



Descriptions of the Bougainville Referendum Options



The purpose of this document is to provide additional detail about Greater Autonomy and Independence so that voters can make a well-informed-choice.

This is the question that will be asked in the referendum on Bougainville’s future status.

Do you agree for Bougainville to have:

1. Greater Autonomy

2. Independence

Definition of Greater Autonomy and Independence

In an exchange of letters in May 2019, the Prime Minister and President agreed on the following definitions of the terms ‘greater autonomy’ and ‘independence’.

GREATER AUTONOMY	INDEPENDENCE
A negotiated political settlement that provides for a form of autonomy with greater powers than those currently available under constitutional arrangements.	An independent nation state with sovereign powers and laws, recognized under international law and by other international states to be an independent state, separate to the state of PNG.

Description of ‘Greater Autonomy’

A negotiated political settlement that provides for a form of autonomy with greater powers than those currently available under constitutional arrangements.

Under the Bougainville Peace Agreement, Bougainville has a high level of autonomy powers for home grown decision-making. When the ABG began in June 2005, all provincial government powers and functions were automatically assumed. Since then, the Autonomous Bougainville Government has assumed additional powers, such as mining. Bougainville has its own constitution, its own political system and its own public service.

Under ‘greater autonomy’, the National Government will continue to support the implementation of the existing autonomy arrangements and provide additional powers and functions to the Bougainville government.

Examples of powers that could be available to Bougainville under ‘Greater Autonomy’ include:

- **Industrial relations**
- **Foreign aid and Investment**
- **International trade and civil aviation**
- **Migratory and straddling fish stocks**
- **Additional taxation and other revenue-raising powers**

Description of ‘Independence’

An independent nation state with sovereign powers and laws, recognized under the law and by other international states to be an independent state, separate to the state of PNG.

Independence for Bougainville as a nation State with full sovereignty will entail:

- **A defined territory, inclusive of maritime boundaries and associated Exclusive Economic Zone.**
- **A form of government chosen by decisions of the people from time to time.**
- **Capacity to enter into and manage relations with other states as well as international organizations.**
- **A right to apply for UN membership.**
- **Capacity to deal with international finance institutions.**

An independent Bougainville would have the full range of powers and functions exercised by independent states, and in particular the powers necessary to generate its own revenues inclusive of control of natural resources, control of all categories of taxation and ability to raise loans Representative Kinds of Powers of an Independent State include:

- **Security (including border security)**
- **Judiciary, including final court of appeal**
- **Police service**
- **Foreign affairs**
- **Telecommunications and postal services**
- **Citizenship**
- **Quarantine**
- **Central bank**

Illustration of the current autonomy arrangements compared with 'Greater Autonomy' and Independence.

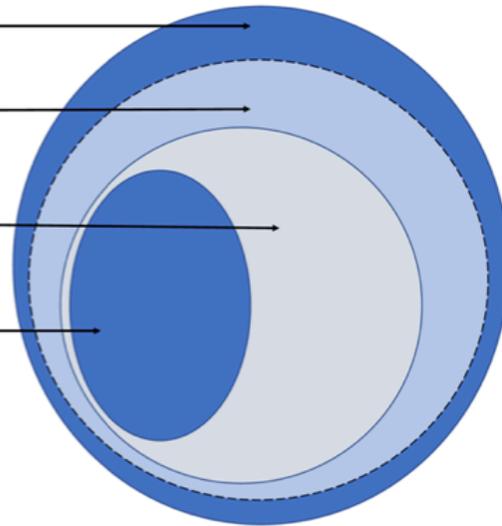
All powers of independent State (such as security, citizenship, foreign affairs)

Greater Autonomy (additional powers such as taxation and revenue-raising)

Autonomy under BPA

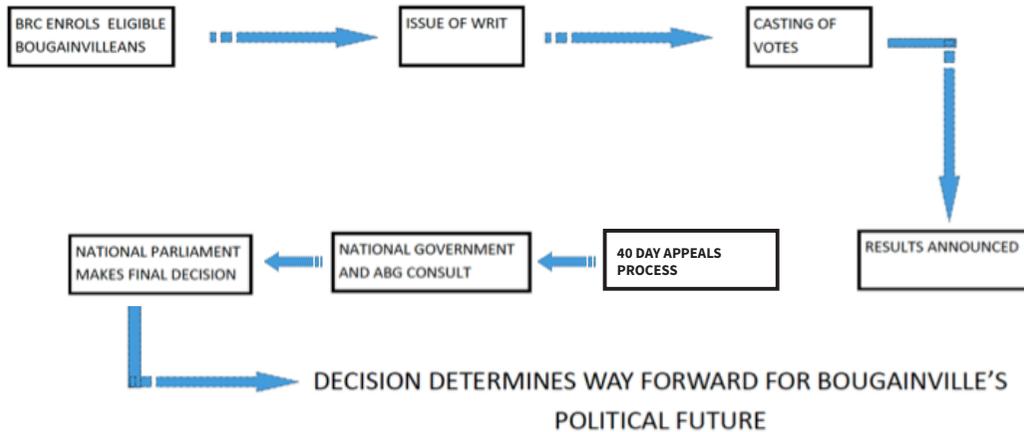
Autonomy to date

BOUGAINVILLE

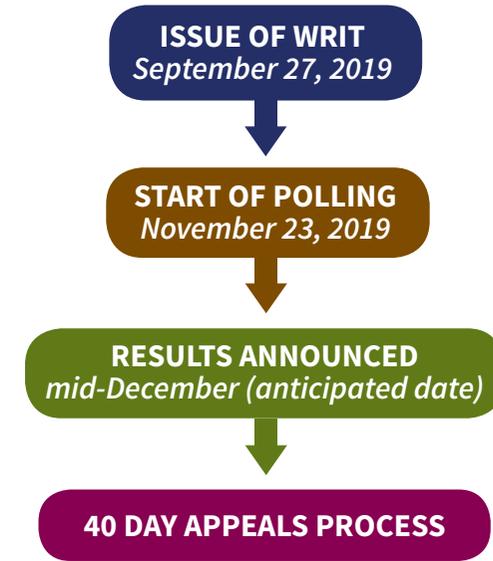


An explanation of the process up to and after the referendum

OUTLINE OF THE BOUGAINVILLE REFERENDUM PROCESS



Time-table



N.B The precise time frames for the last two stages: 'National Government and ABG consult' and 'National Parliament makes final decision' is not settled.