



Victorian Electoral Commission

Report to Parliament on the 2006 Victorian State election

The greatest task of democracy, its ritual and feast - is choice
HG Wells



Victorian Electoral Commission

Report to Parliament on the 2006 Victorian State election

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Report to Parliament on the 2006 Victorian State election

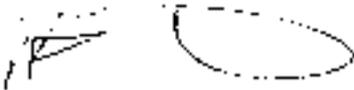
The Hon. Robert Smith, MLC
President of the Legislative Council

The Hon. Jenny Lindell, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

I am pleased to submit to you, for presentation to Parliament, my report on the administration of the Victorian State election held on 25 November 2006.

The Report is in two parts – this narrative report, and Part 2, *Results and Statistics*, which includes detailed results for each electorate.

The report is presented as required by section 8(2)(b) of the *Electoral Act 2002*.

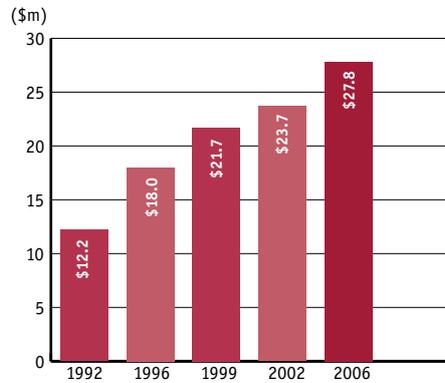
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Tully', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Tully
Electoral Commissioner
16 July 2007

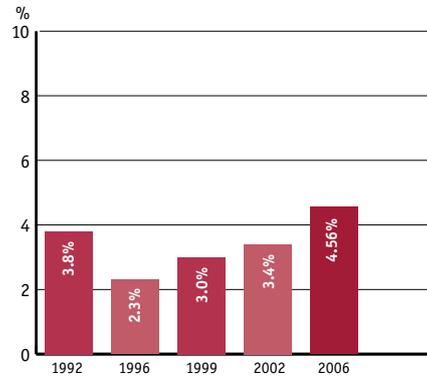
The 2006 Victorian State election at a glance

Graphical summary:

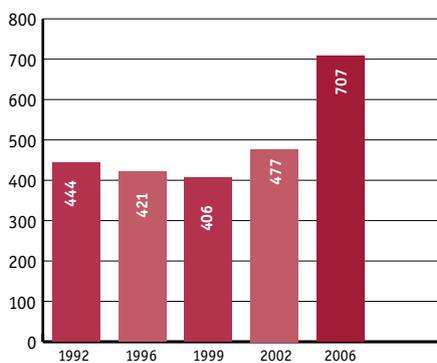
Cost of State elections



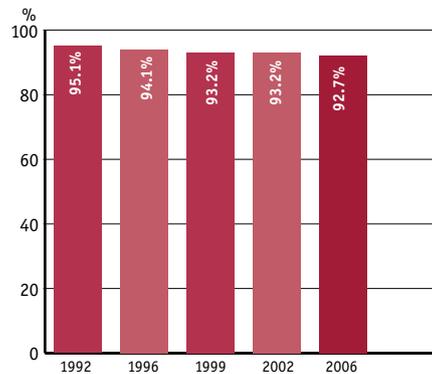
Informal voting at Victorian State elections



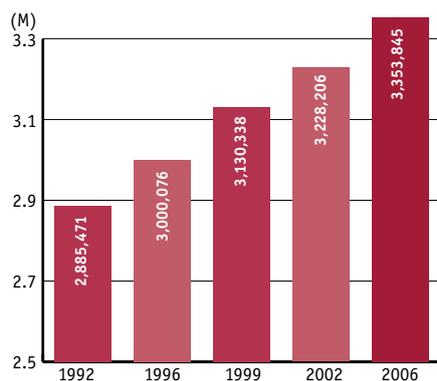
Number of candidates contesting Victorian State elections



Voter participation at Victorian State elections

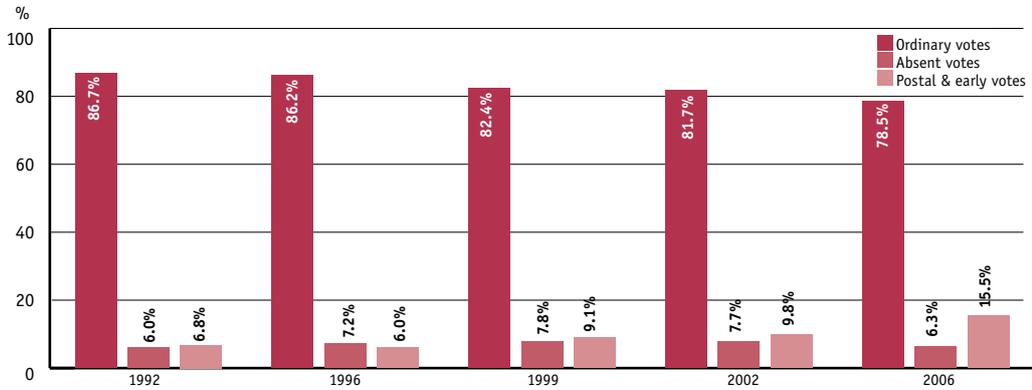


Enrolment at close of roll for Victorian State elections

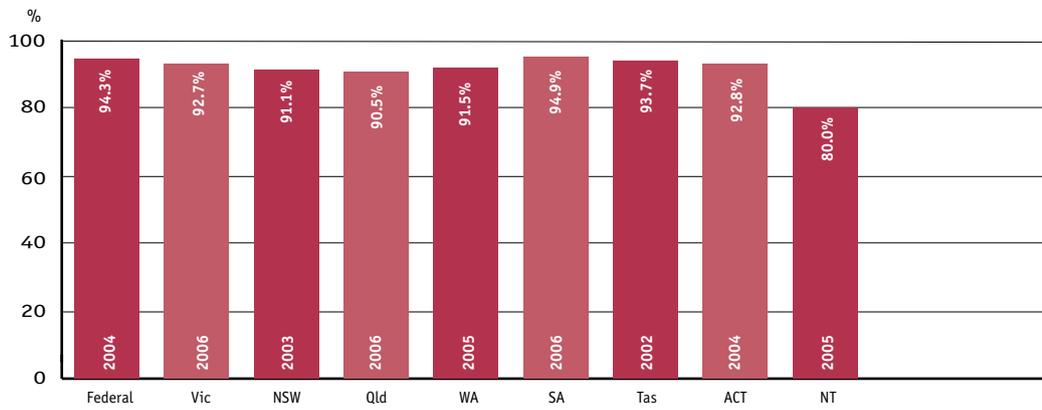




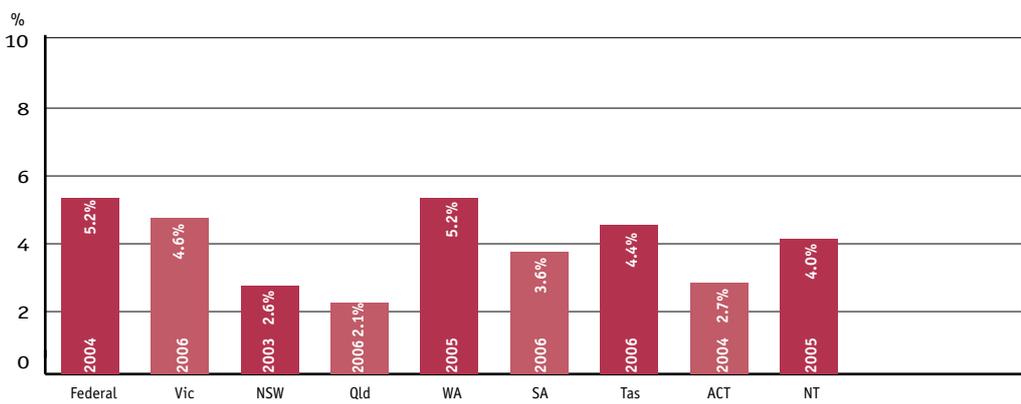
Ordinary, absent, postal and early votes at Victorian State elections



Voter participation at Australian parliamentary elections



Informal voting at Australian parliamentary elections



2006 Victorian State election indicators

Executive summary	Number	On Time	Response Time	2002 Election
Total enrolment	3,353,845			3,228,466
Voter turnout (participation rate)	92.70%			93.20%
Postal votes	226,170	100%	24 hours	201,243
Early votes	255,161			163,712
Absentee votes	199,517			230,576
Overseas and interstate votes	10,805			8,205
Total candidates	707			477
Total below the line votes % (average across all regions)	5%			N/A
Level of informality – Lower House	4.56%			3.42%
Level of informality – Upper House	4.28%			3.67%
Ordinary votes	2,440,009			2,307,845
Antarctic votes	13			7

Nominations	Number	2002 Election	Response Time	Errors
Upper House	248	97		
Lower House	459	372		
Party candidates	644	412		
Independent candidates	63	65		
Contentious nominations	0	1		

Group voting tickets/How-to-vote cards	Number	On Time	Errors	2002 Election
Group voting tickets registered and on website by 9.00am next day	75	100%	0	N/A
Registered HTVCs	672	100%	0	522
HTVCs taken to VCAT	0			0

Ballot papers	Number	On Time	Response Time	2002 Election
Ballot papers printed for election	12,281,000	100%	w/i 4.5 hours of close of nominations	25,320,000
Ballot papers delivered to election offices	12,281,000	100%	2 days early	25,320,000
Ballot packs distributed to GPVs	41,722	100%		31,243
Ballot packs distributed to postal voters	184,448	100%	24hr turnaround	170,000

Voting services	Number	On Time	2002 Election
Voting centres booked by mid-Oct 2006	1,652	100%	1,655
Voting centres assessed for disability access, OH&S prior to 30 June	1,652	100%	1,655
Extra early voting centres identified and leased by mid-Sept 2006	34	100%	26
Election offices leased by mid-Sept 2006	43	100%	53
Mobile voting facilities provided	892	100%	878
Overseas voting centres established	28	100%	35
Interstate voting centres established	11	100%	12
Antarctic voting centres established	1	100%	1



Election Services	Number	On Time	Response Time	2002 Election
% of votes counted at voting centres by 10.00pm on election night		90%		
District recounts	1	100%	24 hours	2
Region recounts	3	100%	24 hours	2 (Province)
District declarations	88	99%	8-Dec-06	88
Region declarations	8	100%	14-Dec-06	22+2 (Province)
Extra voting services provided upon request	4	100%	1 working day	N/A
Furniture and resources dispatched to election offices by deadline	79,491	100%		73,507
Bulletins sent to Election Managers	60	N/A		63
Bulletins sent to registered political parties	29	N/A		5
Bulletins sent to Upper House candidates	11	N/A		0
Election manuals printed	60,600	100%		75,500
Items dispatched from mailhouse	3,591,687	100%		3,341,432
Incorrectly addressed items received by voters	0			N/A
Scannable rolls produced and delivered to warehouse	7,689	100%	4 days	6,491
PDA's provided to 123 voting centres for roll look-up	474			N/A

Enrolment	Number	2002 Election
New enrolments (2 Oct-1 Dec 2006)	62,165	48,710
Updated enrolments (2 Oct - 1 Dec 2006)	117,917	138,529
Returned to sender – roll clean-up	34,000	34,316
Nomination enrolments checked	707	477
Enrolments received by virtual fax/website	28,166	5,690
Enrolment forms sourced from supermarkets	5,158	3,556
Enrolment forms dispatched from TES	2,949	N/A
Enrolment forms sourced from Australia Post	2,511	2,924
Special late electors	61	259
New General Postal Voter applications processed	3,796	935
Declaration votes (total)	74,403	91,963
– Absent not on roll	32,179	60,102
– Unenrolled	39,667	29,976
– Early not on roll	1,493	1,883
Deceased electors removed from roll	12,316	52,702

Personnel	Number	On Time	2002 Election
Election officials employed by deadline	14,811	100%	13,630
Training DVDs provided to election officials	14,500	100%	0
Training hours for Senior Election Officials	6,600 hours	100%	9,984 hours
HelpDesk staff supporting election officials	12		12
Election Managers appointed	43		53
Assistant Election Managers appointed	107		106

Mapping	Number	On Time	Errors	2002 Election
No. of organisations provided with electoral boundaries data	18	100%	0	N/A

2006 Victorian State election indicators

Disability access indicators	Number	2002 Election
Organisations invited to provide comment on development of action plan	84	-
Organisations invited to attend access group	14	-
Access group planning meetings	3	-
Formal complaints in relation to access	3	1
Complaints to Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission [The <i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986</i> provides a complaints and conciliation mechanism for alleged disability discrimination. The Commission has responsibility for inquiring into complaints of alleged infringements under the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> .]	0	1
Maximum no. of fully wheelchair accessible venues able to be booked (of total)	178 (10%)	770 (47%)**
Audio files mailed to vision-impaired voters	6,800	N/A

**A far more stringent access audit tool was used in 2006.

Telephone enquiry service	Number	2002 Election
Calls to service	227,246	129,774
Calls answered by auto-attendant	73,379	24,833
Calls answered by operators	128,090	99,743
Calls escalated to Enrolment Branch	1,485	N/A
Calls to interpreter	2,045	N/A
Fulfilment from call centre	13,018	N/A
Hours service operational	515.5 Hours	N/A
Average % of calls answered within 30 seconds	65%	N/A
Formal complaints with regard to service	2	N/A
Service hours system offline	0	N/A

Complaints	Number	Response Time	2002 Election
Services to voters (early voting centres locations, voting centre queues, no party info on website, voter details not on roll, lack of disability access)	59	24 hours*	23
About the media	1	24 hours*	1
About candidates/parties	103	24 hours*	49
About the VEC (compulsory voting, not employed as election official, conduct of election official, employment conditions, ballot paper presentation)	62	24 hours*	37
Total	225#	100%	110

* mid September 2006 - 1 December 2006

complaints received from mid-September 2006 to 20 February 2007

Advertising	Number	On Time	Errors
Print advertisements published	253	100%	0
Radio advertisements aired	4,222	100%	0
Television spots aired	982	100%	0
Outdoor - metrolites and superlite billboards	69	100%	0
Total	5,526	100%	0



Media	Number	On Time	Response Time
Total media releases issued	54	100%	
Regional/rural media release receipts	4,133	100%	
Statewide media release receipts	387	100%	
Metro media release receipts	1,977	100%	
Journalist queries responded to	421	75% w/i 1hr	max of 3 hours
Journalist surveys distributed	33		
Journalist surveys completed and returned	7 (21%)		

Emails	Number	On Time	Response Time
Emails received on info@vec.vic.gov.au (responses in working days)	1,714	Same day 80%	Next day 13%

Website	Number	On Time	Errors
Total hits over election period 2 Oct - 25 Nov 2006	27,992,472		
Files downloaded over election period	8,994		
Translated material available in language other than English	19	100%	N/A
Audio files available for vision-impaired	5	100%	0
Election-related updates (excluding election night)	117	100%	0
Voting centre look-up hits over election period	206,534		
Combined voting centre look-up hits on Friday 24 & Saturday 25 November	71,456		
Voting centre look-up availability	620 hours		4 hours offline
Interactive animations available	5	100%	
Election night results services - 3 minute updates	97 files	100%	
Virtual tally room total hits 24-30 Nov 2006	1,789,316		
Virtual tally room files downloaded 24-30 Nov 2006	167		

Electronic voting	Number	On Time
Software developed	N/A	100%
E-Centres able to take votes at commencement of voting (of 6)	6	100%
Availability of practice session for e-voters prior to casting formal vote	199	100%
Votes taken on kiosks	199	N/A
Votes printed and counted	199	100%
Votes lost or corrupted	0	
No. of candidates on system (recorded and QA'd)	707	100%

Election publications	Number	On Time	2002 Election
Election manuals published by issue of writ	33,500	100%	67,370*
Candidate and scrutineer handbooks published by July 2006	27,000	100%	
Education supplement in Age newspaper - "All You Need to Know About Voting & Elections"	2	100%	0
Easy English Guides to Voting in Victoria	2,095		0

* Included election manuals, candidate and scrutineer handbooks

2006 Victorian State election indicators

Education	Number	On Time
Z-cards mailed to Year 12 students	46,000	100%
Z-card enrolment forms returned completed	2021	
Schools receiving Regi and Desi's Virtual Voting Adventure	2,500	100%
Council libraries receiving Regi and Desi's Virtual Voting Adventure	115	100%
Make Your Vote Count design competition entries	250	
Make Your Vote Count winning posters distributed to campuses	3,000	
Homeless voters casting vote at mobile voting booth at St Mary's House of Welcome	68	
Indigenous workers employed to work at voting centres	6	
Indigenous organisations to which posters were mailed	130	

Research Evaluation	Number	2002 Election
Level of satisfaction of early voters	98%	97%
Level of satisfaction of postal voters	83%	92%
Level of satisfaction of absent voters	90%	93%
Level of satisfaction of CALD voters	89%	75%
Level of satisfaction of election day voters	86%	90%
Level of satisfaction of political parties with VEC services	highly satisfied	satisfied
Level of satisfaction of candidates with VEC services	89%	93%
Level of satisfaction of election officials with training manual	87%	NA
Overall satisfaction level of voters	88%	93%

Budget	Number	2002 Election
State election budget	\$29.42M	\$22.57M
Estimated cost of State election	\$29.33M	\$23.74M

Electoral Entitlements	Number	2002 Election
Eligible formal first preference votes	5,622,395	5,697,220
Entitlement per formal first-preference vote	\$7.399M	\$6.83M

Payroll	Number	2002 Election
Election staff paid	17,335	N/A
Officials returned pays reprocessed (banking details provided incorrect)	462 (3.1%)	N/A
Value of election payroll (incl. payroll tax & superannuation)	\$13.04M	N/A

Information technology	Number
Servers deployed	60
PCs deployed	450
EVC terminals deployed	100
PDA's deployed	500
Network connections into VEC	85
HelpDesk calls	>1000
ER\EMS bugs logged & resolved during trials & election	80
ER\EMS test cases executed	355
ER\EMS functional areas changed for election	14
Lines of code in ER\EMS	approx 6M
SQL server databases deployed and managed	60
Network users	350
PVA applications scanned	approx 210,000
Scannable roll pages scanned	approx 550,000



Steve Tully
Electoral Commissioner

Foreword

The 56th election of Victoria's Parliament heralded a number of 'firsts' for the Victorian Electoral Commission and the State of Victoria. For the first time, the date of the election was prescribed in legislation and commenced with the issue of the writ on 31 October 2006. For the first time, all members of both houses were to be elected simultaneously. In the Legislative Council (Upper House), those members would be determined by the proportional representation method of vote counting, with electors able to vote either above or below the line for the first time. Electors with a vision-impairment had the opportunity to cast their first secret vote. These changes comprised the largest reforms to Parliament in its 150 years.

Naturally, a great deal of planning and preparation was required to not only deliver, but also communicate these changes to some 3.4 million eligible electors. An EasyVote card (containing elector and electorate details) was mailed to every elector on the electoral register a month prior to the issue of the writ, along with information on the changes to the Legislative Council. Advance enrolment reminder advertising in August 2006 targeted roll integrity prior to the EasyVote card mail-out.

The introduction of electronic voting for those with a vision-impairment was a major initiative. While limited numbers utilised the electronic kiosks, success was evident in the reliability, accuracy and security of the system. A précis covering all aspects of electronic voting is included within this report, including recommendations for legislative change to extend the initiative to those with low proficiency in English and electors with poor motor skills – an initiative that I believe could reduce the level of informal voting, particularly in areas with high numbers of electors who speak a language other than English.

Another initiative was a training DVD for all staff to assist their understanding of requirements on election day and model the standard of customer service performance expected. This DVD was distributed to some 14,000 staff.

Access to voting services was a key objective – both literally and figuratively. Key information was available in a variety of formats, including audio, Easy English, and other languages. Extensive work was undertaken to identify and assess more than 1,600 voting centres for physical accessibility. A more stringent audit tool to assess all venues was used in order to provide public confidence in the accessibility ratings. Disappointingly, only 10% of voting centres available for lease were rated against the audit tool as fully wheelchair accessible, a figure that surely contributed to several justified complaints.

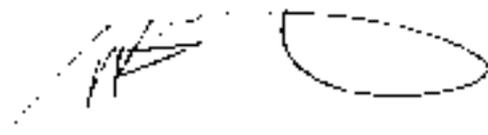
Outside complaints about political parties and candidates, queues at voting centres were the next largest cause for complaint. Whilst it is acknowledged that some locations experienced lengthy queues (an issue we will address), media coverage may have magnified the perception of the size of the problem. Overall, 35 voting centres (3%) had an underestimation of votes expected by at least 600 votes, which equates to at least one extra staff member. Independent research conducted on the day states that although 67% of respondents said they queued on the day, almost two-thirds of them queued for less than five minutes and 86% were satisfied with their experience at the centre. In context, there are more critical measures of the success of an election and 165 of these Key Election Indicators are on pages 4-9.

Election results precipitated a total of four recounts - three regions and one district. Two of the three regional recounts were conducted where the margin was around 100 votes at a critical distribution. In the case of the Northern Metropolitan Region, a transcription error was identified. An initial margin of 17 votes prompted the conduct of the district recount. All recounts were conducted in a timely manner prior to the return of the writ, with no resulting applications for appeal lodged with the Court of Disputed Returns.

Although staffing numbers increase dramatically at election time and an increased work schedule is only to be expected, the punishing number of hours required to be worked by staff in order to meet legislative deadlines caused me concern. This has been identified as a significant OH&S issue for the organisation. Future staffing rosters will be amended to address this issue. All staff should be commended for their dedication and contribution to a challenging, but ultimately successful, State election.

The following report outlines in detail the VEC's conduct of the 2006 State election, including the service provided to electors, registered political parties, candidates and the media. The VEC accepts that participation rates are a good guide to the health of a democracy and it works hard to make administrative processes for electors simple and accessible. The VEC also accepts that it administers the law as passed by Parliament and must remain neutral on policy matters such as compulsory voting and methods of voting. In accordance with this principle, this report makes suggestions in regard to administrative matters that do not impact on policy, and provides information on the impact of current laws on participation for consideration.

Laws that impact on enrolment and formality of voting, which have the potential to impact on participation rates, are clearly matters for the Parliament.



Steve Tully
Electoral Commissioner

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Section 1

Introduction

The Governor issued writs for the 2006 Victorian State election at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 31 October 2006. The issue of the writ is a legal requirement and sets out the timetable of the election.

One writ is issued for the election of the Legislative Council and one for the election of the Legislative Assembly.

1

Introduction

The Governor issued writs for the 2006 Victorian State election at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 31 October 2006. The issue of the writ is a legal requirement and sets out the timetable of the election. One writ is issued for the election of the Legislative Council and one for the election of the Legislative Assembly.

At the issue of the writs, there were 12 registered political parties. At close of nominations there were 707 candidates. All registered political parties contested at least one electorate.

The ALP (ALP) was returned with a reduced majority in the Legislative Assembly. The ALP won 55 seats, the Liberal Party 23 seats, the National Party nine seats, and one independent candidate was elected.

The ALP received 43.06% of first-preference votes. The Liberal Party received 34.44% of first-preference votes. The National Party received 5.17%.

On a Labor/non-Labor party preferred basis, the vote was 54.38% and 45.62%

The Greens received 10.04% of first-preference votes for the Legislative Assembly. This was the highest ever result for the Greens at a Victorian State election, and the highest Legislative Assembly vote for a minor party since the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) scored 13.3% in 1970.

All of the members of the Legislative Council were up for re-election at this election, as rotating terms were abolished. In addition, legislative amendments meant that the Legislative Council would consist of 40 seats rather than the previous 44 seats. The ALP lost its majority, returning 19 seats from the 25¹ seats it held after the 2002 election. The Liberal Party won 15 seats, and the Nationals won two seats. The Greens won three seats, and the Democratic Labor Party won one seat for the first time since 1955.

Election timetable

The Victorian State election timeline is set in legislation. Previously, Victorian State elections were held every three to four years. However the *Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003* provided that barring exceptional circumstances, the next State election was to be held on the last Saturday in November 2006, and then every four years subsequently.

Voting system

The Victorian Parliament is made up of two Houses - the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) and the Legislative Council (Upper House). Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected from 88 single-member electoral districts, each with approximately 38,000 electors. A party or coalition with majority support in the Legislative Assembly forms the Government.

The voting system for the Legislative Assembly is full preferential voting. Voters must number all the squares on the ballot paper in order of their choice. In a preferential voting system, a candidate must gain more than 50% of all formal votes to be elected. If none of the candidates receives over 50% of the first-preference votes, voters' preferences are distributed until one candidate gains an absolute majority.

Members of the Legislative Council are elected from eight electoral regions, each with approximately 418,000 electors. Each region returns five elected members.

A new method of vote counting - proportional representation - was utilised for the Legislative Council in 2006. The principle of proportional representation is that candidates and parties are elected in proportion to their level of support among voters. Under this system, voters can either:

- vote 1 'above-the-line' for their preferred party or group of candidates (the voter's preferences will follow the group voting tickets lodged by the party or group); or
- vote 'below-the-line' for individual candidates. Voters have to vote at least 1 to 5 for their vote to count, and can continue numbering other squares if they wish. This is known as optional preferential voting.

¹ Two were independents at the time of the 2006 State election.

Under the proportional representation vote counting system, a candidate must gain a 'quota' (one-sixth plus 1) of the formal votes to be elected. First, candidates who have gained more than a quota of first-preference votes are elected. Then, elected candidates' surplus votes (the number of votes more than the quota) are transferred to other candidates according to the preferences on the ballot papers. Any candidate who reaches a quota through these transfers is elected. If there are still vacancies to fill once the surplus votes have been transferred, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded and that candidate's votes are distributed to the remaining candidates according to the preferences on the ballot papers. The process of transferring surpluses from elected candidates and distributing preferences from excluded candidates continues until all positions have been filled.

Voting is compulsory at Victorian State elections.

The Victorian Electoral Commission

The Victorian Electoral Commission's (VEC's) responsibility is to conduct fair and impartial elections, efficiently and according to the law.

The Electoral Commissioner is appointed by the Governor-in-Council for a ten-year term. Under the *Electoral Act 2002* (the Act), the Electoral Commissioner is independent of the government of the day and reports directly to Parliament.

The key responsibilities of the VEC are to:

- conduct parliamentary elections and by-elections;
- conduct parliamentary referendums and polls;
- conduct local government elections and by-elections (upon appointment by councils, following a competitive tendering process);
- conduct certain statutory elections;
- provide advice to the Attorney-General and Parliament on issues affecting the conduct of parliamentary elections, including administrative issues requiring legislative remedy;
- ensure the enrolment of eligible electors;
- prepare electoral rolls for parliamentary elections, voters' lists for local government elections, jury lists, and provide enrolment information to members of Parliament and registered political parties;

- contribute to public understanding and awareness of elections and electoral matters through information and education programs;
- provide administrative and technical support to the Electoral Boundaries Commission during the review and drawing of new State electoral boundaries; and
- report to Parliament on the VEC's activities.

The VEC may also be appointed by local councils to conduct electoral representation reviews.

Governing legislation

Much of the work of the VEC is governed by legislation. The *Electoral Act 2002* is Victoria's principal electoral Act, providing for the enrolment system and the conduct of parliamentary elections.

The *Constitution Act 1975* sets out who is entitled to enrol as an elector, who is entitled to be elected to Parliament, and the size and term of Parliament.

The *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act 1982* governs the determination of State electoral boundaries.

1

Legislative changes affecting the 2006 Victorian State election

Since the 2002 State election, the following Acts have made substantial amendments to the *Electoral Act 2002*:

- *Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003*;
- *Electoral (Amendment) Act 2003*;
- *Monetary Units Act 2004*;
- *Electoral Legislation (Amendment) Act 2004*;
- *Electoral Legislation (Further Amendment) Act 2004*;
- *Infringements (Consequential and Other Amendments) Act 2006*; and the
- *Electoral and Parliamentary Committees Legislation (Amendment) Act 2006*.

The *Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003* made the most significant changes to Victoria's electoral system. Victoria now has fixed-date State

elections, with elections taking place on the last Saturday in November every four years. The Act also changed the size and structure of the Legislative Council (Upper House). The number of members has been reduced from 44 to 40. The number of electorates has been reduced from 22 electoral provinces, each with two members (who had rotating terms, with one of the two members up for election at each State election) to eight electoral regions, each with five members (who are all elected at each State election). The vote counting system for the Legislative Council has changed from preferential voting (the same as the Legislative Assembly) to proportional representation. The term for members of the Legislative Council has been reduced from eight years to four.

Table 1: Election timetable

Event	2006 election dates
<i>Expiry of the Legislative Assembly</i>	Tuesday, 31 October
Parliament is dissolved 25 days before the last Saturday in November.	
<i>Issue of writs</i>	Tuesday, 31 October
The issue of the writs starts the election process. An election writ commands the VEC to hold an election and contains the dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, election day and the return of the writ. At a State election, writs are issued for the election of all the members of the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) and for all members of the Legislative Council (Upper House).	
<i>Close of rolls</i>	Tuesday, 7 November
Electors have until 8.00pm, seven days after the writs are issued to enrol, or to update their enrolment.	
<i>Close of nominations</i>	Thursday, 9 November for a registered political party, and Friday, 10 November for independent candidate nominations.
The deadline for receipt of nominations by candidates is midday on the date specified on the writ as the close of nominations. The close of nomination date differs for registered political parties and independent candidates.	
<i>Election day</i>	Saturday, 25 November
Election day is the day nominated for the election to be held and is the day on which most electors cast their vote.	
<i>Return of writs</i>	Friday, 15 December
After the results are declared for all Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council seats, the Victorian Electoral Commissioner returns the writs, endorsed with the names of the successful candidates, to the Governor. Writs must be returned within 21 days of the date of the election.	

Other significant changes to the *Electoral Act 2002* that applied to the 2006 election included:

Enrolment

- Rolls close seven days after the issue of the writs (instead of three days).
- Electors who were 70 years of age or over can apply to become general postal voters. General postal voters automatically receive postal voting material for each State election.
- The eligibility of homeless persons to enrol as itinerant electors has been clarified.
- When the VEC objects to an elector's enrolment, it can make further enquiries after receiving an answer from the relevant elector.

Registration of political parties

- Registered political parties must apply for re-registration in the middle of each term of Parliament. The re-registration process is very similar to that for initial applications for registration.

Nominations

Changes to nomination procedures reflect the new system for the Legislative Council.

- The number of nominators required for Legislative Council candidates not endorsed by a registered political party has increased from six to 50.
- Two or more candidates for a Legislative Council region can apply to the VEC to be treated as a group on the ballot paper. If a group lodges a group voting ticket with the VEC, the group has a square printed 'above-the-line' on the ballot paper. All 'above-the-line' votes for that group are deemed to follow the group voting ticket.
- The nomination deposit for Legislative Council candidates has been reduced from \$700 to \$350. If a group receives 4% or more of the total first-preference votes combined, all the candidates in the group have their deposits refunded, even if individual members of the group obtain less than 4%.

How-to-vote cards

- The timeframe for submission of how-to-vote cards for registration has been aligned for all participants in an election. Previously, parties had a longer period to submit how-to-vote cards.
- All how-to-vote cards to be handed out on election day are registered by the VEC, but can be lodged with any Election Manager.

- The criteria for acceptable how-to-vote cards for a Legislative Council election reflect the new voting system.
- If an error is detected in a registered how-to-vote card, the person who lodged the card can apply to correct the error. The application is treated in the same way as an initial submission.
- Once a how-to-vote card is registered, the applicant has to supply the VEC with only two copies of the card (instead of 10 more copies than the number of voting centres in the electorate, as previously).

Voting

- The ballot paper for a Legislative Council election resembles that for a Senate election. Electors can either vote for a party or group 'above-the-line' (in which case their preferences flow according to the group voting ticket lodged by the party or group), or vote for individual candidates 'below-the-line'. Those voting 'below-the-line' have to vote for at least five candidates, and can continue numbering further preferences if they wish. The ballot paper shows the localities where candidates were enrolled. There is provision for more than one row of groups and candidates on the ballot paper in a region if there are twenty or more groups.
- An amendment to the Act enabled a trial of electronic voting at the 2006 State election. Voters with a vision-impairment, who would not otherwise have been able to vote without assistance, could access electronic voting. Kiosks were equipped with a touch-screen PC, keypad and headphones to 'read' the options for the vision-impaired voter.
- The criteria for applying for an early or postal vote have been simplified. Any elector unable to attend a voting centre on election day is able to apply for an early or postal vote.
- The start of early voting has been shifted from 2.00pm on the final nomination day to 4.00pm, to allow for checking of eligibility of the increased number of nominators required for Legislative Council elections.
- If an elector is physically unable to sign an application or declaration, a witness can make a note on the form to this effect and the application or declaration is accepted.
- Absent voters do not have to complete a declaration form in those voting centres that have an electronic copy of the electoral roll for the whole State (E-Centres and airport voting centres).
- There is provision for temporary suspension of voting at a voting centre on election day, to allow for events such as a power failure.

1

Election results

- The vote counting system for the Legislative Council (proportional representation) is now similar to that for the Commonwealth Senate. To be elected, a candidate must receive a quota of $\frac{1}{6}$ th (based on five vacancies) of the formal votes plus 1.

Enforcement and offences

- Penalties and fees in the *Electoral Act 2002* have been changed from dollar amounts to penalty units and fee units, which are indexed annually.
- The most serious electoral offences, such as bribery and multiple voting, have been made indictable. This affects the way such offences can be investigated and prosecuted.
- Provisions covering the penalty stages of compulsory voting have been amended to follow the *Infringements Act 2006*. The amendments change procedures, timelines and reporting requirements.

Election expenditure

- The Act provides that certain gaming companies cannot donate more than \$50,000 to a registered political party in any financial year. The Act has been amended to ensure that the \$50,000 cap covers Tabcorp, and that shareholders in companies related to the gaming companies are not covered by the cap.

Referendums

- There is now provision for referendums in Victorian law. Certain provisions of the *Constitution Act 1975* are now entrenched, which means that they can only be changed through a referendum of all Victorian electors. Referendums are organised in much the same way as State elections. The VEC must distribute the official 'Yes' and 'No' cases to all electors at least two weeks before polling day. Voters vote 'Yes' or 'No' to the proposed amendment to the *Constitution Act 1975*. There has been no referendum to date under these provisions.

Redivision of electoral boundaries for the Legislative Council 2005

The *Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003* provided that there would be eight electoral regions for the Legislative Council. The Act required the Electoral Boundaries Commission (EBC) to conduct a redivision of Victoria between 1 January and 30 November 2005, to establish the eight regions. Accordingly, the EBC met on 21 February 2005, to commence the redivision process. Each region had to comprise eleven contiguous electoral districts (Legislative Assembly electorates). The EBC was charged with ensuring that enrolments for the regions were approximately equal, not varying by more than 10% from the average, and gave due consideration to 'community of interest' and related factors.

The EBC received ten written submissions and heard six oral submissions before releasing proposed boundaries on 7 July 2005. A further 13 written suggestions and objections to the proposed boundaries were received. After considering the suggestions and objections, the EBC released the final boundaries (unchanged from the proposed boundaries) on 6 October 2005. All submissions, suggestions and objections were public documents, available on the EBC's website and at the office of the VEC.

Broadly, the redivision established five metropolitan regions (Eastern, Northern, South Eastern, Southern and Western Metropolitan) and three country regions (Eastern, Northern and Western Victoria). The new boundaries took effect at the issue of the writs for the 2006 State election.

Pre-election preparation by the VEC

The conduct of a State election is the culmination of four years of planning and preparation by the VEC.

The VEC operates with a core staff of approximately 40, which is supplemented by temporary and casual staff. At the time of the State election, there were some 70 full-time staff working at the VEC. In addition, contract staff were engaged to provide specialist services such as IT support, or election software development and advice. There were also some 14,000 people engaged by the VEC to conduct the State election in election offices and voting centres, as well as to assist in the postal vote processing centre and central count centre which operated for two weeks after the election.

There are many aspects of a State election that require the expertise of external service providers. The contracting of external service providers allows VEC staff to focus on their election-specific areas of expertise. It also ensures that Victorians are provided with the highest quality election services, using the latest technologies and systems.

In early 2006, the VEC entered into contracts with a range of specialist service providers. Contractors were selected after a competitive tendering process, taking into account the quality of their service and value for money.

Contracted services for the State election included:

- information technology;
- cardboard furniture (existing contract);
- electronic voting kiosks;
- election advertising;
- public relations (request for quote);
- telephone enquiry service;
- printing (existing contract);
- transport (existing contract);
- tally room services (request for quote);
- Australia Post (service level agreement);
- election staffing; and
- mail-house services (existing contract).

Pre-arrangements with other agencies

Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (VGSO)

The VEC made preliminary arrangements with the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (VGSO) to have a senior legal adviser on stand-by 24 hours a day during the election period, to ensure that any matters could be dealt with in a timely fashion. The VEC would like to thank the VGSO and in particular Mr James Ruddle, Deputy Victorian Government Solicitor, for his support and responsiveness during the election.

Victoria Police

The VEC contacted the Chief Commissioner of Police in late September to outline the State election processes, and to request a discreet police presence at all voting centres during the hours of voting on election day. Additional arrangements were made for uniformed officers to patrol the building housing the tally room, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre. The VEC provided a full list of election day voting centres to Victoria Police to assist with this request. The VEC would formally like to record its appreciation for the support it received from the Chief Commissioner.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

The VEC made arrangements with the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to have arrangements in place to deal with any applications for review of the Electoral Commissioner's decision in relation to the registration of a how-to-vote card.

Section 82A of the *Electoral Act 2002* provides that if an application for review of a how-to-vote card decision is received, the Tribunal has until 5.00pm on the next working day after receiving the application to determine the application.

1

Supreme Court

Under section 176 of the *Electoral Act 2002*, candidates may seek injunctions in certain circumstances where the conduct of a person may impact on the outcome of an election. The Commission is also able to seek an injunction under the same circumstances. These matters must be heard in the Supreme Court. Therefore, the Victorian Electoral Commission made arrangements with the Department of Justice to ensure any applications for an injunction received on election day could be heard.

Election budget

The cost of conducting the 2006 State election was \$29.328 million. This compares to the cost of the 2002 State election of \$23.7 million

Additional budget was provided to meet inflation, an increase in the number of electors, reformed Upper House election arrangements and the trial of electronic voting.

Actual expenditure occurred over two financial years - \$1.614 million in 2005/2006 being spent on ballot paper, recruitment and training of Election Managers and staff, and the purchase of election materials for election offices and polling places.

The balance of the expenditure of \$27.715 million occurred in 2006/2007, including an estimate for the completion of compulsory voting.

The following table is a summary of the election expenditure (excluding GST) with a short note explaining each item.

In addition, extensive resourcing and logistical planning includes all of the election support materials (see below).

Note	Expenditure	Amount
		'000
1	Advertising / public education	3,020
2	Computer hire	387
3	Postage and telephones	2,630
4	Voting centre hire, Election Managers' offices / early voting centres	2,339
5	Printing and stationery	939
6	Election and rolls management software development	658
7	Electronic voting trial software	642
8	Transport / freight	638
9	Election materials / office furniture (incl. voting centres)	3,928
10	Tally room / translation services / call centre	819
11	Miscellaneous	284
Staffing		
12	Voting and casual staff	5,542
13	Election Managers and Assistant Election Managers	2,522
14	Election casuals and fixed-term staff	4,310
15	Agency staff	670
Total expenditure		\$29,328
Total budget		29,421
Electors on the roll 2006 State election		3,353,845
Cost per elector 2006 State election		\$8.74
Electors on the roll 2002 State election		3,228,206
Cost per elector 2002 State election		\$7.34

Note 1 – Advertising in print, radio and electronic media, mailout to all voters explaining voting in general and the changes to the Upper House (does not include postage)

Note 2 – Rental payments for IT and office equipment

Note 3 – Postage for mailout to all voters, postal votes, compulsory voting and general correspondence

- Note 4 – Rent, power, lighting, property outgoings and general office maintenance for election offices and voting centres
- Note 5 – Includes printing of ballot papers, manuals, election officials instructions
- Note 6 – Cost of IT developers to modify and maintain the election and rolls software
- Note 7 – Cost of developing software, and set-up in voting centres of the electronic voting trial
- Note 8 – Freight cost for transport of all materials and equipment for the set-up of election offices and voting centres, as well as freight for the delivery of ballot papers between election offices and head office
- Note 9 – Purchase of all election materials, equipment, cardboard and office furniture for election offices and voting centres and conducting the election
- Note 10 – Cost of setting up the tally room, translation services for enquiries received at head office, election offices and the call centre, and the cost of establishment, training of operators, and operating the call centre by the contractor
- Note 11 – Other minor costs including accommodation for Election Managers during training, software licences, facilitating interstate and overseas visitors to view the operations, legal fees
- Note 12 – Cost for payment of election official staff including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and Workcover premium
- Note 13 - Cost for payment of Election Managers and Assistant Election Managers including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and WorkCover premium
- Note 14 - Cost for payment of election casuals working in the election offices, Helpdesk staff in head office, and fixed term staff employed at head office for the State election, including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and WorkCover premium
- Note 15 – Cost of agency staff employed for postal vote processing, and Upper House computer-count centre

Candidates' deposits

A total of 712 candidates' deposits, including five deposits for candidates who retired prior to close of nominations, were received for the Upper and Lower Houses, totalling \$249,200.

Following the elections, 224 candidates' deposits were forfeited, totalling \$78,400, which was paid to consolidated revenue.

All other candidate deposits were refunded by cheque on 19 December 2006.

Insurance and claims

The Victorian Electoral Commission is insured with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority and is generally covered under the Department of Justice policy. The VEC has additional coverage in the areas of:

Professional Indemnity	A requirement by many organisations in tenders for election services
Public and Products Liability	A buy-down of the excess
Group Personal Accident	Insurance coverage for election officials
Travel Insurance	Insurance for travel by staff

The cost of the insurance with VMIA in 2006/2007 was \$66,760 which is not included as part of the State election cost. There were no claims by the VEC on the insurance policies, though a total of \$1,827 was paid out for five incidents.

There were twenty-two incident reports from election offices and voting centres reported by the public, which were reported to VMIA. Seven workplace incidents involving staff were reported to WorkCover.

Electoral entitlements

An amount of \$7.395 million has also been paid to political parties and independent candidates for election entitlements, and the details of payments are included on page 52.



Section 2

Services to voters

The fixed election date provided an opportunity to have an extended enrolment advertising period a month prior to the issue of the writ.

2

Enrolment

Recoding electors following the redivision of electoral boundaries

The report on the 2005 redivision of Legislative Council electoral boundaries for Victoria was released on 6 October 2005. The redivision required the VEC to amend all elector details on the enrolment register to reflect the new region boundaries. The new boundaries provided for 11 complete existing Legislative Assembly districts in each new Legislative Council region. Thus it was possible to recode all the properties on the enrolment register by referencing the district coding for each property.

Recoding of the enrolment register database was carried out on 27 April 2006, after critical software changes were made to provide for the new structure of eight Legislative Council regions. After verification of the changes, electoral rolls for the new regions were extracted and provided to Legislative Council members in early May 2006.

Enrolment initiatives prior to the 2006 State election

The fixed election date provided an opportunity to have an extended enrolment advertising period a month prior to the issue of the writ. The campaign commenced with a media launch and included television, radio, newspaper and outdoor advertising, reminding eligible electors to enrol or update their enrolment details. The aim was to have as accurate an enrolment register as possible at the close of rolls.

In addition, every Victorian elector on the enrolment register was mailed an *EasyVote* card. The *EasyVote* card provided important information on the new Legislative Council system and a timely reminder for all electors to ensure that their details were accurate and up-to-date.

A second distribution of *EasyVote* cards was provided to electors who updated their enrolment during the period of the mail-out but before the rolls closed.

Other ongoing enrolment initiatives

To maintain the accuracy of the enrolment register on an ongoing basis, the VEC has a range of strategic programs to help Victorians to enrol or update their enrolment. The VEC sends enrolment brochures to:

- Victorians when they turn 17 years of age and become eligible to provisionally enrol; and
- electors who have changed their address and need to update their enrolment details.

Electors are targeted through data-matching initiatives such as with the Rental Bond Authority and VicRoads. This ensures the VEC only mails enrolment forms to those people who have changed address recently.

Receiving an enrolment form prompts electors to act when they might otherwise delay enrolling or updating their enrolment until an election is called. A non-response to these mail-outs results in a second mail-out, a new initiative since the 2002 State election.

The VEC has ongoing enrolment data collection arrangements with seven organisations. In 2005-06, the VEC collected 123,236 enrolments through its strategic enrolment programs and arrangements.

Enrolment forms are also available year round at the VEC on the VEC website, at local council offices, Coles supermarkets and post offices.

Close of roll

At the issue of the writ on 31 October 2006, eligible electors had seven days to ensure they were on the electoral roll and that their enrolment details were correct. In 2002, this period was three days.

