

# ANNUAL REPORT

2016–17



VOTING NEAR  
YOU

# ANNUAL REPORT

2016–17

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# Letter of transmittal



## Electoral Commissioner

Senator the Hon. Scott Ryan  
Special Minister of State  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the year ending 30 June 2017.

The report has been prepared for the purposes of:

- (i) section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*; and
- (ii) section 17 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

As required by section 10 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, I also certify that I am satisfied that the AEC:

- has prepared fraud risk assessments and a fraud control plan
- has in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection procedures and processes that meet the specific needs of the AEC
- has taken all reasonable measures to deal with fraud relating to the AEC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Rogers', is written over the 'Yours sincerely' text and extends downwards across the date.

Tom Rogers

28 September 2017



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# About this report

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This report outlines the performance of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the financial year ending 30 June 2017. It informs all Australians – including Members of Parliament, political parties, interest groups, candidates, electoral authorities, government departments and agencies, students, teachers and the media – about AEC activities and services. It also describes the AEC's performance against its agency purpose and directions as set out in the AEC Corporate Plan for 2016–20, with reference to updated 2016–17 deliverables specified in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2017–18.

The report accords with the requirements of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act); the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act); and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule for annual reports.

There are five chapters:

- 1. Year in review** – a summary of key developments and trends by the Electoral Commissioner
- 2. About us** – our role, values and principles, outcome and programs structure, organisational structure and leadership, and guiding legislation
- 3. Performance report** – reports against the purpose and five agency directions specified in the 2016–20 AEC Corporate Plan with reference to the Portfolio Budget Statements, plus additional information on achievements to complete the AEC performance story
- 4. Managing the AEC** – governance arrangements, strategic and business planning, risk management, managing resources and assets, compliance and external scrutiny
- 5. Financial reporting** – financial performance for 2016–17, including audited financial statements.

These chapters are supported by:

- appendices and reader guides at the end of the report
- 'spotlight' sections throughout the report highlighting particular developments, activities and outcomes.

## Tools to assist readers

This publication has a table of contents, lists of figures and tables, an alphabetical index, a list of requirements, cross references, an abbreviations and acronyms section, and a glossary.

Visit [annualreport.aec.gov.au/2017](http://annualreport.aec.gov.au/2017) to view this report online. A PDF version is also available.

Refer to page ii for accessible services.



A man with a beard and short brown hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt, is looking down at a document he is holding. The background is blurred, showing other people in a public space. The text 'SECTION 1 YEAR IN REVIEW' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# SECTION 1 YEAR IN REVIEW

The AEC transitioned from one electoral cycle to the next and made some significant advances to improve the voter experience.



**LARGEST  
—EVER—  
FEDERAL ELECTION**

---

**95%**  
**ENROLMENT RATE  
SUSTAINED**

---



**FOCUS ON  
CONTINUOUS  
IMPROVEMENT**

---

**In this section**

- 2** Commissioner's review
- 6** AEC highlights 2016–17

## Commissioner's review

---



2016–17 was a busy and productive year for the AEC, defined by the delivery of a successful double dissolution election and the largest ever agency evaluation of electoral operations aimed at improving the voter experience.

While the polls closed just two days into the reporting year, the intensity remained as the AEC moved quickly to capture valuable information from the election, and to drive further operational improvements in an increasingly complex environment.

The 2016 election was the largest in the nation's history, continuing a trend that has placed increased pressure on the agency's limited resources. At the same time, it underscored the community's expectations for high-quality electoral services, fast and accurate results, and world-class electoral integrity.

To deepen our understanding of what worked, what could be improved and the emerging challenges, the AEC embarked on its most comprehensive election evaluation ever, placing every aspect of its 2016 electoral experience under the microscope.

After detailed analysis, the AEC identified critical new work priorities to help improve operations for future federal elections.

It has been a dynamic time for our organisation; transitioning from one electoral cycle to the next and taking an important new turn in our 'change journey' towards greater modernisation and continuous agency improvement.

### The 2016 federal election

The double dissolution election held on Saturday 2 July 2016 was the largest, most scrutinised and complex election ever conducted by the AEC.

There were 15.6 million people enrolled to vote, which saw the AEC exceed its target of more than 95 per cent of eligible Australians enrolled; and almost 75,000 temporary election staff employed to help deliver the event. Record numbers of political parties and candidates registered to participate.

The election was delivered in difficult and challenging circumstances. The Senate voting reforms to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, were the biggest change to the voting system in 30 years. To implement that change, the AEC adopted new technologies and modified electoral systems and processes just three months out from the event. This included a new end-to-end solution to count and distribute Senate preferences, using scanning and image recognition technology.

The election was successfully delivered despite some initial issues on polling day in relation to the supply of ballot papers in a small number of polling stations, and longer than usual queues in some places.

It demonstrated the strong commitment from AEC staff to deliver a federal election, as well as the importance of systems and process enhancements arising from the Keelty and Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) reviews after the previous election. The AEC has now addressed all of the Keelty and ANAO recommendations – a significant milestone for the agency.

In addition, the election highlighted the need for further improvements to keep pace with community expectations and ensure the electoral system can deliver high-quality and high-integrity elections in the future.

## Election evaluation

To determine the way forward, the AEC convened a formal evaluation team in August 2016 to review all aspects of the election and recommend operational enhancements for the agency.

In December, the team reported eight key lessons learned in areas such as planning, information management and communication practices, resourcing, training and recruitment.

In response to the evaluation, the AEC identified 13 cross-agency work priorities to be implemented by the AEC in time for the next election.

## Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

As part of the evaluation of the 2016 federal election, the agency appeared before the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on several occasions. It also made numerous submissions to its inquiry into the 2016 federal election.

The 'Your vote will help shape Australia' paper people campaign for the 2016 federal election



In its third interim report delivered in June 2017, the Committee commended the AEC for its willingness to adopt the Keely reforms and our proactive efforts to identify ways of transforming our culture and processes. The Committee found the current model for conducting elections, including legacy IT systems and the recruitment and training of temporary election officials, is at the end of its useful life.

The Committee noted that, while the AEC has done its best to innovate within its current significant legislative and resource constraints, further meaningful innovation and modernisation are unlikely without legislative reform and significant investment.

The Committee recommended the Australian Government consider additional funding for the AEC. This would allow for further automation, IT upgrades and system replacements, new employment models for recruiting and training the election workforce, as well as ongoing legislative reforms to address unnecessary prescriptions and other technical issues within the Electoral Act.

## Maintaining confidence

Despite these challenges, the AEC recorded some significant achievements throughout 2016–17. The enrolment rate was sustained above 95 per cent for 12 months, online enrolments surged and the divergence between the federal and state electoral rolls was significantly reduced. We also conducted three electoral redistributions and important work was done to boost the Indigenous participation rate in electoral activity. The AEC also continued to build strategic partnerships and assist overseas electoral administration bodies in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Myanmar and Fiji.

The agency operated within its allocated budget, with improved business practices and information technology efficiencies assisting the AEC's overall financial position.

Recent research<sup>1</sup> shows confidence in the administration of our electoral processes remains high. The AEC is keen to maintain this confidence by working with government on solutions that will enable Australians to enjoy a modern, secure and fit-for-purpose electoral system in the future.

## 2018 and beyond

While much of the focus in 2016–17 was at a strategic level, operationally the AEC also worked hard to prepare for the successful delivery of the next federal election.

In the coming year, the agency will move into the mobilisation phase of its election readiness framework, testing systems and processes, as well as equipping staff to deliver an election as soon as it is called. In addition, there will be a longer-term focus on our organisational design and sustainable employment models, as well as ongoing modernisation and security of our systems.

It will also be an exciting time as we prepare to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* late in the year, and explore the vast range of opportunities to build on our reputation as one of the world's best electoral administration bodies.

1 Norris P & Gromping M: Electoral Integrity Project report, *Populist Threats to Electoral Integrity: The Year in Elections, 2016-17*. Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Research Working Paper Series.  
<https://www.hks.harvard.edu>





National Indigenous youth parliamentarians visit Parliament House in Canberra

## SPOTLIGHT

# Prime Minister opens National Indigenous Youth Parliament

The Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP, led celebrations for the opening of the third National Indigenous Youth Parliament in May 2017.

Fifty Indigenous young Australians travelled to Canberra to attend the week-long event, which aimed to build leadership skills and reflect on the achievements of Indigenous Australians in shaping our democracy.

Prime Minister Turnbull was joined by Opposition Leader Bill Shorten, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs Nigel Scullion, friends and families of the 1967 referendum campaigners, along with many other distinguished guests.

As well as developing leadership skills, the youth parliament provided participants with an opportunity to advocate on important issues for closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage.

In his welcome address, Prime Minister Turnbull reflected on the milestones that have helped Australia chart a course towards reconciliation and healing, including the 50th anniversary of the 1967 referendum, 25 years since the Mabo decision and 20 years since the report *Bringing them home: the national inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families*.



Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull opens the National Indigenous Youth Parliament

# **FEDERAL ELECTION**

**15,882,788**

**AUSTRALIANS**

ENROLLED TO VOTE



**342.1M**  
AGENCY BUDGET



**TOTAL  
ONLINE  
ENROLMENTS**

**LARGEST  
EVER**



**ALL 32  
KEELTY & ANAO  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
CLOSED OFF**

**19  
SUBMISSIONS  
TO JSCEM**

**150  
ELECTORAL  
DIVISIONS  
MANAGED**

**812  
INDUSTRIAL &  
COMMERCIAL  
ELECTIONS &  
BALLOTS HELD**

**766  
ROLL SERVICES  
PROVIDED FOR  
55 STATE, TERRITORY &  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
ELECTORAL EVENTS**

**\$286.6M  
TOTAL COST OF  
ELECTION**

**2.7M+**  
FEDERAL  
ENROLMENT  
TRANSACTIONS

**88.1%**  
RETENTION  
RATE

**2,517**  
EDUCATION  
SESSIONS

**5M+**  
WEBSITE PAGES  
VIEWED

**381**  
REGISTRATIONS OF  
INTEREST FOR  
NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS YOUTH  
PARLIAMENT

**837** REGULAR  
STAFF



**74,893** TEMPORARY  
ELECTION STAFF

ENROLMENT RATE SUSTAINED

**OVER 95%**  
FOR 12 MONTHS

**3** ELECTORAL  
REDISTRIBUTIONS

- NORTHERN TERRITORY
- QUEENSLAND
- TASMANIA



**NEW POLITICAL  
PARTIES  
REGISTERED**

**184,000**

**PUBLIC  
ENQUIRIES**





## SECTION 2

# ABOUT THE AEC

A strong focus on electoral integrity,  
through the values of quality, agility and  
professionalism



**=ONE=**  
**AGENCY**  
**PURPOSE**

---

**150**  
**ELECTORAL DIVISIONS**  
**ADMINISTERED**

---

**837**  
**REGULAR STAFF**

---

---

### In this section

- 10** What is the Australian Electoral Commission?
- 10** Values and principles
- 10** Outcome and program
- 11** Organisational structure and leadership
- 15** Guiding legislation

## What is the Australian Electoral Commission?

---

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is an independent statutory authority established by the Australian Government with a purpose to:

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 programs.

We do this by:

- conducting successful electoral events, including federal elections, by-elections and referendums
- ensuring confidence in the electoral roll
- administering political party registrations and financial disclosure
- supporting electoral redistributions
- undertaking public awareness activities.

## Values and principles

---

The AEC's values of electoral integrity through quality, agility and professionalism inform the agency's strategic planning and day-to-day operations.

The AEC is also guided by the Australian Public Service ICARE values:

- impartiality
- committed to service
- accountable
- respectful
- ethical.

We continue to strengthen our focus on electoral integrity, and on understanding and responding to the expectations of the public and the Parliament.

## Outcome and program

---

The AEC has one 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 programs.

This outcome is delivered via one program – Deliver Electoral Events. This program has six areas of performance for 2016–17, as outlined below. The program areas are reported separately in the Portfolio Budget Statements for the AEC (Budget-Related Paper No. 1.8) available on the Department of Finance website:

- federal elections, by-elections and referendums
- electoral roll management
- support services for electoral redistributions
- party registrations and financial disclosure
- industrial and commercial elections
- public awareness.

## Organisational structure and leadership

### National office

At 30 June 2017, the National Office in Canberra consisted of eight key functional areas:

- Legal and Procurement
- Education and Communications
- Election Planning, Policy and Operations
- Roll Management
- Disclosure, Assurance and Engagement
- Finance and Business Services
- Information Technology
- People Services.

### State/territory offices

The AEC's state offices are located in each state capital city of Australia. The Northern Territory office is in Darwin. Divisional offices in the Australian Capital Territory office are managed by the NSW State Manager, except during election periods, when an Australian Electoral Officer for the Australian Capital Territory is appointed.

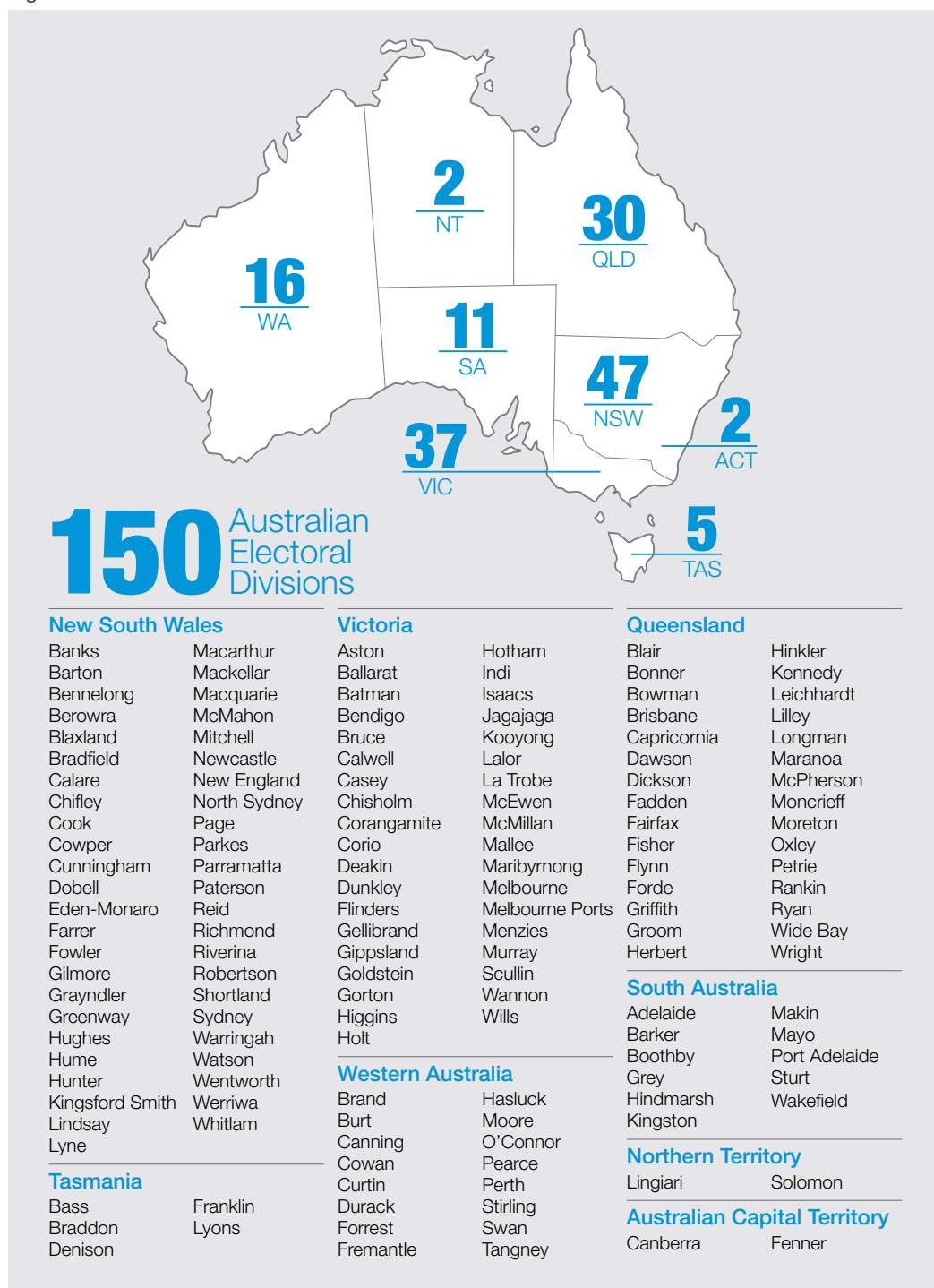
### Divisional offices and electoral divisions

Divisional offices are responsible for electoral administration within each of the 150 electoral divisions. Each division is represented by a member of the House of Representatives. Divisional offices administer the conduct of electoral events, manage the electoral roll and carry out public awareness activities. Australia's electoral divisions as at 30 June 2017 are shown in Figure 1.

#### INTERESTING FACT

The smallest federal electorate is Grayndler in NSW – 32km<sup>2</sup>.  
The largest is Durack in WA – 1,629,858km<sup>2</sup>

Figure 1: Australia's 150 electoral divisions





Senior Executive Group 2016-17. Back row left to right: Stephen Blackburn, Anna Stewart, Thomas Ryan, Martyn Hagan, David Lang, Warwick Austin, Steve Kennedy, Bernadette O'Meara, David Molnar. Front row left to right: Jonathan Nicholl, Fleur Hill, Andrew Gately, Jeff Pope, Tom Rogers, Tim Courtney, Stuart Ore, Paul Pirani, Gina Dario. Absent: Gabrielle Paten

## Electoral Commissioner

The Electoral Commissioner, Mr Tom Rogers, as the Chief Executive Officer of the AEC, both leads and is responsible for day-to-day management of the organisation. He is also the accountable authority under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

## The Commission

The Commission is appointed by the Governor-General and comprises the Chairperson, who must be an active or retired judge of the Federal Court of Australia, the Electoral Commissioner and a non-judicial member.

The functions of the Commission are set out in sections 7 and 7A of the Electoral Act. The Commission has various powers under the Electoral Act that can only be exercised by the Commission, particularly in relation to electoral redistributions, and political party funding and disclosure. Otherwise the Commission acts through the Electoral Commissioner, who is the CEO of the AEC (section 18 of the Electoral Act).

As at 30 June 2017, the members of the Commission were:

- **Chairperson:** Hon. Dennis Cowdroy, OAM QC
- **Electoral Commissioner:** Tom Rogers
- **Non-judicial member:** David Kalisch.

## Executive management

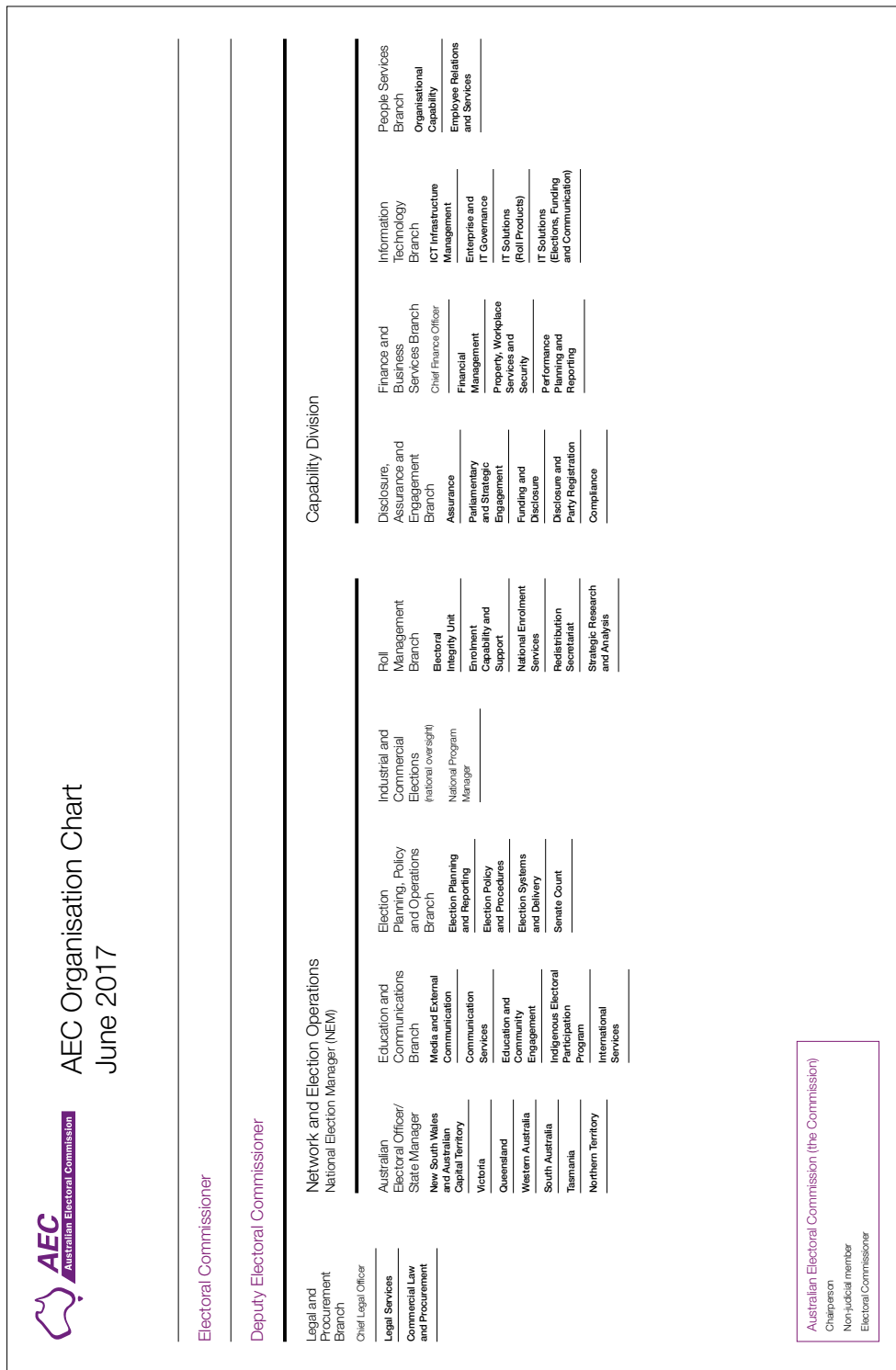
The AEC's organisational structure and leadership are shown in Figure 2. Assisting the Electoral Commissioner are the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, two First Assistant Commissioners, seven Assistant Commissioners, the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer.

They are supported by the State Managers, who also hold statutory appointments as Australian Electoral Officer for their respective state or territory (with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory, see State/territory offices on page 11).

The First Assistant Commissioners are each responsible for a division. These are:

- **Network and Election Operations Division** – the Australian Electoral Officer/State Manager and Divisional network, Election Planning, Policy and Operations, Education and Communications, Roll Management, and the Industrial and Commercial Elections Program. The First Assistant Commissioner also performs the role of National Election Manager.
- **Capability Division** – Finance and Business Services, Information Technology, Disclosure Assurance and Engagement, and People Services.

Figure 2: Organisational chart and leadership structure at 30 June 2017



## Guiding legislation

The Electoral Act establishes the AEC's roles and responsibilities as an independent statutory authority. Table 1 sets out the legislative instruments that guide our functions.

**Table 1: AEC legislative framework**

| Legislative instrument                                               | AEC function                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005</i>                | Conduct Torres Strait Regional Authority elections                                                                              |
| <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>                               | Conduct federal elections                                                                                                       |
|                                                                      | Maintain and update the Commonwealth electoral roll                                                                             |
|                                                                      | Promote public awareness of electoral and parliamentary matters through information and education programs                      |
|                                                                      | Provide international electoral assistance in cases approved by the Minister for Foreign Affairs                                |
|                                                                      | Conduct and promote research into electoral matters and other matters that relate to AEC functions                              |
|                                                                      | Register political parties                                                                                                      |
|                                                                      | Pay public funding to election candidates and parties, and publish financial disclosure returns of political parties and others |
|                                                                      | Provide support to the independent redistribution process that determines representation entitlements                           |
| <i>Electoral and Referendum Regulations 1940</i>                     | Reporting of spending on advertising and market research generally (not restricted to electoral matters)                        |
|                                                                      | Conduct federal elections and referendums and provide voter information                                                         |
| <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> | Manage activities in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development                                     |
| <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i>                                            | Conduct protected action ballots                                                                                                |
| <i>Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009</i>                 | Conduct industrial elections                                                                                                    |
| <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>                               | Hold and release documents                                                                                                      |
| <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>    | Management of Commonwealth resources                                                                                            |
| <i>Public Service Act 1999</i>                                       | Ensure the effective and fair employment, management and leadership of AEC employees                                            |
| <i>Privacy Act 1988</i>                                              | Store, use and disclose personal information                                                                                    |
| <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>                    | Conduct federal referendums                                                                                                     |
| <i>Representation Act 1983</i>                                       | Set numbers for Senate elections                                                                                                |
| <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>                               | Implement and report on matters concerning the health, safety and welfare of AEC workers                                        |





## SECTION 3

# PERFORMANCE REPORTING

The AEC reports on its performance against the agency purpose and five agency directions specified in the AEC Corporate Plan 2016–20



# ONE FEDERAL ELECTION

---

## ~ONE~ ELECTION EVALUATION

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## 13<sup>NEW</sup> WORK PRIORITIES

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# Performance against the agency purpose and directions

This section reports on the AEC’s performance against the agency purpose, five agency directions and corporate performance indicators set out in the AEC Corporate Plan 2016–20.

The agency directions are long-term strategic objectives designed to ensure the AEC meets its purpose and promotes agency-wide continuous improvement. The directions are supported by corporate performance indicators that are reviewed annually. Many of the corporate performance indicators are ongoing, but indicators that relate to election delivery evolve according to the phases of the AEC’s own election readiness framework.

The Corporate Plan agency directions both draw from and contribute to the AEC performance criteria set out for 2016–17 under ‘AEC Program 1.1 – Deliver electoral events’, available in the Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) on the Department of Finance website.

A matrix chart mapping the PBS performance criteria to the Corporate Plan agency directions is shown at Table 2.

Table 2: Mapping of PBS performance criteria for 2016–17 to Corporate Plan agency directions 2016–20

| PBS PERFORMANCE CRITERIA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Federal elections, by-elections and referendums</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Federal electoral events are successfully delivered.</li><li>Maintain ability to conduct a federal electoral event within a timeframe as assessed by the Electoral Commissioner.</li><li>Timely conduct of redistribution activities.</li><li>Industrial elections, Protected Action Ballots, and Torres Strait Regional Authority elections are delivered in accordance with relevant legislation and rules.</li></ul> |
| <b>Electoral roll management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>High level of confidence in the electoral roll.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Party registrations and financial disclosure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Party registration processed in accordance with the Electoral Act.</li><li>Financial disclosures obtained and placed on the public record in accordance with the Electoral Act.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Public awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deliver communication, education and public awareness activities to inform all Australians of electoral matters</li><li>Information is timely and accurate, uses appropriate technology and channels, and meets accessibility standards.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

AEC CORPORATE PLAN AGENCY DIRECTIONS

| Deliver a changed model for elections and referenda | Govern the organisation for quality and assurance | Professionalise the workforce | Re-establish the reputation of the AEC | Build an agile and responsive organisation |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ✓                                                   | ✓                                                 | ✓                             |                                        | ✓                                          |
|                                                     | ✓                                                 |                               | ✓                                      | ✓                                          |
|                                                     | ✓                                                 | ✓                             |                                        |                                            |
|                                                     |                                                   | ✓                             | ✓                                      | ✓                                          |

# Statement by the Electoral Commissioner

I, as the accountable authority of the Australian Electoral Commission, present the 2016–17 annual performance statements of the Australian Electoral Commission, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

Tom Rogers  
Electoral Commissioner  
28 September 2017

## Annual performance statement





Reporting tables against agency directions and linked to aspects of the agency purpose/outcome.

Figure 3: Performance of corporate performance indicators under each agency direction



## AGENCY DIRECTION 1

### Deliver a changed model for electoral events

| Performance criteria                                                                                                                                                  | Link to purpose                        | Source                           | Result                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1 Federal electoral events are successfully delivered                                                                                                               | Efficient delivery of polling services | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Partly met (9/10)<br> |
| 1.2 Maintain ability to conduct a federal electoral event within a timeframe as assessed by the Electoral Commissioner                                                | Efficient delivery of polling services | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Partly met (9/10)<br> |
| 1.3 Evaluation and reform of election practices is implemented according to election readiness phases                                                                 | Efficient delivery of polling services | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Met<br>               |
| 1.4 Industrial elections, protected action ballots and Torres Strait Regional Authority elections are delivered in accordance with the relevant legislation and rules | Efficient delivery of polling services | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Partly met (8/10)<br> |

#### Explanation

**Criterion 1.1** was met with the delivery of the 2016 federal election in accordance with the Federal Election Service Plan. Four service standards are outlined in the Service Plan. Some performance indicators under the standards fell just short of their 100 per cent targets but this result did not materially affect election delivery.

**Criterion 1.2** was partly met with the AEC's election readiness framework refined and a new iteration of the Election Ready Road Map developed following the 2016 election. Two road map activities did not meet specified timeframes in 2016–17 due to the introduction of 2017 work priorities flowing from the election evaluation, and changes to the agency's learning and development approach.

**Criterion 1.3** was met with the AEC comprehensively evaluating its delivery of the 2016 election and communicating key findings to staff in early 2017. The evaluation identified key insights and lessons to be learned. We defined four areas for further enhancement, along with a series of work priorities to be implemented in time for the next election.

**Criterion 1.4** was partly met with a review of the AEC's delivery of industrial and commercial elections under consideration. We continue to implement improvements to the Industrial and Commercial Elections program to ensure consistent delivery of services in accordance with legislation, rules and AEC quality standards. In 2016–17, 812 industrial elections, fee-for-service elections/ballots and protected action ballots were delivered.

## What we did

The focus of agency direction one is to evolve and enhance the model for delivering electoral events within both the legislative framework defined under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and resources available to the AEC.

The 2016 federal election was the largest ever undertaken by the AEC, involving a high degree of complexity. This included a double dissolution election being conducted against a backdrop of Senate voting changes and the AEC's own reform agenda. The AEC successfully delivered this election within the parameters defined by the 2016 Federal Election Service Plan. The majority of performance indicators under the four service standards were met. The election writ was returned on time and there were no challenges submitted to the Court of Disputed Returns concerning AEC conduct.

### INTERESTING FACT

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act* turns 100 in 2018

An election evaluation began immediately after the 2016 election with a brief to review the agency's election delivery and recommend future enhancements. Staff observations and debriefs on AEC processes, systems, materials and policies assisted the evaluation. We identified four areas as a focus for targeted enhancements prior to the next federal election:

- consolidation and coordination
- planning
- recruitment and training
- communication and information management.

These have been translated into a series of work priorities that will be implemented in 2017–18.





In 2016–17, the AEC moved through the 'evaluate and learn' phase of election readiness and into the 'implement change phase'. At 30 June 2017, the agency was largely on track with election readiness.

## Areas for further improvement

With election delivery it can be difficult to anticipate areas for further improvement until after the event. Immediately following the 2016 federal election, the AEC identified a number of areas of focus for the evaluation, including analysing the voter experience and where the AEC can further improve its service delivery. Heading into the next federal electoral event the AEC is focused on analysing key data and ensuring plans are in place to improve queuing times and ballot paper supply.

## AGENCY DIRECTION 2

### Govern the organisation for quality and assurance

| Performance criteria                                                                   | Link to purpose                                                            | Source                           | Result                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.1 The governance framework is effective in supporting the AEC to meet its objectives | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Met<br>               |
| 2.2 High level of confidence in the electoral roll                                     | Active electoral roll management                                           | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Met<br>               |
| 2.3 Timely conduct of redistributions                                                  | Active electoral roll management                                           | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Met<br>               |
| 2.4 The organisation is structured to support the achievement of the agency directions | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 8 | Partly met (6/10)<br> |

#### Explanation

**Criterion 2.1** was met with the AEC's governance framework implemented and agency policies and frameworks up to date. In 2016–17, the AEC reviewed and strengthened the purpose, decision-making and oversight role of AEC governance committees. The agency's assurance and performance reporting frameworks continued to meet agency and Commonwealth accountability requirements and support continuous improvement.

**Criterion 2.2** was met with the completeness of the electoral roll maintained and a sustained enrolment rate above 95 per cent reported throughout 2016–17. Increased use of the AEC's Online Enrolment Service, delivery of the Federal Direct Enrolment and Update (FDEU) program and a federal election during the period, were important factors in achieving this outcome. In the 12 months to 30 June 2017, 29.7 per cent of all enrolments were completed online and 38.6 per cent resulted from FDEU.

**Criterion 2.3** was met with the AEC providing assistance for the redistribution or 'redrawing' of electoral divisions in the Northern Territory in accordance with the Electoral Act. With the Northern Territory redistribution completed, a further two redistributions are underway in Queensland and Tasmania and due to be finalised in 2017–18.

**Criterion 2.4** was partly met with the AEC commencing planning on a new organisational design to respond over the medium term to increasingly complex electoral operations and future agency demands. The agency was allocated funding through the Public Service Modernisation Fund in the Portfolio Budget Statements to implement the organisational design during 2017–18.



## What we did

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The AEC's governance framework was further supported in 2016–17. A program of assurance, audit and fraud control activities provided appropriate assurance and oversight over agency activities, including through the 2016 federal election and post-election period. Significant milestones achieved during the year included formal closure of outstanding Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and Keely review recommendations relating to the 2013 federal election, and full compliance with fraud control requirements under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the Commonwealth Fraud Control Policy. Similarly, the AEC's performance reporting framework continued to evolve, with the link between internal business planning and reporting, and external performance reporting continuing to be strengthened. The reporting framework also supported regular senior level discussion on agency performance.

Maintaining a high level of confidence in the electoral roll is a cornerstone for the successful delivery of electoral events. The completeness of the Commonwealth electoral roll, reflected in the enrolment rate, was maintained at or above 95 per cent across the financial year. Strategies to significantly reduce divergent enrolments between the Commonwealth electoral and State electoral rolls are also showing results, with a 45 per cent decrease in these enrolments between the end of 2015 and June 2017. Importantly, results for enrolments processed in the year ending 31 March 2017, indicate that 97.5 per cent of enrolments were processed without essential field errors (just short of the 100 per cent target) and 92.8 per cent were processed without error in supporting fields.

