



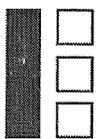
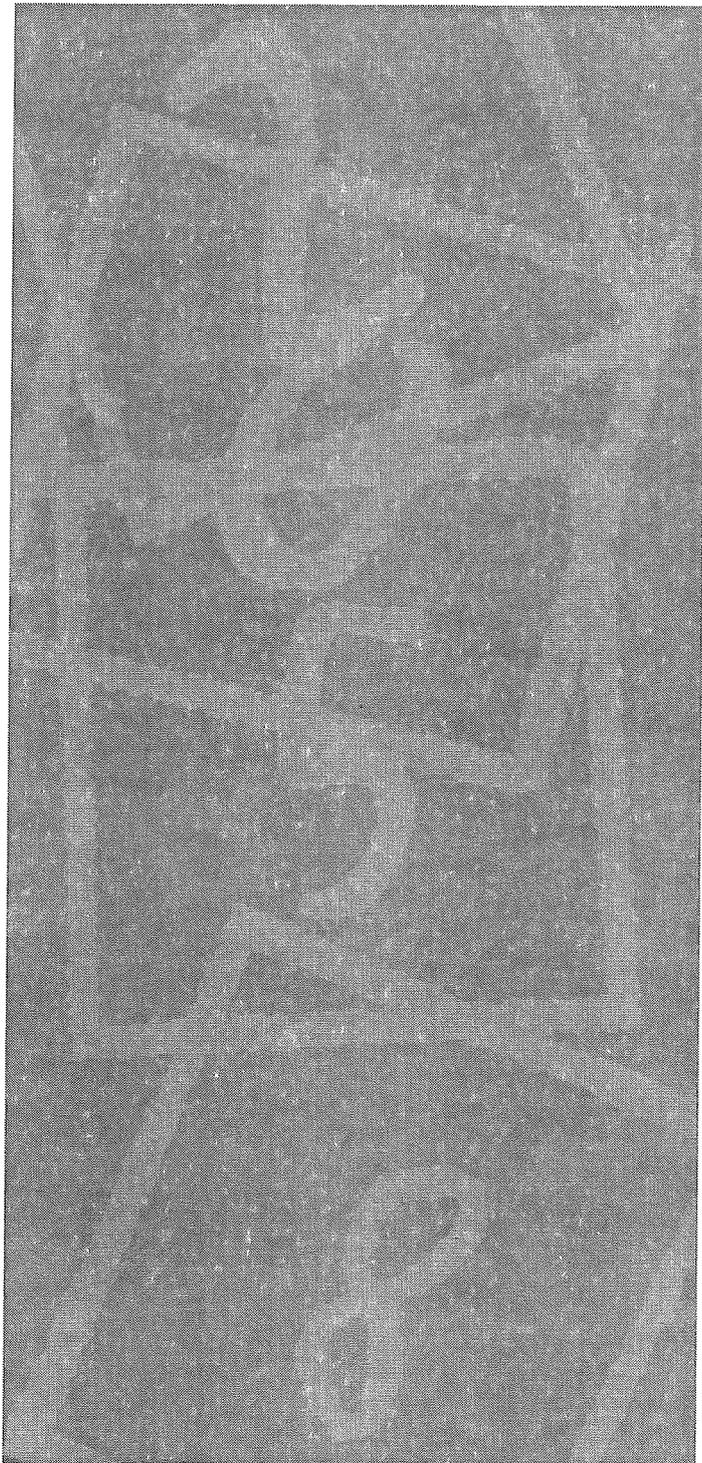
Australian Capital Territory



Elections ACT

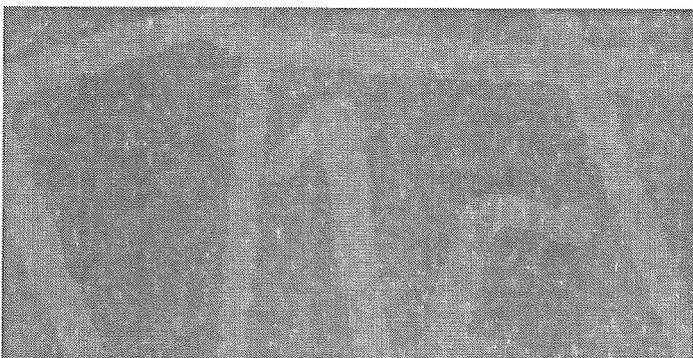
ACT Electoral Commission
Annual Report
2005-2006





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Mr Simon Corbell MLA
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Dear Attorney General

This report has been prepared under section 6(1) of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* and in accordance with the requirements referred to in the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions. It has been prepared in conformity with other legislation applicable to the preparation of the Annual Report by the ACT Electoral Commission.

We hereby certify that the attached Annual Report is an honest and accurate account and that all material information on the operations of the ACT Electoral Commission during the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 has been included and that it complies with the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions.

We also hereby certify that fraud prevention has been managed in accordance with Public Sector Management Standard 1, Part 4.

Section 13 of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* requires that you cause a copy of the Report to be laid before the Legislative Assembly within 3 months of the end of the financial year.



Graham Glenn
Chairperson

6 September 2006



Phillip Green
Electoral Commissioner

6 September 2006



Christabel Young
Member

6 September 2006

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Glossary

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
ANU	Australian National University
CLDB	Culturally and linguistically diverse background
Commission	ACT Electoral Commission
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRU	Continuous Roll Update
ECA	Electoral Council of Australia
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
Elections ACT	Unofficial “corporate name” of the ACT Electoral Commission
Electoral Act	<i>Electoral Act 1992</i>
FOI	Freedom of Information
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1989</i>
Hare-Clark	The proportional representation electoral system used in the ACT
HR	Human Resources
InTACT	The ACT Government information technology management agency
JACS	ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety
Joint roll	Agreement between the ACT and Commonwealth to maintain a common electoral roll
MLA	Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
Party	A political party registered under the Electoral Act
Redistribution	A redistribution of electoral boundaries

Part A**ACT Electoral Commission's Review**

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The Organisation

The ACT Electoral Commission is an independent statutory authority with responsibility for the conduct of elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly and for the provision of electoral advice and services.

The Commission's primary responsibility is to the electors of the ACT. This responsibility is reflected in the Commission's mission, which is:

To provide the ACT community with high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums.

The Commission also provides services to a wide and diverse range of clients, including the Attorney General, Members of the Legislative Assembly, political parties, election candidates, ACT Government agencies, the media and special interest groups.

The Commission's most important function is to conduct elections for the Legislative Assembly. The next election for the Assembly is due to be held on 18 October 2008.

Some of the other tasks for which the Commission is responsible include electoral education, maintaining the register of political parties and the funding and disclosure scheme, conducting redistributions of electoral boundaries, working with other electoral authorities to improve the accuracy of the electoral roll, conducting elections for ACT health professionals boards and providing electoral services to other organisations on a fee-for-service basis.

The Attorney General is the Minister responsible for electoral matters and the Commission is included in the Department of Justice and Community Safety (JACS) portfolio for administrative purposes. In the departmental structure for 2005/2006, the Commission was included in Output Class 1.7: Electoral Services.

Legislative framework

The Commission is responsible for the conduct of elections and referendums and for the provision of electoral advice and services under the following legislation:

- *Electoral Act 1992;*
- *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1994;*
- *Proportional Representation (Hare-Clark) Entrenchment Act 1994; and*
- *Health Professionals Regulation 2004.*

Organisational structure

The ACT Electoral Commission consists of a Chairperson, the Electoral Commissioner and a third Member.

Table 1 — Members of the ACT Electoral Commission

<p>Mr Graham Glenn AO</p> <p><i>Chairperson</i></p> <p>Reappointed until 8 October 2006</p>
<p>Mr Phillip Green</p> <p><i>Electoral Commissioner</i></p> <p>Reappointed until 31 March 2010</p>
<p>Dr Christabel Young FASSA</p> <p><i>Member</i></p> <p>Reappointed until 8 October 2006</p>

Note: This table shows appointments in force in 2005/2006.

The 3 Members of the Commission are appointed by the Executive under the Electoral Act. As Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, the Electoral Commissioner is remunerated as a full-time office holder. The Chairperson and the other Member of the Commission are remunerated as part-time office holders. Remuneration for all 3 Members is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.

The Electoral Commissioner has Chief Executive powers under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* in relation to staff employed to assist the Commissioner.

The Commissioner may also employ casual staff and engage consultants under the Electoral Act, on terms and conditions determined by the Commission after consultation with the Executive.

In 2005/2006 the Commissioner was assisted by 4 permanent officers employed under the Public Sector Management Act.

From time to time, other staff are employed to assist the Commissioner as necessary. These include officers employed under the Public Sector Management Act and the Electoral Act and officers seconded from other organisations.

For a list of staff positions see **Table 9 — Staff of the ACT Electoral Commission** on page 46.

Corporate Plan 2006-2009

MISSION	
To provide the ACT community with high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums.	
Goal 1	To conduct high quality elections and referendums
Key result areas:	1.1 Elections for the ACT Legislative Assembly
	1.2 Election and referendum services to other agencies
Goal 2	To provide high quality electoral information, education, advice and services
Key result areas:	2.1 Electoral information and advice
	2.2 Electoral enrolment
	2.3 Electoral education
	2.4 Other electoral statutory requirements
Goal 3	To support high quality electoral services by effective management
Key result areas:	3.1 Human resource management
	3.2 Financial management
	3.3 Records management
	3.4 Information technology management

The Commission's Corporate Plan was reviewed in 2006. Staff members agreed that the Commission's current mission, goals and key result areas remained appropriate to the roles and values of the Commission. In particular, staff considered that the Commission's mission encapsulated the Commission's high level aims of providing quality electoral services that met the democratic need for transparent, fair, open and independently conducted elections. Staff decided there was no need to expand on the sentiments expressed in the mission by adding a statement of vision or values.

The *Corporate Plan 2006–2009* is underpinned by more detailed operational plans, which set out strategies and procedures for each key result area.