Electors were able to update their enrolment details on the spot at VEC election offices or Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) offices throughout the State, collect an enrolment form at any Coles supermarket or post office, or download a form from the VEC's website. For the first time, electors were able to email enrolment forms to the VEC, as well as fax, post or hand-deliver them.

The period between the issue of the writ and the close of roll was extended from three days in 2002 to seven days in 2006, with no other changes to the election timeframe. The resultant reduced timeframe for producing essential roll products caused significant difficulty in meeting the deadline. In spite of the change, the number of new enrolments and enrolment updates in the period were very similar for both elections. Consideration should be given to moving the close of roll back to three days, to allow sufficient time to produce roll products - see Section 10.

Table 2 Enrolments processed from the issue of the writ to the close of roll

	Issue of writ to close of roll	New enrolments	Enrolment updates
2002	3 days	21,158	34,003
2006	7 days	21,238	36,479

In addition, the VEC processed 26,836 new enrolments and 61,652 enrolment updates in the month prior to the issue of the writ. At the close of rolls at 8.00pm on Tuesday, 7 November, 3,353,845 people were enrolled to vote in the 2006 State election, compared with 3,228,466 at the 2002 State election. (The *Results and Statistics Report* contains details of region and district enrolments at the close of roll.)

The VEC entered into special arrangements with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to facilitate the close of roll for roll production. The AEC worked overtime on the weekend of Saturday, 4 November, to clear any backlog of unprocessed enrolment cards, and provided two additional special enrolment transactions in the week leading up to the close of roll. All AEC offices were open on Melbourne Cup Day (close of roll day) until 8.00pm to receive and process enrolment cards and the AEC provided the close of roll extract within 24 hours of close of roll. The VEC would like to formally record its appreciation for the AEC's responsive turnaround, which was critical to roll production and nomination checking as well as the distribution of postal votes.

Whilst the VEC was relatively satisfied with the state of the roll as at the close of rolls, there is still concern that far too many people disqualified themselves from voting by either not enrolling or by not maintaining their enrolment. Accordingly, the VEC is keen to research, in cooperation with its federal, state and territory colleagues, means by which a person can update their enrolment automatically at the same time they update other government records. This direct update method appears to offer efficiency advantages as well as a service to electors. Such a move would require extensive legislative change and needs to be fully researched.

Table 3 Enrolments processed by the VEC July – November 2006

Jul-06	56,383
Aug-06	64,650
Sep-06	77,469
Oct-06	79,483
Nov-06	104,562

Voting

Arrangements for voting before election day

The VEC made a number of arrangements for electors who were unable to attend a voting centre on election day. A total of 492,136 Victorians voted before election day. This represented 15.8% of all votes cast, and is an increase on the number of votes cast before election day at previous State elections. The total number of votes cast before election day represented a 55% increase on the 2002 State election, where 318,198 votes were cast before election day (10.6% of all votes). At the 1999 State election there were 276,780 votes cast before election day (9.5% of the total).

Early voting in person

Voting in person was possible at 77 early voting centres throughout the State prior to election day. These locations are listed in Appendix 9.

Early voting centres were open for two weeks prior to election day, from Friday, 10 November, to Friday, 24 November. In addition to business hours, these centres were open until 8.00pm on Thursday, 23 November, and from 8.00am to 2.00pm on Saturday, 18 November, in recognition of the needs of those members of the community who could not vote during business hours.

There were 255,161 votes cast at early voting centres prior to election day. This was a 45% increase on 2002, when there were 163,712 early votes cast in person. Early voters were asked the main reason why they lodged a vote at an early voting centre. A third of early voters indicated they voted early because they would be at work on election day and unable to attend a voting centre in their electorate. Other reasons included that the voters would be on holiday interstate or overseas.

The use of computers at all early voting centres enabled staff to identify an elector's correct enrolled address and district, so that the elector could cast a ballot without having to complete a declaration envelope, making voting much quicker. Electors were marked as having voted directly on the VEC's central database.

In most cases, the election office was considered to be appropriately located for the purpose of voting prior to election day. An additional 34 early voting centres were established to supplement election offices, including Melbourne and Avalon airports.

Some electors who wished to vote at the airports were disappointed with the existing operating hours – specifically that the hours did not reflect the extended operating hours of the airport.

Electors with special circumstances were able to vote from 4.00pm on Friday, 10 November, four hours after the close of nominations. However they were only able to vote on ballot papers with below-the-line voting options, as group voting tickets were not finalised until the Sunday after the commencement of early voting. Legislative change is recommended to address this situation in Section 10.

In addition, as the period between the close of nominations and commencement of early voting does not allow enough time for the production and distribution of ballot papers, offices were required to print ballot papers on-site.

Mobile voting

The Electoral Commissioner has the power to appoint certain institutions as mobile voting centres, to enable electors in those institutions to vote on the spot when a mobile voting team visits in the lead-up to a State election. Mobile voting teams may visit establishments such as nursing homes, hostels and hospitals.

There were 892 Mobile voting centres appointed for the 2006 State election, compared with 878 locations in 2002. Under the *Electoral Act 2002*, the VEC is able to appoint a larger range of institutions as mobile voting centres than was possible under the previous legislation.

For the first time, mobile Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) were used at 474 mobile voting centres. The handheld PDAs contained the State electoral roll to assist election officials to identify each elector's correct enrolment details.

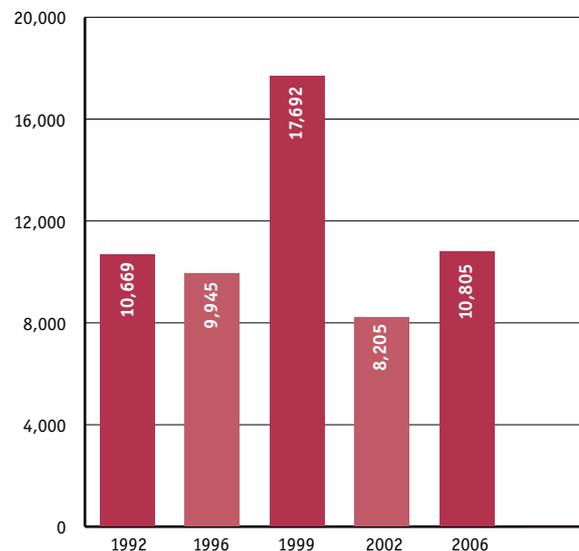
Voting at interstate and overseas locations

Early voting was possible at 11 interstate and 28 overseas locations. These locations are listed in the *Results and Statistics Report*.

A total of 10,805 votes were cast outside Victoria during the 2006 State election. This compares with 8,205 votes in 2002 and 17,692 votes in 1999.

Some additional early voting service improvements for the 2010 State election are identified in Section 9 of this report.

Figure 1 Votes cast at interstate and overseas locations at Victorian State elections 1992 - 2006



Voting by post

Electors unable to attend a voting centre on election day could access a postal vote by:

- collecting an application form from any post office in Victoria;
- downloading an application from the VEC's website;
- telephoning the VEC's telephone enquiry service to request an application form be posted to them; or
- using an application form provided by a political party.

Postal vote applications were scanned and processed electronically, which eliminated labour-intensive handling of paper applications and helped to ensure the efficient delivery of ballot packs. The VEC's election management system also enabled election officials to track all applications and inform electors of the status of their application at any given point in time.

Once the initial backlog was cleared (this took two working days), all postal vote applications were processed on the day they were received by the VEC.

A number of electors had difficulty with the witness provisions on the application form. The application form requires a 'Title or capacity as witness' to be completed by the witness, with an accompanying list of categories of capacity. Many electors presumed this section required either 'Mr', 'Mrs' etc or a description of the relationship i.e. hairdresser, neighbour. Political parties and candidates were advised of the Electoral Commissioner's intention to

authorise the issue of ballot materials where the elector had signed the application in the presence of a witness, and the witness's address and signature were present on the application. While the VEC took action to provide an additional information sheet alerting witnesses of the need to write 'elector', it remained an issue when processing applications. Whilst applications were not rejected, legislative change is recommended accordingly in Section 10.

The VEC also found that many electors who applied for a postal vote also voted at an early voting centre prior to receiving their ballot packs. This was largely due to the fact that many electors received a postal vote application from a political party prior to the advertisement of early voting centres. The VEC had thorough systems in place to ensure that once a person had voted at an early voting centre, their details were cross-checked against returned postal ballot packs. If a match occurred, the ballot pack was not admitted. The implementation of these additional processes did create an administrative burden for the VEC. The VEC will amend its advertising schedule to address this situation, specifically placing more emphasis on early voting in person.

Australia Post is an important partner in the postal voting system, and the VEC used 'Express Post' for delivery of election material in the week prior to election day. This ensured that material was delivered with sufficient time for electors to complete and return their ballot material.

When the preliminary scrutiny began at 8.00am on election day, the declaration could be quickly checked against the elector's signature contained on the scanned image of the postal vote application. As a result, most postal votes were included in the count on election night.

During the 23 days of postal voting, the VEC processed a record 226,170 applications for postal votes (201,243 in 2002).

Registered general postal voters

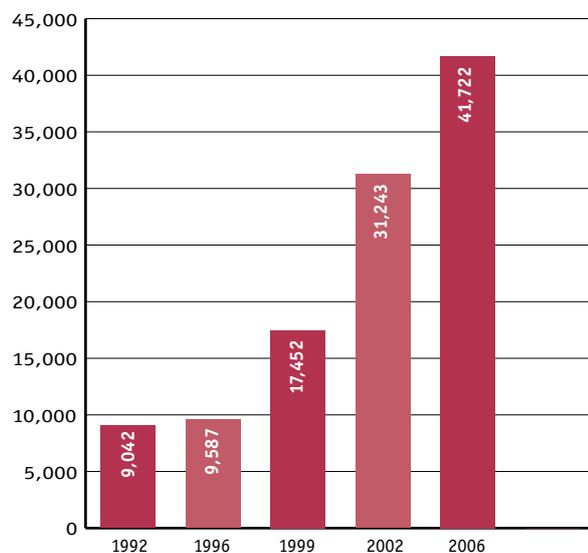
Electors who satisfy certain statutory requirements regarding their inability to vote at a voting centre at election time are eligible for registration as general postal voters. For the first time, legislation included 'aged over 70' as a criterion to register as a general postal voter.

By registering as a general postal voter under the age criteria, electors automatically receive ballot papers in the mail for all State elections and local government elections.

There were 41,722 registered general postal voters at the 2006 State election. This figure demonstrates an increasing trend of voters in this category (31,243 in 2002, 17,452 in 1999).

The increase was probably due to legislative changes that increased eligibility for registration, and a mail-out of information about general postal voting to all senior citizen centres in the State in September 2006.

Figure 2 Registered general postal voters at Victorian State elections 1992 - 2006



Antarctic voting

An 'Antarctic elector' is an elector who has made a request under the *Electoral Act 2002* to be treated as such while employed in Antarctica.

Thirteen Antarctic voters cast a vote at the 2006 State election.

Additional elector services

Events

The VEC is committed to ensuring maximum accessibility to voting. As such, an analysis was conducted to identify any key events that were occurring on Saturday, 25 November, to provide suitable services for electors attending these events. The VEC contacted organisers of these events to coordinate information for participants, examine opportunities to advertise in relevant publications, or in some instances to provide voting centres close to the events. Major events catered for included the Corporate Games, Great Victorian Bike Ride, Queenscliff Music Festival, Earthcore Music Festival, Schoolies Week, RACV Energy Breakthrough and the Springcar Nationals.

The VEC contacted all registered political parties and candidates and notified them of the additional arrangements.

2

Firefighters

Within 18 hours of a request from the Department of Sustainability and Environment to provide voting facilities for up to 400 firefighters in the field, voting facilities were established in Casterton, Western Victoria.

The centre operated from 6.00am to 10.00am on Friday, 24 November, and from 8.00am to 6.00pm on election day. Electronic copies of the State roll on PDAs were provided to election officials to verify elector entitlements.

Avalon Airport

In order to extend the service provided at Melbourne Airport, voting facilities were established in the departures area at Avalon airport from Wednesday, 22 November, through to election day.

Melbourne Assessment Centre and the Melbourne Remand Centre

Mobile voting facilities were established at the Melbourne Assessment Centre, on Thursday, 23 November (8.00am – 4.00pm), and at the Melbourne Remand Centre in Truganina on Friday, 24 November (8.30am – 2.00pm), after notification was received that, despite earlier advice, voting services other than postal voting were required.

Dili

After a request from Australian service personnel stationed in Dili, East Timor, early voting facilities were established at the Australian Embassy in Dili. The centre operated from Monday, 20 November, to Friday, 24 November, and was additional to other voting arrangements established for service personnel.

Arrangements for voting on election day

Voting took place between 8.00am and 6.00pm at 1,652 voting centres throughout Victoria on election day - Saturday, 25 November 2006.

Voters were able to cast an ordinary vote at a voting centre within their electorate, or vote at any other voting centre in the State outside their electorate by casting an 'absent vote'.

A total of 2,440,009 votes were cast on election day. These included 199,517 absent votes, a decrease on the 230,576 issued in 2002 and 226,608 in 1999.

The reduction in the number of absent votes is primarily attributed to an increase in the number of joint voting centres. A total of 148 joint voting centres were established for this election compared to 23 in 2002. The aim was to reduce the number of absent votes issued at voting centres located close to electorate boundaries.

The reduction in absent votes can be further explained in part by the use of the Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). For the first time, PDAs were available at 123 voting centres. Election officials were able to locate a person's correct district from the electoral roll on the PDA, or advise the elector if they were not enrolled correctly and provide them with an enrolment form. In the past, a large percentage of absent votes were rejected due to people inadvertently providing incorrect enrolment details.

Voting centres were established primarily in schools and community halls selected by Election Managers during preparation for the election, with a preference for those that were wheelchair accessible. Disability and community groups were invited to suggest suitable voting centres that the VEC had not already identified.

An accessibility audit of all selected venues was conducted and they were subsequently classified according to recognised national accessibility standards. Despite its best efforts, the VEC was disappointed with the paucity of wheelchair accessible venues – particularly given that most of the venues are State government-owned. This continues to be an ongoing concern.

Voting centre locations were advertised online and through the VEC's telephone enquiry service from 31 October 2006. In addition, they were all listed in major daily newspapers on election day and local voting centres were also listed in regional newspapers. The accessibility rating of all centres was included and those venues rated as 'assisted access' included a brief description on the VEC website of their accessibility limitations.

Group voting tickets for the Legislative Council were required to be displayed at all voting centres. It is accepted that not all voting centres had group voting tickets on display, and this will be addressed in the future.

A number of other voting centre service improvements are also identified in Section 9 of this report.

Improving services for electors with a disability

In December 2005, the VEC developed a *Disability Action Plan* following consultation with organisations representing people with a disability in Victoria. Prior to the State election, the VEC revised the plan to improve access to electoral services and information for voters with a disability.

A number of initiatives were introduced as a result:

- the establishment of an Electoral Access Advisory Group, to provide ongoing input to election plans;
- customised election information for people with special needs - distributed through established community communication networks;
- audio and Easy English information on the website;
- community group presentations;
- the development of an 'Easy English Guide to Voting in the State Election' in conjunction with Scope;
- Easy English posters;
- training video;
- improved signage at voting centres, and vests to enable clear identification of information election officials;
- the installation of a text telephone (TTY) hotline to help people with hearing impairment communicate with the VEC and easily obtain election information;
- magnifying tools; and
- the availability of user-friendly pencils at all voting centres for those with arthritis.

Prospective candidates and political parties were advised of these service enhancements prior to the election.

The VEC also provided table-top voting screens at all voting centres and asked election officials to be aware of, and sensitive to, the needs of electors with a disability.

An initiative to enable voting for electors with a vision-impairment is covered in Section 6.

Assistance for electors from non-English speaking backgrounds

In June 2006, a number of representatives from non-English speaking communities were invited to attend a session with the Electoral Commissioner and representatives of the Communications Branch to provide advice on making voting more accessible. Attendants included representatives from the Migrant Resource Centre, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Multicultural Education Services and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. The session provided some suggestions for improvement that were implemented at the 2006 State election.

Where relevant, Election Managers were provided with statistics on the numbers of voters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds within their electorates, with a view to encouraging employment of election officials from those backgrounds. The VEC employed 1,141 multi-lingual election officials on election day who were able to assist voters and answer enquiries in their preferred language.

All voting centres were provided with brochures with voting instructions in 18 languages other than English, and identification stickers for election officials with particular language skills for easy identification.

2

Communication services

An extensive communications campaign was launched on Tuesday, 3 October, at Federation Square in Melbourne. The VEC took advantage of the fixed election date by commencing its enrolment campaign a month prior to the issue of the writ.

The overarching objectives of the campaign were to:

- increase general public awareness of the changes to the structure and voting system for the Legislative Council;
- maximise new enrolments and enrolment updates prior to the close of the roll;
- minimise the level of informal voting for the Legislative Council;
- increase the formal vote for the Legislative Assembly;
- maximise the level of voter participation for the election;
- encourage the use of early voting among key target audiences;
- provide timely, clear and accurate information services to candidates;
- communicate accurate, accessible election results; and
- provide accurate, clear and accessible information to the media.

The campaign involved a state-wide mail-out, press, radio, television and outdoor advertising, a telephone enquiry service, media relations, community presentations, publications, education services, competitions and events and the VEC's website.

Audience-specific strategies targetted the general public, remote and regional electors, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, blind or vision-impaired voters, people experiencing homelessness, Indigenous Victorians, students and first-time voters. Media representatives were invited to a number of briefings, and arrangements to provide information in short time-frames were established.

State election advertising campaign

Following a competitive tendering process, the VEC appointed Grey Worldwide to adapt the 2002 State election advertising campaign 'Every vote will shape Victoria' for the 2006 State election.

Table 4 Advertising phases

Phase	Timing
1. Enrolment	3 October to 6 November 2006
2. Information for candidates	1 November 2006
3. Voting (motivational)	8-19 November 2006
4. Early voting	10-15 November 2006
5. Candidate listings	18 November 2006
6. How to vote correctly	20-25 November 2006
7. Where to vote on election day	22-25 November 2006

Samples of the press advertising appear in Appendix 5.

Table 5 Advertising spending

Sum of spend TYPE	Media Type Desc					Grand Total
	Magazines	Outdoor	Press	Radio	Television	
Ethnic			\$ 83,454.97	\$ 68,185.00		\$ 151,639.97
Metro			\$669,362.75	\$291,805.00	\$870,496.00	\$1,831,603.75
Other	\$ 13,188.64		\$ 6,050.00	\$ 24,200.00		\$ 43,438.64
Outdoor		\$152,625.00				\$ 152,625.00
Regional			\$129,859.38	\$110,337.60	\$107,990.00	\$ 348,186.98
Grand Total	\$ 13,188.64	\$152,625.00	\$888,727.10	\$494,527.60	\$978,486.00	\$2,527,554.34

Communication services for remote and regional Victorians

Advertising placement was dictated by the need to balance effective targetting of key information with best ‘value for money’.

The VEC advertised in an extended range of regional newspapers (up from 60 newspapers in 2002). The revised selection comprised eight Mighty V newspapers, *The Weekly Times* and 70 Victorian Country Press Association newspapers.

Regional advertising also included placements on the WIN TV, Southern Cross and Prime television networks, eight regional radio stations and additional advertising on 3SR/SUN FM to reach some 60,000 people anticipated to attend the Springcar Nationals in Shepparton on election day.

Table 6 Regional advertising spending by media*

Total	Newspaper	Radio	Television
\$348,187	\$129,859	\$110,338	\$107,990

*Excludes the cost of advertising in State-wide media circulated or broadcast in regional Victoria.

Communication services for voters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Representatives from organisations working with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups assisted the VEC to develop an action plan to maximise opportunities to reach this audience.

As a result, presentations to CALD groups and support workers were made in conjunction with the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) throughout September at Mildura, Wangaratta, Shepparton, Bendigo, Ballarat, Morwell, Springvale, Box Hill and Broadmeadows. A number of Election Managers also made presentations to small groups upon request.

Two media releases in 18 languages were distributed to 66 ethnic publications and six radio stations throughout October and November, while paid advertising in 10 languages ran in 13 ethnic publications and on six radio stations.

Table 7 Ethnic advertising spending by media

Total Newspaper		
Total	Newspaper	Radio
\$151,640	\$83,455	\$68,185

Advertising in both ethnic and English print media included the VEC’s 19 multi-lingual telephone enquiry service numbers that operate all year round. Callers dialling a language-specific number listened to a message on the subject of their choice and could then select an option to speak through an interpreter with a telephone enquiry service operator if required.

2

Table 8 Number of calls and requests for an interpreter (October to November 2006)

	October 2006		November 2006		TOTAL PER LANGUAGE	
	Calls	Interpreter	Calls	Interpreter	Calls	Interpreter
Amharic	5	1	19	6	24	7
Arabic	69	28	235	101	304	129
Bosnian	29	7	64	13	93	20
Cambodian	15	8	59	28	74	36
Chinese (Cantonese)	259	113	541	247	800	360
Chinese (Mandarin)	265	114	708	302	973	416
Croatian	49	13	96	22	145	35
Dari	23	5	43	15	66	20
Greek	135	66	215	81	350	147
Italian	99	20	174	37	273	57
Korean	18	2	34	6	52	8
Macedonian	37	17	69	19	106	36
Persian	23	8	38	5	61	13
Russian	63	21	142	58	205	79
Serbian	49	26	133	56	182	82
Somali	6	0	22	1	28	1
Spanish	48	21	127	40	175	61
Turkish	59	18	128	35	187	53
Vietnamese	216	106	331	137	547	243
Other	135	45	358	76	493	121
TOTAL PER MONTH	1602	639	3536	1285		
TOTAL OVERALL					5138	1924

Key information in 18 languages other than English was also provided on the VEC website, with more detailed information provided in a format available for download for each language.

In addition, an interactive virtual voting experience on was produced (covering 18 languages plus English) for the VEC's website and also in CD format. It provided a simulation of the voting experience for first-time voters and a demonstration of how to fill out Upper and Lower House ballot papers. The CD was distributed to over 300 major CALD associations and groups, local councils and community information centres.



Above: Virtual voting experience in 18 languages plus English.

Multi-language voting instruction brochures were also mailed to those same organisations, along with a summary of language services available and an A4-sized quick guide to key election information. On election day, these brochures were prominently placed at each voting centre, while multi-lingual election officials were clearly identified with a sticker indicating the language spoken. Availability of these services was also promoted through the VMC and the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria.

Communication services for Indigenous persons

In June 2006, the VEC commissioned a research report to investigate ways of engaging Victoria's Indigenous people with the electoral process.

A poster featuring local Indigenous role models and their personal views on the importance of voting was produced to motivate and inspire the wider Indigenous community. This was accompanied by a brochure that clearly explained enrolment and voting, as well as addressing barriers identified as potentially deterring Indigenous people from enrolling. Brochures and posters, along with enrolment forms, were distributed to Indigenous organisations throughout Victoria.



Above: One of two posters developed to encourage enrolment and voting among the Indigenous community.

The VEC approached respected Wongai man and former Carlton Football Club great, Syd Jackson, to record a series of radio advertisements broadcast on Indigenous radio stations 3KND and 3GRR, which service the Echuca and Gippsland regions.

An information stand, located at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service for several days in October and November, allowed Indigenous people to discuss enrolment and voting with a VEC employee. Staff were able to correct common misunderstandings around issues of privacy and penalties for not having previously enrolled, and assist Indigenous people to complete enrolment forms and update details.

Indigenous people were encouraged to apply for casual election work, to increase their involvement in the electoral process and create a welcoming environment for Indigenous electors at voting centres. Six applicants were appointed to voting centres around the State including Preston, Bundoora and Shepparton.

Communication services for people experiencing homelessness

A partnership with the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) and the Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic (PILCH) was formed to provide information about the State election to people experiencing homelessness. A change in legislation made it clear that people experiencing homelessness were entitled to enrol as electors without a fixed address. Such electors are exempted from being fined for failing to vote.

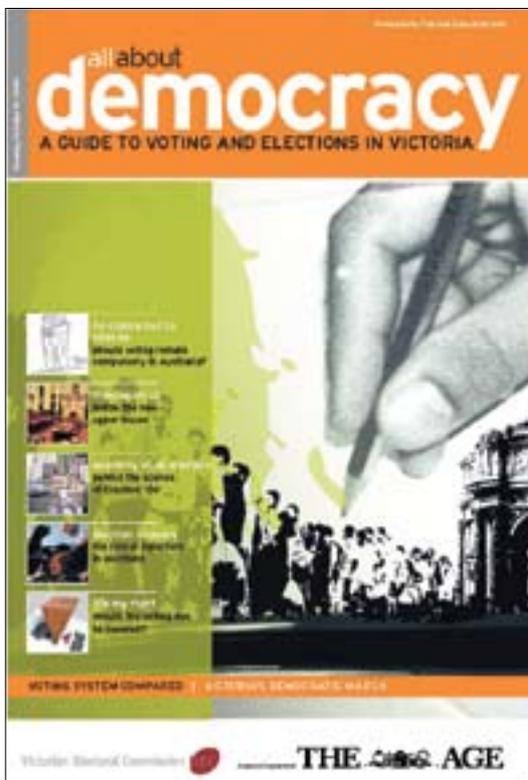
Together with PILCH and CHP, two brochures were developed: one for service providers outlining the above provisions for the homeless, the other specifically for people experiencing homelessness. The brochures were distributed to approximately 330 homelessness organisations throughout Victoria, and were accompanied by 'no fixed address' enrolment forms and ordinary elector enrolment forms.

For the first time, a mobile voting team attended a venue servicing people experiencing homelessness - St Mary's House of Welcome in Fitzroy. This successful initiative saw 68 votes cast during the visit. Many electors commented that they would not have voted if this opportunity had not been available.

2

Communication services for students and first-time voters

Democracy Week (18 to 24 October 2006) was a timely opportunity for the VEC to provide students, teachers and the general public with a behind-the-scenes view of how the VEC operates, information on changes to the Legislative Council, and an overview of Victoria's democratic history. Complementing the VEC's and *The Age's* publication, *All About Democracy - A guide to voting and elections in Victoria* on 16 October, a range of information and motivational products were distributed to Victorian students and teachers.



Above: *The Age* supplement, *All About Democracy - A guide to voting and elections in Victoria*

Reggie and Desi's Excellent Voting Adventure, an interactive CD with teacher notes on each of its three animations, explored the motivational context of voting and provided a simulation of voting and a demonstration of the proportional representation vote counting system. Each animation was (and still is) available on the website, and was distributed to all Victorian schools.

For Year 12 students, a pocket-sized z-card™ entitled *Fast Facts - Voting in Victoria* was developed and distributed to all Victorian secondary schools, accompanied by enrolment forms and reply-paid envelopes to encourage enrolment.

At tertiary and TAFE level, the VEC invited students to design a poster promoting enrolment and voting for the election to the 17- to-25 year-old market. More than 250 entries were received for the *Make Your Design Count* competition, with some institutions incorporating it into their curriculum. The first prize-winning poster was printed and posted around participating TAFE and university campuses.



Above: First prize winning poster by Thomas Littleson of Victoria University

VEC website

An election-specific website portal – www.13vote.com.au – was developed and launched on 2 October. This initiative was designed to team with the 13VOTE (13 86 83) telephone enquiry service number, to enable better recall through advertising and served to increase access and visits to the site.

The portal contained links to only the most essential topics relevant to each phase of the election. Visits to the top five pages each week in October and November correlated with each advertising phase. The website was the most popular means of accessing enrolment forms throughout this period.



Table 9 VEC website page usage October – November 2006

WEEK	Top 5 pages & 13vote.com.au	
Week 1 October		34,913
	1. Homepage	5,537
	2. Enrolment forms	2,473
	3. Check your enrolment	2,275
	4. State election voting	1,082
	5. State elections	974
	13vote.com.au	4,415
Week 8 October		46,275
	1. Homepage	7,641
	2. Enrolment forms	3,674
	3. Check your enrolment	2,799
	4. State election voting	2,177
	5. State elections	1,386
	13vote.com.au	5,542
Week 15 October		73,578
	1. Homepage	15,030
	2. Enrolment forms	7,842
	3. Check your enrolment	6,210
	4. State election voting	4,810
	5. State election enrolment	2,810
	13vote.com.au	13,963
Week 22 October		68,298
	1. Homepage	13,469
	2. Enrolment forms	6,550
	3. State election voting	5,566
	4. Check your enrolment	4,367
	5. State election enrolment	2,220
	13vote.com.au	11,366
Week 29 October		66,340
	1. Homepage	12,137
	2. State election voting	6,463
	3. Enrolment forms	4,824
	4. Check your enrolment	3,508
	5. State election early voting	2,287
	13vote.com.au	26,742
OCTOBER TOTAL VISITORS		289,404

2

Table 9 VEC website page usage October – November 2006

Week 5 November		160,676
	1. Homepage	26,431
	2. State election voting	13,195
	3. Check your enrolment	9,722
	4. Enrolment forms	8,828
	5. State election early voting	6,277
	13vote.com.au	20,416
Week 12 November		198,963
	1. Homepage	31,943
	2. State election early voting	18,907
	3. Nearest voting centre look-up	15,212
	4. State election voting	14,319
	5. Check your enrolment	7,464
	13vote.com.au	28,875
Week 19 November		554,735
	1. Homepage	100,685
	2. Nearest voting centre look-up	62,351
	3. State election early voting	32,859
	4. State election voting	25,069
	5. Check your enrolment	21,438
	13vote.com.au	69,309
Week 26 November		47,657
	1. Homepage	11,813
	2. State elections	4,310
	3. 2002 State election district results	1,709
	4. Districts	1,172
	5. Non-voter follow up	1,342
	13vote.com.au	3,422
NOVEMBER TOTAL VISITORS		962,031
Virtual tally room		
24-30 November		288,371
TOTAL		288,371

A number of external sites were also linked to www.13vote.com.au, including Victoria Online and Victoria's community information portal, Vicnet, as well as sites maintained for special events taking place on election day. These included Bicycle Victoria and the Great Victoria Bike Ride, the Queenscliff Music Festival, the Corporate Games and the Springcar Nationals in Shepparton.

Voting centre search facility

The website also included a voting centre search facility, to identify and locate early voting centres and election day voting centres. On entering their own address, electors were presented with the five nearest voting centres, or two early voting centres. The voting centre address was included, as well as a Melways map, the accessibility rating and any access limitations, and whether the voting centre was within their electoral district. Electors could also search by locality or postcode, which proved helpful for those away from their home address on election day. Over the campaign period, in excess of 226,000 search requests were recorded.

Telephone enquiry service

The VEC's 13VOTE election hotline was outsourced (by tender) to provide a service to deal effectively and efficiently with the large volume of calls that occur during a State election.

The service was operational for nine weeks, from Monday, 2 October, to Friday, 1 December. The operating hours were 8.30am – 7.30pm (8.00pm on close of roll) weekdays, 8.00am – 2.00pm on Saturday, 18 November, and 8.00am – 6.00pm on Saturday, 25 November.

The telephone enquiry service received 227,246 calls during the election period (compared with 129,774 in 2002). Up to 80 trained operators were available at any one time to answer calls at peak times. The VEC provided all operators with information to enable them to answer questions regarding:

- how and where to enrol;
- Election Manager contact details and how to nominate as a candidate;
- the location of interstate and overseas voting centres;
- how to vote by post or in person before election day;
- the location of early mobile voting centres; and
- voting on election day.

Operators were able to access online information to ensure that all telephone enquiries were answered quickly and accurately. More difficult calls were escalated to team leaders. Any enquiry requiring more detail was referred to a VEC representative on the floor and, if required, could be transferred to the VEC's head office for final resolution of the matter. All State election advertising publicised the 13VOTE (13 86 83) hotline number. A TTY line was established, as well as interpreter lines for 18 languages other than English.

It is notable that all advertising generated a large increase in the volume of calls received in the period immediately following publication or broadcast.

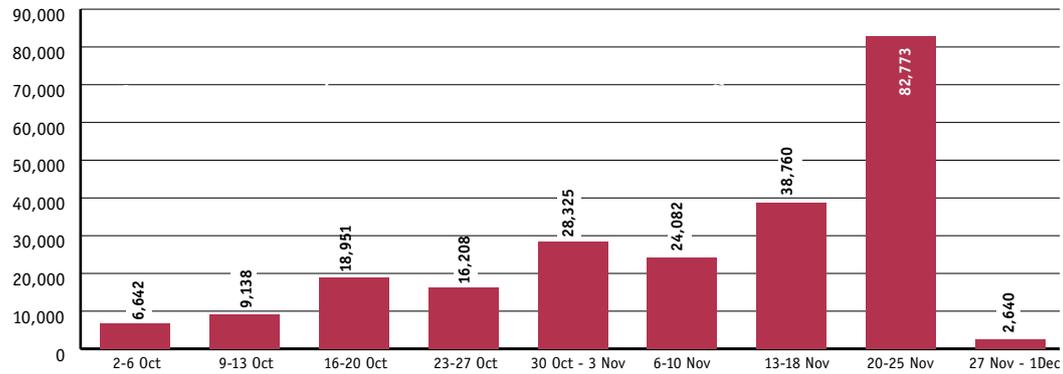
Given the large increase in the number of calls, it is significant that only two formal complaints were received, reflecting the quality of the service.

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Table 10 Service levels at the election hotline

Election	Number of calls received	Number of calls answered	Left after message	Abandoned
2006	227,246	128,090	73,379	25,777
		56%	32%	11%
2002	129,774	99,743	24,833	5,198
		77%	19%	4%

Figure 3 Users of the election hotline at the 2006 Victorian State election



Compulsory voting enforcement

The first stage of the non-voter follow-up process commenced in mid-December. Postal vote declarations received too late to be admitted to the count were processed through the compulsory voting module of the Election Management System. Elector information reports completed at voting centres on election day detailing elector excuses for not voting were also processed through the system at this time. These electors were marked as not able to vote on election day.

Scanning of the 6,133 marked rolls from election day voting centres commenced in mid-January 2007. This activity is a major component of the non-voter follow-up exercise and takes approximately four weeks to complete. The technology used for roll scanning allows for a two per cent tolerance when reading the marks on the roll against the number of marks detailed on the scannable roll cover completed by the issuing officer. The tolerance level is set to allow for possible errors during the reconciliation of ballot papers by the issuing officer at a voting centre. Where the tolerance level is exceeded, each scannable roll is manually reconciled by counting each mark on each page of the roll. This ensures that all electors who were marked on a roll as having voted at a voting centre are recorded in the VEC's Election Management System, therefore ensuring electors are not incorrectly issued with an 'Apparent Failure to Vote' notice.

Once this was completed, the VEC generated a file of 'possible' multiple voters. A total of 1,142 multiple records required further investigation and these voters were sent a letter seeking clarification of how and where they voted. This process is currently underway. It should be noted that the possible multiple voter process in no way affects the result of an election, as in almost all cases, it has been an administrative error that has led to some electors being marked off the roll more than once. In the Lower House district of Ferntree Gully, the number of possible multiple votes was six, which was far less than the final margin of 27 votes.

134,737 'Apparent Failure to Vote' notices were generated in mid-March and mailed to electors over the following two weeks. The first stage of the non-voter follow-up process is conducted under Part 9, Division 2 of the *Electoral Act 2002*. Subsequent follow-up of electors who did not respond to, or provided an invalid response to the 'Apparent Failure to Vote' notice mail out, is conducted under the *Infringements Act 2006*. Non-voters may receive two further notices from the VEC. The first is an *Infringement Notice*. This stage incurs a penalty amount currently set at \$54 and is due for completion by mid-July 2007. The third stage of the non-voter follow-up process will be the mailing of *Penalty Reminder Notices* to all outstanding non-voters. The anticipated completion date of the *Penalty Reminder Notice* stage is late August. Further follow-up of all remaining non-voters may be instigated in the Infringements Court.

Prior to the 2005 local government elections, the VEC implemented electronic payment of non-voter penalties via the internet using BPAY or by EFTPOS. For non-voter follow-up for the State election, the electronic banking options have been extended to include penalty payments at any Australia Post outlet using the PostBillPay facility.

Table 11 Compulsory voting enforcement*

Total voters enrolled	3,353,845
Total voted	2,932,145
Electors who did not vote *	421,700
Apparent Failure to Vote notices sent	134,737

*This includes electors who provided a valid excuse prior to the notices being sent out.

As at 30 May, the VEC had posted 74,651 Infringement Notices to electors. The deadline for response or payment is mid-July 2007.

The VEC's annual report for 2007-2008 will provide complete details of compulsory voting enforcement.

2

The VEC's performance in providing services to voters

Enrolment

A large number of Victorians responded to the VEC's call for enrolments in the lead-up to the 2006 State election.

Between 2 October and the close of roll on 7 November, 149,978 Victorians either enrolled for the first time or updated their enrolment details.

At the close of rolls at 8.00pm on Tuesday, 7 November, 3,353,845 people were enrolled to vote in the 2006 election, compared with 3,228,466 at the 2002 State election.

Voter participation

Voter participation and informal voting rates are useful indicators of the health of an electoral system. It is important to note, however, that these indicators may be affected by factors other than the services provided by an electoral authority, including interest in the election, election issues, the geography and demographic composition of the electorate, and even the weather on election day.

Communication campaigns produced by the VEC sought to maximise voter participation and reduce informal voting, by providing Victorians with all the information they needed to participate fully and appropriately in the election.

Voter turnout at the 2006 State election was 92.7% of the total electors enrolled. This was comparable with the 93.16% recorded at the 2002 State election and 93.23% recorded in 1999. It was also comparable with other State and Federal participation rates (see graphical summary on page 3).

Informal voting

The rate of informal voting for the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) at the 2006 election was 4.56% of votes received, which was more than 1% higher than in 2002. Statistics show that informality is higher in metropolitan electorates with higher numbers of candidates. A record 707 candidates contested the 2006 election.

The rate of informal voting for the Legislative Council (Upper House) was 4.28%, which was just over half a per cent higher than for the 2002 State election. The increase may be due to the changes to the voting system. However, the figure is still lower than the comparable Federal figure for informality when the Senate system was changed.

Further detail on the types of informal votes can be found in Section 8.



Evaluation of election services

The VEC engaged Colmar Brunton Social Research to conduct a survey of voters during the 2006 State election. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate awareness of, and satisfaction with, the services provided by the VEC.

Voting before election day

Ninety-eight percent of early voters surveyed indicated that their experience of the early voting centre was either satisfactory or extremely satisfactory. Only 2% of respondents felt dissatisfied with their experience at the early voting centre. This response was very similar to the level of satisfaction in 2002 (97%).

Respondents were asked to rate a number of attributes from 'extremely dissatisfied' to 'extremely satisfied'. The attribute that received the highest satisfaction was the helpfulness of the staff at the early voting centre (99%). Other attributes that received high levels of satisfaction included: efficiency of the staff (99%), ease of completing the ballot papers (97%), layout and organisation inside the early voting centre (97%), ease of putting the completed ballot papers in the ballot box (95%), privacy when voting (89%) and the availability of information about how to vote (82%). As in 2002, outside signage remains an area for improvement, with the lowest level of satisfaction (55%).

Postal voters were also surveyed about their experience of services provided by the VEC. On being asked how satisfied they were with being provided with the appropriate ballot papers, 83% of respondents were either satisfied or extremely satisfied. This was a slight decline from 92% satisfaction in 2002. However, the level of dissatisfaction was exactly the same at 4%. More respondents than in 2002 (8% compared to 2%) had a neutral attitude to the services provided. Increased negative media attention regarding party postal voting may have contributed to a more neutral attitude to postal voting.

Election day voting

Electors who registered an ordinary vote were surveyed in relation to the service they received on election day. Eighty-six percent of ordinary voters surveyed indicated that their experience of the voting centre was either satisfactory or extremely satisfactory. Only 5% of respondents felt dissatisfied with their overall experience at the voting centre. This was very similar to the picture in 2002, when 90% of ordinary voters were satisfied with their experience at the voting centre and 4% were dissatisfied.

Ordinary voters who were satisfied with their experience at the voting centre were asked why this was the case. Over a third (38%) indicated that they were satisfied because the process was quick and there was little waiting time. Other reasons for satisfaction amongst ordinary voters included: easy to vote (30%), helpful staff (11%) and organised voting centre (10%). Twelve percent gave a negative comment, most of which were related to a dissatisfaction with waiting times, lack of staff and locating the voting centre.

As part of the assessment of the voting experience, respondents were asked if they had to queue before they received their ballot papers. Sixty-seven percent of respondents stated that they did have to queue. Of those respondents who indicated that they had to queue before receiving ballot papers, 41% spent between less than 5 minutes queuing, and 20% stated that they queued for 5 minutes. Eighteen percent waited for 6 to 10 minutes, 9% for 11 to 15 minutes, 9% for 16 to 20 minutes and 3% reported that they had to queue for more than 20 minutes to receive their ballot papers.

Similar to early voting centres, the attribute that received the lowest levels of satisfaction was the outdoor signage indicating that the centre was actually a voting centre (71%).

Absent voters, who voted outside their electoral districts on election day, were also surveyed. Ninety percent of respondents were satisfied with their experience at the voting centre, a figure that was very close to the 93% satisfaction recorded in 2002. Absent voters closely resembled ordinary voters in their responses about particular aspects of the voting experience.

Services for Victorians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

A total of 87 culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) voters completed a face-to-face interview on election day.

Eighty-nine percent of ordinary CALD voters surveyed indicated that their experience of the voting centre was either satisfactory or extremely satisfactory, which is higher than that of 2002 (75%). Only 1% of respondents felt dissatisfied with their overall experience at the voting centre.

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Seventy-two percent of CALD respondents saw or heard communications from the VEC. This was in line with the 2002 Election Survey results (73%). Of those CALD voters who had seen or heard communications, 76% did so via television. Approximately half heard or saw communications in a letter with an *EasyVote* card (53%) and in the newspaper 49%, whilst 27% heard the radio advertisement and 16% saw the billboards. Other mediums included: the website (14%) and the telephone enquiry service (5%).

CALD voters were asked for suggestions on increasing the effectiveness of the communications. The comments indicated that VEC communications would be more effective if:

- there were more and longer advertisements on TV;
- the information on how to vote and where to vote was more straightforward;
- there were more advertisements in different languages in different magazines, newspapers, and on radio, and a letter to each household regarding where and how to vote; and
- there is more information on polling booths and billboards.

Evaluation of communication services

The majority of all electors saw or heard communications from the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) about enrolling to vote, the importance of voting, the election date, where to vote and what to do if away from home on election day:

- ordinary voters (77%);
- early voters (72%);
- absent voters (74%);
- postal voters (73%); and
- CALD voters (72%).

The main information sources, (in order of importance) for all voters regarding the general voting messages were television, letter with *EasyVote* card included, newspapers and radio.

Those who recalled communications by the VEC were asked to evaluate its effectiveness in providing information about the election. Approximately two-thirds considered it to be either extremely effective or effective:

- ordinary voters (31% extremely effective, 38% effective);
- early voters (25%, 43%);
- absent voters (27%, 44%);
- postal voters (32%, 36%); and
- CALD voters (19%, 44%).

Below: Voter campaign launch in Federation Square.



Respondents were asked whether there was any other information related to voting in the election that they would have liked to receive. Approximately 80% of all respondents indicated that they did not require any other information. Of the remainder, the main additional information they would have liked to receive was about where to vote, preferential voting, proportional representation, political parties and advertising, and how to vote.

The changes to the Legislative Council were an important communication message for the VEC. Therefore, those surveyed were asked if they knew that they had a choice of voting above or below-the-line on the Legislative Council ballot paper. A total of 84% of respondents were aware that they had this choice, whilst 15% were unaware.

Over half of the respondents (52%) indicated that when voting below the line on the Legislative Council ballot, the minimum number of squares to be numbered is five, whilst 4% felt it was all the squares and 3% believed it to be one square. Over a third (35%) indicated that they were not sure of the minimum number of squares to be numbered when voting below-the-line. Nine in ten respondents (89%) indicated that when voting above-the-line one square must be numbered, whilst 8% mentioned that they did not know.

VEC website

Those surveyed were also asked questions in relation to the website. Approximately half of ordinary voters were aware of the VEC website. More early voters (69%) used the website than any other group. Only 14% of ordinary voters did so.

Among those who had used the VEC website to get information about the election, the majority indicated they were satisfied with it, particularly postal voters (58% extremely satisfied and 33% satisfied).

VEC election hotline

Approximately one-third of voters were aware of the election hotline 13VOTE (13 86 83). However, of those who were aware of it, very few used it, with early voters the highest percentage of use at 25%. Among the small number of respondents who used the election hotline, satisfaction was high with;

- ordinary voters (59% extremely satisfied, 6% satisfied);
- early voters (50% extremely satisfied, 10% satisfied); and
- CALD voters (60% extremely satisfied).

