The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person **Entry ID:** AWE0197

Vanstone, Amanda Eloise

(1952 -)

Born 19521207, Adelaide South Australia Australia

Occupation Lawyer, Parliamentarian

Summary

Elected to the Senate for South Australia in 1984 (Liberal Party), Vanstone was appointed to several Ministries in her long parliamentary career: Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs from 1996 to 1997, Minister for Justice (and Customs) from 1997 to 2001, Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women from 2001 to 2003 and Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs from 2003 to 2007. On her retirement in 2007, she was appointed Australia's Ambassador to Italy, serving in this position until 2010.

Details

Vanstone obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Adelaide, as well as a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and a Marketing Studies Certificate form the South Australian Institute of Technology. She began her career as a retailer, and worked in wholesaling before becoming a solicitor.

Vanstone served as Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (11 March 1996 to 9 October 1997), Minister for Justice (9 October 1997 to 21 October 1998), Minister for Justice and Customs (21 October 1998 to 30 January 2001), Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women (30 January 2001 to 7 October 2003), and Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (7 October 2003 to 30 January 2007).

She has been a Member of the Cabinet and the Legal Committee of the Cabinet; Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; Shadow Special Minister of State; and spokesperson on the Status of Women. She was involved in the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse.

Amana Vanstone was honoured with an AO in the Australia Day Honours list in 2020 for distinguished service to the Parliament of Australia, to the people of South Australia, and to the community.

Married to Tony, she is a supporter of the RSPCA.

Published resources

Resource Section

The Hon. Amanda Vanstone, Senator for South Australia, Australian Parliament House, http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/senators/homepages/

Senator the Hon Amanda Vanstone: Minister for Family & Community Services; Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women, Department of Family and Community Services, http://www.ofw.facsia.gov.au

Edited Book

Who's Who in Australia 2002, Herd, Margaret, 2002

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book

So Many Firsts: Liberal Women from Enid Lyons to the Turnbull Era, Fitzherbert, Margaret, 2009

Site Exhibition

Australian Women Lawyers as Active Citizens, Trailblazing Women Lawyers Project Team, 2016, http://www.womenaustralia.info/lawyers

Archival resources

AIATSIS Pictorial Collection

Opening of a Memorial to the Stolen Generations

National Archives of Australia, National Office, Canberra

Papers of Senator Amanda Vanstone

Author Details

Anne Heywood

Created 28 November 2001 **Last modified** 24 October 2025