Respect Innovation Accountability Independence Collaboration

Submission to the Electoral Matters Committee

Inquiry into the Conduct of the
2014 Victorian State Election

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Foreword

Victorian electors went to the polls on 29 November 2014 to elect the 58th Victorian Parliament. I am pleased to present this submission to the Electoral Matters Committee Inquiry into the conduct of the 2014 Victorian State election. This submission has been accelerated for the Committee and, although it has been drawn from the 2014 Election Report to be tabled in Parliament in coming months, it should be read as a precursor to that report.

The conduct of Parliamentary elections is the core activity of the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) requiring disciplined and early planning, careful management of staff and resources and strict adherence to state electoral law.

In evaluating the overall success of the election the VEC intended that "Every eligible Victorian will vote at an election that is fully compliant with State Law, transparent, fair and accurate and delivered to the highest standards with efficiency and enthusiasm." This was tested against several indicators as a means of assessing the performance of the VEC and identifying where operational improvements could be made. Pleasingly, most targets were met or exceeded including having an estimated 94.21% of eligible Victorians enrolled with 93.02% of these electors turning out to vote.

Yet, continuing challenges exist around vote informality, which is increasing, and an inability to identify more than 17% of Election Day voting centres in Victoria that are fully wheelchair accessible.

The 2014 State Election was noteworthy on two counts; a record number of Registered Political Parties and candidates chose to participate, and over 34% of electors voted before Election Day.

A total of 21 registered political parties contested the election, compared to ten in 2010. The success of "micro parties" in the Federal Election in 2013 may well have stimulated this activity. While this interest in forming a political party can be construed as demonstrating a healthy democracy, it is to be noted that several parties required several attempts to garner sufficient members to satisfy the requirements of the *Electoral Act 2002*. A finite time limit around the party registration process could assist a genuineness argument.

Candidate numbers increased by 26% on 2010 totals, In the Northern Metropolitan Region, 52 candidates, comprising 20 groups, contested that election requiring the ballot paper to take a particular prescribed form. These large increases in party, group and candidate numbers impacted ballot paper and materials production, and distribution, requiring last minute planning changes.

Since 2002, the proportion of postal and early votes has increased significantly. While early voting is popular across Australia, in Victoria support is particularly strong, likely reflecting elector work commitments, mobility and changing lifestyles. In response, the VEC will examine the viability of adjusting operations so that a proportion of early votes can be included in Election Day counting.

To qualify to vote early, an elector must declare their inability to vote on Election Day and this requirement was stressed in all elements of staff training for the election. Notwithstanding, the VEC was required to appear before the Court of Disputed Returns in response to a petition claiming that a number of early voters were not required to declare their inability to vote on Election Day and that these votes were therefore inadmissible.

As a consequence the Petitioner sought the State election to be declared void. Though the petition was ultimately dismissed, the judgment did provide comment on how the form of the voter declaration could be improved.

The heavy reliance on information and communication technology in support of the election was again clearly evident. Notably, the VEC's new Election Management System (EMS) performed very well providing improved functionality and reduced election office setup overheads. The ongoing investment in redeveloping EMS has been justified. The vVote system, providing voting services to electors with vision impairment, motor impairment or language or literacy difficulties was again well supported in its 25 locations. The wider integration of technology in election operations is evident within this report.

Communicating the election to Victorians was particularly effective as evident in the turnout. A new advertising campaign was designed focusing on the importance of each vote where results are close. This and other activities such as the Democracy Ambassador's Program, Community outreach and education sessions and a Roadshow all contributed to an awareness of the election. A redeveloped and more accessible website, an EasyVote guide for each elector, a presence on Facebook and Twitter and a telephone enquiry service provided further information on how to participate. The reach and impact of each of these initiatives will be reviewed for future campaigns in an ever-changing media environment. The need to prepare around 17,000 casual staff to perform Election Day duties received considerable attention. Training sessions were held in each district, and was supported by online training. Pleasingly, the overwhelming majority of election staff indicated a desire to work again for the Commission.

Vote counting and results reporting on election night and after was efficient and timely. Of the 1786 voting centres across Victoria, nearly 95% had reported their district results by 9.00 pm on election night allowing analysts to predict an election outcome with confidence. In the district of Prahran a recount of votes was conducted given the close result and this district declared on 11 December 2014. For the Legislative Council, the very efficient centralized counting arrangement allowed for all eight Region results to be declared on 16 December 2014. Writs for the election were returned to the Governor on 19 December 2014 as planned.

As with every election there are challenges. Many require an immediate response and others may require a change to operations or to legislation, and while foreshadowed in this report, recommendations will be included in the full Report to Parliament.

The 2014 State Election was very well conducted. Commission staff, casual staff, other employees, contractors and service providers can be pleased with the event and their contribution, for which I am grateful.

The VEC embraces continuous improvement and this submission is critical in positioning the Commission and the State for the next large Parliamentary electoral event.

Warwick Gately AM
Electoral Commissioner

Legislative Assembly – Lower House	Total	
Voters Enrolled at close of roll	3,806,301	(est. 94.21% of eligible electors)
Votes Counted	3,540,545	(93.02% of enrolment at close of roll)
Formal Votes	3,355,707	(94.78% of votes counted)
Informal Votes	184,838	(5.22% of votes counted)
Candidates	545	
Legislative Council – Upper House	Total	
Voters Enrolled at close of roll	3,806,301	
Votes Counted	3,540,168	(93.01% of enrolment at close of rolls)
Formal Votes	3,418,671	(96.57% of votes counted
Informal Votes	121,497	(3.43% of votes counted)
Candidates	351	

Introduction

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 42,000 electors. A party or coalition with the majority support in the Legislative Assembly forms the Government.

