



ACT Electoral Commission



Annual Report



2004 | 2005



Australian Capital Territory



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2004 | 2005



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ISBN 0 642 60350 2

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Mr Jon Stanhope MLA  
Attorney General  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

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 2004 to 30 June 2005 has been included and that it complies with the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions.

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.

Handwritten signature of Graham Glenn.

Graham Glenn  
Chairperson

15 September 2005

Handwritten signature of Phillip Green.

Phillip Green  
Electoral Commissioner

15 September 2005

Handwritten signature of Christabel Young.

Christabel Young  
Member

15 September 2005



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# Glossary



<b>ACT</b>	Australian Capital Territory
<b>AEC</b>	Australian Electoral Commission
<b>ANU</b>	Australian National University
<b>Ballot group</b>	A name registered under the Electoral Act by an Independent MLA for the purpose of grouping candidates on ballot papers – only in use at the 2001 election
<b>Commission</b>	ACT Electoral Commission
<b>CPI</b>	Consumer Price Index
<b>CRU</b>	Continuous Roll Update
<b>ECA</b>	Electoral Council of Australia
<b>EEO</b>	Equal Employment Opportunity
<b>Election funding</b>	Public funding of candidates and registered political parties at ACT Legislative Assembly elections
<b>Elections ACT</b>	Unofficial “corporate name” of the ACT Electoral Commission
<b>Electoral Act</b>	<i>Electoral Act 1992</i>
<b>FAD</b>	Funding and Disclosure
<b>FOI</b>	Freedom of Information
<b>FOI Act</b>	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1989</i>
<b>Hare-Clark</b>	The proportional representation electoral system used in the ACT
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>InTACT</b>	The ACT Government information technology management agency
<b>JACS</b>	ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety
<b>Joint roll</b>	Agreement between the ACT and Commonwealth to maintain a common electoral roll
<b>MLA</b>	Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly
<b>OH&amp;S</b>	Occupational Health and Safety
<b>Party</b>	A political party registered under the Electoral Act
<b>Redistribution</b>	A redistribution of electoral boundaries
<b>SRC</b>	Student Representative Council





## Overview of the agency

### Description of activities

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 to a wide range of clients.

The Attorney General is the Minister responsible for electoral matters and the Commission is included in the Justice and Community Safety portfolio for administrative purposes.

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. An election for the Assembly was held on 16 October 2004.

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

The ACT Electoral Commission Corporate Plan is set out on page 5.

In the departmental structure for 2004/2005, the Commission was included in Output Class 2.7: Electoral Services. A performance report against the performance measures relevant to the Commission listed in the 2004/2005 budget papers for Output 2.7 is on page 49 of this report.

### 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; 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**

<b>Mr Graham Glenn AO</b> <i>Chairperson</i> Reappointed 23 July 2004 for 1 year
<b>Mr Phillip Green</b> <i>Electoral Commissioner</i> Reappointed 1 April 2005 for 5 years
<b>Dr Christabel Young FASSA</b> <i>Member</i> Reappointed 23 July 2004 for 1 year



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 is assisted by 5 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 21 — Staff of the ACT Electoral Commission as at pay 27, 2004/2005*, on page 41.

## Major issues, challenges and achievements for the reporting year

The biggest challenge and achievement of the 2004/2005 year was the successful conduct of the 16 October 2004 ACT Legislative Assembly election.

Notable aspects of the election included:

- ❑ The highest voter turnout of any Assembly election since self-government was introduced, with 93% of enrolled voters participating in the election;
- ❑ The lowest informal vote rate of any Assembly election, at 2.7%;
- ❑ Successful deployment of electronic voting to over 28,000 voters;
- ❑ Very high levels of satisfaction with the Commission's service;
- ❑ Effective use of electronic counting to deliver a final result 11 days after polling day;
- ❑ The conduct of a successful public information campaign, focussing on distinguishing the ACT election from the federal election held the week before;

- ❑ Provision of improved election results displays on the electronic tally board in the tally room and on the Commission's web site; and
- ❑ Trialling of a custom-built electronic voting "tablet" at the Tuggeranong voting centre.



Issuing, casting and depositing an electronic vote

## Overview of agency performance and financial results

In addition to the conduct of the 2004 election, other notable activities undertaken during the year included:

- ❑ Reporting on the use of the electronic voting and counting system at the 2004 election (tabled in the Assembly on 23 August 2005);
- ❑ Commencing a detailed review of the *Electoral Act 1992* after the 2004 election (tabled in the Assembly on 23 August 2005);
- ❑ Commencing a strategic review of the Commission's structure and corporate plan, to be completed in 2005/2006;
- ❑ Preparing to host an electoral educators conference in Canberra in October 2005;
- ❑ Briefing members of parliament and officials from Canada, New Zealand, NSW, Victoria and Western Australia on ACT election practices, particularly electronic voting and counting;
- ❑ Presentation of a paper on the ACT's electronic voting and counting system at the *E-Voting and Electronic Democracy: Present and the Future* conference held in Seoul, South Korea in March 2005;
- ❑ Participating in the Department of Justice and Community Safety (JACS) revision of performance indicators;
- ❑ Securing in-principle agreement to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with JACS for the provision of shared services; and
- ❑ Implementation of the Commission's records management policy and procedures in accordance with the *Territory Records Act 2002*, particularly the destruction of out-of-date records.

Ongoing activities undertaken during the year included:

- ❑ Continuing the Commission's non-parliamentary election program, conducting 1 health professionals board election, 15 fee-for-service ballots, including 9 enterprise bargaining ballots, and assisting with the conduct of 4 interstate elections, the federal election and a New Zealand by-election; and
- ❑ Continuing to work with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA) to improve electoral roll maintenance procedures;
- ❑ Renegotiating a Joint Roll Arrangement memorandum of understanding with the AEC;
- ❑ Pursuing Continuous Roll Update (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.

The Commission's expenditure in 2004/2005 exceeded its allocated budget by around \$26,000. This negative operating result was attributable to JACS withdrawing \$40,000 from the Commission's Government payment for outputs without the knowledge of the Commission and contrary to an agreement reached between JACS and the Electoral Commissioner.



The 2004 draw for ballot positions

## Outlook for the coming year

The main focus of the Commission in 2005/2006 will be on long-term planning for the 2008 Legislative Assembly election.

A major project for 2005/2006 will be the hosting of an electoral educators conference in Canberra in October 2005. This conference is an initiative of the ACT Electoral Commission and will be held under the auspices of the Electoral Council of Australia.

The Commission will also continue its usual education, staff development, non-parliamentary election and CRU programs.

Other projects to be undertaken will include:

- ❑ Investigating options for enhancing the electronic voting and counting system – particularly the feasibility of using electronic scanning for counting paper ballots;
- ❑ Finalising a strategic review of the Commission's structure and corporate plan in the light of the introduction of 4-year terms;
- ❑ Implementing a new strategy for maintaining the Commission's in-house suite of databases in preparation for the 2008 election;
- ❑ Assisting the ACT Government with elections for an ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultative body;
- ❑ Drafting a memorandum of understanding with JACS for the provision of corporate services;
- ❑ Providing advice to Government and Members of the Legislative Assembly on amendments to the Electoral Act as required;
- ❑ 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 and its subcommittees to improve electoral roll maintenance procedures;
- ❑ Implementing the Commission's records management procedures;
- ❑ Continuing the Commission's non-parliamentary election program, including a round of health professionals boards elections; and
- ❑ Continuing the schools based electoral education program.

## Part B: Agency performance



### ACT Electoral Commission Corporate Plan

The *Corporate Plan 2002–2005* is underpinned by more detailed operational plans, which set out strategies and procedures for each key result area, and by the performance measures and standards reported on in Table 25 – Detailed statement of expenditure for 2004/2005.

The next section reports on activities undertaken in each key result area in 2004/2005 to achieve the Commission's goals.

**Table 2 — ACT Electoral Commission Corporate Plan 2002–2005**

MISSION		
To provide the ACT community with high quality electoral services that ensure fair and open elections and referendums.		
GOAL	ONE	To conduct high quality elections and referendums
<b>Key result areas:</b>		1.1 Elections for the ACT Legislative Assembly
		1.2 Election and referendum services to other agencies
GOAL	TWO	To provide high quality information, education, advice and services related to the electoral process
<b>Key result areas:</b>		2.1 Electoral information and advice
		2.2 Electoral enrolment
		2.3 Electoral education
		2.4 Other electoral statutory requirements
GOAL	THREE	To improve the quality of electoral services by ensuring best possible management practice
<b>Key result areas:</b>		3.1 Human resource management
		3.2 Financial management
		3.3 Records management
		3.4 Information technology management

## Key strategic achievements

### Goal one – To conduct high quality elections and referendums

#### Key result area 1.1

#### Elections for the ACT Legislative Assembly

##### The conduct of the 2004 ACT Legislative Assembly election

The October 2004 Legislative Assembly election was the major focus of the Commission's activities in 2004/2005. The 2004 election built on the successes achieved in 2001 with the introduction of electronic voting and counting.

Notable features of the 2004 election included:

- ❑ The highest voter turnout of any Assembly election, with 93% of enrolled voters participating in the election;
- ❑ The lowest informal vote rate of any Assembly election, at 2.7%;
- ❑ Expanded use of electronic voting at polling places, with over 28,000 voters casting their votes electronically;
- ❑ Successful use of the electronic counting system used for the first time in 2001;
- ❑ Provision of secret voting facilities for blind and sight-impaired people, using electronic voting;
- ❑ Use of an electronic display for the draw for positions on ballot papers;
- ❑ Use of an improved electronic tally board in the Tally Room and improved display of election results on the internet on and after election night;
- ❑ The last ACT election held before the introduction of 4-year terms, with the next election due in 2008; and
- ❑ Implementation of changes to the party registration scheme, including a 30 June cut-off for applications for party registration and the removal of the ability of a sitting MLA to register a ballot group.

Table 3 — Key election dates

Event	Date
Last day to lodge applications for party registration	30 June 2004
Close of register of political parties	9 September 2004
Pre-election period commenced/ nominations opened	10 September 2004
Rolls closed	17 September 2004 (8 pm)
Nominations closed	22 September 2004 (12 noon)
Nominations declared/ ballot paper order determined	23 September 2004 (12 noon)
Pre-poll voting commenced	27 September 2004
Pre-poll voting concluded	15 October 2004 (8 pm)
Polling day	16 October 2004 (8 am – 6 pm)
Last day for receipt of postal votes	22 October 2004
Election result announced	27 October 2004
Declaration of the poll	29 October 2004

Key dates for the 2004 election are shown in the following table.



## Electronic Voting and Vote Counting at the 2004 Election

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.

Electronic voting was provided at 4 pre-poll voting centres during the 3 weeks prior to election day, and at 8 polling places on election day. A total of 28,169 electronic votes were cast. After polling day, preferences shown on 176,340 formal paper ballots were data entered into a computer system and combined with the electronic voting data. Progressive results for the election were available each day after the election with a final result announced on Wednesday 27 October 2004.



Pre-poll voting in Woden

Electronic voting and counting was implemented on budget at a cost of around \$179,000. This included around \$72,000 spent in 2003/2004 on software enhancements and \$107,000 spent in 2004/2005 on deployment of electronic voting to polling places and hardware used for electronic voting and counting.

A range of enhancements was made to the electronic voting and counting system for the 2004 election. These enhancements included:

- ☐ Improving the set-up process to automate the loading of election details, particularly candidate names, ballot paper images and audio files;
- ☐ Placing the cursor at a random position on the ballot paper at the start of voting;
- ☐ Shortening the barcode to improve barcode reader performance;
- ☐ Extending the range of statistics that can be published electronically during the count; and
- ☐ Enhancing the usability of the error-control reports used in the data-entry process.

These changes all helped to improve the performance of the electronic voting and counting system at the 2004 election.

The electronic voting and counting system computer code was extensively tested and independently audited before the system was used at the 2004 election.

The Commission invited members of the electronic voting and counting system Reference Group to observe a series of tests of the system in September 2004. This Reference Group consisted of representatives nominated by MLAs and registered political parties and other special interest groups, including the Proportional Representation Society and Blind Citizens Australia.

At the 2004 election the electronic voting system demonstrated that it:

- ☐ Eliminated the need for manual counting of electronic votes, thereby reducing the possibility of counting error and speeding the transmission of results;
- ☐ Was reliable and secure;
- ☐ Significantly reduced the number of unintentional voter errors and contributed to an overall drop in the proportion of informal voters at the election;
- ☐ Allowed blind and sight-impaired people to vote entirely without assistance and in secret through use of headphones and recorded voice instructions; and
- ☐ Provided on-screen voting instructions in 12 different languages.



On-screen choice of 12 different languages

The electronic counting system also had significant benefits. Preferences shown on paper ballots were data-entered by two independent operators, electronically checked for errors, and manually corrected if needed. This data was then combined with the results of the electronic voting, and a computer program was used to distribute preferences under the ACT's Hare-Clark electoral system.



The electronic counting system:

- ❑ Effectively eliminated errors such as incorrectly sorting or counting ballot papers;
- ❑ Increased the accuracy of the election count;
- ❑ Reduced the time needed to accurately count the votes and announce the election result; and
- ❑ Increased the amount of information available about errors made on paper ballots by electors.



Post election electronic scrutiny

The electronic voting and counting system was delivered using ACT Government in-house resources for technical support, and external contractors for software development and supply of hardware.

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.

## Voting

At the 2004 Assembly election, 209,749 eligible electors voted, a turnout of 92.8%. This was the highest voter turnout of any Assembly election since self-government was introduced. This compares to a turnout of 198,721, or 90.9%, in 2001. The following table sets out the numbers of votes counted as ordinary, postal, pre-poll and declaration votes.

**Table 4 — Votes cast in the 2004 election by type of vote**

Vote Type	Number	Percent
Ordinary Votes	170 665	81.4%
Postal votes	6 532	3.1%
Pre-poll votes	30 734	14.7%
Declaration votes	1 818	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>209 749</b>	

## Pre-Poll Voting

Pre-poll voting was provided at Belconnen, Civic, Woden and Tuggeranong in the 3 weeks before polling day, commencing on Monday 27 September 2004. Computer voting was provided at all pre-poll voting centres from 28 September. A total of 30,405 votes were cast at these pre-poll voting centres, with 20,722 of these votes being electronic votes. This compared with 24,169 pre-poll votes cast in 2001, of which around 11,300 were electronic votes.



Pre-poll voting tablet

Pre-polling was also provided on the Saturday prior to polling day for those people who may have found it difficult to pre-poll during ordinary business hours and who would be away on polling day. A total of 2,184 electors used the pre-poll facilities made available on the day, showing that the service provided was convenient for many people. However, as this day was also polling day for the federal election, some voters were confused by the 2 overlapping election periods. While pre-poll centre staff endeavoured to ensure that voters understood they were voting for the ACT election, a small number of voters apparently mistakenly voted twice for the ACT election, believing they were voting once for each of the elections. This issue is discussed below under *Multiple voters* on page 12.

The pre-polling centres were all used as ordinary polling places on polling day with computer voting continuing to be offered.

## Interstate voting

Interstate voters could vote in person at the office of each interstate electoral authority during the pre-election period. A total of 329 votes were cast in this way. These votes are included in the total for pre-poll voting in the table above.

## Postal voting

An elector who expects to be unable to attend a polling place on polling day or whose address is suppressed on the electoral roll is entitled to vote by post or at a pre-poll voting centre. In 2004, 7,794 postal votes were issued to electors, and 6,532 postal votes were admitted to the count. This compared with 8,192 postal votes issued in 2001, of which 6,410 were admitted to the count.

Electors obtained a postal vote by completing an application form. Postal vote application forms were made available in the ACT at all Post Offices and at the ACT Electoral Commission office. The application form was also available to be downloaded and printed from the Commission's website. Australian overseas missions provided application forms to electors overseas. Electors who were registered declaration voters were automatically sent postal ballot material without the need for an application form.

An amendment to the Electoral Act passed by the Legislative Assembly in May 2004 made it an offence 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. This effectively prevented the practice that occurred at the 2001 election, when the major political parties distributed postal vote application forms that requested voters to send their application forms to the parties. This change may have accounted for the smaller number of postal votes issued in 2004 compared to 2001.

More detail on the operation of the postal voting process during the 2004 election is included in the Commission's report: *ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2004: Review of the Electoral Act 1992*.

## Voting at polling places

Public schools, private schools, hospitals and community facilities were used as polling venues in the 2004 election.

Wherever possible, the Commission attempted to keep the same polling places as were used at previous ACT and federal elections in order to minimise public confusion.



A community BBQ at Weston Polling Place

As at previous elections, ACT electors were able to cast an ordinary vote for any electorate at any polling place. An "ordinary vote" is a vote issued to an elector whose name is found on a certified list of electors.

To enable ordinary voting for all three electorates, each polling place is issued with certified lists for its "home" electorate and the other two "away" electorates.

For the first time at the 2004 election, polling staff were issued with an A-Z reference list of all electors in the ACT, in addition to their normal electorate rolls. This made it easier for staff to find electors' names where they could not be found on a particular electorate roll.

## Mobile polling

Teams of polling officials visited hospitals, nursing homes and the Belconnen Remand Centre in the week leading up to polling day.

The mobile polling teams issued a total of 1,511 votes to patients and residents in those institutions. This compares to 1,394 votes issued in 2001.

## Declaration voting

A declaration vote is issued to a voter in a polling place or pre-poll voting centre when his or her name cannot be found on the roll for any of the three electorates.

For the first time at the 2004 election, the AEC was contracted to conduct the declaration vote scrutiny. This is a complex process involving detailed examination of electors' enrolment history stored on the AEC computerised roll system, RMANS. This process proved to be very satisfactory, and served to free up permanent Commission staff for other duties.



A total of 3,288 declaration votes were issued. Of these, 1,818 were admitted to the count. Of those 1,470 declaration votes not admitted to the count, most were cast by persons who were not entitled to vote at the election.

### Informal voting

The 2004 election continued the trend started at the 1998 election and carried into the 2001 election, with the number of informal votes counted at the 2004 election being the lowest in both percentage and absolute terms of any of the 6 ACT Legislative Assembly elections. Around 2.7% of all votes admitted to the count, or 5,560 out of 209,749 ballot papers, were informal in 2004. This compared to 4.0% informal votes in 2001, 4.3% in 1998; 6.2% in 1995; 6.5% in 1992 and 5.7% in 1989.

The following table shows the results of a survey of a sample of informal ballot papers, giving the reasons for ballot papers being informal. The sample only includes paper ballots. Another 518 informal votes were cast on the electronic voting system. All of the these votes are classified as totally blank.

A similar survey was published in the Commission's review of the Electoral Act following the 2001 election.

The 2004 survey indicates that (while the absolute number of informal votes has gone down) the proportion of informal ballot papers that appear to be deliberate has gone up and the proportion of apparently accidental informal votes has gone down. In particular, 35.5% of informal paper ballots were totally blank in 2004, compared to 28.0% in 2001 (taking electronic votes into account would make the 2004 proportion even higher).

Similarly, 22.5% of informal paper ballots in 2004 contained only marks, writing, lines, scribbles or slogans, compared to 19.7% in 2001. By contrast, informal ballots containing ticks, crosses and/or some numbers – which can be expected to include most accidental informal ballots – constituted 38.6% of informal ballots in 2004, compared to 50.4% in 2001.

These results may indicate that the Commission's information campaign contributed to the reduction in the absolute number of informal votes and the proportion of apparently accidental informal votes.

**Table 5 — Breakdown of informal ballot papers by reason for informality – 2004 election**

	Brindabella		Ginninderra		Molonglo		ACT Total	
Reason for informality	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Ballot papers that identify the elector	4	0.3%	3	0.2%	1	0.1%	8	0.2%
Ballot papers totally blank	460	38.0%	445	32.1%	445	37.1%	1 350	35.5%
Ballot papers informal because the voter has "written in" a candidate	27	2.2%	59	4.3%	24	2.0%	110	2.9%
Ballot papers containing marks, writing, lines or scribbles/slogans/stickers only	329	27.2%	308	22.2%	217	18.1%	854	22.5%
Ballot papers containing ticks, crosses or some numbers, but no unique first preference	386	31.9%	568	41.0%	512	42.7%	1 466	38.6%
Apparent "above the line" votes	5	0.4%	4	0.3%	1	0.1%	10	0.3%
Total informal paper ballots in the sample	1 211		1387		1 200		3 798	
Total informal paper ballots in the election	1 586		1477		1979		5 042	
Total informal ballot papers cast using electronic voting	96		183		239		518	
Total of all informal ballot papers in the election	1 682		1 660		2 218		5 560	

## Discarded votes

A development that has come to light since the introduction of electronic voting is the number of electronic vote barcode tokens that are issued to voters but are not used on the computer system to record a vote. Typically, these cases occur where a person attempts to cast an electronic vote but fails to complete all the steps, or where a person does not wish to cast a formal vote and places the barcode directly in the ballot box without recording an electronic vote.

These discarded electronic vote barcodes are not recorded as informal votes, as they are not counted by the electronic voting system. By contrast, a deliberately informal paper ballot placed unmarked in a ballot box will be counted as an informal vote.



