



Three

Report on performance

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

This section reports on the AEC's performance against the agency outcome and three programmes set out in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The AEC has one agency outcome:

Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services and targeted education and public awareness programmes.

The AEC administers three programmes to deliver this outcome:

Programme 1.1 Electoral Roll Management

Programme 1.2 Election Management and Support Services

Programme 1.3 Education and Communication.

There are three parts to the 2013–14 report on performance, aligning with the AEC's three programmes.

1. Active electoral roll management: This section reports on the AEC's performance in maintaining the integrity of the federal electoral roll, providing enrolment services and ensuring that eligible Australians understand and fulfil their enrolment obligations.

2. Efficient delivery of polling services: This section is divided into two parts. The first part, 'Election management', reports on the AEC's performance in delivering three federal parliamentary elections in 2013–14.

The second part, 'Election support services', reports on the AEC's performance in providing a range of additional election services, including funding and disclosure; industrial and commercial elections; and assistance to state, territory and international partners.

3. Education and public awareness: This section reports on the AEC's performance in delivering communication, education and public awareness programmes to help eligible Australians to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities.

The specific deliverables and key performance indicators in the Portfolio Budget Statements are the basis for assessing achievement under each programme.

ACTIVE ELECTORAL ROLL MANAGEMENT

AEC OUTCOME

Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through **active electoral roll management**, efficient delivery of polling services and targeted education and public awareness programmes.

Programme 1.1 Electoral Roll Management

Voter entitlement for Australians and support for electoral events and redistributions through maintaining an accurate and up-to-date electoral roll.

An accurate and complete electoral roll is vital to the integrity of Australia's electoral system. Enrolment is the first step to voting, and all eligible Australians are legally obliged to enrol to vote and keep their enrolment up to date. A high-integrity electoral roll also supports state and territory elections and fair and impartial electoral redistributions.

Overview

This chapter reports on the AEC's performance in:

- managing the electoral roll to ensure its integrity, accuracy and completeness
- providing roll services that support electoral redistributions, state and territory electoral authorities and people with special needs or specific circumstances.

2013–14 performance highlights include:

- strengthened enrolment business processes and integrity measures
- enhanced online enrolment services
- delivery of the 2013 federal election close of rolls
- an increase in the enrolment participation rate of 0.9 per cent.

The chapter includes key performance results over three years and a case study on the AEC's roll management at the 2013 federal election.

Maintaining the electoral roll

The AEC's roll management programme seeks to ensure the integrity, accuracy and completeness of the federal electoral roll. To achieve this, the AEC employs a range of measures as part of a continuous roll update philosophy, which aims to maintain roll integrity throughout the three-year federal election cycle.

Roll integrity

Roll integrity is central to the AEC's management of the electoral roll. A high-integrity electoral roll is one where names and addresses on the roll are legitimate and correct, and only people who are eligible to vote have enrolled. The accuracy and quality of enrolment processing, and maintaining the security of the roll, are also important elements of integrity.

The AEC aims to identify and prevent integrity issues before an enrolment is processed. It applies standard procedures and policies to each enrolment to confirm the veracity of information provided and ensure that the enrolment is processed accurately and according to legislative requirements. These checks confirm:

- the identity and eligibility of the person enrolling
- the accuracy and validity of the enrolment address.

Where necessary, the AEC undertakes additional checks to confirm identity and eligibility, including confirming enrolment details with other government agencies, such as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Foreign Affairs; contacting the person; and referring to prior enrolment applications.

In 2014 the AEC established a dedicated Electoral Integrity Unit. The unit will review all aspects of the AEC's programme design and delivery, commencing with roll management, to drive improvements that build on existing integrity protections.

Enrolment quality assurance

The Enrolment Quality Assurance Programme measures the correctness and timeliness of AEC enrolment processing. In 2013–14, 99.6 per cent of enrolment forms were processed correctly – the same result as 2012–13. Detailed Enrolment Quality Assurance Programme results are shown in [Table 41](#) at [Appendix E](#).

In 2013–14, the AEC processed 84.4 per cent of enrolments within three business days. The target enrolment processing rate is 99 per cent within three business days. The processing target was not met because:

- at various points during the year enrolment forms were stockpiled for close of rolls simulation exercises in preparation for the 2013 federal election close of rolls (the deadline for people to enrol or update their enrolment details before an election)
- legislative requirements prohibit changes to the roll between the close of roles deadline and election day.

Altogether, in 2013–14, the AEC processed more than 3.5 million enrolment transactions,¹ as shown in [Figure 12](#) at [Appendix E](#). This number is substantially higher than the total in 2012–13, which was in turn a substantial increase on historical levels.

¹ Enrolment transactions include all new enrolments and all changes to enrolments, such as updating enrolled addresses, removing people from the roll and reinstating people to the roll.

Enrolment participation

The completeness of the roll is measured by the participation rate – the percentage of eligible Australian voters who are enrolled. The AEC supports roll completeness by maintaining multiple streams of contact with eligible voters to encourage them to enrol and keep their enrolment up to date.

In 2013–14, the participation rate increased by 0.9 per cent – from 91.4 per cent at 30 June 2013 to 92.3 per cent at 30 June 2014. There was a corresponding decline in the number of eligible Australians who are not enrolled – from 1.4 million at 30 June 2013 to 1.2 million at 30 June 2014. A number of factors contributed to the improved participation rate – in particular, the 2013 federal election. While these figures represent a change in the long-term trend of declining enrolment, the participation rate is still below the AEC's target of 95 per cent. The primary reason for this gap is that population growth outstrips enrolment growth.

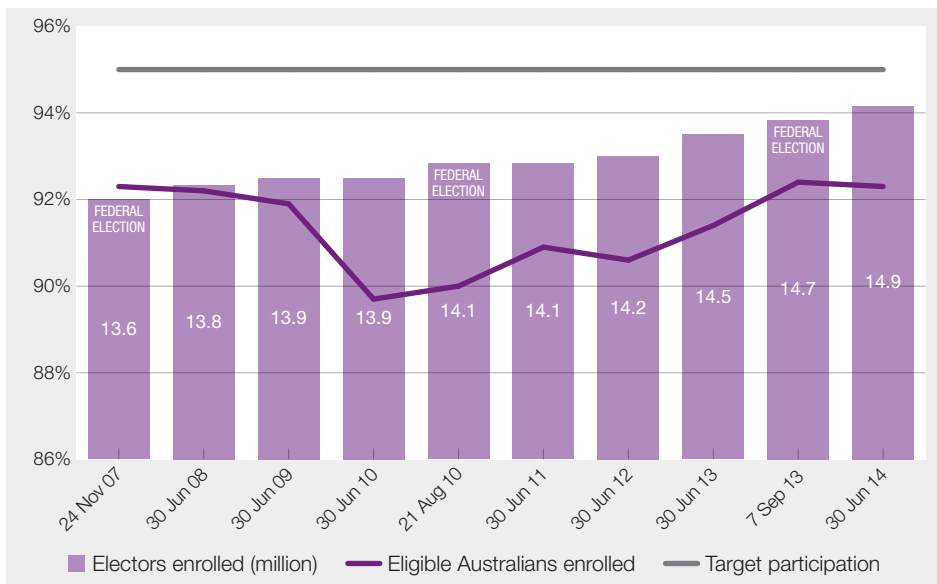
Table 2 shows the number of voters enrolled at 30 June and the estimated number of Australians who are eligible to enrol. Figure 3 shows the participation rate and the growth of the roll since 2007.

More detailed data on enrolment is at Appendix E. The AEC publishes monthly and quarterly enrolment statistics on the [AEC website](#).

Table 2: Electoral roll and estimated participation rate at 30 June 2014

Australians enrolled	Estimated eligible Australians	Proportion of eligible Australians enrolled (enrolment participation rate)	Estimated 'missing' from the electoral roll
14 858 784	16 096 702	92.3%	1 237 918

Figure 3: Participation rate and enrolled population, 24 November 2007 to 30 June 2014



Close of rolls – 2013 federal election

AEC research shows that federal elections are the largest drivers of enrolment. The close of rolls, the deadline for people to enrol or update their enrolment details before an election, is always a peak workload period for the AEC. The 2013 federal election close of rolls saw 627 256 enrolment transactions processed between the announcement of the election on 4 August 2013 and the enrolment deadline of 8pm on 12 August 2013. This compares with 553 272 at the 2010 election and 196 449¹ at the 2007 election.

The AEC invested significant planning and preparation into managing this workload successfully. Planning for the 2013 federal close of rolls began immediately after the 2010 election. Each AEC state and territory office developed local resourcing plans and nationally the AEC implemented improvements to procedures, IT systems and infrastructure. The effectiveness of these measures was then evaluated through a series of processing load tests that simulated peak election workloads.

In July 2013, the AEC also implemented enhanced capability to share the enrolment processing workload between divisions and states. This allowed the election workload to be levelled across geographically dispersed divisional offices. The AEC is increasingly using workload sharing to support local staff and maintain processing efficiency.

More information on the AEC's management of the 2013 federal election close of rolls is provided in the case study, 'Eight days, six hundred thousand enrolments'.

Close of rolls – other elections

The AEC also successfully managed the close of rolls for the Griffith by-election and the 2014 Western Australian Senate election. These were much smaller than the federal election close of rolls but still presented peak workload periods for local staff. A range of strategies were applied to manage them successfully. For example, during 2014 Western Australian Senate election the enrolment processing workload was shared across the AEC, with a substantial proportion of enrolments processed in New South Wales.

The AEC also conducted more than 70 roll closes throughout the year to support local, state and territory elections. More information is provided under Report on Performance Programme 1.2 – Election Support Services.

Continuous roll update

While the 2013 federal election was a significant factor in the increase in enrolment for the year, it only accounts for some of that increase. The 'continuous roll update' approach, whereby the AEC maintains contact with eligible voters throughout the electoral cycle, also contributed to the improved result. Continuous roll update incorporates a variety of activities and strategies, including:

- direct mail to people to remind them to enrol or to update their enrolment details
- communication campaigns such as those conducted for the 2013 federal election (see Report on Performance Programme 1.3 – Education and Public Awareness)
- providing convenient online options for people to check their enrolment status and enrol or update their enrolment
- direct enrolment and update, whereby the AEC updates peoples' enrolment based on data received from other government agencies.²

¹ The significantly lower number for the 2007 federal close of rolls is due to the shorter enrolment deadline which applied at that election and a major AEC campaign over preceding months to enrol people before the election.

² More information about the direct enrolment and update process is available on the [AEC's website](#).

Online enrolment

The 2013 federal election was the first at which voters could sign their enrolment form online. This service proved popular with voters: a total of 85 per cent of all enrolments during the federal election close of rolls were through the AEC's online enrolment service, compared with 27 per cent at the 2010 election.

Feedback from users of online enrolment has been positive, confirming that online services and streamlined technology are important to meeting public expectations of government. Online enrolment is available from the [AEC website](#).

'What a great system – so much easier than in days gone by where you had to post a form to your office. Great to see that technological advancements are being used so well.'

User of AEC online enrolment

Targeted enrolment programmes

To ensure that enrolment keeps pace with population growth, the AEC seeks to enrol those who are newly eligible to enrol: those who turn 18 and those who become Australian citizens.

Youth enrolment

Youth enrolment is a challenge for the AEC – young Australians aged 18 to 25 have lower levels of enrolment than that of the population as a whole. In 2013–14, in the lead-up to the federal election, the AEC conducted a pre-election enrolment campaign with activities targeting eligible young Australians. These included outreach through social media and partnerships with sporting associations, workplaces and tertiary institutions. The campaign is discussed in detail in Report on Performance Programme 1.3 – Education and Public Awareness.

These measures contributed to an increase in the youth participation rate from 76.3 per cent at 30 June 2013 to 78.5 per cent at 30 June 2014. [Figure 4](#) shows trends in the youth participation rate since 2007.

New citizens

The other group of people who are newly eligible to vote in Australia – new citizens – are also a target for the AEC's enrolment efforts. In 2013–14, AEC officers attended and collected enrolment forms at 1 405 citizenship ceremonies. A high proportion of new citizens enrol within six months. [Figure 5](#) shows the trend in the numbers of enrolment forms received within three and six months of a citizenship ceremony.

For new citizens who speak a language other than English, the AEC has a service on its website that provides translated information about enrolling and voting. A telephone interpreter service is also available.

Figure 4: Youth (18–25-year-old) participation rate, 2007 to 2014

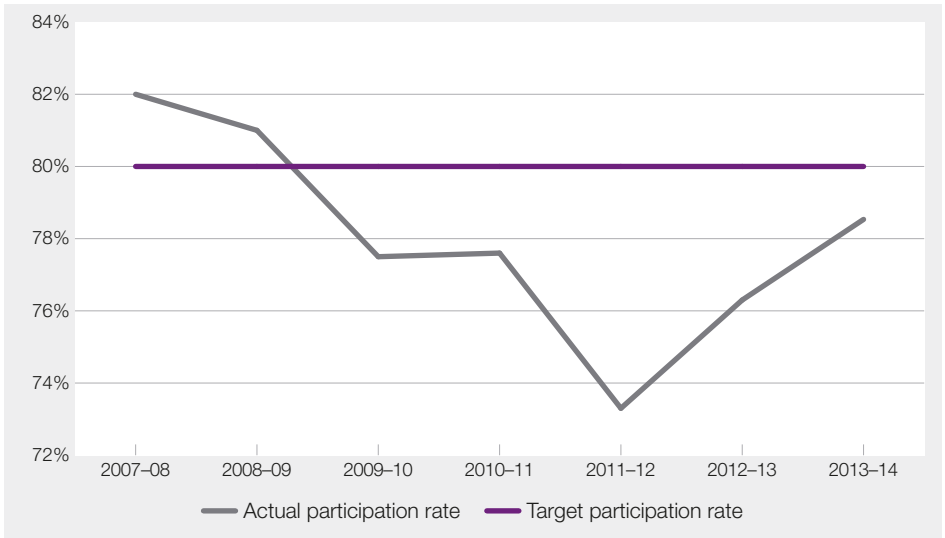
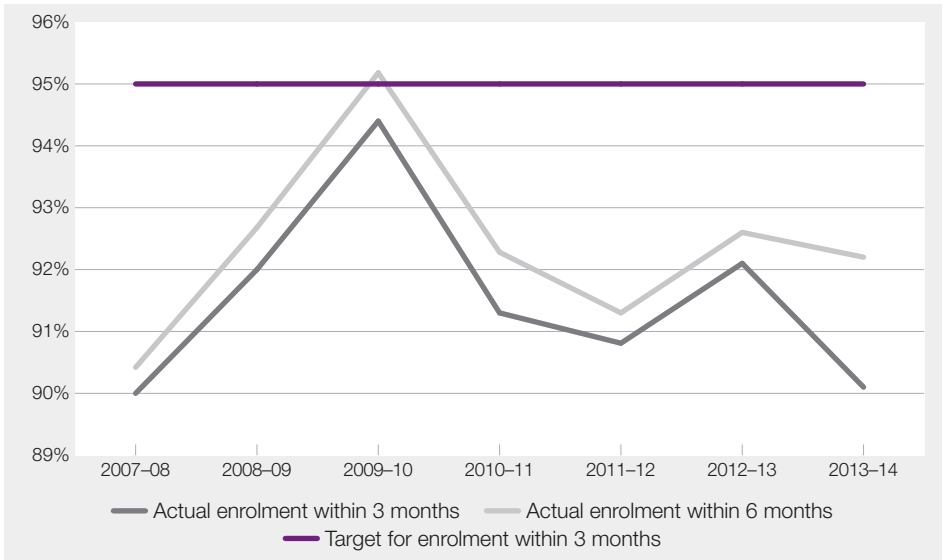


Figure 5: Enrolment forms received within three and six months of citizenship ceremonies



Electoral roll services

The AEC provides tailored enrolment services to people with special needs or specific circumstances. It also provides roll services and extracts to support electoral redistributions, and state and territory electoral authorities.