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

Members of the Legislative Council are elected from eight electoral Regions, each with approximately 465,000 electors. Each region returns five elected members. Proportional representation vote counting for the Legislative Council was introduced 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:

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.

Under the proportional representation vote counting system, a candidate must gain a 'quota' (one sixth plus one) 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.

Victorian Electoral Commission

The Victorian Electoral Commission's (VEC) 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, and referendums
- conduct local government elections and by-elections (following a competitive tendering process)
- conduct electoral representation reviews and subdivision reviews for councils
- conduct certain statutory elections
- consider and report to the responsible Minister 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 state electoral boundaries
- report to Parliament on the VEC's activities.

Governing Legislation

The work of the VEC is governed by legislation that includes:

1. The *Electoral Act 2002*: Victoria's principal electoral Act, prescribing the enrolment system and the conduct of parliamentary elections

2. 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

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

Legislative and Regulatory Changes

Changes affecting the conduct of the 2014 Victorian State election were minor.

The new Electoral Regulations 2012 contained a number of changes that improved efficiency around nominations and the administration of provisional, Antarctic and overseas voting.

The Electoral Amendment Bill 2014, containing provisions to enhance the conduct of the election, was defeated in Parliament in September 2014.

Election Timetable

The Victorian State election timeline is set in legislation. The *Constitution Act 1975* prescribes that, barring exceptional circumstances, the Victorian State election is to be held on the last Saturday in November every four years. The trigger for a State election is the issue of the writs, which occurs 25 days before Election Day.

The Governor issued writs for the 2014 Victorian State election at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 4 November 2014. The writs set out the timetable for the election. One writ is issued for the election of the Legislative Council and one for the election of the Legislative Assembly. The writs for a State election must be returned no later than 21 days after Election Day.

Given this timeframe, it is essential that planning and preparation commences well in advance of the election. The lead-time for the management of the 2014 State election was 12–18 months with most major projects in place by the issue of the writs.

Timeline for the 2014 Victorian State Election

Expiry of the Legislative Assembly Parliament is dissolved 25 days before the last Saturday in November.	Tuesday, 4 November
Issue of writs The issue of the writs commences the election process. The 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 writs. 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).	Tuesday, 4 November
Close of rolls Electors have until 8:00pm, seven days after the writs are issued, to enrol or to update their enrolment.	Tuesday, 11 November
Close of 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.	Thursday, 13 November for a Registered Political Party and Friday, 14 November for independent candidates
Final day for submission of How to Vote Cards for registration by the VEC	Friday, 21 November
Close of Postal Voting	Thursday, 27 November
Close of Early Voting	Friday, 28 November
Election Day Election Day is the day nominated for the election to be held and is the day on which most electors cast their vote.	Saturday, 29 November
Last day that votes can be admitted to scrutiny	Monday, 8 December
Return of writs 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.	On or before Saturday, 20 December (Writ returned 18 December 2014)

Election Planning

The VEC operates with a core of around 55 full time equivalent (FTE) staff, which is supplemented by temporary and casual staff. At the time of the State election, there were over 80 FTE positions at the VEC. In addition, the VEC engaged contract staff to provide specialist services such as Information Technologies support, or election software development and advice. Around 20,000 people were engaged by the VEC to conduct the State election in election offices and voting centres and 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. Contracting external service providers enables VEC staff to focus on their election-specific areas of expertise, ensuring that Victorians are provided with the highest quality election services, using the latest technologies and systems.

For the 2014 State election, the VEC had contracts in place with a range of specialist service providers. Contractors were selected after a formal procurement, taking into account the quality of their service and value for money.

Contracted services for the State election included:

- Australia Post (service level agreement)
- cardboard furniture
- cartage and courier services
- election advertising
- election staffing
- envelope production
- information technology
- mail house services
- mobile application
- printing
- telephone enquiry service
- election staff training products

Arrangements with Other Agencies

Victorian Government Solicitor's Office

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 for its support and assistance on matters related to this election.

Victoria Police

The VEC wrote to the Chief Commissioner of Police outlining the State election processes and requesting a discreet police presence at voting centres during the hours of voting on Election Day. The VEC formally records its appreciation for the support received from the Chief Commissioner and Victoria Police.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

The VEC made arrangements with the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal for arrangements to be 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.

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 VEC is also able to seek an injunction under the same circumstances. These matters must be heard in the Supreme Court. The Victorian Electoral Commission made arrangements with the Supreme Court to ensure any applications for an injunction received on Election Day could be heard.

Election Budget

After an initial budget forecast, additional budget was provided to meet inflation, an increase in the number of electors and the use of advanced technology to assist with the provision of electoral services. Actual expenditure will occur over three financial years; 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16.

The cost of conducting the 2014 State will be reported in the Report to Parliament on the conduct of the 2014 State election.

Insurance and Claims

The Victorian Electoral Commission is insured with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority, and at the time of the election was covered under the Department of Justice policy. The VEC has additional coverage for:

- Public and Products Liability — a buy-down of the excess
- Group Personal Accident — insurance coverage for Election Officials
- Travel — insurance for travel by staff

Details of the cost of the insurance, claims on the insurance policies, incident reports from election offices and voting centres reported by the public, and workplace incidents will be included in the full election report.