Following an ANAO recommendation, the AEC also commenced quarterly publishing of divisional enrolment rates and performance against key enrolment indicators on the AEC website, increasing the integrity and transparency of enrolment performance.

In 2016–17, the AEC applied a range of integrity measures following the 2016 federal election to uphold and enforce the compulsory voting system. Following the 2016 election, instances of possible multiple or non-voting were identified. In September 2016, the AEC sent 969,586 notices to apparent non-voters, a 46 per cent increase from the 2013 election.

## Areas for further improvement



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Maintaining a complete and accurate electoral roll is an ongoing challenge, but directing as many electors to the Online Enrolment Service as possible throughout the electoral cycle enables the AEC to continue to ensure a high level of confidence in the roll.

In 2017–18, the agency will progress implementation of a new organisational design to ensure the AEC's workforce is more proficient across operational and strategic activities, and capable of responding quickly and effectively to change.

### AGENCY DIRECTION 3

## Professionalise the workforce

| Performance criteria                                                                                                                      | Link to purpose                                                            | Source                           | Result                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.1 Staff understand their roles, expectations and accountabilities                                                                       | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Partly met (7/10)<br> |
| 3.2 Management capability of key cohorts addressed in development plans and delivered with 90% participating in courses where appropriate | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Partly met (5/10)<br> |

### Explanation

**Criterion 3.1** was partly met with a new iteration of the Election Ready Road Map following the 2016 election and the start of the ‘implement change phase’ of electoral readiness. Compliance with the road map and accountability for activities and timeframes, were regularly communicated to staff and reported on monthly to the AEC’s National Election Delivery Committee.

**Criterion 3.2** was partly met. Opportunities to develop management capability were provided to select AEC staff. Analysis and planning were also undertaken in this area through a review of the agency’s learning and development approach. In 2017–18, the AEC will pursue further options for building the leadership and management capability of supervisors to support individuals and teams.

### What we did

The evaluation of the 2016 federal election and the outcomes of a recent high level review of learning and development have identified areas where improvements can be made in the short term, and organisational learning enhanced over the long term. In response to the key findings from the review, the AEC has implemented changes to strengthen the governance and coordination of learning and development within the agency under the direction of the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, and through establishing a Learning Governance Committee.

The AEC introduced a new approach to mandatory training with all new and existing Australian Public Service (APS) staff required to complete five mandatory eLearning courses:

- work health and safety
- workplace security
- procurement and contract management (updated for 2017)
- fraud awareness (updated for 2017)
- positive workplace.

Approximately 98 per cent of AEC staff completed the mandatory training. The selected eLearning courses provided staff with corporate training appropriate and relevant to their roles and helped the AEC comply with broader legislative and government policy requirements.

In 2017, the AEC's organisational design review commenced assessing role descriptions, and collecting metadata for all positions according to core function. This work, once completed, will identify staff responsibilities and accountabilities, and will support the transition to a new organisational structure commencing in 2017–18.

Opportunities to develop management capability were provided to select AEC staff – a senior executive development day was held in 2016 and some states conducted courses with a management focus for identified staff. In addition, the AEC is supporting executive coaching initiatives for Senior Executive Service (SES) and Executive Level 2 managers.

Further enhancements to election-specific training activities for the AEC's temporary and APS staff are underway in preparation for the next federal election. This includes reviewing all content and modes of delivery. A series of exercises and rehearsals are also being developed and incorporated into training that will ensure staff understand and have an opportunity to practise key election processes.

## Areas for further improvement

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The AEC will continue to work on ensuring staff understand their roles, expectations and accountabilities, and will review and align its approach to developing management capability in line with the findings from key reviews undertaken in 2016–17.




The recently established Learning Coordination Unit will drive and coordinate a whole-of-agency approach to learning and development, in consultation with key internal stakeholders. This is to ensure learning and development activities remain relevant, focused on business outcomes and build capability. The Learning Coordination Unit will also work with the Learning Governance Committee to ensure effective governance of the whole-of-agency approach to learning and development. The Committee oversees the development, allocation of funding and implementation of learning and development initiatives that best support the agency's priorities and strategic direction.

### INTERESTING FACT

Almost one million voters were added to the roll between the 2013 and 2016 federal elections

## AGENCY DIRECTION 4

### Re-establish the reputation of the AEC

| Performance criteria                                                                                                     | Link to purpose                                                            | Source                           | Result                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1 Productive relationships are maintained with the Minister, Parliament, key agencies and other stakeholders           | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Met<br> |
| 4.2 High-quality services delivered with effective management of issues in line with relevant legislation and agreements | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Met<br> |
| 4.3 Information is timely and accurate, uses appropriate technology and channels, and meets accessibility standards      | Targeted education and public awareness programs                           | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Met<br> |

#### Explanation

**Criterion 4.1** was met with the AEC continuing to maintain productive relationships and meet obligations to the Special Minister of State, Parliament and other key stakeholders through the delivery of high-quality electoral information and advice.

**Criterion 4.2** was met with the AEC providing a wide range of roll products and services to:

1. State and territory electoral authorities
2. Other government departments and agencies
3. Federal parliamentarians
4. Political parties
5. Media and electoral researchers
6. Private sector organisations in accordance with the Electoral Act.

**Criterion 4.3** was met with a continued focus by the AEC on providing a wide range of accessible information to the Australian public about their voting obligations and electoral services. The AEC's public awareness approach included delivery of an extensive advertising campaign up to the 2016 federal election and support for the third National Indigenous Youth Parliament in May 2017.

## What we did

Maintaining productive working relationships with Ministers, Parliament, key agencies and other stakeholders was a priority for the AEC throughout the year. Relevant electoral information and briefings were provided to the Special Minister of State, keeping the Minister appropriately informed. The Minister referred 131 letters to the AEC for the provision of input or advice. Following the 2016 federal election, the AEC provided one primary submission and 18 supplementary submissions to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2016 Federal Election. The AEC's submissions focused on the agency's performance in delivering the 2016 federal election and future changes required to ensure Australia continues to enjoy modern, safe, high-integrity elections.

The AEC delivered an extensive communication campaign on the election and changes to Senate voting requirements right up to election day on 2 July 2016. The AEC's campaign won a Public Relations Institute of Australia ACT award and was highly commended at the national awards. On election day, 1.8 million users visited the AEC website, generating 4.4 million page views. The online tally room is the official record of federal election results and provided progressive tallies from election night through to the finalisation of counting. On election night, more than 200,000 users generated 3.7 million page views of the online tally room.

Throughout the year, the agency continued to provide a range of education information and products to the public, students and teachers. The website 'AEC for schools' hosts a range of education materials for classroom use and averaged 9,000 visits a month in 2016–17. The new publication *Voting in Australia* remains the most requested resource. There were also a further 87,564 visitors to the National Electoral Education Centre at Old Parliament House.

The AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Program delivered a range of culturally appropriate strategies to support Indigenous electoral participation at the 2016 federal election. The AEC reviewed its approach following the election, with a range of recommendations being built into the program at a national and state level to continue to improve services to Indigenous electors. The AEC's efforts to support Indigenous engagement in the electoral system were also advanced by the third National Indigenous Youth Parliament held in May 2017. The AEC, in conjunction with the YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy, supported a week-long program for 50 young Indigenous participants from across Australia and the Torres Strait. The program culminated in a two-day parliament held at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.

## Areas for further improvement

The AEC will continue its focus on upholding the agency's reputation through actively engaging with the Minister and the Parliament, as well as building a strong and effective relationship with the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.


We will also work to improve services to assist the Australian public meet their enrolment and voting obligations, including a renewed focus on the delivery of high-quality electoral services. This will include an ongoing focus on public awareness, electoral education and information activities ahead of the next election.

### INTERESTING FACT

The Division of Canberra has the most electors with 143,912, and the Division of Solomon has the least with 68,487 electors

AGENCY DIRECTION 5

Re-establish the reputation of the AEC

| Performance criterion                                                                                              | Link to purpose                                                            | Source                           | Result                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1 Create an environment to encourage innovative practices to support the AEC and the conduct of electoral events | Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters | AEC 2016–20 Corporate Plan, p. 9 | Partly met (5/10)<br> |

Explanation

**Criterion 5.1** was partly met through the AEC seeking to leverage technology where possible, to deliver high-quality electoral services. The agency successfully implemented Senate voting reforms at the 2016 federal election through innovative use of scanning technology. The AEC conducted several trials using SMS text and email contact channels to remind electors to update their enrolment, with an estimated 1.2 million emails and 1.6 million SMS messages sent in 2016–17. Activities also encouraged electors to interact online, with 29.7 per cent of all enrolments throughout the year occurring through the AEC’s Online Enrolment Service.

What we did

The amendments to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* to introduce Senate voting reforms were the most significant change to the federal voting system in 30 years. Over a 12-week period before the 2016 election, the AEC mobilised new technology and modified electoral systems and processes to scan Senate ballot papers and streamline counting. This solution was successfully delivered and the AEC won an award at the 2016 Australian Information Industry Association’s Awards ACT. Current legislative and resource constraints within which the AEC operates, restrict our ability to drive and lead innovation in the delivery of electoral events.

The AEC information technology system is critical for the efficient delivery of federal elections and electoral services. Some key IT infrastructure was refreshed and the agency moved to cloud hosting for our public-facing websites. This ensures the AEC can deliver scalable services that allow for expansion when required during an election, and meet relevant Commonwealth information technology security requirements.

The AEC maintained strong relationships with Australian and international electoral management bodies throughout the year. While there are unique characteristics to the Australian electoral system, many electoral management bodies are going through a period of change, and international engagement offers the opportunity to exchange ideas and examine issues of mutual concern.

## Areas for further improvement

In 2017–18, the AEC will increase its use of technology and data analysis to improve the voter experience and provide better support for our temporary election workforce. Data analysis currently underway for the next election, will enable the AEC to make more informed decisions regarding resourcing for polling day. We are working with experts in time and motion studies and modelling from Deakin University, to better understand and reduce the likelihood of queuing issues, and determine whether we can optimise polling and post-polling activities.

The AEC will also continue to engage with the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ). ECANZ provides a forum three times a year for Australian and New Zealand electoral commissions to discuss all aspects of electoral administration.

The AEC recognises community expectations regarding the delivery of electoral services have shifted in recent years. In response, the agency has modernised some key processes and procedures by leveraging technology to meet these expectations where possible. However, the AEC enrolment and election management systems are ageing, increasing risk for the agency and its delivery of electoral services. With this in mind, the AEC identified a range of areas for future innovation in electoral management and delivery as part of its submissions to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2016 Federal Election.

## SPOTLIGHT

# Directed level of election readiness for the next election

To prepare for the next federal election, the AEC relies on the election readiness framework and the supporting strategic plan called the Election Ready Road Map. Pivotal to these is a date determined by the Electoral Commissioner, known as the Directed Level of Election Readiness (DLER).

The DLER is the date we must be ready for a writ to be issued to initiate the electoral process and start the next election. The timing of the DLER can be any time the Electoral Commissioner considers an election likely or it can be used to test how ready we are to deliver an election at any point during the electoral cycle. Other factors influencing the choice of

DLER include the convention that elections for the House of Representatives and Senate will be held simultaneously, and act-prescribed limits around issuing and returning writs and parliamentary terms.

The DLER allows us to effectively balance the appropriate level of election readiness, cost and risks. It gives us clear milestones in our preparation for the next federal election and helps us manage our work priorities and activities in a coordinated and uniform way. The DLER also informs the time available to implement change, especially improvements to processes informed by evaluations, legislative change and our modernisation agenda.

## Performance against Regulator Performance Framework

The Australian Government has committed to reducing the cost of unnecessary or inefficient regulation for individuals, business and community organisations. It has developed a framework to measure the performance of regulators.

As a regulatory body, the AEC aims to reduce the regulatory burden imposed on electors through enrolment and voting activities, and is committed to reporting annually against the framework's six mandatory key performance indicators. Our performance for 2016–17 is shown in Table 3, cross-referenced to our performance under the AEC's five agency directions.

## Additional performance information

This section presents additional information on how the AEC delivered on its purpose for 2016–17.

Brief descriptions are organised according to the six AEC performance areas listed in the Portfolio Budget Statements, namely:

- federal elections, by-elections and referendums
- electoral roll management
- support services for electoral redistributions
- party registrations and financial disclosure
- industrial and commercial elections
- public awareness.

**Table 3: AEC performance against the Regulator Performance Framework**

| Mandatory key performance indicators                                                    | Performance criteria                                                                                                 | Result                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities    | Federal electoral events are successfully delivered.                                                                 | Partly met. See performance under agency 1.1.           |
| Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective                  | Information is timely and accurate, uses appropriate technology and channels, and meets accessibility standards      | Met. See performance under agency direction 4.3.        |
| Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed | Maintain ability to conduct a federal electoral event within the timeframe as assessed by the Electoral Commissioner | Partly met. See performance under agency direction 1.2. |
| Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated                    | The governance framework is effective in supporting the AEC to meet its objectives                                   | Met. See performance under agency direction 2.1.        |
| Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities           | Productive relationships are maintained with the Minister, Parliament, key agencies and other stakeholders           | Met. See performance under agency direction 4.1.        |
| Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks   | Evaluation and reform of election practices is implemented according to readiness phases.                            | Met. See performance under agency direction 1.3.        |
|                                                                                         | Create an environment to encourage innovative practices to support the AEC and the conduct of electoral events       | Partly met. See performance under agency direction 5.1. |



# Federal elections, by-elections and referendums

In 2016–17, the AEC prepared and delivered a double dissolution federal election for both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It was the largest and, in many ways, most complex election ever held by the AEC and followed significant reforms to the Electoral Act. These included changes to Senate voting arrangements, as well as the introduction of scanning technologies to streamline counting. Electoral systems and processes were also modified following reviews of the 2013 federal election (see Electoral reform program on page 42).

## 2016 federal election

On Sunday 8 May 2016, the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, announced a double dissolution election for Saturday 2 July 2016. The writs for this election were issued on 16 May 2016.

Table 4: House of Representatives  
nominations by state and territory

| State/territory                 | Seats      | 2016<br>nominations |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| New South Wales                 | 47         | 314                 |
| Victoria                        | 37         | 259                 |
| Queensland                      | 30         | 204                 |
| Western Australia               | 16         | 86                  |
| South Australia                 | 11         | 72                  |
| Tasmania                        | 5          | 30                  |
| Australian Capital<br>Territory | 2          | 9                   |
| Northern Territory              | 2          | 20                  |
| <b>Australia</b>                | <b>150</b> | <b>994</b>          |

## Nominations

Nominations were accepted from 1,625 candidates for a total of 226 vacancies in both houses of Parliament.

The number of candidates for the House of Representatives was 994, while 631 candidates nominated for the Senate. Of these, 1,084 were male candidates, 540 were female candidates and one was unspecified. One candidate for the House of Representatives withdrew their nomination.

Table 4 and Table 5 show the breakdown of nominations by state and territory.

## Ballot papers

Immediately after the declaration of nominations, the AEC began printing and distributing the ballot papers in time for early voting to commence on Tuesday 14 June 2016.

Significant reforms introduced with the passage of legislation in March 2016 affected the ballot papers themselves. Senate ballot papers were an extra 10cm deep, to accommodate 12 candidates in some groups rather than six as in previous elections, and the AEC used scanning technologies to assist in recording votes from Senate ballot papers.

Table 5: Senate nominations by state and  
territory

| State/territory                 | Number of<br>vacancies <sup>a</sup> | 2016<br>nominations |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| New South Wales                 | 12                                  | 151                 |
| Victoria                        | 12                                  | 116                 |
| Queensland                      | 12                                  | 122                 |
| Western Australia               | 12                                  | 79                  |
| South Australia                 | 12                                  | 64                  |
| Tasmania                        | 12                                  | 58                  |
| Australian Capital<br>Territory | 2                                   | 22                  |
| Northern Territory              | 2                                   | 19                  |
| <b>Australia</b>                | <b>76</b>                           | <b>631</b>          |

a. The 2016 federal election was a double dissolution election, so all 76 Senate seats were vacant.

The changes to the Electoral Act also allowed – for the first time in the history of federal elections – that AEC-approved logos could be included on ballot papers. Political parties could have their party logo appear adjacent to their candidate names on the House of Representatives ballot paper, and have no more than two logos appear adjacent to their party or group name above the line on the Senate ballot paper.

For the 2016 election, 33 parties registered a logo, 941 different variations of ballot papers were designed and typeset, and over 45 million ballot papers were printed and distributed securely for use across Australia and the world.

## Voter services

In addition to voting services provided at polling places on election day, voter services for the 2016 federal election included early voting options, mobile polling, postal voting, overseas voting, telephone voting for blind and low vision voters and particular arrangements for deployed Australian Defence Force personnel.

### Early voting services

Changing voter behaviour shows a clear demand for a range of voter services. Pre-poll and postal voting now account for nearly one-third of all votes issued at federal election events. The trend of increased early voting reflects the Australian community's increasing mobility and desire for flexibility in how and where they cast their vote.

At the 2016 election, more than 4.5 million of the 14.4 million votes cast were early votes.

The most significant factor in early voting volumes has been growth in pre-poll votes, which are cast in-person at an early voting centre or AEC divisional office. The number of such votes issued has increased from 5.9 to 22.1 per cent of all votes issued in the past five federal elections.

### Pre-poll voting

There were 649 pre-poll or early voting centres operating across Australia in the 2016 polling period. More than 3 million people cast pre-poll votes at early voting centres and at AEC divisional offices.

This significant uptake of early voting services was likely influenced, in part, by election day falling within the winter school holiday period. Many electors were travelling and away from their home electorate on election day and voted early at pre-poll centres.

### Postal voting

#### *Production and delivery of postal vote packages*

Delivering postal vote packages to voters before polling day is always a key logistical challenge for the AEC. The packages contain a postal vote certificate envelope, ballot papers and instructions. Voters complete the certificate and return it to the AEC for processing.

A total of 1,439,775 postal vote packages were issued from two production sites (one in Sydney and one in Melbourne), while 163 were issued from overseas posts. The remaining packages were issued from AEC offices.

The majority of postal vote certificates are returned before polling day, although the Electoral Act allows for returns 13 days after election day. Those returned beyond this time cannot be admitted to the count. For 2016:

- the AEC received 230,116 postal vote certificates before the 13-day deadline
- a total of 4,930 certificates arrived after the 13-day deadline and could not be admitted.

#### *Processing postal vote applications*

In previous elections, divisional office staff manually entered paper-based postal vote applications directly into the Automated Postal Voting Issuing System. In 2016, under an arrangement with Fuji Xerox Document Management Solutions, paper postal vote applications were scanned.

This change made the process faster and more efficient, reducing manual entry errors. Staff could verify the data more easily, identify any issues and transmit the records electronically to the AEC.

### **Mobile polling**

Mobile polling services can be delivered anywhere the Electoral Commissioner determines them necessary. Mobile polling may begin up to 12 days before election day, as well as be conducted on election day (or on a day to which polling is adjourned).

Polling dates for mobile teams varied. They spanned the legislated dates, beginning Monday 20 June 2016, and continued up to and including election day. The AEC website contained information on places, dates and times for mobile polling visits.

During the election period, 557 mobile polling teams including special hospital, remote and other mobile teams, visited almost 3,000 locations by land, air and sea. Of these, 41 remote mobile voting teams visited more than 400 remote locations across Australia.

### **Overseas voters**

While travelling overseas at the time of an election is a valid and sufficient reason for not voting, the AEC tries to provide services to allow as many voters as possible to participate in the electoral process.

For eligible Australians overseas wanting to vote in the 2016 federal election, the AEC provided in-person voting services in 95 overseas posts. The posts functioned as overseas voting centres for up to two weeks before polling day. Major locations included London, Hong Kong, New York, Paris and Shanghai. Alternatively, Australians located overseas could apply for a postal vote to be mailed to their overseas address.

Overseas voters cast declaration votes, which were sealed and returned to the voter's home division in Australia for scrutiny and counting. In 2016, overseas posts took 71,406 votes, consisting of 70,232 pre-poll votes and 1,174 postal votes.

Some 2,837 overseas postal votes arrived after the 13<sup>th</sup> day following polling day, which meant they could not be admitted to the count.

### **Blind and low vision voters**

The AEC provides tailored voting services for blind and low vision voters. The telephone voting service, operated by call centre staff, involved a two-step process: registration and voting. This service allowed people to cast their vote in secret and with a relative degree of independence. While the voter's anonymity was maintained during the voting process, the vote was completed with the assistance of call centre staff.

Registrations opened on 13 June and were available until 12pm on 2 July. Voting via this service began on 14 June and was available until 6pm on polling day.

During this period, 2,175 people registered and 1,998 people used the service to cast their vote.

### **Australian Defence Force**

The AEC and the Australian Defence Force delivered customised postal voting for personnel deployed overseas during the 2016 federal election.

In an agreement with the AEC, the Department of Defence encouraged Defence Force staff to register as general postal voters in the lead up to the election. If not registered, personnel could apply for a postal vote online.

Depending on their location, Defence Force personnel could also vote in person at one of the 95 overseas voting centres. The AEC added the Australian Consulate in Pearl Harbour, Honolulu, United States, as an overseas voting centre to facilitate voting by large numbers of ADF staff deployed to Hawaii.

### Polling places on election day

On Saturday 2 July 2016, the AEC established 6,822 static polling places, which were open from 8am to 6pm.

Voters cast 11,815,908 House of Representatives ordinary votes, and 11,819,376 ordinary votes for the Senate.

Other votes cast at polling places on election day were 658,511 (4.62 per cent) House of Representatives absent votes (cast outside the home division but within the state or territory), and 55,102 (0.39 per cent) House of Representatives provisional votes cast by voters who could not be found on the certified list.

Following the close of polls, the AEC admitted 14,262,016 ballot papers to the count for the House of Representatives and 14,406,706 for the Senate. Approximately 80 per cent of the House of Representatives ballot papers were counted on election night.

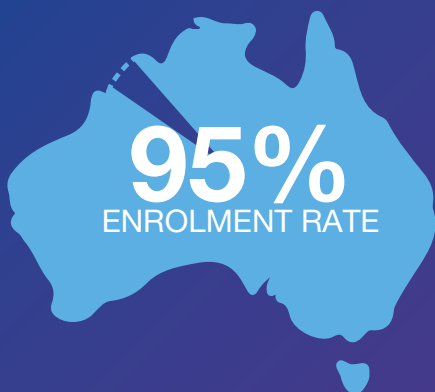
**Table 6: House of Representatives votes by type, 2016 federal election**

| State/<br>territory | Ordinary<br>votes | Absent votes   | Pre-poll votes | Postal votes     | Provisional<br>votes | Total             |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| NSW                 | 3,998,745         | 200,611        | 141,176        | 292,461          | 18,406               | 4,651,399         |
| Vic.                | 2,888,562         | 166,866        | 159,567        | 383,140          | 14,688               | 3,612,823         |
| Qld                 | 2,266,259         | 122,707        | 94,665         | 311,863          | 7,457                | 2,802,951         |
| WA                  | 1,128,162         | 91,667         | 58,940         | 108,669          | 6,568                | 1,394,006         |
| SA                  | 913,581           | 58,512         | 26,390         | 82,361           | 5,327                | 1,086,171         |
| Tas.                | 297,001           | 13,232         | 11,382         | 26,765           | 1,169                | 349,549           |
| ACT                 | 230,644           | 3,195          | 12,482         | 12,597           | 1,009                | 259,927           |
| NT                  | 92,954            | 1,721          | 4,874          | 5,163            | 478                  | 105,190           |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>11,815,908</b> | <b>658,511</b> | <b>509,476</b> | <b>1,223,019</b> | <b>55,102</b>        | <b>14,262,016</b> |

**Table 7: Senate votes by type, 2016 federal election**

| State/<br>territory | Ordinary<br>votes | Absent votes   | Pre-poll votes | Postal votes     | Provisional<br>votes | Total             |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| NSW                 | 4,000,655         | 218,179        | 146,716        | 291,227          | 48,493               | 4,705,270         |
| Vic.                | 2,888,305         | 182,275        | 165,691        | 381,387          | 36,078               | 3,653,736         |
| Qld                 | 2,266,749         | 129,810        | 97,017         | 310,163          | 15,258               | 2,818,997         |
| WA                  | 1,129,121         | 100,849        | 61,226         | 108,256          | 14,101               | 1,413,553         |
| SA                  | 914,035           | 63,307         | 27,342         | 82,065           | 10,961               | 1,097,710         |
| Tas.                | 297,101           | 13,698         | 11,582         | 26,729           | 2,270                | 351,380           |
| ACT                 | 230,417           | 3,283          | 12,653         | 12,555           | 1,613                | 260,521           |
| NT                  | 92,993            | 1,764          | 4,946          | 5,146            | 690                  | 105,539           |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>11,819,376</b> | <b>713,165</b> | <b>527,173</b> | <b>1,217,528</b> | <b>129,464</b>       | <b>14,406,706</b> |

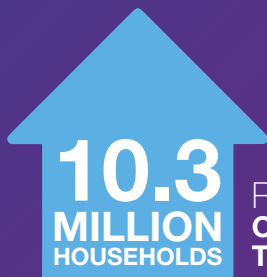
## 2016 FEDERAL ELECTION STATISTICS



**POLLING  
LOCATIONS**



**CANDIDATES  
NOMINATED**



RECEIVED THE  
**OFFICIAL GUIDE TO  
THE 2016 ELECTION**

**74,893**

**TEMPORARY  
STAFF EMPLOYED**

**45M+**

**BALLOT PAPERS  
PRINTED, WITH**

**941**

**DIFFERENT VARIATIONS**

**60,000+**

**BALLOT BOXES  
SUPPLIED**

**14,262,016**

**HOUSE OF REPS &**

**14,406,706**

**SENATE**

**VOTES COUNTED**

**3 MILLION+**

**PRE-POLL  
VOTES CAST**

**HOW TO VOTE  
INFORMATION IN**

**27**

**LANGUAGES**

## Turnout

Turnout is defined as the number of people who voted in the election (formal and informal votes) as a percentage of eligible enrolled electors. Turnout for the 2016 federal election, 91.01 per cent for the House of Representatives and 91.93 per cent for the Senate, was the lowest recorded since the introduction of compulsory voting in 1924.

While turnout has remained over 90 per cent since compulsory voting was introduced, it has been on a slow downward trend in recent years, mirroring the experience of most developed countries.

## Informal voting

For the 2016 federal election, the Senate informality rate was 3.9 per cent, an increase of 1.0 per cent from 2013. The House of Representatives informality rate decreased from 5.9 per cent in 2013 to 5.1 per cent.

Senate informality rose in all states and territories in 2016, though from a low base. Public information campaigns on new voting requirements helped ensure that total informality remained relatively low despite the significant reforms to the Senate voting system.

**Table 8: Informal votes by state and territory, 2016 Senate elections**

| Jurisdiction | Formal no.        | Informal no.   | Total no.         | Informal %  | Swing %     |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| NSW          | 4,492,197         | 213,073        | 4,705,270         | 4.53        | 1.21        |
| Vic.         | 3,500,237         | 153,499        | 3,653,736         | 4.20        | 0.83        |
| Qld          | 2,723,166         | 95,831         | 2,818,997         | 3.40        | 1.24        |
| WA           | 1,366,182         | 47,371         | 1,413,553         | 3.35        | 0.85        |
| SA           | 1,061,165         | 36,545         | 1,097,710         | 3.33        | 0.68        |
| Tas.         | 339,159           | 12,221         | 351,380           | 3.48        | 1.02        |
| ACT          | 254,767           | 5,754          | 260,521           | 2.21        | 0.23        |
| NT           | 102,027           | 3,512          | 105,539           | 3.33        | 0.66        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>13,838,900</b> | <b>567,806</b> | <b>14,406,706</b> | <b>3.94</b> | <b>1.01</b> |

**Table 9: Informal votes by state and territory, 2016 House of Representatives elections**

| Jurisdiction | Formal no.        | Informal no.   | Total no.         | Informal %  | Swing %      |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| NSW          | 4,364,320         | 287,079        | 4,651,399         | 6.17        | -1.42        |
| Vic.         | 3,440,654         | 172,169        | 3,612,823         | 4.77        | -0.42        |
| Qld          | 2,671,229         | 131,722        | 2,802,951         | 4.70        | -0.43        |
| WA           | 1,338,337         | 55,669         | 1,394,006         | 3.99        | -1.39        |
| SA           | 1,040,736         | 45,435         | 1,086,171         | 4.18        | -0.67        |
| Tas.         | 335,623           | 13,926         | 349,549           | 3.98        | -0.06        |
| ACT          | 252,742           | 7,185          | 259,927           | 2.76        | -1.07        |
| NT           | 97,460            | 7,730          | 105,190           | 7.35        | 1.05         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>13,541,101</b> | <b>720,915</b> | <b>14,262,016</b> | <b>5.05</b> | <b>-0.86</b> |

## Senate voting

Senate voting for the 2016 federal election changed with the legislative reforms passed on 18 March 2016. Changes impacted both voting above the line and below the line when voting for the Senate. The changes also affected the method and timing of the Senate count.

Ballot papers are classified into either above the line or below the line based on the preferences used for counting. Current legislation gives precedence to preferences expressed below the line. As a result, papers marked both above and below the line are classified as follows:

- if the below the line preferences are formal, the ballot paper is treated as below the line
- if the below the line preferences are informal, and the above the line preferences are formal, the ballot paper is treated as above the line
- if neither set is formal, the ballot paper is deemed informal.

## Voter experience

The AEC's 2016 Voter Survey found that overall there is broad trust and confidence in the work of the AEC and the way elections are managed.

While most people were satisfied with their voting experience in 2016, satisfaction has declined overall from 93 per cent in 2013, to 87 per cent in 2016.

On the question of 'the length of time you had to wait', satisfaction fell from 87 per cent in 2013 to 78 per cent in 2016. It appears queuing times were the main driver of the overall decline in satisfaction.

A small number of polling places experienced queues at times during the day or ran short of ballot papers, while the vast majority did not. Possible factors include:

- the additional time voters took to complete their Senate ballots and the consequent impact of the flow of voters through the polling place
- while the AEC allocated additional issuing officers to polling places, the time to find and mark an elector's name on a certified list, explain the new voting requirements, and issue ballot papers also had an impact
- the layout or size of some polling places was inadequate to cater for the number of voters
- queues at declaration vote issuing points were caused by the higher than estimated number of declaration votes because election day fell within the school holiday period, and because it took longer to issue them in comparison with ordinary votes.

**Table 10: Above and below the line votes, 2016 Senate elections**

| Jurisdiction | Above the line no. | Below the line no. | Total no.         | Above the line % | Above the line % swing |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| NSW          | 4,249,550          | 242,647            | 4,492,197         | 94.60            | -3.30                  |
| Vic.         | 3,314,376          | 185,861            | 3,500,237         | 94.69            | -2.64                  |
| Qld          | 2,555,956          | 167,210            | 2,723,166         | 93.86            | -3.14                  |
| WA           | 1,290,839          | 75,343             | 1,366,182         | 94.49            | -1.68                  |
| SA           | 970,934            | 90,231             | 1,061,165         | 91.50            | -1.97                  |
| Tas.         | 243,774            | 95,385             | 339,159           | 71.88            | -17.78                 |
| ACT          | 216,086            | 38,681             | 254,767           | 84.82            | 4.69                   |
| NT           | 93,277             | 8,750              | 102,027           | 91.42            | -0.47                  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>12,934,792</b>  | <b>904,108</b>     | <b>13,838,900</b> | <b>93.47</b>     | <b>-3.02</b>           |



## Vote issuing, management and monitoring

The AEC uses a mix of paper and electronic certified lists in vote issuing and declaration vote scrutiny processes. Electronic certified lists allow AEC staff and polling officials to identify electoral enrolments and electronically mark off names. They also provide other benefits, such as being able to print House of Representatives ballot papers on demand and provide daily statistics on ordinary voting at pre-poll centres.

For the 2016 federal election, 1,544 electronic certified lists were used by various polling teams when issuing ordinary and declaration votes. A 2013 pilot had determined that such lists were most useful in pre-poll voting centres

and with mobile teams. Divisions had on average four for use in preliminary scrutiny to mark off absent and pre-poll declaration voters.

Using the electronic lists, and where they were able to connect to the network, AEC staff and polling officials could identify voters and mark off names, updating a central copy of the list. This reduced the risk of both polling official error and multiple voting, and enabled more efficient searching for electors, including by location. Being able to print House of Representatives ballot papers on demand at declaration issuing points and search the national roll, enhances voter franchise by significantly reducing the number of wrongly issued and wrongly declared ballot papers.

## SPOTLIGHT

### A virtual approach to better polling

A critical part of preparing for an election is estimating the personnel and materials required in polling places to service the number of expected voters. While the AEC has computer systems that help with forecasting based on voter estimates, the 2016 federal election evaluation identified a need for improvement.

The AEC has engaged the Institute for Intelligent Systems Research and Innovation at Deakin University – experts in time and motion studies and modelling – to help test and record aspects of polling place activity.

The project will be conducted in Geelong, Victoria over a four-week period in July 2017, and will simulate various polling place scenarios, including:

- polling place set up and voter flow measuring the time it takes electors to move through a polling place and complete ballot papers

- issuing ordinary and declaration votes using paper certified lists, division finders and electronic certified lists
- election night scrutines such as the time spent unfolding, sorting and then counting ballot papers.

The data will be used to generate computer-based models to help the AEC more accurately predict resource requirements for materials and personnel at individual polling stations in the future, with a view to improving the voter experience.



All aspects of polling place activity will be tested and recorded in a simulated polling exercise



## SPOTLIGHT

# Why does the election count take so long?

The speed of an election count is driven by the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, not the AEC. The Electoral Act requires the AEC to follow extensive processes during the count to ensure the will of the Australian people is accurately recorded. This means the AEC is bound by law to undertake these processes, some of which cannot be completed until 13 days after an election has been held.

## So how does the count work?

Most people don't realise that under Australia's preferential voting system, votes get counted several times at a federal election. Counting preferences involves a reiterative process of distributing and counting.

