

CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL TASMANIAN CONSTITUTIONAL EVENTS

11 Sep 1803	European settlement of Van Diemen's Land (VDL) under Lt John Bowen.
24 Sep 1804	Tasmania divided into two counties: Cornwall under William Paterson and Buckingham under David Collins.
4 Feb 1813	Tasmania to be ruled as a single unit.
19 Jul 1823	Original 'Crown' Council provided for both NSW and VDL.
1 Dec 1823	Official warrant issued by Governor Arthur establishing 'Crown' Council.
25 Aug 1824	Crown Council holds first meeting.
14 Jul 1825	Order-in-Council separates VDL from NSW.
16 Jul 1825	NSW Governor Darling appointed with separate Royal Instructions for VDL.
17 Jul 1825	Warrants issued for VDL Legislative Council by Governor Darling.
24 Nov 1825	Governor Darling arrives in VDL.
3 Dec 1825	While in Hobart Darling proclaims VDL as a separate colony from NSW.
17 Dec 1825	Governor Arthur publishes this proclamation dated 12 December 1825.
12 Apr 1826	Legislative Council meets formally.
26 Apr 1826	Legislative Council proceeds to swear in Members.
21 Jun 1826	Legislative Council meets for first proper session.
30 Jan 1829	Enlarged 'Nominee' Council established. (9 Geo IV c83).
31 Jul 1829	Warrant for Nominee Council published (and again on 8 and 15 August 1829).
1838	Lt-Gov Sir John Franklin orders that Council sittings should be open to the public.
30 Jul 1842	Act passed in England for 'Better Government of NSW and VDL'.
31 Oct 1845	'Patriotic six' depart Legislative Council, leaving it without a quorum.
23 Mar 1847	'Patriotic six' reinstated to Legislative Council.
5 Aug 1850	English Parliament passes <i>Australian Constitutions Act</i> to confirm legislative powers of colonies. 'Blended' Council established, part nominated, part elected.
21 Oct 1851	First polling day to elect Tasmanian Members of Parliament.
30 Dec 1851	Noon: first meeting of Legislative Council with elected Members.
19 Aug 1853	Legislative Council select committee appointed to draft constitution for VDL.
25 Apr 1854	Select Committee appointed to draft constitution for bicameral Parliament (Paper No 63/1854 dated 29/9/1854).
31 Oct 1854	New Constitution passed by Legislative Council. (18 Vic No.17); beginning of responsible government.
1 May 1855	Royal Assent from Queen Victoria to new bicameral Parliament.
21 Jul 1855	Privy Council approves name change from Van Diemen's Land to Tasmania (<i>Gazette</i> 27 November 1855)

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24 Oct 1855	Royal Assent to 'Constitutional Act' proclaimed in Hobart (<i>Gazette</i> 30 Oct 1855).
1 Jan 1856	Formal change of name from Van Diemen's Land to Tasmania.
8 Feb 1856	Final meeting of old Legislative Council.
8 Sep 1856	First elections for House of Assembly seat of Launceston - others held between 15 and 22 September.
6 Oct 1856	First elections for new Legislative Council seat of Hobart - others held between 7 and 17 October.
1 Nov 1856	First Premier W.T.N. Champ appointed.
2 Dec 1856	First session of new bicameral Parliament.
3 Jun 1898	First referendum to join Commonwealth: Vote - 81.3% Yes; 18.7% No.
27 Jul 1899	Second referendum to join Commonwealth: Vote - 94.4% Yes; 5.5% No.
29 Oct 1900	Royal Warrant creating Tasmania a State of the Commonwealth of Australia.
1 Jan 1901	Tasmania formally becomes a State in Australian Federal system with Legislative Council of 18 members and House of Assembly of 35 members.
29 Feb 1904	Royal Assent to amendment to <i>Constitution Act</i> extends vote to women.
25 Apr 1907	House of Assembly reduced to 30 members (6 per electorate).
30 Apr 1909	First election for the House of Assembly using Hare-Clark electoral system.
14 Feb 1922	Royal Assent to amendment to <i>Constitution Act</i> gives women the right to stand for election to House of Assembly.
29 Mar 1946	Legislative Council enlarged to 19 members (<i>Constitution Act</i> 1946)
9 Apr 1959	House of Assembly enlarged to 35 members (7 per electorate from 2 May 1959).
4 Dec 1985	Tasmania joins with other States and Commonwealth to confirm 'sovereign, independent' status from England. (<i>Australia Act</i> of November 1985).
25 Jul 1998	Reduction in size of Parliament from 54 to 40 (25 MHAs and 15 MLCs).

CONSTITUTIONAL LANDMARKS (in brief)

Divided Island: Two Colonies: From 1804 until 1812 Tasmania was administered from NSW by two army officers. David Collins controlled the south, known as Buckingham and William Paterson the north, or Cornwall.

Unified Island: One Colony: From 1812 Tasmania was a single unit under Lieutenant Geils and in February 1813 Thomas Davey was made Lieutenant-Governor, although the island remained answerable to NSW.

Separate Island Colony: From 1825 Tasmania was a separate colony answerable only to English colonial authority. Legislative Council established, first appointed by the Governor, later partly elected (1850).

Responsible Island Colony: The passage of the *Australian Colonies Government Act* by England in 1850 set Parliament's powers and from 1856 Tasmania was granted responsible self-government with its own bicameral Parliament, but British colonial authority still held some sway.

Island State of the Federation: Upon Federation, Tasmania gave some powers to the Commonwealth and since 1901 Tasmania has been a State in the Australian Federal system. The laws of Tasmania are thus controlled by the Tasmanian Parliament unless the Federal Constitution prevails.

Independent State: As a result of the passage of the *Federal Australia Act* and the *Australia Acts (Request) Act* in Tasmania (November 1985) the Commonwealth and States no longer have any parliamentary or legislative ties with the English Parliament or Executive Government.