Resource Management and Sustainability

The VEC is committed to managing resources in a way that minimises negative environmental impact across all operations. The VEC continued to implement initiatives addressing key strategies for resource management and sustainable practises including:

- alignment of the VEC operations with Government directions in environmental sustainability
- encouraging staff to become proactively involved in reducing greenhouse emissions
- reducing the number of courier journeys by faxing 'not on roll' absent declarations for checking against the enrolment register
- a new contract for device sharing between electoral commissions sharing 6,000 portable devices instead of each commission owning its own fleet
- improving the VEC's environmental performance by reducing environmental impacts and resource consumption that occur as a consequence of VEC operations

The following initiatives reduced the amount of paper used during the State election:

- online training for election officials reduced the need for the preparation and printing of training materials
- introduction of a new personnel system that incorporates electronic offers of appointment and online time sheeting and payslips
- electronic roll mark-off capability at all early voting centres and during mobile voting reduced the number of envelopes required for the election. Roll mark-off was also provided at a number of Election Day voting centres
- provision of recycling facilities at election offices and voting centres resulted in a reduction of the amount of paper that ended up in land fill.

The VEC endeavours to ensure resources are effectively managed to minimise environmental impact across all operations. However, there are items outside its control that played a large role in the conduct of a State election. The VEC encourages all stakeholders to embrace sustainable actions. However, electors receive large amounts of election material distributed through state-wide mail-outs, or by letter box drops from candidates and others that is outside of the VEC's control.

Enrolment

Victorians responded to the VEC's call for enrolments in the lead-up to the 2014 State election. In the seven days between the issue of the Writ and the close of rolls, the VEC received 43,454 new enrolments and updates. At the close of rolls at 8.00pm on Tuesday, 11 November, 3,806,301 people were enrolled to vote in the 2014 election, compared with 3,582,232 in 2010. Appendix 4 contains details of Region and District enrolments at the close of rolls.

To maintain the accuracy of the Register of Electors on an ongoing basis, the VEC uses a range of strategic programs to help Victorians enrol or update their enrolment. Since 2010, the VEC has been undertaking regular direct enrolment of electors, using primarily change of address data, sourced from Vic Roads.

In early 2014 the direct enrolment was made a weekly process, enabling the VEC to improve the accuracy and currency of the enrolment register. Direct enrolment is considered the most effective way of maintaining an accurate Register of Electors.

More broadly, the VEC continues to work with the Australian Electoral Commission under a Joint Roll Agreement, maintaining a joint enrolment process. This remains a significant input to the maintenance of the Register of Electors. In addition, enrolment forms are available on the VEC website, at local council offices and post offices. In 2014 the VEC introduced an online enrolment facility, enabling electors to enrol and update their details electronically. Figure 1 shows the major sources of enrolment transactions in the six months to December 2014.

With the aim of the Register of Electors being as accurate and up-to-date as possible at the close of rolls, the VEC conducted an extended enrolment advertising campaign for the month prior to the issue of the Writ. The campaign commenced with a media launch and included television, radio, newspaper and outdoor advertising that reminded eligible electors to enrol or update their enrolment details using any of the available methods.

	AEC	VEC Online	VEC Direct Enrol	VEC Manual Update
New to Roll	51,547	7,289	11,836	2
Change of Address	97,798	19,010	118,384	3,230
Reinstatement	12,050	1,358	6,148	569
Total	161,395	27,657	136,368	3,801

Figure 1: Major sources of Enrolment transactions in the six months to December 2014

Online Enrolment

The VEC introduced an online enrolment service in August 2014. This allows Victorian electors to update their enrolment details directly with the VEC. In addition, using an online signature facility electors are also able for the first time to enrol directly with the VEC.

The online enrolment service was a key input into the increased enrolment figures in the lead up to the close of roll on 11 November. Between the issue of the Writ and the close of rolls 10,459 Victorians were able to enrol or update their address details directly with the VEC. This enrolment source represented just under 24% of the total transactions processed between the issue of the Writ and the Close of Roll.

Close of Roll

At the issue of the Writ, eligible electors have seven days to ensure they are on the electoral roll and that their enrolment details are correct. Electors were able to update their enrolment details or enrol at VEC or Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) election offices throughout the State, collect an enrolment form at any post office, or use the VECs online enrolment form via a link on the VEC's website.

The VEC entered into special arrangements with the AEC to facilitate the close of roll for roll production. All AEC offices were open until 8.00pm on close of roll and the AEC provided the close of roll extract within 24 hours of close of roll. A total of 37,742 enrolment or other transactions occurred between the issue of the Writs and the close of roll (see Figure 2)

	Online enrolment	AEC transactions
New to Roll	3,029	9,343
Change of Address	6,857	15,753
Reinstatement	573	2,187
Total	10,459	27,283

Figure 2: Enrolment transactions processed between Issue of Writs and Close of Roll

Services to Candidates and Political Parties

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, 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 a political party to be registered to contest an election, but registration gives a party a number of important entitlements, including:

- 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
- public funding for parties obtaining enough votes.

There was keen interest in party registration in the lead-up to the State election. In 2014, the VEC received applications for registration from 13 new political parties, 11 of which were registered in time for the election. Three parties were registered on the last possible day, 3 November 2014.