The Electoral Act prohibits the start of counting before the polls close at 6pm on polling day. At this point, indicative counts are undertaken to provide information to the public and candidates. The first count involves a simple count of only the first preferences of the House of Representatives ballot papers. A second count is done based on the two candidates expected to have the most votes. The final counting on polling night is the count of Senate first preferences on the ballot papers. But these counts are only the beginning.

Ballot papers from each polling place are then sent to central locations in each electorate, known as outposted centres. At each centre, the House of Representatives ballot papers are carefully counted again to produce the final results. For the 2016 federal election, more than 2.4 million votes had to be relocated back to their home electorates. In the case of Senate ballot papers, they must be sent first to outposted centres and then onto a central site in each capital where they get scanned and counted. In 2016, this process involved moving 14.4 million ballot papers.

The Electoral Act also prescribes processes for managing the election, which sometimes

dictates the timing of events. For example, mobile polling teams must return and scan certified lists before the postal vote count can start. This ensures a person does not vote twice. There are also votes that come through the post as well as those returned from overseas. The AEC must wait 13 days for all votes to arrive in their respective electorates. In the case of a close seat, a result may not be available until after this time. Any votes received after the 13 days are not counted towards the results.

The final step is the full distribution of preferences. Each time there is a distribution, the candidate with the least votes at the end of the distribution will have their votes reallocated for the next distribution according to the next preference on each ballot paper. To ensure the voters' preferences are applied, the AEC goes through these distributions multiple times until a single candidate is elected for the House of Representatives. For the Senate, a count system distributes the preferences until the appropriate number of candidates is elected. Where figures are very close between candidates, it may automatically trigger, or the AEC may call for, a full recount.

The Australian electoral system gives voters great scope to use preferences to choose their candidates, in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Voters also have a broad choice in how or where to cast their votes, including voting outside their home division or overseas. This level of choice, combined with the complex preferential voting systems, means that counting is both complicated and time consuming.

While election outcomes can take time before they are known, the AEC is proud to administer a system that allows all eligible Australians to vote in a federal election, not just those near their designated polling place, and one which preserves the integrity of both the electoral process and the results.

## Declaration voting

The March 2016 amendments to the Electoral Act, required the AEC to change the way it handled declaration votes. Declaration vote ballot boxes were not opened and reconciled at the polling place as had occurred at previous elections. They remained sealed for transport to an outposted centre and stored securely.

At the 2016 federal election, around 18 per cent of counted votes were declaration votes, with the remaining 82 per cent ordinary votes cast at polling places or pre-poll voting centres. More than three million declaration votes were issued and over 2.5 million were counted.

Declaration votes take longer to count as they must undergo eligibility checks before the ballot papers can be removed from the envelopes and counted.

## Voter advice letters

Where declaration votes are issued but not counted, the AEC notifies the voter by letter. Often it is because the elector is not correctly enrolled. It may also be that a postal vote has not been completed before the close of polling or is not returned, or that the declaration has not been properly made (for example a signature was not provided).

From September 2016, voter advice letters were sent to 342,073 voters advising that their declaration vote had been either rejected or only partially admitted.

## Multiple voter and non-voter processing

The AEC is committed to upholding and enforcing the compulsory voting system and the principle of 'one person, one vote', by ensuring a thorough and robust system for addressing possible multiple voting and non-voting. This includes elector education and engagement.

For the 2016 federal election, the AEC wrote to electors with a history of alleged non-voting or multiple voting, to remind them of their voting obligations. Following the close of rolls, letters were sent to:

- 36,830 electors whose records showed they failed to vote at the previous two elections (2010 and 2013) and failed to respond to non-voter notices
- 4,627 electors whose records showed they were marked off the roll more than once at the 2013 federal election and were subsequently referred to the Australian Federal Police.<sup>2</sup>

The AEC has comprehensive systems in place to identify multiple voters. These include an initial check to identify administrative or polling official error. These cases are then eliminated from further investigation.

Following the 2016 federal election, AEC employees examined the apparent multiple voting data and sent letters to 18,343 voters whose names appeared to have been marked off the electoral roll more than once. These letters asked voters when and where they voted.

Where voters did not respond, the AEC issued a follow-up round of letters to 7,141 apparent multiple voters.

The AEC cannot prosecute multiple voting offences, but works closely with the Australian Federal Police and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions on cases of possible multiple voting.

Following the 2016 election, the AEC and the Federal Police worked together to institute a process for referring apparent multiple voting cases to the police.

<sup>2</sup> Electors excluded from the mailing included those who were 70 years or older as at 1 July 2016; silent electors; registered eligible overseas electors (and kin), registered itinerant electors, registered Antarctic electors and electors with an overseas postal address.

In July 2016, 42 cases of apparent multiple voting in the Division of Herbert were referred. The Federal Police determined that there was a distinct absence of evidence on behalf of any individuals to intentionally vote on multiple occasions.

In December 2016, the Federal Police and the AEC conducted a joint assessment process, after which the AEC formally referred 76 additional cases from around Australia to the Federal Police for further investigation. As at 30 June 2017, no outcomes have been reported.

The AEC issues ‘apparent failure to vote’ notices to electors whose names have not been marked off the electoral roll. Those sent a notice have an opportunity to provide the AEC with a valid and sufficient reason for failing to vote (for example an unforeseen medical emergency), or, if they claim that they did vote, to provide information on the time and location.

In September 2016, the AEC sent 969,586 notices to apparent non-voters. This is a 46 per cent increase on 2013, when 663,633 notices were sent. It also corresponds with the lower overall voter turnout for the 2016 federal election. The increase has cost and workload implications for the AEC around mailing, assessment and prosecution processes.

## By-elections and referendums

No other federal elections (including by-elections) or referendums were delivered during 2016–17.

### INTERESTING FACT

During the 2016 federal election, 557 mobile polling teams visited almost 3,000 locations by road, air and sea

## Electoral reform program

### Closing the loop on the Keelty reforms

Following the 2013 federal election, there was an extensive review of election processes. This led to a series of recommendations from the Keelty report, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) and internal AEC analysis. Collectively, these recommendations presented a substantial body of work in electoral reform, which the AEC has been progressively implementing. Since 2013, the AEC has trialled a range of Keelty-related initiatives in by-elections (Griffith, Canning and North Sydney), which were successively refined and revised for implementation at the 2016 federal election.

These included:

- national consistency through new and reviewed policies, standard operating procedures, election delivery planning and other templates, guidance and tools
- improved contracting framework, logistics and materials management
- improved recruitment and training to support the professionalism of the permanent and temporary workforce
- new ballot paper handling processes from printing to authorised destruction
- polling official training emphasising ballot paper principles, handling and security practices
- clear identification of staff and scrutineers at polling places and scrutiny centres
- character checks for selected and supervisory temporary election staff
- improved waste management at polling centres and outposted centres.

In response to the Keelty report in particular, the AEC has:

- created new roles of Divisional Materials Manager and Supervising Divisional Materials Manager based in outposted centres to ensure the safe custody of ballot papers, from the receipt of ballot papers into a division through to the final packaging and despatch of ballot papers to long-term storage
- assigned ballot box guards at every polling place and pre-poll voting centre
- increased the number of polling place liaison officers assigned to monitor the operation of polling places on election day
- created a new role of early voting liaison officers to monitor the operations of mobile polling teams and pre-poll voting centres
- revised procedures for officers-in-charge.

Another fundamental theme of the Keelty findings was the proper handling and management of ballot paper security. In this area, the AEC has made significant strides with enhanced materials handling and substantially strengthened procedures. The main response has been the development of ballot paper principles and a ballot paper handling policy. To ensure the integrity demanded by these principles and policy, the AEC introduced a range of new forms and materials for the 2016 federal election. Post-election evaluation has provided positive feedback about these forms and materials. Even so, there have been some additional opportunities identified where further improvements can be made.

The Keelty report also highlighted a range of workforce-related risks and the need for the AEC to examine workforce culture and capability to improve performance and accountability. Previous observations from JSCEM and the ANAO report into training, recruitment and workforce planning, recommended the AEC change the way it sources, selects and manages its temporary election workforce.

This has been reinforced by the AEC's experience at the 2016 election, and the continuing expectation that the AEC manage increasing complexity and workload at each federal election.

Increasingly, the AEC's regular Australian Public Service workforce and temporary election workforce are required to work longer hours to deliver each election. The AEC is continuing to address these issues. For example, the AEC introduced fundamental changes to training for temporary and permanent staff for the 2016 federal election. The election marked the beginning of the process to address this. Ideally, the AEC will be able to actively engage with the temporary election workforce, especially senior polling officials, for ongoing training and development purposes throughout the electoral cycle.

The AEC acknowledges that to fully address the expectations outlined above, the methodologies underpinning recruitment, induction and performance management of temporary staff across the employment lifecycle, including its human resource systems, need to change. This continues to be an area of interest for future projects.

Other general reforms implemented by the AEC for the 2016 federal election included:

- lowering the threshold for allocating a second-in-charge for all ordinary polling places expecting to issue more than 600 ordinary votes. The intent was to provide additional capacity and support, particularly at the beginning and end of election day and additional capacity to meet compliance with enhanced operational policy and procedures
- lowering the thresholds at which both ordinary issuing and declaration voting issuing officers were allocated for ordinary polling places. The intent was to provide more capacity to deal with the additional time it was expected to take for electors to complete their Senate vote in accordance with the new legislation
- allocating an additional inquiry officer for all polling places. The intent was to provide additional capacity to deal with elector enquiries about the new Senate voting system
- transparency and improved election service delivery, publishing the 2016 Federal Election Service Plan on the AEC website.

### **Senate reform program**

At previous elections, voters had the option to vote above the line, simply marking '1' next to the party of their choice and allowing parties to direct their preferences via group voting tickets. Under the Senate reform, voters at the 2016 federal election were asked to nominate a minimum of six preferences above or 12 preferences below the line. The removal of group voting tickets presented a considerably more complex count to conduct.

Under the previous system, approximately 97 per cent of ballot papers were cast above the line, which were easily entered into the AEC count system. This system would then distribute preferences in accordance with a group voting ticket. Before reform, less than half a million (3 per cent) Senate ballot papers contained below the line votes, and preferences had to be manually entered. Because of the legislative changes, data entry was needed for all 14.4 million Senate ballot papers.

In just over three months, the AEC developed, tested, certified and operationalised a new end-to-end solution to count and distribute Senate preferences. The semi-automated process, using scanning and image recognition technology to capture preferences, was developed with a contractor – Fuji Xerox Document Management Services.

After election day, Senate ballot papers were progressively despatched to a central site in the capital city of each state and territory. Senate ballot papers were scanned to capture an image of everything contained on the ballot paper, except the watermark. Preferences were captured using optical character recognition and verified by an operator.

### **Election readiness framework**

Since the 2013 federal election, the AEC has fundamentally reshaped its planning for election delivery by implementing an election readiness framework. This enables the AEC to monitor its state of readiness and the activities necessary to successfully deliver the event, whenever it occurs.

Following an election, the AEC begins a new cycle of evaluation and preparations for the next electoral event. Post-election evaluation identifies where the AEC needs to change technology, policies and procedures to improve election delivery and services. If legislative changes occur, these are also implemented.

## SPOTLIGHT

# Senate scanning solution wins award

The AEC's Senate scanning solution won an innovation award at the 2016 Australian Information Industry Association's iAwards ACT. This is an annual event that seeks to 'discover, recognise and reward the technology innovations that have the potential to, or are already having a positive impact on the community'.

The award, received in the category of Public Sector and Government Markets, earned the AEC project an entry in the national iAwards to be held in Melbourne in late 2017.

The new end-to-end solution to count and distribute Senate preferences used scanning and image recognition technology to capture voter preferences.

The process required moving 14.4 million ballot papers, in over 34,000 transport containers, from over 6,000 polling places, via the divisional outposted centre, to a central site

in each state and territory. At these sites, over 800 staff operating two shifts, seven days a week, scanned and verified preferences for 631 candidates. This required staff to scan 14,406,706 ballot papers and operators to enter these into the count system, to sort 101,535,258 preferences.



AEC First Assistant Commissioner, Tim Courtney and Acting Assistant Commissioner Information Technology Branch, David Lang, receive the innovation award on behalf of the AEC

The framework is a risk-based election planning strategy, which seeks to balance the level of readiness with the cost of advancing that readiness and the level of risk if an election is unexpectedly called early. It supports coordinated action across the AEC to prepare for a federal electoral event that can occur within as little as 33 days from the issue of the writs. It includes being ready for a writ to be issued at a certain date (the Directed Level of Election Readiness), as well as actions to be completed between the return of the writs from the previous election and the issue of the writs for the next election. These actions are detailed in the Election Ready Road Map – a strategic planning document that underpins the election readiness framework.

The framework is also supported by other activities. For the 2016 federal election, the AEC ran an election readiness program that involved 180 staff in scenario-based learning to go through some of the live aspects of conducting federal elections.

## 2016 federal election evaluation

### The road ahead – learnings from the 2016 federal election

The AEC transitioned into the 'evaluate and learn' phase of its election readiness framework following the 2016 federal election.

In August 2016, it convened an evaluation team to review the event and recommend improvements for future elections.



The evaluation team comprised specialist staff from the AEC's national office, with support from subject matter experts in state and divisional offices, including Divisional Returning Officers, Operations Managers and other divisional office staff. The team was overseen by an Evaluation Board that reported to the Executive Leadership Team. The evaluation team analysed data and developed a set of draft lessons learned.

Among the key challenges identified was the task of recruiting 75,000 temporary staff to assist with the election delivery; longer working hours for staff; manual ballot paper process and systems; and a lack of access to reliable, real time logistical information to enable the right materials to be in the right place at the right time.

The evaluation team reported eight key lessons to be learned from the 2016 election process:

- implement a design process
- ensure roles are clearly defined
- review baseline activities in terms of cost, time and risk
- enhance and integrate the planning framework
- reinforce AEC values and behaviours
- design an accountability, responsibility and authority hierarchy
- enhance information management and communication practices
- enhance capability.

The team also recommended a series of enhancements to drive improvements by either the next electoral cycle or over multiple electoral cycles.

The Executive Leadership Team subsequently endorsed four areas of focus in preparation for the 2018–19 federal election:

- consolidate and coordinate
- training and recruitment
- communication and information management
- planning.

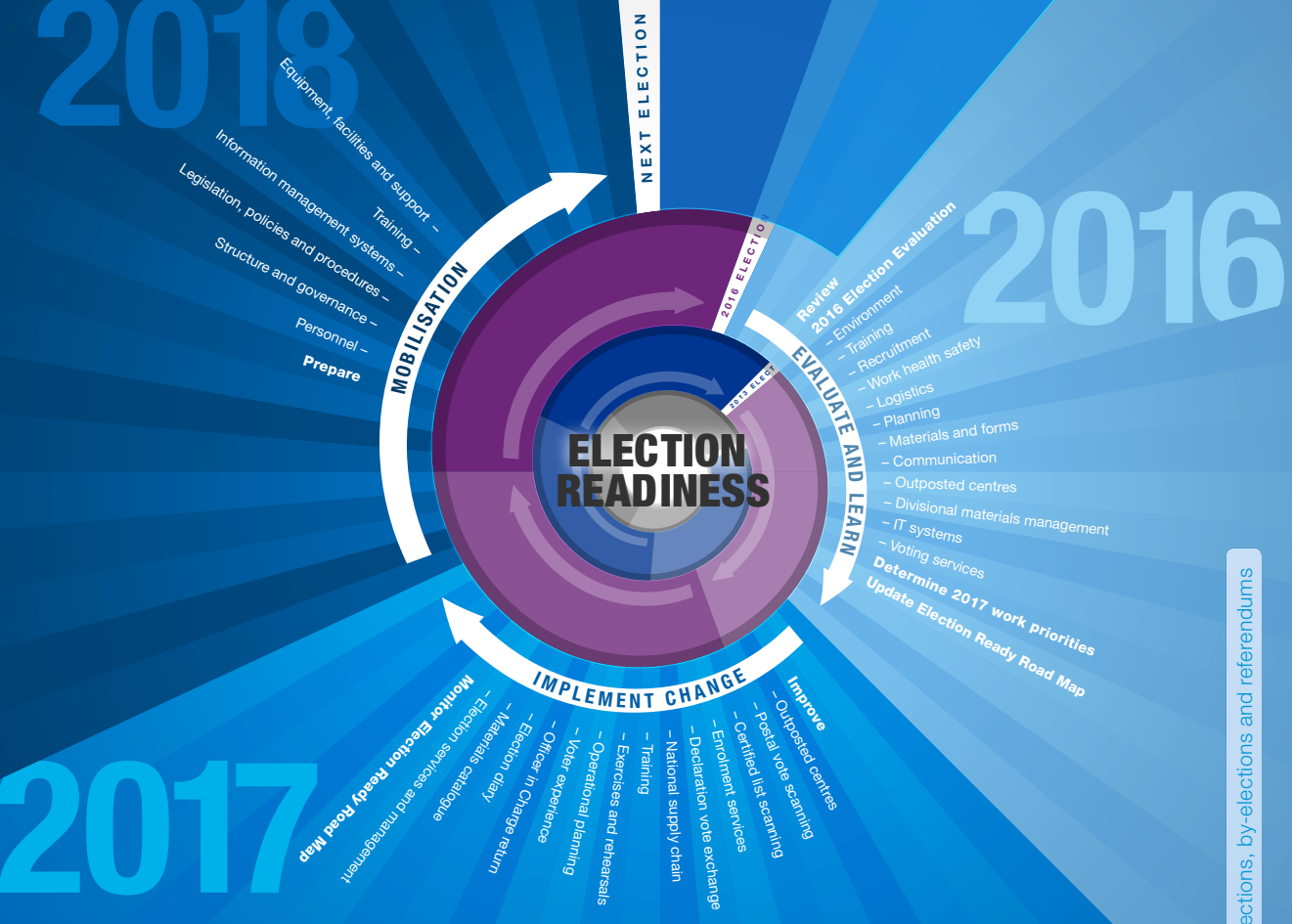
## **AEC work priorities**

The 2016 federal election evaluation project identified 13 cross-agency priority activities to be applied during the 'implement change' phase of the election readiness framework. These involved broad-ranging enhancements to the planning and delivery of elections, including improvements to enrolment services, the supply of election materials, workforce recruitment and training, and polling place operation.

Scoping and planning for these projects began in early 2017, with many progressing to implementation stage by the end of 2016–17.

**Figure 4: 2016 federal election evaluation key lessons**





AEC focus areas in preparation for election readiness (larger version inside back cover)

## SPOTLIGHT

# Election readiness – implement change phase

The AEC needs to be ready to successfully conduct elections whenever they arise. Although there is a generic three-year federal electoral cycle, under legislation elections can come at very short notice, sometimes in as little as 33 days.

Between elections, the AEC must finalise the previous election and start preparing for the next one, as well as consider any broader government initiatives. These activities nearly always mean implementing changes to key policies, procedures and supporting technologies.

‘Implement change’ is the second phase of the AEC’s election readiness framework.

During this phase, the AEC aims to:

- review and prioritise bodies of work identified in the ‘evaluate and learn’ phase of the cycle
- begin work on high priority improvements across the agency
- implement and communicate changes to our operating environment, especially when putting in place new or revised policies and procedures.

To implement change, the AEC focuses on delivering targeted enhancements. This minimises the impact of change on both our staff and the Australian voter.



## Electoral roll management

### The state of the electoral roll

The Commonwealth electoral roll is the list of voters eligible to vote at federal elections.

The completeness of the roll is measured by the enrolment rate – the percentage of eligible Australian electors who are enrolled.

The AEC maintains multiple streams of contact with eligible electors to encourage them to enrol and keep their enrolment up to date, including the Online Enrolment Service, the Federal Direct Enrolment and Update program, and the New Citizens Enrolment Program.

In September 2016, the AEC commenced using SMS and email where possible, as other means of contacting electors about their enrolment.

In 2016–17, the number of people enrolled rose by 180,000 to 15.9 million. This increase almost exactly matched the estimated increase in the eligible population. As a result, the enrolment rate remained high and relatively unchanged, closing the year at 95.1 per cent. Correspondingly, the number of eligible Australians who were not enrolled also remained constant, at around 810,000 as at 30 June 2017.

The Online Enrolment Service, and the Federal Direct Enrolment and Update program now represent almost 80 per cent of all enrolment activity. Only 20 per cent of electors submitted a paper-based claim for enrolment.

The enrolment rate is shown in Figure 5. The target is enrolment of 95 per cent of eligible Australians. More detailed data on enrolment, including monthly and quarterly enrolment statistics, are available from the AEC website.

### SPOTLIGHT

## Online enrolment exceeds 5 million

The total number of enrolment applications received through the AEC's Online Enrolment Service exceeded 5 million in early 2017.

This is a major milestone for the system and represented significant savings for the AEC.

The system includes an electronic signature capture that allows electors to sign their online enrolment form using a stylus, a mouse or their finger and then submit the enrolment electronically, without the need to print. This application provides an accessible online enrolment service for the public, particularly young Australians, many of whom expect to be able to conduct all their business and government transactions online.

Most AEC clients accessing the online service use a mobile or small-screen device, emphasising the shift away from paper-based transactions and highlighting the fact that maintaining your enrolment is simple, convenient and quick.



Millions of Australians have enrolled to vote online

Figure 5: Enrolment rate – 9 October 2004 to 30 June 2017

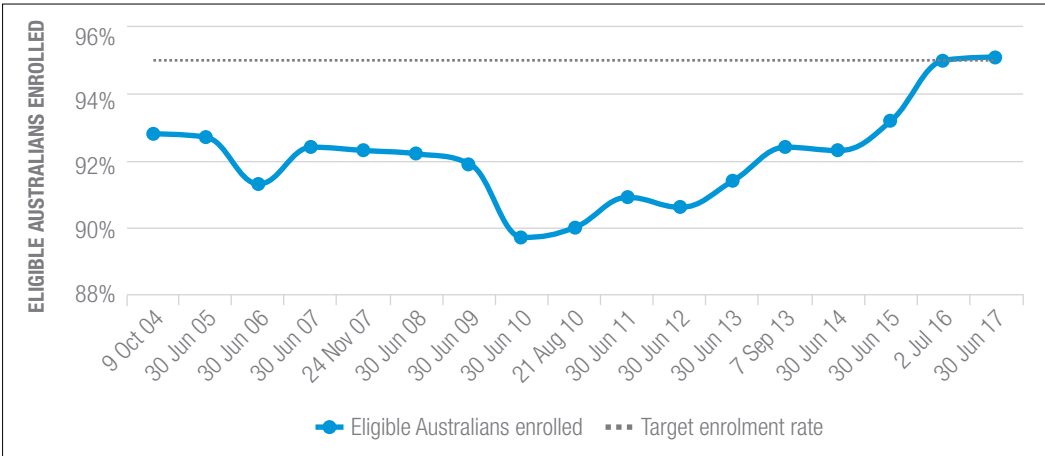


Figure 6: Enrolled population – 9 October 2004 to 30 June 2017



## Targeted enrolment programs

### Youth enrolment

Youth enrolment remains a challenge for the AEC as Australians aged 18 to 24 years have lower levels of enrolment than the general population. Despite this trend, the AEC has increased enrolment rates for this demographic each year since 2012.

In 2016–17, youth enrolment fell slightly in the year after the election, from 87.4 per cent at 30 June 2016 to 85.4 per cent at 30 June 2017, but remained above the target rate of 80 per cent.

### New citizen enrolment

Another important target group for AEC enrolment activity is new Australian citizens. In 2016–17, AEC officers attended 1,311 citizenship ceremonies and collected 105,263 enrolment applications from new citizens enrolling for the first time.

Around 91.2 per cent of new citizens enrolled within three months of attending a citizenship ceremony, compared with just under 92.5 per cent the previous year.

## **Electoral roll integrity**

In 2016–17, to improve roll integrity, the AEC implemented two significant reforms arising from the Australian National Audit Office's (ANAO) Third Follow-up Audit into the Australian Electoral Commission's Preparation for and Conduct of Federal Elections.

### **Improved transparency of enrolment performance**

The ANAO recommended that the AEC increase transparency and drive improvement in enrolment rates by reporting and publishing against performance targets related to roll integrity.

In response, the AEC is now publishing quarterly divisional enrolment rates, enrolment performance indicators and associated performance outcomes on the AEC website.

### **Measuring accuracy of the roll**

The ANAO also recommended that the AEC implement a more reliable method of estimating accuracy and completeness of the electoral roll, than the previous Sample Audit Fieldwork method.

In 2017–18, the Annual Roll Integrity Review will compare client names and addresses from other government agencies with the information on the electoral roll. The review will be more cost effective than the fieldwork method because it will leverage existing data holdings and use existing staff. It is also expected to be more accurate as it matches many millions of AEC and external agency records rather than relying on a sample of around 30,000, as was the case for the 2015 Sample Audit Fieldwork event. The fieldwork method will remain an option for possible future use in ad-hoc situations where a field-based mechanism is required.

Results of the Annual Roll Integrity Review will be published on the AEC website.

## **Enrolment processing**

The Enrolment Quality Assurance Program is a national quality assurance program for enrolment application processing. Every month, the AEC selects a statistically valid random sample of enrolment forms processed. The program measures whether the applications were correctly checked on receipt and whether they have been processed accurately and completely. Error patterns are also scrutinised to identify opportunities for improvements in process, training or systems.

Results provide an estimate of the rate of processing correctness. Fields relating directly to voter entitlements (essential fields) are considered separately from other data (supporting fields). The performance targets are 100 per cent of enrolments processed without error in essential fields and 99.5 per cent processed without error in supporting fields. Results for enrolments processed in the year ending 31 March 2017, indicate that 97.5 per cent of enrolments were processed without essential field errors, and 92.8 per cent were processed without error in supporting fields.

The AEC also has performance indicators for timeliness of enrolment processing – aiming to process 95 per cent of enrolment claims within five days and 99.5 per cent within 30 days. In 2016–17, 69.1 per cent of enrolments were approved within five business days of receipt and 92.6 per cent were approved within 30 days.

Delays in enrolment processing were due to a range of election factors, including a requirement for more than 370,000 declaration envelopes to pass through declaration exchange and scrutiny before enrolments could be processed. During 2016–17, these envelopes made up almost one-quarter of all enrolments processed that were subject to the timeliness performance measures.

Processing timeliness improved once election processes were completed. For the six months from January to June 2017, 96.9 per cent of enrolments were approved within five business days of receipt and 99.6 per cent were approved within 30 days.

### Enrolment fraud

The AEC takes any allegation or suspicion of enrolment fraud very seriously.

Responsibility for examining and analysing allegations of enrolment fraud lies with the Electoral Integrity Unit. This includes an assessment as to whether a specific enrolment fraud allegation should be referred to the Australian Federal Police for investigation.

Where an enrolment fraud matter has been referred to the Federal Police, the integrity unit provides the police with enrolment information and police statements to support the possible prosecution of offenders. As at 30 June 2017, three enrolment fraud matters referred to the Federal Police were being prosecuted in Australian courts.

## Electoral roll products and services

The AEC provides a wide range of roll products and services to state and territory electoral authorities, other government departments and agencies, federal parliamentarians, political parties, media and electoral researchers, and private sector organisations. These services are provided in accordance with the Electoral Act, under agreement and for an authorised purpose.

In 2016–17, the AEC supported three state elections and provided 1,403 extracts of roll information.

### State and territory electoral roll products and services

The AEC manages and maintains the electoral roll on behalf of states and territories under agreements referred to as joint roll arrangements. In 2016–17, the AEC provided 766 roll information products, known as extracts, supporting 55 state, territory and local government elections.

### Other electoral roll products and services

Under section 90B of the Electoral Act, the AEC is permitted to provide certain roll information to various legislated recipients for authorised purposes.

### Members and Senators

Members and Senators are entitled to receive roll information in accordance with subsection 90B(1) of the Electoral Act. The AEC provided 315 roll extracts in 2016–17. A full breakdown of roll information provided is available in Appendix B.

### Political parties

Federally registered political parties are entitled to receive electoral roll information in accordance with subsection 90B(1) of the Electoral Act. In 2016–17, the AEC provided 265 roll extracts to registered political parties. A full breakdown of roll information provided is available in Appendix C.

### Government departments and agencies

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

### INTERESTING FACT

The AEC can directly enrol or update enrolment details of eligible electors based on information from other government agencies

The AEC provided 42 roll extracts to 14 government departments and agencies in 2016–17. Each department and agency provided justification for access by reference to its statutory functions and the *Privacy Act 1988*. A full breakdown of roll information provided is available in Table 31 in Appendix D.

### Researchers

Medical and electoral researchers are permitted access to electoral roll information under subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act. This information is commonly used to identify participants for research projects and surveys. Before they can access roll data, researchers must undergo an approval process. This includes scrutiny by a human research ethics committee and agreement on how the data will be used and protected.

In 2016–17, four medical researchers and one electoral researcher received electoral roll information. A full breakdown of roll information provided is in Table 32 in Appendix D.

### Private sector organisations

Under subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act, private sector organisations may 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 10 roll extracts to private sector organisations. A full breakdown of roll information provided is available in Table 33 in Appendix D.

## Support services for electoral redistributions

Electoral divisions are periodically ‘redistributed’, or redrawn, in accordance with Part IV of the Electoral Act. The purpose of an electoral redistribution is to ensure that, as nearly as practicable, there are an equal number of electors in each electoral division for a given state or territory.

### Redistributions concluded in 2016–17

As a result of the redistribution, changes were made to the boundaries of the two electoral divisions in the Northern Territory. Table 11 sets out the milestones for this redistribution process.

### Redistributions begun in 2016–17

In 2016–17, redistributions began in Queensland and Tasmania, as illustrated in Table 12. These will be finalised in 2017–18.

### Assistance provided by the AEC

The AEC provides administrative assistance to the two bodies established to conduct each redistribution:

- The Redistribution Committee, which is responsible for making a proposed redistribution, comprises the Electoral Commissioner, the relevant Australian Electoral Officer, the Surveyor-General (or equivalent officer) and the Auditor-General of the relevant state or territory.
- The augmented Electoral Commission considers any objections to a proposed redistribution and makes a final determination of the names and boundaries of the redistributed electoral divisions. It comprises the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, the non-judicial member of the Electoral Commission and the members of the Redistribution Committee.

Table 11: Summary of electoral redistributions concluded in 2016–17

| Electoral redistributions                                                | Northern Territory                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Basis for AEC's determination triggering a redistribution                | More than seven years had elapsed since the last redistribution was determined. The Northern Territory retained its entitlement to two members of the House of Representatives. |
| Direction to commence redistribution                                     | 15 October 2015                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Release of Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution            | 9 September 2016                                                                                                                                                                |
| Public input relating to the proposed redistribution                     | Four written objections were received between 9 September and 7 October 2016<br>One written comment on objections was received between 10 October and 21 October 2016           |
| Augmented AEC activities                                                 | Inquiries held: Two submissions were made at the inquiry held in Darwin<br>Decision: Adopt the proposed redistribution<br>Announcement of decision: 7 December 2016             |
| Gazettal of determination of names and boundaries of electoral divisions | 7 February 2017                                                                                                                                                                 |

Table 12: Summary of electoral redistributions commenced in 2016–17

| Electoral redistributions                                     | Queensland                                                                                                                                                          | Tasmania                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Basis for AEC's determination triggering a redistribution     | More than seven years had elapsed since the last redistribution was determined. Queensland retained its entitlement to 30 members of the House of Representatives.  | More than seven years had elapsed since the last redistribution was determined. Tasmania retained its entitlement to five members of the House of Representatives.               |
| Direction to commence redistribution                          | 6 January 2017                                                                                                                                                      | 1 September 2016                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Public input relating to the redistribution                   | There were 25 written suggestions received between 19 April and 19 May 2017<br>Fifteen written comments on suggestions were received between 22 May and 2 June 2017 | There were 21 written suggestions received between 2 November and 2 December 2016<br>Eight written comments on suggestions were received between 5 December and 16 December 2016 |
| Release of Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution | To be released in 2017–18                                                                                                                                           | 5 May 2017                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Public input relating to the proposed redistribution          | To be sought in 2017–18                                                                                                                                             | Eleven written objections were received between 5 May and 2 June 2017<br>Eight written comments on objections were received between 5 June and 16 June 2017                      |

The AEC assisted the redistribution committees for Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory, and the augmented Electoral Commissions for Tasmania and the Northern Territory, by:

- analysing demographic and enrolment data
- facilitating the public consultation process
- providing support for meetings
- producing and publishing (including on the AEC website) information about the redistribution process
- preparing legal instruments, background research papers, analysis of public submissions and material for publication in the Commonwealth Government Notices Gazette
- preparing reports and maps.

During March 2017, the AEC placed notices advising of changes to the boundaries of electoral divisions in newspapers circulating in the Northern Territory. The AEC also sent letters to more than 1,400 Northern Territory households advising that all enrolled residents at the address were now enrolled for a different electoral division as a result of the redistribution.

### INTERESTING FACT

Western Australia has undergone the most redistributions and the Northern Territory the least

## SPOTLIGHT

# Helping Tasmanians with the federal redistribution

When the Redistribution Committee for Tasmania released maps of the proposed redistribution on 5 May 2017, the information was also made available on LISTmap.

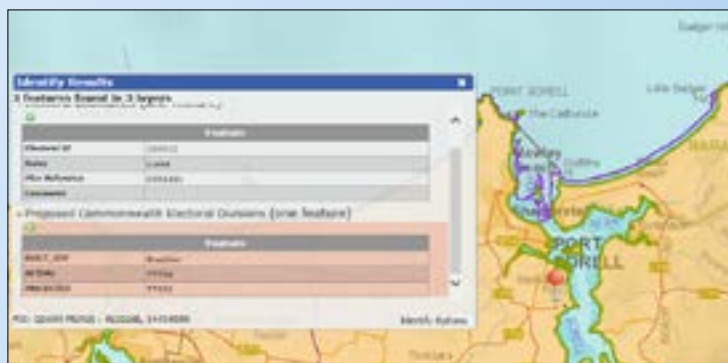
The Land Information System Tasmania (LIST) online map is an interactive map provided by Land Tasmania, a division of the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

LISTmap allows users to zoom in on any location in

Tasmania and identify which local government area, existing federal electoral division, and proposed electoral division the location is in.