Tailored enrolment options

A range of tailored enrolment options are available for people with special needs or specific circumstances. These include special enrolment forms are provided for people of no fixed address; those who live overseas or who work in Antarctica; general postal voters; people who are in prison; people who are physically incapable of signing electoral papers; and 'silent electors' – people who believe that having their address on the roll could put their safety or that of their family at risk. Review of voters registered under these special provisions is ongoing. More information about special enrolment categories is available on the [AEC website](#).

In 2013–14, the only change to special enrolment provisions was to services for silent electors – people who for security reasons do not have their address shown on the electoral roll. In March 2013, the Electoral Act was amended to allow silent electors to carry this status over without having to complete a new statutory declaration when they move into a new electoral division.

This change is an important protection for silent electors who are no longer required to reapply for silent status each time they move.

Electoral roll extracts

The AEC provides extracts of information from the electoral roll to a range of groups – such as parliamentarians, states and territories, other government agencies and medical researchers – for authorised purposes.

In 2013–14, the AEC provided 3 546 electoral roll extracts, 20 fewer than in 2012–13.

State and territory electoral authorities

The AEC maintains the roll on behalf of the states and territories under joint roll arrangements and provides them with information from the roll, called roll extracts, for state and territory elections. In 2013–14 the AEC provided states and territories with 745 roll extracts and supported 79 state, territory and local government elections.

More information on assistance to state and territory electoral authorities is provided under Report on Performance Programme 1.2 – Election Support Services.

Members and senators

Section 90B of the Electoral Act allows Members of Parliament, Senators and candidates to receive electoral roll information. The AEC provided 717 roll extracts in 2013–14. Details of recipients are shown in [Appendix B](#).

Political parties

Federally registered political parties are also entitled to receive electoral roll information in accordance with section 90B of the Electoral Act. In 2013–14, the AEC provided 252 roll extracts. Additional information is at [Appendix C](#).

Government departments and agencies

Government departments and agencies are entitled to receive electoral roll information if they are a 'prescribed authority', under item 4 of section 90B(4) of the Electoral Act.

The AEC provided 49 roll extracts to 13 government departments and agencies in 2013–14. The specific agencies are listed at [Appendix D](#). Each agency provided justification for access by reference to its statutory functions and the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Researchers

Medical researchers and electoral researchers are allowed access to electoral roll information under section 90B(4) of the Electoral Act. They commonly use this information to identify participants for research programmes and surveys. Before they can access roll data, researchers must go through an approval process, which includes approval by a human research ethics committee and agreement about how the data will be used and protected.

In 2013–14 six medical researchers and four electoral researchers received electoral roll information. [Appendix D](#) provides details of the data requested and by whom.

Private sector organisations

Under section 90B(4) of the Electoral Act, private sector organisations can receive roll information for identity verification processes related to the *Financial Transactions Reports Act 1988* and the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006*. The AEC provided 16 roll extracts for organisations in 2013–14. [Appendix D](#) provides details.

Redistributions

A high-integrity electoral roll is essential for electoral redistributions to ensure an equal number of voters in each federal electoral division.

In 2013–14 there were no redistributions of electoral boundaries in any state. A redistribution for the ACT was due to start by 12 December 2013 but was deferred until after the next determination of membership entitlement for the House of Representatives, due in November 2014.

The Electoral Act provides for deferral of a redistribution if the Electoral Commissioner is of the opinion that, following the next determination, the number of members of the House of Representatives will or may change. Deferral of the ACT redistribution was made under this provision, as the number of electoral divisions to which the ACT is entitled may increase from two to three.

Programme 1.1 Electoral Roll Management – key performance results

Key performance indicators	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
95% of eligible people are on the electoral roll. (Participation rate as at 30 June 2014.)	NOT ACHIEVED 90.6%	NOT ACHIEVED 91.4%	NOT ACHIEVED 92.3%
99.5% of enrolment transactions processed correctly.	ACHIEVED 99.5%	ACHIEVED 99.6%	ACHIEVED 99.6%
99% of enrolment transactions processed within three business days.	NOT ACHIEVED 88.5%	NOT ACHIEVED 82.7%	NOT ACHIEVED 84.4%
Those eligible to enrol have enhanced capacity to access certain enrolment services electronically where legislative authority exists.	ACHIEVED Improved online enrolment service; Australia Post collaboration allows eligible individuals to use online mail redirection service to enrol.	ACHIEVED Online enrolment service enhanced through capture of electronic signatures. Collaboration with Australia Post continued.	ACHIEVED Increasing use of online enrolment service for daily transactions.
At least 99% of roll products are accurate.	ACHIEVED 100%	ACHIEVED 98.8%	ACHIEVED 100%
At least 98% of roll products delivered by agreed deadline.	ACHIEVED 100%	ACHIEVED 100%	ACHIEVED 100%
AEC support services are appropriate and allow for effective, timely conduct of redistributions. Redistribution activities comply with legislative requirements and to satisfaction of redistribution committees.	ACHIEVED Support services provided in a timely manner, in accordance with legislative requirements, and to satisfaction of redistribution committees.	NOT APPLICABLE No redistributions were conducted.	NOT APPLICABLE No redistributions were conducted.

Eight days, six hundred thousand enrolments

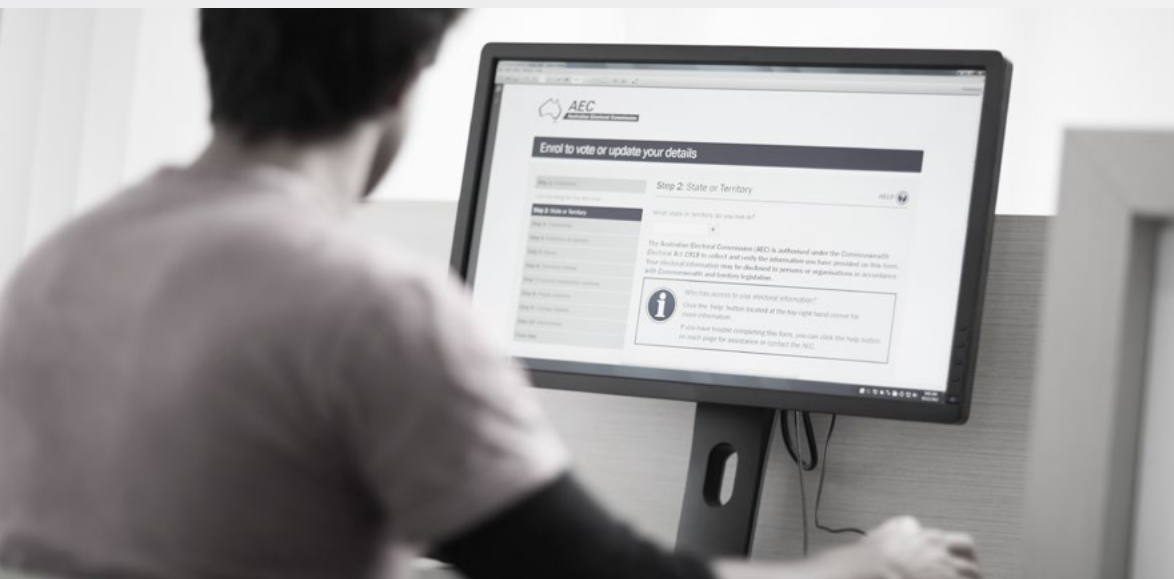
A federal election represents the peak of AEC operational workload following a three-year cycle of planning and preparation. One significant milestone is the close of rolls – the deadline for eligible Australians to enrol or update their enrolment before the election.

The federal electoral roll closes at 8pm local Australian time on the seventh calendar day after the issue of writs for an election. This deadline is designed to give voters enough time to ensure they are enrolled correctly, and the AEC enough time to process enrolments and prepare the roll for production as the certified list – the official record used for voter mark-off on election day.

Historically, an election announcement is a catalyst for voters to either enrol for the first time or update their enrolment details and the 2013 federal election was no different. Hundreds of thousands of enrolments and enrolment updates were received through the AEC's online enrolment service, by email, by post or fax, or by hand delivery. All had to be checked, entered and rechecked to ensure that details were complete, fully verified and captured correctly in the AEC's enrolment systems.

Along with other state and territory offices, the AEC's New South Wales office commenced planning for the 2013 close of rolls almost immediately after the 2010 election. James Carroll, Assistant Director of Roll Management for NSW, noted that, due to population growth, every federal election close of rolls is larger than the one before. 'The secret to successfully managing ever larger workloads is early planning, flexible systems and teamwork', James explained. 'It was vital to prepare early and give staff confidence that capacity and contingencies were in place to manage the increased workload according to the election timetable without compromising roll accuracy and integrity.'

A key feature of the NSW plan was the creation of a central processing team located in Haymarket, Sydney, supported by smaller teams in Parramatta and the Australian Capital Territory. 'These teams took over the work of processing paper enrolment forms', James said. 'This allowed NSW divisional offices to focus on online enrolments, roll integrity and quality assurance processes.'



AEC systems technology was critical to overall management of the workload. In the lead-up to the election, the AEC invested in building system capacity and enhancing system performance to ensure that it could meet peak demand. 'The investment really paid off', James said. 'The NSW state management team was able to monitor systems and the capacity of divisional offices and then reallocate processing tasks whenever we needed to even out workloads across the state.'

Staff began processing data shortly after the issue of the writ on 5 August 2013 and continued to receive enrolments until the deadline on 8pm on Monday, 12 August. During this period around a total of 203 000 enrolment transactions were processed across NSW and the ACT. One-third of these, around 70 000 enrolments, were received in the last two days alone. All were successfully processed to deadline thanks to some 350 staff working in shifts over 36 hours. Across Australia the AEC processed a total of 627 256 enrolments. As predicted, it was the largest close of rolls of any federal election.

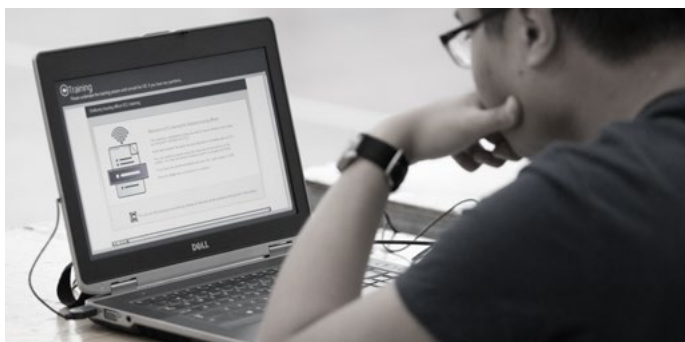
EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF POLLING SERVICES

AEC OUTCOME

Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, **efficient delivery of polling services** and targeted education and public awareness programmes.

Programme 1.2 Election Management and Support Services

Access to an impartial and independent electoral system through the provision of election services, assistance and advice.



Under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* the AEC delivers federal elections, by-elections and referendums. The AEC also provides a wide range of electoral support services for political parties and candidates and Australian workplaces; and assistance to state, territory and international partners.

Reflecting the wide range of the services provided in 2013–14 and the delivery of multiple elections, this chapter is divided into two parts:

- 1. Election management:** This part reports on the AEC's performance in preparing for and delivering three federal parliamentary elections: the 2013 federal election, the 2014 Griffith by-election and the 2014 Western Australian Senate election.
- 2. Election support services:** This part reports on the AEC's performance in providing election services that support Australian workplaces, members of parliament and political parties and candidates, as well as state, territory and overseas electoral authorities.

Each part starts with an overview and performance highlights, followed by a detailed discussion of activities, key performance results over three years, and a case study highlighting particular aspects of AEC election services.

ELECTION MANAGEMENT

As voting is compulsory in Australia, the AEC provides a range of accessible and convenient ways for Australians to vote. Election management also involves preparation, printing and transport of ballot papers, arrangements for counting the votes – known as scrutiny – and the processes and systems needed to deliver timely and accurate results.

Overview

In 2013–14, the AEC prepared for and delivered three federal parliamentary elections:

- 2013 federal election
- 2014 Griffith by-election
- 2014 Western Australian Senate election.

2013–14,¹ performance highlights include:

- finalising election preparations to ensure that policies, processes, materials and support systems were in place for the federal election held on Saturday, 7 September 2013
- more than 1 800 candidate nominations processed
- around 43 million ballot papers printed and distributed
- more than 1.2 million postal vote applications processed
- operating 685 pre-poll voting centres, 568 mobile polling teams, 115 overseas voting centres and 8 475 election day polling places over three elections
- counting 15 212 997 votes
- planning for the next federal election commenced.