The initial scrutiny at Weston polling place

There were 209 discarded electronic vote barcodes counted in 2004. There were 109 discarded electronic vote barcodes counted in 2001. These statistics were not reported in the official election statistics for those elections, although they were listed in the reports on the electronic voting and counting system following the election.

As these discarded votes do constitute votes properly issued to electors, the Commission considers that in future they should be included in the official statistics, as they impact on both the number of invalid votes and on the overall turnout figures for elections. The Commission intends to include these discarded vote numbers in the official election statistics volumes for the 2008 election.

## Non-voters

Voting is compulsory for ACT elections. It is an offence for an enrolled elector to fail to vote at an election without a valid and sufficient reason.

On 23 November 2004 the Commission sent 11396 notices to apparent non-voters.

On 10 February 2005 the Commission sent reminder notices to the 4,390 apparent non-voters who had failed to reply at that stage. On 8 April 2005 the Commission sent notices of possible prosecution to the 2,951 apparent non-voters who had failed to reply to the reminder notice.

The Commission issued summonses on 23 June 2005 to the 894 electors who failed to reply to the notice of possible prosecution and to those electors who provided a reason that was not taken to be valid and sufficient. Some of the electors who were sent summonses subsequently provided valid and sufficient reasons for not voting to the Commission.

New payment options introduced for the first time for ACT non-voters in 2001 were continued in 2004, with credit card payment facilities made available on the internet, by phone and at ACT Government Canberra Connect Shopfronts.

The following table outlines the replies received up to 30 June 2005 compared with the total replies for the 2001 election.

Non-voter processes will continue in the 2005/2006 financial year.



**Table 6 — Non-voter statistics from the 2001 and 2004 elections**

Details	2001	2004
Total enrolment	218 615	226 098
Number of votes counted	198 721	209 749
<b>Total number of apparent non-voters</b>	<b>19 894</b>	<b>16 349</b>
Valid reason for not voting provided before notices sent <sup>1</sup>	9 525	7 029
<b>Number of electors sent non-voters notices <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>11 796</b>	<b>11 396</b>
Elector claimed to have voted	688	873
Elector unable to vote due to mental incapacity or being infirm	104	107
Elector deceased	4	18
Valid and sufficient reason provided	4 195	4 210
\$20 penalty paid	1 767	1 953
Elector moved permanently interstate or overseas	1 001	793
Letter returned undelivered	3 377	2 775
No valid and sufficient reason provided and penalty not paid	42	17
No reply	618	650

Note 1: Includes electors whose postal votes or declaration votes were not admitted to the count, electors who provided valid excuses in person or by telephone or letter and electors who transferred their enrolment interstate before notices were sent.

Note 2: The number of notices sent and the number of valid reasons provided before notices sent do not sum to the total number of apparent non-voters because some voters provided excuses but nevertheless did vote, and because of inaccuracies in the scanning process.

### Multiple voters

The fact that the federal election period overlapped with the ACT election period, with the federal election being held on the Saturday before the ACT polling day, appears to have resulted in a significant increase in the number of electors whose names were marked as having voted twice.

The number of cases of votes apparently cast twice in the same elector's name was significantly higher in 2004 than at previous elections. There were 157 cases of apparent multiple voting in 2004 that the Commission could not discount as polling official error. By comparison, there were 45 such cases in 2001.

Following the detailed examination of certified lists used at polling places, declaration vote envelopes and postal vote envelopes, and after culling cases of polling official error, the Commission concluded that 157 names had been marked twice off certified lists without any adequate explanation. A total of 54 of these names were for Brindabella electors, 45 for Ginninderra electors and 58 for Molonglo electors.

Correspondence with those electors whose names were marked twice as having voted indicated that many of these electors had indeed mistakenly voted twice, believing they were voting once for the federal election and once for the ACT election.

None of the replies received from apparent multiple voters indicated that these voters deliberately or knowingly voted twice at the election. The Commissioner sought advice on prosecution policy from the Director of Public Prosecutions. It was agreed that it was not in the public interest to prosecute multiple voters where there was no evidence of a deliberate intent to vote twice. The Electoral Commissioner sent a warning letter to those who had admitted to voting twice.

The Commission does not consider that this level of apparent multiple voting is indicative of any organised attempt to fraudulently influence the result of the election. Given that the number of apparent multiple votes in each electorate was smaller than the tightest margin in each electorate, the Commission also considered that the identified level of apparent multiple voting was not of sufficient size to have the potential of fraudulently altering the outcome.

## 2004 election community education campaign

In the lead-up to the election the Commission embarked on an extensive communication campaign to ensure electors were informed about the election. The campaign was aimed in particular at increasing voter turnout, reducing informal voting and highlighting electronic voting.

The information campaign communicated several messages to ACT electors. These were:

- ❑ Informing ACT electors that there would be an election for the ACT Legislative Assembly on 16 October 2004 in addition to the federal election being held on 9 October 2004;
- ❑ Encouraging eligible citizens to enrol for the first time or to update their address details before the rolls closed;
- ❑ Explaining the procedures for voting by computer;
- ❑ Informing electors they would be voting for one of three electorates;
- ❑ Informing electors of the alternatives to voting on polling day for those unable to get to a polling place on polling day;
- ❑ Identifying the locations of polling places;
- ❑ Explaining the requirements for casting a formal vote;
- ❑ Informing electors that voting is compulsory; and
- ❑ Informing electors about the 100 metre ban on how-to-vote cards outside polling places.

## Communications strategy

The Commission decided to re-use the campaign theme used effectively at the 2001 election. The Commission placed its advertising using the ACT Government's advertising agency, HMA Blaze. This approach enabled the Commission's communication budget to be primarily used for message delivery, avoiding the need to fund creative concept development.

The information campaign comprised advertising on radio and television, advertising in newspapers, direct mail to all households, public relations activities, and special activities aimed at electors from non-English speaking backgrounds and print-handicapped electors.

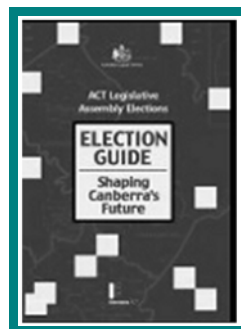
The Commission started issuing media releases related to the election in May 2004, setting out the new deadline of 30 June 2004 for registering new political parties before the election.

Over the following months the Commission worked to increase awareness of the coming election by briefing journalists and political participants, and by generating news stories in the media.

The Commission's formal advertising campaign commenced with the first of 2 letter-box drops. The first delivery was a general information pamphlet, in 1/3 A4 format, which was delivered to all households in the pre-close of rolls period. Delivery commenced in the week beginning 23 August, before the federal election was announced.

The announcement on 29 August 2004 that the federal election was to be held on 9 October 2004 resulted in some last-minute changes to the Commission's communication strategy. The Commission decided to delay the start of the next stage of the advertising campaign until after the roll closed for the federal election, to avoid sending electors confusing messages about 2 different roll close dates (recognising that the first letter-box drop only mentioned the ACT roll close date). The Electoral Commissioner issued a media release encouraging ACT electors to enrol for both elections before the federal roll close on 7 September 2004.

On the day after the federal roll close, 8 September 2004, the Commission's advertising began on radio and television and in newspapers. This stage of the campaign was primarily aimed at informing voters of the date of the election and encouraging eligible citizens to enrol for the first time or to update their address details before the roll closed on 17 September 2004. After the rolls closed, advertising messages concentrated on pre-poll voting, formal voting and polling day voting times and locations.



Election guide pamphlet

A second letter-box drop was delivered in the week beginning 4 October 2004. This second delivery was a more comprehensive 16-page B5 *Election Guide* which included a full list of polling places, as well as more detailed descriptions of the voting and counting system, electronic voting, Robson rotation, how to mark the ballot paper, facsimiles of the ballot papers and information about the 100 metre ban on how-to-vote cards.

The advertising campaign concluded on polling day with a copy of the B5 *Election Guide* inserted in the Canberra Times. Media activities, including posting of election results on the Commission's internet site, continued until the declaration of the poll, providing details of the election count.

Throughout the information campaign period, an information telephone call centre was set up to answer electors' enquiries. This information service was run by the ACT Government's Canberra Connect call centre operating on a fee-for-service basis under a memorandum of understanding with the Commission. The information line answered around 11,478 calls in September and October 2004.

The information campaign also highlighted the Commission's internet site and email address. The Commission set up an in-house team to answer email inquiries. Over 449 emails were received in September and October 2004.

Sample ballot paper from the election guide

## Website visits

The Commission made extensive use of its website [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au) as a means of providing information about the election and supplying electoral forms. All overseas Australian missions, for example, had been told to access postal vote information and the postal vote application form from the website.

In the lead-up to the election, large numbers of users accessed the list of polling places, the downloadable postal vote application, information on electronic voting, answers to frequently asked questions, the election timetable, the electoral boundaries, the list of candidates and the fact sheet on the Hare-Clark system.

On and after polling day, most users accessed the on-line election results. The increased usability of the election results system on the website, compared to the 2001 system, meant that most media requests for results were answered by access to the website. Consequently, the Commission did not need to issue media releases showing results after polling day as it did in 2001.

Statistics on website activity point to a large increase in visits to the Commission's site for the election period.

Before the election period began, the number of users accessing the website averaged around 150 per day. In August 2004 this increased to an average of around 200 users per day. After the election period officially started, the number of users increased to around 480 per day in September. In October, the average number of users was around 990 per day. During crucial periods, the number of users was much higher. The largest number of users – 2,671 – was recorded on 8 October, the day before the federal election. A total of 2,161 users accessed the site on federal polling day. On ACT election day there were 2,284 recorded users, with usage remaining high as the count progressed.

These results indicate a significant increase in the numbers of users recorded in 2001. For example, an average of around 250 users per day was recorded in September 2001, increasing to 1,559 hits on election day itself.

## Public relations activities

A wide range of public relations activities was undertaken during the election campaign. These activities succeeded in generating a large amount of positive coverage of the Commission's election messages.

Public relations activities included:

- ☐ Issuing 13 media releases;
- ☐ Radio, television and newspaper interviews conducted by the Electoral Commissioner and the Deputy Electoral Commissioner; and
- ☐ Arranging photo opportunities in order to draw attention to aspects of the election, particularly voting by computer;
- ☐ Holding public events, including the declaration of nominations and the draw for positions on the ballot papers, the election night Tally Room and the official declaration of the poll.

## Market research

To measure the effectiveness of the Commission's services, market research was undertaken on polling day at polling places.

This research was similar to that undertaken on polling day for the 1995, 1998 and 2001 elections. However, unlike previous elections, the Commission decided not to conduct telephone polling prior to polling day, as the research conducted for previous elections had indicated that awareness of election processes remained generally constant from election to election.

Detailed findings of the research are tabulated in the Appendices from page 55.

An exit poll was undertaken at 25 polling places (of which 4 were electronic polling places) to measure electors' electoral knowledge and satisfaction with the election service. Results show that the election information campaign appeared to be effective. The increased turnout and the reduction in informal voting is a further indicator of the success of the communication campaign.

The research also showed that there was a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the Commission at polling places, with 94% of voters indicating that they considered the Commission's service helpful, efficient and friendly.

As in previous elections, the Commission found that its brochure delivered to all ACT households was particularly effective for imparting more complicated messages about the election.

## Activities aimed at people with special needs

Several information activities were aimed at people with special needs, including people from non-English speaking backgrounds and people with sight or hearing impairment.

The Commission once again employed bilingual educators to provide information to their communities. A total of 11 educators from 11 language groups were employed. These educators conducted 67 sessions which were attended by approximately 800 people. They distributed pamphlets and other election information. A specific election related pamphlet which had been translated into the 11 languages and issued by the Commission was also distributed at the sessions and left in appropriate church centres, clubs and restaurants. Most of the educators used the translated pamphlet to read on various ethnic radio programs. Positive feedback was received from participants in this program.

The Commission's radio advertisements were run on Radio 1RPH (print-handicapped radio). A general information session was given to over 70 participants from different backgrounds at the Migrant Resource Centre. Copies of the Election Guide were provided for English as a Second Language classes run at the Centre.



An additional information session was run for the Chinese Community at the Migrant Resource Centre. It was attended by over 30 members of the community and the session was translated into two Chinese languages.

Close liaison was maintained with the Canberra Blind Society in the setting up of a public demonstration of voting by computer with audio prompts. The demonstration computer was in the foyer of the Legislative Assembly building.

The Telephone Interpreter Service information panel was printed on some of the Commission's publications, encouraging electors with limited facility in English to make use of the service to assist with understanding electoral information.



Voting for the sight impaired

A register of the language capacity of all polling place staff was maintained and electors were alerted through advertising and printed information to the fact that some polling day staff would be able to assist with translation.

## Election forms and equipment

The design and printing of the ballot papers for the 2004 election was again a complex task for the Commission, especially as a large number of versions of the ballot papers are printed under Robson rotation.

The Commission used the in-house system developed in 2001 to design and type-set each version of the ballot papers so as to apply the Robson rotation versions automatically. These were provided to the printers electronically. Tenders were let externally for the printing of the papers. As for the 2001 election, the ballot papers were printed in Canberra.

This process again worked well, and ballot papers were printed in time for the start of pre-poll voting on Monday 27 September 2001.

Other election forms were updated from 2001 versions. Design, distribution and storage were undertaken in-house. Printing of forms was generally undertaken by a contracted printer.

Equipment from the 2001 election was stored between elections where this proved to be cost-efficient and was re-used for the 2004 election wherever possible.

With the federal election held the week before the ACT election, with the agreement of the AEC, most polling places re-used the cardboard voting screens, ballot boxes and queuing equipment that were used for the federal election. The cardboard equipment that had been stored by the Commission since the 2001 election was recycled, as was the cardboard equipment used at the 2004 polling places after polling concluded.

Special modifications were made to the cardboard voting screens used for the computer voting stations. These were provided by the cardboard manufacturers, who provided inserts that modified standard cardboard voting screens to take the computer voting monitors. These new screens used half the width of the screens used in 2001, making it easier to set up the electronic voting polling places and to provide more voting computers.

## Staffing

For the 2004 Legislative Assembly election, the Commission supplemented its small number of permanent staff by employing experienced staff seconded from the AEC and other ACT agencies, and by employing casual electoral staff in temporary positions to manage various processes.

In employing casual staff, the Commission uses its register of persons suitable for employment as polling officials and election casuals. This register was first used for the 1995 election and has been added to regularly since that time. Where possible, staff who worked in previous ACT elections and were rated suitable were re-employed for the 2004 election. Where vacancies existed, suitably rated staff were promoted and other vacancies were filled from the register.

The proximity of the federal election, held on the weekend before the ACT election, led to a higher proportion of experienced staff being unavailable, with higher numbers of staff being employed with no previous election experience, than had been experienced at past elections. Nevertheless, the high satisfaction recorded in the exit polling indicated that the staff employed by the Commission performed their tasks well.

The Commission revised its polling place staffing structure for the 2004 election. The number of “second-in-charge” officers was increased so that almost all polling places had 1 second-in-charge, and some larger polling places had 2. These officers all received face-to-face training and were primarily responsible for issuing declaration votes. This structure was intended to improve the efficiency of the issuing of declaration votes.



The tally room

The Commission also decided not to employ scrutiny assistants, who in past elections have been used after the polls closed to help with packing up polling places. It was decided that the employment of these officers was not warranted.

Payment of polling officials and other election casuals was undertaken by the AEC under contract.

## Election training

The training of all polling officials and casual staff is an important activity undertaken before every Legislative Assembly election.

In 2004, all polling officials received a manual and a home workbook, which was expected to be completed prior to commencing duties. These manuals were reviewed and rewritten in 2004.

An innovation introduced for the 2004 election was the ability for polling officials to complete their workbooks on-line, receiving instant feedback and providing automated performance data to the Commission.



Printing and packing ballot papers

Senior polling officials attended a face-to-face training session. These were conducted by permanent Commission staff and staff seconded from the AEC. The format of the sessions was similar to previous elections, with the focus being on practical exercises. The in-house training was rated highly by the participants.

All casual and polling staff who did not attend a face-to-face training session were given a briefing prior to commencing duties.

The following table lists the face-to-face sessions conducted.

**Table 7 — Training sessions conducted for polling officials and casual staff for the 2004 election**

Session type	Number of sessions	Number of participants
Bilingual educators	1	10
Mobile polling staff	2	6
Polling place managers	12	164
Polling area managers	1	7
Postal voting staff	1	3
Pre-poll staff	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>194</b>

## 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 2004/2005.

#### Federal, Interstate and overseas elections

The Commission provided over-the-counter pre-poll voting, postal vote applications, postal ballot papers and/or enquiry services for 3 interstate general elections, one by-election, the Federal Election and one New Zealand by-election in 2004/2005.

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.

The Electoral Commissioner visited Western Australia during that State's general election to observe election processes and to attend a meeting of the Electoral Council of Australia.

#### Statutory and fee-for-service elections

##### Health professionals boards elections

The Commission conducts elections for the health professionals boards of the Australian Capital Territory under the *Health Professionals Regulation 2004* (which replaced the *Health Professions Boards (Elections) Act 1980* in 2004). These elections are conducted as postal ballots generally every 3 years.

In December 2004 the Commission conducted an election for the ACT Medical Board. For this election Commission staff called for nominations, processed nominations as they were received, prepared and sent ballot material to eligible practitioners and conducted the count. The next round of Health professionals boards elections is due to commence in the second half of 2005. From 2003 the boards have been charged on a fee-for-service basis in line with the provision of electoral services to other organisations.

#### 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. Electoral services provided in 2004/2005 are listed in tables 8 to 14.

#### Enterprise bargaining ballots

The Commission provided assistance to various ACT and outside agencies for their enterprise bargaining ballots in 2004/2005.

Assistance consisted of preparation and printing of ballot papers, a combination of postal and attendance voting, and conduct of the count.

#### Australian National University elections

The Commission assisted with the ANU Union annual elections, the ANU Students' Association (ANUSA) annual elections, two ANU Council elections and assisted in the scrutiny for the University House Board of Fellows election in 2004.

Nominations for the Union elections closed on 10 August, polling was conducted from 23 to 26 August and the result was provided on 26 August.

For the ANUSA, nominations closed on 20 August, polling was from 6 to 9 September and final results were determined on 14 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.

The Commission also assisted the ANU with their election for representatives of the Academic staff to the ANU Council. However, both elections (the Faculties and the Institute of Advanced Studies) only received one nomination each and no election was necessary.

## Other elections

The Commission assisted the Owner Drivers Australian Trucking Association with the preparations for their Council elections, however no election was required as an equal number of nominations were received as there were vacancies. The Commission assisted with the nomination process.

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

## Internet resources

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

**Table 8 — Federal, Interstate and overseas elections**

Election	Polling day	Assistance provided	Votes
Federal Election	9/10/04	postal voting applications	0
New South Wales By-election - Dubbo	20/11/04	pre-poll voting	3
Western Australian General Election	26/02/05	pre-poll voting	157
Tasmanian Legislative Council Election	07/05/05	postal voting applications	0
Northern Territory Legislative Assembly Election	17/06/05	pre-poll voting	42
New Zealand - Te Tai Hauauru by-election	10/07/04	pre-poll voting	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>202</b>

**Table 9 — Enterprise bargaining ballots**

Agency	Polls closed	Result provided	Votes
Cultural Facilities Corporation	11/08/04	11/08/04	50
Department of Education - Teachers	13/08/04	13/08/04	2 373
Canberra Institute of Technology	18/08/04	18/08/04	449
ACT Health – Clerical and Technical	26/08/04	26/08/04	1 266
Department of Urban Services	31/08/04	31/08/04	966
Department of Treasury	3/09/04	3/09/04	362
Department of Justice and Community Safety	9/09/04	9/09/04	426
Chief Minister's Department	9/09/04	9/09/04	248
Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services	10/09/04	10/09/04	465
<b>Total</b>			<b>6 605</b>

**Table 10 — Health professionals boards elections**

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Polls closed	Result provided	Votes
ACT Medical Board	3	6	9/12/04	10/12/04	530
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>530</b>

**Table 11 — Other elections**

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Nominations closed
Owner Drivers Australian Trucking Association	2	2	31/01/05
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	

**Table 12 — ANU Union annual elections, August 2004**

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Votes
Election of 3 ANU Union directors (full 2 year term)	3	11	608
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>608</b>

**Table 13 — ANU Students' Association annual elections, September 2004**

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Votes
President	1	3	1 390
Vice President	1	3	1 388
Education Officer	1	3	1 388
General Secretary	1	3	1 392
Social Officer	1	3	1 404
Treasurer	1	3	1 385
General Representatives	14	62	1 401
Women's Officer	1	2	647
Environment Officer	1	2	1 393
Delegates to the Meetings of National Conference of the National Union of Students	4	20	1 395
<b>Faculty Representatives:</b>			
Faculty of Arts	2	8	650
Faculty of Asian Studies	2	4	105
Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology	2	5	136
Faculty of Law	2	6	314
Faculty of Economics and Commerce	2	6	334
Faculty of Science	2	3	293
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>15 015</b>

**Table 14 — Other ANU elections**

Election	Vacancies	Candidates	Votes
ANU Council – Institute of Advanced Studies	1	1	na
ANU Council – The Faculties	1	1	na
University House Board of Fellows	2	4	258
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>258</b>





The Tally Room - 2004 ACT Legislative Assembly election



## Goal two –

# To provide high quality information, education, advice and services related to the electoral process

## 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 internet site.

### Internet

The Commission's internet site address is [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au). This site continued to be maintained and updated in 2004/2005.