Individuals and organisations can then decide if they wish to make an objection to the proposal.

Identifying the existing federal electoral division and proposed electoral division for the town of Budehaven.





# Party registration and financial disclosure

## Register of Political Parties

The AEC maintains the Register of Political Parties as required under Part XI of the Electoral Act, and advises political parties on applying for and maintaining registration.

The AEC also receives and processes applications for new party registration, reviews registered political parties’ eligibility to remain on the register and manages the process for updating or changing party officials such as the registered officer.

Political parties are not required to register with the AEC. However, for those that do, there are potential benefits such as public election funding (provided a threshold proportion of first preference votes is received), and the ability to have the party name or abbreviation and their registered logo printed on ballot papers. Benefits and obligations are outlined in the Party Registration Guide available on the AEC website.

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

- the current Register of Political Parties (including registered party names, abbreviations, logos, registered officer details and whether the party wishes to receive election funding)
- notices regarding party registration required under the Electoral Act
- historical information
- the Party Registration Guide
- statements of reasons for decisions on applications
- forms and explanations to assist parties making applications.

## Party registration related applications and requests

In 2016–17, the AEC registered five new political parties and received five applications to deregister a political party. These numbers are significantly lower than those for 2015–16, and follow the historical pattern of increased registrations in the year before a federal election and a decrease in the year the election is held.

## 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 delegate of the AEC.

In 2016–17, the AEC received two applications requesting a review of its delegate’s decision not to approve the applications for registration as a political party. These were still under consideration as at 30 June 2017.

During 2016–17, three reviews were determined:

- two concerning approval to register the logo of a party
- one concerning approval to register the abbreviation of a party.

Further details are available on the AEC website.

Table 13: Party registration related applications and requests, 2016–17

| Application/requests                                                  | Approved |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Register a new political party                                        | 5        |
| Voluntarily deregister political party                                | 5        |
| Change party details (including name, abbreviation and logo)          | 18       |
| Update party office holder information – change registered officer    | 12       |
| Update party office holder information – change other party officials | 55       |
| Review of decision by the delegate of the Electoral Commission        | 3        |



### INTERESTING FACT

Only 37 electoral division names used in 1901 are still in use

## Transparency of political funding

The Commonwealth funding and financial disclosure scheme, established under Part XX of the Electoral Act, outlines the requirements about disclosing detailed financial information regarding donations to political parties and election campaigns.

The disclosure scheme requires that the following groups and individuals lodge annual or election period financial disclosure returns with the AEC:

- political candidates
- political parties and their associated entities
- donors (individuals and organisations)
- third parties
- other participants in the electoral process.

## Financial disclosure returns

During 2016–17, the AEC received 1,636 election returns and 868 annual financial disclosure returns and amendments. These included:

- 1,636 election returns from the 2016 federal election
- 722 returns and 62 amendments for the 2015–16 financial year
- 12 returns and 31 amendments for the 2014–15 financial year
- 28 returns and 13 amendments relating to returns received before 2014–15.

Political party and associated entity financial disclosure returns for 2016–17 are due on 20 October 2017. Donor and third party returns for 2016–17 are due on 17 November 2017.

These returns will be published on the AEC website on the first working day in February 2018. Table 14 shows the number of returns lodged for the past three financial years.

Online lodgement of returns is available through the AEC's eReturns system, which is a secure portal on the AEC website. Online lodgement has continued to increase. In 2016–17, 69 per cent of returns were completed online.

**Table 14: Financial disclosure returns lodged and published in previous financial years**

| Return type                                      | 2014–15         | 2015–16         | 2016–17      |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Annual returns</b>                            |                 |                 |              |
| Political party                                  | 92              | 85              | 93           |
| Political party – amendment                      | 35              | 41              | 47           |
| Associated entity                                | 189             | 186             | 188          |
| Associated entity – amendment                    | 8               | 18              | 17           |
| Donor                                            | 360             | 239             | 423          |
| Donor – amendment                                | 34              | 26              | 42           |
| Political expenditure                            | 35              | 32              | 58           |
| Political expenditure – amendment                | 3               | 0               | 0            |
| <b>Election returns</b>                          |                 |                 |              |
| Candidate                                        | 49 <sup>a</sup> | 25 <sup>b</sup> | 1,617        |
| Senate groups                                    | 1 <sup>a</sup>  | 0               | 11           |
| Election donor                                   | 0               | 0               | 8            |
| <b>Total financial disclosure returns lodged</b> | <b>806</b>      | <b>652</b>      | <b>2,504</b> |

a. 2014–15 WA Senate election (returns were received across two financial years).

b. 2015–16 North Sydney and Canning by-elections.

Table 15: Compliance reviews completed in previous financial years

| Return type       | 2014–15   | 2015–16   | 2016–17   |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Political party   | 7         | 14        | 17        |
| Associated entity | 9         | 14        | 14        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>16</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>31</b> |

## Compliance reviews of disclosure returns

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 on an annual basis focusing on the most recent returns lodged. In 2016–17, the AEC completed 31 compliance reviews of disclosure returns lodged by political parties and associated entities. Of the 31 completed reviews, 24 resulted in an amended return being lodged by the relevant party or entity.

## Election funding

The AEC calculates the election funding rate for each vote received by candidates and Senate groups that reached a threshold of 4 per cent of the formal first preference vote. Every six months, the election funding rate is adjusted in line with the consumer price index and published on the AEC website.

The election funding rates during 2016–17 were:

- 262.784 cents per first preference vote for 1 July to 31 December 2016
- 265.675 cents per first preference vote for 1 January to 30 June 2017.

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

The federal election was held on 2 July 2016. The AEC approved and processed the initial

payments of election funding on 27 July 2016 based on the vote count at the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 \$62,778,275.03 in election funding, \$60,466,642.44 was paid in the initial payments and \$2,311,632.59 was paid at the completion of the vote count. Refer to Appendix H for a breakdown of funding paid.

## Industrial and commercial elections

The AEC conducts:

- **industrial elections** in accordance with the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, the associated regulations and the relevant organisation's rules
- **protected action ballots** in accordance with the *Fair Work Act 2009*, the associated regulations and Fair Work Commission orders
- **fee-for-service** elections and ballots.

## Industrial elections

Industrial elections are office bearer elections for organisations registered under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*. These can be either trade unions or employer bodies.

## Protected action ballots

Protected action ballots provide employees with an opportunity to formally vote on proposals for industrial action. These ballots can only occur in the period that an enterprise agreement is being negotiated.

## Fee-for-service elections and ballots

Fee-for-service elections and ballots are conducted at full cost recovery for clients who approach the AEC. Authority for the AEC to both do this work, and charge for it, comes from sections 7A and 7B of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

The AEC has minimum standards (published on the website) that must be met before it will consider conducting fee-for-service elections or ballots. Most fee-for-service work is for the conduct of a ballot on a proposed enterprise agreement.

## Activity

A total of 812 elections and ballots were conducted in 2016–17. Of these, 299 were industrial elections, 423 were protected action ballots, 85 were fee-for-service elections and ballots, and five were other types of elections/ballots. See Table 38 in Appendix G.

A major project for the Industrial and Commercial Elections Program was the replacement of its legacy electoral event management system with a modern, fit-for-purpose system. This is due for implementation in October 2017.

## Public awareness

In 2016–17, the AEC's advertising, communication and public relations strategies focused on the final stages of the 2016 federal election (including the counting period), before returning to communication about enrolment, redistributions and other supporting federal electoral processes.

### Advertising campaign – final 2016 federal election messages

In the final days of the 2016 election voting period (1 and 2 July 2016), the AEC's communication campaign delivered election advertising through television, radio, press and online channels.

This final advertising complemented previous phases of the campaign and concentrated on formal voting instructions as well as directing voters to the AEC website for polling place details.

The AEC's campaign 'Your vote will help shape Australia' was the winner of the Government sponsored campaigns category at the Public Relations Institute of Australia's (PRIA) ACT awards for excellence. The campaign was also highly commended at PRIA's national awards for excellence.

Further information regarding the 2016 public awareness campaign was provided in the AEC's 2015–16 Annual Report.



Angela Murphy, Holly Castro and Phil Diak receive the Public Relations Institute of Australia's excellence award from Division President (ACT), Heike Philips.

## AEC online tally room – election results

The online tally room is the official record of federal election results and provides progressive tallies from election night through to the finalisation of counting. The 2016 election results are available at [results.aec.gov.au/](http://results.aec.gov.au/).

The AEC produced a redesigned online tally room for the 2016 federal election, which for the first time at a federal election, provided a responsive design for users to access results easily via a mobile device.

### Media feed

The AEC's online tally room was complemented by a simultaneous feed of raw results data to subscribing broadcast media outlets.

The media feed service enabled media outlets to import progressive official results through their own software and to display this information in a format of their choosing. The service began at 6pm AEST on election night, and continued until counting was complete.

## 2016 federal election counting period – media relations

Media liaison played a key role in keeping the public updated on counting progress at the 2016 federal election.

This included providing regular updates via the AEC website's homepage, issuing media statements, posting messages via the AEC's Twitter account and organising media access to counting centres. In addition, the Electoral Commissioner and AEC spokespeople delivered a range of television and radio interviews to provide insights into the AEC's counting process and significant results.

Most of the remaining 2016–17 media liaison, both proactively and reactively, coincided with the key electoral activities of redistributions,

financial disclosure, event readiness and party registration.

In 2016–17, the AEC distributed a total of 40 national media releases.

## Education services

### National Electoral Education Centre

The National Electoral Education Centre at Old Parliament House in Canberra provides education programs for students visiting the national capital as part of their civics and citizenship studies.

During the year we:

- hosted visitors from 149 electoral divisions
- held 2,517 sessions
- had 87,564 participants, of which:
  - 72,671 were primary students
  - 7,149 were secondary students
  - 7,744 were adults
- collected 265 new electoral roll enrolments.

In 2016, the AEC renovated parts of the centre to modernise both the presentation content and program spaces. The most dramatic change was a complete make-over of the foyer area using a blend of recent election information and historical items. The theatre presentation was updated with information to reflect the changes to Senate voting. In response to visitor feedback, the AEC also introduced new student activity books to encourage higher order thinking.

### Outreach and online education

The website, AEC for schools, provides a range of education materials for classroom use. The site averages 9,000 visits a month. The new publication, 'Voting in Australia', remains the most requested resource.



The core education outreach program is 'Get Voting', which provides materials for schools to conduct their own election, teaching students about electoral processes through participation. In 2016–17, Get Voting had:

- 12,978 online visitors
- 248 requests for election equipment packs
- school elections for 35,064 students.

### **Professional learning for teachers**

The AEC delivers training to help teachers develop the knowledge and skills needed to teach electoral education in primary and secondary schools.

For example, in 2016–17 the AEC held:

- seven workshops with 87 participants
- two civic education conferences with 43 workshop participants.

In 2016, the AEC also developed a one-hour online professional learning tool for teachers called 'Voting in the classroom'. This module was launched in July 2016 and equips educators to run a classroom election that will help their students understand the decision-making processes of an election.

This year, about 60 educators successfully completed the module.

Given 2017 is the 50th anniversary of the 1967 constitutional referendum, a new initiative has the AEC working with other National Education Institutions in Canberra to provide a one-day workshop for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.

### **Special counts in Western Australia and South Australia**

In 2016–17, the AEC undertook special counts of Senate ballot papers in both Western Australia and South Australia, as ordered by the High Court of Australia, to fill a Senate vacancy in each state. While not a formal party to either court case, the AEC responded to media and public enquiries to provide information about the AEC's role in conducting the special count.

AEC communication included providing information through the AEC website. Once the special counts were formally approved by the High Court, the AEC provided full results through an updated 2016 federal election tally room website.

## AEC website

The AEC website, [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au), continues to be the main external communication platform of the agency and employs a responsive design to ensure it is usable on any device (for example, desktop computer, tablet and mobile phone).

On election day, [www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au) had 1.8 million users generating 4.4 million page views. The AEC tally room website, which provided real time election results, serviced over 200,000 users on election night (from 6pm to midnight) generating around 3.7 million page views.

Following the conclusion of the 2016 federal election, the AEC website continued the geographical customisation of the homepage introduced for the event. This allows users to insert their postcode and have personalised homepage information displayed automatically. Filtered homepage information includes the name of their division, the current member and division details. Once a user has selected their division, the AEC website will remain customised on their next visit from the same device, as well as prioritising deeper content such as the contact details of their division and past election results.

## AEC social media

In 2016–17, the AEC's social media presence continued to include Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

Each social media channel complemented the AEC website. Social media allowed the AEC to liaise with the media, stakeholders and electors in a timely manner, as well as both proactively and reactively.

At 30 June 2017, the AEC Facebook page had more than 28,000 page likes, the Twitter account more than 14,800 followers and the AEC YouTube account more than 1,400 subscribers.

The AEC's Twitter account (@AusElectoralCom) continued to be used throughout 2016–17, and its followers included a substantial media audience. In the latter stages of the election period, including the counting process, the AEC's Twitter account was important for updating the media and the public, as well as providing helpful links to new material on the AEC website.

In total over 2016–17, the AEC proactively posted 198 tweets on its Twitter account. Following the conclusion of the 2016 federal election, the account was used to provide information about particularly newsworthy federal electoral matters, including party registration, redistribution processes and financial disclosure.

## National online and telephone enquiry services

The AEC receives enquiries and feedback from the public and other stakeholders through a range of contact channels, including telephone, web form, email, social media, facsimile, postal mail and in person.

The AEC's national telephone service (13 23 26) provides information and receives queries from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. People with hearing or speech impairment can contact the AEC via the National Relay Service, Text Telephone (TTY), Speak and Listen and Internet relay.

### INTERESTING FACT

In 2010, telephone voting was trialled for voters who are blind or have low vision



## Assisting Australians with diverse needs

As voting is compulsory in Australia, the AEC endeavours to meet the needs of a diverse range of people when managing electoral events and preparing information for the public. We use a variety of education and communication initiatives for meeting the needs of Australians with disability (such as hearing, sight or communication impairments), people suffering disadvantage (such as homelessness), and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

### People with disability

In addition to supporting the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020, the AEC uses a number of initiatives and outreach activities to improve awareness of, and access to, electoral services.

To support the participation of Australians with disability in the 2016 federal election, the AEC held a dedicated information briefing for representatives of the peak disability organisations, providing specific information on the range of services. This also provided an opportunity for representatives of the disability sector to discuss matters related to the election.

### Translation services

The AEC provides a translation 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.

VITS operated 16 dedicated language-specific telephone interpreter information lines and a multi-language information line. It handled 3,034 calls in 2016–17. A total of 1,766 callers used the translator service to speak directly to AEC staff. The top three languages used were Mandarin (1,121 calls), Arabic (346 calls) and Cantonese (307 calls).

For new citizens who speak a language other than English, the AEC also provides translated information on our website about enrolment and voting in 26 languages.

### Service for voters with a hearing or speech impairment

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

## Services for Indigenous Australians

### Indigenous Electoral Participation Program

Historically, Indigenous Australians are far less likely to enrol and vote than other Australians. The AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Program aims to increase electoral knowledge, enrolment, turnout and vote formality levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The program is delivered in urban, regional and remote areas by the AEC's Indigenous Community Engagement Officers, the majority of whom are Indigenous. Under the program, AEC staff work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in their local communities, or in partnership with other organisations, to deliver electoral services in ways that meet cultural and regional needs.

In 2016–17, activities included:

- conducting the third National Indigenous Youth Parliament in May 2017
- providing electoral information sessions at key community events, meetings, conferences and forums to raise awareness of enrolment, voting, vote formality and democratic processes
- raising public awareness for federal, state, and local elections

- contributing to the AEC's Reconciliation Action Plan, cultural awareness training and staff development.

### National Indigenous Youth Parliament 2017

The third National Indigenous Youth Parliament was held in May 2017. The week-long program in Canberra included a two-day parliament in the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, meetings with the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition and Members of Parliament, a reception at Government House and a special parliamentary reception with campaigners from the 1967 referendum and the families of the Mabo plaintiffs.

The youth parliament provides the 50 participants with an opportunity to develop their leadership skills to advocate on important issues for closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. Issues debated during the mock parliament included Indigenous youth mental health, human rights and race discrimination, and improving access to drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. In the adjournment speeches, youth parliamentarians spoke on issues important to their communities, told their stories, and spoke about their concerns with the disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians.



The Indigenous youth parliament was held at Old Parliament House

The participants travelled from all over Australia and the Torres Strait to Canberra for the event. The AEC worked closely with the YMCA and

the Museum of Australian Democracy to deliver a successful program.

### Indigenous electoral participation in the 2016 federal election

The Indigenous Electoral Participation Program supported the AEC's provision of services to Indigenous Australians at the 2016 federal election with a range of activities. Information regarding these activities was provided in the AEC's 2015–16 Annual Report.

Since completing the election, the AEC has undertaken an internal evaluation of the program's 2016 federal election activities to inform the program's national plan for 2017–18.

Preparation of the 2017–18 plan began in late 2016–17.

### Assistance to overseas electoral authorities

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).

While most funding for the AEC's international work is provided by DFAT, the AEC also works closely with counterparts in the Asian, Pacific and Southern African regions, and with other providers of international electoral assistance, including the:

- 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 is also a partner in ‘BRIDGE’ – the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections modular professional development program. In 2016–17, the BRIDGE partnership began to update and consolidate the BRIDGE modules. The program is available online at [www.bridge-project.org](http://www.bridge-project.org).

In addition, the AEC delivers DFAT-funded electoral support programs in Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga.

### **Pacific Island countries**

In 2016–17, the AEC supported Pacific Island electoral management bodies both through bilateral assistance programs and through the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators network (PIANZEA). The PIANZEA Advisory Group provides strategic direction and oversight of network activities. It represents key PIANZEA regions Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia as well as Australia and New Zealand.

In 2016–17:

- AEC officials provided technical assistance for the Tongan Electoral Office, specifically on voter education planning ahead of the elections in 2018.
- The AEC conducted a BRIDGE workshop in Honiara, the Solomon Islands in February 2017, on further understanding the electoral process and the role of political parties. In May 2017, the AEC also conducted a pilot BRIDGE electoral operations planning workshop, in addition to providing broader support and capacity building for the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission.
- The AEC and the Fijian Elections Office signed a memorandum of understanding in March 2017 to establish a mutually cooperative relationship in election administration.

- The AEC ran a BRIDGE workshop on Boundary Delimitation in Canberra, in November 2016. The workshop included PIANZEA representatives, with participants from the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau and Tuvalu.
- The AEC assisted the PNG Electoral Commission with policy manuals on key election processes (nominations, polling and count) as well as associated training manuals.
- The AEC provided ongoing support for the Office of the Bougainville Electoral Commissioner as it prepared for the Bougainville elections. Program planning and stakeholder consultations have commenced.

### **India**

The Australian Electoral Commission has a longstanding relationship with the Election Commission of India. In January 2017, the Australian Electoral Commissioner visited India to participate in the Indian National Voters Day celebrations and attend a seminar. During the visit, the AEC and Election Commission of India signed a memorandum of understanding on electoral cooperation. This marks an important milestone in the strengthening of the relationship.

### **The 2016 Australian Federal Election Visitor Program**

Over the 2016 federal election period, the AEC hosted an Election Visitor Program. This provided an opportunity for foreign representatives from election management bodies to experience an Australian election.

A total of 42 delegates (and one interpreter) attended the program, 35 of whom were senior international delegates representing 17 foreign election management bodies. One senior representative from a foreign government department, one regional multilateral agency, one international non-government organisation and four staff from DFAT also attended the program.

The program included a series of briefings from key AEC business areas, a visit to the AEC's National Electoral Education Centre, visits to two urban and one rural polling station to see polling day activities and the start of the count, and a reception at the AEC offices on election night. A debrief and networking opportunity concluded the program.

Overall, the 2016 program showcased the AEC as a professional electoral body and provided an opportunity for international delegates to better understand the Australian system. It also helped participants form connections and strengthen relationships in the broader network of international electoral management bodies, government departments and non-government organisations.

### Hosting international visitors

In 2016–17, the AEC hosted international study programs, delegations and visitors from 25 different countries, including Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Myanmar, Kiribati, Fiji, Cook Islands, Nieu, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, China, New Zealand, Botswana, Kenya, Korea, Canada, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Vanuatu, as well as from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

## SPOTLIGHT

### Building capacity in our region

In 2016–17, the AEC maintained its commitment to capacity building in the Asia-Pacific region by deploying personnel and providing technical support to a number of countries hosting electoral events.

This included assisting with preparations for the 2017 Papua New Guinea National Election, held from 24 June to 8 July 2017, as well as developing management capability within the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission.

In addition, the AEC assisted with preparations for the Myanmar by-elections, deploying materials and staff to work with the Union Election Commission of Myanmar.

Following the by-elections, the AEC hosted a study program for two early to mid-career female employees from the Union Election Commission, identified as having potential for

career advancement. The program lasted for six weeks and gave participants the opportunity to spend time in the AEC National Office in Canberra, the Victorian State Office and a number of divisional offices.



Electoral Commissioner Tom Rogers and AEC staff with Union Election Commission participants Win Thuzar Khaing and Khine Thandar Myo



## SECTION 4

# MANAGING THE AEC

We seek to ensure that the AEC is managed to the highest standards of integrity, transparency and accountability



**88%**  
**RETENTION RATE**

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**8.5 YEARS**  
**AVERAGE SERVICE**  
**ONGOING STAFF**

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**47.3 YEARS**  
**AVERAGE AGE**  
**REGULAR WORKFORCE**

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### **In this section**

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In the same way that the AEC strives for electoral integrity through quality, agility and professionalism, we also seek to ensure that the organisation itself is managed to the highest standards of integrity, transparency and accountability.

We do this in the first instance through a combination of governance mechanisms combined with ethical standards and staff consultation, plus strategic and business planning and reporting, and comprehensive

risk management. These activities are the foundation of the way we manage our resources and assets.

Assurance is provided through compliance activities such as legal services, auditing and fraud control mechanisms. And ultimately what we do is subject to considerable external scrutiny – through our customers, the public, the judiciary, various audit and integrity bodies and, on occasion, parliamentary committees and inquiries.

## Governance, ethics and employee consultation

The AEC’s corporate governance arrangements are the structures and processes the senior leadership uses to monitor performance, ensure accountability and steer the agency. These predominantly consist of the executive management structure (see Executive management on page 13) and a range of decision-making management committees, supported by four influential discussion forums.

Corporate governance at the AEC is underpinned by strong ethical standards

and regular consultation with employees on decisions that affect them.

Assurance activities were a focus of several management committees during 2016–17 as the agency continued to re-establish its reputation. This was particularly the case for the Business Assurance Committee, Fraud Control Committee and the Organisational Health Committee.

**Table 16: AEC management committees**

| Committee name                        | Function                                                                                                                                                                           | Members                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Meeting frequency |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Executive Leadership Team (ELT)       | Senior management team assisting the Electoral Commissioner in the delivery of strategic leadership and operational management for the AEC.                                        | Electoral Commissioner; Deputy Electoral Commissioner; two First Assistant Commissioners (FAC).                                                                                                                                                                  | Weekly            |
| Organisational Health Committee (OHC) | Monitors performance, risk management, compliance and controls. It provides advice and recommendations to the ELT, which is ultimately responsible for organisational performance. | Deputy Electoral Commissioner; FAC Capability; FAC Network and Election Operations; Assistant Commissioner (AC) People Services; Chief Finance Officer; AC Disclosure, Assurance and Engagement; State Manager New South Wales; State Manager Western Australia. | Monthly           |

| Committee name                              | Function                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Members                                                                                                                                                                              | Meeting frequency                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capability Committee                        | Monitors organisational capability and progresses projects within the AEC to support the agency strategic direction. It monitors project outputs and significant organisational initiatives, and provides advice on the AEC's future capability requirements.                          | FAC Capability; FAC Network and Election Operations; Chief Finance Officer; AC Roll Management; AC Information Management; State Manager Queensland; State Manager Tasmania.         | Monthly                                                                    |
| Business Assurance Committee (BAC)          | Provides independent advice on the AEC's internal audit resourcing and coverage in relation to key risks. Approves the internal audit program. Oversees operation of audit committees and fraud control under the PGPA Act.                                                            | At least three members appointed by Electoral Commissioner; majority of members from outside AEC; advisers from AEC permitted to attend. Four members and three advisers in 2016–17. | Quarterly                                                                  |
| Fraud Control Committee (FCC)               | Subcommittee of the BAC. Advises BAC on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the AEC's fraud control plans, policies and procedures.                                                                                                                                               | AC Roll Management; AC Information Technology; State Manager Victoria; State Manager South Australia; Chief Legal Officer (observer); Chief Finance Officer (observer).              | Quarterly                                                                  |
| National Election Delivery Committee (NEDC) | Supports the National Election Manager (NEM) to oversee the agency's election planning, preparation, delivery and coordination of activities, as set out in the Election Ready Road Map.<br><br>The NEM reports regularly on behalf of the NEDC to ELT and the Electoral Commissioner. | NEM; state and territory managers; and other senior executive employees of AEC (membership expands as election approaches).                                                          | Regularly; varies from monthly to weekly or daily in run-up to an election |
| Work health and safety (WHS) committees     | National and state and territory WHS committees represent workers in WHS matters as well as monitoring, inspecting and inquiring into all aspects of work health and safety.                                                                                                           | Chair; management representatives; employee representatives and advisers from People Services Branch.                                                                                | Quarterly, with out-of-session meetings as required                        |

## Discussion forums

With management and employees distributed across all states and territories, the AEC needs to maintain effective internal communication to ensure agency cohesion. This is achieved at three levels of agency management via

four discussion forums that incorporate the participation and feedback of senior executives and managers. These forums have been designed to facilitate information sharing and links across the AEC's national network.



**Table 17: Discussion forums**

| Forum name                                               | Function                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Members                                                                                                                                       | Meeting frequency                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Senior Executive Forum (now part of NEDC – see Table 16) | Achieving common understanding of key agency issues among all senior executives.<br><br>Focus is on information sharing and clarification of the AEC's approach.<br><br>Also provides links between priority-setting and decision-making at executive level, with implementation at branch and state level.     | Electoral Commissioner;<br>Deputy Electoral Commissioner;<br>three First Assistant Commissioners; state and territory managers; branch heads. | via NEDC                                                                                                |
| Director Operations Network                              | Supports NEDC and other bodies through project work, as tasked. It is a forum to discuss risk and issues facing the operational network; operational policy and procedures, and to consider implementation issues and changes; and to provide feedback to the NEDC on relevant operational or strategic issues. | All Directors of Operations.                                                                                                                  | Fortnightly via teleconference or video conference, with at least three face-to-face meetings per annum |
| Operations Managers Network                              | Encourages participation of operations managers in cultural and operational transformation.<br><br>Facilitates increased collaboration, consistency and compliance across state and territory operations and the broader agency.                                                                                | FAC Network and Election Operations; and operations managers from all states and territories.                                                 | Two to five times a year, as required                                                                   |
| National Office Directors Network                        | Enables directors in National Office to collectively influence AEC strategy and operations, put forward new ideas and opportunities, and raise any unrecognised operational risks.<br><br>Also promotes engagement with other governance entities and improves relationships across the AEC.                    | FAC Capability; all directors (EL2 officers) working in National Office, Canberra.                                                            | Quarterly                                                                                               |

## Ethical standards

The AEC's ethical standards are implicit in:

- AEC values
- the AEC's strategic planning framework
- AEC staff conduct policies (for example, attendance, dress code, conflict of interest)
- the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct (reinforced in the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019).

The AEC's core values of electoral integrity through quality, agility and professionalism inform both strategic planning and day-to-day operations.

More information on AEC values is provided on page 10.

Electoral integrity is a particularly important aspect of the AEC's ethical standards, in accordance with our focus on understanding and responding to the expectations of both the public and the Australian Parliament.

## Employee consultation

The AEC considers effective communication with employees as crucial to the achievement of its objectives. As a result, it manages a number of initiatives to ensure that employee views and opinions are heard on decisions that affect them.

## Consultative forums

As established in the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019, a number of national and state consultative forums support open communication and consultation. Elections are held to select employee representatives, who may self-nominate to participate. The AEC Consultative Forum is the national consultative body. Three employee representatives on the forum are elected by staff.

The responsibilities of the AEC Consultative Forum include:

- improving communication between employees and AEC management
- providing an opportunity for open, honest and effective communication on matters concerning the AEC nationally
- reporting to the Executive Leadership Team as necessary
- convening working parties to examine issues of interest to AEC staff and management (for example, organisational and technical change, equity, diversity, employee relations and human resource management).

## New enterprise agreement

In October 2016, a successful ballot was held on the proposed AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019. There were 871 AEC staff participating in the ballot, with 471, or 66 per cent, voting in favour. The agreement was approved by the Fair Work Commission on 29 November 2016 and formally took effect from 6 December 2016.

The agreement represented the highest possible pay offer available under the Federal Government's Bargaining Policy, with an immediate salary increase of 3 per cent, to be followed by 2 per cent and 1 per cent increases in December 2017 and 2018 (6 per cent increase over the three years of the agreement). The agreement also included amendments to provisions on part-time work arrangements,

flex time and executive level time off in lieu, to strengthen the AEC's commitment to flexible working arrangements.

The enterprise agreement will take the AEC beyond the next federal election. It is a key element for building organisational capability, by setting the framework for working together through the next few years. It will also help the AEC attract, support and retain high-quality staff.

## State of the Service survey

The AEC's Australian Public Service employees are invited to participate in the annual State of the Service survey conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC). In 2017, the survey was conducted over a one-month period during May and June 2017.

The AEC's response rate for 2017 was 76 per cent, which was above the APSC's target response rate of 65 per cent, and was an improvement on last year's response rate of 49 per cent. Each year, senior management reviews the confidential results to find out what is working well across the agency and to take action in areas that require improvement.

## Other internal consultation

Other initiatives used by the AEC to address staff consultation include internal surveys, workshops, dedicated email addresses for specific queries, and online discussion forums. The intranet is the AEC's key internal communication tool and is continuously improved through analysis of usage patterns and user experiences.

### INTERESTING FACT

Electronic electoral enrolment was introduced in 2010



## Strategic and business planning

As a publicly accountable agency, the AEC has a statutory duty to professionally plan and report on its achievements each year, primarily to the Australian Parliament.

Statutory reporting includes the AEC Corporate Plan, Portfolio Budget Statements and (when required) Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, and the Annual Report.

### Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan for 2016–2020, required by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), was published in August 2016. The plan provided a focus for the agency's work from the start of the 2016–17 financial year. It is the foundation of the agency's planning and operating framework.

The plan outlines five agency directions:

- deliver a changed model for elections and referendums
- govern the organisation for quality and assurance
- professionalise the workforce
- re-establish the reputation of the AEC
- build an agile and responsive organisation.

### Portfolio Budget Statements and Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements

The purpose of Portfolio Budget Statements is to inform Senators and Members of Parliament of the proposed allocation of resources within the AEC to government outcomes.

As outlined earlier in this report, the AEC has one 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 programs'.

This outcome is delivered via one program, Deliver Electoral Events, with six areas of performance for 2016–17:

- federal elections, by-elections and referendums
- electoral roll management
- support services for electoral redistributions
- party registrations and financial disclosure
- industrial and commercial elections
- public awareness.

The Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements inform Senators, Members of Parliament and the public of changes since the Budget to the proposed allocation of AEC resources to government outcomes. These are only issued if there are changes that the government has agreed to.

### Annual Report

The primary purpose of the Annual Report is accountability, to the Parliament in particular. The Annual Report informs Parliament, the public and all stakeholders about the performance of the AEC in relation to activities undertaken, and especially in relation to the activities and directions set out in our Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Plan. The Annual Report is also a key reference document and historical record.

## Business planning

The AEC's work is also set out in a comprehensive range of business planning documents, many of which have associated internal monitoring and reporting mechanisms. These documents are listed in Table 18.

### INTERESTING FACT

The Division of McEwen grew the most in 2016–17, by 7,031 electors. The Division of Bruce reduced the most, by 1,256 electors

**Table 18: Business planning documents**

| Document                                       | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Reviewed                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Business planning and reporting framework      | Supports staff in planning and delivering outcomes specified in the AEC Corporate Plan, as well as managing resources and finances. Supports numerous sections of the PGPA Act. Progress against key performance indicators is measured and monitored regularly to ensure priorities are met in the timeframes indicated and within budget. | Annually                                                         |
| Branch, and state and territory business plans | Align branch, and state and territory activities with the business planning and reporting framework.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Annually                                                         |
| Election readiness framework                   | Sets out and monitors the program of activity required to maintain election readiness.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Every election cycle                                             |
| Information Technology Strategic Plan          | Sets out the AEC's desired information technology vision to 2020. Supported by the IT Architecture Plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Annually                                                         |
| Fraud Control Plan                             | Provides a tailored solution for preventing, detecting and responding to fraud in accordance with relevant Commonwealth law, fraud control policies and memorandums of understanding.                                                                                                                                                       | Every two years (or if significant organisational change occurs) |
| Strategic Risk Management Plan                 | Details strategic risks that affect the AEC and specifies how these risks will be managed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Biannually                                                       |
| Assurance Plan                                 | Outlines assurance activities that target the AEC's key/high-risk business processes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Annually                                                         |
| Internal Audit Plan                            | Sets out the AEC's internal audit program for the financial year (contained within the Assurance Plan).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Annually                                                         |
| Business continuity plans                      | Ensure continuation of identified critical business functions during and following a critical incident that causes disruption to normal operations.                                                                                                                                                                                         | Annually                                                         |
| Disability Inclusion Strategy                  | Identifies relevant target outcomes from the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Reported on annually                                             |
| Diversity Strategy                             | Sets out activities to recognise and value diversity in the workplace.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Every four years                                                 |
| Reconciliation Action Plan                     | Sets out activities to recognise and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in internal and external arrangements and activities.                                                                                                                                                                                            | Annually                                                         |
| Agency Multicultural Plan                      | Sets out engagement activities, and access and equity policies to engage those from diverse cultural backgrounds.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Every three years                                                |
| Property Plan                                  | Provides direction for long-term management of leased property.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Annually                                                         |
| Security Plan                                  | Sets out strategies to protect staff, visitors, information, equipment and premises against harm, loss, interference and compromise.                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Biannually                                                       |

## Risk management and business continuity

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The AEC is committed to integrating risk management principles and practices into its business processes. A range of initiatives guide the work of the AEC in its commitment to minimising risk and ensuring business continuity.