Performance indicators

In the 2005/2006 budget papers, the number of performance indicators for most output classes in the JACS portfolio was reduced. The Chief Executive of JACS decided to adopt only 2 performance indicators for the electoral services output class: *High citizen participation in the electoral process*; and *Average time to finalise results of general elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly*. As these indicators only relate to Legislative Assembly elections, the Commission has no formal performance indicators capable of being listed in the budget papers in non-Assembly election years.

The Commission considers that it is worthwhile to maintain an extended set of performance indicators for in-house use and for annual reporting purposes. Set out below are the Commission's performance indicators adopted for 2005/2006. Measurement of the Commission's performance against each of these measures is included in Part B.

Goal 1 – Elections and referendums:	
Objectives	Measures
Increase voter turnout at Legislative Assembly elections	Participation rates
Deliver service within timeline targets	Timelines met
Increase formal voting at Legislative Assembly elections	Formal voting rates
Goal 2 – Information, education, advice and services	
Objectives	Measures
Maintain high client satisfaction	Feedback from clients/electors
Manage registration of political parties	Statutory requirements met
Redraw electoral boundaries for each election	Statutory requirements met
Goal 3 – Effective management	
Objectives	Measures
Manage costs within budget allocations	Budget met
Maintain high staff satisfaction	Performance management feedback
Manage and improve IT business systems	Absence of IT business systems failures

The Commission's timeline targets are:

- All statutory deadlines will be met.
- Election results will be finalised:
 - For general elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly (where a recount is not needed): within 3 weeks from polling day;
 - For general elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly (where a recount is needed): within 4 weeks from polling day;
 - For a count back to fill a casual vacancy in the Legislative Assembly: within 1 week from the date applications to contest the vacancy close; and
 - For other elections and referendums where the ACT Electoral Commission is responsible for providing election results: within 1 week from the close of the poll.

Overview

As an independent statutory authority, the Commission's operational framework is prescribed by the legislation establishing the Commission and codifying its functions.

While the Commission's largest and most visible role is the conduct of Legislative Assembly elections, the Commission has a wide range of functions that provides challenging work at all stages of the election cycle.

These functions include providing advice to Government and others, conducting minor elections, electoral education, maintaining the political disclosure scheme and the register of political parties, redistributing electoral boundaries and assisting other electoral authorities in maintaining the national electoral roll.

In addition to this ongoing work, a great deal of effort is put into Legislative Assembly election preparations in each non-election year. In 2005/2006, this preparatory work included a comprehensive review of the electoral legislation, enhancement of the electronic voting system, a review of the Commission's database business systems and a study of the feasibility of using intelligent character recognition scanning to replace manual data entry of ballot papers.

The biggest challenge for Commission staff is to provide a high level of service with limited resources. By comparison with other Australian electoral authorities, the ACT Commission has fewer staff than all other authorities. The ACT also has a smaller electoral budget than all other authorities except for the Northern Territory, which has around half the number of enrolled electors.

The Commission has shown itself equal to the high goals it has set. Its introduction of electronic voting and counting in the ACT is seen as an example of world's best practice in this field. Not content to stand still, the Commission is now exploring the feasibility of introducing further Australian "firsts" at the 2008 election, including scanning of handwritten ballot papers instead of manual data-entry, and the use of electronic rolls in polling places, to replace manually marked and scanned paper rolls.

In 2006/2007, a challenge for the Commission will be to continue to deliver its high level of services while reducing expenditure to meet the ACT Government's savings targets.

A list of key activities undertaken in 2005/2006 is shown at **Highlights** on page 7.

Highlights

Major activities undertaken during 2005/2006:

- Completing a detailed review of the Electoral Act after the 2004 election;
- Hosting the Electoral Educators' Conference in Canberra in October 2005;
- Using the electronic counting system to conduct a recount to fill the casual vacancy following the resignation of Mr Ted Quinlan MLA;
- Completing a strategic review of the Commission's structure and corporate plan, focussing on preparations for the 2008 Legislative Assembly election;
- Investigating options for enhancing the electronic voting and counting system – particularly the feasibility of using electronic scanning for counting paper ballots;
- Preparing a submission to the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People inquiry into voting age eligibility (provided to the Committee on 17 July 2006);
- Providing advice to Government on the possible need for amendments to the Electoral Act in relation to changes made to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* in June 2006;
- Presentation of a paper on the ACT's electoral system at the *Making Electoral Reform Real* symposium held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in March 2006;
- Providing a submission to the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on its inquiry into civics and electoral education; and
- Observing a pilot of electronic voting at the Buenos Aires City elections in Argentina.

Other activities undertaken during the year included:

- Chairing the Enrolment Steering Committee of the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA), which commenced a review of the national Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program in 2006.
- Commencing discussions with the ACT Government's information technology provider InTACT on adopting a new strategy for maintaining the Commission's in-house suite of databases in preparation for the 2008 election;
- Providing advice to the functional review team and JACS in relation to the ACT Government's functional review of services;
- Advising ACT Government agencies on issues related to elections for an ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative body and elections for the Aboriginal Justice Centre;
- Briefing members and officials from the Commonwealth Parliament, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), Yemen and Korea on ACT election practices, particularly electronic voting and counting;
- Providing staff on secondment to assist at the South Australia state election held in March 2006;
- Implementing a formal performance management system for all staff;
- Providing a draft memorandum of understanding to the Chief Executive of JACS proposing to codify the Commission's relationship with JACS;

-
- Continuing the Commission's non-parliamentary election program, conducting 9 health professionals board elections, 2 health professionals board casual vacancies and 3 fee-for-service ballots, and assisting with the conduct of 7 interstate and international elections, including general elections for New Zealand, South Australia and Tasmania;
 - Providing a full-time electoral inquiry service over the counter, by phone, by email and by post;
 - Continuing to work with the AEC and the ECA to improve electoral roll maintenance procedures;
 - Pursuing CRU initiatives, including securing enrolment forms from secondary school students and obtaining data from a comprehensive range of ACT agencies; and
 - Continuing the schools based electoral education program.

Outlook

The 2 main focuses of the Commission in 2006/2007 will be on the redistribution of electorate boundaries due to commence in late 2006 and preparations for the 2008 Legislative Assembly election.

Projects to be undertaken will include:

- Conducting the redistribution of electorate boundaries, including the public consultation process;
- Contracting the Australian Bureau of Statistics to calculate enrolment projections for use in the redistribution of electorate boundaries;
- Pursuing the feasibility of using electronic scanning for counting paper ballots;
- Investigating the feasibility of using electronic certified lists at polling places to replace paper-based scanned electoral rolls;
- Achieving savings through reduced expenditure to meet the Government's savings targets;
- Moving to new accommodation;
- Working with InTACT to implement a new strategy for maintaining the Commission's in-house suite of databases in preparation for the 2008 election;
- Providing advice to Government and Members of the Legislative Assembly on amendments to the Electoral Act as required;
- Convening the Reference Group to discuss the future of electronic voting and counting;
- Implementing CRU processes, including securing enrolment forms from secondary school students and obtaining data from selected ACT agencies;
- Continuing to work with the AEC and the ECA to improve electoral roll maintenance procedures, particularly through the ECA's Enrolment Steering Committee inquiry into the CRU program;
- Renegotiating the joint roll cost with the AEC;
- Continuing the schools based electoral education program;
- Continuing the Commission's non-parliamentary election program;
- Assisting the ACT Government with elections for an ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative body if required; and
- Implementing and reviewing the Commission's records management procedures.



Part B

Agency performance

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Analysis of Agency performance

This section reports on activities undertaken in each key result area in 2005/2006 to achieve the Commission's goals.

Goal 1 - To conduct high quality elections and referendums

Performance indicator summary

Objectives	Measures	Outcomes
Increase voter turnout at Legislative Assembly elections	Participation rates	Turnout 2004 election: 92.8% Turnout 2001 election: 90.9%
Deliver service within timeline targets	Timelines met	All timelines met
Increase formal voting at Legislative Assembly elections	Formal voting rates	Formal voting 2004 election: 97.4% Formal voting 2001 election: 96.0%

KEY RESULT AREA 1.1

ELECTIONS FOR THE ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Review of the *Electoral Act 1992* following the 2004 ACT Legislative Assembly election

The Commission's review of the operation of the Electoral Act in relation to the conduct of the 2004 Legislative Assembly election was provided to the Attorney General on 22 July 2005 and tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 23 August 2005.

Specific issues discussed in this review included:

- Legislation changes since the 2001 election – listing the main changes that were made to the Electoral Act since the previous election.
- Non-party groups – questioning the right of candidates to be listed on ballot papers in non-party groups.
- Party registration – examining changes made to the party registration scheme after the 2001 election and discussing the need for further change.
- The 100 metre ban on canvassing at polling places – examining the operation of the ban and suggesting that it be removed and replaced with the same 6 metre ban that applies to Commonwealth elections.
- Authorisation of electoral advertisements – examining the operation of the authorisation requirements and suggesting improvements.
- Defamation of candidates – examining the Electoral Act offence of defamation of candidates and suggesting that it be removed.
- Postal voting – examining the favourable impact of an earlier deadline for submission of applications for postal votes from overseas implemented after the 2001 election review, and the impact of making it illegal to induce a person to complete a postal vote application form and return it to an address other than an address authorised by the Electoral Commissioner.
- Interstate pre-polling – suggesting that an apparent mistake in the Electoral Act be corrected to permit interstate polling to commence later than the first possible day of pre-polling.
- Photos of people voting – examining the recent increase in use and popularity of small digital cameras, particularly mobile phone cameras, and suggesting that it be an offence to take a photo of a person's marked ballot paper.
- Appointment of scrutineers – examining the practice of using partially-completed, photocopied scrutineer appointment forms and suggesting more appropriate methods of appointing scrutineers be examined.

