper house of parliament.

Candidates who obtain their 'quota' of votes (approximately 60,000) are elected, and any surplus votes are distributed as 'preferences'. For example, if a candidate wins 80,000 votes, the surplus 20,000 votes are distributed to someone else.

An easy way to think of this is to think of champagne glasses stacked one on top of another. When one is full, excess champagne flows down to the next one and so on so that each has the same 'quota'.

That's similar to the system now being used to elect candidates to parliament in the upper house.

Greens candidate Colleen Hartland, who contested the Western Metropolitan Region, scored only half a 'quota' in her own right.

However she picked up enough preferences from the other parties (in this case, mostly Labor) to win a quota – and get elected to parliament.

The problem is *not* that you might have voted for Labor.

Labor has delivered far more for regional communities than their opposition.

It does *not* have policies to ban rodeos, hunting or the display of live animals at annual shows. Indeed Labor announced policies prior to the 2006 state election to specifically support activities such as hunting and the development of iconic four wheel drive tracks.

Rather, the problem is that the majority of voters who followed Labor's "How To Vote" card, didn't realise their preferences would help the Greens!

A closer look at "How to Vote" cards

"How To Vote" cards help voters understand how to vote for the party of their choice.

For the upper house, these cards include the simple instruction of putting a "1" in one of the boxes "above the line" on the large white ballot paper.

Most voters – about 95% - vote this way. It's quick, it's simple and it's easy to explain.

However because Labor gave its preferences to the Greens, a massive chunk of votes – including those cast by people who *detest* what the Greens stand for – gave Colleen Hartland, the votes she needed to win her seat.

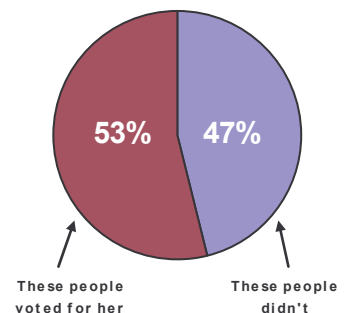
She beat the next candidate by just 129 votes. Therefore, if 65 voters (half of 129+1) living in Melbourne's west who followed Labor's "How To Vote" card had instead voted to put the Greens last, there would now be one less Greens MP in parliament.



Above—Greens MP Colleen Hartland

Right—How following "How To Vote" cards of other parties helped her into parliament

How Colleen got her 'quota'



Instead we're stuck with Colleen until at least 2010.

It was a similar story in the Northern Metropolitan Region and the Southern Metropolitan Region which cover much of the rest of the inner metropolitan area. These were contested by Greens candidates Greg Barber and Sue Pennicuik.

Neither won a quota in their own right, but both benefited from preference flows and got elected. There is no other way to put it - *if you followed Labor's "How To Vote" card in these areas, you helped these Greens candidates get elected.*

Following the "How To Vote" cards of the major parties can help the Greens get elected!

The Greens know that - and hope you don't.

So is the Liberal Party any better? No!

It's widely believed the Liberals did a deal at the last state election in relation to four inner city electorates where they gave their preference to the Greens—ahead of Labor.

Following the Liberal Party "How To Vote" card in those electorates *also* helped the Greens.

The 2007 federal election

At the recent federal election, Labor and the Liberals gave their preferences to the Greens ahead of each other.

Even the National Party gave its preferences to the Greens before Labor!

They are content with this because it limits the support available to their opposition.

It didn't matter which major party you voted for. If you followed their "How To Vote" card, part of your vote went to supporting the election of Greens candidate, Richard Di Natale.

I've met Richard. He's a nice guy.

However he's a Greens candidate who would be likely to jump at the chance to implement the policies that would ban or restrict what you like to do.

As it turned out, Richard only just missed out on being elected to the Senate.

A big part of the reason why he missed out, is that the Australian Shooters Party directed preferences away from the Greens by putting them last - something Labor and the coalition wouldn't do.

The 1998 federal election

You will recall that we had a federal election in 1998, just two years after the gun buyback in 1996.

Not only did Labor and the coalition preferenced the Greens before sending their preferences to each other, they also put the more friendly conservative party, One Nation, last.

So, after all the pain of the buyback - after protesting about the removal of grazing from the Alpine National Park—after the significant threat that remains to rodeos, our timber industries and access to public land, people who fought long and hard to protect what they do, *cast votes that actually helped the electoral prospects of the Greens* at the expense of One Nation.

You can't afford to ignore where your vote goes

The majority of people don't understand the importance of the preferential system. Most people just want to "get in" and "get out" of the polling booth. Placing a "1" in a box for one of the major parties above the line is a quick and easy thing to do.

This is fine if you don't care who benefits from preferences.

However, its crucial for people like you who stand to lose out every time a Greens candidate is elected. The equation is simple—if they get elected, we will see increasing restrictions or bans on hunting, rodeos, four wheel driving, recreational fishing and the timber industry.

Support Country Alliance

Country Alliance is a registered political party that will be contesting the next state election. It is pro-shooting, pro-rodeo, pro-fishing, pro-four wheel driving. It is supportive of the timber industry and regional businesses – and will always put the Greens last!

It will also have a box "above the line" on ballot papers wherever it runs candidates in the upper house.

You can therefore protect what you do by voting for Country Alliance "above the line". You can also support Country Alliance by becoming a member - for just \$20 per year.

This will help us make sure we remain registered, as we are legally required to have at least 500 members. To join, fill in the coupon below or join 'online' at www.countryalliance.org. Donations are also gratefully received.

Make sure your colleagues understand the possibility that when they vote, they could be voting for the Greens!

Visit our website at www.countryalliance.org. Or email us at admin@countryalliance.org. Phone (03) 9017 6119 / mobile 0425 746 066



Yes, I want to join the Country Alliance party

Membership: \$20.00
- and / or Donate: \$

(Note: membership fees and donations are tax deductible)

Post with Country Alliance
payment to: Reply Paid 253,
Mitcham Vic 3132 (no stamp needed)

Are you on the Federal and State electoral rolls ?..... Yes No

Are you a member of another registered political party or political party applying for registration? Yes No

Full Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms

(Please circle) First name Middle name Surname

Address:

Postcode..... Date of Birth .../.../..... **(Work).....(Home).....(Mob).....**

Email:.....Signature: