



ACT | Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander  
Elected Body

# Instructions for Liaison Officers

Election 2017

# Accessibility

---

Elections ACT is committed to making its information and services accessible to as many people as possible.

- If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format – such as large print or audio – please telephone 02 6205 0033.
- If English is not your first language and you require the translating and interpreting service – please telephone 13 14 50.
- If you are deaf or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service:
  - TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for 02 6205 0033
  - Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 02 6205 0033
  - Internet relay users connect to NRS ([www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au)) and then ask for 02 6205 0033
- ACT Interpreter Service – for the deaf and blind – please telephone 02 6287 4391.

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2017

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the Territory Records Office, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601.

Produced by the  
ACT Electoral Commission  
PO Box 272, Civic Square ACT 2608.  
Phone: 02 6205 0033  
Web: [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au)  
Email: [elections@act.gov.au](mailto:elections@act.gov.au)

Publication date: May 2017

# Contents

---

<b>Accessibility.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Instructions for Liaison Officers.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The advertised role of the polling place Liaison Officer.....</b>	<b>6</b>

# Instructions for Liaison Officers

---

You have been selected as a Liaison Officer for the 2017 ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Election.

You have a very important job to do. It is your responsibility to see that only Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders vote in this election.

This is how it is done:

- At all times at least one liaison officer must be present during the hours of polling in each polling location.
- Depending on the circumstances at the time, you may be performing the role of liaison officer as well as the roll of issuing officer, or you could be working as part of an issuing officer team, alongside another issuing officer, who may also be performing the role of liaison officer.
- The first step in issuing a vote is for the issuing officer to ask the elector for their full name and address before providing the elector with a ballot paper.
- Before the ballot papers are given to the voter, you, as a liaison officer, must decide whether or not, on the balance of probability, the voter is an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander.
- You may ask the voter any questions you believe on reasonable grounds are necessary to help you to decide.
- If you are not satisfied that the voter is an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander then you should:
  - Advise the voter that you are challenging their eligibility to vote;
  - Tell the voter that they have a right to cast a declaration vote;
  - If you are not the issuing officer, tell the issuing officer about the challenge;
  - Inform the OIC of the challenge; and
  - Record the challenge in your "Objection Register".
- If the voter elects to cast a declaration vote:
  - Give the voter the "Notice challenging eligibility to vote".
  - Advise the voter that a notice of your decision will be provided to the Review Panel, and that the ballot paper will be admitted to the scrutiny if the Review Panel decides that the voter is an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander.
  - Advise the voter that the decision of the Review Panel will be sent to the voter by the Electoral Commissioner.
- If the OIC is available, it is advisable that the Liaison Officer call over the Officer in Charge to witness the above procedures and to check that the information has been recorded correctly.
- The OIC, if available, should be the officer issuing declaration votes, including declaration votes in relation to eligibility challenges. Once you have completed the challenge steps as outlined above, the OIC will then give the voter declaration voting papers and will continue the process until complete.

- If multiple liaison officers are working within the same polling place, the liaison officers should work together to assist in any necessary decisions on elector eligibility. If however the liaison officers disagree on the eligibility of an elector, with at least one liaison officer challenging eligibility, a declaration vote should be issued according to the procedures above, allowing the review panel to investigate and determine a final eligibility decision.

## **The advertised role of the polling place Liaison Officer**

---

During the polling for an ATSIEB election, a Liaison Officer is appointed to sight all voters entering a polling place and to decide on the balance of probabilities whether or not each voter is an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander. If the Liaison Officer believes that a voter is not an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander and challenges the voter's right to vote, the voter may elect to cast a 'Declaration Vote'.

A 'Declaration Vote' is issued when a voter 'declares' that they are eligible to vote in the election. When issuing a 'Declaration Vote', the polling official stamps the ballot paper with the word 'Declaration' and the voter is instructed to place their completed ballot paper into a Declaration Vote envelope. This envelope is opened and the ballot paper counted **only** if the Review Panel agrees with the voter's declaration.

To be eligible to vote in an ATSIEB election the voter must:

- be an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander;
- be 18 years of age or more on polling start day; and
- be on, or eligible to be on, the ACT electoral roll.

A person is entitled to be on the ACT electoral roll if they:

- are an Australian Citizen;
- are 18 years or older; and
- have lived at their ACT address for at least one month.

If a Liaison Officer challenges a voter they must record the details in the Liaison Officers' Objections Register and sign the record. The Liaison Officer must also give the voter a written notice about the challenge which informs the voter that:

- notice of the Liaison Officer's decision will be given to a review panel; and
- the voter's ballot paper will only be counted if the review panel decides that the voter is an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander.

If the voter elects to cast a declaration vote then the details of the Liaison Officer's challenge will come to the Review Panel for investigation and decision on eligibility to vote.

This information will be provided to the Panel within 3 business days of the voter casting a declaration vote. No action will be required of the panel if the voter does not cast a declaration vote.

# Liaison Officer's objection register

This page should be included in the folder that will be the Liaison Officer's Objection Register.

<b>Polling place</b>	
<b>Liaison officer</b>	

<b>Challenge to voter's qualifications</b>	
I consider that the voter whose details appear below is neither an Aboriginal person nor a Torres Strait Islander.	
Signature of Liaison Officer _____ / /	

<b>Voter details</b>		
<b>Surname</b>		
<b>Given names</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Phone</b>		<b>Fax</b>
<b>Email</b>		

<b>Review panel decision</b>		
<b>Admit</b>	<b>Reject</b>	<b>Review panel member</b>

# Notice challenging eligibility to vote

To be provided to the challenged voter if they elect to cast a declaration vote

Voter details			
<b>Surname</b>			
<b>Given names</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Phone</b>		<b>Fax</b>	
<b>Email</b>			

Challenge to voter's qualifications	
<p>I am challenging your voting at this election because I do not consider that you are an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander.</p> <p>If you request to have a declaration vote, my decision will be given to the Review Panel which will decide whether you are an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander, and therefore whether your vote will be admitted to the count.</p>	
Signature of Liaison Officer _____	/ /