Following analysis of these issues, the Commission recommended that the Electoral Act be amended to:

- Remove the ability of candidates to form non-party groups, so that only candidates belonging to registered political parties will be able to be listed in groups on ballot papers. All other candidates should be listed in the “ungrouped” columns on the ballot papers.
- Provide that an application for registration of a political party that includes the name of a person must include a statement signed by that person indicating their consent to the party name – if such a statement is not provided, the Commissioner must refuse the application.
- Remove the 100 metre ban on canvassing at polling places and replace it with the same 6 metre ban that applies to Commonwealth elections.
- Replace the current authorisation scheme contained in sections 292-295 of the Electoral Act with the following scheme:
 - A person must not disseminate electoral matter in printed form (either in hard-copy form or electronically) unless the author’s name or the name of the person or organisation authorising the material is clearly stated so as to indicate that the person or organisation is responsible for the material.
 - A person must not disseminate electoral matter in sound or video form unless the author’s name or the name of the person or organisation authorising the material is clearly stated in spoken or printed form so as to indicate that the person or organisation is responsible for the material.
 - If electoral matter is published for a registered political party or a candidate (including a person who has publicly indicated that he or she intends to be a candidate), the name of the party or candidate must be stated so as to indicate that the party or candidate is responsible for the material.
 - Clarifying that the ACT’s authorisation rules do not apply to radio and television electoral broadcasters, who are required to authorise electoral matter under the Commonwealth’s *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*.
 - Electoral matter contained in reportage, commentary or letters to the editor in a newspaper, periodical or news-type website does not need to be specifically authorised: responsibility for such electoral matter shall be taken to be assumed either by the managing editor of the publication; or by a person nominated by a statement in the publication indicating that the person has authorised the publication of the electoral matter.
 - Letters to the editor of a newspaper, periodical or news-type website (including internet comments made in the style of letters to the editor) must include the name of the author but do not need to indicate the address of the author.
 - Items containing 10 or fewer words (published other than by newspaper, periodical, radio, television or other sound or video format) – including “campaign novelties” such as a car bumper-sticker, flyer, T-shirt, lapel button, lapel badge, pen, pencil or balloon – do not need to identify the name of the person or organisation authorising the material.

-
- The current requirement stating that government agency publications containing photographs of MLAs published in the 6 months before an election should carry an authorisation statement, should be repealed. Instead, the ACT Government may wish to consider whether to limit content of agency publications in the lead up to an election through its government publishing standards.
 - Complementary changes will need to be made to other provisions in the Electoral Act that are cross referenced to the authorisation provisions, including sections 223, 230 and 306.
 - Complementary changes will need to be made to remove outdated provisions from the Electoral Regulation 1993, including regulations 3 and 6.
- Repeal section 300 of the Electoral Act, which provides for the offence of defamation of a candidate (relying instead on civil law defamation procedures).
 - Provide that interstate polling can begin no earlier than the third Monday before polling day (rather than no later than the third Monday before polling day), to correct an apparent mistake in section 136C.
 - Provide that it is an offence to take a photo of a person's marked ballot paper either in a polling place, or where a person is casting a postal vote.

The Commission also recommended that it consult with candidates and parties to review its forms for appointment of scrutineers to make it easier for candidates to properly appoint scrutineers, and to ensure that partially-completed photocopied appointment forms pre-signed by candidates are not used to allow scrutineers to effectively appoint themselves.

As at 30 June 2006, the Government had not responded to the Commission's recommendations.

Copies of the review can be obtained from the Commission's website at www.elections.act.gov.au/adobe/2004ElectionReview.pdf.

Electronic Voting and Vote Counting

The ACT's electronic voting and counting system, which was introduced for the 2001 election, was successfully used again for the 2004 election in an improved form.

The Commission's report on the operation of the electronic voting and counting system: *ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2004: Electronic Voting and Counting System Review* was provided to the Attorney General on 27 June 2005 and was tabled in the Assembly on 23 August 2005. It can be viewed at the Commission's website at www.elections.act.gov.au/adobe/2004ElectionReviewComputerVoting.pdf.

In its report, the Commission undertook to explore advances in technology to determine if a cost-effective scanning alternative to the data entry of ballot papers was available. In May 2006, a consultation paper seeking industry feedback on the issue of intelligently scanning ballot papers was released.

Feedback from the industry was very positive and indicated that with available technology it would be possible to scan ACT ballot papers and intelligently read the handwritten numbers on them.

The Deputy Electoral Commissioner also met with the returning officer for the Auckland City Council in Auckland to discuss the Council's use of scanning of ballot papers and to observe their scanning processes.

During 2006/2007 the Commission hopes to progress this project by preparing a business case for the use of scanning in reading ballot papers.

Some minor modifications were made to the computer voting system to address issues that arose at the 2004 election. The system was modified to allow the volume of the spoken instructions heard through the headphones to be adjusted using the keypad. The system was also modified to allow the point sizes used on the ballot paper screen to be varied, to allow more flexibility to display long and short political party names on the screen.

The electronic counting system was used in April 2006 to conduct the count to fill the vacancy resulting from the resignation of Mr Ted Quinlan MLA (see below).

Filling the casual vacancy following the resignation of Mr Ted Quinlan MLA

Under the ACT's Hare-Clark system, casual vacancies are filled by recounting the ballot papers that contributed to the election of the vacating MLA. Of those candidates who contested the original election, only those candidates who are still resident in the ACT and who indicate that they wish to contest the casual vacancy are considered.

On 21 March 2006, the Speaker of the ACT Legislative Assembly notified the Electoral Commissioner that Mr Ted Quinlan MLA had that day resigned his office as a Member for Molonglo.

The Electoral Commissioner published a notice in the *Canberra Times* on 24 March 2006 inviting unsuccessful candidates who had stood for Molonglo in 2004 to apply to contest the vacancy. A copy of that notice was also sent to the last known address of those candidates eligible to apply to contest the vacancy.

Eleven candidates applied to contest the casual vacancy by the closing date of 3 April 2006. The declaration of the candidates contesting the vacancy and the recount of the ballot papers counted to Mr Quinlan using the electronic voting and counting system was completed less than an hour after the close of applications at noon on 3 April 2006.

At the conclusion of the count, Mr Andrew Barr had received 5318 votes and Ms Kim Sattler had received 4229 votes, with 1079 votes exhausted and 2 votes lost by fraction.

Full details of the distribution of preferences can be obtained from the office of the Commission or from the Commission's website at **www.elections.act.gov.au/Castabs5.html**.

The Electoral Commissioner declared Mr Andrew Barr elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly for the electorate of Molonglo on 5 April 2006.

KEY RESULT AREA 1.2

ELECTION AND REFERENDUM SERVICES TO OTHER AGENCIES

The Commission's program of providing election and referendum services for other agencies continued in 2005/2006.

Interstate and overseas elections

The Commission provided over-the-counter pre-poll voting, postal vote applications, postal ballot papers and enquiry services for 2 interstate general elections, 4 interstate by-elections and the New Zealand general election in 2005/2006. Details of these elections are shown in Table 2.

No additional costs were incurred by the Commission in providing these services.

Issuing votes and handling enquiries for other electoral jurisdictions at election times provide valuable opportunities for training and benchmarking between jurisdictions.

In addition 3 Commission staff were seconded to the South Australian State Electoral Office to assist with the tally room, postal voting and the upper house scrutiny.

Table 2 – Interstate and overseas elections

Election	Polling day	Assistance provided	Votes
New Zealand general election	16/09/05	pre-poll voting	13
New South Wales State by-elections (Marrickville, Maroubra and Macquarie Fields)	26/11/05	pre-poll voting	5
South Australian general election	18/03/06	pre-poll voting	138
Tasmanian House of Assembly election	18/03/06	pre-poll voting	18
New South Wales State by-election (Pittwater)	6/05/06	pre-poll voting	1
Total			175

Statutory and fee-for-service elections

Health professionals boards elections

The Commission conducts elections for ACT health professionals boards under the *Health Professionals Regulation 2004*. These elections are conducted as postal ballots, generally every 3 years. The Commission provided services for 9 such elections in 2005/2006 (3 of which were not contested). Details of these elections are shown in Table 3.

For these elections, Commission staff call for candidate nominations and, where the election is contested, send ballot material to eligible practitioners and conduct the count of votes. The health professionals boards are charged on a fee-for-service basis for the conduct of these elections. This enables the Commission to fully recover its costs, including permanent staff costs, incurred in running health professionals boards elections.

The Commission also ran 2 casual vacancies for the Medical Board of the ACT during 2005/2006 after 2 sitting members resigned. For these casual vacancies Commission staff called for applications to be included in the casual vacancy and then recounted the ballot papers in order to determine the successful candidate.

Table 3 — Health professionals boards elections

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Polls closed	Result provided	Votes
ACT Dental Board	3	4	01/11/05	01/11/05	247
ACT Nursing and Midwifery Board (Nurses election)	3	9	11/10/05	11/10/05	1138
ACT Nursing and Midwifery Board (Midwives election)	1	1	Not contested		
ACT Optometrists Board	2	3	28/11/05	28/11/05	67
ACT Pharmacy Board	3	5	1/11/05	1/11/05	383
ACT Physiotherapists Board	3	4	1/11/05	1/11/05	366
ACT Podiatrists Board	1	0	Not contested		
ACT Psychologists Board	2	2	Not contested		
ACT Veterinary Surgeons Board	3	4	28/11/05	28/11/05	209
Total	21	32			2410

Fee-for-service electoral services

The Commission conducts elections and provides other electoral services for other organisations under its power to provide services for determined fees.

Australian National University elections

The Commission assisted with the ANU Union annual elections and the ANU Students' Association (ANUSA) annual elections in 2005. Details of these elections are shown in Table 4.

Nominations for the Union elections closed on 9 August, polling was conducted from 22 to 25 August and the result was provided on 25 August.

For the ANUSA, nominations closed on 12 August, polling was from 29 August to 1 September and final results were determined on 5 September.

For these elections, the Commission provided assistance with receipt and checking of nominations, preparation and printing of ballot papers, operation of polling places at the ANU and the conduct of the count.

In 2006 the Commission was contracted by the ANU Council Secretariat to test a vote counting system developed by the ANU for Council elections.

Table 4 – Australian National University elections

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Votes
Election of 3 ANU Union directors (full 2 year term), August 2005	3	6	693
ANU Students' Association annual elections, September 2005	42	154	1 266
Total	45	160	1 959

Other elections

The Commission assisted the National Press Club of Australia with the scrutiny for their board election. Details of this election are shown in the following Table.