### Addressing risk

The AEC safeguards risk-related planning by regularly updating its Strategic Risk Management Plan, Risk Management Handbook and Risk Management Policy, to address changes and developments in the environment in which it operates.

The AECs approach to risk management is to:

- manage all business in a responsible manner
- understand and manage risks faced in electoral operations and the political environment
- increase the likelihood of meeting key performance indicators and delivering the outcomes required by stakeholders
- safeguard assets (people, information, property and public monies) and use them responsibly and efficiently
- create an environment in which all employees assume responsibility for proactively identifying and mitigating risk
- facilitate compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements
- adopt evidence-based, reliable decision-making processes and planning using professional risk management approaches
- ensure a shared, agency-wide approach to risk management

- improve operational effectiveness and efficiency (including use of resources)
- allocate risk owners for each specific risk to the agency.

### Risk register

In 2016–17, the enterprise risk register continued to provide a central platform for employees and management to record, assess and manage risks. By providing a snapshot of identified risks and management strategies, the register helped the agency identify, resolve and mitigate both operational and strategic risks.

### Business continuity

The AEC's approach to business continuity management is based on maintaining the reliability of functions critical to our operations. A range of plans and initiatives, guided by the AEC Business Continuity Management Policy and Framework, address the agency's need to respond appropriately to disruptive events, maintain reporting lines and efficiently deliver critical services.

## Managing resources, assets and procurement

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The AEC manages a diverse portfolio of resources and assets throughout offices at the national, state/territory and divisional level. These include human resources, for example the agency's regular and casual workforce, as well as physical assets like office equipment, and information assets such as technology services.

In managing its assets, the AEC also manages a range of procurement activities, including tenders, consultancies and contracts. About 64 per cent of procurement contracts are held with small and medium enterprises.

The AEC also manages its resources and assets in a sustainable manner that adheres to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* by minimising impact to the environment, reducing waste and conserving energy use.

## Human resources

AEC employees are located throughout Australia in a network of divisional, state and territory offices, including a national office in Canberra.

As at 30 June 2017, the AEC had a regular workforce of 837 employees and a casual workforce of 783 irregular or intermittent employees.

Recruiting, developing and retaining a professional and capable workforce is a key linchpin for our agency. The AEC aims to entrench a culture of quality, agility and professionalism to support electoral integrity. This is achieved through helping employees develop core skills, and providing capability training and the necessary tools for staff to become more adaptive to change by being flexible and innovative when facing an uncertain and demand-driven environment.

## Working arrangements

### AEC enterprise agreement

The AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019 covers most AEC staff. Salary ranges for each classification are published in the agreement, which is available on the AEC website. The agreement took effect on 6 December 2016, replacing the AEC's Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014.

### Section 24(1) determinations

In 2016–17, the terms and conditions of employment of eight employees, predominantly senior executive service and executive level officers, were set by individual determinations by the agency head (the Electoral Commissioner) under section 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

### Collective determination under the Commonwealth Electoral Act

The AEC has a collective determination for staff engaged under section 35(1) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. This covers temporary staff, such as polling officials, for the election period only and sets the terms and conditions, hourly rates of pay and other entitlements.

These terms and conditions are set by the Electoral Commissioner under section 35 of the Electoral Act. Updates to the collective determination are currently being considered in preparation for its use at the next federal election.

### Individual flexibility arrangements

To meet the needs of the AEC, the Electoral Commissioner may agree to individual flexibility arrangements with employees, which can vary the effect of any of the terms of the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019.

During 2016–17, the Commissioner agreed to 29 new individual flexibility arrangements. The majority of these reflected the ongoing need to recognise the particular requirements of both the individuals and the AEC. As at 30 June 2017, 26 individual flexibility arrangements were still active.

### **Employee non-salary benefits**

AEC staff receive a range of non-salary benefits, consisting of leave arrangements, provision for separation and redundancy benefits, plus superannuation. This information is listed in the Notes to the Financial Statements section of this report.

### **Senior executive remuneration and statutory appointments**

The Remuneration Tribunal determines the remuneration of the Electoral Commissioner under the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*.

Other statutory appointees are part of the principal executive officer structure under the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*. The Electoral Commissioner determines the remuneration and conditions afforded to these appointees, within parameters set by the tribunal. Details of executive remuneration are published on the AEC website.

### **Performance management**

The AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019 requires all employees engaged under section 22(2) of the *Public Service Act 1999* to participate in the AEC's Performance Management Program.

Effective performance management in the AEC is a mechanism for:

- aligning employee performance with organisational requirements
- providing regular, constructive feedback to employees
- clearly articulating and managing expectations
- identifying developmental needs.

Eligible employees who meet the requirements set in the Performance Management Program will receive salary advancement.

### **Performance pay**

The AEC does not offer performance bonuses.

### **AEC workforce statistics**

As at 30 June 2017, the AEC workforce consisted of:

- a regular workforce of 831 ongoing and non-ongoing APS employees and six employees engaged under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (statutory office holders)
- a casual workforce of 783 irregular or intermittent employees.

### **Regular workforce**

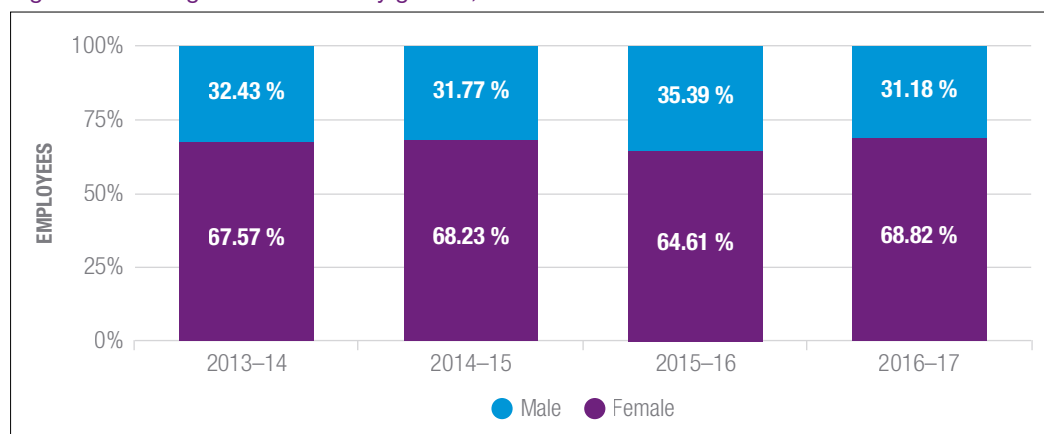
The AEC's regular workforce is spread across the AEC network of national, state, territory and divisional offices.

A range of tables and figures provide specific workforce information within this section of the report. Percentages of male and female staff, from 2013–14 to 2016–17, are shown in Figure 7. The age profile of AEC employees is shown in Figure 8.

Most staff in the AEC are female, with an increase from 64.6 per cent in 2015–16 to 68.8 per cent in 2016–17.

The largest segment of the AEC's regular workforce is in the range of 50 years to less than 55 years of age. The average age of the regular workforce has decreased slightly in the last 12 months, from 47.8 years down to 47.3 years.

Figure 7: AEC regular workforce by gender, 2013–14 to 2016–17



There are currently no staff recorded as Gender X.

Figure 8: AEC regular workforce by age group as at 30 June 2017

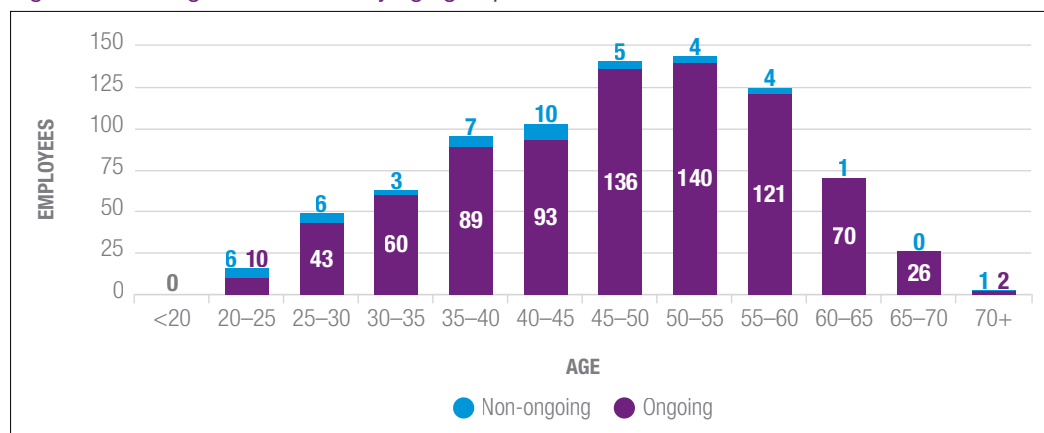
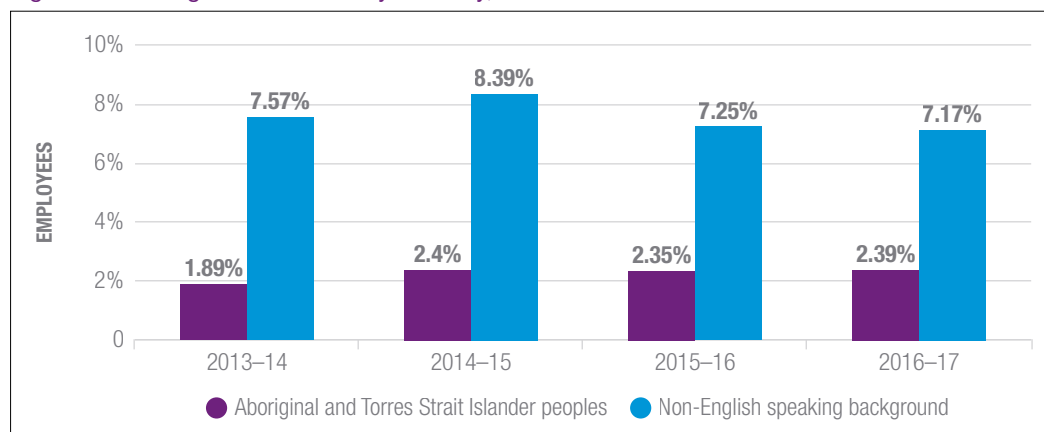


Figure 9: AEC regular workforce by diversity, 2013–14 to 2016–17



**Table 19: AEC regular workforce profile as at 30 June 2017**

| AEC workforce segment                       | Workforce statistic |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full-time                                   | 80.6%               |
| Linguistically diverse background           | 7.2%                |
| Female                                      | 68.8%               |
| Average age                                 | 47.3 years          |
| 45 years and over                           | 60.9%               |
| Staff turnover                              | 12.9%               |
| Average length of service for ongoing staff | 8.5 years           |

### Irregular or intermittent employees

At 30 June 2017, the AEC had an available casual workforce of 783 irregular or intermittent staff. Employed mostly at the APS 1 level, the casual employees were largely working in divisional offices. A breakdown of this workforce is provided in Table 20.

### Election workforce

During elections, the AEC employs thousands of temporary staff as polling officials under section 35 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. In 2016–17, the AEC employed 74,893 temporary staff to conduct the 2016 federal election. Of these, 9,272 people worked in more than one position. The number of positions increased by 7.05 per cent compared to the 2013 federal election, to a total of 86,938 at the 2016 election.

### Indigenous employees

In 2016–17, 2.4 per cent of the regular AEC workforce self-identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. A number of action items have been completed in the year to increase the focus on Indigenous employment in conjunction with the Reconciliation Action Plan.

The AEC is also committed to increasing the numbers of Indigenous polling place staff at elections.

**Table 20: Irregular or intermittent employees by classification**

| Classification | Number of employees |
|----------------|---------------------|
| APS 1          | 763                 |
| APS 2          | 1                   |
| APS 3          | 1                   |
| APS 4          | 10                  |
| APS 5          | 1                   |
| APS 6          | 6                   |
| EL 1           | 1                   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>783</b>          |

APS = Australian Public Service, EL = Executive Level Election workforce

### Indigenous election workforce

For the 2016 federal election, the AEC employed 1,364 staff who had identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. This was a small increase from the 2013 election (1,340 staff), which was more than double the 2010 election (599 staff).

Figure 9 provides further information on AEC staff who self-identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

### Diversity and inclusion framework

The AEC embraces diversity and inclusion. There is a strong connection between diverse workforces and improved policy and program productivity, performance and resilience.

The AEC is currently developing a renewed approach to diversity and inclusion. This will include our current disability strategy, and reconciliation action plan, as well as continued support of flexible working arrangements, carer's responsibilities and ability to undertake higher education under the AEC's enterprise agreement. It will also increase awareness of gender equality, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer/questioning community, and people from non-English speaking, and other diverse backgrounds.



### Disability reporting

As disability reporting to the Council of Australian Governments now occurs through the National Disability Strategy, within the State of the Service report, the specific requirement for disability reporting in individual Commonwealth agency annual reports has been discontinued. The State of the Service report is available at [www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au).

The National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 sets out a 10-year national policy framework to improve the lives of people with disability, their families and carers. A high-level, two-yearly report now tracks progress against each of the six outcome areas of the strategy, and is available at [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au).

### Recruitment and employee retention

We continue to review and optimise relevant recruitment guidelines, processes and procedures.

### Job advertising

The AEC's total advertised vacancies (ongoing and non-ongoing positions) has reduced from 178 in 2015–16 to 91 in 2016–17. This is because of a decrease in staffed positions following the 2016 federal election, and the increased emphasis on managing internal mobility to fill vacant positions.

### Graduate program

The AEC recruited five graduates to participate in the 2016 Graduate Program; three generalist graduates and two IT graduates. All five employees successfully completed the program. The graduates participated in the 2016 Australian Public Service Commission Graduate Development Program. As a team, they developed a project report for the APSC that was highly commended and were finalists for their digital media clip.

The AEC did not run the Graduate Program in 2017 but has committed to running a graduate intake for 2018.

### Retention rate

The AEC's retention rate for ongoing staff in 2016–17 was 88.1 per cent, an increase from 85.6 per cent in 2015–16. The AEC's ongoing employee retention rate fluctuates each year but on average is around 90 per cent.

### Support of the Carer Recognition Act

The AEC does not have any obligations under the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*, as the agency is not defined in the *Public Service Act 1999* as being responsible for the development, implementation, provision or evaluation of policies, programs or services directed to carers or the persons for whom they care.

As a public service agency, however, the AEC does support employees with caring responsibilities as outlined in the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*. Employees are eligible for Paid Personal Leave (Carer's), under Clause 66.4 of the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2016–2019, to provide care or support to those they are responsible for in the case of personal illness, injury or unexpected emergency.

### Learning and development

The AEC provides staff with access to learning and development opportunities that aim to build and maintain a professional and agile workforce able to deliver consistently high-quality outcomes.

On 1 February 2017, the AEC introduced a new approach to mandatory training, with all new and existing APS employees (ongoing, non-ongoing, casuals and contractors) required to complete five mandatory eLearning modules via the Learning Management System by 1 May 2017. The selected eLearning modules provided employees with training appropriate and relative to their roles, as well as to the deliverables of the agency, and assisted the AEC in meeting employer and employee legislative requirements.

The AEC also implemented changes to strengthen the governance and coordination of learning and development within the agency under the direction of the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, and through establishing a Learning Governance Committee.

## Workforce planning

In the AEC, workforce planning is an important element of delivering electoral events as it provides a basis for determining requirements, and anticipating and responding to challenges around attraction and recruitment. The agency undertakes workforce planning in three layers. The first two layers focus on the business operations in the divisional office workforce plans, and branch and state office workforce plans. These two layers are used to inform the third layer: the national strategy.

The AEC continues to build and embed consistent workforce planning methodology across all levels. While previous phases of workforce planning formalised the connection between divisional, state and national office workforce planning risks and strategies, the next phase involves redesigning current workforce planning processes and ongoing work to cement these processes with business planning and operational planning activities across the agency.

Key activities included:

- undertaking an evaluation of end-to-end workforce planning processes after the 2016 federal election
- working with the various networks to refine and re-develop workforce planning processes at all levels
- providing continued support for completing divisional, and state and territory workforce plans.

## New HR metrics reporting

In late 2016, the AEC developed an HR Scorecard as a focus on core workforce characteristics, and this is presented to senior management each month.

HR reporting is a critical part of workforce analysis for the AEC as it helps the agency identify and understand workforce performance and risks. The HR Scorecard assists senior management monitor relevant workforce data, and identify workforce risks before they arise.

It also allows senior management to consider trends over time and plan appropriate workforce management strategies.

## Work health and safety

The AEC recognises its responsibility to positively influence the work health and safety (WHS) of employees, and to provide a safe environment for members of the public who enter AEC premises, including leased premises used as polling places during an electoral event.

## WHS outcomes

The AEC complies with its obligations under both the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* by ensuring there are appropriate systems that actively monitor, evaluate and maintain health, safety and welfare across all aspects of business. Table 21 provides a summary of ongoing AEC workplace health and safety outcomes during the year.

## Claims management

The AEC's management of injury and illness claims during the year consisted of:

- 23 new cases for compensation (of which 22 were accepted by Comcare)
- 38 continuing cases for compensation
- 42 new cases of non-compensable injuries/illness
- 12 continuing cases of non-compensable injuries/illness.

Table 21: Work health and safety summary 2016–17

| Work health safety information                                                        | AEC outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Initiatives taken during the year to ensure the health, safety and welfare of workers | Continued enhancement of the AEC WHS management system.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Health and safety outcomes achieved as a result of the initiatives                    | Continued development of the WHS management arrangement structure. This provided a greater level of employee consultation and representation through an increased health and safety representative network, and revised work group structure. |
| Notifiable incidents                                                                  | During 2016–17, eight incidents were reported to Comcare. Five were notifiable for serious injury or illness, and three notifiable for a dangerous occurrence.                                                                                |
| Investigations conducted by the AEC                                                   | Three investigations were conducted during 2016–17.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Comcare investigations                                                                | One Comcare investigation was undertaken, and no improvement notices issued to the AEC.                                                                                                                                                       |
| Health and safety events reported                                                     | In all, 104 health and safety incidents were reported, compared with 160 for the previous year. An increase in incident reporting occurred in the lead-up to the 2016 federal election.                                                       |
| Number of liaison inspections                                                         | Nil.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

Table 22: New claims for compensable and non-compensable injuries

| Case management type | 2013–14   | 2014–15   | 2015–16   | 2016–17   |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Compensable          | 17        | 14        | 14        | 23        |
| Non-compensable      | 32        | 19        | 41        | 42        |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>49</b> | <b>33</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>65</b> |

## Health and wellbeing programs

The AEC encourages its employees to pursue healthy lifestyles with the following range of elective health and wellbeing programs:

- the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- annual influenza vaccinations
- quit smoking programs
- workstation assessments and provision of recommended ergonomic equipment
- eyesight testing reimbursements.

The EAP provides free, confidential support services that address a range of health and wellbeing issues. In 2016–17, the EAP utilisation rate for new AEC referrals was 6.6 per cent.

## Physical assets

The physical assets of the AEC include equipment located at offices throughout Australia. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure, machines, equipment and office fit-outs are managed on an ‘end of life’ or ‘end of lease’ schedule. Comprehensive service and maintenance agreements are used where they represent value for money, to ensure all assets are fully functional and perform at optimal levels.

## SPOTLIGHT

### Moving to the cloud

During 2016–17, the AEC successfully transitioned its web hosted systems from a physical presence to cloud-hosted infrastructure with Amazon Web Services.

Cloud-based services are becoming the infrastructure of choice for many organisations; the flexibility and scalability built into these solutions are of particular benefit to the AEC, where electoral events can be run within short timeframes and scaled up and down depending on demand for election services.



AEC web-hosted systems are now in the cloud

The AEC's investment in cloud computing ensures reliable disaster recovery and backup solutions. It also ensures regular system updates to meet IT security requirements, and improves system performance and reliability.

### Office fit-outs

In 2016–17, one office fit-out was completed and two began. The Tasmanian state office was relocated within Hobart, and the Division of Riverina (Wagga Wagga, NSW) and the Division of Mallee (Mildura, Vic.) each commenced a fit-out, to be completed in July 2017.

### Information assets

ICT technical support services and infrastructure are integral to the AEC's activities, and are provided through a combination of in-house and external resources.

The AEC provides many services in and out of an election period. Some of these include:

- the Tally Room – live results at election time
- media feed – live election results for consumption by the media
- polling place locator
- AEC employment – AEC's online recruitment system for staffing an election
- check my enrolment
- online enrolment and change of enrolment details
- Get Voting educational resource for school elections

- eReturns – portal used by political parties and associated entities for election funding and financial disclosure obligations.

### ICT infrastructure management – refresh of key infrastructure

To enable the AEC to provide modern and scalable services, the AEC has invested time and money in a multi-layered infrastructure offering. This includes ensuring it can offer supportable and robust infrastructure, whether at the end-user's desktop or mobile service, within the AEC server and storage infrastructure, or engaging with commercial service providers to provide scalable commercial-grade, secure cloud-based offerings. This allows the AEC to conduct its business as usual, as well as scale up services to run an election within a short timeframe in a secure and supportable manner.

The AEC has recently upgraded, refreshed, or modernised:

- desktop and laptop devices across the network
- storage services, with capacity increased and updated equipment
- patching and image maintenance across virtual and on-premises equipment.

## IT security (voting)

Reports of cyber attacks have been widespread over the past year. The AEC continues to work with external parties and stakeholders to maintain awareness of current attacks and trends, and implements appropriate mitigation strategies to protect the AEC network.

## Procurement

### Purchasing

The AEC's approach to procuring goods and services is consistent with the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. The AEC applies these rules through its accountable authority instructions and supporting operational guidelines.

The AEC has a centralised area of expertise, which provides procurement and contracting advice and manages panel arrangements for key election-related services. Information on procurement policy and practices is available to staff through an internal procurement and contract management register and the intranet.

The AEC continues to develop procurement skills, and implement processes to improve efficiency and value-for-money outcomes.

Information on procurements expected to be undertaken in 2017–18 is in the annual procurement plan, available from the AusTender website ([www.tenders.gov.au](http://www.tenders.gov.au)).

### Initiatives to support small business

The AEC supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Participation statistics for small and medium enterprises, are available on the Department of Finance website.

The AEC recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the survey of Australian Government payments to small business are available at [www.treasury.gov.au](http://www.treasury.gov.au).

### Requests for tender

There were five open tender requests published electronically on AusTender in 2016–17.

### Grants

The AEC did not administer any discretionary grant programs in 2016–17.

### Consultancies

The AEC engages consultants when it requires either specialist expertise, or independent research, review or assessment on matters relating to the delivery of electoral events. Consultants are typically engaged to investigate or diagnose an identified issue or problem, carry out defined reviews or evaluations, or provide independent advice to assist in AEC decision-making.

Decisions to engage consultants during 2016–17 were made in accordance with section 35(2) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the PGPA Act and related Regulations (including the Commonwealth Procurement Rules), and relevant internal policies.

During 2016–17, the AEC entered into 15 new consultancy contracts involving total actual expenditure of \$1,491,897 (GST inc.). In addition, 12 ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving an actual expenditure of \$617,149 (GST inc.).

Further information on the value of AEC contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website.

**Table 23: Expenditure on consultancy contracts 2014–15 to 2016–17**

|                                      | 2014–15<br>\$ million | 2015–16<br>\$ million | 2016–17<br>\$ million |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Total actual consultancy expenditure | 2.5                   | 2.9                   | 2.1                   |

## **Australian National Audit Office access provisions**

All AEC contract templates include a standard clause providing for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises. The AEC did not have any contracts without the Australian National Audit Office access provisions.

## **Exempt contracts**

No contracts or standing offers in excess of \$10,000 (GST incl.) in 2016–17 were exempt from publication on AusTender on the basis that they would disclose exempt information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

## **Sustainability principles**

In accordance with the Commonwealth procurement framework, the AEC aims to fulfil its responsibility to be an efficient, effective, economical, ethical and sustainable procurer. The AEC's procurement policy seeks to achieve sustainability through reducing energy consumption and minimising waste.

## **Environmental performance**

We manage our environmental performance by minimising the impact of our operations on the environment, encouraging sustainable business practices, managing waste, and monitoring energy and resource use. The AEC's Environment Management Commitment is available on the AEC website.

An AEC Environmental and Sustainability Guide is available to all staff. It focuses on office-based operations and behaviours that align with legislative requirements. It also encourages environment-friendly and sustainable practices in the areas nominated above.

For the AEC, environmental performance also encompasses nationwide sustainable procurement practices, building operations, and the management of national, state/territory and divisional offices. It also includes the impact of state and federal elections, and management of the waste reduction program for the National Electoral Education Centre.

## **Sustainable development**

### **Sustainable use of premises**

In accordance with section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the AEC reports on environmental performance and measures that minimise environmental impact, including:

- the recommendations of the Australian National Audit Office's Performance Audit Report No.47 of 1998–99
- Department of Industry, Innovation and Science Energy Efficiency in Government Operations Policy
- Fleet Monitoring Body guidelines for use of ethanol.

The AEC continues to take the following measures to minimise the effect of office operations on the environment:

- contracting service providers to collect and recycle paper, cardboard, plastics, aluminium and glass
- contracting service providers to remove spent toner cartridges
- using partly or wholly recyclable products wherever possible
- applying double-sided default printer settings to reduce paper consumption
- promoting use of E10 petrol in AEC vehicles
- considering environmental impacts in the design and layout of new and upgraded accommodation

- working with contracted property services providers to reduce energy consumption in state/territory and divisional offices.

### **Sustainable procurement practices**

The AEC addresses sustainable procurement in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules; the Department of the Environment and Energy's Sustainable Procurement Guide; and the AEC Procurement Policy.

Value-for-money is a core principle of the AEC's Procurement Policy. As a result, the agency values goods and service providers that reduce:

- energy and consumption demand
- unnecessary consumption
- end-of-life disposal.

All tenders are evaluated with consideration of these principles.

### **Energy conservation**

The AEC is committed to establishing standards, programs and innovative practices to improve energy efficiency across our property portfolio.

Energy efficient operations in the national office include:

- energy-efficient dishwashers and refrigerators
- automatic energy-saving mode for multifunction devices and machines
- automatic energy-saving mode for desktop computers and monitors
- motion-sensitive, task-based lighting.

For 2016–17, the use of light and power energy across all AEC premises was 8,836.14 megajoules per person, which represents an 8.21 per cent decrease on the previous year. Higher usage in the previous year was due to increased operations in the lead up to the 2016 federal election.

### **Water conservation**

While opportunities to use water conservation strategies are sometimes limited across the entire AEC property portfolio, the AEC considers the capture and use of water wherever possible.

Water conservation measures at the national office include:

- low-flow sensor taps
- grey water recycling for flushing toilets
- dual-flush cisterns and waterless or low-flow urinals
- rainwater retention for use in cooling towers.

### **Responsible disposal of waste**

The AEC's Environmental and Sustainability Guide provides staff with instructions on the responsible disposal of:

- cleaning chemicals
- volatile organic compounds in paints and solvents
- employee amenity paper products
- furniture
- kitchen supplies.

### **Vehicle use and travel reduction**

AEC business vehicles are selected in accordance with the Department of Finance vehicle selection policy, with a focus on reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when comparing suitable models.

### **National Electoral Education Centre waste reduction program**

The ACTSmart Business Recycling Program assesses the waste reduction initiatives of businesses located in the Australian Capital Territory.



In December 2016, the National Electoral Education Centre was awarded its seventh ACTSmart accreditation. In the seven years that it has actively participated in the program, it has reduced annual landfill waste to 2.9 cubic metres per annum, representing an overall waste reduction of 83 per cent. This achievement has been maintained despite the centre maintaining annual visitor numbers of more than 87,500.

## Compliance

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### Legal compliance

The AEC retains both in-house and external legal services. Activities encompass legal action, commercial law, responding to human rights matters, considering freedom of information requests and overseeing internal and external compliance processes related to enforcing compliance with the Electoral Act, privacy and administrative, judicial and parliamentary scrutiny. We also seek and provide advice on the operation and effect of provisions in the Electoral Act and the Referendum Act.

### Internal audit

Internal audit provided a range of risk-based activities to assess the effectiveness of the AEC's operations and performance. In particular, the internal audit program focused on emerging risks and priorities following the 2016 federal election with topics including reviews of the election readiness framework, election contract management, IT security, election evaluation and business continuity.

### Internal auditors

PricewaterhouseCoopers and McGrathNicol, appointed by the AEC in 2013, continued to provide audit and assurance services during 2016–17. The scope, responsibilities and independence requirements for audit functions are documented in the AEC Audit Charter endorsed by the Business Assurance Committee.

### Fraud control

The AEC complies with the fraud control requirements under the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework, including section 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, the Commonwealth Fraud Control Policy and associated Fraud Guidance.

The 2015–17 Fraud Control Plan highlights the AEC's zero tolerance approach to fraud with regard to the AEC's operation and services. The plan outlines the AEC's strategies to prevent, detect and respond to external and internal fraud. Prevention strategies for corporate and electoral fraud are the focus of the plan, and the AEC conducted regular fraud risk assessments during the year.

The AEC's fraud webpage identifies what is, and what is not, fraud and provides guidance for AEC staff and members of the public to report suspected fraud through an online portal, by telephone via a dedicated hotline, or by mail. In addition, mandatory fraud awareness training was completed by 98 per cent of AEC staff during 2016–17.

In 2016–17, the AEC took all reasonable measures to deal with fraud allegations. The AEC Fraud Unit received and examined 100 allegations of suspected fraud. Ninety-seven allegations were related to electoral matters, and three to corporate fraud. Investigations into corporate fraud matters found no evidence to substantiate the allegations.

## Fraud Control Committee

The Fraud Control Committee is a sub committee of the Business Assurance Committee (see list of AEC management committees in Table 16). It oversees the appropriateness and effectiveness of the AEC's fraud control plans, policies, procedures and systems to identify and investigate fraud-related matters.

The Fraud Control Committee held four meetings in 2016–17 and provided reports to the Business Assurance Committee after each meeting.

## Freedom of information

Agencies subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) are required to publish a broad range of information for the public on their websites as part of the Information Publication Scheme. This replaces a previous requirement to publish a statement in the agency's annual report.

In addition, agencies must publish information that has been released in response to each FOI access request, subject to certain exceptions. This publication is known as a disclosure log.

## Information Publication Scheme and FOI Disclosure Log

The AEC's Information Publication Scheme (IPS) entry and FOI Disclosure Log are published on our website, highlighted with icons developed by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. In accordance with FOI Act requirements, the IPS page on the AEC website displays the following:

- an outline of the IPS and its requirements
- the AEC Agency Plan
- details of the AEC's structure and functions (including a link to the AEC's organisation chart and a list of statutory appointments under the Electoral Act)
- the AEC's reports and responses to the Australian Parliament

- annual reports dating back to 1998
- routinely requested information
- contact details for further queries.

The AEC website also features operational information to help the AEC make decisions or recommendations that affect members of the public, such as the AEC's rules, guidelines, practices and precedents relating to former decisions and recommendations. These include:

- enrolment requirements published at [www.aec.gov.au/enrol](http://www.aec.gov.au/enrol)
- special enrolment options published at [www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling\\_to\\_vote/Special\\_Category](http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Special_Category)
- information for candidates and scrutineers published at [www.aec.gov.au/Elections/candidates](http://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/candidates)
- party registration guide published at [www.aec.gov.au/Parties\\_and\\_Representatives/party\\_registration/guide](http://www.aec.gov.au/Parties_and_Representatives/party_registration/guide)
- financial disclosure guides published at [www.aec.gov.au/Parties\\_and\\_Representatives/financial\\_disclosure](http://www.aec.gov.au/Parties_and_Representatives/financial_disclosure).

### INTERESTING FACT

24 electoral divisions contain islands off the coast of Australia, including the Division of Canberra, which has Norfolk Island

## External scrutiny

### Customer scrutiny

#### Service Charter

The AEC's Service Charter can be viewed on the AEC website.

The charter informs the public of the service they can expect to receive when interacting with the AEC. It reflects and supports the AEC values of electoral integrity through quality, agility and professionalism. As a high-level document, the charter also serves as a central link to the more detailed performance standards available in individual event or business area service plans.

#### Customer enquiries, issues and complaints

In 2016–17 (outside of the federal election period), the AEC received more than 80,000 phone calls, more than 16,000 emails and approximately 13,000 in-person contacts from the public.

During the election period, the AEC partnered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to deliver election contact centre services on behalf of the AEC. The DHS contact centre continued to operate for two weeks after election day, and in the period from 1 July 2016 received more than 69,000 telephone enquiries, approximately 4,900 emails and just under 1,200 product requests. Further information and statistics regarding 2016 federal election public enquiries was provided in the AEC's 2015–16 Annual Report.

#### National complaints management framework

The AEC complaints management policy is available on the AEC website and sets out the processes to be followed when managing a complaint.

The policy outlines the six principles of accessibility, responsiveness, confidentiality, fairness, transparency and efficiency as fundamental to the AEC's management of complaints. It is operationally supported by two internal procedure documents, on complaints management and internal review of complaints, respectively.

### Administrative scrutiny

#### Guiding legislation

The administrative practices and decisions of the AEC are subject to a range of legislation, as outlined in Table 24.

#### Relevant reports and reviews

##### Administrative Appeals Tribunal

There was one matter before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal during this period.

##### *Matter relating to a party logo*

On 19 June 2017, the appeals tribunal notified the AEC about an application to review the AEC decision to affirm the decision of the delegate, under subsection 134(6) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, to register the logo of the Australia First Party (NSW) Incorporated. This logo includes a representation of the Eureka flag.