Election planning

Election planning is a continuous process that extends throughout the electoral cycle. Preparations for the 2013 federal election unfolded in a dynamic operating environment that required the AEC to maintain parallel policies, procedures, systems and training.

Early election announcement

In January 2013, the then Prime Minister indicated that the federal election would be held on 14 September 2013. The AEC commenced early preparations towards this date but, in the absence of an election writ, remained prepared to deliver an election at short notice.

Referendum proposal

On 25 June 2013, the Senate passed a referendum proposal to recognise local government within the Constitution. The referendum was to be held on 14 September 2013 (the original election date) and the AEC commenced the necessary preparations, including designing the Yes/No pamphlet and referendum ballot papers.

The announcement of an election for a different date – 7 September – meant that constitutional timings could not be met and the referendum did not proceed.

¹ The figures provided in 'Performance highlights' above reflect the combined totals in each category for the three elections delivered in 2013–14: the 2013 federal election, the 2014 Griffith by-election and the 2014 WA Senate election. Individual totals for each of these elections are provided in the report that follows.

2013 federal election

On Sunday, 4 August 2013, the then Prime Minister announced a federal election for Saturday, 7 September 2013. The writs for this election were issued on Monday, 5 August 2013. [Table 3](#) shows the key dates for this election.

Nominations

Nominations were accepted from a record 1 188 House of Representatives candidates and 529 Senate candidates. All nominations were officially declared and draws for positions on the ballot papers were conducted in line with legislative requirements at noon on 16 August 2013. [Table 4](#) and [Table 5](#) show the breakdown of nominations by state and territory.

Distribution of ballot papers

Immediately after the declaration of nominations, the AEC began to print and distribute ballot papers in time for early voting to begin on Tuesday, 20 August. Around 43 million ballot papers were printed and delivered for use at more than 8 500 polling locations throughout Australia and internationally.

Provision of voting services

The AEC delivered a range of voting services to ensure that all eligible Australians, regardless of location or circumstance, were able to vote. Facilities for voting included:

- 7 697 ordinary polling places on election day
- early voting facilities operating at 645 locations and AEC offices for up to three weeks before election day
- 102 overseas voting centres operating from Department of Foreign Affairs and Austrade posts around the world
- 504 mobile polling teams
- four overseas Australian Defence Force polling teams
- telephone voting services for voters who are blind or have low vision, allowing them to cast their vote in secret and with a degree of independence.

Types of votes cast

The AEC counted the votes of 13 822 161 people at the 2013 federal election. Continuing the trend from previous elections, there was a significant shift towards early voting. Votes cast before election day in 2013, which included 1.98 million ordinary pre-poll votes, represented more than 27 per cent of all votes counted – some 1.37 million more early votes than were counted in the 2010 federal election. [Table 6](#) shows the number and percentage of each type of vote counted.

For the 2013 federal election, a total of 230 926 voters were registered as general postal voters, and the AEC received 1 098 289 postal vote applications. A significant number of these – 382 664 (33 per cent) – came through the new online postal vote application form. The AEC issued 1 329 948 postal voting packages – an increase of 37 per cent compared to 2010. The proportion of returned postal votes included in the count was similar to that in previous elections, as shown in [Table 7](#).



Table 3: 2013 federal election timeline

Event	Time	Day	Date
Election announced		Sunday	4 August 2013
Issue of writs	6pm	Monday	5 August 2013
Close of rolls	8pm	Monday	12 August 2013
Close of nominations	12pm	Thursday	15 August 2013
Declaration of nominations	12pm	Friday	16 August 2013
Close of Group Voting Ticket lodgement	12pm	Saturday	17 August 2013
Election day		Saturday	7 September 2013
All writs returned		Monday	6 November 2013
Closing date for the lodgement of petitions to the Court of Disputed Returns		Monday	16 December 2013

Table 4: House of Representatives nominations by state and territory

State/territory	Seats	Candidates
NSW	48	352
Vic	37	344
Qld	30	233
WA	15	128
SA	11	66
Tas	5	35
ACT	2	13
NT	2	17
Total	150	1 188

Table 5: Senate nominations by state and territory

State/territory	Vacancies	Candidates	Groups	Ungrouped candidates
NSW	6	110	44	4
Vic	6	97	39	2
Qld	6	82	36	0
WA	6	62	27	1
SA	6	73	33	2
Tas	6	54	23	1
ACT	2	27	13	1
NT	2	24	12	0
Total	40	529	227	11

Table 6: 2013 federal election – types of votes counted

Location	Votes	Votes (%)
Election day	10 080 177	72.93
Pre-poll (ordinary votes)	1 982 859	14.35
Pre-poll (declaration votes)	524 514	3.79
Postal votes	1 126 528	8.15
Mobile polling	108 083	0.78
Total	13 822 161	100.00

Table 7: Proportion of postal votes counted for the last three federal elections

	2013	2010	2007
Postal votes issued	1 329 948	966 574	833 178
Postal votes returned	1 175 868	854 726	749 566
% returned	88.41	88.43	89.97
Postal votes counted ^a	1 126 528	804 973	704 563
% counted	95.8	94.17	94

a. Postal votes received later than 13 days after the close of polls or that fail to meet the preliminary scrutiny requirements as outlined in Schedule 3 of the Electoral Act cannot be admitted to the count.

Counting

Counting of votes in both House of Representatives and Senate elections commences on election night and continues in the weeks that follow.

The counting of votes cast on election day began at the close of polling. Results were progressively updated during the evening through the media feeds and the Virtual Tally Room on the [AEC website](#). The Virtual Tally Room provided reliable, rapid access to results and was used extensively by members of the public, the media and political parties. The subsequent processing of declaration votes issued in Australia and overseas was achieved in accordance with AEC plans, and the results were progressively updated and published in the weeks following election day. All writs were returned by 6 November 2013, within the legislative timeframe.

Where a candidate does not receive an absolute majority of first preference votes in House of Representatives election or a quota of first preferences in a Senate election, a distribution of preferences is required. Wherever required, the vote counting process included distribution of preferences to determine the elected candidate(s).

Election projects and issues

Partnership with Department of Human Services

At the 2013 federal election the AEC expanded its partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to help deliver important election services. This allowed the AEC to use DHS facilities and staff across Australia to provide wide-scale services to the public during the election. These included:

- **election service centres** – in divisions with no physical AEC office DHS provided a number of locations where the AEC could deliver face-to-face election services to voters
- **assistance with mobile polling** – in some remote regions DHS provided staff and infrastructure support to help deliver voting services
- **blind and low vision voting call centre** – DHS provided call centre facilities and staff to help voters who are blind or have low vision to cast their vote
- **AEC election contact centre** – DHS provided call centre facilities and staff to help with enquiries from the public.

The partnership with DHS proved highly effective and it is intended that it will continue in future elections.

Electronic certified lists

The certified list is the official copy of the electoral roll used to mark off voters' names when they come to vote. At the 2013 federal election, electronic copies of the certified list were loaded onto 768 laptop computers and deployed across all states and territories.

Electronic certified lists (ECLs) were used by mobile polling teams and at early voting centres and polling places. ECLs allow polling officials to search for and mark a voter's name off the certified list, print House of Representatives ballot papers on demand and record the issue of a declaration vote. ECLs were also used to support the preliminary scrutiny of absent and pre-poll declaration votes after election day.

ECL devices used a mobile broadband network to deliver real-time updates to a central copy of the certified list when a network connection was available.

In the 2014 Griffith by-election, ECLs were used by 145 polling officials issuing votes on election day. At the 2014 Western Australian Senate election, 218 ECLs were used for remote mobile polling and in a majority of pre-poll voting centres. They were also used at the 'Perth super-booth', which provided ordinary voting services for all Western Australian divisions on election day.

The pilot of ECLS devices delivered a number of benefits:

- ability to reduce the number of paper certified lists
- more accurate mark-off of the certified list
- reduction in the number of apparent multiple marks
- more accurate division identification during declaration voting
- more accurate and immediate data for business intelligence analysis
- faster preliminary scrutiny processing rate
- improved voter/polling official perceptions.

Results of the pilot of ECLs will be used to determine how the technology can best be delivered on a wider scale.

Turnout and formality

The turnout rate¹ for the 2013 election was 93.98 per cent of entitled electors for the Senate and 93.23 per cent for the House of Representatives.² Overall, turnout increased by 0.01 per cent compared to the 2010 election; however, the 2013 result is still one of the lowest on record since the introduction of compulsory voting in 1924.

Formality rates³ were also similar to the 2010 federal election. House of Representatives informality increased slightly from 5.6 per cent in 2010 to 5.9 per cent in 2013. Senate informality decreased from 3.7 per cent in 2010 to 3.0 per cent, remaining within the historical range of two to four per cent recorded since the introduction of above-the-line voting in 1984.

The unique environment for each federal election and the very nature of the secret ballot mean it is not always possible to identify all the factors that impact on rates of informal voting. After each election, however, the AEC conducts research to identify possible factors that influence informal voting. Research into informal voting at the 2013 federal election is currently underway. Research outcomes from previous elections are published on the [AEC website](#).

1 The turnout rate is calculated by dividing the sum of formal and informal votes cast at the election by the number of people entitled to vote in the election.

2 The difference between the House of Representatives and Senate turnout figures is primarily due to a number of declaration voters who were issued ballots for their claimed enrolled address but who were subsequently found to be enrolled in a different division in the same state or territory. Their Senate votes can be counted because the Senate electorate is state-wide but votes issued for the incorrect House of Representatives division cannot be counted.

3 'Formality' refers to the percentage of voters who complete a ballot paper that can be counted as a valid vote.



Western Australian Senate recount and missing ballot papers

In Western Australia, close margins at key stages in the distribution of preferences in the Senate election led to a request for a recount. The Australian Electoral Officer for WA declined the request but it was subsequently granted following an appeal to the Electoral Commissioner. During the recount, 1 370 Senate ballot papers included in the first count were found to be missing and so could not be scrutinised or included in the recount.

The missing ballots created significant doubt about whether the final result of the election truly reflected Western Australian voters' intentions. As a result, the AEC lodged a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns seeking an order that the result be declared void and a fresh election ordered. On 20 February 2014, the court determined that the circumstances surrounding the missing ballot papers had disenfranchised voters and therefore cast doubt on the final result. The court declared the result of the 2013 Western Australian Senate election void and ordered a fresh election. More on these events is provided in the 'Year in review' and 'Governance and accountability' sections of this report.

In November 2013, the AEC engaged Mr Mick Keelty AO to investigate the circumstances surrounding the loss of ballot papers. The AEC released Mr Keelty's report, *Inquiry into the 2013 WA Senate Election* (Keelty Report), on 6 December 2013. It is available on the [AEC website](#).

The report contained a series of recommendations, many of which concerned improvements to the AEC's management of ballot papers. To implement these recommendations, the AEC introduced new and revised procedures at the 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 Western Australian Senate election. The new initiatives delivered improved procedures for printing, packaging, transport, handling and storage of ballot papers.

2014 Griffith by-election

On 22 November 2013 the Member for Griffith, the Hon Mr Kevin Rudd, resigned. The writ for a by-election was issued on Monday, 6 January 2014. [Table 8](#) shows the key dates for this by-election.

Nominations

The AEC accepted nominations from 11 candidates for the Griffith by-election. Nominations were formally declared and the draw for positions on the ballot paper was conducted in line with legislative requirements at noon on 17 January 2014.

Provision of voting services

The facilities for voting included:

- 40 ordinary polling places on election day
- early voting facilities operating at two pre-poll voting centres and AEC divisional offices for up to three weeks before election day
- four mobile polling teams.

Types of votes cast

The AEC provided voting services to 80 275 people in the Griffith by-election. [Table 9](#) shows the number and percentage of each type of vote counted.

Table 8: Griffith by-election timeline

Event	Time	Day	Date
Election announced		Monday	6 January 2014
Issue of writs	6pm	Monday	6 January 2014
Close of rolls	8pm	Monday	13 January 2014
Close of nominations	12pm	Thursday	16 January 2014
Declaration of nominations	12pm	Friday	17 January 2014
Election day		Saturday	8 February 2014
Writs returned		Monday	18 February 2014

Table 9: 2014 Griffith by-election – types of votes counted

Location	Votes	Votes (%)
Election day	61 427	77
Pre-poll (within Griffith)	8 378	10
Pre-poll (other division)	549	1
Postal votes	9 291	12
Mobile polling	630	1
Total	80 275	100

Counting

As for the federal election, counting of votes cast on election day began on time and results were progressively updated during the evening through the media feeds and the [Virtual Tally Room on the AEC website](#). The subsequent processing of declaration votes issued in Australia was conducted and the results progressively updated and published in the weeks following election day.

By-election projects and issues

Improved security and handling of ballot papers

For the Griffith by-election the AEC implemented many of the recommendations in the Keelty Report. These included:

- new ballot paper principles
- ballot paper secure zones
- documented chain of custody of all ballot papers
- improved training for staff and implementation of new staff roles
- improved rubbish and waste management policies
- greater guidance on packaging ballot papers for return.

The AEC successfully integrated the initiatives into the delivery of election services to provide assurance that all ballot papers were fully accounted for. More information on the implementation of these new initiatives is provided in the case study 'Delivering reform at the Griffith by-election'.

Additional integrity measures

A number of additional measures were implemented at the Griffith by-election. While these did not arise directly from the Keely report recommendations, they addressed the intent behind them. Measures included:

- an official list of AEC officers authorised to print ballot papers for the Griffith by-election
- regular scans of computer network drives to ensure ballot paper images were not being saved
- improved arrangements for secure transportation of all certified lists, including tamper-evident materials and tracking
- mandated clear visual identification – AEC branded purple bibs – for all permanent and temporary AEC staff at polling sites
- strengthened character clearance procedures for temporary staff, including the introduction of police character checks.

Electronic certified lists

Following the successful trial of electronic certified lists (ECLs) at the 2013 federal election, 145 ECLs were used for voter mark-off at the Griffith by-election. The smaller size of the by-election meant that ECLs could be used in all polling locations, including pre-poll voting centres and polling places on election day. As a result, the Griffith by-election became the first federal parliamentary election in which no paper copies of the certified list were used for voter mark-off (though they were available as back-up in case of ECL device or system issues).