Before registering a party, the VEC must be satisfied that the party is an 'eligible political party' within the meaning of the Act. There are two main ways in which the VEC tests a party's eligibility, after confirming that the application is in order. First, the VEC advertises the application, inviting objections to the application. Objections must be received within 30 days after the VEC's notice. At the same time, the VEC writes to the people on the party's membership list, asking those people to use an included form and reply-paid envelope to confirm whether they are eligible members of the party.

The VEC received 12 objections to applications to party registration in 2014. Several objections alleged that the party was not a real political party, because it was a single-issue party, or its aims were unclear, or it had free membership. Other objections were to the name of the party as being misleading or confusingly similar to the name of an existing registered party. In considering objections, the VEC was guided by the Act, which contains few provisions relating to a party's constitution and none about a party's policies. The only grounds of objection that the VEC can consider are that the party is not an eligible political party, that the application was not correctly made, or that the party's name is inadmissible.

Most objections were not based on these grounds, so were rejected. Two objections stated that the name of the Liberal Democratic Party so nearly resembled the name of the Liberal Party that it was likely to be confused with the Liberal Party. The VEC considered case history and experience in other jurisdictions, and decided that the name of the Liberal Democratic Party was acceptable. There were no objections to the name of Vote 1 Local Jobs, but there were two objections to its proposed abbreviation, "LJP". In this case, the VEC rejected the argument that the abbreviation was confusingly similar to the abbreviation of the Liberal Party, but concluded that the proposed abbreviation was not a proper abbreviation of the party's name, and required the party to change its abbreviation.

Responses to the VEC's mail-outs to the lists of party members varied considerably. The VEC allowed parties to provide supplementary lists of members, and wrote to those on the supplementary lists. This process could take some time. The VEC only registered a party when it was satisfied, through the independent, signed confirmation of the members themselves, that the party had at least 500 eligible members. Appendix 2 shows the details for party registration in 2014. A total of 21 parties were registered for and contested the 2014 State election (see Figure 4).

Information for Candidates

Handbooks and Briefings

Handbooks produced for candidates and scrutineers were available from the VEC, election offices and via the VEC's website.

The handbooks were also available to registered parties and independent candidates at briefings and the information session conducted by the VEC in the lead up to the election. Political parties registered at the relevant times were invited to meet individually with the Electoral Commissioner and VEC managers. An information session was also provided for independent candidates.

Candidates and parties were provided with information, and supporting material to help ensure they were familiar with their responsibilities and the applicable legislation, were informed about the election services and support available to them from the VEC, and the VEC's responsibilities and procedures as they relate to candidates and parties.

Newsletters

Circulars for registered political parties and independent candidates were distributed throughout the election period, reminding participants of deadlines, providing further data on election arrangements and progress and any other relevant information.

Nominations

The nomination period opened on Wednesday 5 November and closed at 12 noon on Friday 14 November. Registered political parties were required to submit their nominations by 12 noon on Thursday 13 November. The VEC received 896 nominations for the 2014 Victorian State election, a significant increase on the 711 candidates in 2010 and reflecting the trend observed over past elections (See Figure 3).

There were 545 candidates for the 88 Legislative Assembly (Lower House) districts compared with 502 in 2010, and for the eight Legislative Council (Upper House) regions, 351 candidates stood compared with 209 in 2010. A total of 789 candidates were endorsed by registered political parties, an increase on the 624 candidates endorsed in 2010. There were 107 candidates standing as independents, compared with 87 in 2010. Appendix 9 contains a list of candidates for the 2014 State election.

Registered political parties were provided with an electronic application for recording nomination details for each district and region. This enabled parties to print prepopulated nomination forms for their candidates to sign. The VEC accepted electronic files that could be loaded directly into the Election Management System.

The VEC again provided independent candidates with a facility to complete a nomination form online. Once the candidate was satisfied with the details they had entered, they could print the online form to lodge with the Election Manager. By scanning the barcode on the nomination form at the time of lodgement, details as entered by the candidate were loaded directly into the VEC's Election Management System. These facilities streamlined the processing of nominations and reduced waiting times for candidates and party representatives.

Contentious Nomination

On Friday 14 November, the day after nominations closed for candidates endorsed by registered political parties, the VEC received advice from the Palmer United Party that their candidate for the South Eastern Metropolitan Region, was disqualified from being a candidate at the election. Accordingly, they requested that this nomination be withdrawn and his name removed from the ballot paper.