Table 5 – Other elections

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Nominations closed	Votes
National Press Club of Australia	4	6	18/09/05	168
Total	4	6		168

Internet resources

A series of documents to guide organisations through their own elections is available on the Commission's website and include:

- Principles for conducting elections;
- Sample electoral regulations;
- Ballot papers which can be automatically Robson rotated; and
- Scrutiny sheets on a spreadsheet where a Hare-Clark count can be calculated automatically.

Goal 2 - To provide high quality information, education, advice and services related to the electoral process

Performance indicator summary

Objectives	Measures	Outcomes
Maintain high client satisfaction	Feedback from clients/electors	All electoral education and fee-for-service election clients expressed satisfaction; 1 other complaint received
Manage registration of political parties	Statutory requirements met	Statutory requirements met
Redraw electoral boundaries for each election	Statutory requirements met	Next redistribution due 2006/2007

KEY RESULT AREA 2.1 – ELECTORAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Information service

The Commission provides an ongoing information service to the general public through:

- Providing information in person over the counter, by telephone or by email;
- Publishing a range of information booklets and pamphlets;
- Answering written correspondence; and
- Maintaining a comprehensive website.

Internet

The Commission's website address is **www.elections.act.gov.au**. This website continued to be maintained and updated in 2005/2006.

Information and services provided on the website in 2005/2006 included:

- General information about the Commission;
- Detailed results of the casual vacancy declared on 5 April 2006;
- Detailed results of the 2004 Legislative Assembly election held on 16 October 2004;
- Details of past ACT Legislative Assembly elections, casual vacancies and referendums;
- Information regarding electoral boundaries, including redistributions;
- The party register, including details on the registration of political parties;
- Information on the funding and disclosure scheme, including downloadable copies of returns;
- Information for organisations wishing to run their own elections;
- Information for schools to run their own elections;
- A link to the AEC electoral enrolment form, and other enrolment information;
- Printable copies of the Commission's publications; and
- Links to electoral legislation, other electoral bodies and ACT agencies.

Publications

The following items were published in 2005/2006:

- *ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2004 Electronic Voting and Counting System Review*;
- *ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2004 Review of the Electoral Act 1992*; and
- *ACT Electoral Commission Annual Report 2004/2005*.

In addition, the following are available from the Commission:

- Two workbooks entitled *What is the ACT Legislative Assembly?* for primary and secondary school students visiting the Legislative Assembly (November 1999);
- ACT Electoral Commission *Annual Reports* since 1992/1993;
- *Election Statistics* for the 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001 and 2004 elections;
- *Review of the Electoral Act 1992* for the 1995, 1998 and 2001 elections;
- *The 2001 ACT Legislative Assembly Election: Electronic Voting and Counting System Reviews*;
- Electronic voting data from the 2001 and 2004 ACT elections on CD-ROM (on request and payment of fee);
- Funding and disclosure information booklets and related forms;
- *Commitment to Service Statement*;
- Information brochure on voting in the ACT for new citizens;
- Maps of ACT electorates;
- Various electoral enrolment and voting forms;
- Information *Fact Sheets*;
- *Candidates Information* booklets and related forms;
- *Scrutineers Information* booklets and related forms; and
- Redistribution reports, public submissions and statistics for the 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2003 redistributions.

Advice

Providing advice to the Attorney General, Assembly Committees and other MLAs is one of the Commission's most significant tasks. The Commission also provides advice to visiting delegations from other jurisdictions and other countries, makes submissions to Commonwealth parliamentary inquiries and gives presentations at conferences. Examples of advice provided during the year include:

- Advising the Government and Legislative Assembly Members on matters related to the Electoral Act;
- Appearing before the Select Committee on Estimates;
- Appearing before the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs in relation to the Commission's 2004/2005 annual report;
- Advising the Government and ACT agencies on possible electoral processes for representative bodies for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community;
- Preparing a submission to the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People inquiry into voting age eligibility (provided to the Committee on 17 July 2006);
- Providing a submission to the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on its inquiry into civics and electoral education ;

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- Appearing before the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters during its inquiry into the conduct of the 2004 election, to give a presentation on the ACT's electronic voting and counting system;
 - Delivering a presentation on the ACT's electoral system at the *Making Electoral Reform Real* symposium held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in March 2006;
 - Briefing members and officials from the Commonwealth Parliament, the AEC, Yemen and Korea on ACT election practices, particularly electronic voting and counting; and
 - Providing advice to the Office of Electoral Affairs of the City of Buenos Aires on its electronic voting pilot.

Electoral Legislation

During 2005/2006 the Commission provided the Government with advice on several issues that related to the ACT's electoral legislation. These issues included the Commission's review of the Electoral Act after the 2004 election, the widening of the field of persons eligible to be appointed as Chairperson of the Commission, the establishment of an ACT prison and the Commonwealth's changes to the Commonwealth Electoral Act in a range of areas, including prisoner voting, disclosure and enrolment.

On 30 March 2006 the then Attorney General, Mr Jon Stanhope MLA, introduced the Electoral Amendment Bill 2006. This bill was intended to amend the Electoral Act to widen the field of persons who may be appointed as Chairperson of the Commission and to prevent the appointment of people to the Commission who have recently been engaged in political activity through membership of a political party or an Australian parliament. As at 30 June 2006 this bill had not been dealt with by the Legislative Assembly. The Commission provided advice to the Government on the content of this bill.

On 21 June 2006 the Commonwealth Parliament passed the *Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Electoral Integrity and Other Measures) Act 2006*. This Act amended the Commonwealth Electoral Act to make several significant changes to the federal election laws, including closing the electoral roll on the day the writs are issued for a federal election, requiring identification for enrolment, preventing all prisoners from voting at federal elections, extending the right to enrol to all eligible prisoners (that is, prisoners over 17 who are Australian citizens) and raising the disclosure threshold for political donations to \$10,000.

Some of these changes had automatic application to the ACT's electoral laws, as many of the ACT's enrolment, candidacy and disclosure provisions are linked to the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

Prior to the changes, persons serving a prison sentence of 3 years or longer were unable to enrol or vote for ACT or federal elections. The changes removed the right of all prisoners to vote at federal elections. However, as the changes also extended the right to enrol to all prisoners, regardless of their length of sentence, this had the effect of automatically granting the right to vote in the ACT to all eligible prisoners, as the ACT's Electoral Act has no restriction on voting by prisoners.

As such an extension of the right to vote to all prisoners was consistent with the ACT Government's stated policy, there was no need to amend the ACT's Electoral Act to achieve this result.

However, a consequence of extending the right to enrol to all prisoners would have been to extend the right to be elected and to sit as an MLA to all prisoners. Previously, as the right to be elected and to sit as an MLA was linked to the right to enrol, persons serving a prison sentence of 3 years or longer were unable to be a candidate or an MLA.

In anticipation of the Commonwealth changes, the ACT Government moved to amend the Electoral Act to provide that a person is not eligible to be a candidate or an MLA if the person is under a sentence of imprisonment for 1 year or longer for a conviction of an indictable offence. This amendment was made by the *Sentencing Legislation Amendment Act 2006*, which was passed by the Assembly on 2 June 2006. The Sentencing Legislation Amendment Act also amended the Electoral Act to provide for mobile polling at the ACT's proposed new prison.

The changes to the Commonwealth Electoral Act to raise the disclosure thresholds for political donations from \$1500 to \$10,000 also had an automatic application to the ACT, as political parties registered at both federal and ACT levels are able to satisfy the ACT's annual disclosure requirements by submitting a copy of their Commonwealth annual return. The Commonwealth changes broke the nexus between the Commonwealth's and the ACT's disclosure requirements, with local parties and donors still required to disclose transactions of \$1500 or more under the ACT's Electoral Act. The Commission advised the ACT Government on options for addressing the discrepancy between the two jurisdictions. The Government had not announced how it wished to address this issue as at 30 June 2006.

Other changes to the Commonwealth Electoral Act will introduce new proof of identity requirements for persons enrolling on the joint electoral roll. These are expected to commence later in 2006/2007.

The *Health Professionals Legislation Amendment Act 2004* made a minor amendment to the Electoral Act to allow the Electoral Commissioner to appoint officers for the purposes of any Act under which the Commissioner exercises a function. This amendment was particularly aimed at allowing the Commissioner to appoint officers for health professionals boards elections. This amendment came into effect on 7 July 2005.

KEY RESULT AREA 2.2 – ELECTORAL ENROLMENT

Joint roll arrangement

Under the ACT/Commonwealth joint roll arrangement the AEC maintains a joint electoral roll for Commonwealth and ACT purposes. The ACT Electoral Commissioner and the Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales constitute a Joint Management Committee, which oversees the operation of the Joint Roll Arrangement.

The Commission pays the AEC a yearly fee for maintaining the joint roll. This fee is adjusted yearly for CPI, and renegotiated every 3 years. This fee was renegotiated with the AEC in 2003/2004. A fee of \$0.6167 per elector was set for 2005/2006. Joint roll payments for the year totalled \$173,988 (excluding GST). The joint roll fee is due to be renegotiated in 2006/2007.

Electoral Council of Australia

The ECA is a consultative council of Electoral Commissioners from the electoral authorities of the Commonwealth, States and Territories.

The ECA meets approximately each 3 months and at the time of elections to consider the maintenance of the electoral rolls, the operation of new electoral legislation, best practice in the management of elections and other matters of common interest. Major projects undertaken and issues considered by the ECA during 2005-2006 included:

- Changes to the Commonwealth Electoral Act to provide for proof of identity at time of enrolment;
- Continued sponsorship of a 3-year research scholarship at the ANU on the development of Australian electoral administrations; and
- Management with the ACT Electoral Commission of the Electoral Educators' Conference held in Canberra in October 2005

A subcommittee of the ECA, the Enrolment Steering Committee (ESC) met during the year to jointly manage the CRU program for the review of the joint rolls. In 2005-2006 the ESC prepared a report on the CRU program, developed the ECA CRU Strategic Plan and provided input to the AEC for their publication 'A Conceptual Framework Supporting the Electoral Roll'. In 2005 the ACT Electoral Commissioner was appointed chairperson of the ESC. In 2006 this committee was charged with overseeing a major review of the operation and effectiveness of the CRU program. This review is due for completion in 2006/2007.