2014 Western Australian Senate election

On 20 February 2014, the Court of Disputed Returns determined that the result of the 2013 Western Australian Senate election was void and ordered a fresh election. On 28 February 2014, the Governor of Western Australia issued the writ for an election on Saturday, 5 April 2014, to fill the six vacant WA Senate positions. [Table 10](#) shows the key dates for this election.

Nominations

Seventy-seven nominations for the 2014 Western Australian Senate election were accepted. There were 33 groups of candidates and two ungrouped candidates. The nominations were declared and the ballot paper draw was conducted at noon on 14 March 2014 in line with legislative requirements.

Provision of voting services

Facilities for voting included:

- 738 ordinary polling places established on election day
- early voting facilities operated at 38 pre-poll voting centres and AEC divisional offices for up to three weeks before election day
- 13 overseas voting centres operating out of Department of Foreign Affairs and Austrade posts around the world
- 60 mobile teams
- telephone voting services for electors who are blind or have low vision.



Types of votes cast

The AEC provided voting services to 1 310 561 people at the 2014 WA Senate election – a three per cent drop compared with the Western Australian figure for the 2013 federal election but still significantly higher than the levels usually recorded at by-elections.

Most people cast their votes at polling places on election day, but more voters in this election cast pre-poll and postal votes than in the 2013 election. The number of pre-poll ordinary votes increased by 12 per cent and the number of postal votes increased by 18 per cent.

Table 11 shows each type of vote counted as a percentage of the overall number and compared to the 2013 federal election. Figure 6 illustrates the comparison.

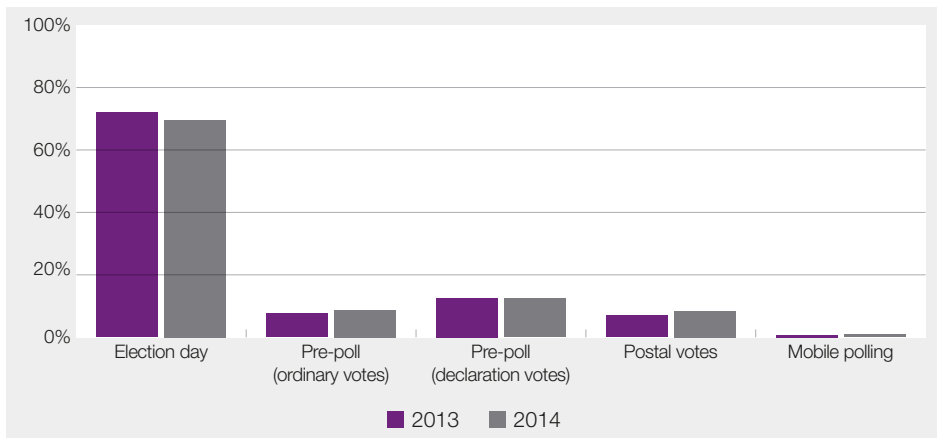
Table 10: 2014 Western Australian Senate election timeline

Event	Time	Day	Date
Court of Disputed Returns orders fresh election for the six vacant WA Senate positions		Thursday	20 February 2014
Election announced		Friday	28 February 2014
Issue of writ	6pm	Friday	28 February 2014
Close of rolls	8pm	Friday	07 March 2014
Close of nominations	12pm	Thursday	13 March 2014
Declaration of nominations	12pm	Friday	14 March 2014
Close of Group Voting Ticket lodgement	12pm	Saturday	15 March 2014
Election day		Saturday	05 April 2014
Return of writ		Thursday	01 May 2014
Closing date for the lodgement of petitions to the Court of Disputed Returns		Tuesday	10 June 2014

Table 11: 2014 Western Australian Senate election – types of votes counted

Method	2014	%	2013	%
Election day	911 133	70	971 499	72
Pre-poll (ordinary votes)	114 662	9	102 796	8
Pre-poll (declaration votes)	162 964	12	170 075	13
Postal votes	110 754	8	94 167	7
Mobile polling	11 048	1	10 260	1
Total	1 310 561	100	1 348 797	100

Figure 6: 2014 Western Australian Senate election – vote types



Counting

Counting of votes for the WA Senate election began on time and results were progressively updated through the media feeds and the [Virtual Tally Room on the AEC website](#). Declaration votes issued in Australia and overseas were processed in accordance with AEC plans and the results were progressively updated and published in the weeks following election day.

Election projects and issues

Further improved security and handling of ballot papers

Using lessons from the Griffith by-election the AEC further refined its policies and procedures to improve security and control of ballot papers to ensure these could be applied effectively on a larger scale. Additional steps taken in the 2014 WA Senate election included:

- updated forms to better record the chain of custody of ballot papers
- close oversight and review of the implementation of new policies and procedures
- new packaging materials to improve security of ballot papers
- a new Divisional Materials Manager Supervisor role to oversee operations at centres where materials from multiple divisions were stored and counted
- a new role of State Materials Manager to provide oversight and assurance of materials management across the state.

Again the AEC successfully integrated these initiatives into the delivery of election services to ensure that ballot papers were accounted for at the election.

Additional integrity measures

As at the Griffith by-election, a number of additional measures were implemented for the WA Senate election. These included all the additional measures introduced at Griffith as well as:

- improved visitor registration procedures
- an expanded Keilty Implementation Taskforce, which maintained a presence in all divisions to support staff over the election weekend.

Electronic certified lists

At the 2014 WA Senate election, 218 ECLs were used for remote mobile polling and in a majority of pre-poll voting centres. They were also used at the 'Perth super-booth', which provided ordinary voting services for all WA divisions on election day.

Once again, the use of ECLs realised a number of benefits and efficiencies, including:

- more accurate mark-off of the certified list
- more accurate division identification during declaration voting
- more accurate and immediate data for business intelligence analysis
- faster preliminary scrutiny processing rate
- improved voter/polling official perceptions.

Programme 1.2 Election Management – key performance results 2013–14

Key performance indicators	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Federal election events (including by-elections and referendums) successfully delivered as required within the reporting period. AEC election practices and management are in accordance with relevant legislation. All election tasks carried out in accordance with legislated timeframes.	NOT APPLICABLE No requirement to conduct a federal election, by-election or referendum.	NOT APPLICABLE No requirement to conduct a federal election, by-election or referendum.	NOT ACHIEVED Successfully delivered all House of Representatives elections and one by-election. Successfully delivered two territory and five state Senate elections. AEC process deficiencies led to the Western Australia Senate election being voided.
High level of election preparedness maintained and key milestones set.	ACHIEVED Continued preparations for the next election, including enhancing systems, equipment and procedures necessary to conduct an election, and supporting ongoing staff readiness.	ACHIEVED Put in place enhanced systems, equipment and procedures necessary to conduct an election. Focus was on taking as much work as possible out of the election period.	Successfully delivered the re-run WA Senate election in April 2014. ACHIEVED Systems, equipment and procedures necessary to conduct an election were in place for 2013 federal election, 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 WA Senate election. Successfully put additional ballot paper security processes and policies in place for all events following 2013 federal election.

A new role to deliver reform: Divisional Materials Managers at the 2014 Western Australian Senate election



The 2014 Western Australian Senate election was conducted under unprecedented scrutiny. The AEC needed to demonstrate that it had new, improved procedures in place to ensure the security of ballot papers, the quality of election services and the integrity of the election outcome. The new role of Divisional Materials Manager (DMM) would be central to achieving these goals.

The role of DMM was first introduced at the 2014 Griffith by-election. Given the larger scale of the WA Senate election, the role was enhanced and experienced temporary staff were appointed as DMMs for each WA electoral division.

DMMs were responsible for the movement, packaging, storage, and security of all of their division's election materials and for maintaining a detailed materials management log. They worked primarily at outposted centres – premises hired for a range of large-scale election tasks. In Perth, outposted centres housed several divisions and DMMs at these sites reported to a supervisor who oversaw material management for the whole centre.

Louise Foppoli was appointed the DMM supervisor at the Northern Scrutiny Centre and was responsible for supervising DMMs for three divisions – Cowan, Moore and Pearce. 'All the positions were new, which meant that, regardless of our election experience, we had a lot to learn', Louise said.

For nearly three weeks before the election, DMMs were responsible for organising materials for the officers in charge of each polling place, including ballot papers, certified lists and sundry election materials. 'We organised ballot paper secure zones in allocated areas within the scrutiny centre and monitored them daily so that movement of ballot papers was controlled and fully accounted for at all times', Louise said.

After election day, the DMMs had to ensure all ballot papers from each polling place as well as declaration votes were accounted for and could continue to be accounted for at each phase of the subsequent scrutines. They also worked closely with their respective Divisional Returning Officers to ensure that the ballot papers and results tallied for each division.

'The first few days after the election were definitely the most challenging', Louise said. 'There was pressure to count votes as quickly as possible, but we could not compromise on the methodical accounting and packaging procedures to be followed. I was impressed with the dedication of everyone involved and the efforts they went to so that every ballot paper could be accounted for at every step in the process.'

Louise believes that trialling the new roles and procedures at state level was a vital step in the AEC's reform process. 'I'm really confident my team did a great job – not just because we achieved the needed outcome but also because we added value along the way. We saw the intent of the changes straight away but sometimes minor adjustments to forms and processes were needed for the new procedures to work effectively on the ground', she said.

'I'm sure the things we learned will help other AEC staff and ensure that full rollout at the next federal election is successful.'

ELECTION SUPPORT SERVICES

The AEC contributes to democracy at home and abroad by delivering a range of election support services. These include support to Australian workplaces, members of parliament, political parties and candidates, as well as state, territory and overseas electoral authorities.

This second part of the report on performance for Programme 1.2 describes AEC performance in:

- maintaining the Register of Political Parties
- supporting transparency in political funding
- supporting Australian workplaces to hold free and fair elections
- providing assistance to other electoral authorities.

2013–14 performance highlights include:

- delivery of party registration services to support the conduct of the 2013 federal election
- more than 2 500 financial disclosure returns processed, including 1 726 returns for the 2013 federal election
- a total of \$60 957 049.70 in election funding paid to registered political parties and candidates
- a specialist Funding and Disclosure branch established and a revised model for risk management of compliance implemented
- conducting 1 027 workplace elections and ballots, 167 fee-for-service elections, 578 protected action ballots and 282 industrial elections
- provision of assistance to state, territory and local governments, including extracts from the electoral roll for the conduct of elections and management of more than 70 state and territory roll closes
- provision of assistance to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Nepal and other international partners.

Maintaining the Register of Political Parties

The AEC maintains the [Register of Political Parties](#) as required under Part XI of the Electoral Act and helps political parties to understand how to apply for and maintain registration.

Political parties are not obliged to register with the AEC. For those that register there are benefits and obligations. These are outlined in the AEC [Party Registration Guide](#) which is available on the AEC website.

In 2013–14 the AEC:

- received and processed applications and liaised with parties to update details
- maintained the Register of Party Agents
- updated contact details for party officials (party secretaries, registered officers, deputy registered officers and party agents).

In 2013–14 the AEC received five applications to register a political party and no applications to deregister a political party. These numbers are significantly lower than those for 2012–13 and are in keeping with the historical pattern of increased registrations in the year before a federal election and a decrease in the year the election is held.

The AEC also received five applications to change a party name and/or abbreviation – this number is much higher than usual. However, this is in line with the increase in applications for registration received ahead of the 2013 federal election.

For the 2013 federal election, the 2014 Griffith by-election and the 2014 Western Australian Senate election, signatures of registered officers and deputy registered officers of all parties were made available to AEC returning officers who received nominations around Australia. Checking signatures is an important step in validating nominations before an election.

Requests for review of party registration decisions

Section 141 of the Electoral Act provides for a review of certain party registration decisions made by the Electoral Commissioner or the Commissioner's delegate.

In 2013–14 the AEC received six applications for review of a delegate's decision and determined two applications received in June 2013. These requests for review comprised:

- two concerning refusals to register new political parties
- two concerning the registration of parties
- one concerning the approval to register the abbreviation of a party
- three concerning refusals to change a registered officer.

The three-person Australian Electoral Commission affirmed the delegate's decision in each case. Further details are available on the [AEC website](#).

Applications to update party office holder information

The AEC contacts parties through the year to ask them to check records held by the AEC concerning party officers. Up-to-date details for parties are critical in an election year.

In 2013–14 the AEC received 29 applications to change the details of the registered officer of a party and 114 applications to change details of other party officials (deputy registered officers, party agents and party secretaries). These numbers reflect a continuation of the increased activity seen in 2012–13 in the lead-up to the 2013 federal election.

The AEC provides updated party registration information on its website including:

- the current Register of Political Parties, including registered party names, optional abbreviations, registered officer details and whether the party wishes to receive election funding
- publishing notices on party registration required under the Electoral Act
- historical information
- the AEC's Party Registration Guide
- statements of reasons for decisions on particular applications
- forms and explanations to help parties to make applications.

Transparency of political funding

The Commonwealth funding and financial disclosure scheme, established under Part XX of the Electoral Act, deals with the public funding of federal election campaigns and the disclosure of detailed financial information.

The disclosure scheme provides transparency in financial matters by requiring candidates, political parties and their associated entities, donors and other participants in the electoral process to lodge annual or election period financial disclosure returns with the AEC.

2013–14 financial disclosure returns

During 2013–14, the AEC received 709 annual financial disclosure returns. This includes 681 returns for 2012–13, five returns and 10 amendments for 2011–12 and five returns and eight amendments relating to returns for previous financial years. The AEC also received 1 726 election financial disclosure returns for the 2013 federal election. They consisted of 1 707 candidate returns, 10 Senate group returns and nine election donor returns.

The AEC also received 11 candidate returns for the 2014 Griffith by-election and 77 candidate returns and one Senate group return for the WA Senate election held on 5 April 2014. [Table 12 shows details of financial disclosure returns lodged and published from 2010–13.](#) Information on all election returns is available on the [AEC website](#).

Political party and associated entity returns for 2013–14 are due on 20 October 2014. Donor and third party returns for 2013–14 are due on 17 November 2014. These returns will be published to the [AEC website](#) on the first working day in February 2015. [Table 12](#) shows the number of returns lodged for the three previous financial years.

Online lodgement of returns is available through the AEC's eReturns system, which is a secure portal on the [AEC website](#). The uptake of online lodgement has continued to increase. This year, 62 per cent of returns were completed online compared with 56 per cent in 2012–13 and 47 per cent in 2011–12.