Information and services provided on the internet in 2004/2005 included:

- General information about the Commission;
- 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 2004/2005:

- ACT Electoral Commission *Annual Report 2003/2004* (September 2004);
- Funding and disclosure information booklets and related forms;
- Election specific information booklets and related forms;
- Translations of election specific information for bi-lingual educators employed for the election;
- *Election Guide: Shaping Canberra's Future* pamphlet promoting the close of roll date and pre-poll voting arrangements and distributed to all Canberra households before the close of rolls;
- *Election Guide: Shaping Canberra's Future* booklet of electoral information including sample ballot papers distributed to all Canberra households the week of the election and included as a supplement in The Canberra Times on election day;
- *ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2004: Election Statistics*; and
- Electronic voting data from the 2004 ACT election on CD-ROM (on request).

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 and 2001 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 Review*;
- ❑ Electronic voting data from the 2001 ACT election on CD-ROM (on request);
- ❑ 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. 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; and
- ❑ Briefing members of parliament and officials from Canada, New Zealand, NSW, Victoria and Western Australia on ACT election practices, particularly electronic voting and counting.

## Legislation to amend the Electoral Act

On 4 August 2004, Opposition MLA Mr Bill Stefaniak introduced a private member's bill, the Electoral Amendment Bill 2004, intended to amend the Electoral Act to provide that elections would be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in November every 4 years (instead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in October), starting with the election due in 2008. This bill was not debated by the Assembly and lapsed with the 16 October 2004 election.

In providing advice to the Government on this bill, the Commission did not support the proposed change. The Commission noted that, as the bill did not move the fall-back date for a clash with a federal election, the ACT fall-back election period would start before polling day for the federal election period, if a future federal election was to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in November in an ACT election year. This could have caused voters, candidates, parties and the respective electoral authorities confusion. The Commission also considered that putting the election date back would have made it difficult for the newly elected Assembly to sit before the end-of-year holiday break, unlike the current timetable.

The *Court Procedures (Consequential Amendments) Act 2004* made a minor consequential amendment to the Electoral Act, which came into effect on 10 January 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.



Electoral enrolment forms

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 \$0.6042 per elector was set for 2004/2005. Joint roll payments for the year totalled \$101,666 (excluding GST).

### Electoral Council of Australia

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

In 2004/2005 the ECA continued to focus on the implementation of more efficient methods for updating the electoral roll, collectively described as CRU. The major projects undertaken by the ECA included:

- ☐ Redesign of the joint enrolment forms to facilitate intelligent character recognition scanning of the forms;
- ☐ A review and redesign of the CRU correspondence to electors, with the new letters entering production in January 2005;
- ☐ A national survey of public access to electoral roll personal information;
- ☐ Discussion of the federal government's proposal to upgrade the proof of identity requirements for persons claiming electoral enrolment;

- ☐ Deciding to recommence the purchase of Australia Post change of address data following a reduction in the price of the supply of this information; and
- ☐ Continuing a sponsorship of a 3-year research scholarship at the Australian National University.

### 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.

The following 2 sub-sections describe the main CRU activities that impact on the maintenance of the ACT electoral roll.

### National activities

Australia-wide change of address data provided by Centrelink, Australia Post and State/Territory specific data sources continued to be used in 2004/2005 to generate letters to households where electors may need to update their enrolment.

In the lead-up to the federal election and the ACT election in 2004, the AEC concluded an Australia-wide "background review" of the electoral roll, which involved sending almost 2 million letters nationwide, combined with a national advertising campaign. Over 27,000 letters were sent in the ACT to over 20,000 different addresses. This review targeted all those addresses that had not been reviewed by the CRU process in the preceding 2 years.

The ACT Electoral Commissioner continued as a member of the sub-committee of the ECA charged with overseeing the national implementation of CRU. In 2004/2005 this sub-committee assisted in the redesign of the main CRU letters to electors and oversaw the introduction of improved operational procedures for matching of data and mailing of CRU letters.

## ACT specific activities

Following the advertising campaigns encouraging electors to enrol leading up to the closing of the rolls for the federal and ACT elections occurring in September 2004, enrolment update activities were relatively subdued later in 2004.

Regular mailings and fieldwork were suspended in late August 2004 in anticipation of the election activity. CRU mailings recommenced on a regular basis in late January 2005.

Analysis of CRU activities undertaken across Australia has indicated that use of State and Territory government databases is a key factor in making CRU an effective means of keeping the roll up to date.

Under section 67 of the Electoral Act the Commissioner has the power to seek information from Territory agencies and from prescribed entities for purposes related to the maintenance of the electoral rolls. This power was used in 2004/2005 to obtain data for CRU purposes from the Rental Bond Board, the ACT Motor Registry, the ACT Board of Studies and ActewAGL.

During 2004/2005, ACT Motor Registry data was used for the first time for regular CRU mailing. With the use of this data, the Commission considers that the ACT has the optimum suite of data sources for the effective implementation of CRU. However, the Commission will continue to evaluate additional data sources.

The ACT roll grew by a net 2,935 electors or by 1.3% in 2004/2005. Approximately 50,000 enrolment forms and 21,000 deletions to the roll were processed during the year. Activity was at a higher level than in the previous reporting period due to the stimulus given to enrolment by the ACT and federal election roll closes in September 2004 and the subsequent processing of election enrolment and non-voter information.

As part of this activity, an estimated total of 35,000 enrolments had been received as a result of CRU mailing and review activities, with an estimated 50% of these arising from motor licensing, utility connections, school and rental tenancy data supplied by ACT agencies.

Responses to the notices sent to non-voters indicated that the roll for the 2004 election appeared to be more accurate and complete than the roll for the 2001 election. While there were over 7,400 more electors enrolled in 2004 compared to 2001, around 200 fewer non-voters indicated they had moved permanently interstate or overseas, and around 600 fewer notices were returned to sender undelivered.

These results are shown in *Table 6 — Non-voter statistics from the 2001 and 2004 elections*, on page 12.

It is likely that the national roll close on 7 September 2004, 10 days before the ACT roll close on 17 September, contributed to the good quality of the roll for the ACT election.

## Enrolment of young people

On 31 March 2004 the Legislative Assembly passed the following resolution:

*That this Assembly:*

- (1) *notes with concern estimates that as many as one in four people aged 18-24 are not on the electoral roll;*
- (2) *calls on the ACT Electoral Commission to examine further ways to encourage young people to enrol to vote such as sending out enrolment information with Year 12 school results, provisional drivers licence applications and proof of age cards and acknowledges the initiatives the Electoral Commission currently has in place to address this matter;*
- (3) *recognises that existing educational programs of civics education play an important role in including young people in processes of electoral education and participation; and*
- (4) *calls on the Minister for Education, Youth and Family Services to refer current civics programs used in schools to the curriculum review team for investigation into the adequacy of these programs.*

In its 2003/2004 Annual Report, the Commission indicated that it was confident that its enrolment strategies would lead to a significant increase in the proportion of young people on the ACT electoral roll at the time of the 2004 election.



The following 2 tables show actual enrolment figures by age group in the ACT as at the 2004 election roll close on 17 September 2004 and as at 30 June 2005, 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.

The table showing the enrolment as at the close of rolls for the election indicates that the proportion of young people on the ACT electoral roll for the 2004 election had markedly increased.

The table showing enrolment as at 30 June 2005 indicates that the proportion of 18 year-olds enrolled in the ACT had declined to 66.1% of the estimated eligible population. This outcome is consistent with observed trends that indicate that high proportions of young people do not enrol unless an election is imminent.

**Table 15 — Enrolment by age group as at the roll close for the 2004 election on 17 September 2004**

Age group	Number enrolled	% of estimated entitled to enrol
18	4 020	84.3%
19	4 336	88.2%
20-24	23 414	88.4%
25-29	22 145	93.1%
30-34	23 597	98.9%
35-39	21 911	97.5%
40-44	22 957	97.8%
45-49	22 311	97.9%
50-54	21 654	99.0%
55-59	19 135	99.4%
60-64	12 282	99.4%
65-69	8 971	99.5%
70+	19 334	97.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226 067</b>	<b>97.5%</b>

Note: This table does not include 17 year olds, who are not eligible to vote and for whom enrolment is voluntary.

**Table 16 — Enrolment by age group at 30 June 2005**

Age group	Number enrolled	% of estimated entitled to enrol
18	3026	66.1%
19	4381	90.8%
20-24	23 039	88.5%
25-29	22 073	90.8%
30-34	23 327	97.7%
35-39	22 116	97.3%
40-44	22 695	98.1%
45-49	22 493	98.9%
50-54	21 489	98.2%
55-59	19 683	99.2%
60-64	12 845	98.7%
65-69	9 204	98.8%
70+	19 771	97.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226 142</b>	<b>95.6%</b>

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

In order to increase the participation rate of people in the younger age groups, the Commission, in conjunction with the AEC, has in place a series of initiatives aimed at encouraging young people to enrol to vote.

These initiatives include:

#### ***The school enrolment project***

The Commission conducts an annual school enrolment project that is aimed at working with schools to collect electoral enrolment forms. Each government and private school with college-age students in the ACT is paid \$2.50 for each enrolment form it collects from its students. This program has been conducted successfully since 2000. A total of 241 enrolment forms were received in 2004/2005 as a result of the school enrolment initiative. The number of forms collected in 2004/2005 was significantly reduced compared to the 1,065 forms collected in 2003/2004 as schools were encouraged to collect forms before 30 June 2004.

**Continuous Roll Update**

The CRU process specifically targets young people with direct mail using data sourced from ACT Motor Registry, the ACT Secondary Schools Board, Centrelink and the ACT Rental Bond Board.

**Electoral education**

The Commission's electoral education program is aimed primarily at raising awareness of the ACT's electoral system. Electoral enrolment requirements are featured in this program. For more detail on the electoral education program, see *Key result area 2.3 Electoral education* on page 28.

**Election roll close advertising**

The Commission conducted its usual advertising campaign in the run-up to the 2004 election, with a focus on the need to enrol before the rolls closed. The effectiveness of this campaign was enhanced by the advertising campaign for the 9 October federal election.

## 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 the same materials as are used in the Assembly.

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 internet site.