Continuous Roll Update

CRU is the term used to describe a range of methods used to update the electoral roll. These methods are described in detail in the Commission's *Annual Report 2002/2003*. CRU was introduced nationally in 1999.

Change of address data provided by Centrelink, Australia Post, the Rental Bond Board, the ACT Motor Registry, the ACT Board of Studies and ActewAGL continued to be used in 2005/2006 to generate letters to households where electors may need to update their enrolment.

With no electoral events occurring in the ACT in 2005/2006, enrolment activity occurred at a comparatively low level during the year. This appears to be consistent with a national trend, as almost all jurisdictions in Australia reported low enrolment activity where no major electoral events took place, with most jurisdictions, including the ACT, reporting a drop in total enrolment numbers.

The number of electors on the ACT roll fell by a net 880 electors in 2005/2006 (not including 17 year old provisional electors).

The national review of the CRU program will examine the reasons for this drop in activity.

The following table showing enrolment as at 30 June 2005 and as at 30 June 2006 indicates that the proportion of 18 year-olds enrolled in the ACT had declined from 66.1% of the estimated eligible population in 2005 to 55.5% in 2006. This outcome is consistent with observed trends that indicate that high proportions of young people do not enrol unless an election is imminent. The table shows actual enrolment figures by age group, compared to estimates of the eligible population in those groups. The figures exclude estimated numbers of non-citizens and other people ineligible to enrol in the ACT. These estimates need to be treated with caution as they are based on various assumptions about residency and eligibility.

Table 6 — Enrolment by age group 2005-2006

Age group	30 June 2005		30 June 2006	
	Number enrolled	% of estimated entitled to enrol	Number enrolled	% of estimated entitled to enrol
18	3 026	66.1%	2 468	55.5%
19	4 381	90.8%	3 578	75.6%
20-24	23 039	88.5%	22 391	87.8%
25-29	22 073	90.8%	21 801	90.2%
30-34	23 327	97.7%	22 278	95.0%
35-39	22 116	97.3%	22 531	97.5%
40-44	22 695	98.1%	22 267	96.0%
45-49	22 493	98.9%	22 586	97.8%
50-54	21 489	98.2%	21 460	97.3%
55-59	19 683	99.2%	20 159	99.2%
60-64	12 845	98.7%	13 677	98.5%
65-69	9 204	98.8%	9 636	98.7%
70+	19 771	97.7%	20 430	98.4%
Total	226 142	95.6%	225 262	94.4%

Note: This table does not include 17 year olds, for whom enrolment is voluntary.

KEY RESULT AREA 2.3 – ELECTORAL EDUCATION

Electoral education program

The Commission provides electoral education to school, community and professional groups. This program is aimed primarily at raising community awareness of the ACT's electoral system and the Legislative Assembly. Sessions include mock elections for school and community groups, conduct of school representative council elections and public service seminars.

The Commission's education sessions are often conducted in cooperation with the Legislative Assembly Education Officer at the Assembly. Participants at these sessions are shown how the Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected and how the Assembly functions. The Assembly has prepared audio-visual material that includes material on the electoral system. An education session can be taken into schools using these same materials.

In addition to conducting face-to-face education sessions, the Commission has developed a range of printed electoral education resources for distribution to schools and community groups. This material is primarily aimed at providing teachers with the ability to conduct electoral education in their own classrooms. This service is a contribution to an Australia-wide incorporation of electoral education and civics education into compulsory school curricula.

All electoral education material is available from the Commission's website.

A campaign to encourage secondary schools to elect members to their Student Representative Council by conducting their own elections using the Hare-Clark system continued in 2005/2006.

A series of documents is available on the website to guide teachers through the electoral process so they can run their own school elections. The documents include:

- Instructions on the election process, the voting system, election day and counting the votes;
- A nomination form;
- Ballot papers; and
- A scrutiny sheet that calculates the Hare-Clark system automatically.

The Commission's education program is advertised, in conjunction with the Legislative Assembly, by direct mail-out to schools and by referral from other organisations.

Electoral Educators' Conference, Canberra, October 2005

The Commission hosted the Electoral Educators' Conference in Canberra in October 2005. This conference was initiated by the Commission and was the first such conference held since 1994. The conference was entitled *Fostering electoral literacy for all young Australians*. It was attended by electoral education officers representing all states and territories (except Tasmania), the AEC and New Zealand. It coincided with the annual parliamentary educators' conference also held in Canberra, with which some joint sessions were held. Guest speakers other than electoral educators included academics, high school teachers and education department officers.

The conference concluded that:

- Electoral education should be seen as part of a whole school civics program.
- Resources should be developed using the expertise of a range of professionals for use Australia wide, especially via the internet.
- Persons outside the school system need to be included in awareness programs – especially the marginalised and those with a disability.
- Good relations between jurisdictions need to be developed and maintained.

Feedback from conference participants was very supportive of holding a similar conference bi-annually.

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters - inquiry into civics and electoral education

The Commission provided a submission to the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on 15 June 2006 in response to its inquiry into civics and electoral education. The submission outlined the Commission's current electoral education programs and proposed some new approaches in the teaching of civics and citizenship to be used in the future. A copy of the submission can be found at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/education/subs/sub083.pdf.

The Commission's examination of current practices and possible future directions for civics and electoral education identified a range of factors and strategies which the Commission suggested the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters may wish to consider in its review. They included:

- Research indicates that civics and citizenship education should begin in early primary school and continue in a progressive way to upper secondary school. It should involve classroom teaching, modelling of democratic school governance, and out-of-classroom activities.
- Out-of-school programs – such as the AEC's Electoral Education Centre (EEC) and the ACT's electoral and parliamentary education program at the Legislative Assembly – have significant impact on electoral education programs, as they tend to make greater impact than classes provided in schools, but only if they are included as part of a broader strategic educational approach.
- Electoral education outcomes could be improved if the AEC broadened its role in civics and electoral education by co-operating with the states and territories to ensure a recognition and discussion of their different electoral practices in its EEC programs.

-
- There would be considerable advantage if standardised learning objects in civics and citizenship, reflecting the national Key Performance Measures, were developed for use by teachers nationally on the internet.
 - The Commission suggested that formal training should be provided for teachers as part of the new civic and citizenship curriculum implementation.
 - The Commission noted that resources available for electoral education are limited within each jurisdiction and suggests that, to ensure the best use of resources, co-operation between electoral educators in different jurisdictions should be encouraged.

The following table lists electoral education sessions conducted by Commission staff during the 2005/2006 financial year.

Table 7 – Electoral education sessions

Organisation type	Number of participants
Colleges	299
Community Groups	173
High Schools	60
Primary Schools	445
Professional Groups	58
Total	1 035

KEY RESULT AREA 2.4 – OTHER ELECTORAL STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Registration of political parties

The Electoral Commissioner keeps the register of political parties for the purposes of ACT Legislative Assembly elections.

At 1 July 2005, there were 10 parties on the register of political parties.

On 7 October 2005 the registration of the Harold Hird Independent Group was cancelled.

On 30 June 2006 the registration of the Helen Cross Independents Group was cancelled.

As at 30 June 2006, the following 8 parties were entered on the register of political parties.

Table 8 – Registered political parties as at 30 June 2006

Party name	Party abbreviation
ACT Equality Party	Equality Party
Australian Democrats	ACT Democrats
Australian Labor Party (ACT Branch)	Australian Labor Party
Christian Democratic Party ACT Division	CDP
Free Range Canberra	FRC
Liberal Democratic Party	LDP
Liberal Party of Australia (A.C.T. Division)	Liberal Party
The ACT Greens	The Greens

Funding and disclosure scheme

Annual returns

Under the funding and disclosure provisions of the Electoral Act, registered political parties, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), associated entities and persons who donated more than \$1500 to a party, MLA or associated entity were required to lodge an annual return for the 2004/2005 financial year by October 2005.

For the 2004/2005 financial year, 10 annual returns were received from political parties, 22 from current and former MLAs, 2 from associated entities and 48 from donors.

These returns were made public on 1 February 2006. Copies of the returns can be viewed at www.elections.act.gov.au/FAD05.html.

In February 2006 the Commission commenced compliance audits of disclosure returns provided by selected political parties and associated entities. The audit was continuing as at 30 June 2006, and will be completed later in 2006.

Commonwealth legislative changes

The ACT's funding and disclosure scheme is modelled closely on the Commonwealth's disclosure scheme. On 21 June 2006 the Senate passed the *Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Electoral Integrity and Other Measures) Act 2006*, which made significant changes to the Commonwealth disclosure scheme. See ***Electoral Legislation*** starting on page 23 for discussion of these changes.

Redistributions

The most recent redistribution of electoral boundaries took place in 2003. The Electoral Act requires a redistribution of electoral boundaries to commence 2 years before each scheduled election.

The next redistribution is due to commence as soon as practical after the third Saturday in October 2006.

Goal 3 –To improve the quality of electoral services by ensuring best possible management practice

Performance indicator summary

Objectives	Measures	Outcomes
Manage costs within budget allocations	Budget met	Budget met - \$6,000 surplus
Maintain high staff satisfaction	Performance management feedback	High staff satisfaction reported
Manage and improve IT business systems	Absence of IT business systems failures	No IT business systems failures

KEY RESULT AREA 3.1 – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Continuous improvement

The Commission endeavours to foster an environment of continuous improvement and strives to provide satisfying work and development opportunities for its staff.

Permanent staff are encouraged to pursue secondments to other agencies to contribute to international, interstate and national electoral projects and to develop new skills through on-the-job training and external training courses.

The Commission also uses industrial democracy to enhance the quality of work for Commission staff. As the Commission is a small organisation, all staff meet in regular forums to participate in decision-making processes. These include regular staff meetings and corporate and strategic planning workshops.