Compliance reviews and special investigations

The AEC undertakes compliance reviews of disclosure returns lodged by political parties and associated entities under section 316(2A) of the Electoral Act. These are undertaken over the three-year life of the federal parliament. In 2013–14, the AEC completed 39 compliance reviews of disclosure returns lodged by political parties and associated entities.

Table 12: Financial disclosure returns lodged and published for previous financial years

Return type	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Political party	67	69	73
Political party – amendment	35	16	29
Associated entity	196	191	185
Associated entity – amendment	17	12	16
Donor	364	220	295
Donor – amendment	33	23	35
Political expenditure	43	41	45
Political expenditure – amendment	0	0	3

Review of funding and disclosure functions

In January 2014 the AEC established an independent Funding and Disclosure branch to drive ongoing implementation of recommendations made by Mr Ron McLeod AM, who conducted an independent review of AEC administration of funding and disclosure services in late 2012. Mr McLeod's report, *Review of the Australian Electoral Commission's disclosure compliance function under Part XX of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, made four key recommendations:

- expand the AEC's programme of compliance reviews based on a broader use of existing powers under the Electoral Act
- adopt a new business model for the AEC's compliance function
- establish a new risk-based AEC branch to administer the funding, disclosure and compliance schemes
- further develop and integrate the funding and disclosure IT system.

The AEC accepted all recommendations.

The new Funding and Disclosure branch has adopted a revised business model that includes a strengthened, risk-based approach to identifying returns to be reviewed. In line with strengthened integrity measures across all AEC programmes, the new model will provide greater transparency and assurance to stakeholders that AEC compliance functions meet legislative requirements, are cost-effective and are achieving desired regulatory outcomes.

Election funding

The AEC paid total election funding of \$60 957 049.70 to registered political parties and candidates during 2013–14. This included \$58 076 456.01 paid following the 2013 federal election, \$182 378.96 paid following the Griffith by-election and \$2 698 214.73 paid following the 2014 WA Senate election.

The AEC calculates the election funding rate for each vote received by candidates and Senate groups who receive at least four per cent of the formal first preference vote in a federal election. Every six months the election funding rate is adjusted in line with the consumer price index. The rates that applied in 2013–14 were:

- 248.800 cents per first preference vote for 1 July to 31 December 2013
- 252.781 cents per first preference vote for 1 January to 30 June 2014.

The Act requires that at least 95 per cent of election funding entitlements, calculated on the basis of votes counted as at the 20th day after polling day, be paid as soon as possible. The balance of entitlements must be paid when the counting of votes is finalised.

2013 federal election

For the 7 September 2013 federal election, the AEC approved and processed the initial payments of election funding on 27 September 2013 based on the vote count at the 20th day after polling day. A payment of 99 per cent of the entitlement was made to all parties and independent candidates with the precondition that a minimum of \$200 was withheld until the count was finalised.

Of a total of \$58 076 456.01 in election funding, \$56 367 240.38 was paid in the initial payments and \$1 709 215.63 was paid at the completion of the vote count. [Table 13](#) shows the breakdown of funding paid.

Table 13: 2013 federal election – final election payment summary

Election funding rate per first preference vote: \$2.488

Party	Interim payment (\$)	Final payment (\$)	Total payments (\$)
Liberal Party of Australia	23 103 312.83	781 360.11	23 884 672.94
Australian Labor Party	20 195 147.98	579 542.57	20 774 690.55
Australian Greens	5 356 184.97	175 686.48	5 531 871.45
National Party of Australia	3 076 611.83	34 460.68	3 111 072.51
Palmer United Party	2 202 044.07	110 765.91	2 312 809.98
Liberal Democratic Party	1 033 845.36	12 649.74	1 046 495.10
Nick Xenophon Group	636 127.83	6 711.66	642 839.49
Country Liberals (Northern Territory)	207 512.94	2 098.57	209 611.51
Katter's Australian Party	166 711.35	1 664.05	168 375.40
Family First	103 724.45	1 042.74	104 767.19
Catherine McGOWAN	68 381.14	693.20	69 074.34
Andrew Damien WILKIE	60 802.12	621.62	61 423.74
Robert Edwin TABER	30 968.80	315.31	31 284.11
Bullet Train for Australia	24 283.90	235.34	24 519.24
Lawrie MCKINNA	19 136.74	177.60	19 314.34
Nathan Wade BRACKEN	17 439.92	200.00	17 639.92
Richard John SAGE	16 263.10	200.00	16 463.10
Stephen Gordon ATKINS	16 123.77	200.00	16 323.77
Jamie Neville McINTYRE	14 884.74	190.05	15 074.79
Mark Marshall ALDRIDGE	9 077.75	200.00	9 277.75
Christian Democratic Party (Fred Nile Group)	8 654.79	200.00	8 854.79
Total election funding paid	56 367 240.38	1 709 215.63	58 076 456.01

2013 Western Australian Senate recount – compensation paid following the loss of votes

As a result of the loss of ballot papers during the 2013 Western Australian Senate recount, the AEC obtained approval from the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson, to make payments in lieu of election funding entitlements that would otherwise have accrued. These payments are authorised under the Scheme for Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration.

Based on the original count, 1 162 ballot papers would have been included in the calculation of election funding entitlements. Accordingly, a total of \$2 891.06 in additional payments was distributed as shown in [Table 14](#).

The Special Minister of State also approved the reimbursement of nomination deposits¹ to those 2013 WA Senate groups and candidates who had not already had their deposit returned. These payments were made before the close of nominations for the 2014 WA Senate election.

¹ Nomination deposits are automatically returned where a candidate or group receives at least four per cent of the first preference votes in the election they contested.

Table 14: Payments in lieu of election funding entitlements for Western Australian Senate votes missing from the 2013 recount

Party	Additional payments (\$)
Liberal Party of Australia	2 204.37
Australian Labor Party	408.03
The Greens WA	278.66
Total	2 891.06

Table 15: Griffith by-election – election payment summary

Election funding rate per first preference vote: \$2.52781

Party	First and final payments (\$)
Liberal Party of Australia	87 186.69
Australian Labor Party	75 892.44
Australian Greens	19 299.83
Total	182 378.96

Table 16: 2014 Western Australian Senate election – election payment summary

Election funding rate per first preference vote: \$2.52781

Party	First payment (\$)	Final payment (\$)	Total payments (\$)
Liberal Party of Australia	1 089 141.93	11 011.54	1 100 153.47
Australian Labor Party	688 411.49	6 973.87	695 385.36
Australian Greens	498 882.24	5 056.91	503 939.15
Palmer United Party	394 741.88	3 994.87	398 736.75
Total	2 671 177.54	27 037.19	2 698 214.73

Griffith by-election

Counting in the Griffith by-election, held on 8 February 2014, was complete by Friday, 28 February 2014, the 20th day after polling. This allowed the AEC to calculate and pay the total funding entitlements in a single round of payments. The total election funding paid for the Griffith by-election was \$182 378.96. [Table 15](#) shows the breakdown of payments.

2014 Western Australian Senate election

For the 2014 WA Senate election, the AEC calculated the initial payments of election funding on 25 April 2014. Payments were made at 99 per cent of the entitlement as at the 20th day after polling day. Of a total of \$2 698 214.73 in election funding, \$2 671 177.54 was paid in the initial payments and \$27 037.19 was paid on the completion of the vote count. The breakdown of payments is shown in [Table 16](#).

Support for Australian workplaces

Under the [Fair Work \(Registered Organisations\) Act 2009](#), the AEC conducts elections for office in registered organisations. This includes all elections and amalgamation ballots for trade unions and employer organisations registered under the Act. The AEC also conducts protected action ballots under the Fair Work Act and provides fee-for-service elections at full cost recovery.

In 2013–14, the AEC conducted 1 027 workplace elections and ballots. These included industrial elections, protected action ballots and fee-for-service elections. All were delivered successfully and on time. [Table 17](#) provides a breakdown.

Industrial elections

In 2013–14 the AEC conducted 282 industrial elections to fill offices in employee (union) and employer organisations registered under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act*. In accordance with this Act, all elections were secret ballots conducted in line with the voting system specified in the registered rules of each organisation. Postal voting was the most common voting method. After each election the AEC reported to the Fair Work Commission and the organisations involved, including feedback on any difficult-to-interpret rules.

Protected action ballots

Under the Fair Work Act, protected action ballots allow working Australians to choose, by secret ballot, whether they agree with proposed industrial action such as strikes, bans or work stoppages. Protected action ballots occur during negotiations for an enterprise agreement when a bargaining representative for an employee lodges a ballot request with the Fair Work Commission. The Commission appoints the AEC to conduct these ballots.

In 2013–14 the AEC conducted 578 protected action ballots for employees from organisations across many industries. Ballots were by post or at worksites and usually took about three weeks to complete. After each ballot, the AEC provided the results to the Fair Work Commission, the bargaining representative for the employee, and the organisation. Where complaints were made or irregularities occurred during the course of the ballot, the necessary post-ballot reports were sent to the Fair Work Commission.

Fee-for-service elections

In 2013–14 the AEC delivered 167 fee-for-service elections and ballots for public and private sector organisations. Of a total 167 elections:

- 130 were enterprise agreement ballots
- 31 were elections to office
- 6 were yes/no ballots.

More than 60 per cent of the fee-for-service elections and ballots were for repeat clients, suggesting a high level of satisfaction with the services provided.

In 2013–14 the AEC received 103 enquiries about its paid services via its fee-for-service page on the [AEC website](#). Thirty-six per cent of these enquiries resulted in the AEC conducting the relevant elections or ballots.

The AEC predominantly conducted enterprise agreement ballots for organisations in the manufacturing, retail, energy, transport and mining sectors.

Table 17: Industrial elections, protected action ballots and fee-for-service elections/ballots statistics – 2013–14

	NSW/ACT	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	Total
Elections and ballots								
Number of contested industrial elections	23	13	8	9	8	8	4	73
Number of uncontested industrial elections	47	45	26	30	28	26	12	209
Enterprise agreement ballots	39	47	11	6	9	17	0	130
Protected action ballots	192	214	59	46	52	10	5	578
Other commercial elections and ballots	11	12	6	2	4	0	2	37
Other elections and ballots	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of elections and ballots completed	312	331	110	93	97	61	23	1 027
Positions								
Number of positions available (industrial)	1 688	2 652	607	855	684	442	140	7 067
Number of unfilled positions (industrial)	495	2 150	215	401	255	164	38	3 718
Candidates								
Number of candidates for uncontested offices (industrial)	1 050	448	352	433	392	262	91	3 027
Total number of candidates	1 452	551	427	536	474	308	120	3 867
Ballot papers								
Number of ballot papers issued (industrial)	175 979	19 895	2 902	111 599	49 071	14 484	5 367	379 297
Number of ballot papers returned (industrial)	18 681	6 143	1 209	22 935	6 870	2 893	1 708	60 439
Number of ballot papers issued (enterprise agreements)	11 471	59 009	10 584	3 919	1 961	4 402	0	91 346
Number of ballot papers returned (enterprise agreements)	8 084	33 896	6 418	2 411	1 123	2 958	0	54 890
Number of ballot papers issued (protected action)	20 506	16 412	6 316	4 518	4 550	1 391	1 884	55 577
Number of ballot papers returned (protected action)	12 958	10 319	3 826	2 554	2 785	902	1 034	34 378
Number of ballot papers issued (other commercial)	2 722	18 848	498	115	804	0	74	23 061
Number of ballot papers returned (other commercial)	997	6 790	460	115	342	0	74	8 778
Number of ballot papers issued (other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of ballot papers returned (other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of ballot papers issued	210 678	114 164	20 300	120 151	56 386	20 277	7 325	549 281
Total number of ballot papers returned	40 720	57 148	11 913	28 015	11 120	6 753	2 816	158 485

Assistance to state, territory and overseas electoral authorities

The AEC maintains cooperative working relationships with other Australian electoral authorities and provides them with a range of services – including roll maintenance, staffing, facilities and resources – to support state, territory and local government elections.

The AEC also delivers electoral support to other countries through programmes and partnerships that support global democracy, electoral administration and governance.

Collaboration with the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand

The Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ) is a consultative council of electoral commissioners from the electoral management bodies of Australia and New Zealand. The AEC chairs and provides secretariat services. Activities in 2013–14 included:

- detailed reporting of the state of the roll and enrolment activities, including close of rolls outcomes
- maintenance and review of a comprehensive list of equipment available for sharing between jurisdictions
- a research paper on internet voting as a starting point for discussion among members.

At 30 June 2014, ECANZ members were:

- Tom Rogers, Acting Australian Electoral Commissioner, Chair
- Colin Barry, Electoral Commissioner, New South Wales
- Warwick Gately, Electoral Commissioner, Victoria
- Walter van der Merwe, Electoral Commissioner, Queensland
- Chris Avent, Acting Electoral Commissioner, Western Australia
- Kay Mousley, Electoral Commissioner, South Australia
- Julian Type, Electoral Commissioner, Tasmania
- Phil Green, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Capital Territory
- Iain Loganathan, Electoral Commissioner, Northern Territory
- Robert Peden, Chief Electoral Officer, New Zealand Electoral Commission.

Support for state, territory and local governments

The AEC has joint roll arrangements with the state and territory electoral commissions and in most cases maintains the state and territory electoral rolls on their behalf. This means voters only need to enrol once to be eligible to vote at federal, state/territory and local elections.

Under joint roll arrangements, the AEC provides extracts from the roll to state and territory electoral bodies, including special roll extracts for the conduct of their elections. In 2013–14 the AEC supported state and territory electoral authorities by providing 745 general roll products and 81 extracts for state, territory and local elections. [Table 18](#) provides further details.

Table 18: Roll extracts provided for state and territory elections

Jurisdiction	All state/territory, LGA and Senate elections	By-elections – federal, state and LGA liquor licence polls for Victoria
Federal	2	1
NSW	–	19
VIC	0	13
Qld	5	13
WA	1	10
SA	1	–
Tas	2	1
NT	3	9
ACT	1	0
Total	15	66

From time to time, the AEC also provides logistical support for state, territory and local government elections, including staff to assist with election tasks. Support provided in 2013–14 includes:

- roll management support for the 2014 South Australian state election
- statistical reviews of enrolment trends for the Electoral Commission South Australia (ECSA) and support for the South Australian local government electoral boundary redistribution
- roll management services for the 2014 Tasmanian House of Assembly elections and for Legislative Council elections in the Divisions of Huon and Rosevears, as well as provision of all returning officers and support staff for the conduct of nominations, voting and counting.