Complaints about services to voters

An issue arose during the busiest period of the election process with one individual who had enjoyed information access privileges. Entitlement to full media feeds and media status was revoked due to excessive and unreasonable demands placed on a senior election official, which was perceived to be harassment.

In response to the VEC's refusal to immediately respond to these demands, the individual widely distributed protected information, via broadcast email and on a website, that had the potential to interfere with the communication of election night results.

The individual falsely accused the VEC of counting electronic votes prior to the close of voting and continued to publicly make these assertions even after the VEC made it clear that this was not the case.

In an attempt to gain the election information which had been restricted, the individual then lodged a Freedom of Information request. The request was fulfilled by the VEC. This was not the view of the individual who then lodged an application with VCAT for a review of the matter. That application has since been withdrawn.

The VEC received an additional 59 written complaints about its services to voters, which are summarised below.

Early voting centres

Five complaints were received from candidates in relation to early voting centres, in particular, their location.

Voting centres

Some 23 complaints were received in relation to voting centres. This included complaints about queues, the appropriateness of certain locations as voting centres including access considerations, and staff behaviour. All complaints were investigated.

Enrolment

Four complaints were received in relation to issues with the roll, where people were incorrectly informed their enrolment details were not correct.

Group voting tickets

A total of four complaints were made about a failure to appropriately display group voting tickets at voting centres. This issue is addressed in Section 9.

2

Information and advertising campaign

Six complaints in relation to requests for additional information were received, including suggested amendments to the ways that voting centres and candidate details could be advertised.

Overseas voting

Three complaints were made in relation to an inability to vote at overseas locations on the advertised dates, and associated delays.

Other complaints

- Three complaints were received about mobile voting centres.
- Other complaints received related to: the conduct of a party supporter, the inappropriateness of the terminology “unsound mind”, telephone enquiry service delay, fold on the Legislative Council ballot paper, and paper wastage of how-to-vote cards.

A total of 62 additional complaints were made in relation to the VEC, including complaints on compulsory voting, conduct of individual election officials, and employment conditions.

In light of these complaints, several service improvements are identified in Section 9.

Region Barot Papers

100 voting centres - 43 offices

figures - for Report to
Parliament

time limitations

Transfer to MECC for data entry - 2
deliveries

Transfer remain in office - final figures
MECC

Overview of processes after 25/11



Section 3

Services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC aims to deliver high quality election services, through the provision of accurate and easy to use information to stakeholders and participants.

3

Information services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC aims to deliver high quality election services, through the provision of accurate and easy to use information to stakeholders and participants.

Prior to the commencement of the State election, the VEC conducted a number of briefing sessions for registered political parties on the election process. The sessions provided information on:

- the VEC's preparations for the election;
- changes to legislation;
- the role of Election Managers;
- postal voting arrangements;
- nomination procedures;
- the registration of how-to-vote cards and group voting tickets;
- the VEC's voter information campaign;
- complaints procedures; and
- public funding of election expenses.

Those attending were also provided with maps showing the location of election offices, early voting centres and election day voting centres.

Representatives from all 12 registered political parties attended these sessions.

A State Election Information Kit was subsequently provided to all members of Parliament and registered political parties.

An information session was held for independent candidates on Sunday, 5 November, and covered key timelines and procedures relevant to independent candidates. Approximately 50 prospective candidates attended this session.

During the election period, the VEC published regular circulars for registered political parties and Legislative Council candidates. Legislative Assembly Election Managers kept their candidates informed of specific election activities and timelines.

Postal voting protocol

The VEC met with all registered political parties in the lead-up to the State election. One of the major items discussed was the production and distribution of postal vote applications by registered political parties. Section 101 of the *Electoral Act 2002* allows for a person other than the Commission to reproduce a postal vote application form and include it with other written material issued by that person or organisation. Historically, the three major registered political parties have produced and distributed postal vote applications during State elections.

A VEC protocol was introduced and communicated to parties regarding the production and distribution of postal vote applications, in order to minimise any elector confusion regarding the origin of the application i.e. whether it was from the VEC or a party.

It was considered necessary that a number of principles be observed in relation to the distribution of postal vote applications. They were that the applications:

- must contain the information detailed in Form K of the Electoral Regulations 2002;
- must not contain any political comment;
- must clearly identify the party or candidate distributing the application but must not contain a Victorian Electoral Commission logo;
- may be distributed with other political information;
- must not contain any information that could be considered to be misleading; and
- must be sent to the Victorian Electoral Commission promptly upon completion.

To assist parties with the production of their postal vote applications, the VEC provided each registered political party with a copy of an application template to be used during the State election.

Parties and candidates were encouraged to discuss their proposed templates, including the envelopes, with the VEC prior to printing and distribution. All applications distributed by parties clearly indicated to electors that the mailing address for the completed application was back to the particular party.

Although the introduction of the protocol resulted in some reduction of elector confusion regarding the postal vote application source, the VEC still received a number of complaints. Moreover, the VEC did experience some delays in the receipt of completed applications from parties leading to delays in the despatch of ballot material. In some instances, this also resulted in electors submitting multiple applications to vote by post. Legislative amendments to be considered are included in Section 10 of this report.

Information to candidates

Handbooks were produced for candidates and scrutineers. The handbooks were available from the VEC, election offices, at the information session for independent candidates and on the VEC's website. All material provided to candidates and scrutineers incorporated feedback received following the 2002 State election, and reflected changes to legislation and electoral boundaries.

The VEC provided candidate handbooks to political parties to distribute to their endorsed candidates.

Election support services

Register of political parties

The *Electoral Act 2002* requires the VEC to establish and maintain a register of political parties.

In order to qualify for registration, a political party must have a written constitution and at least 500 members who are Victorian electors and party members in accordance with the party's rules, and not members of another registered political party or of a party applying for registration.

It is not compulsory for political parties to be registered to contest an election, but registration gives a party a number of important entitlements. These include:

- the right to have the party's name on ballot papers;
- a requirement to nominate candidates and register how-to-vote cards centrally with the VEC;
- access to enrolment and voter information on a periodic basis; and
- public funding for parties obtaining enough votes.

There are 12 registered political parties in Victoria, all of which contested the 2006 election.

Support for the nominations process

The VEC prominently advertised for nominations in all daily newspapers throughout Victoria on the day after the writ was issued. Election Managers provided prospective candidates with a Candidate's Information kit that included:

- the appropriate district or region nomination form;
- an appointment of a scrutineer form;
- an electoral roll confidentiality agreement;
- a *Candidate's Handbook*;
- a how-to-vote card declaration form;
- a list of voting centres for the relevant district or region;
- details on the number of issuing points at each voting centre in the district or region and an estimate of the number of votes expected to be cast;
- a district or region fact sheet;
- a map of the electorate;
- additional forms related to group registration and lodgement of group voting tickets for region candidates; and
- the Election Manager's contact details.

Election Managers offered to meet with each candidate as soon as possible after the acceptance of the candidate's nomination, in order to outline the election process and clarify any other matters.

Registered political parties were required to submit their nominations directly to the VEC, in either hard copy or electronic form. Registered political parties were provided with an electronic application for recording of nominations for each district and region. This enabled parties to enter the nominations onto a USB Flashdrive, which was directly loaded onto the VEC Election Management System by VEC staff. The information was then checked against the hard copy.

The close of nominations was midday on 9 November 2006, for candidates endorsed by registered political parties, and midday on 10 November for other candidates.

Nomination information for all candidates was stored in the Election Management System.

Candidates

The VEC received a record 707 nominations for the 2006 Victorian State election, compared to the previous record of 477 candidates in 2002.

There were 459 candidates for the 88 Legislative Assembly (Lower House) districts compared with 372 in 2002, and 248 candidates stood in the eight Legislative Council (Upper House) regions.

Registered political parties registered 63 groups, and six groups were registered by independent candidates. Three independent candidates remained ungrouped.

All registered groups lodged group voting tickets with the VEC by midday on Sunday, 12 November, in accordance with the legislation. Six of the groups chose to lodge two group voting tickets.

Currently, the *Electoral Act 2002* provides that any

Table 12 Candidates at recent Victorian State elections*

	2006	2002	1999
Candidates	707	477	406
Male candidates	472	319	279
Female candidates	235	158	127
Party candidates	644	412	328
Independent candidates	63	65	78
Highest number of candidates contesting an electorate	Bayswater District (8) Eastern Victoria and Northern Victoria Regions (38 each).	Melbourne District (8)	Frankston East supplementary election (16)
Least number of candidates contesting an electorate	Four candidates in each of 23 districts Western Metropolitan Region (26)	Three candidates in each of 25 districts	Two candidates in each of 29 districts

*Includes simultaneous Upper House by-elections

There was an increase in the number of candidates nominated by registered political parties at this election. The ALP (128), the Liberal Party (125), the Australian Greens (124) and Family First (123) stood candidates in all 96 electorates. The Nationals nominated 32 candidates, People Power nominated 44 and the Democratic Labor Party nominated 23 candidates.

Sixty-three candidates stood as independents, compared with 65 at the 2002 election.

Group registration and group voting tickets – Legislative Council

The new Legislative Council arrangements provided that two or more candidates nominating for a region could request that their names be grouped on the ballot paper and in a specified order. Group registration closed at midday on Thursday, 9 November 2006. This was the same time as close of nominations for registered political parties. A total of 69 groups were registered across the eight regions. Eastern and Western Metropolitan regions had the least with seven groups registered in each region. Northern Victoria region had 11 groups registered - the highest number of groups for a region.

group or registered political party whose candidates are grouped may lodge a group voting ticket. In order to print ballot papers in time for the commencement of early voting on the Monday following close of nominations, ballot papers were prepared at the conclusion of the ballot draw on Friday, 10 November, and subsequently sent to print. The VEC made the assumption that all groups and parties would lodge a group voting ticket by the Sunday. By lodging a group voting ticket, the group or party receives a square above the line, and all above-the-line votes are deemed to follow the ticket. It is not compulsory for these groups and parties to lodge a group voting ticket. In the event that a group or party did not lodge a ticket, the VEC would be required to reprint those ballot papers. The VEC therefore recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

The registration of how-to-vote cards

Registered how-to-vote (HTV) cards are the only form of printed electoral material that can be lawfully handed out, distributed or otherwise made available within 400 metres of a voting centre on election day. Any candidate, person or organisation can register a how-to-vote (HTV) card. HTV cards carried by mobile early voting teams must also be registered.

A change to the *Electoral Act 2002* required all HTV cards to be registered by the Electoral Commissioner. Cards could be lodged with an Election Manager, but were then forwarded to the Electoral Commissioner for registration.

Information about the registration of HTV cards was provided to:

- registered political parties at briefings held prior to the State election;
- independent candidates attending the information session on 5 November; and
- candidates by Election Managers directly and in the Candidate's Information Kit.

The registration period for HTV cards was from Monday, 13 November, to midday on Friday, 17 November. This time period applied for all applications. Previously, different timelines applied for registered political parties and other candidates, persons or organisations.

A total of 679 HTV cards were registered for this election, and all registered HTV cards were on public display at the VEC head office in Little Collins Street, Melbourne. Legislative amendments also allowed for candidates and registered political parties to correct errors. Two errors were corrected.

The registration process for HTV cards is considered in Section 10 of this report.

Provision of electoral rolls to candidates

Each candidate in the 2006 State election was provided with the opportunity to obtain an electronic copy of the electoral roll for their relevant electorate. Additional instructions and software were also provided to make the file suitable for use in a mail-merge.

The extended close of roll date reduced the time available for production of rolls for candidates. In conjunction with the task of processing the large number of enrolments received, the VEC was not able to provide rolls for candidates and political parties until 10 November. Requests for this information had been received by this time, for the purpose of campaigning.

The rolls were printed at the earliest possible time, which was during the weekend after the roll closed. The printing took 48 hours of non-stop production and the rolls were then distributed around the State.

In order to produce the rolls earlier, legislative amendments would be required to move the close of roll date. The VEC recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

Public funding of election expenditure

The *Electoral Act 2002* provides for the public funding of election expenses incurred by registered political parties and candidates contesting Victorian State elections.

For the Legislative Assembly (Lower House), registered political parties and independent candidates that receive four per cent or more of first-preference votes are entitled to \$1.31607 for each first-preference vote received. For the Legislative Council (Upper House), in each region, any candidate in a group or as an independent who receives four per cent or more of first-preference votes is also entitled to public funding. The number of first-preference votes obtained by the first-named candidate in a group is determined by adding the above-the-line votes for that group to the number of first-preferences recorded below the line for the first-named candidate to calculate the entitlement.

In the case of a candidate endorsed by a registered political party, payment is made to the registered officer of the relevant political party. In the case of a candidate not endorsed by a registered political party, payment is made to the candidate.

Payment is dependent upon the VEC receiving an audited Statement of Expenditure (SOE), and an audit certificate that states that the auditor received full access to information and has no reason to believe that any matter in the SOE is incorrect.

Where the audited SOE shows that not less than the entitlement has been spent, payment is calculated at \$1.31607 for each first-preference vote received. Where the SOE reveals that an amount less than the entitlement has been spent, payment is for the amount specified in the SOE. A summary of the returns is presented below.

The deadline for applications for the funding of election expenses was 13 April 2007. The VEC made payments of the entitlement within three working days of receipt of an audited SOE.

Table 13 Funding of election expenditure at the 2006 Victorian State election

Party or Independent candidate	Total party candidates	Total party candidates eligible for funding	Entitlement paid (\$)
ALP	128	128	3,282,127.23
Christian Democratic Party	6	0	Nil
Citizens Electoral Council	15	1	\$1,817.49
Country Alliance	6	0	Nil
Democratic Labor Party	23	3	24,095.93
Democrats	15	0	Nil
Family First Party	123	63	180,797.75
Liberal Party	125	125	2,684,173.46
People Power	43	0	Nil
Socialist Alliance	4	0	Nil
The Australian Greens	124	121	788,662.84
The Nationals	32	28	367,761.28
Dianne Hadden (Ballarat East)			2,894.04
Gordon Ashley (Bayswater)			3,862.67
Clifford Hayes (Brighton)			1,839.87
Irene Goonan (Doncaster)			2,142.56
Catherine Cumming (Footscray)			6,152.63
Craig Ingram (Gippsland East)			17,561.64
Jo McCubbin* (Gippsland South)			1,114.00
Jenny Mulholland (Ivanhoe)			4,193.00
Dave Barry* (Macedon)			2,018.18
Steve Medcraft* (Macedon)			3,025.64
Russell Savage (Mildura)			14,242.51
Lisa Proctor (Morwell)			3,866.61
Stephen Jolly (Richmond)			2,375.51
John Gibbons* (Tarneit)			105.55
TOTAL			7,394,830.39

* Jo McCubbin, Dave Barry, Steve Medcraft and John Gibbons spent less than their entitlement.

It is appropriate at this point to put Victoria's public funding system in an Australia-wide context in Table 14 below.

Table 14 Australian financial disclosure and public funding provisions

Jurisdiction	Financial disclosure	Public funding
Commonwealth	<p>Annual returns by registered political parties and associated entities of total receipts (including details above threshold), expenditure and debts (including details above threshold).</p> <p>Election returns of gifts and electoral expenditure by candidates and third parties.</p> <p>Threshold for details of amounts received recently raised from \$1,500 to \$10,000.</p>	<p>Automatic indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.</p> <p>No details of expenditure required.</p> <p>No requirement that payment not to exceed election expenditure.</p>
New South Wales	Parties, candidates and political donors must lodge returns of contributions received and electoral expenditure to Election Funding Authority, including details above \$1,500 threshold.	<p>Indexed political fund divided into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constituency Fund (1/3) to Legislative Assembly candidates, divided roughly in proportion to votes • Central Fund (2/3) to parties on basis of Legislative Council votes. <p>Payment cannot be more than expenditure.</p> <p>Also Political Education Fund to parties.</p>
Victoria	Federally registered parties must provide VEC with copy of annual return to AEC, to enable checking of \$50,000 cap on political donations by certain gaming companies.	<p>Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.</p> <p>Audited Statement of Expenditure must be submitted, but no details of expenditure required.</p> <p>Payment not to exceed election expenditure.</p>
Queensland	Annual returns by parties and associated entities and election returns by candidates and third parties. Based on Commonwealth model, but retaining \$1,500 threshold and requiring details of expenditure.	<p>Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.</p> <p>Payment not to exceed election expenditure.</p>
Western Australia	<p>Parties and associated entities must submit annual returns of all gifts and other income.</p> <p>Parties, candidates and third parties must disclose election-related gifts and expenditure.</p>	<p>Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.</p> <p>Reimbursement of election expenditure up to limit. Legislation passed late 2006.</p>
South Australia	No legislation.	No legislation.
Tasmania	For Legislative Council, spending limit of \$11,000 per candidate. Candidates must lodge return of expenditure.	No legislation.
Australian Capital Territory	Annual returns of receipts, expenditure and debts by parties, MLAs, associated entities and donors, and election returns by parties, candidates, donors, broadcasters and publishers and political participants. Based on Commonwealth model – can lodge AEC return. Creates problem with different thresholds.	<p>Automatic indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.</p> <p>No details of expenditure required.</p> <p>No requirement that payment not to exceed election expenditure.</p>
Northern Territory	Annual returns of receipts, expenditure and debts by parties and associated entities and donors, and election returns by candidates and broadcasters. Based on Commonwealth model – can lodge AEC return. Creates problem with different thresholds.	No legislation.

3

It is worth noting that Victoria is the only jurisdiction that has public funding of parties and candidates, but effectively has no disclosure of donations received by parties and candidates. This puts Victoria in a somewhat anomalous position, as it means that parties receive public funding without having to account for it. The position is also inconsistent within Victoria, since candidates for municipal elections now have to disclose election donations received.

When public funding was introduced in Victoria, it was argued that financial disclosure provisions were an unnecessary duplication, given that federally registered parties (which included the Victorian branches of those parties) had to disclose their financial details to the Australian Electoral Commission. This argument presents two issues. The first is that the Commonwealth provisions do not cover independent candidates for State elections or parties that are not registered at a Federal level. The second is that Commonwealth legislation may reduce the level of disclosure, as in fact has happened with the increase of the threshold to \$10,000.

The Parliament may wish to consider if the Victorian public funding system requires adjustment - see Section 10.

The VEC's performance in providing services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC engaged Colmar Brunton Social Research to conduct computer-assisted telephone interviews with 66 candidates between 2 January and 19 February 2007.

Services to candidates

Candidates were asked to rate their satisfaction with voting services provided to voters in their electorate.

More than half were satisfied with:

- the efforts of the Victorian Electoral Commission in managing the election on election day (89%);
- the operation of the voting centres (77%);
- the services to voters at the early voting centre prior to election day (75%);
- the usefulness of the website (69%);
- the processes involved in counting the votes (68%);
- the service to voters for processing postal votes (62%); and
- mobile voting service (59%).

They were least satisfied with the usefulness of the enquiry line (30%).



A summary of other significant findings include:

- at least seven in ten candidates mentioning that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the performance of Election Managers; and
- the majority (88%) received a copy of the Candidate's Information Kit prepared by the VEC. Among those who had received it, 86% considered it to be effective, whilst 5% considered it to be neither effective nor ineffective.

Services to political parties

Representatives from six political parties took part in a semi-structured interview regarding their satisfaction with services provided by the Victorian Electoral Commission. The six parties involved were:

- The ALP (Victorian Division);
- The Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division);
- Family First Victoria;
- The Australian Greens (Victoria);
- The National Party of Australia (Victoria); and
- The Democratic Labor Party of Australia.

In general, political parties were highly satisfied with services provided by the VEC in managing the 2006 State election. Parties were especially appreciative of the timeliness of VEC staff in addressing questions and assisting parties to complete the necessary steps to nominate candidates and register how-to-vote (HTV) cards.

Some other findings included:

- Parties generally found the process of registering HTV cards to be complicated, labour-intensive and pressured. This was especially the case for smaller parties, or for representatives who were unfamiliar with the process.
- One party felt that the process of registering HTV cards was unnecessary and would prefer that the VEC did not require cards to be registered before the election. Another party was highly positive about the process of registering cards and strongly preferred the practice to continue.
- The majority of parties were satisfied with the speed and accuracy of the count that occurred on election night. However, most were less satisfied with the progress of counting after election night, especially in regard to Legislative Council ballots.
- Parties were generally highly satisfied with the results provided on the VEC website in regards to the count. They found this information extremely quick and accurate, and superior to the information provided at previous elections.
- Party representatives were generally satisfied with the VEC's service in informing voters about enrolling and updating their enrolment. All felt that the electoral roll used to conduct the election was sufficiently accurate. Some parties were especially satisfied with the *EasyVote* cards sent out to all voters prior to the election.



- Opinions regarding the timeliness of receiving the electoral roll after the 'Close of Rolls' were mixed among the parties. For smaller parties, who do not have sufficient staff to use electoral roll information, the timeliness of receiving electoral roll information was irrelevant. Of the parties who do use electoral roll information, some were satisfied with the timeframe in which they received the roll, and felt that 'it did help us'. Other parties considered the receipt of the information 'too late' as they had already submitted candidate nominations before receiving this information.
- Parties were generally satisfied with the process of sending out and receiving postal votes for the 2006 election. Smaller parties who were not able to distribute postal vote applications generally felt that the ability to distribute postal vote applications provides an additional method of advertising for these parties, and thus advantages those parties with the resources to undertake this process. Furthermore, some parties felt that postal vote applications distributed by parties closely resemble VEC applications, and can confuse voters for whom they are distributed.

Complaints about candidates or political parties

During the course of the State election, the VEC received a total of 225 written complaints, 103 of which were about political parties or candidates.

Fourteen formal complaints related to the inclusion of postal voting applications in campaign material sent by political parties and candidates.

Under the *Electoral Act 2002* (s.101), organisations and individuals other than the VEC are able to reproduce postal voting application forms and include them with campaign materials.

The complaints primarily concerned the appearance and distribution of postal vote applications.

The VEC recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

The majority of the remaining complaints regarding political parties or candidates related to candidates incorrectly authorising electoral material, or alleged that electoral material was misleading.

Where a complaint regarding the authorisation of material was upheld, the relevant candidate was asked to appropriately amend the material and undertake to observe correct authorisation procedures in future.

Two matters concerning misleading material were referred to the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (VGSO) for advice. Previous court decisions have determined that electoral advertising is only misleading when it acts to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to the actual casting of their vote. As neither of these matters related to the casting of votes, no further action was taken.

Two complaints were made regarding possible breaches of bribery provisions. Both cases were submitted to the VGSO for advice. Historical precedent indicated that the 'property or benefit of any kind' was not of sufficient value to have influenced voting intentions. The VEC seeks further clarification as to the dollar value of 'property or value of any kind' – see Section 10.

A complaint received in relation to intimidation was appropriately forwarded to Victoria Police for investigation.

Another serious complaint relating to bogus electoral material was forwarded to Victoria Police.

One complaint was received with regard to potential intimidation at a mobile voting centre by a candidate. The matter was referred to the VGSO, but it found no case to answer.

There were no prosecutions resulting from any of the written complaints lodged.



Section 4

Services to the media

The media is an important source of public information during an election. To ensure accuracy of information, the VEC's services to the media included: briefing sessions; the distribution of media releases to statewide, suburban and regional media; the coordination of media interviews; and issues management.



4

Services to the media

The media is an important source of public information during an election. To ensure accuracy of information, the VEC's services to the media included: briefing sessions; the distribution of media releases to statewide, suburban and regional media; the coordination of media interviews; and issues management.

Media information kit and briefings

The VEC prepared and distributed an extensive election information kit to the media, political parties, MPs, election officials and key researchers from early October 2006.

The information kit featured profiles of every Victorian electorate and included statistical data on key socio-economic indicators, changes to the Legislative Council and the *Electoral Act 2002*, as well as the swings required for seats to change. The kit's shelf life extends beyond that of the State election and copies were available for purchase from Information Victoria.

Four media briefing sessions were held to specifically address changes since the 2002 State election. These included the reform of the Legislative Council (Upper House), the voter information campaign, the trial of electronic voting, computer counts, the provision of results and the process for handling complaints.

The sessions held in April, September and October, 2006, were attended by state political journalists representing major media outlets in Victoria.

Media releases and coverage

More than forty media releases were distributed during the 2006 State election to mainstream Victorian media newsrooms through AAP's Medianet service, Radio Release and/or directly to media outlets. In addition, over 50 community radio broadcasters were emailed media releases and audio files, and two media releases in 18 languages were distributed to 66 ethnic publications and six ethnic radio stations throughout October and November.

There was significant media coverage of a number of initiatives developed by the VEC for the 2006 election. These included television, radio and press coverage of the trial of electronic voting for vision-impaired voters (included in Section 6) and coverage of special voting arrangements for events on election day (Shepparton Springcar Nationals, Queenscliff Music Festival).

During the course of the election, representatives from the VEC were interviewed by, or provided news information to:

- ABC TV, SBS TV, Channel 7, Channel 9 and Channel 10;
- ABC Radio National, 774 ABC, SBS Radio, 3AW, 3MMM, FOX FM, GOLD FM, Nova, 3BO (Bendigo), 3YB Warrnambool, K Rock FM (Geelong), ABC regional radio stations, various community radio stations and 3RPH (Radio Print Handicapped); and
- *The Age*, *Herald Sun*, *MX*, *Weekly Times*, *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review*, AAP and numerous regional and suburban newspapers.



Interview topics included:

- changes to Victoria's Legislative Council;
- how and where to enrol for the State election;
- the record number of candidates contesting the election;
- arrangements for electors unable to vote on election day;
- the trial of electronic voting for vision-impaired voters;
- arrangements for the tally room and the provision of election results; and
- the counting of votes after election day.

The tally room

Traditionally, the tally room has been the focus of media attention on election night. One television network broadcast continuously on the night of 25 November, and several others broadcast a number of live crosses during the evening.

The VEC's preferred venue, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre (MECC), was the only available venue large enough to cater for all the required uses – accommodation of a 20 x 9 metre tally board plus staging, television studio sets, areas for radio and print media, and seating for the general public. The electronic tally board projected results onto a screen, replacing the old physical tally board that had been used for many years.

A decision was made to continue the lease of the MECC venue after election night in order to conduct the computer count for the Legislative Council (Upper House). This decision also enabled the venue to be used for the conduct of the three Legislative Council recounts at very short notice.

The tally room cost just over \$320,000 to establish and operate (excluding the cost of the computer-count process). This included venue hire, wages, security and all communication and technical costs. The media were responsible for their own set-up and operating costs.

The ABC was the only television station to broadcast live from the tally room on election night, with Nine, Seven, Ten and Sky television preferring to broadcast live intermittent crosses. Several radio stations broadcast live from the tally room. This all took place in front of approximately 180 members of the public who chose to attend to watch proceedings – down from some 550 in 2002.

Election results were updated electronically every five minutes on the tally board and the VEC's virtual tally room on the website, as data was keyed into the VEC's Election Management System at election offices.

Given the lowest media, party and general public attendance at the tally room to date, there is speculation over its future. Feedback from the parties and media is inconclusive as to whether to continue this service.

Section 9 of this report details service improvements in relation to media and the tally room.



4

Results services

The VEC introduced a new results service for the State election incorporating the electronic tally board, the VEC's website and TV and print media requirements.

The VEC developed data files that were not only easy to download from the website, but were written in a form that could be readily programmed by all TV and print media.

The VEC published the results data files at regular intervals on the Virtual Tally Room (website) that could be downloaded by any interested party. This allowed interested parties to download data files to suit their particular needs and deadlines.

The data files included indicators for the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. Candidate information included the candidate name, affiliation (if any) and ballot paper position. No personal information on candidates was provided.

Voting locations information included the voting location name and an identifier. No address details were included.

The number of votes received by each candidate was the most important part of the data file.

The new format was tested extensively to ensure the data provided the correct results information in the correct form. Testing was initially done in-house at the VEC. This was further expanded to include the TV and print media in the lead-up to the election and culminated in a full election night dress rehearsal at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre on the Thursday before election day.

Complaints about the media

During the course of the State election, the VEC received one complaint about the media. The complaint alleged that a newspaper article was publishing a political party media release and was more akin to a paid advertisement. The VEC notified the editor of the newspaper and advised the complainant to take the matter up with the Australian Press Council.



Section 5

VEC personnel

A total of 43 Election Managers were appointed to conduct elections for 88 members of the Legislative Assembly and 40 members of the Legislative Council.

5

The VEC's Election Managers

The VEC has approximately 270 Senior Election Officials (SEOs) on standby, who have been recruited and trained for engagement as Election Managers during State and local government elections.

All SEOs completed extensive training for the State election, which comprised home study in conjunction with a series of seminars at the VEC (one two-day seminar, one three-day seminar and a one-day briefing in late October).

A total of 43 Election Managers were appointed to conduct elections for 88 members of the Legislative Assembly and 40 members of the Legislative Council. Some Election Managers in metropolitan areas were responsible for either two or three districts, while Election Managers in rural areas with larger geographic boundaries were allocated one or two districts.

The VEC trialed the appointment of metropolitan Election Managers for three districts as a means of improving efficiencies. However, experience at the November election demonstrated that, with the more complex processes for the Legislative Council, more than two districts per Election Manager is not preferred, given the workload this presents with very tight timeframes. In the future, the VEC will generally appoint Election Managers to a maximum of

two districts in metropolitan and some rural areas and will only consider appointments to three districts in exceptional circumstances.

Assistant Election Managers from the VEC's pool of SEOs were appointed to assist each Election Manager. At least two Assistant Election Managers were appointed for each office. The Assistant Election Managers also completed the VEC's training program, but did not attend the final briefing in October.

The Election Manager's role is to establish offices and appoint staff to facilitate the smooth running of the election for their electorates. They issue early votes, process independent candidates' nominations, organise the draw for the order of the candidates' names on the ballot papers, appoint and train voting centre staff, and make arrangements for establishing voting centres for election day. On election day, the Election Manager is responsible for the conduct of the election and the counting of votes for those electorates for which they have responsibility.

Immediately following election day, Election Managers checked, sorted and despatched completed ballot material to other electorates, finalised payroll tasks for election officials and conducted counts for postal, early and other declaration votes.



The Election Managers also supervised the checking of region ballot papers and despatched those marked 'below-the-line' and those determined to be 'informal' to the central computer counting venue at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre.

Where preference distributions were required for electoral districts, Election Managers conducted a full recheck of ballot papers and conducted the preference distribution. A total of 49 preference distributions were conducted for districts. One recount was conducted for the district of Ferntree Gully.

Support for the VEC's Election Managers

Principal Election Officers

Five Principal Election Officers (PEOs) provided support to the VEC's Election Managers throughout the election. Located at the VEC's Melbourne office, the PEOs were the central point of contact between the Election Managers, the Electoral Commissioner and other VEC staff. They assisted Election Managers with procedural and other complex issues.

Helpdesk

Seven Helpdesk operators provided support to Election Managers. Principally, they assisted the Election Managers with the operation of the VEC's Election Management System and other technical issues.

Election Liaison Officers

In addition, Election Managers were able to appoint Election Liaison Officers (ELO) who visited voting centres on election day. The ELO's role was to alert the Election Manager to instances where voting centres may have needed extra resources and deliver them where appropriate, and to ensure procedures were applied consistently.

Appointment of staff at election offices

Election Managers were responsible for recruiting administrative staff to work in their offices. To assist them in this task, the VEC developed job specifications to assess potential candidates and to ensure that Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles were considered in the selection of all staff. A recruitment company was also engaged to assist with the recruitment of suitable staff who were employed on a casual basis. The company was provided with job specifications to ensure that staff recruited met the VEC's requirements. Many Election Managers in areas with large numbers of people from culturally diverse backgrounds appointed multi-lingual staff where possible.

Appointment and training of election officials

Election Managers were also required to recruit staff for voting centres on election day and give preference to those who had worked at previous elections and/or applied to the VEC prior to the election.

A fixed election date allowed Election Managers to conduct more training for election officials than had previously been possible. Election Managers conducted a three-hour training session for their ELOs, Voting Centre Managers (VCMs) and Assistant Voting Centre Managers (AVCMs). In addition, all Declaration Issuing Officers were required to attend a one-hour training session.

The VEC developed a standard training package, which included a Powerpoint presentation and practical activities, and arranged hire of projectors to assist Election Managers with their training. This ensured that training sessions were conducted in a professional and consistent manner across the State.

Two 30-minute training DVDs were produced to provide an overview of voting centre procedures, with an emphasis on good customer service. One version was for ELOs, VCMs, AVCMs and declaration issuing officers. The other version was for all other election officials.

Voting Centre Managers and ELOs evaluated the work performance of all election officials, in order to determine their suitability for future employment. These details provided the VEC with a strong database repository for future elections.

Some Election Managers found it quite difficult to recruit staff for voting centres and to cover the other staffing requirements on election weekend. The VEC will consider additional promotions to assist Election Managers to find suitable staff in future.

Measures to ensure impartiality

In 1995, the VEC obtained an exemption under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* so as to be able to employ only those personnel who were not engaged in political activities.

This enabled the VEC to advertise and appoint suitable, politically-impartial staff. The exemption applies to the appointment of people working at the 'front line' during State and local government elections, including Election Managers and election officials.

No legal proceedings alleging bias by Election Managers or election officials in the conduct of their duties for parliamentary elections have been lodged in the last 12 years.

5

Neither have the VEC, its Election Managers or election officials been involved in any breach of the *Equal Opportunity Act* in relation to any employment matter in the last 16 years.

Payment of VEC personnel

The payroll system used for the payment of all election staff, including election officials employed at the State election, was administered by the VEC's Finance and Budget Branch. Employee data was contained in the Election Management System.

The VEC maintained records in the Election Management System to ensure that obligations regarding employment records were met, and to assist with any enquiries received from employees.

The payroll system ensured that the 14,811 election officials who worked at the State election were paid within two weeks of the election.

The system also provided for the production of group certificates and special reports for the VEC.

Occupational health and safety considerations

All Election Managers completed a training session in Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S). The training covered awareness of items such as Victorian OH&S legislative requirements, hazard identification, risk assessment and control strategies in the workplace.

The debriefing sessions with Election Managers, as well as complaints received from voting centre staff, highlighted the long and intensive working hours (particularly on election weekend). Long hours were also required within head office in order to meet timelines.

In future, the VEC will generally restrict the number of districts allocated to Election Managers to two districts per manager. In rural areas where distance is a significant factor, one-district offices will apply. The VEC has not ruled out the establishment of a three district office, although this would only occur in exceptional circumstances.

Although the VEC increased the number of staff in the voting centres from 2002, further increases in staff numbers will be required in 2010. The additional staff will address queues, but also reduce the number of staff required to work long and intensive hours on election weekend. These service improvements are outlined in Section 9.

Staff feedback

As part of the evaluation of the State election, the VEC conducted debriefing sessions with Election Managers throughout the State.

The feedback received from Election Managers often provides a useful perspective on the VEC's delivery of election services and leads to improvements.

The feedback received following the 2006 election was wide-ranging and included rural and metropolitan Election Managers. This feedback has been included in the preceding chapters and summarised in Sections 9 and 10 of this report.

The VEC engaged Colmar Brunton Social Research to survey 210 electoral officials about the training and support they received from the VEC. The results indicated a high level of satisfaction.

Nearly all (96%) respondents stated that they had received a training manual from the VEC; 87% of those were satisfied with the manual and 86% completed the questions at the back of the manual. The VEC sent a training DVD to election officials; 82% of respondents reported receiving a DVD; 82% of respondents used it; and 76% of users considered the DVD to be effective in preparing them for their role. Reasons given for not using the DVD were that the respondent did not own the required equipment, that they did not get around to viewing it, or that they felt they did not need additional information. Some 40% of respondents attended a face-to-face training session, and 80% of attendees considered the session effective. Overall, three-quarters of respondents felt that they were adequately prepared for their role, the main reasons for this positive feedback being that the VEC's training material was helpful, that they had done the job before, and that the job was straightforward. Respondents who felt that they were not adequately prepared for everything mentioned such aspects as the declaration voting process, wheelchair access for disabled people, the confusion of people who had moved, and the unexpectedly long day at work.

The great majority (85%) of respondents were satisfied with the support they received from their Election Manager or Voting Centre Manager, while 3% were dissatisfied. Election officials were also surveyed about their perceptions of the services provided by their voting centre to voters, and 88% were satisfied with those services.



Section 6

Electronic voting

In recent years, an increasing number of countries have provided electors with the opportunity to vote electronically.



6

Introduction

In recent years, an increasing number of countries have provided electors with the opportunity to vote electronically. In May 2005, the Victorian Parliament's Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee published a report on *Victorian Electronic Democracy*, which included recommendations for allowing electronic voting in Victorian elections for certain groups, and the continued monitoring of internet technologies for potential voting applications.

In December 2005, the Acting Attorney-General requested that the VEC "report to me the question of whether implementation of a trial of electronic voting kiosks to assist voters to have a secret ballot at the 2006 Victorian State election is feasible. This referral requires the Commission to undertake the necessary research to ensure that appropriate software and hardware is developed and tested." In July 2006, the *Electoral and Parliamentary Committees Legislation (Amendment) Act 2006* was passed by the Parliament. This allowed for the introduction of electronic voting at the 2006 State election.

A budget allocation of \$750,000 was made in the election budget.

The intention of this section of the report is to report to Parliament on the development and implementation of electronic voting at the 2006 State election and to respond to the Acting Attorney-General's request. Future applications of electronic voting, including a response to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee's recommendation that the VEC review the appropriateness of remote voting via information and communication technologies, are covered in Section 10 of this report.

Background

A number of forms of electronic voting have been trialled around the world, including internet voting, telephone voting and voting at stand-alone kiosks at voting centres. Within Australia, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has offered electronic voting facilities at voting centres at its last two elections.

The VEC has been monitoring the development of electronic voting solutions for a number of years. The VEC, in collaboration with the AEC, published two reports on electronic voting following visits to observe electronic voting in the USA and UK: *Electronic Voting and Electronic Vote Counting – a Status Report* (2001) and *eVolution not revolution – Electronic Voting Status Report 2* (2002). Both reports recommended trials of electronic voting.

In 2005, the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee (SARC) published its final report on *Victorian Electronic Democracy*. SARC observed that electronic voting facilities are used in the ACT and around the world. The Committee indicated that secure electronic voting is possible and desirable in Victoria if the system is designed appropriately.

The report was not in favour of implementing internet-based voting for Parliamentary elections in the near future, although it recommended that the VEC review this decision after each State election (Recommendation 52).

The Committee did recommend (Recommendation 53) that the VEC "in consultation with relevant stakeholder groups, should develop and implement a system of electronic voting machines for local and general elections in Victoria. These machines should:

- permit the casting of a private, unassisted vote for the blind, those Victorians with limited vision, and Victorians with low levels of English literacy;
- provide the same voting instructions as appear on the ballot paper in a range of languages other than English;
- produce a voter verifiable paper trail to be retained by electoral officials;
- allow for the electronic tabulation of votes cast; and
- be restricted to a closed local area network under the complete physical control of electoral officials."

In July 2006, the *Electoral and Parliamentary Committees Legislation (Amendment) Act 2006* received assent, amending the *Electoral Act 2002*. The Act restricts electronic voting to "electors who because of a visual impairment cannot otherwise vote without assistance" (s.110D). The Act also specifies that the electronic voting solution must meet eight criteria (s.110E, s.110F):

- 1) Electronic voting must give the same results in the recording of votes as if paper ballots were used.
- 2) The voter must be able to enter preferences.
- 3) The voter must be able to correct a mistake before the vote is recorded electronically.
- 4) The voter must be able to cast an informal vote.
- 5) The voter must be able to quit the electronic voting process before casting a vote and vote by paper ballot if requested.

- 6) The electronic voting system must be designed so it can produce a paper trail so the votes can be counted and scrutineered.
 - 7) The electronic voting system must be designed so it is not possible to ascertain the vote of a particular elector.
 - 8) Electronic voting must be secure from interference.
- The Act gives the Electoral Commissioner the power to approve that the system meets these criteria.
- Development**
- In May 2005, the VEC advertised a tender for interested parties to supply an electronic voting solution. Rather than specifying a particular model for electronic voting, the VEC asked all tenderers to recommend and explain the model that they considered would be most appropriate. Three tenderers were asked to provide a detailed submission explaining the system that they would offer, and two provided proposals. From there, Hewlett-Packard, in partnership with Scytl Secure Electronic Voting, was contracted to develop, implement and support electronic voting.
- In coming to this decision, the VEC consulted with representatives of Vision Australia, Scope and the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service. These groups were selected because it was the VEC's hope to be able to provide electronic voting for electors with vision impairments, motor impairments and poor English language skills. The system selected was the one considered best able to cater for these needs, as well as meet the VEC's business aims.
- Work began on the software development in February 2006. Further consultations regarding the software, hardware and most appropriate venues for the system followed with the VEC's Electoral Access Advisory Group, Vision Australia, Blind Citizens Australia, Scope and the Western Region Disability Network.
- The VEC began user acceptance testing in August, running approximately 2,000 test cases to ensure that the software met the legislative requirements and the VEC's expectations. After all identified bugs had been resolved, the VEC passed the software and the source code on to an independent, expert software auditor, BMM Test Labs, to certify:
- A. The security of the system, with regard to the following requirements:
 - a) the Voting Kiosk is protected from intentional manipulation and fraud by electronic means;
 - b) the Voting Kiosk is protected from undetected unauthorised change to the following:
 - (i) defining ballot forms;
 - (ii) casting and recording of votes;
 - (iii) alteration of voting system audit logs;
 - (iv) changing, or preventing the recording of, a vote; and
 - (v) introducing data for a vote not cast by a registered voter.
 - c) the casting of the vote is entirely secret.
 - B. the Voting Kiosk records votes exactly as cast without any gain or loss;
 - C. the Voting Kiosk is free from malicious source code; and
 - D. the VEC's Electronic Voting Kiosk system will meet the criteria set out in 110E(2) of the *Electoral Act 2002*.

The auditor found that:

Finding 1: The Auditor is satisfied that the system design includes features that together can provide the level of security required by the VEC.

Finding 2: The Auditor is satisfied that the VEC conducted its testing of the voting kiosk system with due diligence.

Finding 3: The Auditor is satisfied that the VEC voting kiosk system implements audit checks that can verify the integrity of ballots and log files.

Finding 4: The Auditor found no evidence of malicious source code in the voting kiosk system.

Finding 5: There were no errors detected in audit tests of security, accuracy and compliance of the system.

Finding 6: The Auditor is satisfied that risks identified in [its] report have been avoided or minimised to a level that would allow the VEC voting kiosk system to comply with VEC and legislated requirements regarding security, accuracy and voting functionality.

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On 23 September 2006, approximately twenty vision-impaired people volunteered their time for a user trial. An area was set up to resemble a voting centre with six voting kiosks, and each vision-impaired person voted, filled out a questionnaire and joined one of three focus groups to discuss their experience and provide feedback. This event was an essential part of the development process and provided a number of key learnings regarding staffing requirements, voting centre procedures and the text, audio and images used on the kiosks.

The feedback received at the user trial enabled the VEC to make several improvements to the software, the hardware and the procedures. For example, several users asserted that they would feel more confident if they could have a practice run prior to casting their vote. This led the VEC to install practice voting kiosks in every E-Centre, an option that received a lot of positive feedback.

The user trial also enabled the VEC to greatly improve the keypad. Following the comments received, the keypad was simplified and made more user-friendly for the vision-impaired: among other things, disabled keys were depressed and more tactile markers were added. A number commented that a custom built keypad would be an advantage but this was beyond the scope of the VEC in 2006.

Three of those who attended were invited back for a more intense workshop focusing specifically on the scripting of the audio for the voting kiosks. This again provided very useful feedback. Some elements of the feedback were impossible to implement in the time-frame, but were noted for the future.

The solution

The final solution implemented was to use non-networked voting kiosks in voting centres. The kiosks were regular, previously un-used PCs with a number of attachments. Instructions and candidate names were displayed on a touch-screen and “read” through headphones playing pre-recorded audio files. Users could choose from two text sizes and have the text either “black on white” or “white on black”. For electors with sufficient vision, options could be selected and voting preferences entered by simply touching the touch-screen.

Electors with severe vision-impairment could use a keypad to move a cursor around the screen, with audio files describing the options and instructions playing as appropriate. Audio feedback was also provided whenever a user selected an option using either the keypad or touch-screen. The volume of the audio could be adjusted or even turned off.



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The software was built with the ability to select any of 12 languages (including English) for the instructions. However, as the trial was restricted by legislation to only those voters with a vision-impairment, the menu allowing voters to select a language other than English was disabled for the 2006 State election.

Electors voted by either using the touch-screen or a 19-key keypad. The keypad was a standard numeric keypad with all keys covered with white stickers, and the most important keys marked with Velcro triangles or raised plastic “bumps” so that vision-impaired people could easily identify them. The five non-functional keys were locked down, which also helped electors to identify the functional keys.