During 2005/2006, all staff at the Commission had several opportunities to attend a variety of information sessions and conferences. Some staff also took advantage of secondment opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills both for their professional and personal development.

In March 2006, the Electoral Commissioner gave a presentation on the ACT's electoral system and led several discussion sessions at the *Making Electoral Reform Real* symposium held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Three Commission staff members assisted at the South Australia state election held in March 2006, taking on a variety of managerial election duties.

In October 2005, the Commission hosted the Electoral Educators' Conference in Canberra with delegates attending from State, Territory and New Zealand Electoral Commissions and Parliaments. All staff of the Commission assisted at this conference.

In October 2005 the Deputy Electoral Commissioner was invited to be an international observer at elections in Buenos Aires in Argentina. While in Buenos Aires she observed a pilot of electronic voting at the Buenos Aires City elections and, having had the experience of introducing electronic voting in the ACT, was able to provide information and feedback to the Buenos Aires Electoral Commission on the pilot. The visit also provided an opportunity to exchange ideas with other international electoral delegates who came from countries as diverse as Guatemala and the USA and to gain an appreciation of the cultural differences in elections around the world.

In 2005/2006, Commission staff held a number of planning sessions, including the review of its corporate plan, mission and goals, and a review of its business planning and development program for all staff.

As a result of this review, the Commission implemented a performance management program in 2005/2006. All staff developed a performance plan and commenced a formal review schedule, with one-on-one performance reviews conducted every 3 months.

2006 also saw the first significant staff change for the Commission for some years. The Commission's long-time Election Projects Manager, Don O'Connor, resigned from the ACT Public Service in April 2006. The Commission wishes Mr O'Connor well in his new career.

For further information on human resource management in the Commission and in particular staff improvement and development opportunities, see ***Managing our People*** from page 45.

KEY RESULT AREA 3.2 – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Commission is included in the JACS portfolio for budgetary purposes. However, the Commission continues to monitor its internal operating budget performance. In 2005/2006, the Commission's budget outcome was within its budget allocation.

The Corporate Finance Unit of the Chief Minister's Department has responsibility for processing all the Commission's finances on the Commission's behalf.

As part of the JACS Internal Audit Plan, a review of salaries and financial processes of agencies in the portfolio, including the Commission, was undertaken during May and June 2006. The result of that review will be available in 2006/2007.

Refer to ***Analysis of financial performance*** from page 57 for more information on the Commission's finances

KEY RESULT AREA 3.3 – RECORDS MANAGEMENT

As required by the *Territory Records Act 2002*, the Commission has in place a records management program.

The Commission has an identified Records Management Policy that has been approved by the Electoral Commissioner as the agency's Principal Officer. Records management procedures have been created and implemented. Appropriate training has been provided to staff.

The Commission's Records Disposal Schedule is listed on the Legislation Register as *Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule – Electoral Records) Approval 2004 (No 1)*, notifiable instrument NI2004—178.

The Commission has its own internal files as well as ACT Registry Files.

All active files, including internal and ACT Registry files, are stored within the Commission's office. Inactive files that are to be stored long-term in accordance with the Commission's Records Disposal Schedule are archived by ACT Registry. An in-house database records the names and details of all files held by the Commission.

The Commission's electronic records are stored on a centralised server maintained by InTACT, the ACT Government information technology management agency. InTACT is responsible for backing-up Commission data.

The Commission does not create or hold records containing information that may allow people to establish links with their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

KEY RESULT AREA 3.4 – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) MANAGEMENT

IT resources

InTACT, the ACT Government information technology management agency, continued to provide IT resources to the Commission in 2005/2006.

IT applications

The Commission maintains a wide range of databases and other IT applications. In 2005/2006 the Commission commenced a review of its IT business systems in preparation for the 2008 election. It is expected this review will conclude in 2006/2007.

Internet

The Commission continued to maintain and update its website during 2005/2006, with all work being completed in-house. The Commission's website address is **www.elections.act.gov.au**.

The Commission is represented on the ACT Web Managers Forum.

For more detail on the Commission's website see *Information service* on page 21.

Human Rights Act

Respect for human rights is a key driver behind the Commission's statutory functions and its organisational mission and goals.

The focus on customer service contained in the Commission's mission, key goals and training programs is intended to ensure that all staff respect, protect and promote human rights in the course of their duties.

The Commission considers that its conduct of elections under the Electoral Act gives effect to section 17(b) (Taking part in public life) of the *Human Rights Act 2004*, which provides that every citizen has the right, and is to have the opportunity, to vote and be elected at periodic elections, that guarantee the free expression of the will of the elector.

Legislative changes during the year to extend the right to vote to all eligible ACT citizens serving prison sentences were consistent with this right.

Consequential legislative changes that restricted the right to be a candidate and the right to sit as an MLA to exclude persons serving a prison sentence of 12 months or more were consistent with section 28 of the Human Rights Act, which provides that human rights may be subject to reasonable limits set by Territory laws that can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

See ***Electoral Legislation*** starting on page 23 for discussion of these changes.

Human rights principles are taken into account in the Commission's regular reviews of the electoral legislation.

Access to Government Strategy

The Commission takes a range of steps intended to ensure that its services are accessible to members of the ACT community who have a disability.

The Commission maintains office space where public documents can be viewed. This space is accessible to people who have a disability.

All staff at all polling places are trained in providing appropriate service to people who have a disability. Special provision is made to provide assistance to any person who is unable to vote without help.

All lists of polling places provided in the Commission's public information material indicate which polling places are accessible to people using wheelchairs. Polling place locations are chosen to maximise the number of polling places that have wheelchair access. All pre-poll voting locations are accessible by wheelchair.

The Commission's electronic voting system is designed to allow people with disabilities to vote in secret, without assistance. Every electronic polling place is equipped with a voting terminal that can be used by a person seated in a wheelchair or in the supplied seat. Each of these terminals has a 21 inch monitor (compared to 17 inch monitors used in standard voting screens). These terminals are also equipped with headphones that broadcast spoken instructions.

Using this system, people with visual impairment are able to vote in secret using a keypad. On-screen voting instructions are also provided in 12 languages. Electronic voting was used for the first time at a parliamentary election in Australia at the 2001 election. It was used again at the 2004 election in pre-poll voting centres and 8 polling places on polling day.

Community engagement

The Commission's mission is to provide the ACT community with high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums. The Commission uses a variety of community engagement processes to fulfil this mission.

The Commission has an active customer commitment program. The Commission's *Customer Commitment Statement* is available at the Commission's office and on the internet. The Commission's Corporate Plan and its operational plans focus on providing high quality services to customers.

Redistributions of electoral boundaries include a major community consultation process through the invitation to the public to submit suggestions, comments and objections. Public submissions are invited by advertisements placed in local newspapers, by direct mail to relevant organisations and individuals, and in media reports. The next redistribution will commence after the third Saturday in October 2006.

Members of the public are invited by advertisements placed in local newspapers to lodge objections to applications for registration of political parties.

Other community engagement processes employed by the Commission include:

- The electoral education program;
- The Commission's website;
- The Commission's enquiry service;
- The electronic voting and counting system Reference Group;
- The electoral enrolment update strategy; and
- The Commission's fee-for-service election program.

Customer feedback on the electoral education program indicated that customers were very satisfied with program delivery, resources and content. Similarly, customer feedback on the fee-for-service election program indicated a high level of satisfaction.

Complaints

The Commission has a complaints strategy in place. The contact officer for complaints is the Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

One complaint was received in 2005/2006 related to a party registration matter. The initial complaint was dealt with by the Acting Electoral Commissioner. The same complaint was escalated to the Electoral Commissioner. The complainant then sought a formal review of the Commissioner's decision by the full Commission. The complaint was considered by the 2 other Commission Members in accordance with Part 15 of the Electoral Act (Review of Decisions), who determined that the Acting Commissioner's original decision was correct.

Multicultural framework

The Commission has integrated the *Framework for a Multicultural Australian Capital Territory 2001-2005* into its strategic and operational planning processes. Under this framework, the Commission has adopted the principles set out in the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* as a guide to the design, delivery, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of services.

The Commission is committed to client focused service delivery in a culturally diverse society.

The special needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are given special attention in the Commission's election information strategy.

The Telephone Interpreter Service information panel is printed on the Commission's major publications, encouraging electors with limited facility in English to make use of the service to assist with understanding electoral information. Links to contact details for the Telephone Interpreter Service are also included on the Commission's website. Professional interpreter services are used as required.

In the lead-up to an ACT election electoral services and information are advertised in the newsletter of the ACT Office of Multicultural Affairs (*Comunicado*). Bi-lingual educators are engaged to communicate electoral information to their communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reporting

In 2005/2006 the Commission held discussions with the Chief Minister and officers from the Chief Minister's Department regarding the Chief Minister's commitment to establish an elected representative body for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT. Following these discussions Commission staff attended a community consultation forum at which the issue of elections for the representative body was discussed. The Commission provided some suggested election rules to the Chief Minister's Department and agreed to provide further advice on the issue as required.

During the year the Commission also provided electoral advice to the Aboriginal Justice Centre on new election rules.

The ACT Women's Plan

The ACT Women's Plan sets out the ACT Government's vision for working with the community to improve the status of all women and girls, and provides a shared approach for working towards this vision across ACT Government agencies.

Two of the objectives set out in Women's Plan are related to the work of the Commission: Representation and Recognition, and Safe, Inclusive Communities.

