

MPs moving straight into ministry after election

On seven occasions, ministerial appointments at the Commonwealth level have been made immediately upon the first election of a person to the Parliament. In two cases the new minister had no parliamentary experience at all; in five other cases the appointee had prior parliamentary and ministerial experience in a State Parliament.

Ministers with no previous parliamentary experience

William Spooner (Liberal, NSW) was elected to the Senate at the 1949 election. His term commenced on 22 February 1950. Spooner was appointed Minister for Social Services in the Menzies Government on 19 December 1949, two months before the commencement of his Senate term. Before entering the Senate, Spooner was a member of Hungerford, Spooner & Co (Chartered Accountants (Aust)) in Sydney.

Simon Crean (ALP, Hotham, Vic) was elected to the House of Representatives on 24 March 1990. He was appointed as Minister for Science and Technology in the Hawke Government on 4 April 1990. Crean had been a union official before he entered Parliament, and was President of the ACTU 1985–90.

Ministers with previous (State) parliamentary experience

Robert (Bob) Debus (ALP, Macquarie, NSW) was elected to the House of Representatives on 24 November 2007. He was appointed Minister for Home Affairs on 3 December 2007.

Debus was a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly 1981-88 and 1995-2007. He held various ministerial positions, including that of Attorney-General (2000-07).

Joseph Lyons (ALP, Wilmot, Tas) was elected to the House of Representatives on 12 October 1929. He was appointed Postmaster-General and Minister for Works and Railways in the Scullin Government on 22 October 1929.

Lyons was a member of the Tasmanian House of Assembly 1909–29. He held various ministerial positions, including that of Premier (1923–28).

Robert (Bob) Menzies, (UAP, Kooyong, Vic.) was elected to the House of Representatives on 15 September 1934. He was appointed Attorney-General and Minister for Industry in the Lyons Government on 12 October 1934.

Menzies was a member of the Victorian Legislative Council 1928–29, and the Victorian Legislative Assembly 1929–34. He held various ministerial positions, including that of Deputy Premier (1932–34). Interestingly, Menzies became a minister immediately after his election to the Victorian Parliament, as he did at the Commonwealth level.

Dr Carmen Lawrence (ALP, Fremantle, WA) was elected to the House of Representatives on 12 March 1994. She was appointed Minister for Human Services and Health and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women in the Keating Government on 25 March 1994.

Lawrence was a member of the Western Australian Legislative Assembly 1986–94. She held various ministerial positions, including that of Premier (1990–93).

John Fahey (Lib, Macarthur, NSW) was elected to the House of Representatives on 2 March 1996. He was appointed Minister for Finance in the Howard Government on 11 March 1996.

Fahey was a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly 1984–96. He held various ministerial positions, including that of Premier (1992–95).