It was decided that the best way to support the voting kiosks was to place them within special voting centres, called E-Centres. The E-Centres were open for early voting and election day voting, and were designed to be especially accessible to people with vision-impairments and other disabilities, as well as allowing for electors from anywhere in the State to come to use the specialised facilities. They were to be fully wheelchair accessible according to the VEC’s audit tool, which included considerations such as:

- accessible car parking;
- ready access to public transport;
- a wheelchair-friendly path from the car park to the voting centre;
- wide doorways, without lips or stairs (or with appropriate ramps); and
- sufficient space to allow for the flow of voters in wheelchairs.

It was decided, in consultation with the disability advocacy groups, that it would be best to offer as many ways as practicable to assist people to vote in the E-Centres and not just electronic voting. That way, all people with special needs could be directed towards the E-Centres. The E-Centres therefore also contained:

- closed-circuit television magnifiers;
- hand-held magnifying sheets;
- lamps;
- fat pencils; and
- an enlarged version of the booklet showing the group voting tickets.



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The E-Centres were equipped with computers networked to the VEC for the electronic marking of the roll and were able to accept votes for any electorate without the elector having to fill out a declaration envelope.

A range of locations across Victoria was selected for the E-Centres. Four were Vision Australia centres (in Ballarat, Kooyong, Shepparton and Warragul), which were selected because they fitted the criteria and were also familiar venues to people with vision-impairments. The other venues selected were the Melbourne Town Hall and Heidelberg North Leisure Centre. One of the intentions of the trial was to trial a number of different types of venue. Heidelberg was chosen before legislation made electronic voting only available for the vision-impaired – the centre contained a Scope office and ran programmes for mobility-impaired groups. It was also in an area rich in linguistic diversity. Each E-Centre was provided with four voting kiosks and two practice kiosks except for Warragul (which had two voting kiosks and two practice kiosks because of limited space).

The voting process

On entering an E-Centre, queue controllers asked electors if they qualified to use electronic voting facilities. If they declared that they did, they were offered the opportunity to have a practice run on one of the two practice kiosks in each E-Centre. The practice kiosks were physically the same as the actual voting kiosks and were running the same software. Instead of voting for their actual electorates, though, voters accessed a dummy electorate with dummy candidates. There was a dedicated staff member standing by the practice kiosks at all times to explain how the equipment worked, guide voters through the process and to answer any questions.

The practice kiosks proved to be very popular, with the majority of voters who cast votes electronically choosing to have a practice beforehand. It was considered extremely valuable to have a person available to answer questions and demonstrate how to use the kiosks while electors were using the dummy candidates, so that a person could be looking over their shoulder and providing advice without the secrecy of the votes being compromised.

After completing a practice vote, or if electors chose not to have a practice vote, electors were directed towards an electronic issuing point. The issuing officers checked the elector's enrolment and then issued the elector with a smartcard (called an 'electorate card'), which contained the elector's district and any accessibility options that the elector had selected (*i.e.* font size, font colour and volume).

It also contained a status field to indicate whether the elector had completed the voting process, started but not completed it, or was yet to begin. No personal details or any data that could link a vote to a particular elector were on the electorate card.

The elector then took the card to one of the voting kiosks. When the card was inserted, the kiosk was activated and the elector was taken through the following screens:

1. an introduction screen explaining what to expect and how to use the kiosk;
2. a screen allowing electors to find out more information or change any of the settings;
3. the Legislative Assembly ballot screen, showing electors the candidates and allowing them to make their selections;
4. a screen asking electors to choose to vote above-the-line or below-the-line;
5. a Legislative Council ballot screen, showing electors either their above-the-line or below-the-line options and allowing them to make their selections;
6. a verification screen reproducing the voters' Legislative Assembly preferences and providing the opportunity to change those preferences; and
7. a verification screen reproducing the voters' Legislative Council preferences and providing the opportunity to change those preferences.

Although this was seamless to the elector, the elector's preferences were passed from one software module to another between steps 5 and 6 above. Therefore the verification stage, in addition to allowing the electors the opportunity to double-check that they were happy with the preferences they entered, also gave electors the opportunity to check that the software was recording their preferences correctly.

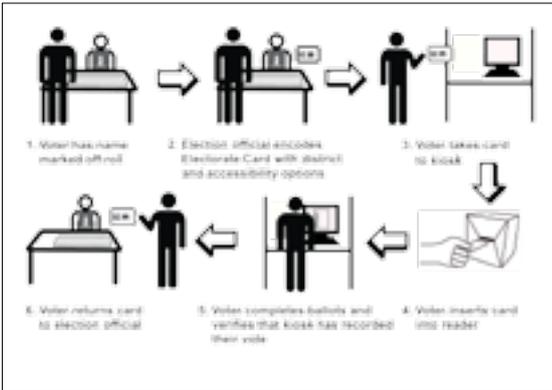
If electors entered an informal vote, which they could do through under-voting or not selecting any preferences, the software automatically warned them as soon as they attempted to progress to the next stage and at the verification stage. In both cases, the warning also provided the electors with the ability to change their selections or to continue with an informal vote. It is noteworthy that one of the votes was informal.

After verifying the Legislative Council selections, the electors finally cast their votes by selecting a 'cast' option. At any stage before this, electors could quit the process and either start again, or vote using a pencil and paper ballot. The field on the electorate cards enabled election officials to verify whether a person claiming a paper ballot after having started an

electronic vote had actually fully cast an electronic vote or not. That was all that was required of the electors.

The voting preferences were encoded and stored on two media on the voting kiosk (on the hard disk and on a USB key). Voters returned their electorate cards to the election officials, who wiped them and re-encoded them for the next elector.

Figure 4 Electronic voting process



After electors cast their votes, the preferences were stored in the voting kiosks in encrypted files. Before any electronic votes were cast, eight members of the VEC at head office were issued with smartcards and each member chose a personal and secret password. The votes could not be decrypted without at least three of those people coming together at the same time and place. This ensured that it was not possible for anybody other than the designated staff to see the votes and that nobody could see the voting preferences before the close of voting.

All votes remained untouched on the kiosks throughout the voting period. After the close of voting, the files were extracted onto CDs and then transported either physically or electronically back to the VEC's head office. Once there, the files were loaded onto one computer and then decrypted, following three of the eight members coming together and entering their passwords. Ballots were then printed, sorted and distributed to counting centres for inclusion with the other ballots.



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Implementation

The voting kiosks at all six E-Centres were able to take votes from 13-25 November 2006 (except Sunday, 17 November). An advertising campaign about the electronic voting and other facilities, targeting vision-impaired electors, was undertaken in October and November. It included the following:

- major advocacy groups Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia published information in their newsletters and on their websites, and encouraged their members to promote the system by word of mouth;
- information was sent out to 7,000 people on Vision Australia's database in alternative formats: large print, Braille, audio and e-text;
- Radio 3RPH (Radio Print Handicapped) ran advertisements in November, and broadcast a 30 minute interview with Chris Gribbin, the Electronic Voting Project Manager;
- media releases with pre-recorded audio grabs were sent to radio stations near the E-Centres;
- a newsletter was sent to local councils to inform carers of vision-impaired people;
- detailed information on electronic voting was published on the VEC's website from early October, including in audio and large print formats;
- the project was covered on Channel 9 and on local television networks (WIN TV Ballarat, Gippsland and Shepparton);
- Vision Australia took out advertisements about electronic voting in a number of local papers; and
- articles were published in *The Age*, the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Melbourne Times*, as well as in over fifteen local newspapers.

Over the course of the voting period, 199 electors cast electronic votes. They were distributed as follows:

Table 15 Voters at E-Centres

E-Centre:	Number of electronic voters:
Ballarat Vision Australia Centre	64
Heidelberg Leisure Centre	6
Kooyong Vision Australia Centre	65
Melbourne Town Hall	31
Shepparton Vision Australia Centre	14
Warragul Vision Australia Centre	19
Total	199

Of those votes, 12% were cast on election day and 88% before that. There were also in excess of 24,000 non-electronic voters at the E-Centres (although 49.8% of those non-electronic votes were cast at Melbourne Town Hall).

With respect to the accessibility features, voters made use of the options as follows:

Table 16 Options used at E-Centres

Feature:	Option:	Percentage of users:
Text colour	Black on white	90.95%
	White on black	9.05%
Zoom	Default size	77.89%
	Large print	22.11%
	10 (silent)	0.50%
Volume	30	4.02%
	50	49.75%
	70 (default)	44.22%
	90	1.51%

This clearly shows the importance of including all of these options. It is also noteworthy that 12% of the voters chose to vote below-the-line for the Legislative Council, a significantly higher proportion than amongst the voters as a whole (approximately 5%). Vision-impaired electors in focus groups indicated that this was because they had not had a chance to vote below-the-line in Senate elections previously, as they had always had to rely on another person to fill out the ballot paper for them, and had felt awkward asking someone else to spend so long helping them to vote. This was, for many, the first opportunity to vote below-the-line, and they were eager to take it. One user explained, "For the Senate in the Federal Parliament for instance, I have always opted for the easy approach and voted above the line. Most people do this by choice; in reality we've had no alternative."

The software allowed people to cast informal votes through either under-voting or not giving any preferences, and one (0.5%) of the votes was informal for the Legislative Assembly and none for the Legislative Council. This is significantly less than amongst the voting population as a whole, as one would expect given the effort required to vote electronically (making deliberate informality less likely) and the fact that the software warned voters that their vote would be informal and gave them the opportunity to change it before they cast it.

It is noteworthy, though, that nine Legislative Assembly votes (4.5%) were formal but did not have the last preference filled in. As this is a significantly higher proportion than amongst the voting population as a whole, this suggests that the warning message was used a number of times by voters to determine whether or not they had finished their vote and that they proceeded to the next step as soon as they failed to get that message. Clearly, this is an essential and helpful feature for an electronic voting solution for the vision-impaired.

The other noteworthy fact about the electronic votes is the length of time taken to cast one. The average length of time to cast an electronic vote was just under six minutes. The VEC was aware that the process would necessarily take significantly longer for an elector relying on audio instructions and feedback. Vision-impaired people in the focus groups commented that many things take longer for them and that this would not be an issue. Indeed, the process of voting on a paper ballot with assistance takes significantly longer than it takes a person not requiring assistance. Few electronic voters raised time concerns as a problem in feedback after the election.

In the implementation phase, there were no significant bugs or anomalies detected in the system. Some of the monitors were faulty, and had to be replaced, but this was done very rapidly and did not prevent anyone from voting. The central processing unit of each computer was encased in a Perspex case with numbered seals, which were checked at the start and end of each day and there were no unaccounted-for changes to the seals. The software kept log files, which recorded events that took place on each kiosk, and would detect any tampering. These files were examined after the close of voting and no suspicious activity was recorded in these files. Daily reconciliations between the number of electronic votes issued and the number of votes recorded on the kiosks showed no anomalies. Given these factors, the VEC has no reason to doubt the integrity, accuracy and authenticity of the electronic votes.

Feedback

The VEC gathered feedback about the electronic voting trial from a number of sources:

- a number of site visits throughout the election;
- a debriefing session with the VEC staff who managed the E-Centres;
- a feedback session with representatives of Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia; and
- face-to-face interviews with eleven randomly-selected vision-impaired voters conducted by Colmar Brunton.

A number of voters also sent personal correspondence to the VEC about their experiences.

Overall, the feedback to the VEC from all sources was very positive. A high proportion of users considered having a secret vote and being able to enter their preferences themselves to be important and key reasons for choosing to vote secretly. This was borne out in some of the correspondence received by the VEC:

- “It was wonderful to be able to do your own voting and not have to rely on someone filling in the ballot paper for you, hoping they do it the way you want.”
- “Yesterday was a milestone in my life because for the first time I was able to vote independently.”
- “Until now, I have just assumed that filling out the ballot paper was not for me and that it would always be done by a trusted friend under my instruction.... Electronic voting has the potential to transform voting into a satisfying and relaxed experience.”
- “I never had an interest in politics before, but now I can vote on my own I have a reason to.”

Some of the factors that were particularly valued by users included:

- staff trained in working with people with a vision-impairment;
- the option to have a practice vote before actually voting – one voter explained, “the whole thing became clear after the first run-through, so that when it came to filling in the proper ballot papers, I was very confident”;
- those who could read Braille found the Braille instructions next to each kiosk helpful; and
- the additional equipment such as closed circuit televisions, magnifiers and large pencils also proved very popular.

6

In practice, there were two quite different ways of using the electronic voting kiosks – either by using the touch screen and reading the text or by using the keypad and hearing the options through the headphones. Both types of users were questioned, and both methods were well received. Importantly, people who used the system overwhelmingly said that they would vote electronically again in the future.

A number of minor changes to the software and hardware were recommended by voters to improve usability (for example, the ability to change the speed or pause the audio instructions, longer cables for the headphones, layout of the kiosks). A number of users indicated that a custom-built keypad would improve usability. The VEC will assess the feasibility of implementing these changes prior to the next use of electronic voting.

Analysis of the trial

The VEC considers that the trial of electronic voting at the 2006 State election was a success. The technology has been proven to work and be appropriate in a real election environment.

As mentioned, there was no reason to doubt the integrity, accuracy or authenticity of any of the votes. In feedback, voters reported high levels of satisfaction with the software. A small number of voters started on the practice kiosk, but decided that it was too hard and opted for a paper vote instead. A few people started voting electronically, but abandoned their votes. Given the complexity of the voting system in Victoria (with two different types of ballot paper with different formality rules and above-the-line and below-the-line voting for the Legislative Council) and the difficulties inherent in voting for the vision-impaired using any electronic system, the VEC considers that the software trialled at the 2006 State election is acceptable and appropriate to Victoria's needs.

There are a small number of minor changes to the software that were recommended by voters to improve usability (for example, the ability to change the speed or pause the audio instructions). The VEC will assess the feasibility of implementing these changes prior to the next use of electronic voting.



6

A major issue regarding the feasibility of future potential uses of the software is cost. Substantial costs were incurred in resourcing the E-Centres, compared to other voting centres, which limit the practicality of having more E-Centres under the present legislative provisions. Extending the franchise of users for electronic voting could substantially reduce the cost per vote and maximise the return on the investment.

Regarding venues, the VEC believes that placing the electronic voting kiosks within the E-Centres which catered for various disabilities worked well. The VEC notes the particularly low electronic vote turn-out at the Heidelberg E-Centre. The VEC considers that this shows the importance of choosing venues that are familiar to vision-impaired voters if the use of electronic voting is restricted to these electors.

A significant issue is that the participation rate for electronic voting was significantly less than had been hoped for, and well below the capacity of the infrastructure put in place. Although the VEC considers that it achieved a good spread of publicity, anecdotally it was suggested that there was a low rate of awareness of the trial amongst the vision-impaired community. A number of people who did vote at Vision Australia centres had not come there specifically to vote, but had come for other reasons and only voted electronically due to 'spruiking' by VEC staff. The two Vision Australia centres that took the most electronic votes (Kooyong and Ballarat) were the larger ones where regular programmes continued through the voting period. Other reasons suggested as to why people were hesitant included:

- concern that by declaring themselves to be vision-impaired, electors may then be labelled disabled by other government departments;
- vision-impairment is quite often related to ageing and older people tend to be less comfortable with computers;
- there were concerns about the security of the system, based on issues encountered overseas with electronic voting and some misunderstandings about how the system worked (one person reported that the name 'E-Centre' had caused some confusion because it suggested that the votes were emailed); and

- many vision-impaired voters are registered as general postal voters and so are automatically sent their ballot papers – many may have found it easier to simply fill in those papers rather than come to a voting centre, or may have filled them out before learning about the electronic voting option.

Feedback suggested that now that the system has been successfully trialled, and as word of mouth spreads, a larger number of people will be more likely to use the system at future elections. It was also suggested that an improved participation rate could come from advertising the system in mainstream radio and television and approaching carers' associations, retirement villages etc. Feedback indicated that it is important to use venues that large numbers of vision-impaired people are visiting for other purposes during the election period.

One thing noted by the VEC in the development of the electronic voting system is that it would be of advantage to all of the electoral commissions of Australia to have a set of standards that an electronic voting solution should meet. This would make the process of tendering for electronic voting in the future easier for both electoral commissions and suppliers, and would help to ensure some consistency across Australia. A number of vision-impaired people have commented that it would be confusing for voters to have to use systems that are operated differently at the State level compared to the Federal level. As a result, the VEC will work with interstate and Commonwealth colleagues in order to meet this objective.

The VEC has also identified some legislative changes in Section 10, for consideration in light of the trial.



Section 7

Counting the votes and the return of the writs

Counting of votes commenced on election night after the close of voting at 6.00pm. Ordinary votes issued in election day voting centres were counted in voting centres.



7

Votes counted on election day

Counting of votes commenced on election night after the close of voting at 6.00pm. Ordinary votes issued in election day voting centres were counted in voting centres.

Three counts were conducted as follows:

1. 1st preference count – Legislative Assembly
2. Two candidate preferred count – Legislative Assembly
3. 1st preference count – Legislative Council

After the counting of first-preference votes for the Legislative Assembly, a two-candidate-preferred count was conducted, with preferences distributed to the two candidates considered most likely to be in the lead after the distribution of preferences. The purpose of the two-candidate-preferred count was to provide an early indication of the result of the election, and also to provide detailed information for political parties and analysts. The final voting centre count conducted on election night was the first-preference count for the Legislative Council.

Counting of postal and early votes commenced at 6.00pm on election night in election offices in the same count order as the voting centres. A large number of postal and early votes were counted on election night. Given the increased number of early and postal votes issued for this election, further counting was required on Sunday and Monday to complete these counts.

Processing declaration votes after 6.00pm on election day

Declaration votes are all votes other than 'ordinary votes' (those cast by electors voting at a centre appointed for their own district on election day). They are called declaration votes because the elector makes a declaration stating their entitlement to vote, which is then checked by the VEC to determine whether the vote should be admitted to the count. There are several different types of declaration votes, and the method of processing each type varies.

- Postal votes are cast by electors who have applied to vote by post and have been mailed ballot papers by the VEC. The elector places the ballot papers in the declaration envelope and posts it to the VEC. The postal vote declarations are forwarded to the appropriate election office, where the elector's signature on the declaration is checked against the application.

- Early votes are cast at early voting centres before election day. The elector makes a verbal declaration that they are eligible for an early vote. Early votes cast outside the elector's district are forwarded to the appropriate election office for counting after election day.
- Absent votes are cast by voters at voting centres outside their own districts on election day. After election day, the declaration envelopes containing the ballot papers are sent to the appropriate Election Managers.
- Unenrolled votes are cast by those voters whose details cannot be found on the electoral roll on election day, but who sign a written declaration that they are entitled to vote. After election day, the declaration envelope – including the ballot papers – are sent to the VEC to check whether the voter is entitled to vote. They are then returned to the appropriate election office with advice on entitlement.

Postal votes that were postmarked Sunday, 26 November, were checked for the date the declaration was witnessed. If the declaration was witnessed on or before election day, the postal vote was admitted for further scrutiny. It is suggested that further clarification on this matter is included in the legislation – see Section 10. Also in this context, it should be noted that some 3,538 postal votes were postmarked on, or after, the Monday following election day could not be admitted to the count. It is possible that many of these votes were cast before close of polling.

The VEC processed 74,403 declaration votes where elector details could not initially be found on the roll. This figure is a decrease on the 91,961 declaration votes at the 2002 State election. Table 18 shows the numbers of declaration votes checked by the VEC and the number admitted to the count:

Table 17 Declaration votes

Type of declaration vote	Number checked by VEC		Number admitted to count	
	2002	2006	2002	2006
Early	1,883	1,499	1,549	518
Absent	60,102	33,237	30,325	4,461
Unenrolled	29,976	39,667	1,175	2,617
Total	91,961	74,403	33,049	7,596

The number admitted to the count represents those electors whose details were found on the roll in this subsequent check. In many cases, electors present at a voting centre and complete a declaration envelope, but are unaware that their enrolment details are not up-to-date, making them ineligible to vote.

An important innovation at the 2006 State election was that all early voting centres were equipped with computers containing the electoral roll for the entire State. Therefore, the entitlement of all early voters and many absent voters could be checked as they voted, instead of after election day. This greatly accelerated the processing of declaration votes.

The increase in the number of joint voting centres on election day (from 23 to 148) contributed to the reduction in the number of declaration votes that required further checking of elector entitlement. The VEC will continue to utilise joint voting centres in order to reduce declaration voting, as outlined in Section 9.

In addition, PDAs were provided to 123 voting centres and mobile voting centres. The PDAs included a copy of the roll for the entire state. Staff were able to use the roll look-up facility to search for electors using a simple search function. The PDAs were most useful in mobile voting centres, as well as the absent issuing points in voting centres. The PDAs greatly assisted in ensuring correct elector enrolment details for declaration votes.

In short, though, it is clear that approximately 66,000 people presented to vote on election day, unaware that they were not on the roll. This is further evidence that direct enrolment update arrangements should be vigorously pursued.

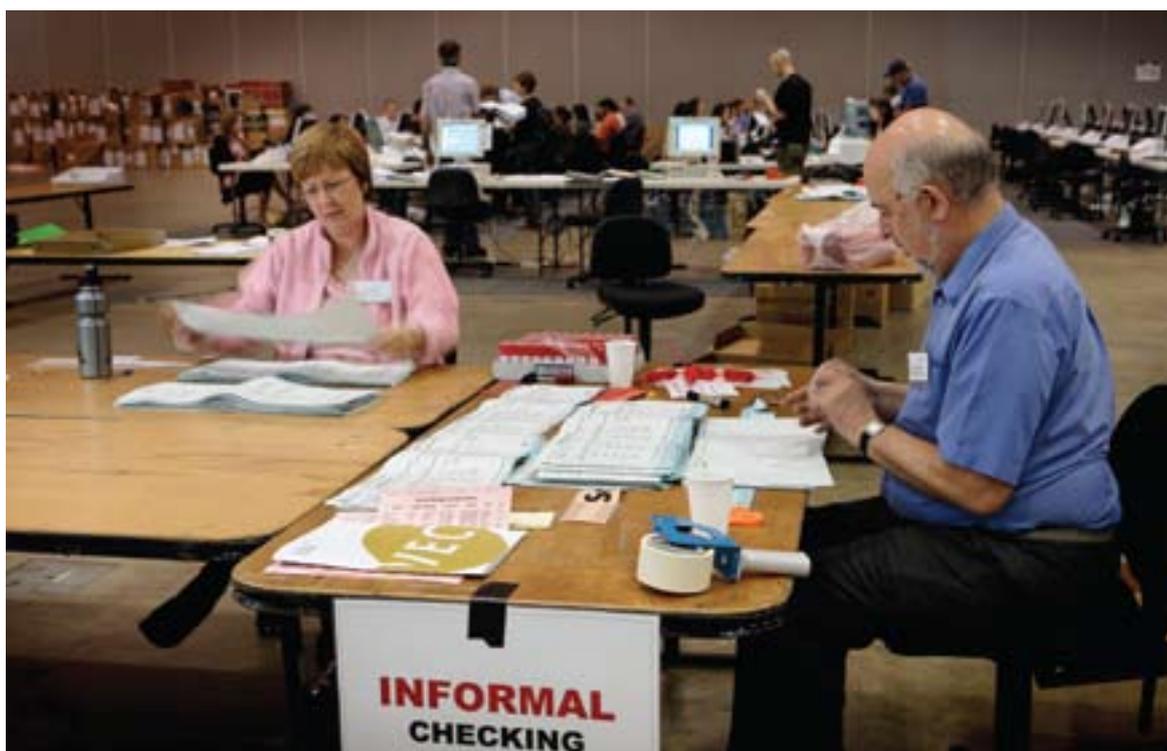
Counting after election day

Preference distributions

Preference distributions to determine the result of an election were required in each Legislative Assembly district where no candidate obtained an absolute majority (more than 50 per cent) of the first-preference votes. Preference distributions were conducted in 49 districts. In each case, the first step was to re-check all the first-preference votes, to establish a secure basis for the distribution of preferences. The re-checks usually detect some mistakes in the initial count, leading to minor discrepancies between re-checked figures and the two-candidate-preferred counts.

Following the re-check, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is declared excluded, and votes for that candidate are distributed to the remaining candidates according to the preferences on the excluded candidate's ballot papers. This process continues until one candidate obtains an absolute majority of the formal votes.

In twelve districts, the preference distribution reached a result while there were still more than two candidates remaining. In Gippsland East there were three candidates remaining – Mr Ingram and the Liberal and National candidates, and the VEC conducted a preference count for information purposes to determine the final result on an Ingram vs Liberal basis. See page 108 for details.



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District recount

The Electoral Commissioner called a recount for the district of Ferntree Gully. The recount was conducted because the original margin was 17 votes. The recount was conducted at the Ferntree Gully election office in the presence of scrutineers on Tuesday, 5 December. The Electoral Commissioner, as required by the legislation, made all decisions regarding disputed ballot papers.

The final result increased the margin to 27 votes.

See Table 19 below.

Region count

First-preference votes for the Legislative Council were counted at voting centres and at election offices on election night.

Commencing the Monday after election day, all below-the-line and informal ballot papers held in each election office in the State – up to and including election night – were transferred to the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre (MECC), where a centralised computer-count centre had been established.

Reconciliation of all below-the-line ballot papers was undertaken at the MECC for each district. Once reconciled, the below-the-line ballot papers were amalgamated for each region and batched in preparation for data entry into the VEC's computer-count application. Informal ballot papers were re-checked for formality in the presence of scrutineers. Ballot papers found to be formal (above-the-line or below-the-line) were set aside for inclusion in data-entry.

The VEC's computer-count application used to calculate the results of the Upper House elections has been independently audited by BMM Testlabs. The audit process certified that the software used by the VEC is capable of accurately recording ballot papers, distributing preferences and calculating election results based on the proportional representation rules governing the counting of the Upper House ballot papers. BMM Testlabs is a global organisation that provides independent computer systems assurance and compliance certification testing services.

Table 18 Ferntree Gully District recount comparison

Count	Majority	ALP	ECKSTEIN, Anne	GREENS	BULLOCK, Steve	FAMILY FIRST	ROUSE, Allister	LIBERAL	WAKELING, Nick	CITIZENS ELECTORAL COUNCIL	RUSSELL, Ross	DOWELL, Adrian PEOPLE POWER	Informal Votes	Total Votes Polled
Provisional	18301	15395	2603	1673	16165	130	634	2120	38720					
Recount	18329	15420	2608	1673	16187	134	635	2064	38721					
Diff(Rec-Prov)	28	25	5	0	22	4	1	-56	1					
% change	0.15%	0.16%	0.19%	0.00%	0.14%	3.08%	0.16%	-2.64%	0.00%					

Three teams of 30 data-entry operators were established for the count. Each team was responsible for data-entry of ballot papers for two or more regions. The computer-count application identified ballot papers deemed to be informal during data-entry. Once data-entry had been completed for each batch of ballot papers, the informal papers were removed and passed to the informal checking team for further scrutiny.

Subsequent collections of ballot papers from election offices took place up to the last collection on Tuesday, 5 December, with the same processes described above being repeated.

Once all below-the-line ballot papers had been data-entered, the total number of above-the-line ticket votes for each group were entered into the computer-count. The total ticket votes for each group for each region was faxed to the MECC from each election office. Added to this figure was the number of above-the-line ballot papers held at MECC.

Once all above-the-line and below-the-line data had been entered into the computer-count application for each region, the total number of informal ballot papers held at MECC for each region was entered into the system. Final reconciliation then took place prior to the results being calculated. Scrutineers were able to observe all aspects of the count.

The calculation of results commenced at 5.00pm on Tuesday, 12 December. The results were calculated in the following order:

- Eastern Victoria;
- South Eastern Metropolitan;
- Western Metropolitan;
- Western Victoria;
- Eastern Metropolitan;
- Southern Metropolitan;
- Northern Victoria; and
- Northern Metropolitan.

All eight calculations were completed by approximately 6.30pm. All results were then published as 'provisional', awaiting the declaration of results.

Region provisional results

Prior to the calculation of the region provisional results, the VEC used the total number of district ballot papers as a guide for the total number of ballot papers expected for each region. This assisted the VEC in tracking the movement of ballot papers from voting centres to the central count centre. It is not unusual for the total number of ballot papers received for the district and the region electorate to vary by a small percentage, and based on previous Australian experience, a difference of 0.3% was used as a general guide. The variance can occur when electors return only one paper with their postal voting material, or when they place only one paper in the ballot box. Table 20 shows the final comparison of district versus region ballot papers.

Table 19 District vs region ballot comparison

	Total Region	Total District	Difference	%
Eastern Metro	388,126	388,213	-87	-0.02%
Eastern Victoria	391,826	391,448	378	0.10%
Northern Metro	381,879	381,571	308	0.08%
Northern Victoria	380,817	381,314	-497	-0.13%
South Eastern Metro	385,747	385,672	75	0.02%
Southern Metro	373,225	373,688	-463	-0.12%
Western Metro	399,486	399,732	-246	-0.06%
Western Victoria	409,066	408,269	797	0.20%

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A check of the number of ballot papers in the respective districts against the region was completed prior to the data entry of 'above-the-line' ticket votes.

However, this check was not repeated after the information was entered into the VEC's computer-count application. In the case of the Northern Metropolitan Region, a human transcription error occurred when entering 'above-the-line' ticket vote totals in the computer-count application and this was accepted by the system. The Northern Metropolitan Region was the last region to be processed, and those following the progressive count on the VEC website were surprised at the provisional outcome. The VEC also found the result contrary to initial expectations and focussed its initial efforts on reviewing the count-sheet algorithms. When the accuracy of the algorithms was confirmed, the VEC quickly identified the human error which led to the number of ballot papers in the count exceeding reasonable tolerances when compared to the district totals.

An administrative error that was inconsequential to the final result for Northern Metropolitan Region was also identified during the review of the count sheet. This related to the implementation of a split voting ticket for the Democrats. The error was rectified in the recount process.

The Western Metropolitan and Western Victoria Region results were particularly close with regard to the last vacancies, and a recount for both regions was subsequently authorised. The margin at the critical exclusion for Western Metropolitan Region was 76, with Labor provisionally ahead. The margin at the final exclusion for Western Victoria Region was 114, with the DLP provisionally ahead.

The Liberal Party requested a recount of the Southern Metropolitan Region with particular reference to the fifth vacancy. This request was not supported by the VEC, given the size of the margin and the fact that human error similar to that which occurred in the Northern Metropolitan Region could be ruled out. The final margin for Southern Metropolitan Region was 1,536 votes.

The outcomes for the other four regions were very clear.

Interested people were given copies of the count-sheets in electronic format shortly after the completion of the count, and large print copies were displayed at the Victorian Electoral Commission.

Region recount process

All recounts were conducted at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre in the presence of around 350 scrutineers. The recounts for Western Metropolitan and Western Victoria Regions commenced at 1.00pm on Wednesday, 13 December, with the recount for Northern Metropolitan Region commencing at 5.00pm on the same day. Approximately 240 clerical staff, 60 data entry operators and all VEC staff not currently engaged on other projects were involved in the recount.

Prior to the recount, all above-the-line ballot papers held in election offices were transported to the count centre. This involved approximately 2,000 large security boxes containing over 1,000,000 above-the-line ballot papers.

The recount involved a full manual check and count of the ballot papers originally sorted to above-the-line and informal. Above-the-line ballot papers for each group were checked separately. The preferences on all ballot papers marked below-the-line were data-entered into the VEC's computer count application. As a final step, prior to the calculation of the result, the total number of above-the-line ballot papers for each group was entered into the VEC's computer-count application.

All ballot papers identified as informal were checked by designated teams, with the Electoral Commissioner ruling on all ballot papers in dispute.

The scrutineers were briefed on the recount process prior to its commencement. Prior to the result being calculated, scrutineers were provided with the opportunity to raise any matters given the finality of the process. No issues were raised at the time.

The recounts for all three regions were completed by 5.30am on Thursday, 14 December.

Region recount results

Whenever a recount is conducted, there will be movement of ballot papers from candidate to candidate - as a result of manual mis-sorts, and from formal to informal and vice versa, as a result of formality interpretation. Overall, however, the margin in the result, based on historical data, should not vary by more than 1 vote for every 1,000 (0.1%) counted. That is, if 400,000 votes are counted, the recount result should not vary from the provisional result by more than 400 either way.

In the case of the Western Metropolitan Region, the provisional result and the final result varied by 205, but this was enough to change the successful candidate for the fifth vacancy.

In the case of the Western Victoria Region, the provisional result and the final result varied by 289; this increased the margin of the successful candidate.

In the case of the Northern Metropolitan Region, the elimination of the transposition error resulted in the election of a different candidate to the fifth position. This was entirely expected.

The Labor Party stated that its candidates in the Western Metropolitan Region suffered a loss of primary votes during the recount. The VEC responded that it was satisfied that the interpretation of informality had resulted in a loss of primary votes in proportion for all candidates.

The VEC also noted that the total number of ballot papers in the recounts compared to the provisional counts varied by between 0.07% for Western Victoria Region and 0.12% for Western Metropolitan Region. This is explained by minor counting variations that arise when large ballot papers are counted manually. Some ballot papers are torn and have corners that may be folded, which can impact on the consistency of manual counting.



Table 20 Region recount comparison

Western Victoria Region

Count No.	Quota	CANDIDATES															
		WARD, Marcus	BLAIR, Gillian	CHENERY, Stephen	McALOON, Karen	CAMERON, Judy	JONES, Greg	JONES, Lachlan	HODGE, Miles	HEATH, Ron	KAVANAGH, Peter	POWER, Clare	POWER, David	CASANOVA, Michael	CASANOVA, Leanne	BULL, Sue	STEWART, Rowan
		Greens	Greens	Greens	Greens	Greens	People Power	People Power	Country Alliance	Country Alliance	DLP	DLP	DLP	DLP	DLP	Soc Alliance	Soc Alliance
Provisional	65760	32417	383	269	189	662	2835	51	3477	73	10148	112	107	51	59	1120	44
Recount	65747	32482	398	274	195	673	2871	51	3425	75	10145	114	111	53	62	1084	46
Diff (Rec - Prov)	-13	65	15	5	6	11	36	0	-52	2	-3	2	4	2	3	-36	2
% change		0.20%	3.92%	1.86%	3.17%	1.66%	1.27%	0.00%	-1.50%	2.74%	-0.03%	1.79%	3.74%	3.92%	5.08%	-3.21%	4.55%

Western Metropolitan Region

Count No.	Quota	CANDIDATES															
		JACKSON, Max	WILLIAMS, Christine	MADDEN, Justin	EIDEH, Khalil	PAKULA, Martin	BARLOW, Henry	ZAWATTA, Lisa	FINN, Bernie	REYNOLDS, Stephen	TSFNG, Wayne	BITANS, Ann	BESHARA, Mark	MCCARTHY, Shane	LIVESAY, Robert	CORIC, Dani	HOWE, Roger
		People Power	People Power	ALP	ALP	ALP	ALP	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal	DLP	DLP	Democrats			
Provisional	62498	4755	318	217802	624	400	733	615	90882	449	165	187	3918	102	3540	102	117
Recount	62402	4770	328	217188	659	432	775	652	90785	455	173	191	3921	108	3514	110	117
Diff (Rec - Prov)	-96	15	10	-614	35	32	42	37	-97	6	8	4	3	6	-26	8	0
% change		0.32%	3.14%	-0.28%	5.61%	8.00%	5.73%	6.02%	-0.11%	1.34%	4.85%	2.14%	0.08%	5.88%	-0.73%	7.84%	0.00%

Northern Metropolitan Region

Count No.	Quota	CANDIDATES															
		MULLHOLLAND, John	HARWOOD, Kevin	LUTZ, Geoff	HEALY, Jessica	STONE, Robert	BIGGS, Barbara	HUGHES, Vern	KALINIV, Joseph	MESARITIS, Koulla	ALEXOPOULOS, Alexios	SENKUL, Mousti	BARBER, Greg	CAREY, Piya	PHAM, Hoa	OSBOLDSTONE, Glenn	MARTI, Daniel
		DLP	DLP	Democrats	Democrats	Democrats	People Power	People Power				Greens	Greens	Greens	Greens	Greens	
Provisional	61101	18347	262	4170	212	100	3812	144	1396	59	81	84	59322	707	426	532	419
Lib Adjust																	
Recount	60025	18309	272	4201	218	102	3748	146	1406	61	83	84	59360	713	433	537	422
Diff (Rec - Prov)	-1076	-38	10	31	6	2	-64	2	10	2	2	0	38	6	7	5	3
% change		-0.21%	3.82%	0.74%	2.83%	2.00%	-1.68%	1.39%	0.72%	3.39%	2.47%	0.00%	0.06%	0.85%	1.64%	0.94%	0.72%

7

Process summary and transparency

Counting at all stages was conducted in the presence of scrutineers.

For the Legislative Assembly, preliminary first-preference counts were conducted in voting centres and election offices. For the 49 districts where a preference distribution was required, a full re-check of all ballot papers took place prior to the conduct of the preference distribution. In the district of Ferntree Gully, where the final margin was 17, the Electoral Commissioner initiated a recount of all ballot papers. The recount involved checking every ballot paper for formality, recounting first-preference votes and completion of a further preference distribution. All Legislative Assembly results were progressively displayed on the VEC website.

For the Legislative Council, preliminary first-preference counts, above and below-the-line were conducted in voting centres and in election offices.

The preliminary results were displayed on the VEC website.

Ballot papers marked below-the-line and informals were transported to the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre (MECC) in the weeks following election weekend. Informal ballot papers were rechecked at MECC and the preferences on below-the-line ballot papers were data-entered into the VEC's computer-count application. The ballot papers marked above-the-line were re-checked in election offices and final figures for each group were faxed to MECC to be entered into the VEC's computer-count application.

Provisional results were calculated for each region and reports were made available to any interested person.

Recounts were conducted for three regions at the MECC. This involved bringing all above-the-line ballot papers from the relevant election offices to the MECC.

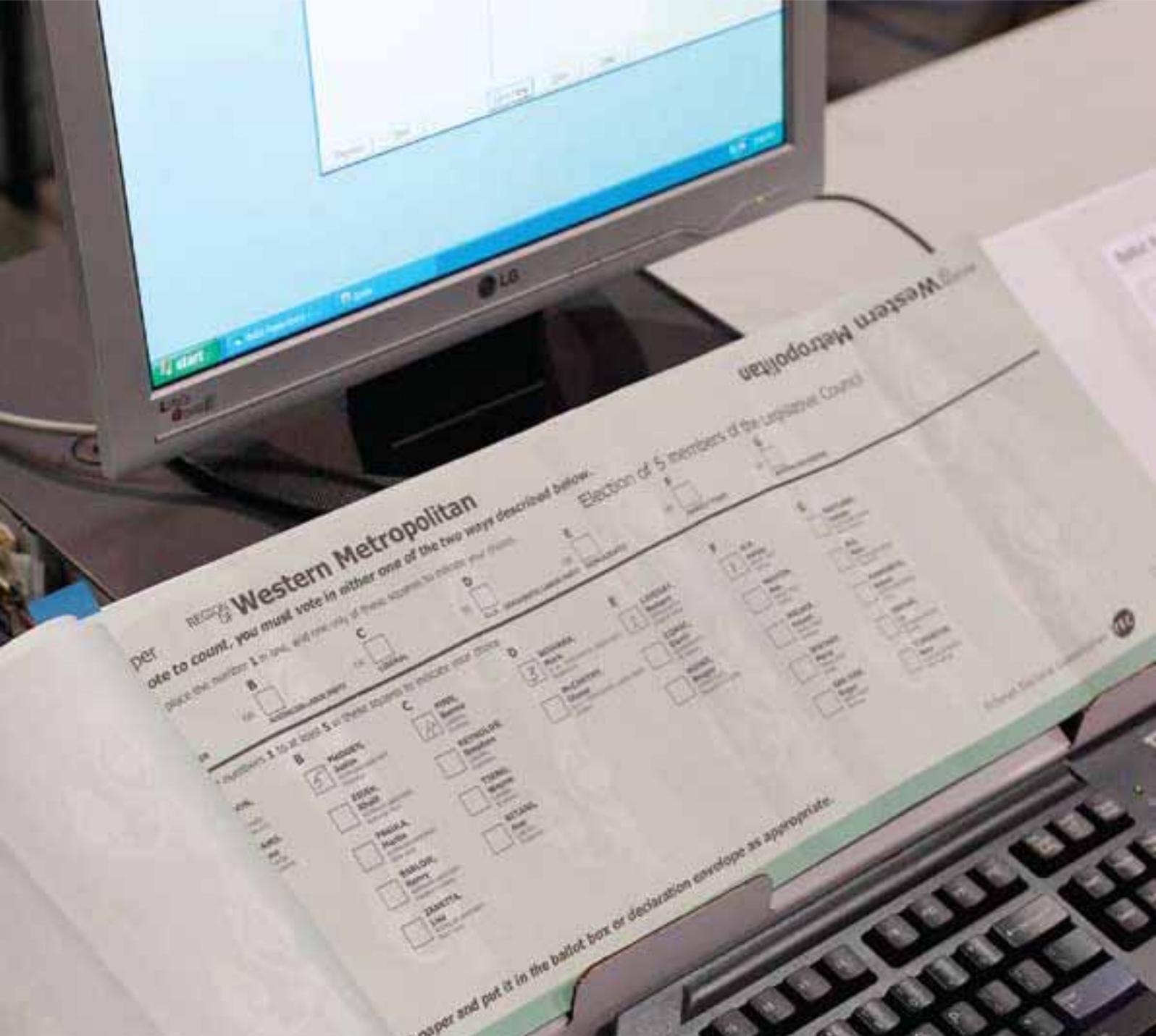
All above-the-line ballot papers were re-checked for correct sorting and counting. Informal ballot papers were all re-checked and all below-the-line ballot papers were data-entered for a second time.

Final recount results were calculated at the MECC and reports were made available to any interested persons.

The VEC will continue to investigate the use of scanning technology as an option to replace data entry of ballot papers. See section 9 – Recommended Service Improvements.

The return of the writs

The writs for the State election were returned to the Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser, AC, on Friday, 15 December 2006.



Section 8

Analysis of the results of the 2006 Victorian State election

Participation and informal voting

Table 21 shows voter turnout and informal voting by electorates. The voter turnout rate for the State as a whole was 92.73% of electors enrolled, slightly lower than the 93.2% rate at the 2002 State election. Within Victoria, voter turnout was lowest in the inner suburban districts, where the population is very mobile, and highest in some country and outer suburban districts. The voter participation rate at

Victorian State elections has been gradually declining since a peak of 95.13% in 1992. The causes of this trend are a suitable subject for research.

Informal voting was highest in the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne, reaching 8.51% of total votes in Derrimut District. High informal voting coincided with areas with high proportions of residents who are not fluent in English. Informal voting was lowest in the more affluent suburbs of Melbourne.