The VEC advised that there was no provision under the *Electoral Act 2002* to withdraw a nomination after nominations had closed or to remove a candidate's name from the ballot paper. The Palmer United Party subsequently sought an injunction to have the candidate's name removed from the ballot paper. The injunction was heard and dismissed by Justice Bongiorno in the Victorian Supreme Court on the same afternoon. The Palmer United Party subsequently lodged a Group Voting Ticket (GVT) for their registered group for the South Eastern Metropolitan Region, placing the disqualified candidate in third position on their GVT.
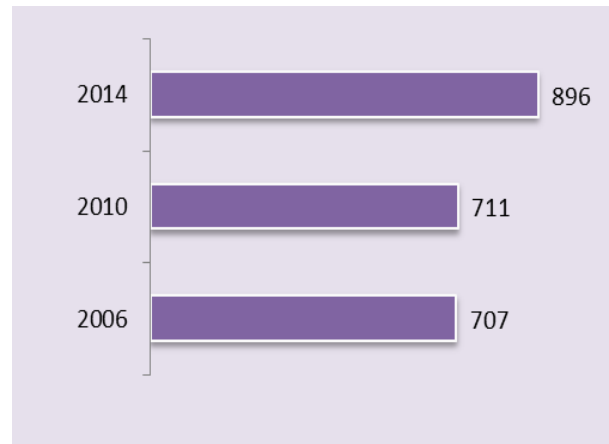
Figure 3: Number of candidates contesting Victorian State elections, 2006-2014
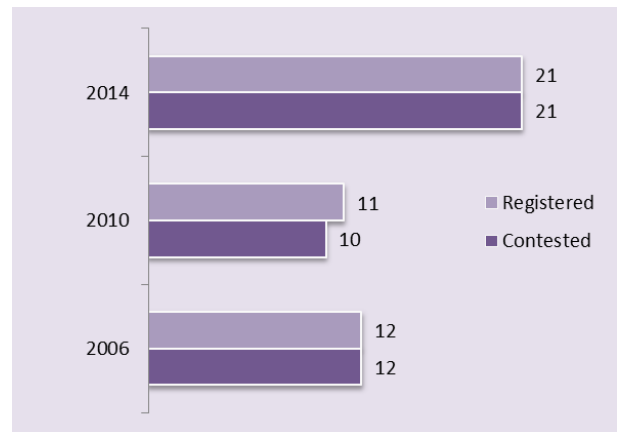
Figure 4: Number of registered political parties contesting Victorian State elections, 2006-2014
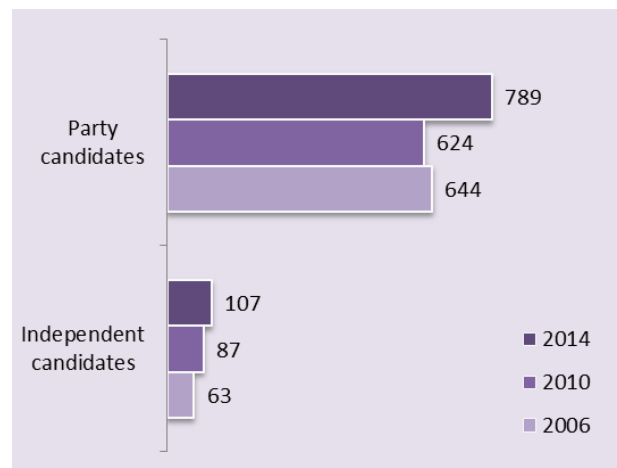
Figure 5: Candidates endorsed by registered political parties, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Group Registration and Group Voting Tickets – Legislative Council

Two or more candidates nominating for the same region in the Legislative Council can request that their names be grouped on the ballot paper in a specified order. Group registration closed at midday, Thursday, 13 November, the same time as close of nominations for registered political parties.

A total of 133 groups were registered across the eight regions compared with 57 in 2010. This was a significant increase and gave rise to increased ballot paper sizes across all regions. Northern Metropolitan region had the highest number of groups, with 20 groups registered. This triggered the implementation of the special ballot paper layout prescribed by Schedule 1B of the *Electoral Act 2002* with two rows of above-the-line groups and two rows of candidates below-the-line. Northern Victoria Region had the least with 14 groups registered.

A total of 129 groups were from registered political parties and three groups were registered by independent candidates. The Liberal and National Party registered combined groups in Eastern, Northern and Western Victoria Regions. Nine independent candidates remained ungrouped.

In accordance with legislation, all registered groups lodged group voting tickets with the VEC by midday on Sunday, 16 November (see Figure 6). One independent group in Southern Metropolitan Region chose to lodge two group voting tickets.
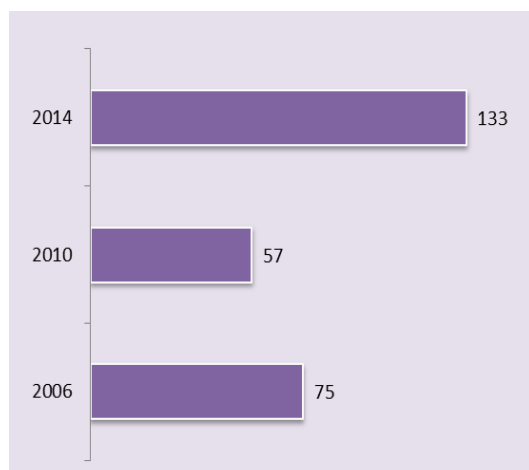
Figure 6: Group voting tickets registered, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

How-to-Vote Card Registration

How-to-vote cards (HTVC) must be registered by the VEC if they are to be handed out, distributed or otherwise made available within 400 metres of a voting centre on Election Day. HTVCs carried by mobile early voting teams must also be registered. Any candidate, person or organisation can register a HTVC.