A campaign to encourage secondary schools to elect members to their Student Representative Council (SRC) by conducting their own elections using the Hare-Clark system continued in 2004/2005.



A student voting at an education session

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 on an Excel spreadsheet with automatic Robson rotation, or as a Word document; 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.

Preparations began in the first half of 2005 for the Commission to host the first gathering of electoral educators from around Australia in ten years. Under the auspices of the Electoral Council of Australia, a conference entitled *Fostering electoral literacy for all young Australians* will be held in Canberra in October 2005. Participants will share ideas on electoral education programs and resources and discuss ways of widening their audience.

The following table lists electoral education sessions conducted by Commission staff during the 2004/2005 financial year.

**Table 17 — Electoral education provided to organisations during 2004/2005**

Organisation type	Organisation name	Number of participants	Date
Colleges	Church of England Girls Grammar School	80	20/07/04
	Constitutional Convention Year 11 students	80	06/08/04
	Constitutional Convention Year 11 students	80	20/08/04
	Copland College	300	23/02/05
	St Clare's College	24	20/09/04
Community Groups	ACT Multicultural Council	70	28/09/04
	ACT Chinese Australian Association	30	03/10/04
	Eddison Day Club	60	24/09/04
	Migrant Resource Centre	60	21/09/04
	University of the Third Age	12	05/08/04
	Veteran, Vintage and Classic Motor Cycle Club of the ACT	3	09/03/05
High Schools	Belconnen High School	55	17/09/04
Primary Schools	Farrer Primary School	50	04/11/04
	Gold Creek School (Primary)	85	21/06/05
	Gordon Primary School	65	22/06/05
	Gordon Primary School	70	28/06/05
	Sacred Heart Primary School	76	15/03/05
	St Peter and Paul Primary School	100	03/08/04
	St Francis of Assisi Primary School	92	17/11/05
	Trinity Christian School	80	30/08/04
Professional Groups	ACT Public Service seminar – 2004 ACT election	15	7/10/04
	ACT Public Service seminar – Introducing the Legislative Assembly	47	3/06/05
	InTACT leaders forum	30	24/11/04
	Pre-election period and caretaker conventions seminar	119	20/7/04
	Pre-election period and caretaker conventions seminar	80	27/7/04
	Teachers professional development day	15	17/08/04
<b>Total</b>		<b>1 778</b>	



## 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 2004, there were 7 parties on the register of political parties.

During 2004/2005, the following major changes were made to the register of political parties:

- ❑ Free Range Canberra was registered on 30 July 2004;
- ❑ Harold Hird Independent Group was registered on 30 July 2004; and
- ❑ Helen Cross Independents Group was registered on 30 July 2004.

As at 30 June 2005, the following 10 parties were entered on the register of political parties.

**Table 18 — Registered political parties as at 30 June 2005**

Party name	Party abbreviation
ACT Equality Party	Equality Party
Australian Democrats	ACT Democrats
Australian Labor Party, Australian Capital Territory	ACT Labor
Christian Democratic Party ACT Division	CDP
Free Range Canberra	FRC
Harold Hird Independent Group	Harold Hird Independent
Helen Cross Independents Group	Helen Cross Independents
Liberal Democratic Party	LDP
Liberal Party of Australia (A.C.T. Division)	Liberal Party
The ACT Greens	The Greens

Two significant changes to the party registration scheme were made by the *Electoral Amendment Act 2004*, passed by the Legislative Assembly in May 2004.

One change removed the provisions that allowed Independent MLAs to register ballot groups.

The other significant change was to provide for a fixed cut-off date for applications for party registration, and for changes to registered party names or abbreviations, in an election year. The Commission recommended this change to remove uncertainty about the latest date on which applications for party registration could be made, and to allow time for review of party registration decisions made by the Electoral Commissioner. The 3 new parties listed above applied for registration before the cut-off date for the 2004 election.

#### Funding and disclosure scheme

##### Election funding

Public funding was made available to parties and independent candidates contesting the 2004 election at a rate of \$1.31236 per first preference vote. To be eligible for public funding, parties and independent candidates had to receive at least 4% of the formal votes cast in the election.



**Table 19 — Election funding payments from the 2004 election**

Party	Amount
Australian Labor Party, Australian Capital Territory	\$125 507.56
Liberal Party of Australia (ACT Division)	\$93 286.48
The ACT Greens	\$24 930.90
Australian Democrats	\$3 206.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$246 931.03</b>

### 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 2003/2004 financial year by October 2004.

For the 2003/2004 financial year, 8 annual returns were received from political parties, 17 from current MLAs, 2 from associated entities and 6 from donors.

These returns were made public on 4 April 2005. Copies of the returns can be viewed at [www.elections.act.gov.au/FAD04.html](http://www.elections.act.gov.au/FAD04.html).

### Election Returns

Following an ACT Legislative Assembly election, election returns outlining details of those who bought electoral advertising are required from broadcasters and publishers operating in the ACT. Following the 2004 election these returns were due for lodgement by 13 December 2004. Eight returns from broadcasters and 4 returns from publishers were received.

Election returns outlining donations received and expenditure on electoral matter are required following an ACT election from all candidates. Candidate returns were due to be lodged on 31 January 2005. A total of 76 (out of 77) candidate returns was received. One candidate died after the election.

Ten registered political parties and 2 non-party groups were required to lodge a 2004 election return outlining expenditure on electoral matter by 31 January 2005. These returns were received.

Donors to candidates are also required to lodge returns outlining details of their donations. Eleven donor returns were lodged.

All returns were released to the public on 4 April 2005. The returns were made available both at the Commission's counter and on the internet.

### Redistributions

The most recent redistribution of electoral boundaries took place in 2003.

One of the requirements imposed on the augmented Commission in making a redistribution is to endeavour to ensure, as far as practicable, that the number of electors in each electorate will be within the range of +/-5% of the relevant quota at the time of the next election.

The table below shows the actual enrolment figures for the 2004 election were within the range of +/- 2.6% of the quota, a better outcome than the projected variation of within +/- 3.6% estimated during the 2003 redistribution process.

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.





Table 20 — Enrolment totals: variations from quota at the 2004 election

Estimated enrolment for polling day 2004 used during 2003 redistribution				Actual results for polling day 2004		
Electorate	Quota	Estimated enrolment	% above or below quota	Quota	Actual enrolment	% above or below quota
Brindabella	65 999	64 325	-2.54%	66 499	65 279	-1.83%
Ginninderra	65 999	64 312	-2.56%	66 499	65 271	-1.85%
Molonglo	92 398	95 758	+3.64%	93 099	95 548	+2.63%
ACT total		224 395			226 098	

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

### 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.

After the 2004 election, Commission staff held several post-election evaluation and planning sessions. These resulted in plans for changes to be implemented at the 2008 election.

For further information on human resource management in the Commission and in particular staff improvement and development opportunities and enterprise bargaining, see *Managing our people* from page 40.



## Key result area 3.2

## Financial management

Commission staff provided input into various changes to JACS finance procedures during the financial year.

Refer to *Part D: Analysis of financial performance* from page 48 for more information on the Commission's finances.

JACS Corporate Finance took responsibility of processing all receivables, payables and journals on the Commission's behalf during 2004/2005. As a result, the Commission ceased maintaining its own in-house financial system.

## Key result area 3.3

### Records management

As required by the *Territory Records Act 2002*, the Commission implemented its new records management program in 2004/2005.

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 now has its own internal files (EC files) as well as ACT Registry Files.

All active files, including EC and ACT Registry files are stored within the Commission's office. 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.

## 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 2004/2005. In addition InTACT assisted the Commission with the electronic voting and counting project during the year and provided further IT equipment for the 2004 election.



Data operators during the scrutiny

#### IT applications

Commission staff create and maintain a wide range of databases and other IT applications in-house. This results in significant savings, both in IT maintenance costs and in time and costs in performing essential functions.

Use of these systems during the 2004 election assisted in providing client-focused cost-efficient services.

A particularly successful in-house project was the new internet election results system developed and implemented by Commission staff. Commission staff also developed and implemented a new on-line election staff training workbook.

In 2005/2006 the Commission intends to review its strategy for maintaining the Commission's in-house suite of databases in preparation for the 2008 election.

#### Internet

The Commission continued to maintain and update its internet site during 2004/2005, with all work being completed in-house. The Commission website address is [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au).

The Commission is represented on the ACT Web Managers Forum.

For more detail on the Commission's internet site see *Information service* on page 22.

## Human Rights Act

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.

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

Human rights principles are also 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 which is accessible to people who have a disability where public documents can be viewed.

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 counter 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 and comments. Public submissions are invited by advertisements placed in several local newspapers, by direct mail to relevant organisations and individuals, and in stories generated in the media by the Commissioner. The next redistribution will be held in 2006/2007.

Other community engagement processes employed by the Commission include:



- ☐ The electoral education program;
- ☐ The Commission's internet site;
- ☐ The Commission's enquiry service;
- ☐ 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.

As 2004/2005 was an election year, the Commission dealt with over 210,000 people during the year. Around 20 written complaints were received related to its provision of services for the election. Some complaints related to statutory requirements over which the Commission has no control. Other complaints dealt with access to pre-poll centres and polling places and with the conduct of polling officials.

Exit polling conducted for the Commission indicated a very high level of satisfaction with Commission staff at polling places. No voters polled indicated that Commission staff were unhelpful or unfriendly, and only 1% of those polled considered the service they received to be inefficient.

The Commission will consider the matters raised in the complaints it received during the year and will take steps to address those issues where it can.

## 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. (See *Activities aimed at people with special needs* on page 15.)

For the 2004 election the Commission successfully used the following strategy to inform the multicultural community:

- ☐ Employed 11 bi-lingual educators to provide election information to their communities. The educators broadcast on multi-cultural radio and distributed pamphlets in community languages;
- ☐ Provided a specially targeted information session for the Migrant Resource Centre which was attended by over 70 citizens from different backgrounds;

- ☐ Provided an information session for 30 members of the Chinese community;
- ☐ Employed people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to provide assistance to members of the public at polling places and made public that information; and
- ☐ Provided computer voting facilities including instructions to voters in 12 community languages.

Consultation with the Canberra Blind Society was instrumental in setting up a public demonstration of voting by computer with audio prompts.

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.

Electoral services and information are advertised in the newsletter of the ACT Office of Multicultural Affairs (*Communicado*).



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reporting

The Commission is committed to providing election facilities accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander electors.

In 2004/2005 the Commission made contact with the Yurauna Centre at the Canberra Institute of Technology, which provides support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with regard to provision of election information. The Centre provided enrolment forms at the time of the election.

The Commission also held discussions with 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. The Commission anticipates that it will be in a position to conduct elections for this representative body in 2005/2006.