Table 21 Voter turnout and informal voting

Electoral district	Electors enrolled	Total votes	Percentage of electors who voted	Informal votes	Informal votes as percentage of votes
Albert Park	43,926	37,655	85.72	1630	4.33
Altona	41,888	39,244	93.69	2398	6.11
Ballarat East	37,648	34,607	91.92	1328	3.84
Ballarat West	41,283	38,099	92.29	1395	3.66
Bass	39,847	37,474	94.04	1705	4.55
Bayswater	36,321	33,984	93.57	1955	5.75
Bellarine	40,888	38,504	94.17	1354	3.52
Benalla	35,788	33,335	93.15	1211	3.63
Benambra	35,224	32,503	92.28	1083	3.33
Bendigo East	38,000	35,627	93.76	1413	3.97
Bendigo West	39,557	36,743	92.89	1413	3.85
Bentleigh	37,250	35,011	93.99	1365	3.9
Box Hill	37,970	35,264	92.87	1171	3.32
Brighton	36,932	33,870	91.71	968	2.86
Broadmeadows	36,713	33,197	90.42	2743	8.26
Brunswick	39,734	35,474	89.28	2186	6.16
Bulleen	34,692	32,667	94.16	1325	4.06
Bundoora	35,354	33,325	94.26	1531	4.59
Burwood	38,284	35,592	92.97	989	2.78
Carrum	39,516	36,895	93.37	1741	4.72
Caulfield	36,491	33,174	90.91	1215	3.66
Clayton	33,398	31,559	94.49	1818	5.76
Cranbourne	40,541	37,929	93.56	2144	5.65
Dandenong	34,489	31,437	91.15	2178	6.93
Derrimut	35,906	32,909	91.65	2799	8.51
Doncaster	35,524	33,230	93.54	1325	3.99
Eltham	38,242	36,179	94.61	1189	3.29
Essendon	37,601	34,492	91.73	1639	4.75
Evelyn	37,693	35,549	94.31	1553	4.37
Ferntree Gully	40,994	38,721	94.46	2064	5.33
Footscray	37,293	33,686	90.33	2306	6.85
Forest Hill	36,669	34,531	94.71	1250	3.62
Frankston	35,465	32,914	92.81	1391	4.23
Geelong	39,307	36,181	92.05	1339	3.7
Gembrook	38,722	36,393	93.99	1551	4.26
Gippsland East	39,024	36,224	92.82	1496	4.13
Gippsland South	37,314	34,940	93.64	1615	4.62
Hastings	39,913	37,666	94.37	1475	3.92
Hawthorn	38,017	34,531	90.83	890	2.58
Ivanhoe	37,162	34,519	92.89	1567	4.54
Keilor	46,060	43,221	93.84	2718	6.29



Electoral district	Electors enrolled	Total votes	Percentage of electors who voted	Informal votes	Informal votes as percentage of votes
Kew	36,049	33,031	91.63	896	2.71
Kilsyth	38,358	36,026	93.92	1412	3.92
Kororoit	38,186	35,166	92.09	2745	7.81
Lara	40,485	37,495	92.61	2258	6.02
Lowan	38,181	36,171	94.74	1295	3.58
Lyndhurst	36,605	33,926	92.68	2249	6.63
Macedon	42,700	40,473	94.78	1534	3.79
Malvern	37,452	32,479	86.72	964	2.97
Melbourne	38,853	32,964	84.84	1214	3.68
Melton	38,693	35,999	93.04	2123	5.9
Mildura	36,320	33,471	92.16	1632	4.88
Mill Park	38,365	36,344	94.73	2036	5.6
Mitcham	36,374	34,365	94.48	1205	3.51
Monbulk	36,262	34,074	93.97	1415	4.15
Mordialloc	39,249	36,826	93.83	1480	4.02
Mornington	36,934	34,486	93.37	1203	3.49
Morwell	36,667	34,357	93.7	1455	4.23
Mount Waverley	36,604	34,492	94.23	1347	3.91
Mulgrave	33,982	31,621	93.05	1880	5.95
Murray Valley	36,739	34,227	93.16	1265	3.7
Narracan	38,846	36,432	93.79	1410	3.87
Narre Warren North	37,223	34,860	93.65	1575	4.52
Narre Warren South	45,871	43,213	94.21	1838	4.25
Nepean	36,451	33,853	92.87	1506	4.45
Niddrie	36,148	33,801	93.51	2113	6.25
Northcote	38,584	34,932	90.53	1625	4.65
Oakleigh	34,478	31,789	92.2	1230	3.87
Pascoe Vale	38,591	35,020	90.75	2272	6.49
Polwarth	40,403	37,954	93.94	1334	3.51
Prahran	38,332	32,572	84.97	1201	3.69
Preston	37,858	34,509	91.15	2339	6.78
Richmond	38,941	33,496	86.02	1485	4.43
Ripon	36,473	34,309	94.07	1268	3.7
Rodney	35,652	33,625	94.31	1757	5.23
Sandringham	36,376	33,984	93.42	1032	3.04
Scoresby	38,226	35,979	94.12	1464	4.07
Seymour	38,112	35,833	94.02	1390	3.88
Shepparton	36,206	33,849	93.49	1346	3.98
South Barwon	43,002	40,351	93.84	1239	3.07
South-West Coast	41,338	38,599	93.37	1618	4.19
Swan Hill	33,731	31,628	93.77	1476	4.67
Tarneit	41,235	38,689	93.83	2053	5.31
Thomastown	36,458	33,904	92.99	2753	8.12
Warrandyte	39,590	37,267	94.13	1228	3.3
Williamstown	37,437	34,364	91.79	1933	5.63
Yan Yean	41,083	38,907	94.7	1479	3.8
Yuroke	41,502	39,140	94.31	1916	4.9
TOTAL	3,353,845	3,109,907	92.73%	141914	4.56%

Electoral region	Electors enrolled	Total votes	Percentage of electors who voted	Informal votes	Informal votes as percentage of votes
Eastern Metropolitan	412,960	388,126	93.99	12,179	3.14
Eastern Victoria	417,673	391,826	93.81	12,625	3.22
Northern Metropolitan	419,105	381,879	91.12	21,730	5.69
Northern Victoria	408,029	380,817	93.33	15,426	4.05
South Eastern Metropolitan	412,943	385,747	93.41	20,200	5.24
Southern Metropolitan	413,587	373,225	90.24	11,420	3.06
Western Metropolitan	431,847	399,486	92.51	25,075	6.38
Western Victoria	437,701	409,066	93.46	14,588	3.57
TOTAL	3,353,845	3,110,172	92.73%	133,243	4.28%

An analysis of ballot papers

The informal voting rate for the Legislative Assembly increased from 3.42% in 2002 to 4.56% in 2006 – a record rate for a Victorian State election. Informal votes for the Legislative Council rose from 3.67% in 2002 to 4.28% in 2006. These increases coincided with the introduction of a new voting system for the Legislative Council. For the first time, the manner of voting differed between the two State election ballot papers. These factors prompted the VEC to conduct a survey of informal ballot papers at the State election. The aims of the survey were to measure the incidence of various types of informal voting, to discover whether the new Legislative Council system affected the informal vote, and to contribute to Australia-wide literature on this subject.

The VEC selected the following electorates for the survey:

- Brunswick District;
- Ferntree Gully District;
- Gippsland East District;
- Melbourne District;
- Mildura District;
- Northcote District;
- Richmond District;
- Rodney District;
- Shepparton District;
- Western Metropolitan Region; and
- Western Victoria Region.

These electorates cover a wide range of Victorians. The four inner-suburban districts (Brunswick, Melbourne, Northcote and Richmond) are characterised by high proportions of residents born overseas, relatively high household incomes, and a generally young, mobile population with a high rate of Internet usage. In contrast, the four country districts (Gippsland East, Mildura, Rodney and Shepparton) have small numbers of residents born overseas, lower household incomes, and a generally older population. The outer-suburban district of Ferntree Gully is distinguished by its high household income, low rate of unemployment and relatively young population. Of the two regions surveyed, Western Metropolitan had the highest informal vote in the State, and has the highest rate of unemployment in the State, a high proportion of residents born overseas, and a population that is less mobile than the State average. Western Victoria Region includes Geelong and Ballarat, as well as the rural areas of western Victoria, and has the lowest household income of any region and a low proportion of residents born overseas.

To increase the value of its analysis, the VEC divided the informal ballot papers into numerous categories. The primary classifications were blank, numbering errors, ticks and crosses and writing, but there were sub-categories within these classifications. In particular, the VEC tried to determine which ballot papers appeared to be deliberately informal.



Informal district ballot papers

Informal district ballot papers were sorted into the following eleven categories. A few ballot papers fell into more than one category (for instance, including both a tick and numbers); these were sorted to what appeared to be the more important category for that ballot paper.

Blank	The bulk of these ballot papers were presumably deliberately informal, though they might include ballot papers lodged by people who had difficulties with the whole voting process.
Numbers – 1 only	These include ballot papers cast by voters who misapplied the way to vote above-the-line for the Upper House.
Numbers – insufficient	Ballot papers including insufficient numbers to constitute a formal vote.
Numbers – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers including number sequences such as '1's, or '0', or '1', '10', '300', which indicate an intention to cast an informal vote.
Numbers – other	
Ticks/crosses – preference	Ballot papers indicating a clear preference for a candidate through a single tick or cross.
Ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers with ticks or crosses in every square, indicating an intention to reject all the candidates.
Ticks/crosses – other	
Writing – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers with writing or drawings indicating opposition to all the candidates, including those with a cross over the whole paper.
Writing – other	Vague scrawls not indicating any intention.
Administrative error	Ballot papers which are really formal, or which have been issued for the wrong district.

Table 22 shows the results of the survey of district informal votes.



Table 22 Categories of district informal votes

District	Blank	Nos - 1 Only	Nos - Insufficient	Nos - deliberate	Nos - Other	Ticks/ crosses - preference	Ticks/ crosses - deliberate	Ticks/ crosses - other	Writing - deliberate	Writing - other	Admin error	TOTAL
Brunswick	423 19.38%	528 24.19%	101 4.63%	98 4.49%	424 19.42%	161 7.38%	98 4.49%	35 1.60%	278 12.73%	16 0.73%	21 0.96%	2183
Ferntree Gully	505	630	71	110	175	159	75	4	319	5	11	2064
Gippsland East	270 24.47%	388 30.52%	182 3.44%	52 5.33%	260 8.48%	82 7.70%	44 3.63%	5 0.19%	190 15.46%	3 0.24%	24 0.53%	1500
Melbourne	259 18.00%	316 25.87%	73 12.13%	73 3.47%	151 17.33%	110 5.47%	51 2.93%	14 0.33%	124 12.67%	15 0.20%	27 1.60%	1213
Mildura	313 21.35%	314 26.05%	210 6.02%	74 6.02%	399 12.45%	125 9.07%	33 4.20%	6 1.15%	127 10.22%	1 1.24%	30 2.23%	1632
Northcote	378 19.18%	502 19.24%	46 12.87%	65 4.53%	149 24.45%	155 7.66%	75 2.02%	12 0.37%	228 7.78%	2 0.06%	9 1.84%	1621
Richmond	297 23.32%	376 30.97%	155 2.84%	62 4.01%	258 9.19%	136 9.56%	44 4.63%	13 0.74%	132 14.07%	3 0.12%	21 0.56%	1497
Rodney	359 19.84%	481 25.12%	153 10.35%	76 4.14%	313 17.23%	110 9.08%	36 2.94%	9 0.87%	179 8.82%	18 0.20%	11 1.40%	1745
Shepparton	345 20.57%	369 27.56%	40 8.77%	62 4.36%	131 17.94%	163 6.30%	57 2.06%	1 0.52%	129 10.26%	37 1.03%	9 0.63%	1343
TOTAL	3149 21.28%	3904 26.38%	1031 6.97%	672 4.54%	2260 15.27%	1201 8.12%	513 3.47%	99 0.67%	1706 11.53%	100 0.68%	163 1.10%	14798

Ballot papers with a single number '1' were the largest category of informal votes, both overall at 26.38% and in each district surveyed. Has the incidence of '1 only' voting increased, and, if so, what could have caused the increase?

Unfortunately there was no survey of informal ballot papers from the 2002 State election, and so there is no definitive answer as to whether there are more '1 only' votes than before. However, there are some indications. The last time the VEC conducted a survey of informal ballot papers was after the 1988 State election. At that time, ballot papers with insufficient numbering, including '1 only', constituted only 12% of all informal votes. The most equivalent jurisdiction for which information is available is Western Australia, where voters have to number every square on their Lower House ballot paper, and can either vote '1' for a party or vote for individual candidates on their Upper House ballot paper. At the 2005 Western Australian Legislative Assembly election, 26.95% of the informal votes indicated a first preference only. This rate is very similar to that for the '1 only' votes in Victoria.

It seems likely that the number of '1 only' votes has increased, and that this increase can be attributed to the new voting system for the Legislative Council. Despite the VEC's efforts to communicate the correct ways of voting, it appears that a significant number of voters became aware they could vote '1', and did so on both ballot papers.

Turning to broader categories, 53.16% of informal votes were the result of numbering errors. Ticks and crosses made up 12.25% - a much smaller proportion than numbers, but still significant. As it is very common to fill in forms with ticks, it is not surprising that some voters did the same on their ballot papers.

Apparently deliberate informal votes were 19.54% of the total. If blank votes are added, 40.82% of the informal votes were probably deliberate.

At least 41.47% of the informal votes indicated a clear preference, either as a number '1' or a tick or cross. Legislative change would be required to admit such votes to the count.





Informal region ballot papers

Region ballot papers are more complex than district ballot papers, with voters being able to vote either above or below-the-line on the ballot paper. There are more ways in which voters can make mistakes, and consequently more categories of informal votes. The 18 categories used in the survey are:

Blank	
Writing – apparently deliberate	
Writing – other	
Administrative error	
Fragments	Ballot papers which have been torn up. It can be difficult to determine how many pieces make up a single ballot paper.
Above-the-line (ATL): numbers – ALP/DLP	Ballot papers with '1' in both the ALP and DLP squares.
ATL: numbers – apparently deliberate	
ATL: numbers – other	
ATL: ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers with ticks or crosses in every square, indicating an intention to reject all the candidates. (Ballot papers with a tick or cross in a square above-the-line are formal.)
ATL: ticks/crosses – other	
Below-the-line (BTL): numbers – 1 only	These are ballot papers cast by voters who misapplied the way to vote above-the-line.
BTL: numbers – insufficient	
BTL: numbers – repetitions	Ballot papers with sequences of '1' to '5', or '1' to the number of candidates in a group, in several or all of the groups below-the-line.
BTL: numbers – apparently deliberate	
BTL: numbers – other	
BTL: ticks/crosses – preference	
BTL: ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	
BTL: ticks/crosses – other	

Table 23 shows the results of the survey of region informal votes.



Table 23 Categories of region informal votes

Category	Western Metro	WM %	Western Vic	WV %	Total	Total %
Blank	6838	30.75%	5375	36.77%	12213	33.14%
Writing - Deliberate	1907	8.58%	1745	11.94%	3652	9.91%
Writing - Other	566	2.55%	441	3.02%	1007	2.73%
Admin Error	17	0.08%	67	0.46%	84	0.23%
Fragments	17	0.08%	55	0.38%	72	0.20%
ATL: Nos - DLP/ALP	16	0.07%	208	1.42%	224	0.61%
ATL: Nos - Deliberate	481	2.16%	328	2.24%	809	2.20%
ATL: Nos - Other	386	1.74%	660	4.52%	1046	2.84%
ATL: Ticks/Crosses - Deliberate	201	0.90%	186	1.27%	387	1.05%
ATL: Ticks/Crosses - Other	201	0.90%	251	1.72%	452	1.23%
BTL: Nos - 1 Only	7028	31.61%	3055	20.90%	10083	27.36%
BTL: Nos - Insufficient	740	3.33%	274	1.87%	1014	2.75%
BTL: Nos - Repetitions	1379	6.20%	773	5.29%	2152	5.84%
BTL: Nos - Deliberate	453	2.04%	181	1.24%	634	1.72%
BTL: Nos - Other	350	1.57%	462	3.16%	812	2.20%
BTL: Ticks/Crosses - Preference	833	3.75%	184	1.26%	1017	2.76%
BTL: Ticks/Crosses - Deliberate	364	1.64%	125	0.86%	489	1.33%
BTL: Ticks/Crosses - Other	457	2.06%	246	1.68%	703	1.91%
	22234		14616		36850	
Total Writing					4659	12.64%
Total Numbers					16774	45.52%
Total Ticks/Crosses					3048	8.27%
Total Deliberate					5971	16.20%
Total ATL					2918	7.92%
Total BTL					16904	45.87%



Blank ballot papers were the largest category of informal ballot papers in the regions surveyed, comprising almost a third of the total. This contrasts with the position for the districts, where little more than one-fifth of the informal ballot papers were blank. It is possible that the sheer size of the region ballot papers deterred people from attempting to complete them.

The second largest category were below-the-line '1 only' ballot papers, at 27.36%. It appears that many voters read the direction to vote '1' above-the-line, and misapplied it to vote '1' for the lead candidate in their preferred group below-the-line. This category was much stronger in Western Metropolitan than in Western Victoria.

A significant category was below-the-line repetitions, which made up 5.84% of the total. Voters are directed to "place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in these squares to indicate your choice", and it seems that voters attempted to comply by voting "1" to "5" in several groups.

Looking now at broader categories, 45.52% of informal votes were the result of numbering errors. Ticks and crosses comprised 8.27% – a smaller proportion than for the districts, probably because a single tick or cross above-the-line is a formal vote.

Apparently deliberate informal votes were 16.2% of the total. If blank votes are added, 49.34% of the informal votes were probably deliberate.

Some 32.87% of the informal votes indicated a clear preference, either as a number '1' or a tick or cross below-the-line. This is a much lower proportion than for the districts, probably because it is easy for voters to vote '1' above-the-line.

The ease of voting above-the-line led to a significant contrast between the incidence of informal votes above-the-line and below-the-line. Only 7.92% of the region informal votes were above-the-line, while 45.87% were below-the-line. The difference is still more marked if the above-the-line and below-the-line informal votes are added to the formal votes. Below-the-line votes constituted 5% of the total formal Upper House votes. If 5% of the formal votes for Western Metropolitan and Western Victoria are added to the below-the-line informal votes for those regions, 30.54% of the below-the-line votes were informal. In contrast, only 0.4% of the above-the-line votes for Western Metropolitan and Western Victoria were informal.

Implications of the informal ballot paper survey

It appears that the increase in the informal vote at the 2006 State election can be partly attributed to the change in the voting system for the Upper House. Many voters voted '1' on their district ballot paper, just as they had on their region ballot paper. In the election for the Legislative Council, many voters voted '1' below-the-line, making their vote informal, or misinterpreted the instructions to vote '1' to at least '5'.

If voters deliberately vote informally, that is their decision, based on their views of the political system, parties and candidates. However, it is regrettable when voters attempt to vote correctly and make an error. The VEC aims to reduce the level of accidental informal voting, so that voters' wishes can have an effect.

Legislative change would be required for '1 only' votes or single ticks or crosses on district ballot papers to be accepted as formal. One possibility would be optional preferential voting, as in New South Wales and Queensland. Another possibility would be ticket voting as in South Australia, under which a '1 only' vote for a candidate would be accepted as formal provided the candidate had lodged a voting ticket with the State Electoral Office.

The directions on the region ballot paper may have confused some voters, leading to the significant number of below-the-line repetitions discovered in the survey. However, the wording on the ballot paper could only be changed through an amendment to the *Electoral Act 2002*.

In the absence of legislative change, the VEC might consider modifying the design of the region ballot paper. For instance, the line on the ballot paper might be thickened to deter voters from voting '1 only' below-the-line. Also, the VEC will look at ways of making its how-to-vote information as clear as possible. Sections 9 and 10 consider areas for improvement, including matters for Parliament to consider.

How-to-vote card conformity survey

As well as examining informal ballot papers, the VEC surveyed formal ballot papers for their degree of conformity with how-to-vote (HTV) cards.

HTV cards play an important part in Australian elections. Australia's preferential and proportional voting systems make the act of voting more difficult than in countries where a voter simply has to make a single mark on a ballot paper. The Australian systems also encourage parties and candidates to negotiate favourable preference deals. To ensure that voters vote in accordance with the party's strategy, party members distribute HTV cards to voters outside voting centres. HTV cards are considered so important that in Victoria (and also in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia) legislation provides for the registration of HTV cards.

In this context, it would be useful to learn the degree to which voters actually follow their party's HTV card. The VEC examined the formal ballot papers for Brunswick, Gippsland East, Mildura, Melbourne, Northcote, Richmond, Rodney and Shepparton districts.

Table 24 shows the results of the survey.



Table 24 How-to-vote card conformity

District	ALP	ALP %	Liberal	Lib %	National	Nat %	Green	Green %	Family First	FF %	People Power	PP %	Socialist	Soc %	Independent	Ind %
Brunswick	7815	49.2	2612	45			2874	29.1	37	6.6	129	25.5	223	34.6		
Gippsland East	2119	52.4	4169	55.1	3447	52.8	345	20.2	352	31					5252	38.2
Mildura	577	27.2	1281	34.8	4959	38.7			215	18.9					3188	27.9
Melbourne	6735	47.6	2694	38.4			2521	29	84	16.9	35	6.7			171	19.7
Northcote	10196	58.2	2142	42.1			3790	41.5	124	11.6					139	27.2
Richmond	7301	49.1	1918	30.1			2409	30.5	64	14.4	16	3.2			480	26.6
Rodney	1867	32.3	4916	48.5	6004	47.1	147	14.4	313	29					176	16.6
Shepparton	2847	46.1	4976	57.9	8439	53.6	292	19.2	178	27.8						
TOTAL	39457	49	24708	45.7	22849	47.8	12378	31	1367	20.8	180	11.8	223	34.6	9406	32

The outstanding feature is that less than half of the voters in these eight districts followed their party's HTV card. Although voters knew which party they wanted to support, they made up their own minds about the allocation of preferences.

Supporters of the major parties (Labor, Liberal and National) tended to conform most with their party's HTV cards. The strongest conformists were Labor voters in Northcote (58.2%), followed closely by Liberal voters in Shepparton (57.6%). Overall, 49% of Labor voters followed the ALP HTV cards, 45.7% of Liberal voters followed the Liberal cards, and 47.8% of National voters followed the National cards. A possible reason for this behaviour is that a high proportion of voters for the major parties would be lifelong supporters, who would tend to heed their party's instructions. Also, the major parties have more members and so are more able to station members at every voting centre to hand out HTV cards. It is worth noting that in districts where a major party was weak, such as the ALP in Mildura, there tended to be a lower rate of conformity with the party's HTV card.

Voters for the smaller parties were less inclined to follow HTV cards. Less than a third of Green voters voted according to the Green cards, 20.8% of Family First voters followed Family First cards, and the figure for People Power voters was only 11.8%. A surprisingly high 32% of voters for Independent candidates followed their candidate's HTV card, but most of these votes were for the sitting members for Gippsland East and Mildura, who were well known and had strong support. The smaller parties tend not to have a large, long-standing support base. It is likely that many of their voters vote for an alternative to the major parties and are more interested in a protest vote than in following an HTV card. As well, they are less likely to see a HTV card of a smaller party, because these parties may not have the numbers to cover all voting centres.

The registration of HTV cards is discussed further in Section 10 of this report.

Analysis of result

Changes in Parliament

The changes to the size and structure of the Legislative Council led to a substantial turnover in the membership of that House. The Legislative Council was reduced from 44 members to 40. Moreover, for the first time in Victoria's history, the whole of the Council was to be elected at once, and the change to a proportional representation vote counting system altered the pattern of seats and spurred the parties to select different candidates. Thirteen members of the Legislative Council retired when Parliament expired, while seven members were defeated at the State election. Six members attempted to switch to the Assembly, two of them successfully (Marsha Thomson for Footscray and John Eren for Lara). There were 18 new members of the Legislative Council, including two members (Bernard Finn and Inga Peulich) who had previously sat in the Legislative Assembly.

Turnover in the Legislative Assembly was less dramatic. Thirteen members stood down at the State election, eight were defeated, and there were 19 new members (excluding the two members who transferred from the Legislative Council).

Overall, there were 26 retirements at the State election. Eleven of the retiring members belonged to the ALP, 11 to the Liberal Party, two to the National Party, and there were two independents. The members who did not re-contest included a former leader of the Opposition, Mr Robert Doyle; a former Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Phil Honeywood; a former Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Bill Forwood; a former President of the Legislative Council, Ms Monica Gould; and four other former ministers, the Hons. Bill Baxter, Robin Cooper, Mary Delahunty and Sherryl Garbutt.

Of the 106 Parliamentarians who did stand at the State election, 91 were re-elected and 15 were defeated. Of the 15 defeated members, 12 belonged to the ALP, one to the National Party and two were independents.

Thirty-seven new members were elected to replace the retiring and defeated members. The party affiliations of the new members were: ALP, 13; Liberal Party, 17; National Party, three; Australian Greens, three; and Democratic Labor Party, one. Overall, 29% of the members elected were new, compared with 34% at the 2002 State election.

Figures 5 and 6 show the composition of both Houses of Parliament following the 2002 and 2006 State elections.

Tables 25 and 26 list the members elected for each seat at the 2006 State election.

Figure 5 Composition of the Legislative Assembly after the 2002 and 2006 Victorian State elections

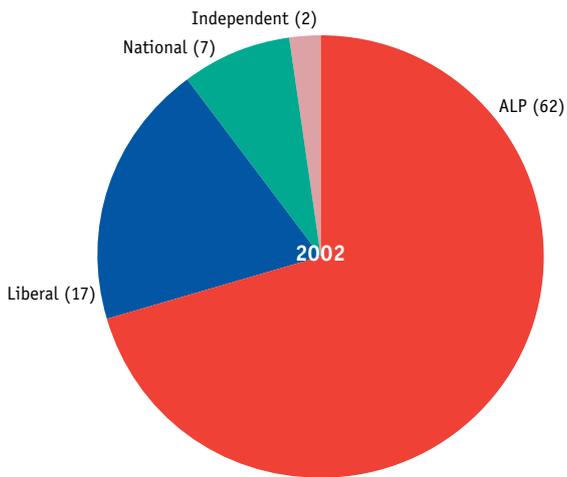
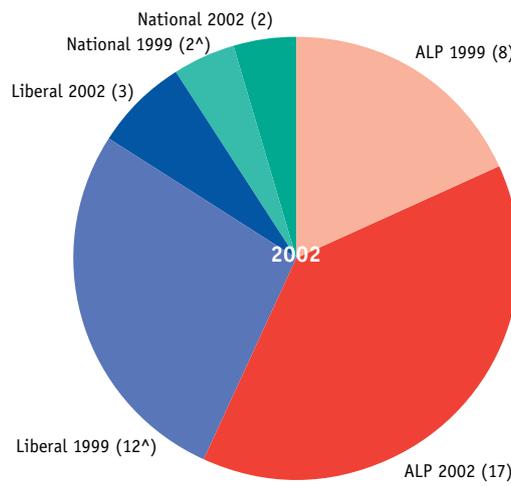


Figure 6 Composition of the Legislative Council after the 2002 and 2006 Victorian State elections



^ Two by-elections were held in conjunction with the 2002 State election for seats contested at the 1999 State election. As a result of these by-elections, the National Party lost one seat (Western) to the Liberals.

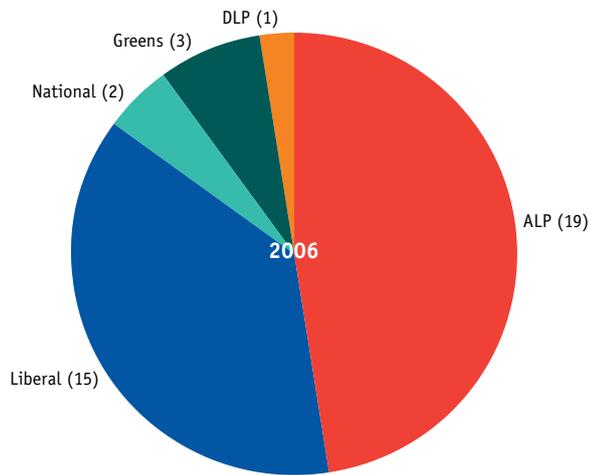
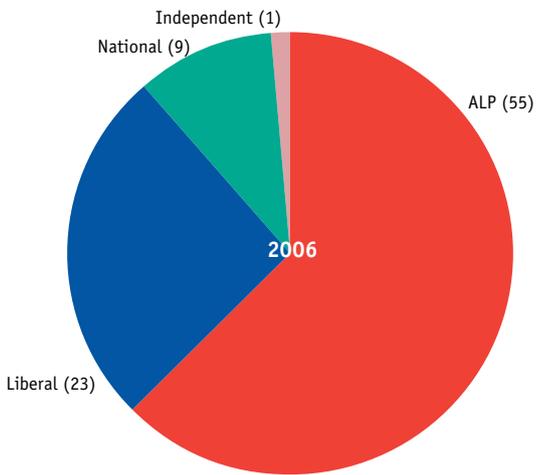


Table 25 Legislative Assembly: members elected at the 2006 State election

District	Name	Party
Albert Park	Hon. John Thwaites	ALP
Altona	Hon. Lynne Kosky	ALP
Ballarat East	Geoff Howard	ALP
Ballarat West	Karen Overington	ALP
Bass	Hon Ken Smith	Liberal
Bayswater	Heidi Victoria*	Liberal
Bellarine	Lisa Neville	ALP
Benalla	Bill Sykes	The Nationals
Benambra	Bill Tilley*	Liberal
Bendigo East	Jacinta Allan	ALP
Bendigo West	Hon. Bob Cameron	ALP
Bentleigh	Rob Hudson	ALP
Box Hill	Robert Clark	Liberal
Brighton	Hon. Louise Asher	Liberal
Broadmeadows	Hon. John Brumby	ALP
Brunswick	Carlo Carli	ALP
Bulleen	Nicholas Kotsiras	Liberal
Bundoora	Colin Brooks*	ALP
Burwood	Bob Stensholt	ALP
Carrum	Hon. Jenny Lindell	ALP
Caulfield	Helen Shardey	Liberal
Clayton	Hong Lim	ALP
Cranbourne	Jude Perera	ALP
Dandenong	Hon. John Pandazopoulos	ALP
Derrimut	Telmo Languiller	ALP
Doncaster	Mary Wooldridge*	Liberal
Eltham	Steve Herbert	ALP
Essendon	Judy Maddigan	ALP
Evelyn	Christine Fyffe*	Liberal
Ferntree Gully	Nick Wakeling*	Liberal
Footscray	Marsha Thomson	ALP
Forest Hill	Kirstie Marshall	ALP
Frankston	Alistair Harkness	ALP
Geelong	Ian Trezise	ALP
Gembrook	Tammy Lobato	ALP
Gippsland East	Craig Ingram	Independent
Gippsland South	Peter Ryan	The Nationals
Hastings	Neale Burgess*	Liberal
Hawthorn	Ted Baillieu	Liberal
Ivanhoe	Craig Langdon	ALP
Keilor	George Seitz	ALP
Kew	Andrew McIntosh	Liberal
Kilsyth	David Hodgett	Liberal
Kororoit	Hon. André Haermeyer	ALP

District	Name	Party
Lara	John Eren	ALP
Lowan	Hugh Delahunty	The Nationals
Lyndhurst	Hon. Tim Holding	ALP
Macedon	Joanne Duncan	ALP
Malvern	Michael O'Brien*	Liberal
Melbourne	Hon. Bronwyn Pike	ALP
Melton	Don Nardella	ALP
Mildura	Peter Crisp*	The Nationals
Mill Park	Lily D'Ambrosio	ALP
Mitcham	Tony Robinson	ALP
Monbulk	James Merlino	ALP
Mordialloc	Janice Munt	ALP
Mornington	David Morris*	Liberal
Morwell	Russell Northe	The Nationals
Mount Waverley	Maxine Morand	ALP
Mulgrave	Daniel Andrews	ALP
Murray Valley	Ken Jasper	The Nationals
Narracan	Gary Blackwood	Liberal
Narre Warren North	Luke Donnellan	ALP
Narre Warren South	Judith Graley*	ALP
Nepean	Martin Dixon	Liberal
Niddrie	Hon. Rob Hulls	ALP
Northcote	Fiona Richardson*	ALP
Oakleigh	Ann Barker	ALP
Pascoe Vale	Hon. Christine Campbell	ALP
Polwarth	Terry Mulder	Liberal
Prahran	Tony Lupton	ALP
Preston	Robin Scott*	ALP
Richmond	Richard Wynne	ALP
Ripon	Joe Helper	ALP
Rodney	Paul Weller	The Nationals
Sandringham	Murray Thompson	Liberal
Scoresby	Kim Wells	Liberal
Seymour	Ben Hardman	ALP
Shepparton	Jeanette Powell	The Nationals
South Barwon	Michael Crutchfield	ALP
South-West Coast	Hon. Denis Napthine	Liberal
Swan Hill	Peter Walsh	The Nationals
Tarneit	Tim Pallas*	ALP
Thomastown	Hon. Peter Batchelor	ALP
Warrandyte	Ryan Smith*	Liberal
Williamstown	Hon. Steve Bracks	ALP
Yan Yean	Danielle Green	ALP
Yuroke	Liz Beattie	ALP

* New Member of Parliament

Table 26 Legislative Council: members after the 2006 State election (in order of election for each region)

Region	Name	Party
Eastern Metropolitan	Richard Dalla-Riva	Liberal
	Shaun Leane*	ALP
	Bruce Atkinson	Liberal
	Brian Tee*	ALP
	Jan Kronberg*	Liberal
Eastern Victoria	Philip Davis	Liberal
	Matt Viney	ALP
	Edward O'Donohue*	Liberal
	Johan Scheffer	ALP
Northern Metropolitan	Peter Hall	The Nationals
	Theo Theophanous	ALP
	Matthew Guy*	Liberal
	Jenny Mikakos	ALP
	Greg Barber*	Australian Greens
Northern Victoria	Nazih Elasmr*	ALP
	Candy Broad	ALP
	Wendy Lovell	Liberal
	Damian Drum	The Nationals
	Donna Petrovich*	Liberal
South Eastern Metropolitan	Kaye Darveniza	ALP
	Gavin Jennings	ALP
	Gordon Rich-Phillips	Liberal
	Adem Somyurek	ALP
	Inga Peulich*	Liberal
Southern Metropolitan	Robert Smith	ALP
	David Davis	Liberal
	John Lenders	ALP
	Andrea Coote	Liberal
	Sue Pennicuik*	Australian Greens
Western Metropolitan	Evan Thornley*	ALP
	Justin Madden	ALP
	Bernard Finn*	Liberal
	Khalil Eideh*	ALP
	Martin Pakula*	ALP
Western Victoria	Colleen Hartland*	Australian Greens
	Jaala Pulford*	ALP
	John Vogels	Liberal
	Gayle Tierney*	ALP
	David Koch	Liberal
	Peter Kavanagh*	Democratic Labor Party

* New Member of Parliament

Candidates and parties

A total of 707 candidates nominated to contest the 2006 State election – a record number for a Victorian State election. This compares with 477** candidates who contested the 2002 election and 406** at the 1999 election (see Figure 7). The increase in the number of candidates in 2006 can be attributed mainly to the changes to the Legislative Council, under which for the first time, the entire House was to be elected at once. As well, the emergence of the new political parties Family First, People Power and the Country Alliance increased the number of candidates.

At the 2006 State election, 459 candidates contested the 88 Legislative Assembly seats, and 248 candidates contested the 40 Legislative Council seats.

With the Labor, Liberal, Greens and Family First parties standing candidates in every seat, the minimum number of candidates in any district was four. There were more five-candidate contests than any other (occurring in 35 districts), while the maximum number of candidates in a district was eight (in Bayswater). For the Upper House, the number of candidates per region ranged from 26 (in Western Metropolitan Region) to 38 (in Eastern Victoria and Northern Victoria Regions).

The number of women nominating as candidates was 235, compared with 158 at the 2002 State election. This was a substantial increase, but the proportion of women candidates barely moved, from 33.1% in 2002 to 33.2% in 2006. The number of women in Parliament declined, from 40 (30% of all MPs) after the 2002 election to 37 (29%) after the 2006 election.

The *Results and Statistics Report* lists all candidates contesting the 2006 State election in alphabetical order.

** Includes the candidates for the simultaneous Legislative Council by-elections.

* New Member of Parliament

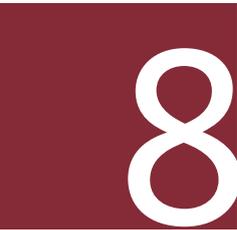


Figure 7 Number of candidates contesting Victorian State elections 1992-2006

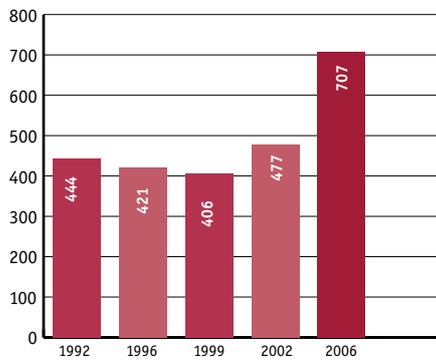
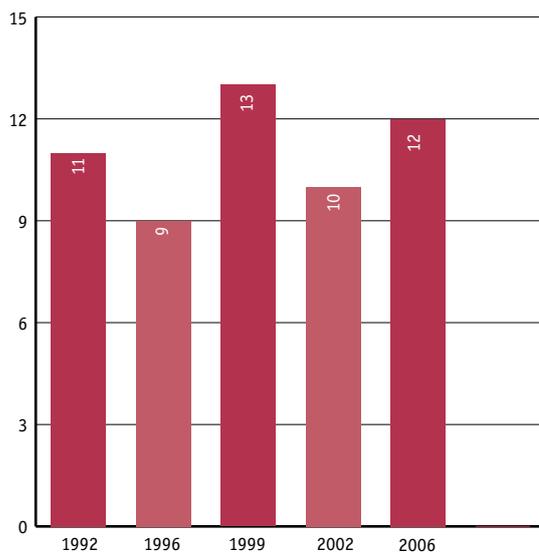


Figure 8 Number of registered political parties contesting Victorian State elections 1992-2006



Twelve registered political parties stood candidates in 2006, compared with 10 in 2002 (see Figure 8).

Sixty-three candidates were not endorsed by any registered party, which was very similar to the figure of 65 in 2002. Some of those candidates may have belonged to unregistered political parties, but the VEC's database does not enable such candidates to be distinguished from independents. The change to a proportional representation system for the Legislative Council, under which groups of independents could stand with almost the same advantages as party candidates, encouraged an increase in independent candidates for the Upper House from four in 2002 to 20 in 2006, but this was balanced by a decline in the number of independent candidates for the Assembly from 61 to 43. One independent was elected in 2006, compared with two at the previous State election.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of first-preference votes received by the parties in elections for the Legislative Assembly since 1996.

Tables 27 and 28 show the results for parties and candidates for both Houses of Parliament at the 2006 State election.

Figure 9 Legislative Assembly: first-preference votes 1992-2006

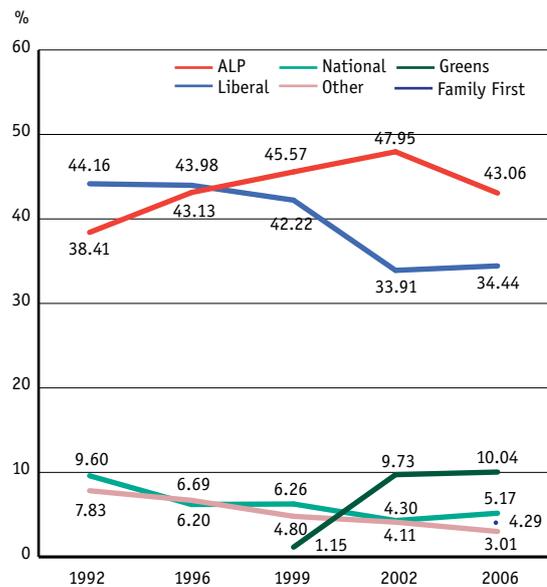




Table 27 Legislative Assembly votes at the 2006 Victorian State election

Party	Candidates	Successful candidates	Votes	Formal vote (%)	Change since 2002 (% point)
ALP	88	55	1,278,046	43.06	-4.89
Liberal Party	88	23	1,022,110	34.44	+0.53
Australian Greens	88	0	297,931	10.04	+0.31
The Nationals	20	9	153,299	5.17	+0.87
Family First	88	0	127,266	4.29	NA
People Power	27	0	15,226	0.51	NA
Citizens Electoral Council	15	0	5,187	0.17	-0.16
Socialist Alliance	2	0	1,102	0.04	-0.07
Other candidates	43	1	67,826	2.29	-1.11
Total	459	88	2,967,993	100.00	

Note: There were 141,914 informal votes, making a total of 3,109,907 votes cast for the Legislative Assembly.

Table 28 Legislative Council: votes at the 2006 Victorian State election

Party	Candidates	Successful candidates	Votes	Formal vote (%)	Change since 2002 (% point)
ALP	40	19	1,234,082	41.45	-6.04
Liberal Party	37	15	1,028,421	34.55	+0.04
Australian Greens	36	3	314,847	10.58	-0.29
The Nationals	12	2	131,946	4.43	+0.06
Family First	35	0	114,739	3.85	NA
Democratic Labor Party	23	1	58,722	1.97	NA
People Power	16	0	30,433	1.02	NA
Democrats	15	0	24,673	0.83	-0.96
Country Alliance	6	0	13,329	0.45	NA
Christian Democratic Party	6	0	5,819	0.20	+0.06
Socialist Alliance	2	0	1,130	0.04	NA
Other candidates	20	0	18,788	0.63	-0.04
Total	248	40	2,976,929	100.00	

Note: There were 133,243 informal votes, making a total of 3,110,172 votes cast for the Legislative Council.



Candidates' deposits forfeited

Of the 707 candidates, 215 forfeited their deposits, because they were not elected and/or because they, or their Upper House group, obtained less than 4% of the first-preference votes in their electorates. These candidates comprised 60 Family First candidates, 32 People Power candidates, 20 Democratic Labor Party candidates, 15 Australian Democrats, 14 Citizens Electoral Council candidates, six Christian Democrats, six Country Alliance candidates, four Nationals, four Socialists, three Greens and 51 independent candidates.

Two-party-preferred vote

Since 1985, the Victorian Electoral Commission (and its predecessor, the State Electoral Office) has prepared two-party-preferred vote statistics for each State election. The purpose of the two-party-preferred vote is to show, for each electorate and for the State as a whole, how the vote was divided between the ALP and the Liberal and National parties, taking into account the preferences of people who vote for minor parties and independents.

The two-party-preferred vote was calculated in the following way:

- In districts where a preference distribution was conducted to determine the result, where the distribution continued until only two candidates were left in the count, and where the final distribution was between a Labor and a Liberal/National candidate, the final result of the preference distribution constituted the two-party-preferred vote. There were 32 such districts in the 2006 State election.
- In districts where a preference distribution was not conducted or could not be used (because the distribution determined the result when there were more than two candidates still in the count, or because the distribution was not between a Labor and a Liberal/National candidate), and where the two-candidate-preferred count was between a Labor and a Liberal/National candidate, the two-candidate-preferred count constituted the two-party-preferred vote. There were 48 such districts in the 2006 State election.

- In districts where neither the preference distribution nor the two-candidate-preferred count was between a Labor and a Liberal/National candidate, a special two-party-preferred count was conducted. There were eight such districts in the 2006 State election. In five of these districts the special two-party-preferred count distributed preferences from the other candidates to the Labor and Liberal candidates, while in Mildura, Rodney and Shepparton the special two-party-preferred count was between the Labor and National candidates.

In districts where both Liberal and National candidates were standing, the leading candidate of the two parties in that electorate was chosen as the Liberal/National candidate for the two-party-preferred vote. There were 20 such districts in the 2006 State election. In 11 districts the Liberal candidates were chosen for the two-party-preferred vote, while in nine districts the National candidates were chosen.

It is worth noting that the two-party-preferred vote is obtained for information purposes only. It provides a measure – in each district and for the State as a whole – of support for the parties most likely to form government. The two-party-preferred vote does not alter the result of the election in any district. The result is determined according to law by the count of first-preference votes and by preference distributions where required, regardless of the party affiliations of the candidates.

In most State elections, there are a number of cases where the Labor or Liberal/National candidates are not the two leading candidates in an electorate. There were four such cases in the 1996 State election, six in the 1999 State election, eleven in the 2002 State election, and nine in the 2006 State election (Brunswick, Melbourne, Northcote and Richmond districts, in which the Liberal candidate was third in terms of first-preference votes; Rodney, Shepparton and Swan Hill districts, in which the Labor candidate came third on the first-preference votes; and Gippsland East and Mildura districts, in which the Labor candidate came fourth on the first-preference votes). In each case, preferences were distributed to the Labor and the leading Liberal/National candidate, in order to maintain a consistent approach and establish a two-party-preferred vote. The two-party-preferred vote was 54.38% Labor and 45.62% Liberal/National.