The registration period for HTVCs was from Monday, 17 November, to midday on Friday, 21 November. A total of 1,628 HTVCs were registered for this election compared to 1,101 in 2010. There has been a significant increase in the number of HTVCs registered at State elections since 2006 (see Figure 7). All registered HTVCs were available for viewing at the VEC head office in Little Collins Street, Melbourne and were published on the VEC website in accordance with legislation.
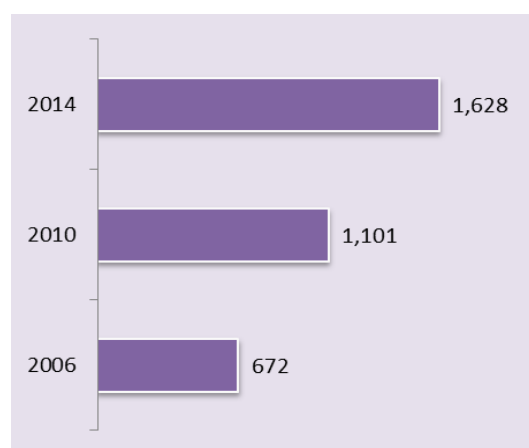
Figure 7: How to vote cards registered, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Provision of electoral rolls to candidates

Under the *Electoral Act 2002* (the Act) the VEC is required to provide a list specifying certain electors and limited information particulars on request to registered political parties and candidates in an election. This list is provided as encrypted data.

The Act prescribes severe penalties for any misuse of electoral information provided. When providing the information, the VEC reminds recipients of their obligations in relation to the information, the permitted purpose, the confidential nature of the information, the need for secure use, storage and destruction of the information and of the existence of the associated penalties for misuse.

Candidates' deposits forfeited

The deposits of 460 of the 896 candidates were forfeited because they were not elected and/or because they, or their Upper House group, obtained less than four percent of the first-preference votes in their electorates (see Appendix 10).

Postal Voting Protocol

A major discussion item at meetings with registered political parties was the production and distribution of postal vote applications by registered political parties. Section 101 of the Act 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.

The VEC postal voting protocol was distributed to registered political parties. Introduced prior to the 2006 State election the protocol provides guidance on the production and distribution of postal vote applications and aims to minimise elector confusion about whether the application was from the VEC or a political party. The protocol directs that a postal vote application:

- must contain the information detailed in Form J of the Electoral Regulations 2012
- must not contain a VEC logo
- must not contain any information that could be considered to be misleading within the Act
- must not be produced using shiny paper
- must not contain any political comment
- must clearly identify the distributing party or candidate
- may be distributed with other political information

To assist parties with the production of their postal vote applications, the VEC provided each registered political party with a template for a postal vote application 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.

At the 2014 State election, two parties produced and distributed postal vote applications. Over 75% of postal vote applications processed by the VEC were party specific applications. Despite the established protocol and the assistance from the VEC available to parties, a number of issues arose.

The VEC had requested parties to ensure that completed postal vote applications submitted to party offices were promptly forwarded to be delivered at the VEC by 11.00 am to ensure same day despatch of ballot material to electors. This was not always achieved and led to delays in the despatch of ballot material and subsequent queries and complaints from electors keen to receive their voting material.

In addition, the sheer volumes of postal vote applications distributed by parties across the state, along with the two week period between the issue of the writ and the close of nominations resulted in some electors submitting multiple applications to vote by post.

Some electors who received the application form with electoral material included, incorrectly assumed it was from the VEC. A number of complaints, emails and phone queries were received by the VEC relating to what electors erroneously believed was a partisan approach by the VEC. Other complainants were not aware of or disapproved of the parties being allowed to send postal voting applications in this way, and to the use of their personal information by parties and candidates. While the VEC provides advice that this use and disclosure is permitted by the Act, some electors express strong negative feelings about it.

The Greens erroneously delivered copies of a General Postal Voter application to a small number of electors who submitted these applications thinking they were applying for a postal vote. As soon as the VEC became aware of the error, the Greens were contacted and a solution was negotiated to help ensure these electors were able to submit the correct form in time to receive their voting material. One complaint was received in relation to this matter.

Communication Services

Advertising Services

A new advertising campaign was a key feature of the VEC's election communication in 2014. The animated campaign aimed to reflect the diversity of Victorian voters and emphasise the importance of every single vote. The majority of advertisements opened with an historical election statistic on close results. This concept tested well in research. The campaign was designed to be effective across a broad range of advertising platforms and featured on television, radio, online banners, social media, outdoor posters and billboards in addition to the VEC's website and campaign material.

Specific advertising content was developed for each key message during the election. Television advertisements were developed to address enrolment, early voting, voting with assistance, the importance of preferences and how to correctly complete the ballot papers. Additional advertisements to address more specific needs or legislative requirements were developed for various platforms. Sample advertisements from the campaign are included in Appendix 13.

The advertising placement strategy was developed with the intention of targeting areas and audiences that are typically under-represented in the democratic process. More capital was invested in social media than at any prior State election and services such as streaming media were included for the first time.

In line with Victoria's Regional Communication Policy, more than 15% of the total advertising budget was allocated to the use of media outlets in regional areas. However, due to savings at the time of booking, the ultimate spend in regional areas was 14.05%.

As people from culturally or linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are much more likely to face barriers to the democratic process, the total advertising spend in CALD outlets was 10.15% of the total placement budget. This is more than double the proportion required by the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Multicultural Communication Policy for Government agencies.

The VEC's media buying agency advised that the VEC had exceeded its media targeting strategy in terms of reach and frequency of advertising. However, post-election research indicated that in virtually all voter groups, far fewer voters could recall having seen any advertising in traditional media (television, print and radio), especially compared with results in 2010. Upon further investigation, this result has been attributed to greater audience fragmentation in terms of media consumption i.e. there are many more media channels to cover than ever before – extra free-to-air TV, subscription services and online outlets. This will be taken into consideration in terms of future media buying strategies.