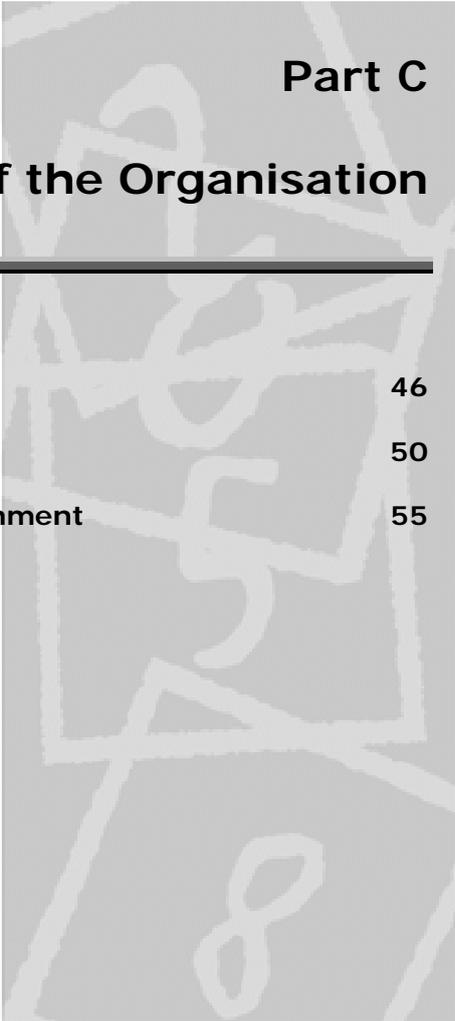
The Commission aims to conduct elections in which women are free to participate as electors and as candidates. At the 2004 election, 40 candidates were women and 54 candidates were men. Of the 17 elected Members of the Assembly, 6 were women. As of 30 June 2006, there were 227,281 electors on the electoral roll aged 17 and over; 117,544 were women and 109,737 were men.

In order to promote a safe community, the Commission continues to work with the AEC to ensure that silent enrolment is available and offered to community members who, for reasons of safety, do not want their addresses published on the electoral roll.

Part C

Management of the Organisation

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Managing our people

HR performance

The Commission is a small agency with a small permanent work force.

In 2005/2006, 1 of the 5 permanent staff of the Commission resigned and 1 other permanent staff member continued with a temporary transfer to another department. A recruitment process was completed during this time to recruit a permanent replacement for the vacant position. Casual staff were employed during the year to assist with fee-for-service elections.

The Commission maintains an in-house database of applicants for casual and temporary employment. Casual staff appointed under the Electoral Act, including polling officials, are employed following a merit selection process based on equal employment opportunity principles, previous experience and performance ratings.

Staffing profile

The following table sets out details of permanent staff employed during 2005/2006. The figures presented are as at 30 June 2006. The table does not include the 2 part-time Commission Members.

Table 9 — Staff of the ACT Electoral Commission

Title	Classification	Female	Male	CLDB	Category	Length of service		Employment authority
Electoral Commissioner	Statutory Office Holder		1		5 year appointment	24	full-time	Electoral Act
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	Senior Officer Grade B	1			Permanent	15	part-time	Public Sector Management Act
Election Projects Manager	Administrative Service Officer Class 6		1		Permanent	1	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Project and Office Manager	Administrative Service Officer Class 6	1		1	Permanent	13	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Education and Information Manager	Acting Administrative Service Officer Class 6	1			Permanent	6	part-time	Public Sector Management Act
Totals		3	2	1				

Notes:

CLDB: Culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Length of Service: Includes all years of service in the public sector.

There were no permanent staff in either the disabled or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander categories.

For privacy reasons, an age range is not shown for each staff member. As at 30 June 2006, 1 staff member was in the 25-29 age group; 1 in the 35-39 age group, 2 in the 45-49 age group and 1 in the 55-59 age group.

Culture and values

The Commission's culture and values are reflected in its mission: To provide high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums.

To meet this aim, Commission staff are conscious of the need to be impartial, politically neutral and professional in all dealings with clients. The Commission's focus on continuous improvement also serves this aim.

Commission staff have adopted the principles of the *ACT Public Service Code of Ethics*. There have been no allegations of breaches of the Code of Ethics.

All casual staff are informed of the Code of Ethics and are required to sign an undertaking that they acknowledge the importance of being impartial and politically neutral and that they will take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest.

Processes are in place to handle allegations of potential breaches of the Code of Ethics through the Commission's normal management structure.

Workplace diversity

The Commission has continued to follow the *JACS Equity and Diversity Plan 2003-2005*, which has been modified as appropriate to the structure and needs of the Commission.

The Commission is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and equity and diversity. The Commission recognises the necessity of discouraging all forms of discrimination and ensuring the effective use of the abilities and skills of staff from diverse backgrounds.

Equity and diversity measures adopted in 2005/2006 included:

- Ensuring that employment practices were free from workplace discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- Adopting the *ACT Public Service Code of Ethics*;
- Ensuring the Equity and Diversity Plan was communicated to and understood by all staff;
- Continuing the Commission's consultative industrial democracy practices;
- Providing staff with access to part-time work (2 of the Commission's 5 permanent positions were permanent part-time);
- Implementing the Commission's performance management, and learning and development strategies;
- Participating in the Executive Leadership Development Program;
- Allowing staff to undertake external secondments; and
- Providing staff with access to flex-time.

Workplace health and safety

In all of its activities the Commission gives careful consideration to occupational health and safety (OH&S) principles and practices. The Commission has adopted the JACS OH&S policy.

Incoming post is scanned by the ACT Government Registry before being opened by Commission staff.

The Commission has 1 staff member who is a designated floor fire warden and another staff member who is a designated qualified first aid officer. The Commission shared an OH&S representative with its adjoining neighbours, the JACS Restorative Justice Unit and the ACT Human Rights Office.

There were no workers compensation claims during the reporting period.

Workplace relations

Certified agreements

The JACS Officers Certified Agreement 2004/2007, which covers Commission staff and to which the Electoral Commissioner was a signatory, expires on 31 March 2007.

The Commission is represented by a staff officer and the Electoral Commissioner on the JACS Workplace Consultative Committee (General). The Electoral Commissioner is a member of the JACS Joint Union Management Consultative Committee. Both these committees are established under the JACS Officers Certified Agreement.

Australian Workplace Agreements

No Commission staff were employed under an Australian Workplace Agreement.

Special Employment Arrangements

No Commission staff were employed under a Special Employment Arrangement.

Learning and development

During 2005/2006, all permanent staff of the Commission received training and/or gained other experience by attending various courses and seminars, and/or by observing other elections and gaining experience from other agencies.

To facilitate the Commission's learning and development strategy, each staff member is allocated up to \$2,000 in the Commission's budget each year.

Each Commission staff member developed a formal individual performance management and development plan during 2005/2006. These plans are reviewed every 3 months. Through regular meetings of all staff, the Commission also monitors and updates the Commission's performance as a team.

Learning and development opportunities undertaken in 2005/2006 are shown in the following table.

Table 10 – Learning and development activities

Staff Members	Date	Course/seminar/development opportunity
Electoral Commissioner	February 2006	Executive leadership development program – coaching session
	March 2006	Executive leadership development program – coaching session
	March 2006	Electoral reform symposium – Canada
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	October 2006	International observer – Buenos Aires election
Administrative Service Officer Class 6	March 2006	Assistance to South Australia state election
Acting Administrative Service Officer Class 6	March 2006	Assistance to South Australia state election
Acting Administrative Service Officer Class 6	March 2006	Assistance to South Australia state election
All staff	October 2005	Electoral Education Conference
	February 2006	Information session – understanding departmental budget and finance process
	May 2006	Information session – how to deal with mental health clients

Governance

Internal accountability

As a very small agency, the Commission does not have complex internal accountability structures and processes.

The full Commission, consisting of the Chairperson, the Electoral Commissioner and the third Member, oversees the operation of the Commission, sets general directions and approves reports to the Legislative Assembly. Under the Electoral Act, the Commission is responsible for undertaking internal reviews of a range of decisions that can be made in the first instance by the Commissioner or by his or her delegate.

The full Commission also forms part of the augmented Electoral Commission, together with the members of a redistribution committee. The augmented Electoral Commission considers objections to proposed electoral boundaries and makes final determinations of electorate names and boundaries.

The Electoral Commissioner performs the role of chief executive officer of the Commission. The Commissioner is empowered to make a wide range of decisions under the Electoral Act and the Public Sector Management Act. The Commissioner generally approves all major projects undertaken by Commission staff, including contracts, legislative instruments, publications and memorandums of understanding for fee-for-service elections. The Commissioner also carries a delegation under the *Financial Management Act 1996* to commit expenditure up to the limit of the Commission's budget.

The Deputy Electoral Commissioner performs a range of management functions in support of the Commissioner, including contracts manager, funding and financial disclosure manager and registrar of political parties. The Deputy Electoral Commissioner carries a standing delegation to perform the Commissioner's functions should the Commissioner be unavailable.

The Commission's management structure is described under **Organisational Structure** on page 3. Details of the Commission's corporate and operational plans can be found at **Corporate Plan 2006-2009** on page 4. Details of the Commission's performance reporting arrangements can be found at **Performance indicators** at page 5.

Remuneration of the Commission members is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.

For administrative purposes the Commission is an independent statutory authority within the Justice and Community Safety portfolio. The Commissioner exercises financial powers under the Financial Management Act as a delegate of the Chief Executive of the Department of Justice and Community Safety, who retains legislative responsibility for and maintains an oversight role of the Commission's budget. The Commissioner is a member of the Department's consultative management committee, JACSCOM, the JACS Information Management/Information Communication Technology Committee and the JACS Joint Union Management Consultative Committee.

Fraud prevention

Prevention strategies

The Commission employed the following fraud prevention strategies in 2005/2006:

- Adherence to fraud prevention procedures in office administration;
- Inclusion of fraud prevention procedures in the Commission's operational plans;
- Analysis of risk assessments in all major contracts;
- Use of a code of conduct relating to the use of information technology, particularly as it relates to electoral roll information;
- Use of standard procedures for viewing proof of identity documents when witnessing applications for enrolment;
- Secure storage of ballot material for all elections; and
- Secure website.

The Commission also continued to work closely with the AEC and the ECA on strategies and performance measures related to detection and prevention of electoral enrolment fraud.

Detection strategies

The Commission's election procedures include many mechanisms designed to provide for transparency. In particular, scrutineers appointed by candidates are entitled to be present throughout polling and the count for Legislative Assembly elections and most fee-for-service elections.

There were no reports or allegations of fraud or corruption received in 2005/2006.