[Appendix F](#) provides more information on the range of services provided for each state and territory throughout the year.

Torres Strait Regional Authority elections

The Torres Strait Regional Authority is an Australian Government authority. Its governing board consists of at least 20 elected members living in the Torres Strait region and board elections take place once every four years.

The AEC delivers a range of products and services to support the conduct of these elections in line with the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005*. There was no board election in 2013–14. The next election is due in 2016.

Advice and assistance in overseas elections

The AEC undertakes international electoral work in accordance with section 7(1)(fa) of the Electoral Act, in close cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The majority of funding for the AEC’s international work is provided by DFAT, but the AEC also works closely with other providers of international electoral assistance, including:

- International Foundation for Electoral Systems
- United Nations Electoral Assistance Division
- United Nations Development Programme
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
- Commonwealth Secretariat – an intergovernmental organisation of which Australia is a member.

The AEC actively pursues networking with these bodies and with counterparts in the Asian, Pacific and Southern African regions, particularly through the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators network (PIANZEA).

Asia-Pacific

In 2013–14 the AEC provided secretariat services to PIANZEA and conducted DFAT funded electoral support programmes in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Nepal, Bhutan and a number of Pacific Island countries.

Indonesia

The AEC worked with Indonesia's three election management bodies – the General Elections Commission (KPU), the Elections Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) and the Indonesian Elections Ethics Council (DKPP) – and with academics and local organisations to strengthen electoral capacity and improve regional democracy and governance. The AEC's Indonesia strategy addresses:

- exchange of knowledge and experiences related to the study, reform and management of election administration systems
- education and capacity development programmes on election management and administration
- research programmes to support election management and administration.

The AEC delivers support through its Jakarta office, which has a permanent in-country director and eight locally engaged staff. In 2013–14 it delivered DFAT funded programmes throughout Indonesia at the national and provincial levels.

Activities included:

- a research paper on the establishment of a postgraduate-level electoral management course for Indonesian electoral management body officials and possibly other stakeholders
- an induction programme for newly elected provincial KPU commissioners (104 commissioners from 17 Indonesian provinces)
- an Indonesian visitor study programme during the 2013 federal election
- four new instructional manuals for the 2014 Indonesian legislative election
- monitoring and evaluation of the BRIDGE¹ Indonesia programme and creation of a BRIDGE case study
- a regional knowledge exchange workshop and seminar on increasing election participation between Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and India
- hosting a multilateral electoral research forum, 'Towards Election Inclusiveness', that included election management bodies, academics and research organisations from Australia, Bhutan, Nepal, Timor-Leste, Thailand, South Korea, Mexico, Japan, the Netherlands, Canada and Indonesia.

AEC Indonesia directly trained 225 Indonesian public service officials and 405 non public servants.

¹ BRIDGE stands for 'Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections'. The programme provides professional development in election administration and governance.

Timor-Leste

The AEC worked with the election management bodies in Timor-Leste, the Secretariado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral (STAE) and the Comissão Nacional de Eleições (CNE), to continue to strengthen electoral capacity.

In September 2013, at the time of the federal election, the AEC delivered an election study programme and a BRIDGE workshop in Darwin for STAE and CNE staff. Additional activities included:

- an ongoing mentoring and coaching programme for STAE and CNE staff in the field, led by the AEC's Timor-Leste programme officer
- delivery of two modified BRIDGE civics education and voter information modules in Dili in February 2013 and two modified BRIDGE introductory modules in Dili in June 2013
- accreditation of more BRIDGE facilitators in both STAE and CNE.

Papua New Guinea

The AEC works with the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) through the AEC PNGEC Twinning Programme, funded by DFAT until the end of 2015. This programme became the only provider of Australian electoral assistance to Papua New Guinea when the broader Australian Government electoral support programme ended in late 2013. Under the programme, the AEC provides short-term injections of technical expertise appropriate to the PNGEC's focus.

Assistance in 2013–14 included:

- two staff seconded to assist the PNGEC with a series of enrolment and electoral pilots
- additional short-term expertise from three staff in the areas of community engagement, training and evaluation to assist with the pilots
- attendance of seven assistant election managers from Papua New Guinea at AEC-led election study programmes for the March 2014 South Australian and Tasmanian state elections
- attendance at electoral support programme board meetings.

'Helping to building the technical capacity of our PNG counterparts was the most rewarding part of the role for me.'

Sukanthan Aravindan, AEC officer seconded to PNGEC

Nepal

In 2012–13 the AEC assisted the Election Commission of Nepal with ongoing operation of the Nepalese Electoral Education and Information Centre in Kathmandu. Two Election Commission of Nepal staff attended the AEC's election visitor programme.

As a partner organisation to the Nepalese Electoral Education and Information Centre, the AEC provided pre-deployment briefings, ongoing support and mentoring to two Australian youth ambassadors for development who were working at the centre in 2013–14.

Pacific Islands

In 2013–14 the AEC continued to provide secretariat services to the PIANZEA network. The AEC also provided support to Pacific nations through PIANZEA as well as assistance through other Pacific Island programmes. Activities included:

- providing a learning clinic for 17 Pacific electoral officials on the AEC's generic voter registration system, software and hardware and ongoing technical support for users
- hosting Pacific Island officials as part of the Australian federal election visitor programme in September 2013
- organising and delivering PIANZEA advisory group meetings held in July 2013 and March 2014
- delivering BRIDGE civic education and gender modules for 33 electoral officials from the PIANZEA network, including participants from Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Vanuatu, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, Timor-Leste and the Marshall Islands
- supporting the Tongan Electoral Commission by developing a voter education curriculum; training trainers; and supporting election planning, logistics and voter registration
- delivering a final voter education workshop for district registration officers and staff from the Vanuatu Electoral Office
- supporting a PIANZEA knowledge exchange on voter education and communication through work placement of a staff member from the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission with the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission.

'A great experience provided by AEC. Helps all electoral management bodies and takes forward mutual cooperation to a higher level. [The AEC] deserves thanks for the initiative. It was professional, warm, very hospitable and most productive – worth emulating.'

Federal election international study programme participant

Other international partnerships and programmes

Hosting international visitors

In 2013–14 the AEC hosted international study programmes and delegations from African and Asia-Pacific countries including Botswana, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Myanmar, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, South Sudan, Tonga, Rwanda, Uganda, Ukraine, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Federal election international study programme

The AEC conducted an international study programme during the 2013 federal election. The programme hosted a diverse group of international participants from 19 countries: Bhutan, Canada, Fiji, India, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Tokelau.

Representatives from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and DFAT also attended. Such programmes offer participants a range of benefits, including important networking opportunities, and extend the ties that bind the electoral family around the world.

Programme 1.2 Election Support Services – key performance results 2013–14

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Register of Political Parties			
Party registration processed in accordance with the legislation and the Register of Political Parties updated in a timely manner.	ACHIEVED Met requirements of the Electoral Act; all applications received were processed. Party Registration Guide and related forms updated on the AEC website. Reasons for AEC decisions about party registration applications published on the AEC website.	ACHIEVED Met requirements of the Electoral Act. Received and processed unusually large numbers of applications to register new political parties (33). Party Registration Guide and related forms updated on AEC website. Reasons for AEC decisions about party registration applications published on the AEC website.	ACHIEVED Processed all applications in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act and in a timely manner. Formed a new Funding and Disclosure branch in January 2014, which is responsible for party registration functions in response to 2012 McLeod Inquiry recommendations. ^a
Funding and disclosure			
Election funding calculated and paid in accordance with the legislation.	NOT APPLICABLE No federal elections.	NOT APPLICABLE No federal elections.	ACHIEVED See above for details of payments for each event.
Financial disclosures obtained and placed on the public record in accordance with legislated timeframes.	ACHIEVED Reminded all relevant individuals and organisations to lodge financial disclosure returns and published returns on AEC website as soon as practicable after lodgement. Prosecuted a candidate from 2010 federal election who failed to lodge a financial disclosure return despite reminders: court found the candidate guilty. Referred a further three donors to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) for non-lodgement of a 2010–11 annual return.	ACHIEVED 2011–12 annual returns received and processed in time for publication on 1 February 2013. Received all 2011–12 annual returns, so no prosecutions necessary.	ACHIEVED Received and processed 681 out of 682 annual returns expected for 2012–13 in time for publication on 3 February 2014. No cases referred to the CDPP for non-lodgement. Received and processed 1 726 out of 1 736 candidate and Senate group returns for 2013 federal election. Referred 10 candidates to CDPP for non-lodgement of a candidate return. Received all 11 candidates returns for the Griffith by-election.

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Industrial elections and protected action ballots			
Industrial elections delivered in accordance with relevant legislation.	ACHIEVED All industrial elections are delivered in accordance with the Fair Work Act and the rules of relevant organisations.	ACHIEVED All industrial elections are delivered in accordance with the Fair Work Act and the rules of relevant organisations.	ACHIEVED All industrial elections are delivered in accordance with the Fair Work Act and the rules of relevant organisations.
Protected action ballots delivered in accordance with relevant legislation and Fair Work Commission ^o orders.	ACHIEVED All protected action ballots completed in accordance with the Fair Work Act and Fair Work Australia orders.	ACHIEVED All protected action ballots completed in accordance with the Fair Work Act and Fair Work Australia orders.	ACHIEVED All protected action ballots completed in accordance with the Fair Work Act and Fair Work Commission orders.
All election tasks carried out in accordance with legislated timeframes.	ACHIEVED All industrial election tasks delivered in accordance with legislated timeframes and timetables.	ACHIEVED All industrial election tasks delivered in accordance with legislated timeframes and timetables.	ACHIEVED All industrial election tasks delivered in accordance with legislated timeframes and timetables.
Fee-for-service elections			
Fee-for-service elections successfully delivered, as required, on a full cost recovery basis.	ACHIEVED Complied with all relevant legislative requirements, internal policies and organisational rules to conduct fee-for-service elections on a full cost recovery basis.	ACHIEVED Complied with all relevant legislative requirements and organisational rules to conduct fee-for-service elections on a full cost recovery basis. Updated relevant internal policies.	ACHIEVED Complied with all relevant legislative requirements, internal policies and organisational rules to conduct fee-for-service elections on a full cost recovery basis.
Effective assistance is provided with the conduct of state, territory and local government elections where requested by the relevant electoral body.	ACHIEVED Provided skilled and trained staff and resources to successfully conduct or assist with parliamentary elections. Provided assistance to state and territory electoral bodies.	ACHIEVED Continued to provide skilled and trained staff and resources to successfully conduct or assist with parliamentary elections. Provided assistance to state and territory electoral bodies.	ACHIEVED Continued to provide skilled and trained staff and resources to successfully conduct or assist with parliamentary elections. Provided assistance to state and territory electoral bodies.
State, local government stakeholders and fee-for-service clients are fully satisfied with the services provided.	ACHIEVED Received positive feedback on the conduct of fee-for-service elections from stakeholders and clients.	ACHIEVED Received positive feedback on the conduct of fee-for-service elections from stakeholders and clients, with 100% of respondents surveyed indicating that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service provided.	ACHIEVED Received positive feedback on the conduct of fee-for-service elections; 60% of elections delivered were 'repeat business' for previous clients.

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Torres Strait Regional Authority elections			
Elections delivered in accordance with relevant legislation on a full cost recovery basis.	NOT APPLICABLE No elections held.	ACHIEVED Conducted successful elections on 15 September and 8 December 2012.	NOT APPLICABLE No elections held.
Key performance indicator			
International assistance by the AEC meets the goals specified for individual projects undertaken, with stakeholders fully satisfied with the services provided.	ACHIEVED All specified goals met.	ACHIEVED All specified goals met.	ACHIEVED All specified goals met. Feedback from stakeholders on how the AEC met commitments was overwhelmingly positive.

a. R McLeod 2012, *Review of the Australian Electoral Commission's disclosure compliance function under Part XX of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Available on [AEC website](#).
b. On 1 January 2013, Fair Work Australia became the Fair Work Commission. The previous name is maintained for the relevant KPI.

It's an early start – so early that only a faint light on the horizon breaks the darkness. But the team from Darwin has already been up for some time, preparing for their day of remote polling in Warruwi – a remote Northern Territory Aboriginal community on South Goulburn Island.



Going to great lengths to deliver the franchise

Warruwi, with around 220 enrolled voters, is just one of many Indigenous communities spread over 1.3 million square kilometres in the Division of Lingiari that received mobile polling services during the 2013 federal election.

Almost all of the voters in Lingiari live in remote areas, and one in every three lives in a remote Indigenous community. Service delivery in these areas can be particularly challenging. For many of these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voters English is their second, or even third, language and electoral processes are unfamiliar and challenging. Nevertheless, they are keen to have their say.

To make it easier, the AEC implemented significant improvements to electoral services for remote voters during the 2013 election. Schedules were extended to allow communities with more than 200 enrolled voters to receive at least one full day of polling. Larger communities received up to five days of polling. The extended services were publicised widely on regional television and radio and promoted locally through Australian Government agencies and community organisations.

Partnership was key. The AEC worked in collaboration with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to maintain efficiency while extending the reach of services and to ensure they were both professional and culturally appropriate. Each AEC mobile polling team included two experienced DHS staff who work regularly in the communities and are known and well regarded. They were accompanied by an experienced AEC polling official. Most teams had at least one Indigenous member. The teams travelled to communities by air and in DHS vehicles, supported by DHS logistical staff in Darwin and Alice Springs and following DHS remote travel safety protocols.

At their destinations, teams used the AEC's new electronic certified lists to search quickly for voter names and improve the movement of voters through each polling location. A series of 12 Indigenous in-language DVDs and one easy-English version were also screened at various locations on TVs or tablets. The videos showed voters how to cast a formal vote and 89 per cent of viewers said they found them helpful.

Mobile polling teams were also supported by AEC voter information officers (VIOs) – a new position established for the 2013 federal election. VIOs were local Indigenous community members trained by the AEC to help voters to understand how to cast a formal vote. Throughout the election VIOs worked in 44 remote communities across the Northern Territory.

