

# The ACT Electoral Commission & Elections ACT

## Functions of the ACT Electoral Commission & Elections ACT

The ACT Electoral Commission is an independent statutory authority responsible for conducting elections and referendums for the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory.

The ACT Electoral Commission comprises 3 statutory office holders: the Chairperson, the Electoral Commissioner and a third Member. The Commission members are independent Officers of the ACT Legislative Assembly, reporting to the Assembly through the Speaker.

The Electoral Commissioner is assisted by staff employed under the *Public Sector Management Act 1992* and the *Electoral Act 1992*. The Electoral Commissioner and the staff assisting the Commissioner work under the operating title Elections ACT.

Elections ACT's mission is to provide the ACT community with high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums.

The functions of the Commission and Elections ACT include:

- Conducting elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly;
- Taking part in redistributing electoral boundaries for the ACT;
- Providing advice to the Legislative Assembly and the Executive on election matters;
- Conducting information campaigns and providing electoral education services;
- Registering political parties and administering the election funding, expenditure and financial disclosure scheme;
- Working with the Australian Electoral Commission to provide an electoral roll for ACT elections, and
- Conducting other elections, including elections for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and fee for service elections.

## More information

If you would like more information:

- Visit the website [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au) or email [elections@act.gov.au](mailto:elections@act.gov.au)
- Visit Elections ACT at Level 6, 221 London Circuit, Canberra City
- Phone (02) 6205 0033 or fax to (02) 6205 0382

(07/21)



# History of voting in the ACT

1988

- ACT self-government bills introduced into Commonwealth parliament with Royal Assent being given on 6 December 1988.
- Elections were run according to the *Australian Capital Territory (Electoral) Act 1988*.

1989

- First ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 4 March 1989 using the modified d'Hondt electoral system.
- ACT voted as a single electorate.
- Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected for fixed 3 year terms.

1991

- Commonwealth parliament legislated to give control of the ACT electoral system to the people of the ACT.
- The *Australian Capital Territory (Electoral) Amendment Act 1991* sets out conditions for a referendum on an ACT electoral system to choose between a single member electorate system or Hare-Clark proportional representation system.

1992

- Second ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 15 February 1992 using the modified d'Hondt system again.
- Referendum to choose a new electoral system was held at the same time as the election.
- The Hare-Clark electoral system was chosen. 65.3% of people voted for this system.
- ACT Electoral Commission established by *Electoral Act 1992*.

1995

- Third ACT Legislative Assembly election held on 18 February 1995 using the Hare-Clark electoral system for the first time.
- ACT divided into 3 multi-member electorates: Brindabella with 5 MLAs, Ginninderra with 5 MLAs and Molonglo with 7 MLAs.
- Entrenchment referendum on the Hare-Clark system. Entrenchment means that the electoral system can only be changed by another referendum or by a special majority of two-thirds of the Assembly.

1998

- Fourth ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 21 February 1998.
- Elections moved from third Saturday in February to third Saturday in October every 3 years.

2001

- Fifth ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 20 October 2001.
- New electorate boundaries used at this election after a redistribution in 2000.
- Electronic voting used for the first time for an ACT election.

2004

- Sixth ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 16 October 2004.
- Elections changed from third Saturday in October every 3 years to every 4 years.
- Members now elected for fixed 4 year terms.

2008

- Seventh ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 18 October 2008.
- New electorate boundaries used at this election after a redistribution in 2007.

2012

- Eighth ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 20 October 2012.
- New electorate boundaries used at this election after a redistribution in 2011.

2016

- Legislation was enacted by the Legislative Assembly in 2014 to increase the size of the Assembly to 25 members.
- A redistribution was carried out in 2015 to create 5 new electorates, each electing 5 MLAs.
- New electorates are Brindabella, Ginninderra, Kurrajong, Murrumbidgee and Yerrabi.
- New electorate boundaries applied from the ninth ACT Legislative Assembly election held on 15 October 2016

2020

- Tenth ACT Legislative Assembly election was held on 17 October 2020.
- New electorate boundaries used at this election after a redistribution in 2019.