EasyVote Guide

From Friday 13 November, personalised EasyVote Guides were mailed to all electors who were on the electoral roll at the close of roll. For the 2014 election, the format of the EasyVote Guide was presented as two items – an A4 EasyVote Guide and a DL-size EasyVote brochure. The format was changed with a view to speed the printing time, to enable the product to be mailed earlier, with the result that the product was able to be mailed out within two days of the close of roll. The draft products were tested for ease of understanding and content with focus groups and rated extremely well with all audiences.

Information in the EasyVote Guide included the elector's voting and electorate details on an EasyVote Card to take to the voting centre; the dates, times and voting locations for the election; information regarding the change of electoral boundaries and accessibility ratings for each voting centre within the voter's district. The EasyVote brochure provided information about early and postal voting options, accessibility supercentres and electronically assisted voting, instructions on how to correctly complete both ballot papers and interpreter contact numbers for 20 languages other than English.

Communication Services for CALD Voters

The VEC offered translated information online, in text and audio format in 20 languages other than English, along with translated enrolment forms, which convert to English when printed. Specialist advice was sought from LEBA Ethnic Media to help ensure that the key messages from the advertising campaign reached non-English speaking voters across the State. Recommendations as to the most effective outlets for each language, along with translation and dispatch services were received.

Press and radio advertisements constituted 68% and 23% of the total CALD advertising spend respectively. Victoria has a vibrant and diverse spectrum of in-language print publications and each key message from the advertising campaign was translated and published in as many languages as possible. Similarly, translated versions of each radio advertisement ran on recommended in-language radio shows throughout the campaign.

Online advertisements about enrolment and preferences were placed on in-language newspaper sites that have strong Victorian traffic. Similarly, key Facebook posts about enrolment were promoted to Victorian users who identified their preferred language as one of the 20 the VEC was targeting across the State.

Mobile Application – Vote Victoria

Building on the success of the mobile application (app) developed for the 2010 State election, the VEC engaged mobile development agency Mnet to produce an expanded product for mobile users for the 2014 State election.

Again under the name Vote Victoria, and also available for Android for the first time, the app utilised the enrolled address input by users and provided voting information, locations and reminders during the voting period. From 6.00 pm on election night the app delivered live first preference and two candidate preferred results, along with a State-wide summary and the facility to share the count status with friends via Facebook or Twitter.

The app was downloaded 16,255 times between 14 November and 19 December when it was removed from the Apple iTunes and Google Play stores. This was a three-fold increase over the 2010 mobile app, while registering an aggregate user rating of 3.6 out of a possible five stars across the two outlets. Usage analytics show that the app was accessed an average of 4.88 times per user for an average duration of over 32 minutes. Peak usage of the app was between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm on election night and the most viewed districts were those with close outcomes or unanticipated results: Prahran, Melbourne, Richmond, Brunswick, Frankston, Albert Park, Bentleigh and others. Although 99% of users were based in Australia, the app was also downloaded in 51 other countries around the world.

Social Media

In the four years since the 2010 State election, the VEC has built a strong presence on social media along with a reputation for responsive monitoring. Social media has evolved considerably in this time, with more platforms becoming significant in the market, and increased numbers of users from a broader demographic. A proportion of the overall advertising budget was allocated for the purposes of promoting key social media posts throughout the campaign.

The VEC decided to focus its efforts on Facebook and Twitter, providing rich posts with content unique to the organisation. The VEC's Facebook page-following increased by 69% during the campaign to 5,225 followers at the return of the writs. However, total reach (the number of people who saw a VEC post) was significantly higher. At the close of the roll, VEC posts reached just under 10,000 users a day, and on election weekend, the total reach of selected posts was more than 687,000.

The VEC's Twitter following grew by 36% and the @electionsvic handle was directly mentioned in 3,397 tweets. The VEC posted 478 tweets during the 2014 State election campaign. Fifty-two tweets were prepared in advance and the remaining 426 were direct responses to other users' posts. More broadly, the State election, under the tag #VicVotes, was mentioned more than 20,000 times.

Activity that mentioned the @electionsvic handle grew throughout the campaign. Posts spiked noticeably on key dates in the election timeline: close of the roll, close of nominations, start of early voting and key result dates. As a general rule, VEC activity on Twitter had a response ratio of around 1:7, i.e. for every VEC post, users posted approximately seven times. The campaign was internally managed by the VEC's small Communication Team and channels were monitored 16 hours a day to ensure elector's posts were responded to as soon as possible.

Telephone Enquiry Service

The VEC conducted a tender process for the provision of an outsourced telephone enquiry service (TES), with Stellar Asia Pacific winning the tender. The purpose of the TES was to cater for a high volume of public enquiries over a 9.5 week operational period – from 29 September through to 3 December 2014. See Figure 8 for statistics relating to the Telephone Enquiry Service.

To help ensure high quality, accurate and appropriate content of responses, a VEC project team (project manager and three supervisors) worked onsite at Stellar's South Yarra location. Operating hours for the TES were from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm weekdays (8.00 pm on close of roll day) from 29 September through to the commencement of early voting, when hours were adjusted to provide additional hours of service on weekdays and Saturdays.

The number of calls to the service in 2014 was 108,536, marginally more than in 2010 (106,784). The major difference in 2014 was the significant jump in the number of calls to the VEC head office from interstate and overseas callers who are not able to access the VEC's 13 phone number from outside Victoria. In 2010, these calls numbered in the hundreds over the campaign period, whereas in 2014, more than 5,000 calls were taken from outside Victoria in the two weeks prior to Election Day. The VEC believes the reason for the increase in the number of calls from overseas and interstate was the ability to use telecommunications software to make calls with ease and without additional cost, using existing data allowances or free wifi locations.