Figure 10 Legislative Assembly: two-party-preferred votes at Victorian State elections 1992-2006

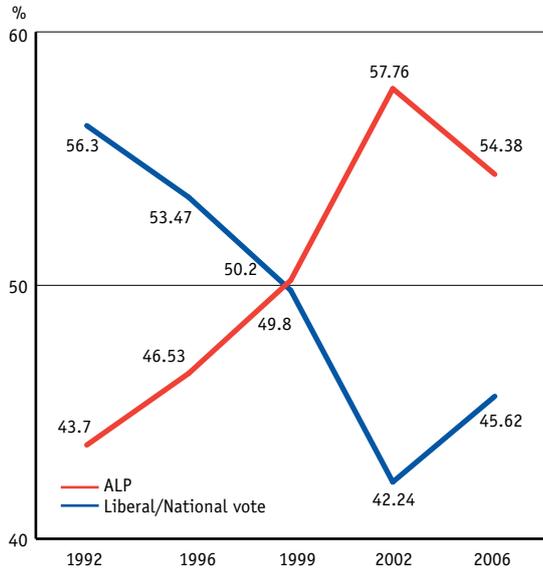


Table 29 Legislative Assembly: two-party-preferred vote at the 2006 State election

District	Labor votes	%	Liberal/ National votes	%	Swing 2002-2006 (%)
Albert Park	21,502	59.69%	14,523	40.31%	3.8 against Labor
Altona	25,869	70.21%	10,974	29.79%	4.5 against Labor
Ballarat East	18,850	56.64%	14,429	43.36%	1.0 against Labor
Ballarat West	20,751	56.54%	15,953	43.46%	2.5 against Labor
Bass	15,926	44.48%	19,882	55.52%	4.9 against Labor
Bayswater	15,088	47.11%	16,941	52.89%	5.6 against Labor
Bellarine	21,528	57.95%	15,622	42.05%	0.3 against Labor
Benalla	10,437	32.49%	21,687	67.51%	15.5 against Labor
Benambra	13,288	42.29%	18,132	57.71%	3.7 against Labor
Bendigo East	19,009	55.39%	15,309	44.61%	7.6 against Labor
Bendigo West	21,447	60.56%	13,965	39.44%	5.4 against Labor
Bentleigh	18,950	56.32%	14,696	43.68%	1.6 to Labor
Box Hill	15,267	44.78%	18,827	55.22%	4.1 against Labor
Brighton	12,853	39.07%	20,041	60.93%	3.5 against Labor
Broadmeadows	24,878	81.89%	5,500	18.11%	1.1 to Labor
Brunswick	25,915	77.85%	7,372	22.15%	0.2 against Labor
Bulleen	12,935	41.57%	18,182	58.43%	5.8 against Labor
Bundoora	20,701	65.12%	11,086	34.88%	2.5 against Labor
Burwood	18,594	53.74%	16,009	46.26%	1.4 against Labor
Carrum	19,935	56.71%	15,219	43.29%	5.5 against Labor
Caulfield	13,526	42.37%	18,400	57.63%	5.4 against Labor
Clayton	20,884	70.27%	8,836	29.73%	3.6 against Labor
Cranbourne	21,927	61.29%	13,851	38.71%	0.5 to Labor
Dandenong	20,077	68.67%	9,162	31.33%	1.6 against Labor
Derrimut	22,365	74.30%	7,735	25.70%	3.0 against Labor
Doncaster	13,359	41.88%	18,541	58.12%	7.4 against Labor
Eltham	19,764	56.48%	15,226	43.52%	1.7 to Labor
Essendon	20,276	61.70%	12,586	38.30%	4.2 against Labor
Evelyn	16,053	47.22%	17,943	52.78%	3.1 against Labor
Ferntree Gully	18,315	49.96%	18,342	50.04%	2.3 against Labor
Footscray	23,428	74.67%	7,948	25.33%	0.2 against Labor
Forest Hill	16,896	50.77%	16,385	49.23%	5.0 against Labor
Frankston	16,775	53.22%	14,748	46.78%	2.6 against Labor
Geelong	20,213	58.33%	14,441	41.67%	0.2 to Labor
Gembrook	17,670	50.71%	17,172	49.29%	0.9 against Labor
Gippsland East	12,662	36.46%	22,064	63.54%	3.4 against Labor
Gippsland South	11,393	34.19%	21,932	65.81%	5.0 against Labor
Hastings	17,737	49.01%	18,454	50.99%	1.8 against Labor
Hawthorn	12,694	37.74%	20,941	62.26%	6.4 against Labor
Ivanhoe	19,918	60.45%	13,034	39.55%	2.0 against Labor
Keilor	28,107	69.41%	12,385	30.59%	1.4 to Labor



District	Labor votes	%	Liberal/ National votes	%	Swing 2002-2006 (%)
Kew	12,990	40.44%	19,131	59.56%	3.6 against Labor
Kilsyth	17,183	49.65%	17,428	50.35%	2.4 against Labor
Kororoit	24,482	75.56%	7,920	24.44%	1.5 against Labor
Lara	22,268	67.93%	10,514	32.07%	4.4 against Labor
Lowan	9,748	27.92%	25,169	72.08%	5.0 against Labor
Lyndhurst	22,642	71.48%	9,034	28.52%	3.6 against Labor
Macedon	22,649	58.17%	16,290	41.83%	1.1 against Labor
Malvern	12,180	38.68%	19,313	61.32%	1.1 against Labor
Melbourne	22,677	71.43%	9,070	28.57%	0.7 against Labor
Melton	21,513	63.54%	12,345	36.46%	1.8 against Labor
Mildura	9,330	29.31%	22,507	70.69%	14.0 against Labor
Mill Park	24,276	70.79%	10,018	29.21%	6.0 against Labor
Mitcham	17,234	51.97%	15,926	48.03%	5.7 against Labor
Monbulk	18,511	56.68%	14,148	43.32%	1.6 against Labor
Mordialloc	18,926	53.54%	16,420	46.46%	1.0 against Labor
Mornington	12,695	38.15%	20,582	61.85%	10.0 against Labor
Morwell	15,755	47.88%	17,147	52.12%	7.0 against Labor
Mount Waverley	16,675	50.31%	16,470	49.69%	2.0 against Labor
Mulgrave	18,280	65.77%	9,515	34.23%	0.5 against Labor
Murray Valley	9,302	28.24%	23,637	71.76%	7.9 against Labor
Narracan	16,582	47.35%	18,440	52.65%	9.5 against Labor
Narre Warren North	19,716	59.23%	13,569	40.77%	0.5 against Labor
Narre Warren South	25,965	60.94%	16,641	39.06%	1.7 against Labor
Nepean	13,138	40.62%	19,203	59.38%	9.2 against Labor
Niddrie	19,396	61.22%	12,288	38.78%	5.4 against Labor
Northcote	26,737	80.29%	6,562	19.71%	2.0 to Labor
Oakleigh	19,031	62.37%	11,481	37.63%	2.8 against Labor
Pascoe Vale	23,828	72.78%	8,912	27.22%	1.4 against Labor
Polwarth	14,394	39.31%	22,220	60.69%	1.2 against Labor
Prahran	16,800	53.55%	14,571	46.45%	0.9 against Labor
Preston	24,222	75.30%	7,944	24.70%	0.5 against Labor
Richmond	24,060	75.17%	7,948	24.83%	0.4 against Labor
Ripon	17,964	54.35%	15,090	45.65%	3.1 against Labor
Rodney	8,026	25.19%	23,841	74.81%	8.4 against Labor
Sandringham	13,615	41.32%	19,332	58.68%	5.7 against Labor
Scoresby	13,400	38.83%	21,110	61.17%	7.9 against Labor
Seymour	19,517	56.66%	14,926	43.34%	2.8 against Labor
Shepparton	8,239	25.35%	24,264	74.65%	9.5 against Labor
South Barwon	20,446	52.28%	18,666	47.72%	2.7 against Labor
South-West Coast	17,018	45.99%	19,982	54.01%	3.3 against Labor



District	Labor votes	%	Liberal/ National votes	%	Swing 2002-2006 (%)
Swan Hill	8,029	26.60%	22,152	73.40%	9.3 against Labor
Tarneit	22,879	62.47%	13,747	37.53%	4.9 against Labor
Thomastown	25,152	81.07%	5,872	18.93%	0.7 against Labor
Warrandyte	14,767	41.01%	21,244	58.99%	2.6 against Labor
Williamstown	24,066	74.25%	8,346	25.75%	1.5 against Labor
Yan Yean	21,675	57.91%	15,753	42.09%	1.6 against Labor
Yuroke	26,126	70.19%	11,095	29.81%	2.7 against Labor
TOTAL	1,611,866	54.38%	1,352,258	45.62%	3.38 against Labor

Number of districts swinging to Labor 2002-2006: 7

Number of districts swinging to Liberal/National 2002-2006: 81

Gippsland East – additional distribution

The VEC received a request from the Liberal Party on 28 December 2006, to complete one final distribution for the district of Gippsland East.

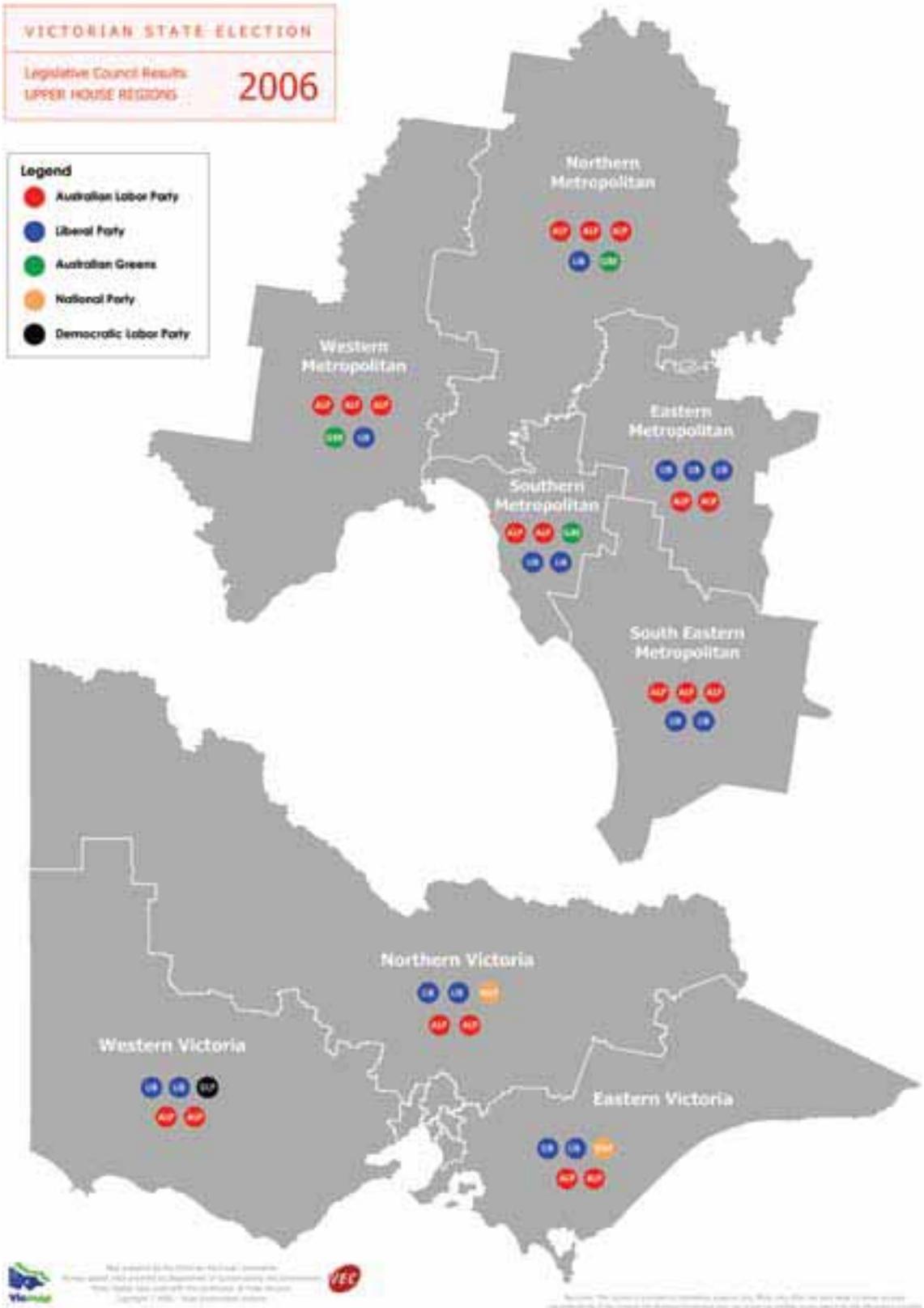
The VEC had selected candidates Ingram (Ind) and Nixon (Nat) for the ‘two-candidate-preferred’ count, but in fact the leading two candidates following the final preference distribution were Ingram and Bommer (Lib).

At the completion of the Gippsland East preference distribution, when candidate Ingram achieved an absolute majority, candidates Bommer and Nixon still remained but candidate Nixon’s ballot papers were not distributed.

The VEC agreed to distribute candidate Nixon’s ballot papers as part of its statistical analysis in March 2007.

The results of the final distribution are as follows:

Totals when Ingram elected	Ingram	Bommer	Nixon	Total
	18,538	8,295	7,895	34,728
Transfer of 7895 ballot papers of Nixon	1,988	5,907		7,895
TOTAL	20,526	14,202		34,728
	59.11%	40.89%		



Margins by which seats are held

The following tables show the final votes for the first and second-placed candidates in each seat, and the percentage point swing required for each seat to change hands. The figures are derived from:

- preference distributions where they were conducted; and
- two-candidate-preferred counts for the remaining seats.

The seats are grouped by party, and ranked from safest to most marginal.

Table 30 Legislative Assembly: margins by which Labor members hold their seats

District	Labor votes	%	Non-Labor votes	%	Swing required (% point)
Broadmeadows	24,878	81.89%	5,500	18.11%	31.90 to Liberal
Thomastown	25,152	81.07%	5,872	18.93%	31.08 to Liberal
Koroit	24,482	75.56%	7,920	24.44%	25.57 to Liberal
Preston	24,222	75.30%	7,944	24.33%	25.31 to Liberal
Footscray	23,428	74.67%	7,948	25.10%	24.68 to Liberal
Derrimut	22,365	74.30%	7,735	25.70%	24.31 to Liberal
Williamstown	24,066	74.25%	8,346	25.75%	24.26 to Liberal
Pascoe Vale	23,828	72.78%	8,912	27.22%	22.79 to Liberal
Lyndhurst	22,642	71.48%	9,034	28.52%	21.49 to Liberal
Mill Park	24,276	70.79%	7,536	23.22%	20.80 to Liberal
Clayton	20,884	70.27%	8,836	29.73%	20.28 to Liberal
Altona	25,869	70.21%	10,974	29.79%	20.22 to Liberal
Yuroke	26,126	70.19%	11,095	29.81%	20.20 to Liberal
Keilor	28,107	69.41%	12,385	30.59%	19.42 to Liberal
Dandenong	20,077	68.67%	9,162	31.33%	18.68 to Liberal
Lara	22,268	67.93%	10,514	32.07%	17.94 to Liberal
Mulgrave	18,280	65.77%	9,515	34.23%	15.78 to Liberal
Bundoora	20,701	65.12%	11,086	34.88%	15.13 to Liberal
Melton	21,513	63.54%	12,345	36.46%	13.55 to Liberal
Tarneit	22,879	62.47%	13,747	37.53%	12.48 to Liberal
Oakleigh	19,031	62.37%	11,481	37.63%	12.38 to Liberal
Essendon	20,276	61.70%	12,586	38.30%	11.71 to Liberal
Cranbourne	21,927	61.29%	13,851	38.71%	11.30 to Liberal
Niddrie	19,396	61.22%	12,288	38.78%	11.23 to Liberal
Narre Warren South	25,965	60.94%	16,641	39.06%	10.95 to Liberal
Bendigo West	21,447	60.56%	13,965	39.44%	10.57 to Liberal
Ivanhoe	19,918	60.45%	13,034	39.55%	10.46 to Liberal
Albert Park	21,503	59.69%	14,523	40.31%	9.70 to Liberal
Narre Warren North	19,716	59.23%	13,569	40.77%	9.24 to Liberal
Northcote (1)	19,484	58.52%	13,813	41.48%	8.53 to Greens
Geelong	20,213	58.33%	14,441	41.67%	8.34 to Liberal
Macedon	22,649	58.17%	16,290	41.83%	8.18 to Liberal
Bellarine	21,528	57.95%	15,622	42.05%	7.96 to Liberal
Yan Yean	21,675	57.91%	15,753	42.09%	7.92 to Liberal
Carrum	19,935	56.71%	15,219	43.29%	6.72 to Liberal
Monbulk	18,511	56.68%	14,148	43.32%	6.69 to Liberal
Seymour	19,517	56.66%	14,926	43.34%	6.67 to Liberal
Ballarat East	18,850	56.64%	14,429	43.36%	6.65 to Liberal



District	Labor votes	%	Non-Labor votes	%	Swing required (% point)
Ballarat West	20,751	56.54%	15,953	43.46%	6.55 to Liberal
Eltham	19,764	56.48%	15,226	43.52%	6.49 to Liberal
Bentleigh	18,950	56.32%	14,696	43.68%	6.33 to Liberal
Bendigo East	19,009	55.39%	15,309	44.61%	5.40 to Liberal
Ripon	17,964	54.35%	15,090	45.65%	4.36 to Liberal
Burwood	18,594	53.74%	16,009	46.26%	3.75 to Liberal
Richmond (2)	17,170	53.64%	14,841	46.36%	3.65 to Greens
Brunswick (3)	17,853	53.63%	14,435	46.37%	3.64 to Greens
Prahran	16,800	53.55%	14,571	46.45%	3.56 to Liberal
Mordialloc	18,926	53.54%	16,420	46.46%	3.55 to Liberal
Frankston	16,775	53.22%	14,748	46.78%	3.23 to Liberal
South Barwon	20,446	52.28%	18,666	47.72%	2.29 to Liberal
Melbourne (4)	16,512	52.01%	15,238	47.99%	2.02 to Greens
Mitcham	17,234	51.97%	15,926	48.03%	1.98 to Liberal
Forest Hill	16,896	50.77%	16,385	49.23%	0.78 to Liberal
Gembrook	17,670	50.71%	17,172	49.29%	0.72 to Liberal
Mount Waverley	16,675	50.31%	16,470	49.69%	0.32 to Liberal

(1) Northcote calculated on ALP vs Greens basis. On ALP vs Liberal basis, swing required is 30.30 to Liberal.

(2) Richmond calculated on ALP vs Greens basis. On ALP vs Liberal basis, swing required is 25.18 to Liberal.

(3) Brunswick calculated on ALP vs Greens basis. On ALP vs Liberal basis, swing required is 27.86 to Liberal.

(4) Melbourne calculated on ALP vs Greens basis. On ALP vs Liberal basis, swing required is 21.44 to Liberal.

Election results



Table 31 Legislative Assembly: margins by which Liberal members hold their seats

District	Liberal votes	%	Labor votes	%	Swing required (% point)
Hawthorn	20,941	62.26%	12,694	37.74%	12.27 to Labor
Mornington	20,582	61.85%	12,695	38.15%	11.86 to Labor
Malvern	19,313	61.32%	12,180	38.68%	11.33 to Labor
Scoresby	21,110	61.17%	13,400	38.83%	11.18 to Labor
Brighton	20,041	60.93%	12,853	39.07%	10.94 to Labor
Polwarth	22,220	60.69%	14,394	39.31%	10.70 to Labor
Kew	19,131	59.56%	12,990	40.44%	9.57 to Labor
Nepean	19,203	59.38%	13,138	40.62%	9.39 to Labor
Warrandyte	21,244	58.99%	14,767	41.01%	9.00 to Labor
Sandringham	19,332	58.68%	13,615	41.32%	8.69 to Labor
Bulleen	18,182	58.43%	12,935	41.57%	8.44 to Labor
Doncaster	18,541	58.12%	13,359	41.88%	8.13 to Labor
Benambra	18,132	57.71%	13,288	42.29%	7.72 to Labor
Caulfield	18,400	57.63%	13,526	42.37%	7.64 to Labor
Bass	19,882	55.52%	15,926	44.48%	5.53 to Labor
Box Hill	18,827	55.22%	15,267	44.78%	5.23 to Labor
South-West Coast	19,982	54.01%	17,018	45.99%	4.02 to Labor
Bayswater	16,941	52.89%	15,088	47.11%	2.90 to Labor
Evelyn	17,943	52.78%	16,053	47.22%	2.79 to Labor
Narracan	18,440	52.65%	16,582	47.35%	2.66 to Labor
Hastings	18,454	50.99%	17,737	49.01%	1.00 to Labor
Kilsyth	17,428	50.35%	17,183	49.65%	0.36 to Labor
Ferntree Gully	18,342	50.04%	18,315	49.96%	0.05 to Labor

Table 32 Legislative Assembly: margins by which National members hold their seats

District	National votes	%	Non-National votes	%	Swing required (% point)
Swan Hill	22,152	73.40%	8,029	26.60%	23.41 to Labor
Lowan	25,169	72.08%	9,748	27.92%	22.09 to Labor
Murray Valley	23,637	71.76%	9,302	28.24%	21.77 to Labor
Benalla	21,687	67.51%	10,437	32.49%	17.52 to Labor
Shepparton (1)	21,677	66.67%	10,838	33.33%	16.68 to Liberal
Gippsland South	21,932	65.81%	11,393	34.19%	15.82 to Labor
Mildura (2)	17,854	56.08%	13,985	43.92%	6.09 to Savage
Rodney (3)	17,334	54.39%	14,534	45.61%	4.40 to Liberal
Morwell	17,147	52.12%	15,755	47.88%	2.13 to Labor

(1) Shepparton calculated on National vs Liberal basis. On ALP vs National basis, swing required is 24.66 to ALP.

(2) Mildura calculated on National vs Savage basis. On ALP vs National basis, swing required is 20.70 to ALP.

(3) Rodney calculated on National vs Liberal basis. On ALP vs National basis, swing required is 24.82 to ALP.

Table 33 Legislative Assembly: margins by which independent members hold their seats

District	Independent votes	%	Liberal votes	%	Swing required (% point)
Gippsland East (1)	20,526	59.11%	14,202	40.89%	9.12 to Liberal

(1) Swing calculated on Ingram vs Liberal basis. On ALP vs Liberal basis, swing required is 13.55 to ALP.



Section 9

Recommended service improvements

The following items constitute administrative improvements that do not require legislative amendments.

9

Recommended service improvements

The following items constitute administrative improvements that do not require legislative amendments.

Enrolment updates

The VEC seeks endorsement to further research direct elector enrolment update methods.

Early voting centres

With the likelihood of a further increase in early voting in future, the VEC will review the locations of early voting centres, with a commitment to ensuring adequate coverage and resourcing.

In addition, options to extend operating hours at airport voting centres will be examined.

Mobile voting

In future, the VEC will further clarify candidates' responsibilities in relation to mobile voting to ensure candidates only visit scheduled mobile voting centres prior to the commencement of voting. Additional training will be provided to VEC staff delivering these services. The VEC will also provide clear guidelines regarding mobile voting services and processes to political parties and candidates.

Overseas voting centres

The VEC did experience difficulties with voting services at some overseas voting centres. This included material being delayed in Customs, and the lack of training for some consular election officials. Information technology opportunities to assist in relaying materials will be pursued in the future, as well as the appointment of better trained staff at particular centres.

Voting centre signage

Signage remains an issue for the VEC as it is often faced with council restrictions on the placement of signage in prominent locations such as main roads etc. The organisation will continue to look at options for increased signage at the actual venue, bearing in mind consideration for building owners. In addition, the VEC will look to provide each elector with details of their closest local voting centres in a state-wide mail out.



Display of group voting tickets

The VEC will address the fact that not all voting centres displayed group voting tickets.

Election day voting centres

Queues

All complaints about queues were investigated, with a detailed analysis of the difference between the number of votes estimated for that particular centre and the number of actual votes received. In those areas where there were significant queues, it was found that the number of actual votes was greater than the number estimated. This was particularly true in growth areas, as well as areas that were close to major infrastructure such as the Melbourne Town Hall. In 2010, the VEC will utilise mapping software and other data besides historical information, to better predict the volume of votes likely to be received at each centre.

There is a strong likelihood that the 2010 Victorian state election will be conducted shortly after a Federal election, on current timelines. This will further enable the VEC to be more accurate with estimations.

In addition, online venue location search facilities will clearly indicate those centres located within the elector's district and those that are not.

Wheelchair access

The VEC received complaints in relation to the lack of wheelchair accessible voting centres. Despite considerable liaison with disability organisations, the VEC was unable to locate and lease many accessible venues. The VEC will continue to liaise with community and disability organisations to identify more suitable venues. In addition, the VEC will liaise with the Department of Education at a more strategic level to seek assistance on sourcing and rating venues.

Joint voting centres

The VEC will continue to utilise joint voting centres in order to reduce declaration voting. The centres will be located close to electoral boundaries.

Communication services

The State election communication campaign will be revised to consider:

- the timing of the stages of various campaigns; with a particular emphasis on advertising early voting prior to the issuing of postal votes. This is to encourage those who can not attend a voting centre on election day to vote early, as opposed to applying for a postal vote; and
- the inclusion of more tailored information, such as a list of voting centres on the EasyVote card.

At this stage it is likely that the basic message and visuals from the 2006 advertising campaign will be used in 2010. Savings will be diverted to more targeted advertising.

Media releases

In future, the VEC will distribute media releases more broadly to obtain improved media coverage. This will include any individual media contacts, rather than rely on AAP's Medianet coverage.

Tally room

Prior to the 2010 State election, in conjunction with the political parties, the VEC will assess the demand for the continuation of the tally room. Consideration will be given to the media needs, result services and access for the general public.

Computer counting

The VEC will continue to investigate the feasibility of utilising scanning technology to replace the requirement to data enter ballot paper details for computer counting purposes. In doing so, the VEC will look at options to improve transparency for scrutineers and candidates.

9

Personnel

More staff in voting centres

Additional staff will be appointed to assist not only in addressing queues, but also the long hours required on election weekend.

Election Manager appointments

The VEC will generally restrict the number of districts allocated to Election Managers to two districts per manager. In rural areas where distance is a significant factor, one district offices will apply. The VEC has not ruled out the establishment of a three district office, although this would only occur in exceptional circumstances.

Region counts

The VEC will appoint designated region Election Managers who will manage ballot papers and the count, without any other district responsibilities. While this will have budget implications, it will result in a quicker and more accurate count.

Informal Legislative Council votes

In light of the informal ballot paper survey, the VEC will investigate alternative design opportunities, to ensure the instructions on the ballot paper are clear.



**Section 10
Recommendations for legislative
consideration**



10

Postal voting

Party involvement in postal voting

Party postal vote applications continue to be an issue for a number of reasons, not least of which is the confusion on the part of the elector receiving the applications. Section 101 of the *Electoral Act 2002* allows for other individuals or groups besides the Electoral Commission to distribute postal votes. Despite significant consultation with the parties to ensure that the applications clearly identified the party details, the VEC received a number of complaints from members of the public who believed that the applications were misleading, i.e. that they were from the VEC. This caused considerable administrative management issues and elector anger when the elector realised the application was from a party and that the party in fact collects elector details in this manner.

The timing of the distribution of party postal vote applications also causes issues. The Act requires the VEC to reject party applications that have been signed and returned prior to the issue of the writ. The VEC also received legitimate applications from parties too late to issue ballot packs.

A high number of people applied for a postal vote on a party application, and then, while waiting for their material to arrive, cast an early vote. The VEC believes this was largely due to the fact that postal vote applications were distributed by the parties prior to the publication of early voting centre details. In future, many of these people will be encouraged to attend an early voting centre, as opposed to applying for a postal vote.

The VEC will look to its advertising schedule in 2010 to promote early voting at the commencement of the issue of the writ. This may persuade those who might have applied for a postal vote to attend an early voting centre instead.

To avoid elector confusion and to ensure applications are distributed and received within the legislative timeline, the Act should be amended so that only the Electoral Commission can distribute postal vote applications.

Postal vote declarations postmarked Sunday

Section 106 (3) of the *Electoral Act 2002* states that postal vote declarations are taken to have been posted before 6.00pm on election day if:

- (a) the postmark on the envelope is dated any day on or before election day; or
- (b) in the case of no postmark being legible, the declaration is witnessed on or before election day.

Australia Post advises that mail posted on Saturday is not processed/postmarked until Sunday. This means that ballot material lodged in post boxes after the Australia Post clearance on Friday night and at any time on Saturday will be postmarked Sunday.

The VEC sought legal advice on this matter and consulted with all registered political parties. A process was subsequently implemented whereby declarations postmarked Sunday were assessed according to the date that the declaration was witnessed. Declarations witnessed on or before election day were accepted.

Consideration should be given to further clarifying this situation in the legislation.

Witness on postal vote declarations

Sections 101 and 106 of the *Electoral Act 2002* describe the process by which an elector may apply for a postal vote and includes directions on how they should complete their postal voting material.

An application must be signed by the applicant in the presence of an authorised witness.

The postal vote declaration returned by the postal voter must also be completed in the presence of an authorised witness and the authorised witness must sign and add their title or capacity of witness, either an elector (their name is on the roll), or an election official, to the postal vote declaration.

Many witnesses found the completion of this section of the application confusing. A large number of electors wrote "Mr" or "wife" etc, as opposed to 'elector'.

The Election Manager checks the elector's signature on the returned postal vote declaration against the signature on the original application. Declarations are rejected where the signatures do not match.

The Election Manager is also required to reject returned declarations that are not witnessed even though they are signed by the elector.

Consideration should be given to removing the requirement for postal vote declarations to be witnessed.

How-to-vote card registration

Feedback obtained after the election from candidates and political parties included some feedback on the requirement to register how-to-vote (HTV) cards. Parties generally found the process of registering HTV cards to be complicated, labour-intensive and pressured. One party felt that the process of registering HTV cards was unnecessary, whereas another party strongly preferred the practice to continue.

Only HTV cards distributed on election day, or those included with the material carried by mobile voting teams, are required to be registered. HTV cards distributed at early voting centres do not need to be registered.

From the VEC's point of view, the registration of HTV cards is very labour intensive. A number of parties and candidates register more than one card covering different preference combinations.

The *Electoral Act 2002* includes provisions that prohibit the distribution of election material that is misleading or deceptive (with significant penalties) in addition to the provisions relating to the registration of HTV cards.

Registration provisions for HTV cards are not included in Commonwealth legislation, or in electoral legislation in Western Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, or the Northern Territory.

Consideration should be given to the future of this practice in Victorian elections.

General postal voters

Section 24 of the *Electoral Act 2002* describes the criteria and the process for a person to apply to be registered as a general postal voter (GPV) for State elections.

GPVs do not need to re-register each election. There are a number of GPVs who have been registered for many years and who have their ballot material sent to them automatically at the time of a State election, without having to make further application.

The Election Manager must compare the signature of the elector on each returned postal vote declaration with the signature of the same elector on the postal vote application.

All declarations will have an accompanying application except for GPVs.

Based on legal advice, the VEC has accepted postal vote declarations from GPVs that are signed and witnessed – because the application does not exist for this election and the VEC does not maintain copies of the original application to become a GPV. These are maintained by the AEC.

Consideration should be given to clarifying the scrutiny requirements for GPVs.

10

Registration of group voting tickets

Sections 69A and 69B of the *Electoral Act 2002* provide for candidates for the Legislative Council to form groups and for groups to submit group voting ticket(s).

Groups must be registered by 12 noon on the day before close of nominations (Thursday) and those groups that do register “**may**” submit one or more group voting tickets by 12 noon on the second day after close of nominations (Sunday).

If a group voting ticket is lodged by the 12 noon close on Sunday, a square in relation to the group is placed above-the-line on the ballot paper.

The VEC arranges for a small number of ballot papers to be printed locally to provide early voting facilities after 4.00pm on the day nominations close. These ballot papers do not have boxes printed above-the-line because group voting tickets have not yet closed, and voters only have the option to vote below-the-line. The VEC has also recommended that the commencement of early voting be moved to the Monday following close of nominations for this reason.

Given the short timeline between close of nominations and the commencement of early voting, the VEC must begin its major print of ballot papers immediately following the draw for positions on the ballot paper (Friday). In doing so, the VEC makes an assumption that all registered groups will submit at least one group voting ticket and prints a box above-the-line for all registered groups.

In the event that a group chooses not to lodge a group voting ticket, the VEC would be required to reprint ballot papers after the close of group voting ticket registrations on the Sunday.

Consideration should be given to amending Section 69B so that groups that register under Section 69A **must** lodge a group voting ticket. Consideration should also be given to the consequences of dealing with ballot papers marked above-the-line for any groups that fail to lodge a group voting ticket.

Commencement of early voting

Section 99 (1)(a) of the *Electoral Act 2002* directs that early voting is to commence at 4.00pm on the final nomination day. This allows the VEC only four hours to conduct the ballot draw, and to print and distribute ballot papers to voting centres for the commencement of early voting. This proved challenging. Printed ballot papers were not available at all early voting centres at 4.00pm. In addition, electors were unable to vote above-the-line as group voting ticket lodgment did not close until midday on Sunday, 12 November.

Consideration should be given to amending the Act so that early voting commences on the Monday after nominations close. This will allow sufficient time to produce and distribute ballot papers and permit electors to vote above-the-line if they so choose.

Terminology - unsound mind

The *Constitution Act 1975*, outlines the qualifications for being on the electoral roll. Section 48 (2)(d) provides that “by reason of being of unsound mind, [a person who] is incapable of understanding the nature and significance of enrolment and voting”, is not entitled to be on the roll of electors.

The VEC received several complaints from members of the public, and disability groups about the use of the term ‘unsound mind’. In light of this information Parliament should consider the appropriateness of this term.

Three-month rule

Electors who do not live at their address on the roll are affected by a provision commonly known as the ‘three-month rule’. Under this rule, if an elector claiming to vote gives an address that is not the elector’s address on the roll, the election official must ask: “Has (the address shown on the electoral roll) been your principal place of residence within the period of three months immediately before election day?” If the elector answers “no” to this question, the elector’s claim to vote must be rejected.

The three-month rule is based on the principle that only people who live within an electorate should be able to vote for that electorate. This matter became an issue after the 1999 State election, and the three-month rule was included in the *Electoral Act 2002*. The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) prepared training and instructional material for election officials to guide them in applying the three-month rule. The VEC’s material stated that the rule does not apply to young people who are temporarily living away from home, people who live at two addresses, people living in aged care accommodation who intend to return to their enrolled address, and itinerant and silent electors.

The three-month rule has a potentially far-reaching impact. Victoria has a highly mobile population. An Australian Bureau of Statistics survey shows that 28.8% of adult Victorians change address over three years. This mobility is concentrated in younger age groups, with 41.8% of 18-24 year olds and 52.7% of 25-34 year olds moving in three years. These moves tend to be quite short in distance. Of people moving within Victoria, 76.2% move less than 20 kilometres, and 37.6% move less than 5 kilometres.

These statistics suggest that a high proportion of people changing address could move within their electoral district. Despite the VEC’s enrolment programs, and concentrated advertising before the roll closes, a substantial number of electors do not update their enrolment in time. These are likely to include a high proportion of the more mobile segments of the population, such as young people, the unemployed and the mentally ill. Given the efforts to engage these marginalised groups with the community, it is unfortunate if they are denied a vote at a State election even though they are on the roll.

It is estimated that around 10,000 people were denied a vote through the application of the three-month rule at the 2006 State election. Almost 1,700 voting centres operated across Victoria at the election. Notwithstanding the VEC’s training and instructional material, the three-month rule was difficult to interpret and apply. Questions arose, for example, about whether it applied to an elector who had lived overseas for a period, had just returned to Australia, but intended to change address shortly. There is a risk of inconsistent administration of the three-month rule.

In light of the difficulties in consistent administration, and the potential consequences of the operation of the rule, it is suggested that the Act should be amended to either abolish the three-month rule, or to exempt the rule from applying to electors on the roll who move within their electorate without updating their enrolment.

Close of roll seven days after issue of the writ

After the 2002 State election, the close of roll was moved from three days to seven days after the issue of the writ. Despite the movement, the same number of enrolments were received in the seven days prior to roll close in 2006, as in the three days prior to the close of roll in 2002.

The extension of the close of roll date reduced the time available to the VEC to produce roll products in time for early voting, nomination checking and for candidates for campaigning purposes.

Consideration should be given to moving the close of roll back to three days after the issue of the writ, to allow sufficient time for the production of roll products. This would assist in ensuring complete roll products for the commencement of early voting and the processing of nominations. It would also allow the VEC to respond to the feedback from candidates and parties who would appreciate the receipt of the roll earlier for campaign purposes.

The VEC believes that with a fixed date election, there is sufficient opportunity for electors to update their details before the close of roll. The advertising can commence considerably earlier and as a result, electors have more notice and time to update their details.

10

Clarification on bribery

Section 151 (2) of the Act states: “A person must not, in order to influence or affect any person’s election conduct, give or confer, or promise or offer to give or confer, any property or benefit of any kind to the person or any other person”.

Two instances of bribery were referred to the Victorian Government Solicitor’s Office (VGSO) for advice. In both instances, the VGSO found that the dollar value amount that was conferred was not of a sufficient amount to constitute bribery. The VEC seeks definitive clarification on the specifics of what dollar amount, or classification of gift, would constitute bribery.

Electronic voting

Electronic voting franchise at State elections

Currently, legislation restricts electronic voting to “electors who because of a visual impairment cannot otherwise vote without assistance”. The VEC considers that there are a number of other electors who would benefit from access to electronic voting:

- people with motor impairments, who may have difficulty filling out paper ballots by hand without assistance;
- people with poor English-language skills who may have difficulties understanding the instructions on the ballot paper (instructions, formality warnings etc. can be provided in multiple languages using the electronic voting software);
- people who are illiterate in either English or their primary spoken language (instructions and options could be provided in audio through the headphones in multiple languages); and
- electors outside Victoria.

In the first three instances, extending the franchise to these electors would provide the same benefits to these groups as does providing electronic voting to the vision-impaired. That is, these electors would be enabled to vote secretly, whereas currently they must rely on another person to fill out their ballot papers. The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee in its report on *Victorian Electronic Democracy* also recommended allowing people with motor impairments and poor English language skills to vote electronically.

Stand-alone electronic kiosks in overseas and interstate voting centres would be able to easily supply ballots for any district and region. Currently large numbers of paper ballots must be shipped to these venues – this would be replaced with a small number of CDs and smartcards. The votes could also be sent back to Melbourne electronically (as they were from the non-metropolitan locations in the 2006 trial) and printed for inclusion in the count on election night, reducing the delay that currently occurs waiting for the ballot papers to be transported to Victoria.

The VEC notes that the software has been designed with these possibilities in mind and would not need to be redeveloped for this purpose.

Printing of electronic ballots

The *Electoral Act 2002* (s. 110E(2)(f)) specifies that electronic voting software must be able to print the votes to enable counting. If this requirement were removed, then time and money could be saved in the calculation of results. The VEC considers that if electronic voting were to be implemented on a wider scale, important cost off-sets could come from reducing the printing of votes and reducing the amount of time spent counting votes.

At the 2006 trial, each Legislative Assembly vote was printed on a separate piece of paper and included in the manual count. An alternative option would be to print one piece of paper for each pattern of preferences – i.e. if twenty voters all give preferences to the candidates in the same way, then one sheet with that pattern of preferences and an indication that that represents twenty votes could be printed and included the manual count. This would reduce the time spent sorting and counting votes.

Legislative Council votes were printed and then the preferences were manually entered into the VEC’s Election Management System, which was used to calculate the results in 2006. It would be more efficient to simply import the voting preferences from the electronic voting software into the VEC’s Election Management System, saving time, reducing the number of staff needed to process votes, and reducing the possibility of errors.

Electronic voting franchise at local government elections

Currently, the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *City of Melbourne Act 2001* do not have provisions for electronic voting. The VEC considers, however, that voting electronically would provide the same benefits to electors at this level of government as it does to electors at State elections. Moreover, the VEC considers that there are some valuable opportunities to trial electronic voting in other ways at local government elections.

One possibility would be to trial electronic voting for people with poor English-language skills at an attendance election in a municipality with a high proportion of culturally and linguistically diverse voters. Data from previous elections show that these municipalities tend to have very high informality rates, such as Brimbank and Moreland City Councils. Other municipalities with large numbers of candidates tend to also have higher rates of informality. A trial of this nature would allow the VEC to assess how helpful electronic voting is as a solution to this problem.

A second possibility would be to conduct all voting electronically in one particular municipality and then calculate the results by importing the data into the VEC's counting software, rather than printing the votes. As mentioned above, this could provide cost advantages, faster results and a reduction in possible errors.

To make either scenario more affordable through reducing the amount of infrastructure required, the VEC recommends allowing electronic voting for two weeks and not just on election day. The VEC notes that this parallels postal voting, where voters have an extended time to fill in their ballot papers in most local government elections.

Remote electronic voting

In preparing its submission to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee in early 2005, the VEC investigated the possibility of remote electronic voting over the internet. At the time, the VEC concluded that there were not sufficient practical security measures available to ensure that voting over the internet would be secure and accurate. The VEC does not believe that sufficient changes have been introduced since then to reduce its concerns and make internet-based voting secure, nor to protect internet-based voting from interruptions due to activities such as denial of service attacks.

The VEC also notes that in nations where voting over the internet has been trialled recently alongside other forms of voting (for example, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Estonia), there has been very little up-take by electors. This would seem to indicate either poor public confidence in the internet, or a lack of interest on the public's part in internet voting.

Many of the security concerns regarding electronic voting would not apply to voting remotely over a closed network. The Australian Electoral Commission is currently investigating the possibility of providing remote voting over the Department of Defence's intranet. The VEC believes that this project should be watched closely and potential applications for Victoria assessed in light of that experience.

10

Research for consideration

Public funding system

Parliament may wish to research the appropriateness of the current public funding system.

Informal ballot papers

In light of the informality trend for the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, Parliament may wish to research how informality may be reduced through legislative amendments.

Appendices

1. Previous State election dates and outcomes

Previous State election dates and outcomes

The following table sets out the dates and results of all elections for the Legislative Assembly since 1900.

Date	Party winning election	Comments
1 November 1900	Liberals	McLean minority Conservative Liberal Government defeated; Turner minority Liberal Government takes office.
1 October 1902	Conservatives	
1 June 1904	Conservatives	
15 March 1907	Fusion	The Conservatives and Liberals combined as the Fusion.
29 December 1908	Fusion Liberal	Bent Conservative Government defeated; Murray Fusion Liberal Government takes office. The Fusion had broken up, but was re-formed when the Murray Government took office. The Fusion Liberals were the forerunners of today's Liberal Party.
16 November 1911	Liberal	The Fusion Liberals had become known as the Liberal Party.
26 November 1914	Liberal	
15 November 1917	Economy National	Peacock minority National Government defeated; Bowser minority Economy National Government takes office. The Liberal Party had become known as the National Party in 1917. The party had split, and the 'Economy' faction won the election.
21 October 1920	National	The Lawson National Government (a combination of the Nationals, Economy Nationals and National Laborites) held office but lost its majority. Until 1952, no party won a majority.
30 August 1921	National	Minority Government
26 June 1924	Labor	Peacock minority National Government defeated; Prendergast minority Labor Government takes office but is defeated in Parliament in November 1924 by the Allan Coalition Government.
9 April 1927	Labor	Allan Country–National Coalition Government defeated; Hogan minority Labor Government takes office but is later defeated in Parliament.
30 November 1929	Labor	McPherson minority National Government defeated; Hogan minority Labor Government takes office.
14 May 1932	United Australia– Country Coalition	Hogan minority Labor Government defeated; Argyle United Australia–Country Coalition Government takes office. The National Party had changed its name to the United Australia Party in 1931.
2 March 1935	United Australia – Country Coalition	The coalition broke up less than a month after the election and a minority Country government was formed.
2 October 1937	Country	Minority Government
16 March 1940	Country	Minority Government
12 June 1943	Country	Minority Government
10 November 1945	Labor	Macfarlan Ministerial Liberal Government defeated; Cain minority Labor Government takes office. The United Australia Party had changed its name to the Liberal Party in 1945. The Ministerial Liberals were a dissident group of Liberals who had overthrown a Country-Liberal coalition.