Objections to the registration process for this logo were based on its reputed creation by the Ballarat Reform League as a symbol of defiance.

The widespread use of an image of the Eureka flag as a component of various registered trademarks supports the proposition that the image of the flag is not owned by anyone individual or organisation.

This matter has not yet been set down for hearing.

Table 24: Guiding legislation for AEC administrative decisions

| Act                                                           | Governing body                                                               | Related matters                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975</i>               | Administrative Appeals Tribunal                                              | Certain administrative decisions made under the Electoral Act.                       |
| <i>Ombudsman Act 1976</i>                                     | Commonwealth Ombudsman                                                       | Complaints about matters of administration relating to AEC functions.                |
| <i>Privacy Act 1988</i>                                       | Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (the Privacy Commissioner) | Complaints about breaches of privacy rights.                                         |
| <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>                        | Australian Information Commissioner<br>Freedom of Information Commissioner   | Complaints about, and delays in, the handling of requests for access to information. |
| <i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986</i> | Australian Human Rights Commission                                           | Complaints that claim the AEC has unlawfully discriminated against an individual.    |

### Commonwealth Ombudsman

There were no investigations undertaken by the Ombudsman into the AEC's administration during the reporting period.

### Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

There were no reports of privacy breaches to the Australian Information Commissioner during the reporting period.

However, the AEC did receive a notice from the Freedom of Information Commissioner under section 55E of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* relating to a complaint about the handling of a request for access to documents. The AEC complied with the notice on 15 June 2017.

### INTERESTING FACT

Ballot papers and pencils are requirements of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*

### Australian Human Rights Commission

The Australian Human Rights Commission dismissed a complaint that the AEC's assisted voting services were discriminatory to blind or visually impaired electors, and that the AEC was in breach of its obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The AEC was unable to enter a conciliation process because the AEC has little discretion to remedy the complaint in the manner sought by the complainant.

As part of the vetting process for senior polling officials, the AEC conducts criminal record checks. In June and July 2017, the AEC was notified of several complaints being lodged with the Human Rights Commission alleging criminal record discrimination under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*. One complaint remains outstanding at the end of the reporting period. All other complaints have been resolved.

On 2 March 2017, the commission advised the AEC of a complaint from the father of a disabled person alleging disability discrimination under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* because the AEC had not agreed to permanently remove the disabled person from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll.

This matter was subsequently resolved by the father providing medical evidence that the disabled person was ‘incapable of understanding the nature and significance of enrolment and voting’ as required by sections 93(8)(a) and 116(4) of the Electoral Act.

## Judicial scrutiny

### High Court

There have not been any decisions of the High Court that directly involved decisions made by the AEC during the reporting period. The AEC did provide assistance concerning the process for re-counting Senate votes following the decisions in the matters of *Re Culleton* [No 2] [2017] HCA 4 and *Re Day* [No 2] [2017] HCA 14, where both Mr Culleton and Mr Day were found to have been disqualified from nominating as candidates for the 2 July 2016 federal election due to the operation of section 44 of the Constitution.

### Federal Court

#### Administrative decisions judicial review

There were no applications to the Federal Court under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977* during the reporting period.

### Industrial elections

There were no applications to the Federal Court involving the AEC’s conduct of industrial elections during the reporting period where the AEC was named as a party.

There was one application to the Federal Court for an inquiry in relation to the election for offices which the AEC conducted but was not named as a party. In *Clancy, in the matter of an application for an inquiry in relation to an election for offices in the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation* [2017] FCA 460 (5 May 2017), the court held that the applicant failed to establish reasonable grounds for his application for an inquiry. The court also dismissed the application for the institution of an inquiry under section 201 of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*.

## Parliamentary scrutiny

### Services to the Australian Parliament

The AEC is accountable to the Australian Parliament with responsibilities set out in the Electoral Act, the Referendum Act and related legislation. The AEC provides evidence, advice and other input to matters being considered by the Special Minister of State and to various parliamentary committees – but primarily to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

In 2016–17, the Special Minister of State referred 131 letters to the AEC for input. Major themes included political donations and donation reform, compulsory voting, electronic voting, issues relating to polling places and enrolment. The AEC also provided 65 briefings to the Special Minister of State, and support for Question Time and Senate Estimates hearings.

### Parliamentary inquiries

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters continues to be the central point for parliamentary consideration and debate on electoral law, administration and legislative reform. The AEC provides support to parliamentary inquiries by making submissions, appearing at hearings and providing information when requested.

Parliamentary inquiries conducted in 2016–17 are summarised in Table 25.

### INTERESTING FACT

Compulsory enrolment was introduced in 1911 and it became compulsory to vote at federal elections in 1924

Table 25: Parliamentary inquiries and AEC involvement 2016–17

| Inquiry                                                             | Committee                                           | Date referred     | AEC involvement                                                                                                                                                         | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inquiry into the 2016 Federal Election and matters related thereto. | Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters       | 21 September 2016 | The AEC made one primary submission and 18 supplementary submissions; appeared at 10 public hearings and four private meetings; and answered questions taken on notice. | The first interim report on the authorisation of voter communication was tabled on 9 December 2016.<br><br>The second interim report: Foreign donations was tabled in March 2017.<br><br>The third interim report: AEC modernisation was tabled on 21 June 2017. |
| Inquiry on the establishment of a National Integrity Commission     | Select Committee on a National Integrity Commission | 8 February 2017   | The AEC appeared at a public hearing but did not make a submission.                                                                                                     | The committee is to report by 15 August 2017.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

A woman with curly brown hair and glasses, wearing a dark purple blazer, is looking down at a document. An older man with white hair, glasses, and a mustache, wearing a grey suit and a red lanyard, is also looking at the document. The background is a blurred office setting. A purple gradient overlay covers the bottom half of the image.

## SECTION 5

# FINANCIAL REPORTING





**\$342.1M**  
**AGENCY  
BUDGET**

---

**\$122.8M**  
**AGENCY  
ASSETS**

---

**\$36.2M**  
**AGENCY  
LIABILITIES**

---

In this section

**94** Financial performance summary

The AEC's 2016–17 financial results were influenced by election expenditure. The Australian National Audit Office has issued an unqualified audit opinion for the AEC's 2016–17 financial statements.

The AEC's financial reporting consists of a financial performance summary, together with the financial statements and supporting notes.

The financial performance summary provides a snapshot of the AEC's deficit, surplus, balance sheet and net asset information.

The financial statements consist of the auditor's report, the Electoral Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer statement, and various financial statements and administered schedules. Further information on the financial performance of the AEC is provided in the notes section.

## Financial performance summary

---

The AEC's 2016–17 financial results are positive, with spending well within allocated funding and an operating surplus achieved at the end of the year. The AEC's operating surplus was \$36.0 million compared to an operating deficit of \$25.0 million in 2015–16. The 2016–17 result was influenced by election expenditure for the 2016 federal election held on 2 July 2016.

The statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017 shows total assets of \$122.8 million and total liabilities of \$36.2 million for a net asset position of \$86.7 million. Total assets and liabilities have decreased from the previous year as all balances related to the 2016 federal election have been received and/or paid.

The Australian National Audit Office has issued an unqualified audit opinion for the AEC's 2016–17 financial statements.

No significant issues of non-compliance in relation to the finance law were reported to the Special Minister of State in 2016–17. This included any failure to comply with the duties of accountable authorities (section 15–19 of the PGPA Act), significant fraudulent activity and other serious breaches (section 25–29 of the PGPA Act).

However, the current funding model presents an ongoing challenge for the AEC and poses significant risk in managing the increasing complexity of federal elections and the ongoing growth in the size of the electoral roll. Improved business practices and information technology efficiencies throughout the reporting year have assisted the AEC's positive financial position. However, the increasing complexity of federal electoral events, and the need to modernise the AEC's legacy IT systems will require further investment at a point in the future.

## List of financial statements

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## Certification

### Auditors report



#### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

##### To the Special Minister of State

##### Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Electoral Commission for the year ended 30 June 2017:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Australian Electoral Commission as at 30 June 2017 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Australian Electoral Commission, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2017 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by Electoral Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the Financial Statements.

##### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Australian Electoral Commission in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997* (the Code). I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

##### Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Australian Electoral Commission, the Electoral Commissioner is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the rules made under that Act. The Electoral Commissioner is also responsible for such internal control as the Electoral Commissioner determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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19 National Circuit BARTON ACT  
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

In preparing the financial statements, the Electoral Commissioner is responsible for assessing the Australian Electoral Commission's ability to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Electoral Commissioner is also responsible for disclosing matters related to going concern as applicable and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

#### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Serena Buchanan  
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra  
12 September 2017

Statement by the Electoral Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>STATEMENT BY ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 comply with subsection 42(2) of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act. |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Electoral Commission will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Signed.....<br><br>Tom Rogers<br>Electoral Commissioner<br>12 September 2017                                                                                                                                       | Signed.....<br><br>Stephen Blackburn<br>Chief Finance Officer<br>12 September 2017 |

# Primary financial statements

## Statement of comprehensive income for the period ended 30 June 2017

|                                                                                 | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000  | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>                                                     |       |                |                 |                              |
| <b>Expenses</b>                                                                 |       |                |                 |                              |
| Employee benefits                                                               | 3.1   | 152,607        | 104,562         | 194,868                      |
| Suppliers                                                                       | 4.1A  | 135,675        | 159,515         | 114,356                      |
| Depreciation and amortisation                                                   | 2.3A  | 9,229          | 9,326           | 8,719                        |
| Finance costs                                                                   | 2.4B  | 22             | 20              | 85                           |
| Write-down and impairment of assets                                             | 4.1B  | 1,502          | (4)             | –                            |
| Losses from asset disposals                                                     | 2.3A  | 658            | 23              | –                            |
| Total expenses                                                                  |       | 299,693        | 273,442         | 318,028                      |
| <b>OWN-SOURCE INCOME</b>                                                        |       |                |                 |                              |
| <b>Own-source revenue</b>                                                       |       |                |                 |                              |
| Sale of goods and rendering of services                                         | 1.2A  | 18,235         | 15,224          | 10,952                       |
| Other revenue                                                                   | 1.2B  | 219            | 447             | 85                           |
| Total own-source revenue                                                        |       | 18,454         | 15,671          | 11,037                       |
| Total own-source income                                                         |       | 18,454         | 15,671          | 11,037                       |
| <b>Gains</b>                                                                    |       |                |                 |                              |
| Other gains                                                                     | 1.2C  | 48             | –               | –                            |
| Total gains                                                                     |       | 48             | –               | –                            |
| Net (cost of) services                                                          |       | (281,191)      | (257,771)       | (306,991)                    |
| <b>Revenue from Government</b>                                                  |       |                |                 |                              |
| Revenue from Government                                                         | 1.1A  | 317,187        | 232,757         | 313,347                      |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit) on continuing operations</b>                               |       | <b>35,996</b>  | <b>(25,014)</b> | <b>6,356</b>                 |
| <b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>                                               |       |                |                 |                              |
| <b>Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services</b> |       |                |                 |                              |
| Changes in asset revaluation surplus                                            |       | (311)          | 1,885           | –                            |
| Total other comprehensive income                                                |       | (311)          | 1,885           | –                            |
| Total comprehensive income/(loss)                                               | 1.4   | 35,685         | (23,129)        | 6,356                        |

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

### BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY

#### Statement of comprehensive income

At the time that appropriations were agreed there was a significant amount of uncertainty around expenditure due to the level of election reform that the AEC was required to undertake in the delivery of the 2016 federal election. As a result, the AEC's employee expenses are lower than budgeted and supplier expenses are higher than budgeted. The AEC's revenue is higher than budgeted as additional funds were also appropriated to the AEC during the year to support a possible plebiscite. For these reasons the AEC incurred a higher than budgeted surplus.



Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017

|                                    | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                      |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Financial assets</b>            |       |                |                |                              |
| Cash and cash equivalents          | 2.1A  | 4,220          | 17,932         | 891                          |
| Receivables for goods and services | 2.1A  | 1,687          | 2,116          | 2,305                        |
| Appropriations receivable          | 2.2A  | 83,179         | 74,030         | 24,596                       |
| Other receivables                  | 2.2B  | 674            | 4,417          | 493                          |
| <b>Total financial assets</b>      |       | <b>89,760</b>  | <b>98,495</b>  | <b>28,285</b>                |
| <b>Non-financial assets</b>        |       |                |                |                              |
| Leasehold improvements             | 2.3A  | 8,424          | 10,359         | 12,104                       |
| Plant and equipment                | 2.3A  | 6,603          | 7,696          | 5,793                        |
| Computer software                  | 2.3A  | 9,071          | 14,402         | 14,153                       |
| Intellectual property              | 2.3A  | 1,912          | 2,161          | –                            |
| Inventories                        | 2.3B  | 3,909          | 14,599         | 3,055                        |
| Lease incentive                    |       | –              | 38             | –                            |
| Other non-financial assets         | 2.3C  | 3,135          | 7,077          | 2,068                        |
| <b>Total non-financial assets</b>  |       | <b>33,054</b>  | <b>56,332</b>  | <b>37,173</b>                |
| <b>Total assets</b>                |       | <b>122,814</b> | <b>154,827</b> | <b>65,458</b>                |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                 |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Payables</b>                    |       |                |                |                              |
| Suppliers                          | 2.1A  | 5,506          | 72,637         | 7,786                        |
| Other payables                     | 2.4A  | 3,947          | 11,249         | 5,119                        |
| <b>Total payables</b>              |       | <b>9,453</b>   | <b>83,886</b>  | <b>12,905</b>                |
| <b>Provisions</b>                  |       |                |                |                              |
| Employee provisions                | 3.2   | 25,130         | 24,611         | 24,085                       |
| Other provisions                   | 2.4B  | 1,570          | 1,525          | 1,561                        |
| <b>Total provisions</b>            |       | <b>26,700</b>  | <b>26,136</b>  | <b>25,646</b>                |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>           |       | <b>36,153</b>  | <b>110,022</b> | <b>38,551</b>                |
| <b>Net assets</b>                  |       | <b>86,661</b>  | <b>44,805</b>  | <b>26,907</b>                |
| <b>EQUITY</b>                      |       |                |                |                              |
| Contributed equity                 |       | 60,373         | 54,202         | 60,373                       |
| Asset revaluation surplus          |       | 22,674         | 22,985         | 21,100                       |
| Retained earnings                  |       | 3,614          | (32,382)       | (54,566)                     |
| <b>Total equity</b>                |       | <b>86,661</b>  | <b>44,805</b>  | <b>26,907</b>                |

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY**

Statement of financial position

The AEC's total assets are higher than budgeted due to an increase in appropriation revenue receivable. The AEC's expenditure was not as high as originally budgeted and due to a change in approach to the scrutiny of Senate ballot papers and the uncertainty around the extent of election reforms at the 2016 federal election, a higher than anticipated surplus was achieved. The AEC also received additional appropriation to support a possible plebiscite during 2016–17.

## Statement of changes in equity for the period ended 30 June 2017

|                                              | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>CONTRIBUTED EQUITY</b>                    |                |                |                              |
| <b>Opening balance</b>                       |                |                |                              |
| Balance carried forward from previous period | 54,202         | 43,190         | 54,202                       |
| Adjusted opening balance                     | 54,202         | 43,190         | 54,202                       |
| <b>Transactions with owners</b>              |                |                |                              |
| Contributions by owners                      |                |                |                              |
| Departmental Capital Budget                  | 6,171          | 11,012         | 6,171                        |
| Total transactions with owners               | 6,171          | 11,012         | 6,171                        |
| Closing balance as at 30 June                | 60,373         | 54,202         | 60,373                       |
| <b>RETAINED EARNINGS</b>                     |                |                |                              |
| <b>Opening balance</b>                       |                |                |                              |
| Balance carried forward from previous period | (32,382)       | (7,368)        | (60,922)                     |
| Adjusted opening balance                     | (32,382)       | (7,368)        | (60,922)                     |
| <b>Comprehensive income</b>                  |                |                |                              |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the period             | 35,996         | (25,014)       | 6,356                        |
| Total comprehensive income                   | 35,996         | (25,014)       | 6,356                        |
| Closing balance as at 30 June                | 3,614          | (32,382)       | (54,566)                     |
| <b>ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE</b>             |                |                |                              |
| <b>Opening balance</b>                       |                |                |                              |
| Balance carried forward from previous period | 22,985         | 21,100         | 21,100                       |
| Adjusted opening balance                     | 22,985         | 21,100         | 21,100                       |
| <b>Comprehensive income</b>                  |                |                |                              |
| Other comprehensive income                   | (311)          | 1,885          | –                            |
| Total comprehensive income                   | (311)          | 1,885          | –                            |
| Closing balance as at 30 June                | 22,674         | 22,985         | 21,100                       |
| <b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>                          |                |                |                              |
| <b>Opening balance</b>                       |                |                |                              |
| Balance carried forward from previous period | 44,805         | 56,922         | 14,380                       |
| Adjusted opening balance                     | 44,805         | 56,922         | 14,380                       |
| <b>Comprehensive income</b>                  |                |                |                              |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the period             | 35,996         | (25,014)       | 6,356                        |
| Other comprehensive income                   | (311)          | 1,885          | –                            |
| Total comprehensive income                   | 35,685         | (23,129)       | 6,356                        |
| Transactions with owners                     |                |                |                              |
| Contributions by owners                      |                |                |                              |
| Departmental Capital Budget                  | 6,171          | 11,012         | 6,171                        |
| Total transactions with owners               | 6,171          | 11,012         | 6,171                        |
| Closing balance as at 30 June                | 86,661         | 44,805         | 26,907                       |

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

#### **ACCOUNTING POLICY**

##### **Equity injections**

Amounts appropriated which are designated as ‘equity injections’ for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

#### **BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY**

##### **Statement of changes in equity**

The AEC incurred a higher than anticipated surplus in 2016–17 due to a change in approach to the scrutiny of Senate ballot papers and the uncertainty around the extent of election reforms at the 2016 federal election.

## Cash flow statement for the period ended 30 June 2017

|                                                                    | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000  | 2016<br>\$'000 | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>                                        |       |                 |                |                              |
| <b>Cash received</b>                                               |       |                 |                |                              |
| Appropriations                                                     |       | 311,069         | 201,225        | 298,272                      |
| Sales of goods and rendering of services                           |       | 19,984          | 18,000         | 10,952                       |
| Net GST received                                                   |       | 19,604          | 4,547          | –                            |
| Total cash received                                                |       | 350,657         | 223,772        | 309,224                      |
| <b>Cash used</b>                                                   |       |                 |                |                              |
| Employees                                                          |       | 157,530         | 95,600         | 194,868                      |
| Suppliers                                                          |       | 206,335         | 125,925        | 114,356                      |
| Total cash used                                                    |       | 363,865         | 221,525        | 309,224                      |
| Net cash (used by)/from operating activities                       |       | (13,208)        | 2,247          | –                            |
| <b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>                                        |       |                 |                |                              |
| <b>Cash used</b>                                                   |       |                 |                |                              |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment                          |       | 1,800           | 4,227          | 6,171                        |
| Purchase of intangibles                                            |       | 1,844           | 5,313          | –                            |
| Total cash used                                                    |       | 3,644           | 9,540          | 6,171                        |
| Net cash (used by) investing activities                            |       | (3,644)         | (9,540)        | (6,171)                      |
| <b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>                                        |       |                 |                |                              |
| <b>Cash received</b>                                               |       |                 |                |                              |
| Contributed equity                                                 |       | –               | 3,989          | 6,171                        |
| Departmental Capital Budget                                        |       | 3,140           | 20,345         | –                            |
| Total cash received                                                |       | 3,140           | 24,334         | 6,171                        |
| Net cash from financing activities                                 |       | 3,140           | 24,334         | 6,171                        |
| <b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash held</b>                        |       | <b>(13,712)</b> | <b>17,041</b>  | <b>–</b>                     |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period |       | 17,932          | 891            | 891                          |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period       | 2.1A  | 4,220           | 17,932         | 891                          |

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY****Cash flow statement**

The AEC's operating cash used was higher than budgeted due to costs incurred in 2015–16 in preparation for the 2016 federal election on 2 July 2016 not being paid until 2016–17. The financing cash received is lower than budgeted due to delays in the commencement of a number of capital projects that will be delivered during 2016–17.

## Administered schedules

### Administered schedule of comprehensive income for the period ended 30 June 2017

|                              | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>  |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>              |       |                |                |                              |
| Other expenses               | 5.1A  | 62,883         | 392            | 76,000                       |
| Total expenses               |       | 62,883         | 392            | 76,000                       |
| <b>INCOME</b>                |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Revenue</b>               |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Non-taxation revenue</b>  |       |                |                |                              |
| Electoral fines/penalties    | 5.2A  | 3,746          | 369            | 2,000                        |
| Candidate deposits           | 5.2A  | –              | 25             | –                            |
| Other                        | 5.2A  | –              | 10             | –                            |
| Total non-taxation revenue   |       | 3,746          | 404            | 2,000                        |
| Total revenue                |       | 3,746          | 404            | 2,000                        |
| Net contribution by services |       | (59,137)       | 12             | (74,000)                     |
| (Deficit)/surplus            |       | (59,137)       | 12             | (74,000)                     |

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

#### BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY

##### Schedule of comprehensive income

The AEC's administered expenditure was lower than budgeted as payments to political parties from the 2016 federal election were not as high as anticipated. The AEC's administered revenue was higher than anticipated due to electoral fines and penalties for the 2016 federal election being higher than anticipated.

### Administered schedule of assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2017

|                                                        | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 | Original<br>Budget<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <b>ASSETS</b>                                          |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Financial assets</b>                                |       |                |                |                              |
| Cash and cash equivalents                              | 5.3A  | 3,560          | 2,282          | –                            |
| Total financial assets                                 |       | 3,560          | 2,282          | –                            |
| Total assets administered on behalf of Government      |       | 3,560          | 2,282          | –                            |
| <b>LIABILITIES</b>                                     |       |                |                |                              |
| <b>Payables</b>                                        |       |                |                |                              |
| Suppliers                                              | 5.3B  | –              | 14             | –                            |
| Total payables                                         |       | –              | 14             | –                            |
| Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government |       | –              | 14             | –                            |
| Net assets                                             |       | 3,560          | 2,268          | –                            |

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

### Administered reconciliation schedule

|                                                                 | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July                    | 2,268          | 1              |
| <b>Net cost of/(contribution by) services:</b>                  |                |                |
| Income                                                          | 3,748          | 2,699          |
| Expenses                                                        | (63,815)       | (420)          |
| <b>Transfers from/(to) Australian Government:</b>               |                |                |
| Appropriation transfers from Official Public Account (OPA)      |                |                |
| Special appropriations (limited)                                |                |                |
| Payments to entities other than corporate Commonwealth entities | 65,105         | 392            |
| Appropriation transfers to OPA                                  |                |                |
| Transfers to OPA                                                | (3,746)        | (404)          |
| Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June                   | 3,560          | 2,268          |

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

##### Administered cash transfers to and from the Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the AEC for use by the Government rather than the AEC is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the entity on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the Administered cash flow statement and in the Administered reconciliation schedule.

Administered cash flow statement for the period ended 30 June 2017

|                                                                    | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>                                        |                |                |
| <b>Cash received</b>                                               |                |                |
| Electoral fines/penalties                                          | 3,746          | 369            |
| Candidate deposits                                                 | –              | 25             |
| Other                                                              | 2              | 2,305          |
| Total cash received                                                | 3,748          | 2,699          |
| <b>Cash used</b>                                                   |                |                |
| Political parties/candidates                                       | 63,710         | 372            |
| Refund of electoral fines/penalties                                | 105            | 34             |
| Total cash used                                                    | 63,815         | 406            |
| Net cash flows (used by)/from operating activities                 | (60,067)       | 2,293          |
| <b>Cash from Official Public Account</b>                           |                |                |
| Appropriations                                                     | 65,105         | 392            |
| Total cash from Official Public Account                            | 65,105         | 392            |
| <b>Cash to Official Public Account</b>                             |                |                |
| Appropriations                                                     | (3,746)        | (404)          |
| Total cash to Official Public Account                              | (3,746)        | (404)          |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period | 2,268          | 1              |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period       | 3,560          | 2,282          |

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



# Overview

## Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a. Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015 (FRR) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2015; and
- b. Australian accounting standards and interpretations – Reduced disclosure requirements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

The 2016 federal election was held on the 2nd of July 2016. Costs related to this incurred in 2016–17 are included in the Statement of financial position and Statement of comprehensive income.

## New Australian accounting standards

| Standard                                 | Effective date | Summary of changes                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AASB 124<br>Related Party<br>Disclosures | 1 July 2016    | The standard applies to not-for-profit public sector entities for 2016–17. This will require the disclosure of remuneration for key management personnel and the disclosure of transactions with related parties. |

All other new/revised/amending standards and/or interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off date and are applicable to the current reporting period did not have a material effect on the AEC's financial statements.

## Accounting judgements and estimates

No accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of any assets or liabilities within the next reporting period.

## Taxation

The AEC is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

## Reporting of administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian accounting standards.

In accordance with changes to the FRR, special account cash balances held in AEC bank accounts and in the Official Public Account are included in the Administered schedule of assets and liabilities, Administered cash flow statement, and Administered reconciliation schedule for the first time this financial year. Previous year comparatives have also been amended (2017: \$1.338 million; 2016: \$2.268 million).

## Events after the reporting period

### **Departmental**

There are no events after the reporting date that will materially affect the financial statements.

### **Administered**

There are no events after the reporting date that will materially affect the financial statements.

# Notes to the financial statements

## 1. Funding

This section identifies the AEC’s funding structure and the funds available to the AEC.

### 1.1 Revenue from Government

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

#### Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as revenue from Government when the AEC gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

#### 1.1A: Revenue from Government

|                                                          | Notes | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|----------------|
| Departmental appropriation – operating <sup>1</sup>      | 1.1B  | 308,187        | 122,520        |
| Departmental appropriation – advance to Finance Minister | 1.1B  | –              | 101,237        |
| Departmental special appropriations                      | 1.1D  | 9,000          | 9,000          |
| <b>Total revenue from Government</b>                     |       | <b>317,187</b> | <b>232,757</b> |

1. Prior year appropriation of nil (2016: \$0.799 million) is included in departmental appropriation – operating in note 1.1A but excluded in note 1.1B.

### 1.1B: Annual appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

|                                            | 2017<br>\$'000   | 2016<br>\$'000   |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Ordinary annual services</b>            |                  |                  |
| Annual appropriation                       |                  |                  |
| Operating                                  |                  |                  |
| Operating <sup>1</sup>                     | 308,187          | 121,721          |
| Advance to the Finance Minister            | –                | 101,237          |
| Section 74 receipts of PGPA Act            | 18,754           | 16,749           |
| <b>Total operating appropriation</b>       | <b>326,941</b>   | <b>239,707</b>   |
| Capital budget                             | 6,171            | 11,012           |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>333,112</b>   | <b>250,719</b>   |
| Appropriation applied                      |                  |                  |
| Operating                                  | (320,823)        | (208,974)        |
| Capital                                    |                  |                  |
| Departmental Capital Budget                | (3,140)          | (20,345)         |
| Equity injections                          | –                | (3,989)          |
| <b>Total capital appropriation applied</b> | <b>(3,140)</b>   | <b>(24,334)</b>  |
| <b>Total appropriation applied</b>         | <b>(323,963)</b> | <b>(233,308)</b> |
| <b>Variance<sup>2</sup></b>                | <b>9,149</b>     | <b>17,411</b>    |

1. Prior year appropriation of nil (2016: \$0.799 million) is included in departmental appropriation – operating in note 1.1A but excluded in note 1.1B.
2. \$3.0 million of the variance of \$9.1 million outlined in Table 1.1B relates to DCB funding. This amount will be drawn down in 2017–18 as capital accruals are paid and delayed works are completed. The remaining \$6.1 million of the variance relates to operating expenditure and is in line with the AEC's budgeted surplus for the financial year.

### 1.1C: Unspent annual appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

|                                                      | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>DEPARTMENTAL</b>                                  |                |                |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>                     |                |                |
| Appropriation Act 1 – 2016–17 – Cash                 | 4,220          | –              |
| Appropriation Act 1 – 2015–16 – Cash <sup>1</sup>    | –              | 17,932         |
| <b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>               | <b>4,220</b>   | <b>17,932</b>  |
| <b>Appropriations receivable</b>                     |                |                |
| Appropriation Act 1 – 2016–17                        | 76,308         | –              |
| Appropriation Act 3 – 2016–17                        | 3,840          | –              |
| Supply Act 1 – 2016–17 – Departmental Capital Budget | 3,031          | –              |
| Appropriation Act 1 – 2015–16                        | –              | 74,030         |
| <b>Total appropriations receivable</b>               | <b>83,179</b>  | <b>74,030</b>  |
| <b>Total departmental</b>                            | <b>87,399</b>  | <b>91,962</b>  |

1. The AEC's cash balance at 30 June 2016 was higher than normal due to amounts being drawn down close to the end of the financial year to fund election payments early in the 2016–17 financial year.

### 1.1D: Special appropriations (recoverable GST exclusive)

| Authority                                                                                     | Appropriation applied |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                               | 2017<br>\$'000        | 2016<br>\$'000 |
| <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Departmental)</i>                                         | 9,000                 | 9,000          |
| <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Administered)</i>                                         | 65,105                | 357            |
| <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 – s77 Repayment of Receipts</i> | –                     | 34             |
| <b>Total special appropriations applied</b>                                                   | <b>74,105</b>         | <b>9,391</b>   |

No entities spent money from the Consolidated Revenue Fund on behalf of the AEC.

## 1.2 Own-source revenue and gains

### 1.2A: Sale of goods and rendering of services

|                                                      | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Own-source revenue</b>                            |                |                |
| Sale of goods                                        | 10,720         | 10,501         |
| Rendering of services                                | 7,515          | 4,723          |
| <b>Total sale of goods and rendering of services</b> | <b>18,235</b>  | <b>15,224</b>  |

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when:

- a. the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer; and
- b. the AEC retains no managerial involvement or effective control over the goods.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion of costs incurred to date compared with the estimated total costs of the transaction.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

### 1.2B: Other revenue

|                                   | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Other                             | 55             | 278            |
| Resources received free of charge |                |                |
| Remuneration of auditors          | 85             | 85             |
| Other                             | 79             | 84             |
| <b>Total other revenue</b>        | <b>219</b>     | <b>447</b>     |

## ACCOUNTING POLICY

### Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

### 1.2C: Other gains

|                          | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Makegood gains           | 48             | –              |
| <b>Total other gains</b> | <b>48</b>      | <b>–</b>       |

## 1.3 Special accounts

|                                                                         | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Services for Other Entities And Trust Monies (SOETM)<sup>1</sup></b> |                |                |
| Balance brought forward from previous period                            | 2,268          | 1              |
| Increases                                                               | 2              | 2,295          |
| <b>Total increases</b>                                                  | <b>2</b>       | <b>2,295</b>   |
| Available for payments                                                  | 2,270          | 2,296          |
| Decreases                                                               |                |                |
| Administered                                                            | 932            | 28             |
| <b>Total administered</b>                                               | <b>932</b>     | <b>28</b>      |
| <b>Total decreases</b>                                                  | <b>932</b>     | <b>28</b>      |
| <b>Total balance carried to the next period</b>                         | <b>1,338</b>   | <b>2,268</b>   |
| <b>Balance represented by:</b>                                          |                |                |
| Cash held in AEC bank accounts                                          | 53             | –              |
| Cash held in the official public account                                | 1,285          | 2,268          |

1. Appropriation: *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* section 80.

Establishing Instrument: *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* section 20.

Purpose: for the expenditure of monies temporarily held in trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth. For example, candidate deposits.

## 1.4 Net cash appropriation arrangements

|                                                                                                                            | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Total comprehensive income/(loss) less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations | 44,914         | (13,803)        |
| Plus: depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriation                                   | (9,229)        | (9,326)         |
| <b>Total comprehensive income/(loss) – as per the Statement of comprehensive income</b>                                    | <b>35,685</b>  | <b>(23,129)</b> |

## 2. Departmental financial position and managing uncertainties

This section analyses the AEC's assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result, and how the AEC manages financial risks related to these and its operating environment. Employee-related information is disclosed in the People and relationships section.

### 2.1 Financial instruments

#### 2.1A: Categories of financial instruments

|                                                               | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>                                       |                |                |
| <b>Loans and receivables</b>                                  |                |                |
| Cash on hand or on deposit                                    | 4,220          | 17,932         |
| Receivables                                                   |                |                |
| Receivables for goods and services                            | 1,697          | 2,118          |
| Less impairment allowance                                     | (10)           | (2)            |
| <b>Total receivables</b>                                      | <b>1,687</b>   | <b>2,116</b>   |
| <b>Total loans and receivables</b>                            | <b>5,907</b>   | <b>20,048</b>  |
| <b>Total financial assets</b>                                 | <b>5,907</b>   | <b>20,048</b>  |
| <b>FINANCIAL LIABILITIES</b>                                  |                |                |
| <b>Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>       |                |                |
| Supplier payables                                             | 5,506          | 72,637         |
| <b>Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b> | <b>5,506</b>   | <b>72,637</b>  |
| <b>Total financial liabilities</b>                            | <b>5,506</b>   | <b>72,637</b>  |

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2016: 30 days). Settlement of suppliers payable is usually made within 30 days.

Increase in impairment allowance for the period of \$8,000 (2016: \$5,000 decrease) has been recognised in relation to loans and receivables and included in the net cost of service. No amounts have been written off or recovered/reversed.

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

##### Financial assets

The AEC classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- a. financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- b. held-to-maturity investments;
- c. available-for-sale financial assets; and
- d. loans and receivables.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised and derecognised upon trade date.

## Loans and receivables

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments and that are not quoted in an active market are classified as 'loans and receivables'. Loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment.

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include:

- a. cash on hand;
- b. demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value; and
- c. cash in special accounts.

## Effective interest method

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis except for financial assets that are recognised at fair value through profit or loss.

## Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period.

Financial assets held at amortised cost – if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has been incurred for loans and receivables or held to maturity investments held at amortised cost, the amount of the loss is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The carrying amount is reduced by way of an allowance account. The loss is recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income.

## Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

## 2.2 Other financial assets

### 2.2A: Appropriation receivable

|                                       | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Appropriation receivables             | 83,179         | 74,030         |
| <b>Total appropriation receivable</b> | <b>83,179</b>  | <b>74,030</b>  |

### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Refer to Note 1.1.

### 2.2B: Other receivables

|                                | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Statutory receivables          | 674            | 4,417          |
| <b>Total other receivables</b> | <b>674</b>     | <b>4,417</b>   |



Other receivables are not past due or impaired.

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Statutory receivables are amounts owed to the AEC from the Australian Taxation Office in relation to the refund of GST collected.

## 2.3 Non-financial assets

### 2.3A: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles for 2017

|                                                                          | Leasehold<br>improvements<br>\$'000 | Plant &<br>equipment<br>\$'000 | Computer<br>software <sup>1</sup><br>\$'000 | Intellectual<br>property<br>\$'000 | Total<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>As at 1 July 2016</b>                                                 |                                     |                                |                                             |                                    |                 |
| Gross book value                                                         | 10,994                              | 7,696                          | 56,675                                      | 2,304                              | 77,669          |
| Accumulated depreciation, amortisation<br>and impairment                 | (635)                               | –                              | (42,273)                                    | (143)                              | (43,051)        |
| <b>Total as at 1 July 2016</b>                                           | <b>10,359</b>                       | <b>7,696</b>                   | <b>14,402</b>                               | <b>2,161</b>                       | <b>34,618</b>   |
| Additions                                                                |                                     |                                |                                             |                                    |                 |
| Purchase                                                                 | 770                                 | 1,434                          | 804                                         | –                                  | 3,008           |
| Revaluations and impairments recognised<br>in other comprehensive income | (365)                               | 130                            | –                                           | –                                  | (235)           |
| Impairments recognised in net cost of<br>services                        | –                                   | –                              | (1,494)                                     | –                                  | (1,494)         |
| Depreciation and amortisation                                            | (2,331)                             | (2,470)                        | (4,179)                                     | (249)                              | (9,229)         |
| Other movements                                                          |                                     |                                |                                             |                                    |                 |
| Asset transfers                                                          | –                                   | 462                            | (462)                                       | –                                  | –               |
| Disposals                                                                | (9)                                 | (649)                          | –                                           | –                                  | (658)           |
| <b>Total as at 30 June 2017</b>                                          | <b>8,424</b>                        | <b>6,603</b>                   | <b>9,071</b>                                | <b>1,912</b>                       | <b>26,010</b>   |
| <b>Total as at 30 June 2017 represented by</b>                           |                                     |                                |                                             |                                    |                 |
| Gross book value                                                         | 8,424                               | 6,603                          | 54,248                                      | 2,304                              | 71,579          |
| Accumulated depreciation, amortisation<br>and impairment                 | –                                   | –                              | (45,177)                                    | (392)                              | (45,569)        |
| <b>Total as at 30 June 2017</b>                                          | <b>8,424</b>                        | <b>6,603</b>                   | <b>9,071</b>                                | <b>1,912</b>                       | <b>26,010</b>   |

1. The carrying amount of computer software included \$2,607,247 of purchased software and \$6,462,732 of internally generated software.

No indicators of impairment were found for property, plant and equipment and intangibles (2016: nil).

No property, plant and equipment and intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

#### Revaluations of non-financial assets

All revaluations were conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated in this note. On 30 June 2017, an independent valuer conducted the revaluations.

A revaluation decrement of \$364,976.43 for leasehold improvements (2016: \$656,757 increment) was debited to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the equity section of the Statement of financial position. A revaluation increment for provision for restoration of \$249,331 (2016: nil) was credited to the asset revaluation surplus. An increment of \$129,513 for property, plant

and equipment (2016: \$1,202,475) was credited to the asset revaluation surplus and included in the equity section of the statement of financial position.

### Contractual commitments for the acquisition of plant, equipment and intangible assets

At 30 June 2017, there were no significant contractual commitments for the acquisition of plant, equipment and intangible assets.

### Fair value measurement<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

The following tables provide an analysis of assets and liabilities that are measured at fair value. The remaining assets and liabilities disclosed in the Statement of financial position do not apply the fair value hierarchy.

|                             | Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period |                |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                             | 2017<br>\$'000                                             | 2016<br>\$'000 |
| <b>Non-financial assets</b> |                                                            |                |
| Leasehold improvements      | 8,424                                                      | 10,359         |
| Plant and equipment         | 6,603                                                      | 7,696          |

1. There are no non-recurring fair value measurements.
2. There are no changes in valuation techniques.
3. The remaining assets and liabilities reported by the AEC are not measured at fair value in the Statement of financial position.

### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

### Asset recognition threshold

Purchases of plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to 'makegood' provisions in property leases taken up by the AEC where there exists an obligation to restore the property to its original condition. These costs are included in the value of the AEC's leasehold improvements with a corresponding provision for restoration recognised.

## Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, plant and equipment are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reversed a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

## Depreciation

Depreciable plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the AEC, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

|                        | 2017                                    | 2016                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Leasehold improvements | <b>Lesser of lease term/useful life</b> | Lesser of lease term/useful life |
| Plant and equipment    | <b>5 to 10 years</b>                    | 5 to 10 years                    |
| IT equipment           | <b>3 to 5 years</b>                     | 3 to 5 years                     |

## Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2017. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the AEC were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

## Derecognition

An item of plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

## Intangibles

The AEC's intangibles comprise internally developed software, purchased software and intellectual property for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets are amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful life of the AEC's software is 1 to 10 years (2016: 1 to 10 years) and the useful life of the AEC's intellectual property is 0 to 4 years (2016: 0 to 4 years).

All intangible assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2017.

### 2.3B: Inventories

|                                   | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Inventories held for distribution | 3,909          | 14,599         |
| <b>Total inventories</b>          | <b>3,909</b>   | <b>14,599</b>  |

During 2017, \$8.8 million of inventory held for use at the next federal election was recognised as an expense as the 2016 federal election occurred on 2 July 2016 (2016: \$2.6 million).

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Inventories held for distribution are valued at cost, adjusted for any loss of service potential.

Costs incurred in bringing each item of inventory to its present location and condition are assigned as follows:

- a. raw materials and stores – purchase cost on a first-in-first-out basis; and
- b. finished goods and work-in-progress – cost of direct materials and labour plus attributable costs that can be allocated on a reasonable basis.

Inventories acquired at no cost or nominal consideration are initially measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

### 2.3C: Other non-financial assets

|                                         | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Prepayments                             | 3,135          | 7,077          |
| <b>Total other non-financial assets</b> | <b>3,135</b>   | <b>7,077</b>   |

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets (2016: nil).

## 2.4 Other payables and provisions

### 2.4A: Other payables

|                              | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Salaries and wages           | 492            | 6,086          |
| Superannuation               | 398            | 1,060          |
| Separations and redundancies | 433            | –              |
| Lease incentives             | 2,255          | 2,779          |
| Straight-line leases         | 369            | 524            |
| Unearned revenue             | –              | 800            |
| <b>Total other payables</b>  | <b>3,947</b>   | <b>11,249</b>  |

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

##### Parental Leave Payments Scheme

Amounts received under the Parental Leave Payments Scheme by the AEC not yet paid to employees were presented gross as cash and a liability (payable). The total amount received under this scheme was \$81,862 (2016: \$181,357).

##### Employee benefits

Refer to Note 3.2.

##### Leases

Refer to Note 4.1A.

##### Unearned revenue

Unearned revenue relates to payments in advance for services provided to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on a reciprocal basis.

### 2.4B: Other provisions

|                                                  | Provision for<br>restoration<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>As at 1 July 2016</b>                         | 1,525                                  |
| Additional provisions made                       | 17                                     |
| Amounts used                                     | –                                      |
| Amounts reversed                                 | (70)                                   |
| Revaluation of provision                         | 76                                     |
| Unwinding of discount or change in discount rate | 22                                     |
| <b>Total as at 30 June 2017</b>                  | <b>1,570</b>                           |

The AEC currently has 31 (2016: 34) agreements for the leasing of premises which have provisions requiring the AEC to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease. The AEC has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation.

## **2.5 Contingent assets and liabilities**

### **Contingent assets**

At 30 June 2017, the AEC had no contingent assets (2016: nil).

### **Contingent liabilities**

At 30 June 2017, the AEC had no contingent liabilities (2016: nil).

### **Quantifiable contingencies**

At 30 June 2017, the AEC had no quantifiable contingencies (2016: nil).

### **Unquantifiable contingencies**

At 30 June 2017, the AEC had no unquantifiable contingencies (2016: nil).

### **Significant remote contingencies**

The AEC has no significant remote contingencies (2016: nil).

#### **ACCOUNTING POLICY**

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the Statement of financial position but are reported in the notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

### 3. People and relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

#### 3.1 Employee benefits

|                              | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Wages and salaries           | 128,594        | 83,154         |
| Superannuation:              |                |                |
| Defined contribution plans   | 8,436          | 7,032          |
| Defined benefit plans        | 6,978          | 5,892          |
| Leave and other entitlements | 7,803          | 7,100          |
| Separation and redundancies  | 796            | 1,384          |
| Total employee benefits      | 152,607        | 104,562        |

#### 3.2 Employee provisions

|                           | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Leave                     | 25,130         | 24,611         |
| Total employee provisions | 25,130         | 24,611         |

## ACCOUNTING POLICY

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits and termination benefits expected within 12 months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period, minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

### Leave

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the shorthand method as at 30 June 2017. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

### Superannuation

The AEC's staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), or the PSS Accumulation Plan (PSSap), or other superannuation funds held outside the Australian Government.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes.

The AEC makes employer contributions to the employees' defined benefit superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The AEC accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions.

## 3.3 Key management personnel remuneration

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the AEC, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the AEC. The AEC has determined the key management personnel to be the Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner and the two First Assistant Commissioners. Key management personnel remuneration is reported in the table below:

|                                                                         | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Short-term employee benefits                                            | 1,478          | 1,275          |
| Post-employment benefits                                                | 387            | 233            |
| Other long-term employee benefits                                       | 133            | 113            |
| <b>Total key management personnel remuneration expenses<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>1,998</b>   | <b>1,621</b>   |

1. The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the AEC.

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table are 7 (2016: 5).



During the year, the number of positions included in key management personnel was 4.5 (2016:4). As 2016–17 was an election year, AEC was approved an additional 0.5 of a key management personnel position during 2016–17.

### 3.4 Related party disclosures

The AEC is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the AEC are key management personnel including the Portfolio Minister and Executive, and other Australian Government entities.

#### **Transactions with related parties:**

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions have not been separately disclosed in this note.

Significant transactions with related parties can include:

- the payments of grants or loans;
- purchases of goods or services;
- receipts to provide services;
- payments for superannuation; and
- asset purchases, sales transfers or leases.

Giving consideration to relationships with related entities, and transactions entered into during the reporting period by the entity, it has been determined that there are no related party transactions to be separately disclosed.

## 4. Other information

This section includes additional financial information that is either required by AAS or the PGPA FRR or is relevant to assist users in understanding the financial statements.

### 4.1 Expenses

#### 4.1A: Suppliers

|                                                      | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Goods and services supplied or rendered</b>       |                |                |
| Consultants                                          | 2,312          | 10,335         |
| Contractors                                          | 35,110         | 14,876         |
| Travel                                               | 4,378          | 5,583          |
| IT services                                          | 19,809         | 20,611         |
| Inventory                                            | 8,786          | 383            |
| Furniture and venue hire                             | 8,919          | 6,737          |
| Property                                             | 9,046          | 8,502          |
| Mail and freight                                     | 18,062         | 13,747         |
| Advertising                                          | 2,313          | 49,695         |
| Printing                                             | 6,071          | 5,485          |
| Legal costs                                          | 327            | 1,132          |
| Other                                                | 5,508          | 6,999          |
| <b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b> | <b>120,641</b> | <b>144,085</b> |
| Goods supplied                                       | 53,104         | 79,641         |
| Services rendered                                    | 67,537         | 64,444         |
| <b>Total goods and services supplied or rendered</b> | <b>120,641</b> | <b>144,085</b> |
| <b>Other suppliers</b>                               |                |                |
| Operating lease rentals                              | 12,295         | 14,982         |
| Lease restoration                                    | 15             | (842)          |
| Workers compensation expenses                        | 2,724          | 1,290          |
| <b>Total other suppliers</b>                         | <b>15,034</b>  | <b>15,430</b>  |
| <b>Total suppliers</b>                               | <b>135,675</b> | <b>159,515</b> |

#### Leasing commitments

The AEC in its capacity as a lessee, leases office accommodation and storage that are effectively non-cancellable. The lease payments can be varied periodically to take account of an annual Consumer Price Index increase, a fixed increase or a market increase. Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.

Commitments for minimum lease payments in relation to non-cancellable operating leases are payable as follows:

|                                   | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Within 1 year                     | 14,432         | 15,977         |
| Between 1 to 5 years              | 30,076         | 28,765         |
| More than 5 years                 | 2,569          | 6,082          |
| Total operating lease commitments | 47,077         | 50,824         |

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight-line basis, which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

#### 4.1B: Write-down and impairment of assets

|                                           | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Impairment on financial instruments       | 8              | (4)            |
| Impairment on intangible assets           | 1,494          | –              |
| Total write-down and impairment of assets | 1,502          | (4)            |

## 5. Items administered on behalf of Government

This section analyses the activities that the AEC does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

### 5.1 Administered – expenses

#### 5.1A: Other expenses

|                                     | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Refunds – electoral fines/penalties | 105            | 34             |
| Political party funding             | 62,778         | 358            |
| <b>Total other expenses</b>         | <b>62,883</b>  | <b>392</b>     |

### 5.2 Administered – income

#### 5.2A: Fees and fines

|                             | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Non-taxation revenue</b> |                |                |
| Electoral fines/penalties   | 3,746          | 369            |
| Candidate deposits          | –              | 25             |
| Other                       | –              | 10             |
| <b>Total fees and fines</b> | <b>3,746</b>   | <b>404</b>     |

#### ACCOUNTING POLICY

All administered revenues are revenues relating to ordinary activities performed by the AEC on behalf of the Australian Government. As such, administered appropriations are not revenues of the individual entity that oversees distribution or expenditure of the funds as directed.

Fines are charged for non-voters of federal elections, by-elections and referendums. Administered fee revenue is recognised when received.

Each nomination for the Senate and the House of Representatives must be accompanied by a deposit.

## 5.3 Administered – assets and liabilities

### 5.3A: Cash and cash equivalents

|                                        | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cash on hand or on deposit             | 2,222          | 14             |
| Cash on hand – special account         | 53             | –              |
| Cash held at the OPA – special account | 1,285          | 2,268          |
| <b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b> | <b>3,560</b>   | <b>2,282</b>   |

### 5.3B: Suppliers

|                              | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Trade creditors and accruals | –              | 14             |
| <b>Total suppliers</b>       | <b>–</b>       | <b>14</b>      |

Settlement of suppliers payable is usually made within 30 days.

## 5.4 Administered – financial instruments

|                                                               | 2017<br>\$'000 | 2016<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Financial assets</b>                                       |                |                |
| <b>Loans and receivables</b>                                  |                |                |
| Cash on hand or on deposit                                    | 2,222          | 14             |
| Cash on hand – special account                                | 53             | –              |
| Cash held at the OPA – special account                        | 1,285          | 2,268          |
| <b>Total loans and receivables</b>                            | <b>3,560</b>   | <b>2,282</b>   |
| <b>Total financial assets</b>                                 | <b>3,560</b>   | <b>2,282</b>   |
| <b>Financial Liabilities</b>                                  |                |                |
| <b>Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b>       |                |                |
| Trade creditors and accruals                                  | –              | 14             |
| <b>Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost</b> | <b>–</b>       | <b>14</b>      |
| <b>Total financial liabilities</b>                            | <b>–</b>       | <b>14</b>      |

Receivables (net) are expected to be recovered within 12 months (2016: within 12 months)

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2015: 30 days). Settlement of suppliers payable is usually made within 30 days.

## 5.5 Administered – contingent assets and liabilities

There are no administered contingencies, remote or quantifiable, for the AEC (2016: nil).



# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Resources

This appendix provides details of the AEC's resources and expenses in 2016–17, as required by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit Requirements for annual reports for departments, executive agencies and other non-corporate Commonwealth entities, 25 June 2015.

The tables in this appendix correspond to tables in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17 and staff statistics, namely:

- the Agency Resource Statement, which provides information about the various funding sources that the AEC was able to draw on during the year (Table 26)
- Expenses and resources by outcome, showing the detail of budget appropriations and total resourcing for Outcome 1 (Table 27)
- Average staffing levels from 2014–15 to 2016–17 (Table 28).

**Table 26: Agency Resource Statement 2016–17**

|                                                        |   | Actual<br>appropriation<br>for 2016–17<br>\$'000 | Payments<br>made for<br>2016–17<br>\$'000 | Balance<br>remaining<br>2016–17<br>\$'000 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ordinary annual services<sup>a</sup></b>            |   |                                                  |                                           |                                           |
| Prior year departmental appropriation                  |   | 74,030                                           | 74,030                                    | –                                         |
| Departmental appropriation <sup>b</sup>                |   | 314,358                                          | 231,179                                   | 83,179                                    |
| Section 74 relevant agency receipts                    |   | 18,754                                           | 18,754                                    | –                                         |
| Total ordinary annual services                         | A | 407,142                                          | 323,963                                   | 83,179                                    |
| Total available annual appropriations and payments     |   | 407,142                                          | 323,963                                   | 83,179                                    |
| <b>Special appropriations</b>                          |   |                                                  |                                           |                                           |
| Special appropriations limited by criteria/entitlement |   |                                                  |                                           |                                           |
| <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Administered)</i>  |   | 65,105                                           | 65,105                                    | –                                         |
| <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (Departmental)</i>  |   | 9,000                                            | 9,000                                     | –                                         |
| Total special appropriations                           | B | 74,105                                           | 74,105                                    | –                                         |
| <b>Special accounts<sup>c</sup></b>                    |   |                                                  |                                           |                                           |
| Opening balance                                        |   | 2,268                                            | 0                                         |                                           |
| Non-appropriation receipts to special accounts         |   | 2                                                | 0                                         |                                           |
| Payments made                                          |   | 0                                                | 932                                       |                                           |
| Total special accounts                                 | C | 2,270                                            | 932                                       |                                           |
| Total resourcing (A + B + C)                           |   | 483,517                                          | 399,000                                   |                                           |
| Total net resourcing for agency                        |   | 483,517                                          | 399,000                                   |                                           |

a. Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2016–17 and Appropriation Bill (No. 3) 2016–17. This also includes prior year departmental appropriation and section 74 relevant agency receipts.

b. Includes an amount of \$6.171 million in 2016–17 for the Department Capital Budget. For accounting purposes this amount has been designated as 'contributions by owners'.

c. Does not include 'special public money' held in accounts like Other Trust Monies accounts, Services for other Government and non-agency bodies accounts or Services for Other Entities and Trust Monies special accounts.



Table 27: Expenses and resources for Outcome 1

|                                                         | Budget <sup>a</sup><br>2016–17<br>\$'000 | Actual<br>expenses<br>2016–17<br>\$'000 | Variation<br>\$'000 |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Program 1.1</b>                                      |                                          |                                         |                     |
| Administered expenses                                   |                                          |                                         |                     |
| Special appropriations                                  | 76,000                                   | 65,105                                  | 10,895              |
| Departmental expenses                                   |                                          |                                         |                     |
| Departmental appropriation <sup>a</sup>                 | 304,149                                  | 281,464                                 | 22,685              |
| Special appropriations                                  | 9,000                                    | 9,000                                   | 0                   |
| Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year | 8,719                                    | 9,229                                   | (510)               |
| <b>Total for Program 1.1</b>                            | <b>397,868</b>                           | <b>364,798</b>                          | <b>33,070</b>       |
| <b>Total expenses for Outcome 1</b>                     | <b>397,868</b>                           | <b>364,798</b>                          | <b>33,070</b>       |

a. Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2016–17 Budget at Additional Estimates.

b. Departmental appropriation combines 'Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)' and 'Revenue from independent sources (section 74)'.

Table 28: Average staffing levels 2014–15 to 2016–17

|                                 | 2014–15 | 2015–16 | 2016–17 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Average staffing level (number) | 759     | 819     | 809     |

## Appendix B: Electoral roll information

Members of Parliament and Senators who received roll information in 2016–17 are set out in the table below. Data is extracted monthly, and distribution began in September 2016 following the formal return of the writ for the 2016 federal election.

**Table 29: Recipients of electoral roll extracts September 2016 – June 2017**

| Name                                       | Electorate/State            | Roll data provided | Date provided       |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| The Hon Linda Burney MP                    | Member for Barton           | Barton             | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Mr Andrew Gee MP                           | Member for Calare           | Calare             | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Mr Andrew Wilkie MP                        | Member for Denison          | Denison            | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Ms Catherine McGowan AO, MP                | Member for Indi             | Indi               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| The Hon Robert Katter MP                   | Member for Kennedy          | Kennedy            | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Ms Susan Lamb MP                           | Member for Longman          | Longman            | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Ms Rebekha Sharkie MP                      | Member for Mayo             | Mayo               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Mr Adam Bandt MP                           | Member for Melbourne        | Melbourne          | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| The Hon Damian Drum MP                     | Member for Murray           | Murray             | Nov 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Brian Burston                      | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Dec 2016 – May 2017 |
| Senator Sam Dastyari                       | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Marise Payne               | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Lee Rhiannon                       | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator John Williams                      | Senator for New South Wales | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Pauline Hanson                     | Senator for Queensland      | Queensland         | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Ian Macdonald              | Senator for Queensland      | Queensland         | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon James McGrath              | Senator for Queensland      | Queensland         | Sep 2016 – May 2017 |
| Senator Barry O'Sullivan                   | Senator for Queensland      | Queensland         | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Larissa Waters                     | Senator for Queensland      | Queensland         | Oct 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Cory Bernardi                      | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham           | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Robert Day AO                      | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016            |
| Senator Stirling Griff                     | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore               | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Oct 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Anne Ruston                | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Nicholas Xenophon                  | Senator for South Australia | South Australia    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |

| Name                          | Electorate/State              | Roll data provided | Date provided       |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Senator Nicholas McKim        | Senator for Tasmania          | Tasmania           | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Stephen Parry | Senator for Tasmania          | Tasmania           | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator the Hon Lisa Singh    | Senator for Tasmania          | Tasmania           | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Peter Whish-Wilson    | Senator for Tasmania          | Tasmania           | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Christopher Back      | Senator for Western Australia | Western Australia  | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Peter Georgiou        | Senator for Western Australia | Western Australia  | Apr 2017 – Jun 2017 |
| Senator Dean Smith            | Senator for Western Australia | Western Australia  | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |

## Appendix C: Roll information for registered political parties

Registered political parties that received roll information in 2016–17 are set out in the table below. Data is extracted monthly, and distribution began in September 2016 following the formal return of the writ for the 2016 federal election.

**Table 30: Parties provided with electoral roll extracts, September 2016 – June 2017**

| Registered political party                    | Roll data provided                                            | Date provided       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Animal Justice Party                          | New South Wales                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australia First Party (NSW) Incorporated      | New South Wales                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australian Christians                         | Western Australia                                             | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australian Country Party                      | Victoria                                                      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australian Equality (Marriage) Party          | Victoria                                                      | Sep 2016 – Oct 2016 |
| Australian Greens                             | National                                                      | Oct 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australian Labor Party (ALP)                  | National                                                      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Australian Sex Party                          | Victoria                                                      | Nov 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Consumer Rights & No-Tolls                    | Queensland                                                    | Sep 2016 – Oct 2016 |
| Democratic Labour Party (DLP)                 | New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Family First Party                            | Victoria, South Australia, Queensland                         | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Health Australia Party                        | Victoria                                                      | Sep 2016 – Oct 2016 |
|                                               | Victoria                                                      | Jan 2017 – Jun 2017 |
|                                               | Queensland                                                    | Nov 2016 – Dec 2017 |
| Jacqui Lambie Network                         | Tasmania                                                      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Liberal Democratic Party                      | New South Wales                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Liberal National Party of Queensland          | Queensland                                                    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Liberal Party of Australia                    | National                                                      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division)      | South Australia                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| National Party of Australia – National        | New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia | Feb 2017 – Jun 2017 |
| National Party of Australia – Victoria        | Victoria                                                      | Nov 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| National Party of Australia – (SA) Inc        | South Australia                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Non-Custodial Parents Party (Equal Parenting) | New South Wales                                               | Apr 2017 – Jun 2017 |
| Pauline Hanson's One Nation                   | Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia                | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Queensland Greens                             | Queensland                                                    | Oct 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Rise Up Australia Party                       | Victoria                                                      | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Science Party                                 | New South Wales                                               | Dec 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party           | New South Wales                                               | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |

| Registered political party        | Roll data provided | Date provided       |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Socialist Alliance                | New South Wales    | Sep 2016            |
| The Greens NSW                    | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| The Greens – Victoria Branch      | Victoria           | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| The Greens (WA) Inc.              | Western Australia  | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |
| Voluntary Euthanasia Party        | New South Wales    | Oct 2016            |
| VOTEFLUX.ORG   Upgrade Democracy! | New South Wales    | Sep 2016 – Jun 2017 |

## Appendix D: Other recipients of roll information

**Table 31: Government departments and agencies that received electoral extracts, July 2016 – June 2017**

| Institution                                                          | Data provided |          |          |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                                                      | Aug 2016      | Nov 2016 | Feb 2017 | May 2017 |
| Australian Bureau of Statistics                                      | —             | Yes      | —        | —        |
| Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity                  | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission                          | Yes           | —        | Yes      | —        |
| Australian Federal Police                                            | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Financial Security Authority                              | —             | Yes      | —        | —        |
| Australian Securities and Investments Commission                     | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Security Intelligence Organisation                        | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Taxation Office                                           | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Commonwealth Superannuation Commission                               | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Competition and Consumer Commission                       | Yes           | —        | —        | —        |
| Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Australian Passport Office | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Department of Human Services – Centrelink                            | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (Austrac)         | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| Federal Court of Australia                                           | —             | —        | —        | Yes      |

**Table 32: Medical and electoral researchers provided with electoral roll extracts, July 2016 – June 2017**

| Contact, institution                                                                                     | Data provided                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Medical researchers</b>                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Dr Vincent Ho, School of Medicine, Western Sydney University, Penrith, NSW                               | Random sample of 2,000 records of men and women, aged 65 years or older, for a study: 'Constipation in the elderly of Greater Western Sydney'.                                                                                                                                        |
| Professor Peter Soyer, Dermatology Research Centre of the University of Queensland, Woolloongabba, Qld   | Random sample of 5,000 records of men and women, in age ranges from 20–69 years, from the Queensland electoral divisions of Bonner, Bowman, Brisbane, Griffith, Lilley, Moreton, Oxley, Petrie, Rankin and Ryan for a study: 'Brisbane Electoral Roll Naevus Study'.                  |
| Professor Gerry FitzGerald, Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove Campus, Qld                | Random sample of 3,000 records of men and women, from Queensland electoral divisions of Blair, Bonner, Brisbane, Griffith, Groom, Lilley, Moreton, Oxley, Petrie, Rankin, Ryan and Wright for a study: 'Assessment of the long term health effects of the 2011 floods in Queensland'. |
| Professor David Crawford, Faculty of Health, Deakin University, Burwood, Vic.                            | Random sample of 7,990 records of men and women, in age ranges from 18–65 years, from all Victorian federal divisions for a study: 'Monitoring Salt Intake in Victoria'.                                                                                                              |
| <b>Electoral researchers</b>                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Associate Professor Betsy Blunsdon, Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated | Two random samples of 2,500 records of men and women, in two-year age ranges, across all states and territories, for a study: '2016 Australian Survey of Social Attitudes: Role of Government'.                                                                                       |

Table 33: Provision of electoral roll information to organisations verifying identity for financial purposes, July 2016 – June 2017

| Institution                                           | Data provided |          |          |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                                       | Aug 2016      | Nov 2016 | Feb 2017 | May 2017 |
| ACXIOM Australia Pty Ltd                              | Yes           | Yes      | —        | —        |
| FCS OnLine                                            | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| VEDA Advantage Information Services and Solutions Ltd | Yes           | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |

## Appendix E: Advertising and market research

In 2016–17, the AEC finalised the national public information campaign for the 2016 federal election, which was almost wholly delivered in the previous financial year. This included some final market research for the campaign.

Non-campaign newspaper advertisements supported federal redistributions and party registration processes during 2016–17.

Table 34 provides particulars of payments not less than \$13,000 (GST incl.) to advertising agencies, and market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising organisations, as required under Section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. Figures reflect payments above the threshold unless otherwise specified. (There were no payments of \$13,000 or more to polling or direct mail organisations.)

**Table 34: Advertising and media placement payments, \$13,000 or more**

| Agency type                     | Agency name             | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Amount<br>(GST inclusive) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Advertising agency              | BMF Advertising         | Creative head hours associated with AEC advertising campaigns.                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$70,136.55               |
| Market research                 | Orima                   | Developmental, concept and refinement testing of AEC advertising campaigns.                                                                                                                                                                         | \$88,415.80               |
| Market research                 | Wallis Consulting Group | Qualitative and quantitative market research services including campaign benchmark and tracking.                                                                                                                                                    | \$237,818.00              |
| Media advertising organisations | Dentsu Mitchell*        | Media placement: campaign advertising associated with the 2016 federal election; non-campaign advertising associated with the election campaign; electoral redistributions; industrial and commercial elections; recruitment and other advertising. | \$1,012,579.54            |
| <b>Total</b>                    |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>\$ 1,408,949.89</b>    |

\*Due to the way payments are reported to the AEC, figures from Dentsu Mitchell include invoices below the threshold.



## Appendix F: AEC regular staff

Table 35: APS ongoing staff (including staff on higher duties arrangements) demographics as at 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2017

| Classification | Female part-time |           | Female full-time |           | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |           | Total      |            |
|----------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|
|                | 2016             | 2017      | 2016             | 2017      | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017      | 2016       | 2017       |
| NSW            |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |            |            |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1         | 0          | 1          |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0         | 1                | 2         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0         | 2          | 2          |
| EL 1           | 1                | 1         | 7                | 7         | 0              | 0        | 6              | 5         | 14         | 13         |
| APS 6          | 1                | 2         | 37               | 24        | 0              | 0        | 19             | 14        | 57         | 40         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0         | 4                | 9         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 8         | 6          | 17         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 1         | 11               | 9         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 2         | 13         | 12         |
| APS 3          | 1                | 4         | 27               | 23        | 0              | 0        | 6              | 5         | 34         | 32         |
| APS 2          | 6                | 22        | 25               | 3         | 1              | 3        | 3              | 1         | 35         | 29         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>9</b>         | <b>30</b> | <b>112</b>       | <b>77</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>3</b> | <b>39</b>      | <b>36</b> | <b>161</b> | <b>146</b> |
| Vic.           |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |            |            |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 1          |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0         | 2                | 2         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 2          | 2          |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0         | 6                | 6         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 2         | 8          | 8          |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0         | 21               | 24        | 0              | 0        | 24             | 22        | 45         | 46         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 1         | 0                | 4         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 2         | 2          | 7          |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0         | 4                | 3         | 0              | 1        | 1              | 0         | 5          | 4          |
| APS 3          | 1                | 5         | 32               | 22        | 0              | 0        | 4              | 4         | 37         | 31         |
| APS 2          | 1                | 26        | 30               | 4         | 1              | 2        | 1              | 1         | 33         | 33         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2</b>         | <b>32</b> | <b>95</b>        | <b>66</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>3</b> | <b>34</b>      | <b>31</b> | <b>132</b> | <b>132</b> |
| Qld            |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |            |            |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 0          |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1         | 1          | 1          |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0         | 3                | 4         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 3         | 5          | 7          |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0         | 20               | 15        | 0              | 0        | 15             | 7         | 35         | 22         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 1         | 6                | 10        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 7         | 7          | 18         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0         | 7                | 8         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 1         | 9          | 9          |
| APS 3          | 0                | 5         | 22               | 13        | 0              | 0        | 3              | 3         | 25         | 21         |
| APS 2          | 1                | 16        | 19               | 6         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1         | 21         | 23         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1</b>         | <b>22</b> | <b>77</b>        | <b>56</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>25</b>      | <b>23</b> | <b>103</b> | <b>101</b> |

| Classification | Female part-time |           | Female full-time |           | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |           | Total     |           |
|----------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                | 2016             | 2017      | 2016             | 2017      | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017      | 2016      | 2017      |
| <b>WA</b>      |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |           |           |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 1         | 0         |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1         | 1         | 1         |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0         | 1                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 2         | 3         | 3         |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0         | 12               | 6         | 0              | 0        | 8              | 6         | 20        | 12        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0         | 5                | 8         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 4         | 6         | 12        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 2         | 4                | 5         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 1         | 6         | 8         |
| APS 3          | 2                | 4         | 15               | 10        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 17        | 14        |
| APS 2          | 1                | 11        | 9                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 10        | 11        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>3</b>         | <b>17</b> | <b>47</b>        | <b>30</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>14</b>      | <b>14</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>61</b> |
| <b>SA</b>      |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |           |           |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0         | 1         | 0         |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1         | 1         | 1         |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0         | 3                | 3         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 3         | 3         |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0         | 12               | 8         | 0              | 0        | 3              | 1         | 15        | 9         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0         | 0                | 4         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 2         | 1         | 6         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0         | 3                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 3              | 3         | 6         | 4         |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0         | 7                | 7         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 2         | 8         | 9         |
| APS 2          | 0                | 3         | 3                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 3         | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>3</b>  | <b>29</b>        | <b>24</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>9</b>       | <b>9</b>  | <b>38</b> | <b>36</b> |
| <b>Tas.</b>    |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |           |           |
| AEO            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0         | 1         | 0         |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 3              | 1         | 4         | 1         |
| APS 6          | 0                | 1         | 2                | 3         | 0              | 0        | 3              | 1         | 5         | 5         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0         | 3                | 3         | 0              | 0        | 2              | 2         | 5         | 5         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 1         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 1         | 1         |
| APS 3          | 0                | 1         | 4                | 3         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1         | 5         | 5         |
| APS 2          | 0                | 1         | 3                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 3         | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>4</b>  | <b>14</b>        | <b>10</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>10</b>      | <b>5</b>  | <b>24</b> | <b>19</b> |

| Classification   | Female part-time |            | Female full-time |            | Male part-time |           | Male full-time |            | Total      |            |
|------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                  | 2016             | 2017       | 2016             | 2017       | 2016           | 2017      | 2016           | 2017       | 2016       | 2017       |
| <b>ACT</b>       |                  |            |                  |            |                |           |                |            |            |            |
| SES Band 2       | 0                | 0          | 0                | 0          | 0              | 0         | 3              | 3          | 3          | 3          |
| SES Band 1       | 1                | 1          | 3                | 4          | 0              | 0         | 4              | 5          | 8          | 10         |
| EL 2             | 0                | 1          | 19               | 18         | 0              | 0         | 20             | 16         | 39         | 35         |
| EL 1             | 6                | 11         | 48               | 41         | 1              | 4         | 40             | 37         | 95         | 93         |
| APS 6            | 6                | 6          | 37               | 42         | 0              | 0         | 27             | 29         | 70         | 77         |
| APS 5            | 5                | 3          | 14               | 18         | 2              | 1         | 16             | 12         | 37         | 34         |
| APS 4            | 7                | 7          | 22               | 13         | 0              | 0         | 6              | 4          | 35         | 24         |
| APS 3            | 1                | 1          | 6                | 3          | 0              | 0         | 4              | 1          | 11         | 5          |
| APS 2            | 0                | 0          | 1                | 0          | 0              | 0         | 1              | 1          | 2          | 1          |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>26</b>        | <b>30</b>  | <b>150</b>       | <b>139</b> | <b>3</b>       | <b>5</b>  | <b>121</b>     | <b>108</b> | <b>300</b> | <b>282</b> |
| <b>NT</b>        |                  |            |                  |            |                |           |                |            |            |            |
| AEO              | 0                | 0          | 0                | 0          | 0              | 0         | 0              | 1          | 0          | 1          |
| EL 1             | 0                | 0          | 0                | 0          | 0              | 0         | 1              | 0          | 1          | 0          |
| APS 6            | 0                | 0          | 2                | 1          | 0              | 0         | 1              | 0          | 3          | 1          |
| APS 5            | 0                | 0          | 3                | 2          | 0              | 0         | 1              | 1          | 4          | 3          |
| APS 4            | 0                | 0          | 1                | 1          | 0              | 0         | 0              | 1          | 1          | 2          |
| APS 3            | 0                | 0          | 2                | 2          | 0              | 0         | 1              | 1          | 3          | 3          |
| APS 2            | 0                | 0          | 2                | 2          | 0              | 0         | 0              | 0          | 2          | 2          |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>   | <b>10</b>        | <b>8</b>   | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b>  | <b>4</b>       | <b>4</b>   | <b>14</b>  | <b>12</b>  |
| <b>AEC total</b> | <b>41</b>        | <b>138</b> | <b>534</b>       | <b>410</b> | <b>5</b>       | <b>11</b> | <b>256</b>     | <b>230</b> | <b>836</b> | <b>789</b> |

AEO = Australian Electoral Officer, APS = Australian Public Service, SES = Senior Executive Service.