Risk management and internal audit

The Commission undertakes risk management assessments for all its major projects and contracts. During the reporting period the Commission began the task of assessing risks for new processes expected to be introduced for the 2008 ACT election.

As the Commission is too small to undertake its own internal audit processes, it takes part in the JACS internal audit arrangements.

The Commission was a participant in the JACS 2005/2006 Strategic Internal Audit Program. Assessment of this program will be included in the JACS Annual Report. There were no adverse audit findings related to the Commission in 2005/2006.

The Commission's finances are also audited as part of the JACS portfolio.

External scrutiny

The Commission was not subject to significant external scrutiny in 2005/2006.

Reports required by legislation

Freedom of information

Section 7 statement

Section 7 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* (the FOI Act) requires agencies to publish a statement showing functions of the agency, how the public can participate in the work of the agency, categories of documents in the possession of the agency, and facilities provided for access to the agency's documents.

The Chairperson of the Commission is the principal officer of the Commission for the purposes of the FOI Act in relation to functions and powers vested in the Commission.

The Electoral Commissioner is the principal officer of the office of the Electoral Commissioner for the purposes of the FOI Act in relation to functions and powers vested in the Electoral Commissioner.

Establishment and powers

The ACT Electoral Commission is an independent statutory authority established by the *Electoral Act 1992*.

The Commission and the Electoral Commissioner exercise powers under the Electoral Act, the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1994* and the *Health Professionals Act 2004*.

Arrangements for external participation

There are several avenues available under the Electoral Act for external participation in electoral matters.

- Members of the public are invited to make suggestions, comments and objections regarding proposed changes to electoral boundaries;
- Members of the public are invited to lodge objections to applications for registration of political parties;
- An elector may object to the enrolment of a person on the ground that the person is not entitled to enrolment; and
- Approaches from the community on any electoral matter are welcomed by the Commission.

Documents

Extracts, updated at least once each year, from the ACT electoral roll are made available for public inspection (but not purchase) without charge at the office of the Commission.

Lists of registered practitioners eligible to vote in health professionals boards elections are made available for public inspection (but not purchase) without charge at the office of the Commission during the relevant election period.

Records related to the issue of declaration votes for ACT Legislative Assembly elections are made available for public inspection (but not purchase) without charge at the office of the Commission during the relevant election period.

The following documents are available for inspection and purchase:

- The register of political parties;
- Annual returns of donations, expenditure and debts submitted by political parties, MLAs, associated entities and donors; and
- Election returns of donations and expenditure submitted by political parties, candidates, broadcasters and publishers, donors and other political participants.

The documents listed under *Publications* on page 21 are provided free of charge (except for electronic voting data on CD-ROM).

Facilities for access

Publicly available documents can be obtained from the Commission's office. FOI requests should be directed to the Deputy Electoral Commissioner. See **Contact officer** on page 54 for contact details.

Most items are also available on the Commission's website at **www.elections.act.gov.au**.

Section 8 Statement

Section 8 of the FOI Act requires the Commission to publish a statement of documents used for the purpose of making decisions or recommendations. This statement is available on request and is included on the Commission's website at **www.elections.act.gov.au/FOI.html** and in the statement published by JACS

Section 79 Statement

Section 79 of the FOI Act states that each responsible Minister must prepare an annual report on the operation of the FOI Act in relation to each agency for which the Minister is responsible.

The Commission did not receive any FOI requests in 2005/2006, nor were any FOI matters outstanding at 1 July 2005.

Public Interest Disclosure

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994* requires each ACT Government agency to establish and maintain procedures to facilitate the making of public interest disclosures. The Commission has adopted procedures implemented by JACS.

During 2005/2006 no public interest disclosures related to the Commission were lodged.

Territory records

A description of the Commission's compliance with the Territory Records Act is set out at **Key result area 3.3 – Records management** on page 36.

Contact officer

For further information about the ACT Electoral Commission, FOI or any other matters raised in this annual report, contact:

The Deputy Electoral Commissioner
ACT Electoral Commission
Level 12
14 Moore St
Canberra City ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6205 0033

Fax: (02) 6205 0382

Or write to:
PO Box 272, Civic Square ACT 2608

Or email:
elections@act.gov.au

Website:
www.elections.act.gov.au

Sustainability and Environment

Commissioner for the Environment

The Commission did not contribute to the *State of the Environment Report* in 2005/2006. The Commission has not been the subject of an investigation or recommendations made by the Commissioner for the Environment.

Ecologically sustainable development

The *Environment Protection Act 1997* requires agencies to report on how its actions accorded with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

The Commission's delivery of service is generally office based. Commission staff are very mindful of waste management. Commission staff follow the following environment-friendly practices:

- Power to computers, printers, photocopier and lights is turned off every night;
- Recyclable consumables are used when available and recycled paper is used for normal office work and for publications where appropriate;
- Office waste paper and toner is recycled; and
- Election material is reused or recycled where possible.

It is expected that the provision of computer voting will lead, in time, to a reduction in the use of paper products during an election period.

In August 2005 the Electoral Commissioner elected not to use a Government vehicle.

The Commission participates in the ACT Green House energy efficiency data collection program.

Strategic Bushfire Management Plan

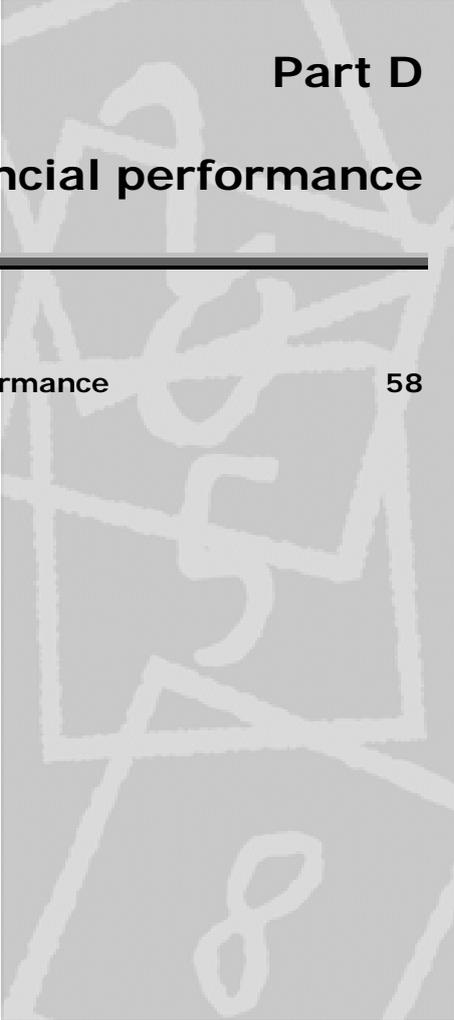
The Electoral Commission is neither a manager of Unleased Territory Land or the owner of Territory Land.

Part D

Analysis of financial performance

Analysis of financial performance

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Analysis of financial performance

Management Discussion and Analysis

The Commission's expenditure was within its budget for 2005/2006.

The Commission does not have financial reporting obligations under the Financial Management Act. The Commission is included in the JACS portfolio for budgetary purposes. In the departmental structure for 2005/2006, the Commission is included in Output Class 1.7 – Electoral Services.

The financial transactions for the Commission for the year ending 30 June 2006 are formally reported in the consolidated financial statements of the JACS Annual Report. The Commission's financial results have been audited for the purposes of the *Audit Act 1989* as part of the JACS portfolio.

Financial Report

The following table shows the operating costs of the Commission for the reporting year for information purposes only. This table should be read in conjunction with the JACS financial statements shown in its Annual Report. The table excludes JACS corporate overheads.

Table 11 — Financial summary for 2005/2006

ACT Electoral Commission	Budget \$'000	Actual Outcome \$'000
Revenue		
Government Payment for Outputs	917	917
Other Revenue	66	44
Total Revenue	983	961
Expenses		
Employee Expenses	475	413
Superannuation	64	105
Administration Expenses	418	434
Depreciation	7	3
Total Expenses	964	955
Operating Result	19	6

Statement of Performance

The Commission is not required to prepare an annual statement of performance under the Financial Management Act.

In the 2005/2006 budget papers, the number of performance indicators for most output classes in the JACS portfolio were reduced. The Chief Executive of JACS decided to adopt only 2 performance indicators for the electoral services output class: *High citizen participation in the electoral process*; and *Average time to finalise results of general elections and referendums for the Act Legislative Assembly*. As these indicators only relate to Legislative Assembly elections, the Commission has no formal performance indicators capable of being listed in the budget papers or reported on in non-Assembly election years.

The Commission's in-house performance indicators are listed at **Performance indicators** on page 5 and evaluated in Part B.

Strategic asset management

The Commission's assets, accommodation details and energy reduction strategies are included in the JACS asset management strategy and reported on in the JACS Annual Report.

To assist with tracking computing and office equipment the Commission uses the InTACT ATLAS system, which is updated to reflect any equipment changes.

Capital works

The Commission did not undertake any capital works projects in 2005/2006.

Government contracting

Procurement principles and processes

The processes used to select and manage all contractors during 2005/2006 complied with the *Government Procurement Act 2001* and the ACT Government Procurement Principles and Procurement Circulars.

External sources of labour and services

In 2005/2006, the Commission did not enter into any reportable contracts for labour and services that exceeded \$20,000 for the reporting period.

Interest paid on commercial accounts

No interest was paid during 2005/2006 on commercial accounts.

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Legislative report

The Commission is responsible for the conduct of the elections and referendums and for the provision of electoral advice and services under the following legislation:

- *Electoral Act 1992;*
- *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1994;*
- *Proportional Representation (Hare-Clark) Entrenchment Act 1994; and*
- *Health Professionals Regulation 2004.*

The Commission's role in providing advice on amendments to this legislation is discussed above at ***Electoral Legislation*** from page 23.

Legislative Assembly Committee inquiries and reports

The Commission was subject to the following Legislative Assembly Committee inquiry and report in 2005/2006:

- Standing Committee On Legal Affairs, *Report on Annual & Financial Reports 2004-2005*, Report 2, February 2006 (page 15).

The Committee made no recommendations directly related to the Commission.

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