Date	Party winning election	Comments
8 November 1947	Liberal–Country Coalition	Cain minority Labor Government defeated; Hollway Liberal–Country Coalition Government takes office. The Cain Government was forced to the polls when the Legislative Council blocked supply.
13 May 1950	Liberal and Country	Minority Government. The Liberal Party had changed its name to Liberal and Country Party in 1949. The minority Liberal and Country Government was replaced by a minority Country Government less than two months after the election.
6 December 1952	Labor	McDonald minority Country Government defeated; Cain Labor Government takes office. The McDonald Government was forced to the polls when the Legislative Council (Labor and dissident Liberals combined) blocked Supply. The Cain Government was the first majority Labor Government in Victoria's history.
28 May 1955	Liberal and Country	Cain minority Labor Government defeated; Bolte Liberal and Country Government takes office. The Cain Government had lost its majority as a result of a split in the ALP. The split led to the election which ushered in 27 years of Liberal Government.
31 May 1958	Liberal and Country	
15 July 1961	Liberal and Country	
27 June 1964	Liberal and Country	
29 April 1967	Liberal	The Liberal and Country Party had changed its name to the Liberal Party in 1965.
30 May 1970	Liberal	
19 May 1973	Liberal	
20 March 1976	Liberal	
5 May 1979	Liberal	
3 April 1982	Labor	Thompson Liberal Government defeated; Cain Labor Government takes office.
2 March 1985	Labor	
1 October 1988	Labor	
3 October 1992	Liberal–National Coalition	Kirner Labor Government defeated; Kennett Liberal–National Coalition Government takes office.
30 March 1996	Liberal–National Coalition	
18 September 1999	Labor	Kennett Liberal–National Coalition Government defeated; Bracks minority Labor Government takes office with the support of three independent MPs.
30 November 2002	Labor	Bracks Labor Government re-elected with a record majority
25 November 2006	Labor	

2. Victorian premiers since 1855

Premier	Period in office – Party affiliation of government
William Haines	November 1855 – March 1857 (468 days)
John O'Shanassy	March 1857 – April 1857 (50 days)
William Haines	April 1857 – March 1858 (316 days)
John O'Shanassy	March 1858 – October 1859 (597 days)
William Nicholson	October 1859 – November 1860 (397 days)
Richard Heales	November 1860 – November 1861 (354 days)
John O'Shanassy	November 1861 – June 1863 (591 days)
James McCulloch	June 1863 – May 1868 (1776 days)
Charles Sladen	May – July 1868 (67 days)
James McCulloch	July 1868 – September 1869 (437 days)
John MacPherson	September 1869 – April 1870 (202 days)
Sir James McCulloch	April 1870 – June 1871 (437 days)
Charles Duffy	June 1871 – June 1872 (358 days)
James Francis	June 1872 – July 1874 (782 days)
George Kerferd	July 1874 – August 1875 (373 days)
Graham Berry	August – October 1875 (75 days) Liberal
Sir James McCulloch	October 1875 – May 1877 (580 days) Conservative
Graham Berry	May 1877 – March 1880 (1020 days) Liberal
James Service	March – August 1880 (152 days) Conservative
Graham Berry	August 1880 – July 1881 (341 days) Liberal
Sir Bryan O'Lochlen	July 1881 – March 1883 (608 days)
James Service	March 1883 – February 1886 (1079 days) Conservative-Liberal Coalition
Duncan Gillies	February 1886 – November 1890 (1722 days) Conservative-Liberal Coalition
James Munro	November 1890 – February 1892 (469 days) National Liberal
William Shiels	February 1892 – January 1893 (343 days) Liberal
James Patterson	January 1893 – September 1894 (613 days) Conservative
Sir George Turner	September 1894 – December 1899 (1896 days) Liberal
Allan McLean	December 1899 – November 1900 (350 days) Conservative Liberal
Sir George Turner	November 1900 – February 1901 (86 days) Liberal
Alexander Peacock	February 1901 – June 1902 (484 days) Liberal
William Irvine	June 1902 – February 1904 (617 days) Conservative
Sir Thomas Bent	February 1904 – January 1909 (1789 days) Conservative to Feb. 1907, Fusion Feb. 1907 - Oct. 1908, Conservative from Oct. 1908
John Murray	January 1909 – May 1912 (1227 days) Fusion Liberal
William Watt	May 1912 – December 1913 (571 days) Liberal
George Elmslie	December 1913 (14 days) Labor
William Watt	December 1913 – June 1914 (179 days) Liberal
Sir Alexander Peacock	June 1914 – November 1917 (1261 days) Liberal
John Bowser	November 1917 – March 1918 (113 days) Economy National
Harry Lawson	March 1918 – April 1924 (2231 days) National to Sept. 1923, National-Country Coalition Sept. 1923 - Mar. 1924, National from Mar. 1924
Sir Alexander Peacock	April – July 1924 (82 days) National
George Prendergast	July – November 1924 (124 days) Labor
John Allan	November 1924 – May 1927 (914 days) Country-National Coalition
Edmond Hogan	May 1927 – November 1928 (553 days) Labor
Sir William McPherson	November 1928 – December 1929 (386 days) National
Edmond Hogan	December 1929 – May 1932 (890 days) Labor
Sir Stanley Argyle	May 1932 – April 1935 (1049 days) United Australia-Country Coalition
Albert Dunstan	April 1935 – September 1943 (3088 days) Country
John Cain (senior)	September 1943 (5 days) Labor
Albert Dunstan	September 1943 – October 1945 (746 days) Country-United Australia Coalition
Ian Macfarlan	October – November 1945 (51 days) Ministerial Liberal
John Cain (senior)	November 1945 – November 1947 (730 days) Labor

Premier	Period in office – Party affiliation of government
Thomas Hollway	November 1947 – June 1950 (951 days) Liberal–Country Coalition to Dec. 1948, Liberal from Dec. 1948
John McDonald	June 1950 – October 1952 (855 days) Country
Thomas Hollway	October 1952 (4 days) Electoral Reform
John McDonald	October – December 1952 (48 days) Country
John Cain (senior)	December 1952 – June 1955 (903 days) Labor
Sir Henry Bolte	June 1955 – August 1972 (6288 days) Liberal
Sir Rupert Hamer	August 1972 – June 1981 (3209 days) Liberal
Lindsay Thompson	June 1981 – April 1982 (299 days) Liberal
John Cain (junior)	April 1982 – August 1990 (3047 days) Labor
Joan Kirner	August 1990 – October 1992 (789 days) Labor
Jeff Kennett	October 1992 – October 1999 (2571 days) Liberal–National Coalition
Steve Bracks	October 1999 – Labor

3. Significant Victorian electoral events since 1851

1851	First Legislative Council election.
1856	Victoria becomes the first State in the world to adopt the secret ('Australian') ballot.
1857	All men gain the right to vote and stand for the Legislative Assembly; restrictive property franchise applies to the Legislative Council until 1950.
1870	Payment to members of the Legislative Assembly introduced.
1877-1878	Supply blocked-constitutional crisis.
1891	Labor Party created. First Chief Electoral Inspector appointed.
1899	One man one vote for Legislative Assembly.
1900	First postal vote for Legislative Assembly.
1908	Women get the vote.
1909	Fusion Liberal Party (forerunner of Liberal Party) formed.
1911	Preferential voting for Legislative Assembly.
1913	George Elmslie forms first Labor government.
1916	Labor Party splits over conscription. Victorian Farmers' Union (forerunner of National Party) created.
1921	Preferential voting for Legislative Council.
1923	Women able to run for Parliament. Compulsory enrolment introduced.
1926	Voting for Legislative Assembly compulsory.
1927	Absentee voting for Legislative Assembly.
1933	First woman elected to Legislative Assembly.
1935	Compulsory and absentee voting introduced in Legislative Council elections.
1937	One person one vote for Legislative Council.
1947	Legislative Council refuses supply. Cain Government forced to polls and defeated.
1950	All adults eligible to vote for the Legislative Council-property franchise removed.
1952	Election of first majority Labor government, under John Cain (senior).
1955	Labor splits: Democratic Labor Party (anti-communist) formed in 1958 Beginning of 27 years of Liberal government.
1965	Liberal and Country Party renamed Liberal Party.
1972	Sir Henry Bolte retires after a record 17 years as Premier.
1973	Qualifying age for voting and membership of the Victorian Parliament lowered to 18 years.
1979	First women elected to the Legislative Council.
1982	Election of first Labor government to last more than a term of Parliament, under John Cain (junior). First woman Victorian Cabinet Minister.
	One vote, one value through equal electorates; end of rural weighting.
1984	Terms of Legislative Assembly increased to maximum of 4 years, with a minimum 3 years. 17 year olds able to enrol provisionally.
1990	Joan Kirner becomes Victoria's first woman Premier.
1992	Kennett Liberal-National Party Coalition elected.
1997	Record number of candidates stand for a single electorate (17) at the Mitcham by-election.
1999	Bracks minority Labor Government elected.
2003	Introduction of proportional representation for the Legislative Council and fixed four-year terms for Parliament.
2006	Electronic voting for vision impaired introduced.
2006	Victoria Parliament celebrates its 150th Anniversary.
2006	Record number of candidates for State election (707).

4. Advertising placed by the VEC

The following table shows the media outlets in which the VEC placed advertising for the voter information campaign.

Media type	Metropolitan	Regional/local	Ethnic
Newspapers	The Age	Albury Border Mail	21st Century Chinese Weekly
Herald Sun		Alexandra & Eildon Standard	Ambassador
MX		Ararat Advertiser	An Nahar
		Ballan News	Australian Macedonian Weekly
		Ballarat Courier	Croatian Herald
		Beaufort Pyrenees Advocate	El Telegraph
		Beechworth Ovens/Murray Advertiser	Extra Informativo
		Benalla Ensign	Il Globo
		Bendigo Advertiser	Melbourne China Post
		Bright Alpine Observer	Neos Kosmos
		Buloke Times	Panorama
		Camperdown Chronicle	The Serbian Voice
		Castlemaine Mail	TiVi Tuan-San
		Casterton News	Yeni Vatan
		Cobram Courier	
		Cobden Times	
		Cohuna Farmers Weekly	
		Colac Herald	
		Corryong Courier	
		Daylesford Hepburn Shire Advocate	
		Dimboola Banner	
		East Gippsland News	
		Echuca Riverine Herald	
		Edenhope West Wimmera Advocate	
		Euroa Gazette	
		Foster Toora Mirror	
		Geelong Advertiser	
		Hamilton Spectator	
		Healesville Mountain Views Mail	
		Heathcote McIvor Times	
		Hopetoun Courier	
		Horsham Wimmera Mail-Times	
		Kaniva West Wimmera Messenger	
		Kerang Northern Times	
		Kilmore Free Press	
		Kyabram Free Press	
		Kyneton Midland Express	
		Lakes Entrance Post	
		Latrobe Valley Express	
		Leongatha Great Southern Star	

Media type	Metropolitan	Regional/local	Ethnic
		Lismore Western Plains Advertiser	
		Loddon Times	
		Maldon Tarrangower Times	
		Mansfield Courier	
		Mansfield High Country Times	
		Maryborough Advertiser	
		Mildura Sunraysia Daily	
		Mortlake Dispatch	
		Myrtleford Times	
		Nhill Hindmarsh Messenger	
		Numurkah Leader	
		Orbost Snowy River Mail	
		Ouyen North West Express	
		Pakenham News	
		Phillip Island & San Remo Advertiser	
		Port Fairy Moyne Gazette	
		Portland Observer	
		Rainbow Argus	
		Robinvale Sentinel	
		Rochester Campaspe Valley News	
		St Arnaud North Central News	
		Sale Gippsland Times	
		Sea Lake & Wycheproof Times	
		Seymour Telegraph	
		Shepparton News	
		Stawell Times News	
		Swan Hill Guardian	
		Terang Express	
		Wangaratta Chronicle	
		Warragul Gazette	
		Warracknabeal Herald	
		Warrnambool Standard	
		Weekly Times	
		Wonthaggi South Gippsland Sentinel	
		Yarram Standard News	
		Yarrawonga Chronicle	
		Yea Chronicle	

Media type	Metropolitan	Regional/local	Ethnic	
Radio	101.1 MIX FM	105.7 The River	3CW	
	104.3 Gold FM	3BA/PowerFM Ballarat	3ME 1638AM	
	3AW	3BO FM Bendigo	3RG – Globo (Rete Italia)	
	3FOX FM	3GRR Gippsland	3VNR 1605AM	
	3KND Indigenous Radio	3MA Mildura	3XY – Radio Hellas	
	3RPH – Print Handicapped	3SR Shepparton / SUN FM	3ZZZ	
	Magic 693	3 STAR FM Bendigo	SBS Radio	
	3MMM FM	3TR Gippsland / Latrobe Valley		
	Nova 100.3 FM	3YB Warrnambool		
	Vega 91.5	KRock 95.5FM Geelong		
	Television	ATV10	Prime Mildura	
		GTV9	Prime Victoria	
		HSV7	Ten Victoria	
SBS TV		WIN TV Mildura		
		WIN TV Victoria		
Magazines	Beat	Forte		
	Fifty Plus News			
	In Press			
	Stuff			
	Victorian Senior			

5. Sample advertisements

Changed address, turned 18 or just not on the roll?

Enrolment for the Victorian State Election closes Tuesday 7 November 2006.



To vote at the Victorian State election on Saturday 25 November 2006 you need to be correctly enrolled. Enrol now if you're an Australian citizen aged 18 or over and you are not enrolled. Update your enrolment if you've changed your permanent residential address or other details. Electoral law requires that you be enrolled at your permanent address to be able to vote. Enrolling is compulsory. However, if you have never enrolled or have let your details lapse, you will not be penalised if you enrol for this election. To enrol or update your enrolment, pick up an enrolment form at any post office, Coles or BI-LO supermarket, download one from our website www.13vote.com.au, or call **13 VOTE (13 86 83)** and a form will be sent to you. Post or fax (**9277 7126**) the completed form immediately. Remember, to make sure your vote helps shape Victoria, your enrolment form must reach an electoral office within Victoria before **8.00pm on Tuesday 7 November**.

Enquiries **13 VOTE (13 86 83)** or www.13vote.com.au
Call 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:

• **ИМП/К** 9209 0190 Amharic • **عربي** 9209 0100 Arabic • **Bosanski** 9209 0191 Bosnian • **ខ្មែរ** 9209 0192 Cambodian • **粵語** 9209 0101 Chinese (Cantonese)
• **Hrvatski** 9209 0102 Croatian • **عربي** 9209 0193 Dari • **Ελληνικά** 9209 0103 Greek • **Italiano** 9209 0104 Italian • **한국어** 9209 0194 Korean
• **Македонски** 9209 0105 Macedonian • **普通话** 9209 0106 Chinese (Mandarin) • **فارسی** 9209 0195 Persian • **Русский** 9209 0196 Russian
• **Српски** 9209 0107 Serbian • **Soomaali** 9209 0108 Somali • **Español** 9209 0109 Spanish • **Türkçe** 9209 0110 Turkish • **Việt ngữ** 9209 0111 Vietnamese
• All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY : 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).

Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

GREY/ELC0183

Every vote will shape Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission 

Early enrolment

Victorian State Election

I have received writs from Professor David de Kretser, AC, Governor of Victoria, issued on 31 October 2006, for the general election of eighty-eight members of the Legislative Assembly and forty members of the Legislative Council.

The writs specify the following dates for the election:

Close of the rolls: 8.00pm Tuesday 7 November 2006

Close of nominations: 12 noon Friday 10 November 2006

Election day: Saturday 25 November 2006

Return of the writs: on or before Saturday 16 December 2006

Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

GREY/ELC0178

Victorian Electoral Commission  Every vote will shape Victoria.

Issue of writs

Election Managers.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Bayswater District
Leonie Taylor
1/21 Barry Street
BAYSWATER
Tel 9720 3125

Box Hill District
See Mitcham District

Bulleen District
See Eltham District

Doncaster District
See Eltham District

Eltham District
Katrina Williams
Showroom 1,
256 Bolton Street
ELTHAM
Tel 9439 3113

Ferntree Gully District
See Bayswater District

Forest Hill District
See Mitcham District

Kilsyth District
See Warrandyte District

Mitcham District
Judy Tickner
Level 2,
29-33 Railway Road
BLACKBURN
Tel 9894 1528

Scoresby District
See Bayswater District

Warrandyte District
Hugh MacCartney
27 New Street
RINDWOOD
Tel 9870 4179

Eastern Victoria Region

Bass District
See Narracan District

Evelyn District
Alistair Lee-Archer
1/28 John Street
LILYDALE
Tel 9737 6478

Gembrook District
Bob Neal
Showroom 7,
Beaconsfield
Business Park
2 Beaconsfield
EMERALD ROAD
BEACONSFIELD
Tel 9707 0581

Gippsland East District
Sandra Wood
83 Main Street
BAIRNSDALE
Tel 5152 4109

Gippsland South District
See Morwell District

Hastings District
See Mornington District

Morbark District
See Gembrook District

Mornington District
Julie Allan
22 Main Street
MORNINGTON
Tel 5975 8033

Morwell District
Alan Bright
173 Princes Drive
MORWELL
Tel 5134 2846

Narracan District
Geoff Williamson
2/155 Queen Street
WARRAGUL
Tel 5623 3618

Nepean District
See Mornington District

Northern Metropolitan Region

Broadmeadows District
Helen Delves
2/485 Cooper Street
CAMPBELLFIELD
Tel 9308 5440

Brunswick District
See Melbourne District

Bundoora District
See Mill Park District

Ivanhoe District
See Northcote District

Melbourne District
Bill Lang
Level 9/505 Little
Collins Street
MELBOURNE
Tel 9614 6177

Mill Park District
Olive Nelms
17 Macquarie Drive
THOMASTOWN
Tel 9464 1544

Northcote District
Robb Mason
192 High Street
NORTHCOOTE
Tel 9482 5316

Preston District
See Northcote District

Richmond District
See Melbourne District

Thomastown District
See Broadmeadows District

Yan Yean District
See Mill Park District

Northern Victoria Region

Benalla District
Dianne McMillan
78 Sydney Road
BENALLA
Tel 5762 7183

Benambra District
Gwen Howard
Office 1,
103 Hume Street
WODONGA
Tel (02) 6024 2011

Bendigo East District
See Bendigo West District

Bendigo West District
Tony McDowell
96-98 Pall Mall
BENDIGO
Tel 5443 6077

Macedon District
Michael Sullivan
Shop 2,
33 Hamilton Street
GISBORNE
Tel 5420 7504

Mildura District
Trevor Leighton
Firestation Arcade
Langtree Avenue
MILDURA
Tel 5021 0677

Murray Valley District
Elaine Broadway
27-29 Faithfull Street
WANGARATTA
Tel 5721 4088

Rodney District
See Shepparton District

Seymour District
John Manley
Old State Offices
28 High Street
SEYMOUR
Tel 5792 4136

Shepparton District
Lindsay Mitchell
456 Wynham Street
SHEPPARTON
Tel 5821 0166

Swan Hill District

Mardi Messer
261 Beveridge Street
SWAN HILL
Tel 5032 5941

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Carrum District
See Frankston District

Clayton District
Brian Ritchie
2/200 Wellington Road
CLAYTON
Tel 9560 3623

Cranebourne District
See Frankston District

Dandenong District
Bill Irvine
Level 6,
280 Thomas Street
DANDENONG
Tel 9791 7293

Frankston District
David Triplov
Chisholm Institute,
Frankston Campus
Level 2,
4 Baxter Street
FRANKSTON
Tel 9783 7122

Lyndhurst District
See Morialloc District

Mordialloc District
Shirley Bean
Level 5,
1230 Nepean Hwy
CHELTENHAM
Tel 9583 6139

Mount Waverley District
See Clayton District

Mulgrave District
See Clayton District

Narre Warren North District
See Dandenong District

Narre Warren South District
See Dandenong District

Southern Metropolitan Region

Albert Park District
See Caulfield District

Bentleigh District
See Sandringham District

Brighton District
See Sandringham District

Burwood District
Ron Ritchie
1/115-21
Huntingdale Road
BURWOOD
Tel 9889 8107

Caulfield District
Anne Wettenhall
481 Glenhurst Road
ELSTERNWICK
Tel 9523 6450

Hawthorn District
See Kew District

Kew District
Peter Panayiotou
37 Burwood Road
HAWTHORN
Tel 9818 2657

Malvern District
See Burwood District

Oakleigh District
See Burwood District

Prairies District
See Caulfield District

Sandringham District
Patricia Buchanan
1 Beaumaris Parade
SANDRINGHAM
Tel 9555 3627

Western Metropolitan Region

Altona District
See Tarnet District

Derimut District
See Footscray District

Essendon District
Geoff Plover
Level 7/641-649
Mt Alexander Road
MOONEE PONDS
Tel 9326 0021

Footscray District
Heather Oke
44 Leander Street
FOOTSCRAY
Tel 9687 0477

Keller District
See Yuroke District

Kororoit District
See Footscray District

Niddrie District
See Essendon District

Pascoe Vale District
See Essendon District

Tarnet District
Mary Noonan
107 Elm Park Drive
HOPPERS CROSSING
Tel 8742 2899

Williamstown District
See Tarnet District

Yuroke District
Jeff Robinson
2/21 Flight Drive
TULLAMARINE
Tel 8336 1165

Western Victoria Region

Ballarat East District
See Ballarat West District

Ballarat West District
Ray Martin
Shop 1 Creswick
Plaza, Creswick Road
BALLARAT
Tel 5333 2026

Bellarine District
Eon Macaulay
Unit 2,
114 Bellarine Highway
NEWCOMB
Tel 5248 1933

Geelong District
John Egan
Geelong Catholic
Regional College
152-154 Yarra Street
GEELONG
Tel 5223 1299

Lara District
See Geelong District

Lowan District
Tony Preston
39 Urquhart Street
HORSHAM
Tel 5382 0105

Melton District
Doug Lindsay
Bacchus Marsh Village
Shopping Centre
Shop 43,
cnr Main Young and
Bennett Streets
BACCHUS MARSH
Tel 5367 0562

Powartha District
Elizabeth Reeves
52A Rae Street
COLAC
Tel 5231 5065

Ripon District
Robyn Walker
60 Nolan Street
MARYBOROUGH
Tel 5460 5907

South Barwon District
See Bellarine District

South-West Coast District
Lynda Beeshtof
185 Fairy Street
WARRNAMBOOL
Tel 5560 5275



Information for candidates.

Nominations are now open for the 2006 Victorian State Election.

Candidates who are not endorsed by a registered political party must nominate with the appropriate election manager. The election manager will supply a Candidate's Kit, which includes a nomination form. Nominations close at 12 noon, Friday 10 November. Late nominations cannot be accepted. The VEC will conduct an information session for intending non-party candidates at 2.00pm on

Sunday 5 November at the Victorian Electoral Commission, Ground Floor, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne.

Registered political parties must nominate candidates at the VEC, Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne. Nominations for party candidates close at 12 noon, Thursday 9 November. Late nominations cannot be accepted.

Additional information for Upper House candidates.

Candidates for the Upper House (Legislative Council) can nominate with any election manager within their region.

Two or more candidates who have nominated for the Upper House may request that their names be

grouped on the ballot paper. Group requests must be received at the Victorian Electoral Commission by 12 noon, Thursday 9 November.

Group voting tickets must be lodged with the VEC by 12 noon, Sunday 12 November.

How-to-vote cards.

If a person or organisation intends to distribute how-to-vote cards on election day, Saturday 25 November, the cards must be registered by the VEC.

Registered how-to-vote cards are the only form of printed electoral material that may be distributed within 400 metres of a voting centre on election day (penalties apply).

The period for submitting how-to-vote cards for registration is Monday 13 November to 12 noon,

Friday 17 November.

Organisations or individuals other than registered political parties may submit how-to-vote cards to any election manager.

Registered political parties should submit all their how-to-vote cards for registration to the VEC, Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne.

How-to-vote cards submitted after noon on Friday 17 November cannot be considered.

For more information: call the election manager in the electorate where you intend to nominate or distribute how-to-vote cards.

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:
 • 阿拉伯文 9209 0190 Amharic • العربية 9209 0100 Arabic • Bosanski 9209 0191 Bosnian • ខ្មែរ 9209 0192 Cambodian • 粵語 9209 0101 Chinese (Cantonese)
 • Hrvatski 9209 0102 Croatian • داری 9209 0193 Dari • Ελληνικά 9209 0103 Greek • Italiano 9209 0104 Italian • 한국어 9209 0194 Korean
 • Македонски 9209 0105 Macedonian • 普通话 9209 0106 Chinese (Mandarin) • فارسی 9209 0195 Persian • Русский 9209 0106 Russian
 • Српски 9209 0107 Serbian • Soomaali 9209 0108 Somali • Español 9209 0109 Spanish • Türkçe 9209 0110 Turkish • Việt-ngữ 9209 0111 Vietnamese
 • All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY : 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).

Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

GREVELD0177 HS

Every vote will shape Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission **VEC**



Last chance to enrol to vote.

If you've changed address, turned 18 or if you're just not on the roll, you must update your enrolment by **8pm this Tuesday.**

To vote at the Victorian State election on Saturday 25 November 2006 you need to be correctly enrolled.

Enrol now if you're an Australian citizen aged 18 or over and you are not enrolled. Update your enrolment if you've changed your permanent residential address or other details.

Electoral law requires that you be enrolled at your permanent address to be able to vote.

Enrolling is compulsory. However, if you have never enrolled or have let your details lapse, you will not be penalised if you enrol for this election.

To enrol or update your enrolment, you will need to go to one of the offices listed here.

Remember, every vote will shape Victoria. To make sure your vote does, your enrolment form must reach an electoral office within Victoria before **8.00pm on Tuesday 7 November.**

Enquiries 13 VOTE (13 86 83) or www.13vote.com.au
Call 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:

- ግንባር 9209 0190 Amharic • عربي 9209 0100 Arabic • Босански 9209 0191 Bosnian • ខ្មែរ 9209 0192 Cambodian • 粵語 9209 0101 Chinese (Cantonese)
- Hrvatski 9209 0102 Croatian • ڪري 9209 0183 Dari • Ελληνικά 9209 0103 Greek • Italiano 9209 0104 Italian • 한국어 9209 0194 Korean
- Македонски 9209 0105 Macedonian • 普通话 9209 0106 Chinese (Mandarin) • فارسی 9209 0195 Persian • Русский 9209 0106 Russian
- Српски 9209 0107 Serbian • Soomali 9209 0108 Somali • Español 9209 0109 Spanish • Türkçe 9209 0110 Turkish • Việt-ngữ 9209 0111 Vietnamese
- All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY: 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).

Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

Where to enrol on the spot.

- Bacchus Marsh** VEC Election Office
Bacchus Marsh Village Shopping Centre
Shop 43, cnr Main Young and Bennett Sts
- Bairnsdale** VEC Election Office
83 Main Street
- Ballarat** VEC Election Office
Shop 1, Creswick Plaza, Creswick Road
- Ballarat** AEC Office – Division of Ballarat
58 Doveton Street North
- Bayswater** VEC Election Office
1/21 Barry Street
- Beaconsfield** VEC Election Office
Showroom 7 Beaconsfield Business Park
2 Beaconsfield Emerald Road
- Benalla** VEC Election Office
78 Sydney Road
- Bendigo** AEC Office – Division of Bendigo
371 Hargreaves Street
- Blackburn** VEC Election Office
Level 2, 29 Railway Road
- Boronia** AEC Office – Division of La Trobe
1st Floor, 252 Dorset Road
- Burwood** VEC Election Office
11/15-21 Huntingdale Road
- Camberwell** AEC Office – Division of Kooyong
2nd Floor, 695 Burke Road
- Campbellfield** VEC Election Office
2/485 Cooper Street
- Cheltenham** VEC Election Office
Level 5, 1230 Nepean Hwy
- Cheltenham** AEC Office – Division of Isaacs
Suite 4, 350 Charman Road
- Clayton** VEC Election Office
2/200 Wellington Road
- Colac** AEC Office – Division of Corangamite
55 Dennis Street
- Dandenong** AEC Office – Division of Holt
147-151 Foster Street
- Elsternwick** VEC Election Office
481 Glenhenty Road
- Eltham** VEC Election Office
Showroom 1, 256 Bolton Street
- Footscray** VEC Election Office
44 Leander Street
- Frankston** AEC Office – Division of Dunkley
Commonwealth Centre,
cnr Young and Davey Streets
- Geelong** VEC Election Office
152-154 Yarra Street
- Geelong** AEC Office – Division of Corio
52 Brougham Street
- Gisborne** VEC Election Office
Shop 2, 33 Hamilton Street
- Glenroy** AEC Office – Division of Wills
Shop 4, 830 Pascoe Vale Road
- Greensborough** AEC Office – Division of Scullin
Level 1, 9-13 Flintoff Street
- Hastings** AEC Office – Division of Flinders
Shop 3, 82 High Street
- Hawthorn** VEC Election Office
37 Burwood Road
- Heidelberg** AEC Office – Division of Jagajaga
65 Burgundy Street
- Highton** VEC Election Office
1 Beaumaris Parade
- Hoppers Crossing** VEC Election Office
107 Elm Park Drive
- Horsham** VEC Election Office
39 Urquhart Street
- Lilydale** VEC Election Office
1/28 John Street
- Malvern** AEC Office – Division of Higgins
1343 Malvern Road
- Maryborough** VEC Election Office
60 Nolan Street
- Melbourne** VEC Election Office
Level 9, 505 Little Collins Street
- Melbourne** AEC Office – Division of Melbourne
Ground Floor, Casselden Place
2 Lonsdale Street
- Mildura** AEC Office – Division of Mallee
Hazelgrove House, 122 Ninth Street
- Moonee Ponds** VEC Election Office
Level 7, 641-649 Mt Alexander Road
- Moonee Ponds** AEC Office – Division of Maribymong
4 Homer Street
- Mornington** VEC Election Office
22 Main Street
- Morwell** VEC Election Office
173 Princes Drive
- Mulgrave** AEC Office – Division of Bruce
5/1-3 Compark Circuit
- Newcomb** VEC Election Office
Unit 2/114 Bellarine Highway
- Northcote** VEC Election Office
19/2 High Street
- Oakleigh** AEC Office – Division of Hotham
3rd Floor, Commonwealth Centre
20-22 Atherton Road
- Ringwood** AEC Office – Division of Casey
41-43 Ringwood Street
- St Albans** AEC Office – Division of Gorton
348A Main Road West
- Sale** AEC Office – Division of Gippsland
79-91 Raymond Street
- Sandringham** AEC Office – Division of Goldstein
24 Bay Road
- Seymour** AEC Office – Division of McEwen
Shop 4, 30 Wallis Street
- Shepparton** AEC Office – Division of Murray
37/379 Wyndham Street
- Sunbury** AEC Office – Division of Calwell
16 Brook Street
- Sunshine** AEC Office – Division of Gellibrand
Shop 2, 304 Hampshire Road
- Swan Hill** VEC Election Office
261 Beveridge Street
- Thomastown** VEC Election Office
17 Macquarie Drive
- Thornbury** AEC Office – Division of Batman
602 High Street
- Tullamarine** VEC Election Office
2/21 Flight Drive
- Wangaratta** AEC Office – Division of Indi
Shop 3, 31 Ely Street
- Warrnambool South** AEC Office – Division of Aston
Level 2, 420 Burwood Hwy
- Warragul** AEC Office – Division of McMillan
Shop 4, 76 Smith Street
- Warrnambool** AEC Office – Division of Wannon
100 Kepler Street
- Werribee** AEC Office – Division of Lalor
Level 2, 75-79 Watton Street
- Wodonga** VEC Election Office
Office 1, 103 Hume Street

Full wheelchair access
 Access with assistance

GREY/ELC0184

Every vote will shape Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission



If you can't vote on 25 November you can still shape Victoria.

How you can vote in person or by post before election day.

Election day is Saturday 25 November 2006. If you can't get to a voting centre on election day, there are two ways you can vote in advance.

In person: you can vote at any Early Voting Centre listed below between 8.30am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday (also on Saturday 18 November between 9.00am and 2.00pm and until 8.00pm on Thursday 23 November).

By post: you can pick up a postal vote application form at any post office, download one from www.13vote.com.au or phone **13 VOTE (13 86 83)** and we'll send you one.

Mail or fax your correctly completed application immediately and we will mail you your ballot papers. Post your completed ballot papers promptly. Ballot papers posted after 6.00pm on Saturday, 25 November 2006 cannot be counted.

Voting if you are going interstate or overseas.

If you will be outside Victoria on election day, you can vote before you leave or while you're away.

Before you leave: you can vote by post or in person as described above.

Melbourne Airport: you can vote at Melbourne Airport between 8.30am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday (also

on Saturday 18 November between 9.00am and 2.00pm and until 8.00pm on Thursday 23 November).

While you're away: you can vote interstate or overseas. For locations visit www.13vote.com.au or call **13 VOTE (13 86 83)**.

Enquiries **13 VOTE (13 86 83)** or www.13vote.com.au
Call 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 2.00pm this Saturday.

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:
 • **العربية** 9209 0190 Arabic • **بوسني** 9209 0100 Bosnian • **Босански** 9209 0191 Bosnian • **ខ្មែរ** 9209 0192 Cambodian • **普通话** 9209 0101 Chinese (Cantonese)
 • **Нрвски** 9209 0102 Croatian • **عربي** 9209 0193 Dari • **Ελληνικά** 9209 0103 Greek • **Italiano** 9209 0104 Italian • **한국어** 9209 0194 Korean
 • **Македонски** 9209 0105 Macedonian • **普通话** 9209 0106 Chinese (Mandarin) • **فارسی** 9209 0195 Persian • **Русский** 9209 0196 Russian
 • **Српски** 9209 0107 Serbian • **Soomaali** 9209 0108 Somali • **Español** 9209 0109 Spanish • **Türkçe** 9209 0110 Turkish • **Việt-ngữ** 9209 0111 Vietnamese
 * All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY : 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).
 Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

Where to vote in person.

- Albert Park** 185 Victoria Avenue
- Altona** 51A Blyth Street
- Ararat** 226-230 Barkly Street
- Bacchus Marsh** Bacchus Marsh Village Shopping Centre, Shop 43, corner Main Young and Bennett Streets
- Bairnsdale** 83 Main Street
- Ballarat E Centre** Vision Australia Ballarat, 1300 Howitt Street (corner Lake Street), Wendouree
- Ballarat** Shop 1 Creswick Plaza, Creswick Road
- Bayswater** 1/21 Barry Street
- Beaconsfield** Showroom 7, Beaconsfield Business Park, 2 Beaconsfield Emerald Road
- Benalla** 78 Sydney Road
- Bendigo** 96-98 Pall Mall
- Bentleigh East** Room 32, Central Wing, Moorleigh Community Village, 90-92 Bignell Road
- Blackburn** Level 2, 29-33 Railway Road
- Bulleen** Suite 2 Lower Ground Bulleen Plaza, 79-109 Manningham Road
- Burwood** 11/15-21 Huntingdale Road
- Campbellfield** 2/485 Cooper Street
- Chelsea** Shop 10, 450 Nepean Hwy
- Cheltenham** Level 5/1230 Nepean Hwy
- Clayton** 2/200 Wellington Road
- Cotac** 52A Rae Street
- Cranbourne** 1 New Holland Drive
- Croydon** 3/12-14 Thomas Brew Lane
- Dandenong** Level 6/280 Thomas Street
- Deer Park** 775 Ballarat Road
- Echuca** 501 High Street
- Elsternwick** 481 Glenhurlty Road
- Eltham** Showroom 1, 256 Bolton Street
- Ferntree Gully** Shop 1, 115 Station Street
- Footscray** 44 Leander Street
- Frankston** Chisholm Institute, Frankston Campus Level 2, 4 Baxter Street
- Geelong** Geelong Catholic Regional College 152-154 Yarra Street
- Greensborough** 9-13 Flintoff Street
- Gisborne** Shop 2, 33 Hamilton Street
- Hallam** Unit 3, 261 Princes Hwy
- Hamilton** Hamilton Plaza, 73 Brown Street
- Hastings** Shop 3, 97 High Street
- Hawthorn** 37 Burwood Road
- Heidelberg North E Centre** Olympic Leisure Centre, 15 Alamein Road, Heidelberg West
- Highbett** 1 Beaumaris Parade
- Hoppers Crossing** 107 Elm Park Drive
- Horsham** 39 Urquhart Street
- Kooyong E Centre** Vision Australia Kooyong, 454 Glenferrie Road
- Lilydale** 1/28 John Street
- Maryborough** 60 Nolan Street
- Melbourne** Australian Electoral Commission Casselden Place 2 Lonsdale Street
- Melbourne Election Office** Ground Floor, 505 Little Collins Street
- Melbourne E Centre** Melbourne Town Hall, corner Swanston and Collins Streets
- Mildura** Firestation Arcade, Langtree Avenue
- Moonee Ponds** Level 7/641-649 Mt Alexander Road
- Mornington** 22 Main Street
- Morwell** 173 Princes Drive
- Newcomb** Unit 2/114 Bellarine Highway
- Northcote** 192 High Street
- Ocean Grove** 24 Hodgson Street
- Portland** 44 Percy Street
- Ringwood** 27 New Street
- Rosebud** 7B Wannanue Place
- Sale** 4/201 York Street
- Seymour** Old State Offices, 28 High Street
- Shepparton** 456 Wyndham Street
- Shepparton E Centre** Vision Australia Shepparton, corner Archer Street and Channel Road
- Sunbury** Shop 9, 92 Evans Street
- Swan Hill** 261 Beveridge Street
- Syndal** 613-615 High Street
- Thomastown** VEC Election Office 17 Macquarie Drive
- Thomastown** Thomastown Library, 52 Main Street
- Tullamarine** 2/21 Flight Drive
- Tullamarine Airport** International Departure Lounge
- Wangaratta** 27-29 Faithful Street
- Warragul** 2/155 Queen Street
- Warragul E Centre** Vision Australia, 2A Mountz Street
- Warrnambool** 185 Fairy Street
- Wheeters Hill** Shop 33, Wheelers Hill Shopping Centre, 190-200 Jells Road
- Whitfesa** 17 Church Street
- Wodonga** Office 1, 103 Hume Street
- Wonthaggi** Shop 10 Westend Arcade, 152 Graham Street
- Yarrawonga** 25 McNally Street

Full wheelchair access
 Access with assistance

GREVEL00187

Every vote will shape Victoria.

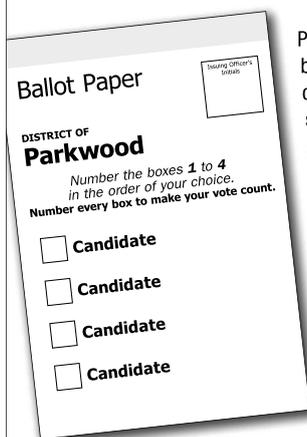
Victorian Electoral Commission **VEC**

Voting before election day

How to vote correctly this Saturday.

For your vote to shape Victoria at this State election, Saturday 25 November 2006, you must fill out your ballot papers correctly. On election day you'll be given two ballot papers, a small ballot paper for the Lower House (Legislative Assembly) and a large ballot paper for the Upper House (Legislative Council).

Small ballot paper for the Lower House



Put the number **1** in the box next to the name of the candidate you most want to see elected, then number ALL the other boxes in order of your preference.

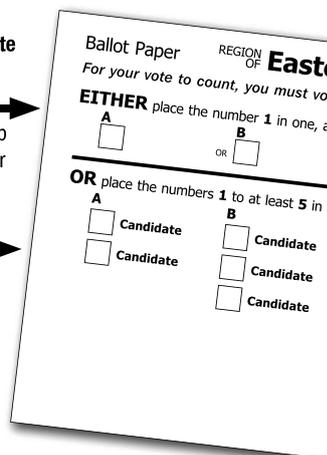
Remember, number all the boxes on the small ballot paper.

Large ballot paper for the Upper House

For the Upper House you can vote in two ways.

Either →
Vote for your preferred party or group of candidates by placing the number **1** in just one of the squares above the line.

Or →
Vote for individual candidates below the line by numbering a minimum of 5 squares in order of your preferences 1 to 5. You may continue numbering more than 5 if you wish.



Voting centres open 8.00am to 6.00pm on Saturday 25 November.

Enquiries 13 VOTE (13 86 83) or www.13vote.com.au

Call 8.30am to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 6.00pm Saturday (election day)

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:
 • ግምገማያ 9209 0190 Amharic • العربية 9209 0100 Arabic • Bosanski 9209 0191 Bosnian • ខ្មែរ 9209 0192 Cambodian • 粵語 9209 0101 Chinese (Cantonese)
 • Hrvatski 9209 0102 Croatian • داري 9209 0193 Dari • Ελληνικά 9209 0103 Greek • Italiano 9209 0104 Italian • 한국어 9209 0194 Korean
 • Македонски 9209 0105 Macedonian • 國語 9209 0106 Chinese (Mandarin) • فارسی 9209 0195 Persian • Русский 9209 0196 Russian
 • Српски 9209 0107 Serbian • Soomaali 9209 0108 Somali • Español 9209 0109 Spanish • Türkçe 9209 0110 Turkish • Việt-ngữ 9209 0111 Vietnamese
 • All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY : 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).
 Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner,
 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

GREY/EL00161

Every vote will shape Victoria.

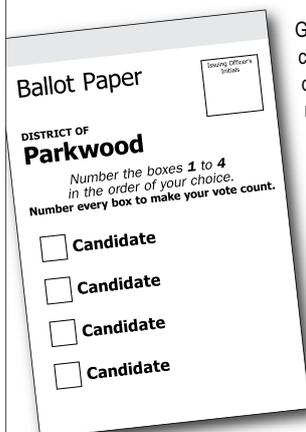
Victorian Electoral Commission

Cách bỏ phiếu đúng thể lệ vào Thứ Bảy này.

Muốn lá phiếu của mình góp phần xây dựng Tiểu Bang Victoria trong kỳ bầu cử lần này vào Thứ Bảy ngày 25 tháng Mười Một năm 2006, quý vị phải điền phiếu bầu đúng thể lệ.

Vào ngày bầu cử, quý vị sẽ được trao hai lá phiếu, một lá phiếu nhỏ để bầu Viện Dưới (Hạ Viện) và một lá phiếu lớn để bầu Viện Trên (Thượng Viện).

Lá phiếu nhỏ để bầu Hạ Viện



Ghi số **1** vào ô vuông nằm cạnh tên của ứng cử viên mà quý vị muốn được đắc cử nhất, rồi ghi số vào TẤT CẢ những ô vuông còn lại theo thứ tự quý vị tùy chọn.

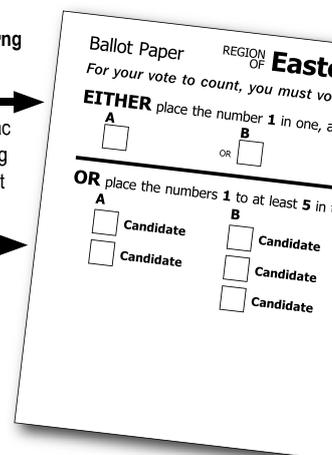
Xin nhớ ghi số vào tất cả các ô vuông trong lá phiếu nhỏ.

Lá phiếu lớn để bầu Thượng Viện

Quý vị có thể bỏ phiếu cho Thượng Viện theo hai cách.

Hoặc →
Bỏ phiếu cho đảng chính trị hoặc nhóm ứng cử viên được quý vị ủng hộ bằng cách ghi số **1** vào chỉ một ô vuông trên lần vạch mà thôi.

Hoặc →
Bỏ phiếu cho từng ứng cử viên được liệt kê dưới lần vạch bằng cách ghi số vào ít nhất 5 ô vuông theo thứ tự quý vị tùy chọn từ 1 đến 5. Quý vị có thể tiếp tục ghi số cho nhiều hơn 5 ứng cử viên nếu muốn.



Các trung tâm bỏ phiếu mở cửa từ 8g sáng đến 6g tối vào Thứ Bảy ngày 25 tháng Mười Một.

Mọi thắc mắc xin liên I.c 13 VOTE (13 86 83) hoặc www.13vote.com.au

Gọi từ 8g30 sáng đến 7g30 tối Thứ Hai đến Thứ Sáu và từ 8g sáng đến 6g tối Thứ Bảy (ngày bầu cử)

Muốn biết thông tin bằng Việt Ng, xin gọi số 9209 0111

TTY : 9299 0570 (Điện thoại Đánh chữ dành cho người khiếm thính/nặng tai). Cửa S. H. Tully, Ủy Viên Đặc Trách Tuyển Cử, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

GREVELCO190

Mỗi lá phiếu sẽ góp phần quyết định tương lai của tiểu bang Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission

Voting correctly (Vietnamese)

Where to vote on Saturday, 25 November.

Where to vote in the Victorian State Election.

Local voting centres are listed here. It is easiest to vote in your own District but if you will not be in your District to vote on election day, you can cast an absent vote at any other voting centre in Victoria. There is a complete list of voting centres available at the

Victorian Electoral Commission website, www.13vote.com.au

Remember, voting is compulsory.

POLWARTH DISTRICT

Alvie

Alvie Public Hall, 1140 Corangamite Lake Rd

Apollo Bay

Apollo Bay Leisure Centre, Costin Street

Beeac

Beeac Primary School, Lang Street

Birregurra

Birregurra Mechanics Hall, Main Street

Camperdown

Camperdown P-12 College, Wilson Street

Carlisle River

Carlisle River Public Hall, Gellibrand River Rd

Carpentait

Carpentait Public Hall,
cnr Ansons and Carpentait-Bungador Roads

Cobden

Cobden Civic Hall, cnr Victoria & Silvester Sts

Colac

Bluewater Fitness Centre, 118-134 Hearn St

Colac East

Colac Primary School Activity Centre,
Murray St East (enter from Lyons St), Colac

Colac West

Colac High School, Murray Street, Colac

Cororooke

Cororooke Public Hall, Lake Corangamite Rd

Cressy

Cressy Primary School, 17 Yarima Road

Deans Marsh

Deans Marsh Public Hall, Pennyroyal Valley Rd

Derrinallum

Derrinallum Community Hall, Main Street

Ecklin

Ecklin Hall, Timboon-Terang Road

Elliminyt

Elliminyt Primary School,
cnr Slater Street and Main Road

Forrest

Forrest Primary School, 10 Grant Street

Gellibrand River

Gellibrand Hall, Colac-Lavers Hill Road,
Gellibrand

Irrewillipe East

Irrewillipe Public Hall, 2470 Irrewillipe Road,
Irrewillipe

Lavers Hill

Lavers Hill Public Hall, 47 Great Ocean Road

Lismore

Lismore Primary School, 77 William Street

Lorne

Lorne Senior Citizens Centre, Mountjoy Pde

Mortlake

Mortlake RSL Hall,
cnr Shaw and Townsend Streets

Noorat

Noorat Primary School,
Noorat McKinnons Bridge Road

Peterborough

Peterborough Golf Club, 20 Schomberg Road

Port Campbell

Port Campbell Baptist Church, Lord Street

Simpson

Simpson Primary School, Princetown Road

Terang

Terang Civic Hall, High Street

Timboon

Timboon Grade Prep to 12 School,
Hamilton Street

Warrion

Warrion Public Hall, Coragulac-Beeac Road

Winchelsea

Winchelsea Senior Citizens Centre,
36 Harding Street

Wiridijil

Wiridijil Hall, Princetown Road,
b/w Melrose and Boorook Rds, Cooriemungle

Wurdi Boluc

Wurdi Hall, 220 Wurdi Hall Road,
Winchelsea South

RIPON DISTRICT

Skipton

Skipton Mechanics Institute,
5 Anderson Street

 Full wheelchair access

 Access with assistance

Voting centres open 8.00am to 6.00pm on Saturday, 25 November.