Figures include all ongoing staff employed at 30 June 2017 under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

ACT electoral divisions are co-located with National Office employees in the ACT.

Source: Aurion HR System.

**Table 36: APS non-ongoing staff (including staff on higher duties arrangements) demographics as at 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2017**

| Classification | Female part-time |          | Female full-time |          | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |          | Total     |          |
|----------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|
|                | 2016             | 2017     | 2016             | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016      | 2017     |
| <b>NSW</b>     |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |           |          |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1         | 0        |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1        | 0         | 1        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 1        | 0              | 0        | 2              | 0        | 3         | 1        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 2              | 1        | 3         | 1        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 8                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 27             | 0        | 35        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 1        | 11               | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 12        | 1        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>21</b>        | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>33</b>      | <b>2</b> | <b>54</b> | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Vic.</b>    |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |           |          |
| AEO            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1        | 0         | 1        |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 1        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1         | 1        |
| APS 6          | 1                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 3         | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 2                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 2         | 0        |
| APS 4          | 1                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1         | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 2              | 0        | 3         | 0        |
| APS 2          | 1                | 0        | 4                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 5         | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>3</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>8</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>4</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Qld</b>     |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |           |          |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1         | 0        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 1        | 0              | 0        | 4              | 1        | 4         | 2        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 1        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1        | 2         | 2        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1         | 0        |
| APS 3          | 1                | 0        | 4                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 7              | 0        | 12        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 1        | 4                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 4         | 1        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>10</b>        | <b>2</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>13</b>      | <b>2</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>WA</b>      |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |           |          |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 2              | 0        | 2         | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 2         | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 4                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 10             | 0        | 14        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 2                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 2         | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>7</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>13</b>      | <b>0</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>0</b> |

| Classification | Female part-time |          | Female full-time |           | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |          | Total     |           |
|----------------|------------------|----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
|                | 2016             | 2017     | 2016             | 2017      | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016      | 2017      |
| SA             |                  |          |                  |           |                |          |                |          |           |           |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1         | 0         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0         | 0              | 1        | 1              | 0        | 2         | 1         |
| APS 2          | 0                | 1        | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1         | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>3</b>         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>4</b>  | <b>2</b>  |
| Tas.           |                  |          |                  |           |                |          |                |          |           |           |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1         | 0         |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 4              | 0        | 4         | 0         |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>4</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>5</b>  | <b>0</b>  |
| ACT            |                  |          |                  |           |                |          |                |          |           |           |
| SES Band 1     | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0         | 0         |
| EL 2           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1         | 1         |
| EL 1           | 0                | 1        | 5                | 2         | 1              | 0        | 2              | 1        | 8         | 4         |
| APS 6          | 1                | 1        | 7                | 2         | 0              | 0        | 6              | 2        | 14        | 5         |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 2                | 2         | 0              | 0        | 1              | 3        | 3         | 5         |
| APS 4          | 6                | 6        | 1                | 4         | 1              | 0        | 3              | 2        | 11        | 12        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 3                | 1         | 0              | 0        | 8              | 0        | 11        | 1         |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0         | 0              | 1        | 1              | 0        | 2         | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>7</b>         | <b>8</b> | <b>19</b>        | <b>12</b> | <b>2</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>22</b>      | <b>8</b> | <b>50</b> | <b>29</b> |

| Classification   | Female part-time |           | Female full-time |           | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |           | Total      |           |
|------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
|                  | 2016             | 2017      | 2016             | 2017      | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017      | 2016       | 2017      |
| NT               |                  |           |                  |           |                |          |                |           |            |           |
| AEO              | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 0         |
| EL 1             | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 0         |
| APS 6            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 3              | 0         | 3          | 0         |
| APS 5            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 0         |
| APS 4            | 0                | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 0          | 0         |
| APS 3            | 0                | 0         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 1          | 0         |
| APS 2            | 0                | 0         | 1                | 0         | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0         | 1          | 0         |
| <b>NT Total</b>  | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b>  | <b>2</b>         | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>3</b>       | <b>0</b>  | <b>5</b>   | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>AEC total</b> | <b>11</b>        | <b>11</b> | <b>71</b>        | <b>16</b> | <b>2</b>       | <b>2</b> | <b>93</b>      | <b>13</b> | <b>177</b> | <b>42</b> |

AEO = Australian Electoral Officer, APS = Australian Public Service, SES = Senior Executive Service.

Figures include all non-ongoing staff employed at 30 June 2017 under the *Public Service Act 1999* except irregular or intermittent employees.

ACT electoral divisions are co-located with National Office employees in the ACT.

Source: Aurion HR System.

Table 37: Staff employed under the Electoral Act by demographics as at 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2017

| Classification | Female part-time |          | Female full-time |          | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |          | Total    |          |
|----------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                | 2016             | 2017     | 2016             | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016     | 2017     |
| NSW            |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEONSW         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1        | 0        |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> |
| Vic.           |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEOVIC         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1        | 0        |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> |
| Qld            |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEOQLD         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1        | 1        | 1        |
| EL 1           | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b> |
| WA             |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEOWA          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 1        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 1        |
| APS 6          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> |

| Classification                | Female part-time |          | Female full-time |          | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |          | Total    |          |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                               | 2016             | 2017     | 2016             | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016     | 2017     |
| <b>SA</b>                     |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEOSA                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1        | 0        | 1        |
| EL 1                          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Tas.</b>                   |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEOTAS                        | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1        | 0        | 1        |
| APS 6                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>ACT</b>                    |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| Electoral Commissioner        | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 1        | 1        | 1        |
| Deputy Electoral Commissioner | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 1        | 1        | 1        |
| SES Band 1                    | 0                | 0        | 1                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1        | 0        |
| EL 2                          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| EL 1                          | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2                         | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>2</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> |



| Classification   | Female part-time |          | Female full-time |          | Male part-time |          | Male full-time |          | Total    |          |
|------------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
|                  | 2016             | 2017     | 2016             | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016           | 2017     | 2016     | 2017     |
| NT               |                  |          |                  |          |                |          |                |          |          |          |
| AEONT            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 1              | 0        | 1        | 0        |
| EL 1             | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 6            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 5            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 4            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 3            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| APS 2            | 0                | 0        | 0                | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0              | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| <b>NT Total</b>  | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b> |
| <b>AEC total</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>0</b> | <b>2</b>         | <b>1</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b> | <b>5</b>       | <b>5</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>6</b> |

AEO = Australian Electoral Officer, SES = Senior Executive Service.

This table includes full-time statutory office holders of the AEC engaged under the Electoral Act working in, or in conjunction with, an agency that operates under the *Public Service Act 1999*. This table excludes the temporary election workforce.

Source: Aurion HR System.

## Appendix G: Industrial and commercial elections

Table 38: Industrial and commercial elections 2016–17

| Electors and ballots                                            | NSW/ACT        | Vic.           | Qld           | WA            | SA            | Tas.         | NT           | Total          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Number of contested industrial elections                        | 54             | 26             | 9             | 8             | 12            | 6            | 6            | 121            |
| Number of uncontested industrial elections                      | 49             | 37             | 12            | 36            | 26            | 16           | 2            | 178            |
| Enterprise agreement ballots                                    | 13             | 10             | 7             | 6             | 4             | 8            | 0            | 48             |
| Protected action ballots                                        | 87             | 176            | 54            | 19            | 73            | 14           | 0            | 423            |
| Other commercial elections and ballots                          | 11             | 2              | 10            | 5             | 5             | 0            | 4            | 37             |
| Other elections and ballots                                     | 1              | 2              | 1             | 0             | 1             | 0            | 0            | 5              |
| <b>Total number of elections and ballots completed</b>          | <b>215</b>     | <b>253</b>     | <b>93</b>     | <b>74</b>     | <b>121</b>    | <b>44</b>    | <b>12</b>    | <b>812</b>     |
| <b>Positions</b>                                                |                |                |               |               |               |              |              |                |
| Number of positions available (industrial)                      | 3,164          | 2,387          | 398           | 631           | 474           | 205          | 74           | 7,333          |
| Number of unfilled positions (industrial)                       | 1,402          | 1,455          | 93            | 279           | 94            | 68           | 8            | 3,399          |
| <b>Candidates</b>                                               |                |                |               |               |               |              |              |                |
| Number of candidates for uncontested offices (industrial)       | 1,698          | 853            | 295           | 439           | 398           | 141          | 53           | 3,877          |
| <b>Total number of candidates</b>                               | <b>2,120</b>   | <b>1,058</b>   | <b>375</b>    | <b>500</b>    | <b>483</b>    | <b>163</b>   | <b>89</b>    | <b>4,788</b>   |
| <b>Ballot papers</b>                                            |                |                |               |               |               |              |              |                |
| Number of ballot papers issued (industrial)                     | 245,513        | 79,894         | 60,187        | 20,424        | 55,034        | 2,332        | 4,807        | 468,191        |
| Number of ballot papers returned (industrial)                   | 27,461         | 19,568         | 7,627         | 2,396         | 7,764         | 1,025        | 1,130        | 66,971         |
| Number of ballot papers issued (enterprise agreement ballots)   | 1,902          | 33,546         | 1,305         | 2,327         | 246           | 3,281        | –            | 42,607         |
| Number of ballot papers returned (enterprise agreement ballots) | 1,717          | 20,171         | 1,140         | 1,949         | 143           | 2,260        | –            | 27,380         |
| Number of ballot papers issued (protected action)               | 4,810          | 15,978         | 5,200         | 950           | 3,053         | 638          | –            | 30,629         |
| Number of ballot papers returned (protected action)             | 3,664          | 11,242         | 3,151         | 653           | 1,992         | 313          | –            | 21,015         |
| Number of ballot papers issued (other commercial)               | 455            | 97             | 3,649         | 1,106         | 2,247         | –            | 217          | 7,771          |
| Number of ballot papers returned (other commercial)             | 329            | 97             | 3,447         | 562           | 919           | –            | 217          | 5,571          |
| Number of ballot papers issued (other)                          | 23             | 201            | 24            | –             | 793           | –            | –            | 1,041          |
| Number of ballot papers returned (other)                        | 9              | 99             | 20            | –             | 698           | –            | –            | 826            |
| <b>Total number of ballot papers issued</b>                     | <b>252,703</b> | <b>129,716</b> | <b>70,365</b> | <b>24,807</b> | <b>61,373</b> | <b>6,251</b> | <b>5,024</b> | <b>550,239</b> |
| <b>Total number of ballot papers returned</b>                   | <b>33,180</b>  | <b>51,177</b>  | <b>15,385</b> | <b>5,560</b>  | <b>11,516</b> | <b>3,598</b> | <b>1,347</b> | <b>121,763</b> |

## Appendix H: 2016 federal election payments

Table 39: Election funding payments summary, 2016 federal election

| Political party                              | Interim payment \$ | Final payment \$ | Total payment \$ |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Liberal Party of Australia                   | 23,464,128.62      | 739,025.38       | 24,203,154.00    |
| Australian Labor Party                       | 22,355,109.55      | 836,577.02       | 23,191,686.57    |
| Australian Greens                            | 6,337,258.36       | 379,797.62       | 6,717,055.98     |
| National Party of Australia                  | 3,158,301.63       | 103,287.98       | 3,261,589.61     |
| Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party            | 1,623,827.11       | 121,542.17       | 1,745,369.28     |
| Nick Xenophon Team                           | 1,179,992.89       | 65,243.26        | 1,245,236.15     |
| Derryn Hinch's Justice Party                 | 544,420.99         | 36,765.25        | 581,186.24       |
| Christian Democratic Party (Fred Nile Group) | 283,838.18         | 5,197.94         | 289,036.12       |
| Family First                                 | 218,993.20         | 3,947.49         | 222,940.69       |
| Country Liberals (Northern Territory)        | 180,977.63         | 1,828.06         | 182,805.69       |
| Katter's Australian Party                    | 157,743.09         | 1,603.87         | 159,346.96       |
| Rise Up Australia Party                      | 75,490.79          | 1,131.76         | 76,622.55        |
| Jacqui Lambie Network                        | 68,951.79          | 5,011.39         | 73,963.18        |
| Liberal Democratic Party                     | 48,494.75          | 680.02           | 49,174.77        |
| Animal Justice Party                         | 34,114.28          | 331.45           | 34,445.73        |
| Australian Recreational Fishers Party        | 29,277.97          | 295.74           | 29,573.71        |
| Glenn Lazarus Team                           | 21,220.94          | 214.35           | 21,435.29        |
| Australian Christians                        | 20,422.25          | 182.64           | 20,604.89        |
| Shooters Fishers and Farmers Party           | 17,456.17          | 400.00           | 17,856.17        |
| Bullet Train for Australia                   | 15,509.23          | 291.97           | 15,801.20        |
| Australian Liberty Alliance                  | 15,277.98          | 157.95           | 15,435.93        |
| Australian Country Party                     | 9,155.11           | 189.49           | 9,344.60         |
| Help End Marijuana Prohibition (HEMP) Party  | 6,311.79           | 200.00           | 6,511.79         |
| Australian Sex Party                         | 6,311.79           | 200.00           | 6,511.79         |

|                                            | Interim payment \$     | Final payment \$      | Total payment \$       |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Independents</b>                        |                        |                       |                        |
| Catherine McGowan (Indi, Victoria)         | 81,241.57              | 1,104.42              | 82,345.99              |
| Andrew Wilkie (Denison, Tasmania)          | 76,413.07              | 771.85                | 77,184.92              |
| Antony Windsor (New England, NSW)          | 72,333.82              | 622.90                | 72,956.72              |
| Robert Oakeshott (Cowper, NSW)             | 70,762.48              | 714.77                | 71,477.25              |
| Stephen Ruff (North Sydney, NSW)           | 30,745.25              | 339.47                | 31,084.72              |
| Dennis Jensen (Tangney, Western Australia) | 25,836.11              | 242.57                | 26,078.68              |
| James Mathison (Warringah, NSW)            | 25,721.64              | 259.81                | 25,981.45              |
| Bradley Christensen (Lyne, NSW)            | 24,004.61              | 242.47                | 24,247.08              |
| Jim Ball (McKellar, NSW)                   | 17,645.66              | 215.77                | 17,861.43              |
| Daniel McCarthy (Leichardt, Queensland)    | 15,821.94              | 197.37                | 16,019.31              |
| Kevin Foley (Riverina, NSW)                | 15,722.08              | 197.37                | 15,919.45              |
| Stephen Mayne (Menzies, Victoria)          | 15,214.91              | 192.12                | 15,407.03              |
| David Wilks (Forde, Queensland)            | 13,575.14              | 200.00                | 13,775.14              |
| John Harvey (Hunter, NSW)                  | 12,261.22              | 194.74                | 12,455.96              |
| David Tran (Gellibrand, Victoria)          | 11,922.23              | 205.25                | 12,127.48              |
| Julie Hegarty (Mackellar, NSW)             | 11,706.74              | 228.91                | 11,935.65              |
| Kenneth Murray (Capricornia, Queensland)   | 11,131.25              | 200.00                | 11,331.25              |
| Christine Berman (Bradfield, NSW)          | 10,939.41              | 223.65                | 11,163.06              |
| Stephen Large (Dawson, Queensland)         | 10,794.88              | 200.00                | 10,994.88              |
| Arthur Mills (Farrer, New South Wales)     | 10,684.51              | 176.35                | 10,860.86              |
| Michael McCluskey (Wannon, Victoria)       | 10,437.50              | 200.00                | 10,637.50              |
| Robert Jones (McPherson, Queensland)       | 9,917.18               | 200.00                | 10,117.18              |
| Yingiya Mark Guyula (Lingiari, NT)         | 4,672.02               | 200.00                | 4,872.02               |
| Braedon Earley (Lingiari, NT)              | 4,551.13               | 200.00                | 4,751.13               |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>\$60,466,642.44</b> | <b>\$2,311,632.59</b> | <b>\$62,778,275.03</b> |

## Appendix I: List of requirements

**Table 40: List of Annual Report requirements**

| Section and description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Requirement                         | Page  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Opening pages                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                     |       |
| Letter of transmittal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Mandatory                           | iii   |
| Table of contents                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Mandatory                           | v     |
| Index                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Mandatory                           | 163   |
| Glossary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                           | 159   |
| Contact officer(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Mandatory                           | ii    |
| Internet home page address and internet address for report                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mandatory                           | ii    |
| Review by Secretary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                     |       |
| Review by departmental secretary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Mandatory                           | 2–4   |
| Summary of significant issues and developments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Suggested                           | 2–4   |
| Overview of department's performance and financial results                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Suggested                           | 4     |
| Outlook for following year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Suggested                           | 4     |
| Significant issues and developments – portfolio                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Suggested for portfolio departments | N/A   |
| Departmental overview                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                     |       |
| Role and functions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Mandatory                           | 10    |
| Organisational structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                           | 11–14 |
| Outcome and program structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Mandatory                           | 10    |
| Where outcome and program structures differ from Portfolio Budget Statements/Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements or other portfolio statements accompanying any other additional appropriation bills (other portfolio statements), details of variation and reasons for change | Mandatory                           | N/A   |
| Portfolio structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Mandatory for portfolio departments | N/A   |

| Section and description                                                                                                                                                                       | Requirement              | Page          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Report on performance</b>                                                                                                                                                                  |                          |               |
| Review of performance during the year in relation to programs and contribution to outcomes                                                                                                    | Mandatory                | 16–65         |
| Actual performance in relation to deliverables and key performance indicators set out in Portfolio Budget Statements/ Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements or other portfolio statements | Mandatory                | 18–30         |
| Where performance targets differ from the Portfolio Budget Statements/Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, details of both former and new targets, and reasons for the change           | Mandatory                | N/A           |
| Narrative discussion and analysis of performance                                                                                                                                              | Mandatory                | 16–65         |
| Trend information                                                                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                | 16–65         |
| Significant changes in nature of principal functions/services                                                                                                                                 | Suggested                | N/A           |
| Performance of purchaser/provider arrangements                                                                                                                                                | If applicable, suggested | 74–75, 83–86  |
| Factors, events or trends influencing departmental performance                                                                                                                                | Suggested                | 2–4, 16–65    |
| Contribution of risk management in achieving objectives                                                                                                                                       | Suggested                | 74            |
| Performance against Service Charter customer service standards, complaints data, and the department's response to complaints                                                                  | If applicable, mandatory | 88            |
| Discussion and analysis of the department's financial performance                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                | 4, 94, 99–100 |
| Discussion of any significant changes in financial results from the prior year, from budget or anticipated to have a significant impact on future operations                                  | Mandatory                | 94, 99–100    |
| Agency resource statement and summary resource tables by outcomes                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                | 130–131       |
| <b>Management and accountability</b>                                                                                                                                                          |                          |               |
| <b>Corporate governance</b>                                                                                                                                                                   |                          |               |
| Agency heads are required to certify their agency's actions in dealing with fraud                                                                                                             | Mandatory                | iii           |
| Information on preventing, detecting and dealing with fraud                                                                                                                                   | Mandatory                | 86            |
| Statement of the main corporate governance practices in place                                                                                                                                 | Mandatory                | 68–70         |
| Statement of any significant issue reported to the responsible minister that relates to non-compliance with finance law                                                                       | Mandatory                | N/A           |
| Names of the senior executive and their responsibilities                                                                                                                                      | Suggested                | 11–14         |
| Senior management committees and their roles                                                                                                                                                  | Suggested                | 68–69         |
| Corporate and operational plans and associated performance reporting and review                                                                                                               | Suggested                | 72–73         |
| Internal audit arrangements including approach adopted to identifying areas of significant financial or operational risk and arrangements to manage those risks                               | Suggested                | 74, 86–87     |
| Policy and practices on the establishment and maintenance of appropriate ethical standards                                                                                                    | Suggested                | 10, 70        |
| How nature and amount of remuneration for Senior Executive Service officers is determined                                                                                                     | Suggested                | 76            |


| Section and description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Requirement              | Page                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| External scrutiny                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                          |                     |
| Significant developments in external scrutiny                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mandatory                | 88–91               |
| Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Mandatory                | 88–90               |
| Reports by the Auditor-General, a Parliamentary Committee, the Commonwealth Ombudsman or an agency capability review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Mandatory                | 88–91               |
| Management of human resources                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |                     |
| Assessment of effectiveness in managing and developing human resources to achieve departmental objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Mandatory                | 75–81               |
| Workforce planning, employee retention and turnover                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Suggested                | 79–80               |
| Impact and features of enterprise or collective agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, determinations, common law contracts and Australian Workplace Agreements.                                                                                                                                                                              | Suggested                | 75–76               |
| Training and development undertaken and its impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Suggested                | 79–80               |
| Work health and safety performance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Suggested                | 80–81               |
| Productivity gains                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Suggested                | 16–65               |
| Statistics on staffing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Mandatory                | 76–78, 131, 139–147 |
| Statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Mandatory                | 78                  |
| Enterprise or collective agreements, individual flexibility agreements, determinations, common law contracts and Australian Workplace Agreements                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Mandatory                | 75–76               |
| Performance pay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Mandatory                | 76                  |
| Assets management                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                          |                     |
| Assessment of effectiveness of assets management                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | If applicable, mandatory | 74–83               |
| Purchasing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                          |                     |
| Assessment of performance against Commonwealth Procurement Rules                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Mandatory                | 83–85               |
| Consultants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                          |                     |
| Summary statements detailing the number of new consultancy services contracts let during the year; the total actual expenditure on all such contracts (GST incl.); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts entered into in a previous year; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (GST incl.) | Mandatory                | 83                  |
| Summary of policies for selecting and engaging consultants; procedures for selecting consultants; and main categories of purposes for which consultants were engaged                                                                                                                                                                                    | Mandatory                | 83–84               |
| Statement noting that information on contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Mandatory                | 83                  |
| Australian National Audit Office access clauses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                          |                     |
| Absence of provisions in contracts allowing access by the Auditor-General                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Mandatory                | 84                  |

| Section and description                                                                                                                                        | Requirement              | Page    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Exempt contracts                                                                                                                                               |                          |         |
| Contracts exempted from publication in AusTender                                                                                                               | Mandatory                | 84      |
| Small business                                                                                                                                                 |                          |         |
| Procurement initiatives to support small business                                                                                                              | Mandatory                | 83      |
| Financial statements                                                                                                                                           |                          |         |
| Financial statements                                                                                                                                           | Mandatory                | 92–127  |
| Other mandatory information                                                                                                                                    |                          |         |
| Work health and safety (Schedule 2, Part 4 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> )                                                                     | Mandatory                | 80–81   |
| Advertising and Market Research (Section 311A of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> ) and statement on advertising campaigns                           | Mandatory                | 58, 138 |
| Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance (Section 516A of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> ) | Mandatory                | 84–86   |
| Compliance with the agency's obligations under the <i>Carer Recognition Act 2010</i>                                                                           | If applicable, mandatory | 79      |
| Grant programs                                                                                                                                                 | Mandatory                | 83      |
| Disability reporting – explicit and transparent reference to agency-level information available through other reporting mechanisms                             | Mandatory                | 79      |
| Information Publication Scheme statement                                                                                                                       | Mandatory                | 87      |
| Correction of material errors in previous annual report                                                                                                        | If applicable, mandatory | N/A     |
| Agency resource statements and resources for outcomes                                                                                                          | Mandatory                | 130–131 |
| List of requirements                                                                                                                                           | Mandatory                | 151–154 |










# READER GUIDES



## Abbreviations and acronyms

| Term     | Description                                                                  |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAS      | Australian Accounting Standards                                              |
| ACT      | Australian Capital Territory                                                 |
| AEC      | Australian Electoral Commission                                              |
| AEO      | Australian Electoral Officer                                                 |
| ANAO     | Australian National Audit Office                                             |
| APS      | Australian Public Service                                                    |
| APSC     | Australian Public Service Commission                                         |
| BAC      | Business Assurance Committee                                                 |
| BRIDGE   | Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections                    |
| DFAT     | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade                                      |
| DLER     | Directed Level of Election Readiness                                         |
| EA       | Enterprise Agreement                                                         |
| ECANZ    | Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand                               |
| EL       | Executive Level                                                              |
| ELT      | Executive Leadership Team                                                    |
| FCC      | Fraud Control Committee                                                      |
| FDEU     | Federal Direct Enrolment and Update                                          |
| FOI      | Freedom of Information                                                       |
| FRR      | Financial Reporting Rule                                                     |
| ICARE    | APS values—impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful, ethical |
| ICT      | Information and communications technology                                    |
| IPS      | Information Publication Scheme                                               |
| JSCEM    | Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters                                |
| NEDC     | National Election Delivery Committee                                         |
| NEM      | National Election Manager                                                    |
| NRS      | National Relay Service                                                       |
| OHC      | Organisational Health Committee                                              |
| PBS      | Portfolio Budget Statement                                                   |
| PGPA Act | Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013                   |
| PIANZEA  | Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators          |
| PNG      | Papua New Guinea                                                             |
| SES      | Senior Executive Service                                                     |
| SMS      | Short Message Service                                                        |
| VITS     | Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service                               |
| WHS      | Work health and safety                                                       |

# Glossary

| Term                        | Description                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Amortisation                | Reductions in the value of assets to reflect their reduced worth over time.                                                                                                                            |
| Ballot                      | A secret vote, normally written.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Ballot box                  | The sealed container into which a voter places a completed ballot paper.                                                                                                                               |
| Ballot paper                | A paper that shows the questions to be put or the names of the candidates who are standing for election and on which voters mark their vote.                                                           |
| By-election                 | An election held to fill a single vacancy in the House of Representatives.                                                                                                                             |
| Candidate                   | A person standing for election to the House of Representatives or Senate.                                                                                                                              |
| Certified list              | The official electoral roll used to mark off voters at an election.                                                                                                                                    |
| Claims for enrolment        | Application form to enrol to vote or update enrolment.                                                                                                                                                 |
| Close of rolls              | The date the electoral roll closes for the federal election, which is 8pm local Australian time on the seventh calendar day after the writs are issued.                                                |
| Compulsory voting           | The requirement for Australian citizens aged 18 years and over to enrol to vote and to vote at each election.                                                                                          |
| Constitution (Australian)   | The document that sets out the structure under which the Australian Government operates. It can only be amended through a referendum.                                                                  |
| Court of Disputed Returns   | A court (in Australia, the High Court) that determines disputes about elections.                                                                                                                       |
| Declaration vote            | Any vote where, instead of the voter being marked off the certified list, the vote is sealed in an envelope and signed by the voter and admitted to the count only after further checks are completed. |
| Declaration of nominations  | Formal announcement of registered candidates, whose names will appear on a ballot paper in an election.                                                                                                |
| Depreciation                | A method of allocating the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life.                                                                                                                              |
| Elector                     | A person whose name appears on an electoral roll                                                                                                                                                       |
| Electoral cycle             | The period from one federal election to the next, usually three years.                                                                                                                                 |
| Electoral division          | The voting area, containing approximately equal numbers of voters, for which one member is elected to the House of Representatives. Australia is divided into 150 electoral divisions.                 |
| Electoral roll              | The list of people entitled to vote in an election or referendum.                                                                                                                                      |
| Electorate                  | See entry for 'Electoral division' above.                                                                                                                                                              |
| Employee                    | Member of staff that is ongoing, non-ongoing, intermittent or irregular.                                                                                                                               |
| Enrolment form              | See entry for 'Claims for enrolment' above.                                                                                                                                                            |
| Federal election            | A general election for the House of Representatives and Senate.                                                                                                                                        |
| Fee-for-service election    | An election or ballot conducted on a full cost recovery basis.                                                                                                                                         |
| Financial disclosure return | A document detailing information on the receipts and expenditure of participants in the political process.                                                                                             |
| Formality or formal vote    | A vote in an election or referendum where the ballot paper has been marked correctly and is counted towards the result. A ballot paper incorrectly marked is called informal.                          |
| Franchise                   | The right to vote.                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| Term                                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Funding and disclosure                        | Public funding of election campaigns and disclosure of certain financial details by candidates, political parties and others.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| General postal voter                          | A voter who is registered to have postal ballot papers sent automatically.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| House of Representatives                      | The house of Parliament in which the government is formed. Under a preferential voting system, each electoral division elects one member of the House of Representatives.                                                                                                                                             |
| Inventory balance                             | The worth of held goods and materials.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters | The parliamentary committee that reports on, and refers inquiries into, matters relating to electoral laws, practices and administration.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Member                                        | Any person elected to Parliament, but commonly used for the House of Representatives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Mobile polling team                           | Polling officials who bring polling to hospitals, nursing homes and remote locations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Nomination                                    | Submission for candidacy for election to the Senate or House of Representatives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Operating deficit                             | Financial status in which expenditure exceeds revenue.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Ordinary vote                                 | A vote cast on or before election day within the electoral division in which the voter is enrolled.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Outposted centre                              | Premises established to house key election activities such as scrutines and despatch and return of materials to and from polling places.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Poll                                          | An election – a count of votes or opinions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Polling day                                   | The day fixed for the election.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Polling place                                 | A location for people to vote.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Postal vote                                   | Ballot papers sent to a voter and posted back.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Preferential voting                           | A system of voting where a voter shows an order of preference for candidates by numbering their choices.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Pre-poll vote                                 | A vote cast before election day.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Protected action ballot                       | A workplace voting system whereby employees participate in a fair and secret ballot to determine whether industrial action should proceed in their workplace.                                                                                                                                                         |
| Provisional vote                              | Vote cast at a polling place where the elector's name cannot be found on the roll, the name has been marked off, or the voter has a silent enrolment.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Redistribution                                | A redrawing of electoral boundaries to ensure (as closely as possible) the same number of voters in each electoral division.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Referendum                                    | A vote to change the Constitution.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Returned candidate                            | Candidate who is officially declared elected by a returning officer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Returning officer                             | The person responsible for conducting an election in a particular area. A divisional returning officer is responsible for conducting the House of Representatives election in their electoral division. An Australian electoral officer is the returning officer for the Senate election in their state or territory. |
| Registered political party                    | A party registered with the AEC under Part XI of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Revenue appropriations                        | Federal funds set aside each year for specific government programs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Roll                                          | The list of people entitled to vote in an election or referendum.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Scrutineer                                    | Someone nominated by a candidate to watch the counting, or scrutiny of votes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Scrutiny                                      | The counting of votes is also known as the scrutiny.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Term           | Description                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Secret ballot  | A vote made in secret.                                                                                                                                                             |
| Senate         | The house of Parliament representing the states. A total of 76 senators are elected – 12 from each state and two from each territory – under a proportional representation system. |
| Silent elector | A voter whose address does not appear on the electoral roll, for reasons of personal safety.                                                                                       |
| Turnout        | The percentage of people who voted in the election (formal and informal votes as a percentage of eligible enrolled electors).                                                      |
| Vote           | To choose a representative, or indicate a preference, in an election.                                                                                                              |
| Writ           | A document commanding an electoral officer to hold an election, containing dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, the election day and the return of the writ.    |







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