Overall, remote polling teams for the 2013 federal election took 27 per cent more votes than in 2010. The AEC's partnership with DHS proved to be a critical factor in improving services to remote communities, as was support received from the Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Northern Territory Shires and the many organisations and individuals who work regularly in these remote areas.

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

AEC OUTCOME

Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services and **targeted education and public awareness** programmes.

Programme 1.3 Education and Communication

Informed Australians through the provision of information services on electoral matters.

The AEC delivers education and public awareness programmes to ensure that all Australians have sufficient knowledge and understanding of their electoral responsibilities.

Overview

This chapter reports on the AEC's performance in:

- providing electoral education services to schools, students, teachers and the general public
- delivering public awareness programmes to help Australians to understand and fulfil their electoral obligations
- delivering targeted programmes so that all eligible voters can participate in Australian democracy regardless of individual background or circumstances.

2013–14 performance highlights include:

- welcoming the millionth visitor to the National Electoral Education Centre in Canberra
- facilitating school elections involving 50 358 school students through *Get Voting*
- delivering a broad-sweeping public awareness campaign to help eligible Australians to comply with their enrolment and voting obligations at the 2013 federal election
- producing the *Official guide to the 2013 federal election*, which was delivered to around 10 million households across Australia
- deploying 332 voter information officers – a new role introduced for the 2013 federal election – to help Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to understand how to cast a formal vote
- holding the second National Indigenous Youth Parliament to educate Indigenous youth leaders on democratic processes.

The chapter includes a table of key performance results over three years and a case study on the second National Indigenous Youth Parliament, held in May 2014.



Education

In 2013–14 the AEC provided education services to schools, universities and community groups through a variety of channels and programmes.

National Electoral Education Centre

The AEC's National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) at Old Parliament House in Canberra provides electoral education on Australian government and democracy, federal electoral processes and the democratic responsibilities of all citizens. While the majority of visitors are school students, the centre also conducts sessions for adults, including new citizens. For visitors aged 16 or older, the sessions include the opportunity to enrol to vote.

In 2013–14 the NEEC hosted visitors from all 150 Australian electoral divisions and delivered 2 542 education sessions to 87 065 participants. The centre also welcomed its millionth visitor since moving to its current location at Old Parliament House in Canberra.

The NEEC also began a comprehensive evaluation of the goals and outcomes of its programmes. The final evaluation report and recommendations will be delivered in 2014–15.

Get Voting

The AEC's national school education programme, Get Voting, helps primary and secondary schools to conduct in-school elections for real positions, such as representatives on student councils. These authentic election experiences help students to understand the federal electoral system and prepare them to fulfil their democratic responsibilities as adults.

Get Voting, available on the [AEC website](#), provides online resources and planning tools for teachers. Free election resources, including ballot boxes, posters and other equipment, are also distributed to schools. AEC divisional staff support the programme, providing advice on good electoral practice.

In 2013–14 the Get Voting website:

- received 11 764 unique visitors
- logged 386 requests for election equipment packs
- was used to deliver school elections for 50 358 students.

This year, the AEC developed an evaluation framework to systematically measure the short- and long-term outcomes of Get Voting, which is still a relatively new programme. The framework includes an automated feedback process after each Get Voting election and staged research with teachers, such as in-school interviews and online surveys.

The evaluation framework will be fully implemented over the next 12 months and will help the AEC to better understand how Get Voting resources are used in schools and what their impact is on students, and to identify ways to expand the reach of the programme.

Assisting teachers and future teachers

Your Vote Counts

Your Vote Counts is a workshop presented by AEC staff to university students studying education. The programme aims to develop the skills and knowledge needed to teach civics education in schools.

During 2013–14 more than 2 000 university students from eight tertiary institutions participated in Your Vote Counts. This programme is currently in transition to other delivery methods to reach the wider education sector.

Making a Nation

Making a Nation is the AEC's online interactive learning tool for senior history students. It is available on the [AEC website](#).

In 2013–14, Making a Nation was linked to the Australian history curriculum through the educators portal Scootle. Scootle allows teachers to find appropriate learning activities to achieve the specific outcomes of the history curriculum.

Civics education

In 2013–14, the AEC also contributed to:

- consultations on a new national civics and citizenship curriculum and collaborated with universities and others in the education sector to develop and trial professional learning for classroom teachers
- the Australian Government's National Schools Constitutional Convention and the National Capital Civics Education Group – the peak forum for Canberra-based civics and citizenship institutions.

Online education resources

The AEC provides a range of information and education resources to schools and the general public through [its website](#). It also offers a dedicated email service and subscriber list for teachers and educators.

Public awareness campaigns

In 2013–14 the AEC's advertising, communication and public relations strategies focused on the 2013 federal election and the 2014 Griffith by-election and Western Australian Senate election. In particular, AEC public awareness campaigns sought to ensure that all eligible voters were correctly enrolled, understood their voting options and were able to cast a formal vote.

Phased public awareness activities were delivered in a variety of ways to maximise reach and impact in as cost-effective a manner as possible. Traditional media advertising was supported by social media and community engagement events. Detailed information was delivered through a mix of online and printed materials.

Federal election 2013

Before each election the AEC implements a range of communications and education activities designed to maximise voter awareness. Traditionally the AEC plans and structures the public awareness campaign over three phases from announcement to election day.

The campaign aims to ensure that voters:

- understand how to enrol or update their enrolment details
- are aware of their voting options, including ways they can vote if they will not be able to attend a polling place on election day
- understand how to cast a formal vote.

Table 19: 2013 federal election – public awareness campaign activities

Activity	Timing	Description
Advertising		
Low-level online advertising	Commenced 29 May	Paid search advertising and ads on Facebook targeting 17-year-olds turning 18
Mass media advertising campaign – Your Vote is a Valuable Thing	14 July–3 August	National advertising on television, in magazines, online, in cinemas, outdoors and on Indigenous television and radio, community language radio and radio for the print handicapped
Election mass media advertising campaign – Your Vote is a Valuable Thing	4 August–7 September	National advertising (television, press, radio and online) from announcement of the election date to election day. Covered close of rolls, voter services and formality messaging
Partnerships targeting young Australians		
Facebook app Your Vote Matters	24 June–12 August	Facebook enrol to vote app reminds all Australians, particularly those aged 18 to 24, to enrol or update their enrolment
Rock Enrol	1 July–12 August	Again used Rock Enrol ^a in partnership with Triple J, including sponsorship at the Splendour in the Grass music festival
Student Edge	1–6 August	Partnered with Student Edge ^b to directly email eligible students to remind them to enrol and vote
Public relations and promotions		
Don't Leave It to the Last Minute engagement campaign	1 July–12 August	Involved workplaces, sporting organisations and tertiary institutions in delivering enrolment reminder message to their employees/members/students
Sporting events	19–22 July 26–28 July	Attended 17 sporting events nationally across two weekends to deliver enrolment reminder message

a. Rock Enrol is an initiative of Triple J and encourages young Australians to enrol and vote.

b. Student Edge is Australia's largest member-based organisation for secondary and tertiary students.

In the first half of 2013 the AEC had a unique opportunity to take advantage of an announced election date of 14 September to add a pre-election enrolment reminder phase to the overall campaign. When the election date was changed to 7 September this phase was reduced by a week.

Each phase of the campaign included a mix of advertising, public relations activities and online and printed information products.

Phase 1: pre-election – May to August 2013

The pre-election enrolment campaign sought to give an early reminder to eligible Australians of the requirement to enrol or update their enrolment details. The campaign involved a multi-pronged mix of community engagement activities, advertising, media, public relations and social media marketing. A number of activities were targeted at Australians aged 18 to 25, who traditionally have lower levels of enrolment compliance. [Table 19](#) outlines the activities delivered in this phase of the campaign.

Phases 2 to 4: close of rolls, voter services and formality – July to September 2013

The AEC mass media election advertising campaign began on 14 July. The campaign, titled *Your Vote is a Valuable Thing*, was rolled out in stages to build rapid and increasing awareness of voter rights and responsibilities. Each phase focused on a different message relevant to the particular point in the election period.

The first campaign stage (close of rolls) was delivered in two parts. In the first three weeks, from July to August, the message to voters was not to wait but to enrol or update their details before the election date was announced. In the final week, following the election date announcement on 4 August, voters were again reminded that they needed to enrol or update their details before the close of rolls deadline at 8pm on 12 August.

The voting services stage advised people who would not be able to vote on election day to vote early, and told them about alternative voting options. This phase began on 21 August and continued until 6 September.

The final stage, focused on formality, ran in the week leading up to election day and informed voters how to correctly complete House of Representatives and Senate ballot papers.

Each stage of the advertising campaign used a mix of television, radio, press and digital advertising and was translated into 28 community languages and 10 Indigenous languages.

Public awareness campaign outcomes

AEC research indicates that the pre-election campaign, in conjunction with new online service delivery options and the strong motivation provided by the election itself, contributed to an overall increase in enrolment from 91.2 per cent to 92.3 per cent in 2013–14.

Independent market research conducted by Ipsos Strategic Research Institute found that those aged 18–24 were more likely to recall AEC enrolment messages than older Australians, indicating that the early phase of the campaign contributed to growth in the rate of young Australians enrolled from 76.3 per cent to 78.5 per cent.

The research also found that awareness of the fundamentals of the Australian voting system remained high through 2013–14 and that the *Your Vote is a Valuable Thing* campaign played a role in increasing knowledge in the lead-up to the federal election. However, the research also shows the impact of the campaign has lessened since it was first used at the 2007 federal elections and again at the 2010 federal elections.

Official guide to the 2013 federal election

The AEC delivered the *Official guide to the 2013 federal election* to around 10 million households across Australia. The guide supported the advertising campaign by providing specific information on where, how and when Australians could vote, including what to do if they could not get to a polling place on election day. It also provided information on how to correctly complete ballot papers to cast a formal vote and linked to additional information on the AEC website, including a practice voting tool. The official guide was available in 26 languages and accessible formats including Braille, large print, audio and e-text.



AEC website

The AEC provided comprehensive information about the 2013 federal election on [its website](#). Staged updates to the home page complemented the staged key messages of the public awareness campaign. Material was available in languages other than English and in other accessible formats.

On election night and in the following weeks, the AEC provided election results on the Virtual Tally Room available on the [AEC website](#). A parallel feed of election results data was available for media outlets seeking to tailor this information to their own display formats and graphics. The 2013 results are now stored with results from previous elections on the AEC website.

Social media

The AEC uses Facebook and Twitter to respond to public enquiries, distribute enrolment and election messages and support its communication campaigns. Social media are fully integrated into all AEC external communication strategies, campaigns and activities.

During the 2013 federal election, the AEC Facebook page reached almost one million people through a combination of sponsored page posts, paid advertising and page interactions. The page had more than 19 000 page likes and more than 90 000 daily engaged users, and posts on it were seen more than seven million times. AEC Twitter had more than 5 500 followers, received more than 2 000 direct enquiries and had more than 3 300 retweets, which reached well over one million people.

During the 2014 WA Senate election, the AEC Facebook page reached over 2.2 million people. It had more than 20 000 page likes, almost 12 000 daily engaged users and almost 1 000 page comments. AEC Twitter had more than 7 100 followers, 686 retweets and 428 direct enquiries.

2014 Griffith by-election

The AEC produced a range of similar communication products to support the conduct of the Griffith by-election in February 2014. These ranged from newspaper advertising and media releases to an official election guide delivered to more than 74 000 households in the Division of Griffith.

2014 Western Australian Senate election

In its public information campaign for the WA Senate election, the AEC again used the message Your Vote is a Valuable Thing but targeted it to voters in Western Australia. Preparation of the campaign began in late 2013 to ensure that it could be on air the day the writs for the election were issued – Friday, 28 February 2014.

The campaign used the same staged approach as for the federal election – close of rolls, voter services and formality – and was translated into eight community languages and five Indigenous languages. An official guide to the WA Senate election was delivered to more than one million households in WA.

The AEC launched the 2014 WA Senate election web page once the writ was issued. The web page complemented the staged key messages of the public information campaign and served as a central source of election information.

The AEC also implemented media and public relations activities for this election, with a focus on ensuring that WA voters understood they had to be enrolled for, and vote in, the election. It used its contracted public relations agency to help with a range of activities, including photo and filming opportunities and proactive contact with media outlets and journalists.

Assisting Australians with diverse needs

The AEC implements a range of education and communication strategies to enable all eligible Australians to participate in our democracy, regardless of circumstance. This includes community education and products for Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; for those suffering disadvantage, such as homelessness; and for those with disabilities.

The AEC also has specific outreach programmes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, delivered primarily through the Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme.

Community formality initiatives

The 2013 federal election presented the opportunity to trial new initiatives to reduce the level of unintentional informal voting. Activities included face-to-face electoral education for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in electorates with high rates of voting informality.

For the 2013 federal election the AEC contracted 10 bilingual community education officers in Sydney and two in Melbourne to deliver targeted electoral education over a five-month period. They delivered 138 community workshops to a total of 3 598 participants in Sydney and Melbourne.

Voter information officers

Under its voter information officer (VIO) programme the AEC recruited, trained and deployed polling officials dedicated to helping voters to understand how to complete formal ballot papers for the House of Representatives and the Senate. VIOs were deployed in selected polling places with historically high informality rates and where the voting population had low English proficiency or lacked familiarity with electoral process. Typically these were polling places with large proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse or Indigenous voters.

A total of 332 VIOs were employed in 225 polling places in all states and territories except Tasmania. VIOs also accompanied 26 mobile polling teams to remote areas.

A majority of voters who used VIO services said they found them helpful and 63 per cent of polling places that engaged VIOs had higher rates of voting formality.

Translated polling place material

At the 2013 federal election, in polling places with large culturally and linguistically diverse communities, the AEC displayed translated voting formality posters on House of Representatives and Senate voting.

The AEC also identified the top three languages spoken in over 400 polling places with a historically high rate of informality related to low English proficiency. It then supplied these polling places with translated formality posters, in relevant combinations of 35 languages, for display in voting screens.

Social inclusion

The AEC supports the Australian Government's Social Inclusion Agenda and aims to provide accessible electoral services by:

- ensuring access to voter services by providing accessible permanent AEC premises and polling places and alternative and assisted voting options
- providing a range of products and information services, including a variety of alternative contact channels, accessible publications and an accessible website
- implementing inclusive recruitment and workplace practices to educate staff about the benefits of diversity and to support staff with disabilities in the workplace.