Enquiries 13 VOTE (13 86 83) or www.13vote.com.au

Call between 8.30am and 7.30pm Monday to Friday.

TTY: 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired.) Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

ELC0213

Every vote will shape Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission 

VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION GUIDE



Vote today and help shape Victoria.

When you go to vote you'll be given two ballot papers, a small ballot paper for the Lower House (Legislative Assembly) and a large ballot paper for the Upper House (Legislative Council). Read the instructions carefully.

Voting for the Lower House (small ballot paper)

Put the number **[1]** in the box next to the name of the candidate of your first choice, then number ALL the other boxes in order of your preference. Remember, number all the boxes on the smaller ballot paper.

Voting for the Upper House (large ballot paper)

For the Upper House you can:

Either - Vote above the line

Vote for your preferred party or group of candidates by placing the number **[1]** in just one of the squares above the line;

Or - Vote below the line

Vote for individual candidates below the line by numbering a minimum of 5 squares in order of your preferences 1 to 5. You may continue numbering more than 5 if you wish.

Where to vote.

Voting centres for all Districts are listed in the following pages. It is easiest to vote in your own District but if you will not be in your District to vote today, you can cast an absent vote at any other voting centre in Victoria. For electors leaving or returning to Victoria today, voting facilities are available at the international departure terminal at Melbourne Airport and the check-in terminal at Avalon Airport.

Voting is compulsory.

Voting centres open 8.00am to 6.00pm today

Enquiries 13 VOTE (13 86 83) or www.13vote.com.au

Call between 8.00am and 6.00pm today

For enquiries in languages other than English call our interpreting service:

- **Arabic** 9209 0190
- **Arabic** 9209 0100
- **Arabic** 9209 0190
- **Bosnian** 9209 0191
- **Bosnian** 9209 0191
- **Bosnian** 9209 0191
- **Chinese (Cantonese)** 9209 0191
- **Chinese (Cantonese)** 9209 0191
- **Chinese (Cantonese)** 9209 0191
- **Croatian** 9209 0102
- **Croatian** 9209 0102
- **Croatian** 9209 0102
- **Dari** 9209 0193
- **Dari** 9209 0193
- **Dari** 9209 0193
- **Greek** 9209 0103
- **Greek** 9209 0103
- **Greek** 9209 0103
- **Italian** 9209 0104
- **Italian** 9209 0104
- **Italian** 9209 0104
- **Korean** 9209 0194
- **Korean** 9209 0194
- **Korean** 9209 0194
- **Macedonian** 9209 0105
- **Macedonian** 9209 0105
- **Macedonian** 9209 0105
- **Persian** 9209 0195
- **Persian** 9209 0195
- **Persian** 9209 0195
- **Russian** 9209 0196
- **Russian** 9209 0196
- **Russian** 9209 0196
- **Serbian** 9209 0107
- **Serbian** 9209 0107
- **Serbian** 9209 0107
- **Somali** 9209 0108
- **Somali** 9209 0108
- **Somali** 9209 0108
- **Spanish** 9209 0110
- **Spanish** 9209 0110
- **Spanish** 9209 0110
- **Turkish** 9209 0111
- **Turkish** 9209 0111
- **Turkish** 9209 0111
- **Vietnamese** 9209 0112
- **Vietnamese** 9209 0112
- **Vietnamese** 9209 0112
- All other non-English languages 9209 0112

TTY : 9299 0570 (Telephone typewriter for the hearing impaired).

Authorised by S. H. Tully, Electoral Commissioner, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000.

E Centres

E Centres are operating at the following locations. These centres have electronic voting facilities for vision impaired electors in addition to voting facilities for all electors.

- **Ballarat Vision Australia E Centre** ☺
Vision Australia Ballarat, 1300 Howitt Street (cnr Lake Street), Wendouree
- **Heidelberg North E Centre** ☺
Olympic Leisure Centre, 15 Alamein Road, Heidelberg West
- **Kooyong Vision Australia E Centre** ☺
Vision Australia Kooyong, 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong
- **Melbourne Town Hall E Centre** ☺
Melbourne Town Hall, cnr Swanton and Collins Streets, Melbourne
- **Shepparton Vision Australia E Centre** ☺
Vision Australia Shepparton, cnr Archer Street and Channel Road, Shepparton
- **Warragul Vision Australia E Centre** ☺
Vision Australia, 2A Mourtiz Street, Warragul

Albert Park District



- **Bridport**
Albert Park Primary School, Bridport Street (entry via Cardigan Place), Albert Park
- **Elwood** ☺
St Columbas Catholic Church Hall, 2 Normandy Road
- **Elwood North**
Elwood Primary School, cnr Mitford Street and Poets Grove, Elwood
- **Kerferd South**
Middle Park Primary School, Richardson Street (access via Mills Street), Middle Park
- **Middle Park**
Middle Park Bowling Club, Canterbury Road (entry via Armstrong Street)
- **Port Melbourne East**
Sol Green Community Centre, cnr Montague and Coventry Streets, South Melbourne

Port Melbourne West

- **Port Phillip Specialist School**, Nott Street (entry via Farrell Street), Port Melbourne
- **Sandridge**
Fishermen's Bend Community Hall, cnr Dunstan Parade and Centre Avenue, Port Melbourne
- **South Melbourne**
South Melbourne Town Hall, 208 Bank Street
- **Southbank** ☺
Malthouse Theatre - Kiln Room, 113 Sturt Street
- **St Kilda**
St Kilda Primary School, Brighton Road
- **St Kilda Park** ☺
St Kilda Park Primary School, 68 Fitzroy St, St Kilda
- **St Kilda South**
Cora Graves Centre, 38 Blesington Street, St Kilda

Altona District



- **Altona**
Altona Primary School, 109 Blyth Street
- **Altona Bay** ☺
Altona Green Primary School, 230 Victoria Street, Altona Meadows
- **Altona Meadows** ☺
Altona Meadows Primary School, Alma Avenue
- **Altona West** ☺
Altona Secondary College, 277 Civic Parade, Altona
- **Belbridge** ☺
Central Park Community Centre, 80 Lonsdale Circuit, Hoppers Crossing
- **Boardwalk** ☺
Carranballac P-9 College - Boardwalk Campus, cnr Durings Road & Foxwood Drive, Point Cook
- **Derimat** ☺
Derrimat Heath Primary School, Sycamore Street, Hoppers Crossing
- **Jameson Way** ☺
Carranballac P-9 College - Jameson Way Campus, Jameson Way, Point Cook
- **Laverton**
Laverton Primary School, Epsom Street
- **Laverton North** ☺
Laverton Secondary College, 91 Bladin Street (cnr Jennings Street), Laverton
- **Mossfield**
Mossfield Primary School, Langridge Street, Hoppers Crossing
- **Seabrook** ☺
Seabrook Primary School, 85-103 Point Cook Road
- **Seaholme** ☺
Seaholme Primary School, cnr Millers Road and Civic Parade (entry via Civic Parade), Altona

Ballarat East District



- **Ballan**
Ballan RSL, 146 Inglis Street
- **Ballarat** ☺
St Andrews Church Hall, Dawson Street North
- **Ballarat West**
Dana Street Primary School, Dana Street (cnr Dawson Street, Ballarat)
- **Bungaree**
Bungaree Mechanics Institute, Bungaree-Wallace Road
- **Buninyong** ☺
Buninyong Primary School, 202 Simpson Street
- **Caledonian** ☺
Caledonian Primary School, Thompson Street, Ballarat
- **Canadian** ☺
Canadian Lead Primary School, Otway Street South, Ballarat
- **Clarks Hill**
St Marys Catholic School, Powells Road
- **Creswick**
CALCAN, Victoria Street
- **Daylesford** ☺
Daylesford Primary School, 102-106 Vincent Street
- **Drummond**
Drummond Primary School, RMB 3814 Lauriston Road
- **Elaine**
Elaine Mechanics Institute, Pearson Street
- **Glenlyon**
Glenlyon Shire Hall, Barkly Street
- **Gordon** ☺
Gordon Public Hall, Main Street
- **Heppburn Springs** ☺
Heppburn Primary School, Main Road
- **Kyeoneton** ☺
Kyeoneton Sporting Complex, 4 Victoria Street
- **Maggie** ☺
Maggie Primary School, 61 Doowra Street
- **Mainsbury** ☺
Mainsbury Primary School, 28 Cameron Street
- **Meredith** ☺
Meredith Primary School, Wallace Street
- **Mount Clear** ☺
Mount Clear Primary School, 1206 Geelong Road
- **Mount Egerton**
Mount Egerton Mechanics Institute, Main Road
- **Mount Pleasant** ☺
Mount Pleasant Primary School, 401 Cobden Street, Ballarat
- **Mount Wallace** ☺
Mount Wallace Hall, Mount Wallace Hall Lane
- **Napoleons** ☺
Napoleons Primary School, 4721 Colac-Ballarat Road
- **Newlyn**
Newlyn Primary School, 2701 Midland Hwy
- **Redan North**
Wesleyan Methodist Church, 410 South Street, Ballarat
- **Skipton Street**
Skipton Street Uniting Church, cnr Skipton and Darling Streets, Ballarat
- **Springbank**
St Michael's C. Primary School, 738 Springbank Road
- **The Stockade**
Damascus College (Victoria Street Campus), 200 Victoria Street, Ballarat
- **Trentham** ☺
Trentham Primary School, Bridge Street
- **Tyden** ☺
Tyden Primary School, 11 Oowes Street
- **Warrenheip**
Warrenheip Primary School, E952 Main Road
- **Wendouree** ☺
Ballarat Grammar School, 201 Forest Street
- **Yandolt**
Yandolt Primary School, 74 High Street

Ballarat West District



- **Alfredton** ☺
McCallum Community Centre, 29 Learmonth Street
- **Alfredton West** ☺
Alfredton Primary School, Outberrts Road, Alfredton
- **Ballarat** ☺
St Andrews Church Hall, Dawson Street North
- **Ballarat City** ☺
Ballarat North Primary School, cnr Sturt & Elliot Sts, Ballarat
- **Ballarat North** ☺
Ballarat North Primary School, Landsborough Street
- **Ballarat North West** ☺
Pleasant Street Primary School, Pleasant Street North, Ballarat
- **Ballarat South** ☺
St Aloysius C. Primary School, Ripon St, Ballarat South
- **Ballarat South West**
Pleasant Street Uniting Church, 36A Pleasant St South, Ballarat
- **Ballarat Vision Australia E Centre** ☺
Vision Australia Ballarat, 1300 Howitt Street (cnr Lake Street), Wendouree
- **Black Hill**
Black Hill Primary School, 601 Chisholm St, Ballarat
- **Caledonian** ☺
Caledonian Primary School, Thompson Street, Ballarat
- **Delacombe** ☺
Delacombe Primary School, Warrina Drive
- **Redan**
Redan Primary School, Hertford Street, Sebastopol
- **Redan North**
Wesleyan Methodist Church, 410 South St, Ballarat
- **Sebastopol** ☺
Sebastopol RSL, cnr Birdwood Avenue & Beverin Street
- **The Stockade**
Damascus College (Victoria Street Campus), 200 Victoria Street, Ballarat
- **Wendouree** ☺
Ballarat Grammar School, 201 Forest Street
- **Wendouree East**
Linda Brown Pre-School, College Street, Wendouree
- **Wendouree North** ☺
Forest Street Primary School, Forest Street, Wendouree
- **Wendouree West**
Grevillea Park Primary School, Violet Grove, Wendouree

Bass District



- **Bass**
Bass Valley Community Centre, cnr Bass Hwy and School Road
- **Bayles** ☺
Bayles Regional Primary School, 3730 Ballarto Road
- **Bunyip**
Bunyip Hall, Main Street
- **Cape Paterson** ☺
Cape Paterson Community Hall, Cape Paterson Road
- **Catani**
Soldiers Memorial Hall, Taplins Road
- **Clyde** ☺
Clyde Primary School, Oroya Grove
- **Cora Lynn** ☺
Cora Lynn Recreation Reserve Hall, Bunyip River Road
- **Cornelia**
Cornelia Public Hall, Smythe Street
- **Cowes** ☺
Cowes Primary School, Settlement Road
- **Dayston**
Powell's River Primary School, 82-96 Daly Street
- **Garfield**
Garfield Primary School, 84 Railway Avenue
- **Grantville** ☺
Grantville Hall, Bass Highway
- **Inverloch** ☺
Inverloch Community Centre (A Beckett Street entrance), A Beckett Street
- **Kilcunda** ☺
Kilcunda Community Centre, 3513-3515 Bass Hwy
- **Koo-weerup** ☺
Koo-weerup Secondary College, Rossiter Road
- **Lang Lang** ☺
Lang Lang Primary School, 52 Westport Road
- **Maryknoll** ☺
Fr Pootley Memorial Hall, Koolbirra Road
- **Nar Nar Goon** ☺
Nar Nar Goon Community Centre, Spencer Street
- **Nar Nar Goon North** ☺
Nar Nar Goon North Public Hall, cnr Dore and Bessie Creek Roads
- **Newhaven** ☺
Newhaven Community Hall, 23 Cleeland Street
- **Pakenham** ☺
Pakenham Secondary College, 1020 Princes Highway
- **Pakenham Central** ☺
Pakenham Uniting Church Hall, 47 James Street, Pakenham
- **Pakenham Hills** ☺
Pakenham Hills Primary School, Kennedy Rd, Pakenham
- **Rhyll**
Rhyll Mechanics Hall, Lock Road
- Full wheelchair access ☺ Access with assistance

Every vote will shape Victoria.

Victorian Electoral Commission **VEC**

Voting on election day

6. Media releases

Media releases distributed during the 2006 State election:

Via AAP Medianet and/or direct to media:		
Release date	Release title	# media recipients
18-Sep-06	Media Advisory - Obligations of the media regarding the Victorian State election	290
2-Oct-06	State election gets into shape at Fed Square	193
3-Oct-06	Students have designs on the State election	64
4-Oct-06	Z-Cards make voting easy for students	190
9-Oct-06	Voters to shape regional Victoria	54
16-Oct-06	Voters to shape Victoria	88
20-Oct-06	Enrolment closing soon	252
23-Oct-06	Enrolment closing soon	39
30-Oct-06	Last chance to enrol for state election	205
31-Oct-06	Election formally called	292
1-Nov-06	Last chance to enrol	39
2-Nov-06	Rolls close Melbourne Cup Day	87
6-Nov-06	Rolls close tomorrow	27
8-Nov-06	Media Advisory - State election nominations and ballot draw information	290
9-Nov-06	Early voting commences for State election	205
10-Nov-06	Record response to roll call	292
11-Nov-06	Record number of candidates to contest election	290
12-Nov-06	Early voting commences for State election	87
16-Nov-06	Postal voting proves popular	87
16-Nov-06	Voters set to trounce turnout tally	205
21-Nov-06	Can't vote on Saturday? You must vote now	87
22-Nov-06	Make sure your vote counts on Saturday	87
23-Nov-06	Media Advisory – Victorian State election results	294
23-Nov-06	Where to vote tomorrow	87
24-Nov-06	Vote today	87
26-Nov-06	Voting continues for close seats	292
30-Nov-06	Media Advisory – State election counting update	292
5-Dec-06	Tight margin results in Recount for Ferntree Gully	136
8-Dec-06	Lower House results finalised	290
12-Dec-06	Provisional Upper House results	290
14-Dec-06	Upper House recount results	290
14-Dec-06	Media Advisory – Upper House Declarations	290



Via Radio Release to regional commercial and metropolitan radio (with audio files):		
Release date	Release title	# media recipients
3-Oct-06	Victorian State election campaign kicks-off today	96
16-Oct-06	Enrolled Victorians receive their EasyVote cards today	96
30-Oct-06	Roll closing - urgent reminder	96
6-Nov-06	Enrol by 8.00pm today for the State election	96
13-Nov-06	State election early and electronic voting opens	96
20-Nov-06	State election this week	96
23-Nov-06	Last urgent reminder to vote in the State election	96

Via LOTE Marketing in 18 languages to ethnic media:		
Release date	Release title	# media recipients
Oct-06	Enrol to vote at the Victorian State election	73
Nov-06	Voting in the 2006 Victorian State election	73

Electronic voting and special events direct to media:		
Release date	Release title	# media recipients
8-Nov-06	Ballarat's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo/vision opportunity)	7
8-Nov-06	Shepparton's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo opportunity)	11
8-Nov-06	Warragul's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo opportunity)	6
8-Nov-06	Heidelberg's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo opportunity)	5
8-Nov-06	Kooyong's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo opportunity)	2
8-Nov-06	Melbourne's E Centre set for first electronic votes (with photo opportunity)	2
10-Nov-06	E Centres set for Victoria's first electronic votes (with photo/vision opportunity)	17
15-Nov-06	Corporate Games... ready, set, vote (with photo opportunity)	5
15-Nov-06	Daylesford show goers reminded to vote	1
15-Nov-06	Spring Car Nationals must race to vote (with photo opportunity)	10
15-Nov-06	Great Victorian Bike Riders reminded to vote (with photo opportunity)	3
16-Nov-06	Festival goers reminded to vote	7
24-Nov-06	Fire fighters in Casterton vote (with photo/vision opportunity)	9

7. Sample newspaper features

Voting information mailout

SUNRAYSIA voters should check their letterboxes over the next two weeks for information on changes to the Upper House and their Easy-Vote card, says Victorian Electoral Commissioner, Steve Tully.

The Statewide mailout will inform voters of changes for the November 25 election, which includes a fixed election date, 40 Upper House members to be elected every four years, and proportional representation as the method of vote counting for the revamped Upper House ballot papers.

"When voting, electors will receive a large Upper House ballot paper. It will resemble a Senate ballot where they have a choice of voting above or below the line. The key difference is that if they choose to vote below the line, they need to choose at least five candidates."

The EasyVote card will list the voter's electoral details and the district and region for which they will be voting.

"It is possible to vote without the card, but it may take longer."

"Of course, if you're not enrolled, you can't vote."

"So those who haven't enrolled before should do so and those who have moved should update their details."

A new initiative this year will be an online voting centre look-up facility available from the formal start of the election campaign on October 31.

Through the VEC's 13vote.com.au State election website, voters will be able to enter their address or the address in Victoria they will be on election day and the nearest five voting centres will be listed.

An icon will then enable the voter to view that address on a map, if they are unfamiliar with the area.

"Our aim has been to increase accessibility to voting and making it easier to find the voting centre is a good start."

"This new facility will also enable voters to list and find early voting centres and also E Centres, which will accommodate electronic voting for the vision impaired."

Sunraysia Daily 12 October 2006

Vote for Victoria push under way

By MATHEW MURPHY

THE message was there everywhere you looked.

But in case you missed it, two elastic performers in white bodysuits conveyed it through an interpretive dance. Play-Doh was handed out, and a giant inflatable map of Victoria and a smaller edible version made of gingerbread helped reinforce the point.

For those gathered at Federation Square for the Victorian Electoral Commission's voter information launch who were still left in the dark, comedian Hamish Blake provided help.

"If you missed the symbolism of the Play-Doh it is so each one of you can shape Victoria just like each vote will shape Victoria," he said.

All Victorians on the electoral roll will get a letter this month telling them of changes to Victoria's upper house as part of the

campaign launched yesterday.

The redrafting of the boundaries has created eight new regions, each with five elected representatives.

A move to Senate-style proportional representation has lowered the number of votes needed to get elected.

Victorian electoral commissioner Steve Tully said people who were still unsure about the changes can use a hotline, which has been set up at 13VOTE (13 96 83) or through the internet on 13vote.com.au.

Year 12 students will get a Z-Card, which provides facts about voting, and an enrolment form.

Electronic voting will be available for the first time with six centres set up so those with vision impairment can vote anonymously.

The centres will be in Ballarat, Kooyong, Shepparton, Hei-

delberg West, Warragul and Melbourne Town Hall.

Victorians have up until 8pm on Tuesday, November 7, to enrol or update their enrolment.

VOTERS' GUIDE

SAURDAY, NOVEMBER 25

- Polling booth locations will be announced by October 31 and listed at www.13vote.com.au
- Postal voting applications open on October 31.
- Victorians who will be overseas can vote two weeks before the poll.
- The deadline for enrolling or updating enrolment information is 8pm on November 7.
- If a valid reason is not given for failing to vote a fine of \$53.40 will be incurred.

The Age 4 October 2006

Early birds beat the rush of poll fever



ON THE TRAIL
JONATHAN GREEN

IF MYER can open its Christmas windows on November 11, there's no reason why Victorians shouldn't start voting for the 2006 election on November 13. Which they did.

Never mind that the two major campaigns have only just been launched, never mind that with a fortnight of fevered electioneering lies before us: voting began yesterday at 77 designated early voting centres across the state.

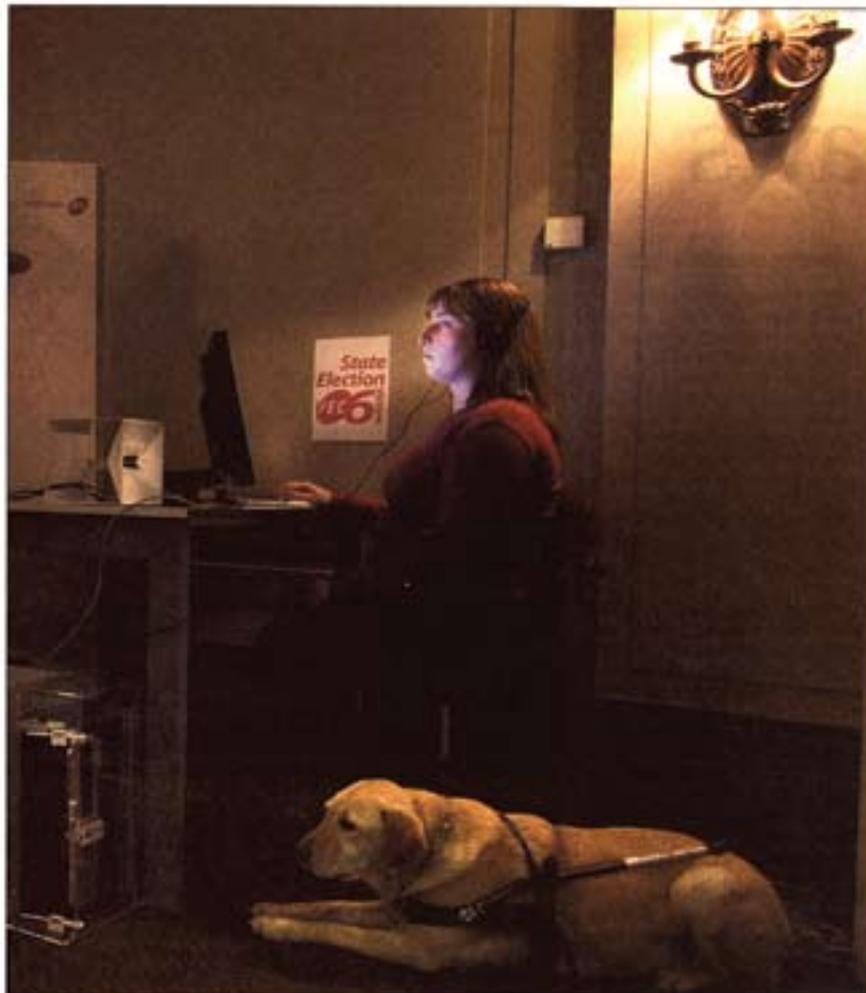
It could be that the deciding votes in the coming poll have already been cast, though if the result mirrors an exhaustive exit poll of two voters leaving the city's Lower Town Hall polling place just after lunchtime yesterday, it will be a draw.

Which will console the ALP and Liberal campaign workers who braved the polar extremities of Swanston Street to distribute how-to-vote cards, though it may also disappoint the rather earnest woman from the Socialist Party, but then one suspects that in the current political milieu, disappointment is very much her lot.

There was quite a throng at the Town Hall booth through lunchtime, people either obliged to vote early due to an impending absence or inconvenience, or those simply keen to get their affairs in order and avoid the queues and sausage sizzles of November 25.

It is also possible to vote early for no good reason. Not strictly legal perhaps, but possible: for while the counter staff will ask you whether you will be able to attend a booth on November 25, they require no proof that you won't.

So, if you are the sort of person whose Christmas shopping is already wrapped and tagged, the sort of person for whom last-minute fluctuations in stamp duty policy will be of no



Alone at last: visually impaired Melissa Howe will vote alone for the first time, thanks to electronic voting. PICTURE: MICHAEL BISHOP

moment, then this could be just the option.

You can vote for any Victorian electorate at any early voting centre, by following the simple instructions displayed in the booth. For example: "Put the small ballot paper in the ballot paper box marked small."

Which makes almost as much sense as its companion: "Put the large ballot paper in the

ballot paper box marked large."

Yesterday also marked a first in the technology available to visually impaired Victorian voters, who will be able to vote solo for the first time using specially developed computer technology available at six "E centres" — snappy shorthand for electronic voting.

The Lower Town Hall is one, and so it was that at 3.10pm

yesterday Melissa Howe of Deer Park was able to enter an electronic booth accompanied only by her guide dog Vanya and for the first time in her voting life cast her secret ballot in secret.

"I'd class myself as a swinging voter," she said, giving nothing else away. Which might be enough to knock the Lower Town Hall exit poll right off its axis.

Disenfranchised homeless get the vote

By ANDREW FENTON

■ TWENTY-THOUSAND homeless Victorians are now eligible to vote in state and council elections following changes to the electoral act.

The new rules enable people with no fixed address to vote, provided they have a close relative on the electoral roll.

The Victorian Electoral Commission bombarded shelters and support agencies with enrolment forms over recent months in an effort to sign up voters in the lead-up to the state election.

But VEC communications manager Sue Lang said that only a relative few were likely to vote on November 25 because the scheme was still in its infancy.

"Some people think that because they haven't enrolled and voted previously they may be fined," she said. "We've tried to assure them that's not the case."

Ms Lang said that everyone deserved to be able to vote.

"It's a wonderful initiative that ensures everyone has their franchise regardless of whether they have a home address to vote from," she said.

Homeless man David Clancy said he welcomed the changes and had been encouraging his mates to enrol.



David Clancy has been encouraging other homeless people at St Mary's House of Welcome to enrol and vote.

"People are in situations that can change on a daily or weekly basis but we still read the paper, we still know what's happening," he said.

St Mary's House of Welcome (165 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy) will host

a free barbecue and voting day on November 17 from 11am to 2pm.

"Approximately 80 per cent of homeless people have a mental illness so they may have a great deal of anxiety about going to an actual centre," Ms Lang said. "We thought what might be less intimidating for them was to organise a mobile voting location and St Mary's is the ideal centre because it's quite central."

St Mary's social worker David Ring said he jumped at the chance to get involved.

"It's something we thought was really important and we wanted to get our guys involved," he said. "We've signed up 15 people and 10 of them have never voted before."

He said his clients had a good understanding of the issues that affected them.

"They certainly understand the IR laws and the breaching stuff. They may express it in a very different way but they are across the issues."

Shelters and community organisations that would like VEC officers to assist their homeless clients to vote should call Sue Lang on 9299 0730.

Melbourne Times 15 November 2006



Nicole Cassar is urging indigenous Australians to cast their vote.

Koori vote plea

Julia Irwin

ABORIGINAL electoral officer Nicole Cassar is urging indigenous Australians living in Darebin to make their vote count.

Ms Cassar is based at the Northcote election office in High St and will be at Kingsbury Primary School's polling station on November 25 to encourage and help indigenous people to vote.

She is one of six Aboriginals the Victorian Electoral Commission has employed to increase indigenous participation in the state election.

A commission research report in June this year found a significant percentage of indigenous people were not

enrolled and of those enrolled a "large majority had little interest or did not intend to vote".

The report blamed the low vote on a lack of indigenous candidates and understanding about the electoral processes.

Ms Cassar, a Kingsbury resident, said indigenous people often felt intimidated by the electoral process.

"My role is a bit like an interpreter," she said.

"For a long time our vote didn't count (indigenous Australians got the vote after the 1967 referendum), which makes it more important that we should have our say. Voting gives us equality and is a way we can show we care and have an interest in

the future development of the state."

Ms Cassar said participating in the political process was more important for indigenous people after the Federal Government dissolved the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission last year transferring indigenous programs funding to mainstream departments.

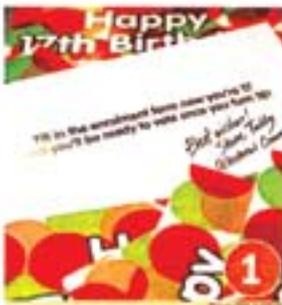
"I would encourage all Kooris young and old to vote and if not enrolled, make sure you're enrolled so you can vote next time," she said.

Ms Cassar will be at the election office at 192 High St, Northcote, on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday this week.

■ **More election coverage on Pages 12 and 13.**

Anatomy of a state election

Compiled by BEN HAYWOOD



1 ENROLLING TO VOTE

All year the Victorian Electoral Commission works to keep the electoral roll up to date. Every teenager enrolled in VCE gets a card on their 17th birthday with an enrolment form so that they can vote as soon as they turn 18.

In the lead-up to an election, everyone on the electoral roll is contacted to confirm their enrolment details. Advertising campaigns encourage those who have never enrolled to do so and those who have moved to update their details.

DISTRIBUTION

With the election offices and early voting centres already stocked, distribution begins from the VEC warehouse for the 1700 voting centres. The cardboard furniture and equipment synonymous with Australian elections is distributed in a five-day period before election day.



2 MAPPING

Everyone votes based on the district and region where they live. The Electoral Boundaries Commission reviews the boundaries according to legislation to make sure there is about the same number of people in each district and the same number of people in each region. This ensures that everyone is equally represented and everyone's vote has the same value.

At August 2006, the average number of electors per region was about 400,000. The average number of electors per district was about 38,000.

3 SET UP

Election staff set up the voting centres in preparation for election day.



4 TRAINING

More than 34,000 people are trained in the lead-up to an election for a range of roles that take place before the polling day, and on the day of the election itself. Some of these jobs include: election managers and assistant election managers (who work in election offices), voting centre managers and assistant voting centre managers, election liaison officers, declaration issuing officers and other election officials (who work at voting centres on election day).

5 CASTING YOUR VOTE

Between 8am and 8pm on election day about 3.4 million Victorians cast their votes for the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly at one of 1700 voting centres across the state.



6 VOTING CENTRES

On election day there will be about 1700 voting centres. Staff at the VEC locate and book these sites months in advance. They include everything from school halls to leisure centres.

7 COUNTING THE VOTES

When voting closes, the count begins. Election officials - watched closely by independent scrutineers - count the votes and lodge their results with their election office, which then sends the results on to the Election Management System at head office. The process is precise. Every ballot paper must be accounted for.



- 1
- 2
- 5
- 3
- 4



5

WAREHOUSE

Furniture and office equipment for the election offices - including desks, chairs, photocopiers, fax machines and computers - are organised and stored ready for distribution from the VEC warehouse in Maribyrnong a few months before the election.



6

CALL CENTRE OPENS

With the election just months away, the VEC call centre opens to cope with the influx of election inquiries - everything from where your nearest voting centre is to what to do if you will be out of the state on election day. During the election period, the call centre will take more than 100,000 calls.



7

BALLOT PAPERS

The ballot papers for the state election are designed. With 88 electorates and eight regions, that's 96 ballot papers that must be filled with candidate names and parties. There is no room for error. The ballot papers are printed in the two weeks before the election and distributed across the state, around the country and throughout the world so that Victorians can cast their vote.



8

EARLY VOTING

Two weeks before the election, 79 early voting centres open at key locations across the state. Six E-Centres provide electronic voting facilities for the vision impaired and the opportunity for those who can't vote on election day to cast their vote early.

THE TALLY ROOM

As results come in from election offices across the state, the Election Management System sends updates to the tally room at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. The public, through the media and the virtual tally room on the internet, watch closely as the results flow in to the enormous electronic tally board. The results data is also fed to the media outlets covering the election.

REGION	ALBANY	WIMBORNE	WARRACKBEA
1	10,000	10,000	10,000
2	10,000	10,000	10,000
3	10,000	10,000	10,000
4	10,000	10,000	10,000
5	10,000	10,000	10,000
6	10,000	10,000	10,000
7	10,000	10,000	10,000
8	10,000	10,000	10,000
9	10,000	10,000	10,000
10	10,000	10,000	10,000
11	10,000	10,000	10,000
12	10,000	10,000	10,000
13	10,000	10,000	10,000
14	10,000	10,000	10,000
15	10,000	10,000	10,000
16	10,000	10,000	10,000
17	10,000	10,000	10,000
18	10,000	10,000	10,000
19	10,000	10,000	10,000
20	10,000	10,000	10,000
21	10,000	10,000	10,000
22	10,000	10,000	10,000
23	10,000	10,000	10,000
24	10,000	10,000	10,000
25	10,000	10,000	10,000
26	10,000	10,000	10,000
27	10,000	10,000	10,000
28	10,000	10,000	10,000
29	10,000	10,000	10,000
30	10,000	10,000	10,000
31	10,000	10,000	10,000
32	10,000	10,000	10,000
33	10,000	10,000	10,000
34	10,000	10,000	10,000
35	10,000	10,000	10,000
36	10,000	10,000	10,000
37	10,000	10,000	10,000
38	10,000	10,000	10,000
39	10,000	10,000	10,000
40	10,000	10,000	10,000
41	10,000	10,000	10,000
42	10,000	10,000	10,000
43	10,000	10,000	10,000
44	10,000	10,000	10,000
45	10,000	10,000	10,000
46	10,000	10,000	10,000
47	10,000	10,000	10,000
48	10,000	10,000	10,000
49	10,000	10,000	10,000
50	10,000	10,000	10,000
51	10,000	10,000	10,000
52	10,000	10,000	10,000
53	10,000	10,000	10,000
54	10,000	10,000	10,000
55	10,000	10,000	10,000
56	10,000	10,000	10,000
57	10,000	10,000	10,000
58	10,000	10,000	10,000
59	10,000	10,000	10,000
60	10,000	10,000	10,000
61	10,000	10,000	10,000
62	10,000	10,000	10,000
63	10,000	10,000	10,000
64	10,000	10,000	10,000
65	10,000	10,000	10,000
66	10,000	10,000	10,000
67	10,000	10,000	10,000
68	10,000	10,000	10,000
69	10,000	10,000	10,000
70	10,000	10,000	10,000
71	10,000	10,000	10,000
72	10,000	10,000	10,000
73	10,000	10,000	10,000
74	10,000	10,000	10,000
75	10,000	10,000	10,000
76	10,000	10,000	10,000
77	10,000	10,000	10,000
78	10,000	10,000	10,000
79	10,000	10,000	10,000
80	10,000	10,000	10,000
81	10,000	10,000	10,000
82	10,000	10,000	10,000
83	10,000	10,000	10,000
84	10,000	10,000	10,000
85	10,000	10,000	10,000
86	10,000	10,000	10,000
87	10,000	10,000	10,000
88	10,000	10,000	10,000

13

VICTORY CLAIMED

As the night unfolds the results become clearer. Typically one party concedes and another declares victory before the end of the night and before every vote is officially counted.



14

THE COUNT CONTINUES

Counting continues for many days after the election weekend. Absentee votes, including those cast overseas and interstate, and postal votes are sorted and returned to their correct electorate for counting.

Compiling final results continues at the computer count centre for many days until the precise results have been recorded and rechecked.



15

PACK UP

Voting centres, election offices and eventually the computer count centre are dismantled and returned to storage where they will stay until the next election.



16



Hamish helps election campaign take shape

Messing about with playdough, comedian and FOX FM radio host Hamish Blake knows every vote this state election will shape Victoria. He joined Bec, Jake, Sarah and Georgia today to launch the state election education campaign outlining changes to the Upper House and the way members are elected. See 13vote.com.au

Picture: NICOLE CLEARY

MX 3 October 2006

Victoria puts blind faith in electronic voting

By LIA RIMSON

Victoria is about to enter the age of electronic voting at a time when controversy rages in the United States over whether such machines make democracy itself "hackable".

Vision-impaired Victorians begin voting this week on new e-voting terminals designed for privacy and security, ahead of the state election on November 25.

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) claims its machines cannot be hacked, but there were widespread reports of e-voting irregularities in the US after last week's mid-term elections. Voters across the nation described a phenomenon called "vote flipping", in which votes intended for one candidate were recorded for another.

E-voting advocates blamed voter error but others suggested much more used for e-voting may have been badly calibrated. The recent HBO documentary *Hacking Democracy* raised fears of undetectable e-voting



A US voter casts her vote electronically. The Victorian Electoral Commission says its e-voting system for vision-impaired people can't be hacked.

fraud, but most reports from last week were of faulty machines.

In Salt Lake City, Utah, and Indianapolis, Indiana, some machines did not boot up, in Florida some machines shut down. In New Jersey some voters claimed the machines highlighted a Democrat candidate by default. Denver and

Pennsylvania also reported problems with their machines, resulting in long delays and voter queues.

Todd Perry, editor of *IEEE Spectrum* magazine, saw problems with e-voting even in the heart of Silicon Valley in California, where five out of the seven machines at her polling place failed to work.

But the VEC says its e-voting trial, the Intermix in a bigger trial at the next federal election, has undergone exhaustive testing before the event.

"The system is state-of-the-art, it's not like in the US where it is unproven, so it can't be hacked," says Sue Long, VEC communications manager. "The secret thing that can happen is that you'll have a loss of confidence in the election. That's our main concern."

Privacy and security concerns were raised by political parties and election officials when the legislation allowing the e-voting trial was passed, but all these concerns have been addressed, Ms Long says. "We have had an independent software auditor confirm it does what it's meant to do," she says. "If this works successfully the obvious question will be if it's applicable for wider application."

Special Minister of State Gary Nairn announced to support a limited trial of e-voting for the vision-impaired at the next federal election. There will

also be an online ballot for Australian Defence Force personnel stationed overseas using the ADP's Intermix.

If successful, these trials will be extended in 2010, possibly to include Australian living in Antarctica, but a spokeswoman for Mr Nairn says the federal trials are just a precursor to general nationwide e-voting, because "it is not government policy".

Since 2002, able and disabled voters have had their votes tabulated electronically in the ACT. In 2004, 28,169 electronic votes were recorded at 12 pre-poll and polling day centres, representing 13.4 per cent of the ballot. The system, used barcodes, and terminals were networked using eMMS software, a secure LAN and remote servers.

A review of those elections by the ACT Electoral Commission gave the system the thumbs up. "While there were some concerns publicly raised about the need for a paper audit trail of electronic votes, the Commission is

satisfied that the use of open source software, the independent audit of the software code, and the security built into the system, including its physical security, ensured that the system was transparent and reliable," the report said.

The VEC's e-voting system was set up in response to submissions for electoral reform by Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia. Private electronic terminals allow voters to cast their preferences unassisted using read-aloud software, headphones and a modified numerical keypad. A large print touch screen for people with partial vision, and human help, are also at hand.

The Victorian system, designed by Hewlett-Packard and Sparta's Next Secure Electronic Voting, is different to the US machines as it does not tabulate voting preferences electronically. It records votes and later prints out the corresponding ballot paper, leaving an auditable paper trail.

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Blind faith in electronic votes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Voters have their names marked off the roll in the traditional way and receive a smart-card containing their electorate details. They insert the card into a card-reader attached to the voting terminal that sits behind a number-sealed plastic box and follow the instructions. Once a vote is cast, the card is locked and cannot be used again.

Disability groups convinced the Victorian Government of the need for the e-vote, arguing it provides the ballot secrecy afforded to able voters.

Historically, blind and sight-impaired voters have needed a helper to record their preferences.

Chris Gribbin, e-voting project manager at the VEC, says voting preferences will be recorded on a hard disk and a removable back-up USB key inside each terminal. When polling closes, the encrypted data will be burnt on to CD and transported to the central VEC office for printing. Regional centres will transmit the data via private ADSL.

At the VEC the data will be

decrypted by two officials using individual key cards and passwords. Votes will then be printed on to paper ballots and returned to their electorate centres to be counted by hand.

Australia has lagged behind the rest of the world in adopting electronic ballots. A report produced by the Victorian and Australian Electoral Commissions in 2001 said the Australian preferential voting system does not readily lend itself to the use of the technology deployed in the US.

It argued that proportional representation would complicate electronic elections requiring voters to rank all candidates according to preference.

It also argued "there is no evidence to suggest that there is any political or community support for change".

But Tony Clark, manager of strategic projects at Vision Australia, says vision-impaired voters have reported feeling empowered for the first time. If e-voting is good for vision-impaired people, he says, it's good for everybody.

"It's got great potential," Mr

Clark says. "We just need the political will. Political parties are used to counting pieces of paper. (They leave) a real trail that people can follow. They are also used to capturing people by giving them how-to-vote cards."

"They can still do that (with electronic voting kiosks) but they haven't got their head around it yet," he says.

The VEC's Mr Gribbin says different jurisdictions have had different motivations for introducing electronic elections.

"For us it was the vision-impaired. In Brazil it was for the illiterate population, in other countries such as India it was (to eliminate) fraud, in the ACT it was to count (votes) faster," Mr Gribbin says.

The 2002 Australian Electoral Commission report says: "Australia has always been a leader in electoral democracy. Australians need to be aware that other jurisdictions are now taking the lead on the e-voting issue."

LINKS

13vote.com.au
scytll.com

8. Interstate and overseas early voting centres

		Votes
Adelaide	South Australian Electoral Office, 134 Fullarton Road, Rose Park Adelaide SA 5000	522
Alice Springs	Northern Territory Electoral Office, Unit 4/16 Leichardt Terrace, Alice Springs NT 0870	91
Brisbane	Electoral Commission of Queensland, Forestry House Foyer, 160 Ground Floor, Mary Street, Brisbane QLD 4000	977
Cairns	Magistrates Courts Office, 5D Sheridan Street, Cairns QLD 4870	306
Canberra	ACT Electoral Commission, 12 Level 2 Moore Street, Canberra City ACT 2601	547
Darwin	Northern Territory Electoral Office, AANT BLDG, 2nd Floor, 79 - 81 Smith Street, Darwin NT 0801	375
Hobart	Tasmanian Electoral Office, Level 2, Telstra Centre, 70 Collins Street, Hobart TAS 7001	317
Noosa	Magistrates Courts Office, 179 Langura Street, Noosa QLD 4215	307
Perth	Western Australian Electoral Commission Level 2, 111 St. George's Terrace, Perth WA 6000	859
Southport	Ray White House Suite, 201 Level 2, Cnr Nerang & Scarborough Streets, Southport QLD 4215	671
Sydney	New South Wales State Electoral Office, Level 25, 201 Kent St, Sydney NSW 2000	993
Total interstate votes		5,965

Overseas

Athens, GREECE (Australian Embassy)	27
Auckland, NEW ZEALAND (Australian Consulate-General)	133
Bangkok, THAILAND (Australian Embassy)	111
Beijing, CHINA (People's Republic of) (Australian Embassy)	178
Berlin, GERMANY (Australian Embassy)	56
Dili, EAST TIMOR (Australian Embassy)	36
Geneva, SWITZERLAND (Australian Permanent Mission to the Office of the United Nations)	23
Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM (Australian Consulate-General)	170
Hong Kong, CHINA (Australian Consulate-General)	699
Jakarta, INDONESIA (Australian Embassy)	55
Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA (Australian High Commission)	85
London, UNITED KINGDOM (Government of Victoria - Victoria House)	1,861
Los Angeles, USA (Australian Consulate-General)	72
Manila, PHILIPPINES (Australian Embassy)	91
New Delhi, INDIA (Australian High Commission)	76
New York, USA (Australian Consulate-General)	207
Paris, FRANCE (Australian Embassy)	102
Port Moresby, PAPUA NEW GUINEA (Australian High Commission)	35
Rome, ITALY (Australian Embassy)	58
San Francisco, USA (Australian Consulate-General)	52
Singapore, SINGAPORE (Australian High Commission)	204
Taipei, TAIWAN (Australian Commerce and Industry Office)	115
The Hague, NETHERLANDS (Australian Embassy)	56
Tokyo, JAPAN (Australian Embassy)	147
Toronto, CANADA (Australian Consulate-General)	37
Vancouver, CANADA (Australian Consulate)	66
Washington, USA (Australian Embassy)	27
Wellington, NEW ZEALAND (New Zealand Chief Electoral Office)	58
Total overseas votes	4,837