## 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. Of the 226,098 electors on the electoral roll, 116,686 were women and 109,412 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

### Managing our people

#### HR performance and analysis

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

Three of the 6 permanent staff of the Commission went on extended leave following the election period in 2004/2005. As a result two temporary staff were employed for the duration of the extended leave periods. In addition another permanent staff member accepted a temporary transfer to another department; this resulted in the temporary recruitment of another staff member.

During 2004/2005 a total of 798 staff were employed on a casual basis to assist with the election process.

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.

See the following table for details of permanent staff employed during 2004/2005.

## Staffing profile

**Table 21 — Staff of the ACT Electoral Commission as at pay 27, 2004/2005**

Title	Classification	Female	Male	CLDB <sup>1</sup>	Category		Employment authority
Commission Chairperson	Statutory Office Holder		1		1 year appointment	part-time	Electoral Act
Commission Member	Statutory Office Holder	1			1 year appointment	part-time	Electoral Act
Electoral Commissioner	Statutory Office Holder		1		5 year appointment	full-time	Electoral Act
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	Senior Officer Grade B	1			Permanent (on leave)	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Acting Deputy Electoral Commissioner	Senior Officer Grade C	1			Permanent - Higher Duties	part-time	Public Sector Management Act
Election Applications Manager	Senior Officer Grade C		1		Permanent (on leave)	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Election Projects Manager	Administrative Service Officer Class 6		1		Temporary	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Project and Office Manager	Administrative Service Officer Class 6	1		1	Permanent (on leave)	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Project and Office Manager	Administrative Service Officer Class 6	1			Temporary	full-time	Public Sector Management Act
Administration and Finance Officer	Administrative Service Officer Class 4	1			Temporary	part-time	Public Sector Management Act
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			

Note 1: CLDB = Culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Note 2: There were no permanent staff in either the disabled or Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander categories.

## 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.

## 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 (EEO) 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 2004/2005 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 6 permanent positions were permanent part-time for some of 2004/2005);
- ❑ 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.

In 2004/2005 the Commission reviewed its employment strategies and recruited all election casual positions for the October 2004 election based on merit, ensuring that equity and diversity objectives were met.

For a list of casual staff by EEO group see the following table.

**Table 22 — Workplace diversity statistics – casual staff – 2004/2005**

EEO Category	Yes	No	Not Stated	Total
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	2	789	7	798
Disabled	7	781	10	798
Culturally and linguistically diverse background	95	692	11	798
	Female	Male	Not stated	Total
Gender	434	349	15	798

## 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.



Stretching during the election scrutiny.

All incoming mail is scanned by the ACT Government Registry before being opened by Commission staff in a secure room provided by JACS.

The Commission has access to a fire warden, a designated qualified first aid officer and an OH&S representative.

A number of OH&S initiatives were implemented during the election period. For example, senior polling staff were given instructions to follow and a checklist to complete to identify and resolve any OH&S issues when setting up their polling places. First aid kits were also provided to all polling places.

There were no workers compensation claims during the reporting period.

## Learning and development

During 2004/2005, some 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.

Mains areas of training were:

- ☐ Information technology training;
- ☐ Financial management training; and
- ☐ Human resources and personnel systems training.

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.

In 2004/2005, the Commission directly paid \$4,645 for training and development purposes for its Public Sector Management Act staff (not including costs of training polling officials).

Commission staff have decided not to adopt formal individual performance management plans or development plans. Instead, as the Commission has only 6 permanent staff, performance management and learning and development plans are agreed by consultation at structured planning workshops and monitored and updated through regular meetings of all staff.

Learning and development opportunities undertaken in 2004/2005 are shown in the following table.

**Table 23 — Learning and development activities undertaken by Electoral Commission staff in 2004/2005**

Staff Members	Date	Course/seminar/development opportunity	Cost
Electoral Commissioner	30/11/04	Executive leadership development program – coaching session	\$450
	6/5/05	Excel advanced	\$315
	20/06/05	Corporate finance training	\$0
Acting Deputy Electoral Commissioner	14/03/05	Excel Essentials	\$285
	17-18/03/05	Access Essentials	\$630
	29/03/05	Word Intermediate	\$255
Administrative Service Officer Class 6	16/03/05	Excel intermediate	\$285
	29-30/3/05	Access intermediate	\$630
	26/04/05	HTML essentials	\$340
Acting Administrative Service Officer Class 6	14/03/05	Excel essentials	\$285
	17-18/3/05	Access essentials	\$630
	29/03/05	Word intermediate	\$255
	1-2/06/05	Chris 21 personnel system training	\$0
	14/06/05	HR21 workshop	\$0
	16/06/05	Corporate finance training	\$0
Administrative Service Officer Class 4	14/03/05	Excel essentials	\$285
Acting Administrative Service Office Class 4	16/06/05	Corporate finance training	\$0
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$4 645</b>

## Workplace relations

### Certified agreements

The JACS Officers Certified Agreement 2003/2004, which covers Commission staff and to which the Electoral Commissioner was a signatory, expired on 31 March 2004.

The Electoral Commissioner and Commission staff, together with staff and management of JACS, negotiated a new enterprise agreement for 2004 to 2007.

The Electoral Commissioner was a member of the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement Management Reference Group formed within JACS to consider proposed changes to the Department's Certified Agreement.



The new agreement was put to a staff ballot in September 2004 and was implemented soon after. The Electoral Commissioner was a signatory to the new agreement.

## Australian Workplace Agreements

No Commission staff were employed under an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA).

## Governance

### Internal accountability structures and processes

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 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.

Details of the Commission's management structure can be found at *Organisational structure* on page 1.

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

### Strategic and organisational planning

As an independent statutory authority, the Commission's role is largely defined by, and constrained by, the functions and responsibilities set out in the Electoral Act and other relevant legislation.

The ACT Electoral Commission Corporate Plan is set out on page 5 of this report. Part B of this report from page 5 gives a detailed report on achievements against the Commission's key result areas in 2004/2005.

The corporate plan is underpinned by more detailed operational plans, which set out strategies and procedures for each key result area. These plans are further supported by detailed project plans that set out tasks, timelines and staff responsibilities.

The Commission's corporate plan and operational plans are developed in a collegiate fashion involving all staff in a workshop environment.

Project plans are regularly reviewed at staff meetings to ensure that task deadlines are met.

The Commission's annual reports are its main avenue for reporting its compliance with its statutory obligations to the Legislative Assembly and other stakeholders.

### Fraud prevention

#### Prevention strategies

The Commission employed the following fraud prevention strategies in 2004/2005:

- ☐ 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;
- ☐ Secure premises for all election polling and counting;
- ☐ Training of all election staff in fraud prevention procedures;
- ☐ Secure tally room for the Legislative Assembly election; and
- ☐ Secure internet site.

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.

There were no reports or allegations of fraud or corruption received in 2004/2005.

## Risk management and internal audit arrangements

The Commission undertakes risk management assessments for all its major projects and contracts. For example, the introduction and continued use of the electronic voting and counting system has been subjected to extensive risk assessment.

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 2004/2005 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 2004/2005.

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 2004/2005, other than the standard procedures that applied during the 2004 election.

## 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 monthly, 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* from page 22 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 46 for contact details.

Most items are also available on the Commission's internet site at [www.elections.act.gov.au](http://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](http://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 received one FOI request in 2004/2005. This request was transferred to the AEC. There were no FOI matters outstanding at 1 July 2004.

### 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 2004/2005, 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 35.

### 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](mailto:elections@act.gov.au)

Website:  
[www.elections.act.gov.au](http://www.elections.act.gov.au)

## Sustainability and environment

### Commissioner for the Environment reporting

The Commission did not contribute to the *State of the Environment Report* in 2004/2005. 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.

The Commission also subscribes to Greenfleet. Greenfleet is a not for profit organisation that plants trees to offset the greenhouse impact of subscribers' vehicles.

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

### Strategic Bushfire Management Plan and Bushfire Operational Plans

The Commission does not use any bushfire prone government land.

## Part D: Analysis of financial performance

### Agency financial results and analysis of financial performance

The Commission is included in the JACS portfolio for budgetary purposes. In the departmental structure for 2004/2005, the Commission was included in Output Class 2.7 – Electoral Services.

The Commission's financial results have been audited for the purposes of the *Audit Act 1989* as part of the JACS portfolio.

The financial transactions for the Commission for 2004/2005 are formally reported in the consolidated financial statements included in the *JACS Annual Report*. The following tables are presented for information.

The Operating Statement for Electoral Services for 2004/2005 includes corporate overhead costs incurred by JACS.

Table 24 shows that the Commission's expenditure was over budget by around \$26,000 after taking into account the capital injection provided for electronic voting. This negative operating result was attributable to JACS withdrawing \$40,000 from the Commission's Government payment for outputs without the knowledge of the Commission and contrary to an agreement reached between JACS and the Electoral Commissioner.

**Table 24 — 2004/2005 Operating Statement: Output 2.7 — Electoral Services**

	Amended Budget (\$ '000)	Outcome (\$ '000)
<b>Revenue</b>		
Government payment for outputs	2 557	2 517
User charges	76	46
Resources received free of charge	0	0
<b>Total revenue for Electoral Commission</b>	<b>2 633</b>	<b>2 563</b>
JACS corporate overheads	139	178
<b>Total revenue including corporate allocation</b>	<b>2 772</b>	<b>2 741</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Employee expenses	1 110	1 129
Superannuation	145	115
Supplies and services	1 165	1 193
Depreciation and amortisation	32	3
Other expenses (public funding of parties and candidates)	215	247
<b>Total expenditure by Electoral Commission</b>	<b>2 667</b>	<b>2 688</b>
JACS corporate overheads	146	159
<b>Total expenditure including corporate overheads</b>	<b>2 813</b>	<b>2 847</b>
<b>Operating result</b>	<b>-41</b>	<b>-106</b>
Capital injection for electronic voting	80	80
<b>Operating result after capital injection</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>-26</b>

**Table 25 — Detailed statement of expenditure for 2004/2005**

<b>Employee expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>
Commissioner Members – part-time	37 327
Fringe benefits tax	5 133
Leave entitlements	142 071
Miscellaneous – employee	892
Salaries	934 589
Workers compensation	9 112
<b>Total employee expenses</b>	<b>1 129 124</b>
<b>Superannuation</b>	<b>\$</b>
Superannuation – productivity	21 773
Superannuation – liability	93 051
<b>Total Superannuation</b>	<b>1 14 824</b>
<b>Supplies and services</b>	<b>\$</b>
Accommodation (including polling place venue hire)	190 043
Advertising	129 806
Computers	139 812
Consultants and contractors	129 946
Electoral Services (including Joint Roll Costs)	143 509
Miscellaneous – administration	37 224
Office machines/furniture – purchase, repair, maintenance	6 476
Postage and freight	82 848
Printing	256 975
Records Management	2 962
Storage	8 252
Supplies and stationery	17 187
Telephones	20 582
Training	4 898
Travel	4 073
Vehicle hire	188 62
<b>Total Supplies and services</b>	<b>1 193 455</b>
<b>Depreciation and amortisation</b>	<b>\$</b>
Depreciation	3 668
<b>Total Depreciation and amortisation</b>	<b>3 668</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>
Public Funding of Parties and Candidates	246 931
<b>Total Other expenses</b>	<b>246 931</b>
<b>Total expenditure by Electoral Commission</b>	<b>2 688 002</b>
JACS Corporate overhead	159 222
<b>Total expenditure including corporate overhead</b>	<b>2 847 224</b>

## Reporting outcomes against performance indicators set out in 2004/2005 budget papers

This section reports on the Commission's performance in 2004/2005 in terms of the following performance indicators set out in the 2004/2005 budget papers.