Translation services

The AEC provides a translating service, which is outsourced to the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS). This service can also be accessed through the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Translating and Interpreting Service. During the 2013 federal election and 2014 Western Australian Senate election, the AEC extended the translating service to cover the same operating hours as the election contact (call) centre. This ensured that voters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds could access electoral information throughout the election period.

VITS operated 16 dedicated language-specific telephone interpreter information lines and a multi-language information line. It handled approximately 10 000 calls in 2013–14; 7 000 of the callers used the translator service to speak directly to AEC staff. The three top languages used were Mandarin (3 000 calls), Cantonese (1 400 calls) and Arabic (1 000 calls).

Accessible publications

During 2013–14 the AEC developed three new products targeted at voters with diverse needs:

- easy English guides for voters with an intellectual or cognitive disability or low English proficiency
- a video on voting services for the blind and low-vision community and their advocates
- a video in Australian Sign Language for the deaf and hearing-impaired community.

These new products provided a range of electoral information covering both enrolment and voting.

During the 2013 federal election, the 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 WA Senate election, the AEC also provided a range of publications in accessible formats. These were available to order from the election contact (call) centre and for download from the AEC website. Some were also provided to Vision Australia and other organisations on the AEC's Disability Advisory Committee for distribution to their members.

Services available on the [AEC website](#), including the online postal vote application and online enrolment systems, have statements of accessibility for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Conformance Level AA from Vision Australia. In addition, the AEC's website is optimised to display effectively on small-screen devices, its translated information is optimised to display in-language page titles and its YouTube-hosted videos are captioned and have full transcripts available.

Services for those who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment

The AEC provides a service for voters who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech impairment. The service is operated by the National Relay Service, which is managed through the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Accessible premises

All newly obtained and fitted out AEC tenancies are Building Code of Australia compliant and, where possible, existing premises meet Australian Standard AS 1428 (2010).

The AEC undertook physical inspections of all polling places used during the 2013 federal election, 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 WA Senate election and, as far as was practicable, used polling places with full accessibility. Its polling place inspection tool incorporates the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010, which is guided by the objectives of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

To ensure that voters could make informed choices about accessible polling places, for each election the AEC promoted the accessibility ratings of all premises using a searchable polling place locator service on the AEC website, advertising in major metropolitan newspapers and the election contact (call) centre. Where an accessible polling place was not available, alternative arrangements were in place, including:

- postal voting
- an assisted vote in a polling place
- receiving ballot papers outside a polling place, such as in a vehicle
- mobile voting in hospitals, nursing homes and other care facilities
- telephone voting for voters who are blind or have low vision.

More information on AEC strategies to support those with disabilities is available in 'Managing resources and assets'.



Services for Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians are less likely to enrol, less likely to vote and less likely to vote formally than any other Australians. The AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme (IEPP) aims to close this gap. Under the programme, AEC staff at national, state and local levels work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their local communities or in partnership with other organisations to deliver election services in ways that meet cultural and regional needs.

In 2013–14, a core IEPP objective was to increase Indigenous Australians' awareness of the need to enrol and vote for the 2013 federal election and 2014 WA Senate election. Information and assistance on how to cast a formal vote were also provided. These election-focused activities were delivered in the broader context of the IEPP strategy and delivery of a flagship event: the second National Indigenous Youth Parliament, held in Canberra in May 2014.

Election communication to Indigenous voters

In the lead-up to the 2013 federal election the IEPP delivered a range of communication activities for Indigenous Australians. Specialised branding under the tagline 'Our Vote, Our Future' was developed for the Indigenous print and online communication campaign and used across key activities. These included:

- launching the AEC Our Vote, Our Future dedicated Facebook page on 9 August 2013. Facebook promotions focused on outreach to Indigenous youth and on remote polling arrangements for the 2013 federal election
- developing a set of election posters containing enrolment, turnout and formality messages for distribution during the 2013 federal election by internal and external stakeholders
- providing in-language election materials for remote communities in the Northern Territory covering enrolment, turnout and formality during the 2013 federal election
- placing targeted advertisements and editorial content in Indigenous press and online media
- Indigenous and community engagement officers conducting enrolment and public awareness activities at community events around Australia.

All AEC Indigenous media and communication activities publicised the Indigenous portal on the [AEC website](#). Visits to this page during the 2013 election almost tripled in comparison with visits during the 2010 election.

As for the previous two elections, the AEC adapted mainstream advertising activities during the 2013 federal election to meet the needs of Indigenous voters. However, the subsequent evaluation revealed that the Indigenous component of the mainstream campaign had either failed to reach target audiences or had only limited reach among them. These results indicate that there is value in delivering specifically targeted and culturally tailored communication.

Strategic partnerships to engage Indigenous audiences

Throughout the year the AEC worked in partnership with government and non-government agencies to help widen the delivery of election messages and services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This was particularly important in remote locations facing the additional barriers of distance and access.

Co-sponsored or collaborative activities included:

- a service delivery agreement between the AEC's Northern Territory office and the Department of Human Services to help provide voter services to remote Indigenous communities during the 2013 federal election
- an Indigenous stakeholder kit containing media content, images and digital resources to help government and non-government agencies, such as the Department of Human Services and Reconciliation Australia, to distribute Indigenous enrolment, turnout and formality messages
- a behind-the-scenes tour of election processes for four young Indigenous Australians, delivered in partnership with a local Indigenous youth programme run jointly by The Salvation Army and Gunya Meta in Logan City, south of Brisbane
- an informal arrangement with a Wilcannia radio station to help deliver enrolment, turnout and voting reminder messages in the lead-up to the federal election
- a partnership with the Museum of Australian Democracy and the YMCA to deliver the National Indigenous Youth Parliament 2014
- sponsorship of key Indigenous cultural and sporting events to disseminate enrolment reminder messages, including the Murri Rugby League Carnival in Ipswich, the Festival of Indigenous Rugby League in Newcastle, the Brisbane Clancestry Festival and the 2013 Deadly Awards in Sydney
- collaboration with the South Australian Wiltja Programme and the YWCA to deliver electoral education workshops to students from remote communities across the Central and Western Desert regions of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

These partnerships allowed the AEC to extend the reach and increase the impact of communication to Indigenous audiences. The Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme will continue to cultivate appropriate partnerships and collaborations to ensure that awareness programmes reach Indigenous Australians in urban, regional and remote locations.



National Indigenous Youth Parliament 2014

Building on the success and goodwill generated by the first National Indigenous Youth Parliament held in 2012, the second National Indigenous Youth Parliament took place from 28 May to 3 June 2014. Once again, this flagship event in the IEPP was the product of collaboration between the AEC, the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

Fifty young Indigenous leaders aged 16 to 25 years, chosen from more than 230 applicants, travelled to Canberra to learn how government works and how laws are made. They met with and learned from many of the nation's leaders, including the Governor-General, ministers and their opposition counterparts, members of parliament, Indigenous community leaders, the United States Ambassador to Australia, senior government officials and representatives of the parliamentary press gallery.

A highlight was a two-day simulated parliament at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, where youth parliamentarians debated bills on matters important to them and to their community.

The National Indigenous Youth Parliament laid the groundwork for participants to further develop their leadership skills and professional networks and become local ambassadors for their communities.

More information on the National Indigenous Youth Parliament is provided in the case study 'Making a difference at the National Indigenous Youth Parliament'.

Programme 1.3 Targeted Education and Public Awareness Programmes – key performance results 2013–14

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Education			
78 000 visitors to the National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) per annum.	ACHIEVED 87 717	ACHIEVED 90 400	ACHIEVED 87 065
2 000 NEEC sessions delivered per annum.	ACHIEVED 2 529	ACHIEVED 2 600	ACHIEVED 2 542
100 000 participants in AEC education outreach services (including Get Voting and community education).	ACHIEVED 131 876	ACHIEVED 100 717	NOT ACHIEVED 83 025 Reduced number is due to the diversion of AEC operational capacity to election delivery throughout 2013–14.
1 200 participants in teacher professional development sessions.	ACHIEVED 2 527 students from 17 universities.	ACHIEVED 3 184 students from 18 universities.	ACHIEVED 2 079 students from eight universities.
New service delivery options, including partnerships that promote public awareness of electoral matters.	ACHIEVED Get Voting piloted in SA, Vic and ACT.	ACHIEVED Get Voting operating in all states.	ACHIEVED Get Voting take-up in 127 divisions.
New online education resource material that responds to curriculum needs.	ACHIEVED Designed education modules linked to new national history curriculum.	ACHIEVED Delivered education modules linked to national history curriculum.	ACHIEVED Education modules available through the national teacher resource portal.
Participant feedback indicates 90% satisfaction with AEC education services.	ACHIEVED Over 90% satisfaction rate with AEC education programmes.	ACHIEVED Over 90% satisfaction rate with AEC education programmes.	ACHIEVED Over 90% satisfaction rate with AEC education programmes.
Public awareness			
AEC communication strategies and services developed, implemented and reviewed as appropriate.	ACHIEVED Developed communication strategies for special audiences.	ACHIEVED Developed communication strategies for 2013 federal election including enrolment, pre-election, referendum and special audience strategies.	ACHIEVED Implemented communication strategies for 2013 federal election, 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 WA Senate election, including tailored delivery to special audiences.

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Positive audience feedback on effectiveness of advertising and public awareness activities through surveys, market research and stakeholder consultation.	ACHIEVED Market research supports effectiveness of Count Me In campaign strategy.	ACHIEVED Market research supports effectiveness of Count Me In campaign enrolment publicity materials.	ACHIEVED Market research supports effectiveness of election campaigns in raising public awareness.
Published information is timely and accurate, makes appropriate use of available technology and meets online accessibility standards.	ACHIEVED Public information and key services (eg Count Me In enrolment campaign) delivered using mix of technology, including AEC website and social media. Social media platforms adopted to extend AEC outreach. Website accessibility strategy introduced to meet Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) National Transition Strategy standards.	ACHIEVED Public information and key services (eg enrolment) delivered using online technology, including AEC website and social media. Social media fully integrated into communication campaigns. Website meets AGIMO National Transition Strategy accessibility standards.	ACHIEVED Timely and accurate public information delivered through AEC website and social media for 2013 federal election, 2014 Griffith by-election and 2014 WA Senate election. Website meets WCAG 2.0 standard to medium conformance level (AA). ^a
Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme (IEPP)			
Evaluation shows the IEPP is meeting its objectives.	NOT APPLICABLE KPIs for IEPP were updated in 2012–13. KPIs for years to 2011–12 available on AEC website .	ACHIEVED Increased emphasis on urban and regional locations and on partnerships with government and non-government agencies in line with programme evaluation. IEPP objectives mainstreamed into AEC business.	ACHIEVED Evaluation indicates increase in electoral knowledge, enrolment and turnout by Indigenous Australians following mainstream and targeted services delivered for 2013 federal election.
Feedback from target audience on the IEPP shows the programme is well received.	NOT APPLICABLE KPIs for IEPP were updated in 2012–13. KPIs for years to 2011–12 available on AEC website .	ACHIEVED Positive feedback from audiences and stakeholders for new tailored education services and information products.	ACHIEVED Positive feedback from Indigenous Australians for federal election initiatives. Improved awareness among Indigenous Australians.

a. Some legacy information (PDFs) is not yet fully compliant.

Making a difference at the National Indigenous Youth Parliament

Arrin Hazelbane is a young Warai man with family connections to the west coast of South Australia and the Finnis River region of the Northern Territory. Arrin is currently studying law at the University of Adelaide. His aim is to pursue a career in politics, with aspirations to give back to his community and help other Indigenous people to break down barriers.

Ineke Wallis is from the East Arnhem region and is currently working as a governance and executive administration officer for the East Arnhem Regional Council in Nhulunbuy. As someone who speaks her mind, Ineke provides a vital link between the council and community representatives and she aspires to become an elected representative of her people.

Ineke and Arrin were among 50 young Indigenous leaders, aged 16–25, who took part in the second National Indigenous Youth Parliament. Once again, the youth parliament was a collaboration between the AEC, the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

The youth parliament programme included a visit to Parliament House to observe question time and meet and learn from members and senators. Arrin spoke at length to his South Australian representatives, Mark Butler MP, Senator Anne Ruston and Senator Penny Wright. Ineke received first-hand advice from Northern Territory Senator Nova Peris, the Hon Warren Snowdon MP and Natasha Griggs MP.

Participants also talked informally with political leaders such as the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion; the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Bill Shorten MP; the Chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council, Mr Warren Mundine; and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP – who attended as the representative of the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson. Many of the politicians who met and spoke with the youth parliamentarians later noted that the experience had reinvigorated their own enthusiasm and idealism.

Participants also attended a reception at Government House with His Excellency General the Hon Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd) and visited the Embassy of the United States to meet the US Ambassador to Australia, John Berry.

The 2014 National Indigenous Youth Parliament, held in May 2014, was an opportunity for young Indigenous Australians to experience Australia's electoral and parliamentary system first-hand. For Ineke Wallis and Arrin Hazelbane, the youth parliament was another important step towards a career in public life.



Ineke Wallis (left) and Arrin Hazelbane (right) at the 2014 National Indigenous Youth Parliament.

On Saturday, 31 May 2014 the participants arrived at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House for the official opening of the two-day simulated parliament.

The symbolism was very powerful as Arrin and Ineke took their place alongside the other future Indigenous leaders in the chamber where, in 1962, legislation giving Indigenous people the right to enrol and vote in federal elections had been debated more than 50 years earlier.

Arrin passionately debated the Indigenous Juvenile Justice and Alternative Sentencing Youth Bill 2014. Ineke debated the Indigenous Retirement Age and Access to Superannuation Youth Bill 2014. Their desire, and that of all the participants, to effect change and give a voice to Indigenous people was evident throughout the week.

'[The National Indigenous Youth Parliament] enabled me to understand the importance of voting and not to underestimate each individual's democratic rights', said Arrin. 'I am now a part of a collective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth voice. We are the voice of the future.'

'It's important for our mob to get educated and close the gap, as this is the only way for our people to have a brighter future', Ineke said. 'Being with so many great inspirational young Indigenous people made me see we can do it if we stick together.'

