



Background

The AJP has **positions** and **policies**. They are very different.

A **policy** concerns an issue on which Animal Justice Party branches, regional groups and Members of Parliament will actively campaign on. They are core business ... things like factory farming, live animal export or hunting.

AJP members must be able to trust that the party will stay focused on animals. Hence our policies will keep that focus. Policies will determine the issues which dominate the effort of our elected representatives.

But we also recognise that the voting public need to know how AJP representatives will vote on important non-animal issues. Thus, we also have **positions**. Which explain to the voting public how we feel about other issues. A position must follow clearly from our core values of rationality, non-violence, kindness and equality; and when it does, then we will adopt it, without reference to the membership. But we recognise our fallibility and allow that a single adequately argued communication from a member may cause us to rescind or modify a position. In this way we hope that our positions will be widely shared by members who share our core values.

On some issues, there may be no single obvious position flowing from our core values, in which case our representative will exercise a conscience vote.

First Nations

The Animal Justice Party (AJP) recognises the horrific treatment of First Nations people since European arrival and endorses every effort to rectify these long standing injustices. We understand that First Nations communities that were here before colonisation, had a complex system of relationships and management of self, other people and their wider world that enabled them to thrive on a continent that was, in itself,

a complex environment. First Nations people were caretakers of the continent and its inhabitants for tens of thousands of years and sovereignty was never ceded.

The AJP will always support equality (one of four core values) and oppose oppression. We also support equity and fairness. It is not the place of the AJP to unilaterally decide on social or economic issues of special concern to First Nations people; our primary mission and policy expertise is representing animals and nature. For social or economic issues impacting First Nations communities, our representatives will consult directly with local Indigenous leaders and be guided by their experience. The AJP supports self-determination and empowering First Nations communities. The party will consult with First Nations people on issues like treaty, constitutional reform, education, health, incarceration and others, recognising the complexity and diversity of views across First Nations communities.

The AJP supports establishing one or more Makarrata Commissions to facilitate truth-telling and agreement-making between First Nations peoples and various governments. All governments must comply with their obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹ and the AJP supports the articles therein.

The AJP is committed to non-violence. Sadly we continue to see Aboriginal deaths in custody since the Royal Commission in 1987. Hundreds have continued to die² with some factors including overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, procedures not being followed and medical care being withheld. With First Nations people 15³ to 26⁴ times more likely to be incarcerated, major reform is urgently required. The AJP supports the development and implementation of holistic approaches to address this violence and discrimination and their root causes.

Map Acknowledgement: Aboriginal Australia, D R Horton, Aboriginal Studies Press, 1996

¹<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples-1>
²<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jun/06/aboriginal-deaths-in-custody-434-have-died-since-1991-new-data-shows>
³<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4517.0~2018~Main%20Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20prisoner%20characteristics%20~13>
⁴<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2018/contents/table-of-contents>



Want a voice for animals in Parliament? Join, donate, or find out more about the Animal Justice Party at animaljusticeparty.org. You can also read our policies, here: animaljusticeparty.org/policieslist.

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