**Table 26 — 2004/2005 Reporting outcomes against performance indicators**

Output 2.7: Electoral Services			Price (\$'000)	
<b>Description:</b> The provision of services by the Electoral Commission to enable the conduct of elections and referendums, and the maintenance of the electoral roll and related programs.				
Measures	Original target	Amended target	Result	Variation
<b>Quantity</b>				
Number of people on electoral roll.	224 000		226 167 <sup>1</sup>	1.0%
Number of elections/referendums conducted or assisted with.	18		23 <sup>2</sup>	27.8%
<b>Quality</b>				
Compliance with standards.	100%		100% <sup>3</sup>	0%
Percent of clients satisfied with electoral services.	95%		99% <sup>4</sup>	4.2%
<b>Timeliness</b>				
Compliance with standards and statutory requirements.	100%		100% <sup>5</sup>	0%
Election results finalised within standards.	100%		100% <sup>5</sup>	0%
<b>Cost</b>				
Average cost per elector for electoral services.	\$12.5	\$12.6	\$12.6 <sup>6</sup>	0.2%
<b>Total cost: (\$'000)</b>	<b>\$2 792</b>	<b>\$2 813</b>	<b>\$2 847</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

### Notes on 2004/2005 results:

1. This is the ACT enrolment figure as at 30 June 2005 including 17 year olds.
2. Result is client driven. Target is an estimate only. The demand for services in 2004/2005 was higher than anticipated due to the large number of enterprise bargaining agreement elections held.
3. The Commission's quality standards are:
  - ☐ Absence of adverse findings that reflect on the performance of the Commission as a result of legal action (met if none, not met if one or more);
  - ☐ Voter turnout at ACT Legislative Assembly general elections is 90% or more; and
  - ☐ Unintentional informal voting at ACT Legislative Assembly general elections is 5% or less.



In 2004/2005, the Commission met all of these standards.

4. The Commission has a number of mechanisms in place for its clients to provide feedback on its services and enable the Commission to measure its client satisfaction rate. In 2004/05 an independent market research report measured client satisfaction. The report showed that no voters rated the Commission's service unhelpful, no voters rated the Commission's service unfriendly and 1% rated the Commission's service as inefficient. In addition around 20 complaints were received from voters during the 2004 Election period.
5. The Commission's timeliness standard is that all statutory deadlines will be met.  
All the applicable deadlines were met in 2004/2005.

The Commission's standards for providing election results are as follows:

- ❑ For general elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly (where a recount is not needed): 3 weeks from polling day;
- ❑ For general elections and referendums for the ACT Legislative Assembly (where a recount is needed): 4 weeks from polling day;
- ❑ For a count back to fill a casual vacancy in the Legislative Assembly: 3 weeks 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: 1 week from the close of the poll.

All the applicable standards were comfortably met in 2004/2005.

6. Result is calculated as the total cost divided by the number of people on the electoral roll (\$2,855,034 divided by 226,167 electors). The cost per elector for electoral services in 2004/05 was \$12.62.

## Asset management

The Commission's assets 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 management

The Commission did not undertake any capital works projects in 2004/2005.

## Procurement contracting principles and processes

In 2004/2005, the Commission engaged a number of contractors to provide services related to the 2004 election.

The Commission manages its own contracts.

The processes used to select and manage the contractors complied with the *Government Procurement Act 2001* and the ACT Government Procurement Principles and Procurement Circulars and the Consultancy Guidelines: *Achieving the Effective Use of Consultants in the ACT Public Service*.

See *External sources of labour and services* on page 53 for a list of contractors.



# Government contractual debt (interest)

No interest was paid on overdue payments to suppliers under Part 4 of the *Government Procurement Act 2001*. No contracts were entered into in 2004/2005 that specified that Part 4 of the Government Procurement Act did not apply.

## Financial reports

### Financial statements

The Commission does not have financial reporting obligations under the *Financial Management Act 1996*.

Financial transactions for the Commission are formally reported in the consolidated financial statements included in the JACS Annual Report.

Financial details are provided for information at *Part D: Analysis of financial performance* from page 48.

### Ownership agreement

Electoral services are included in the JACS Ownership Agreement 2004-2005. Reporting under that agreement is the responsibility of JACS.

As an independent statutory authority, the Commission is not a party to an ownership agreement.

### External sources of labour and services

In 2004/2005, the Commission engaged the contractors in the following table to provide services related to the 2004 election.

In addition to the following contracts, a further \$12,300 was spent on contractor services involving contracts of less than the \$15,000 reporting threshold. These services were for market research for the 2004 election and storage, distribution and display of postal vote applications in Post Offices.

The processes used to select and manage the contractors were consistent with ACT Government Procurement Guidelines and Circulars and the Consultancy Guidelines.

**Table 27 — External sources of labour and services 2004/2005**

Name of Contractor	Description of Contract	Cost (\$)	Date of Approval
BMM International	Audit of electronic voting and counting system software	\$27 500.00	3 August 2004
National Capital Printing	Ballot Paper and Barcode printing for the 2004 Election	\$83 290.90	5 August 2004
Australian Electoral Commission	Data Capture from Marked Certified Lists	\$30 699.14	18 August 2004

## Legislative / regulatory data reports

### Legislation

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;* and
- ❑ *Health Professionals Regulation 2004.*

For relevant amending legislation enacted in 2004/2005, see **Legislation to amend the Electoral Act** on page 23.

### Advisory and consultative boards and committees

The Commission does not have any relationship with advisory or consultative boards or committees that provide advice to a minister.

### Service purchasing arrangements / community grants / assistance / sponsorship

The Commission did not provide any service purchasing arrangements, community grants, assistance or sponsorship in 2004/2005.

### Legislative Assembly Committee inquiries and reports

There were no Legislative Assembly Committee inquiries or reports related specifically to the Commission in 2004/2005.

### Government inquiries and reports

There were no Government inquiries or reviews related specifically to the Commission in 2004/2005.

### Reports by Auditor – General

There were no reports by the Auditor-General related specifically to the Commission in 2004/2005.

### Reports by the Ombudsman

There were no reports by the Ombudsman related to the Commission in 2004/2005.

## Market research results

The following tables set out key results of market research conducted on behalf of the Commission by Market Attitude Research Services.

One survey was undertaken. This survey was a face-to-face exit interview of 500 respondents conducted on election day at 24 polling places, of which 4 were electronic voting places.

**Table 28 — Voter knowledge of names of electorates**

**Q: Can you tell me the name of your electorate?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Brindabella	24	24
Ginninderra	26	27
Molonglo	39	38
Canberra	1	-
Fraser	1	3
Namadgi	-	-
Other	-	1
Don't know	9	8

The survey was intended to measure the effectiveness of the information campaign and measure levels of satisfaction with the Commission's services.

Results are shown compared to the equivalent results obtained from similar surveys undertaken during the 2001 election. There were some minor variations in the wording of the questions used in 2001 compared to 2004. The questions listed are those asked in 2004.

**Table 29 — Voter knowledge of numbers of members of electorates**

**Q: Can you tell me how many members your electorate will have?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
One	1	1
Five	31	33
Seven	28	28
Seventeen	-	-
Other	7	5
Don't know	33	33

**Table 30 — Voter knowledge of 100 metre ban on how-to-vote cards**

**Q: Are you aware or unaware that "how-to-vote cards" will no longer be able to be given out within 100 metres of an ACT election polling place?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Aware	66	74
Unaware	32	26
Unsure/don't know	2	-

**Table 31 — Voter opinion on absence of how-to-vote cards**

**Q: Did you find it a problem that “how-to-vote cards” were not available today?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Yes	15	9
No	84	89
Unsure/don't know	1	1

**Table 32 — Voter opinion on problems with absence of how-to-vote cards**

**Q: What problems did you have?\***

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 75 %	N = 45 %
Disagree with ban on how-to-vote cards	40	49
Did not know who to vote for	41	62
New resident to the ACT and did not know what to do	na	4
Other	37	2

\*Asked of those who said “yes to the previous question.  
Multiple responses possible.

**Table 33 — Voter knowledge of Robson rotation**

**Q: Were you aware of the Robson rotation method of printing ballot papers so that candidate names are listed in a different order on different ballot papers?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Never heard of Robson rotation	49	41
Have heard of Robson rotation but don't know anything about it	14	10
Know some things about Robson rotation	26	22
Know all about Robson rotation	12	28



**Table 34 — Voter opinion of adequacy of voting instructions**

**Q: How adequate were the instructions you were given by the ACT Electoral Commission on how to fill out your ballot paper for this election?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Very adequate	36	38
Adequate	54	55
Neither adequate nor inadequate	5	2
Inadequate	3	3
Very inadequate	1	1
Unsure/don't know	2	1

**Table 35 — Voter opinion of queuing at polling places**

**Q: Which of these statements best describe how you found the queuing here today?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
Unacceptably long	-	-
Long but acceptable	4	2
Not very long and acceptable	11	3
Not a real problem	85	95

**Table 36 — Voter opinion of polling place service**

**Q: Having just voted, which of these comments best describes the service provided by the people running this polling place?**

	Polling day 2001	Polling day 2004
	N = 500 %	N = 500 %
<b>Helpfulness</b>		
Very helpful	49	48
Helpful	45	46
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	5	6
Unhelpful	1	-
Very unhelpful	-	-
<b>Efficiency</b>		
Very efficient	47	55
Efficient	47	42
Neither efficient nor inefficient	4	3
Inefficient	2	1
Very inefficient	-	-
<b>Friendliness</b>		
Very friendly	48	52
Friendly	48	44
Neither friendly nor rude	4	4
Rude	-	-
Very rude	-	-

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