Calls handled by operators	73,000	67.26%
Calls handled by auto-attendant	30,728	28.31%
Calls abandoned	3,033	2.79%
Diverted to voicemail	1,775	1.64%
Total calls	108,536	
Call handled through interpreter	1,186	1.09%
Average call handing time	294 seconds	
Emails answered	3,941	
Mail sent as result of enquiry	11,778 items	

Figure 8: Statistics relating to the telephone Enquiry Service, 2014 State election

Community Education and Engagement

Community Information and Education

A wide range of community information and education activities were undertaken in 2014 to raise awareness and encourage the participation of communities facing barriers to electoral participation. These included outreach enrolment sessions, targeted information and education sessions, special mobile voting sessions and a roadshow that aimed to raise public awareness See Figure 9).

	Sessions	Participants
Multicultural	151	3,196
Youth	25	862
Homeless	30	320
Disability	23	538
Mobile voting	20	320
Total	249	5,236

Figure 9: Education and engagement activities, 2014

VEC Roadshow

In conjunction with an events company contracted for the purpose, the VEC implemented an updated roadshow, *Driving Votes*, for the 2014 State election enrolment period. A van featuring the 'paper people' rolled out to 19 destinations across Victoria, focusing on districts with historically poorer electoral statistics and targeting high foot traffic locations. The schedule incorporated static sites including Federation Square, Dandenong Market and Southern Cross Station, and roving activities, in which *Driving Votes* staff travelled through major thoroughfares and areas of interest such as shopping strips, parks, street festivals and busy intersections.

The campaign was designed to engage youth and CALD audiences, to reinforce awareness of the upcoming election and the importance of correctly enrolling. Electors were encouraged to utilise the VEC's online resources, although face-to-face information and paper forms were also provided.

Driving Votes was a success, generating awareness and public engagement. A total of 55,655 items of VEC merchandise were distributed and there were 29,647 direct interactions with electors. Visitor feedback was overwhelmingly positive, praising the convenience factor and the VEC's willingness to put a public face on the electoral process.

Community Sector Information Kits

Around 2,500 Community Sector Information Kits were distributed to key community sector organisations across Victoria in July 2014. The aim was to raise awareness of the 2014 State election among communities facing barriers to electoral participation. Around 1,000 of these kits were sent to ethno-specific service providers.

In addition to promoting the information, education and outreach services offered by the VEC, the Kit provided information about enrolling and voting in the election. The Kit consisted of a cover letter, posters, Easy English Guides and specially coded enrolment forms.

Aboriginal Communities

Due to a staffing loss, a full outreach program was unable to be rolled out prior to the State election. Instead, the VEC hosted the 10th anniversary of the Long Walk Womens' Luncheon on 17 October – celebrating the success and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. In addition, in early November an outreach session was held in Robinvale, which has a proportionately high number of indigenous Victorians.

CALD Communities

Community Education Sessions

In the months preceding the 2014 State election, the VEC delivered a total of 151 face-to-face electoral information sessions to 3,196 established, and new and emerging CALD communities in metropolitan and regional Victoria. The project team was able to work with groups that are harder to reach owing to their geographic location, age and/or gender.

Culturally responsive electoral information sessions were delivered in community settings such as churches, private spaces, cultural and community gatherings in areas where CALD communities are located, and in English language classes in western, outer-western and south-eastern areas. Sessions were delivered in a variety of languages including English. The interpreter service was used to meet the communities' language needs. Of these sessions, 59 were delivered by Community Educators as part of the VEC's Democracy Ambassador Program.

Democracy Ambassador Program

In 2013, responding to a submission made by the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV), the VEC commenced the first part of a Democracy Ambassador (DA) pilot project. The project aims to provide electoral information and education to culturally and linguistically diverse communities, particularly new and emerging communities.

Community Educators share their lived experience, which leads to raising and promoting community awareness about the election through local community media. This successfully generated engagement by CALD communities.

The *Easy English – Vote in Victorian State Elections* booklet was used extensively with CALD communities. It succinctly conveys information on how to enrol and how to vote correctly. The VEC received very positive feedback about the booklet via the Community Educators.

People Experiencing Homelessness

The VEC continued its Homeless not Voteless program in 2014, expanding the number and location of enrolment outreach and mobile voting sessions.

Enrolment Outreach

The VEC conducted 30 enrolment outreach sessions at key agencies that provide services to people experiencing homelessness from September 2014 to the close of the electoral roll on 18 November. During the enrolment sessions, 86 people completed enrolment forms and a further 68 people checked that their details were included on the electoral roll.

At the time of the election, there was a total of 1,780 electors who identified as experiencing homelessness on the electoral roll. A total of 356 homeless persons enrolled or updated their details on the roll during 2014.

Mobile Voting

Mobile voting was conducted at 20 of the locations that had been visited as part of the community outreach activities. The sessions were held at times that agencies suggested were most suitable, generally coinciding with the highest volume of people attending the service. Many of the sessions were held at lunch time or in the early afternoon. In the 2014 State election, 320 votes were cast at the homeless mobile voting locations.

Support from Service Providers

The service providers who hosted enrolment outreach and mobile voting sessions played a key role in supporting the participation of people experiencing homelessness. In addition to providing access to their venues and assisting the VEC to identify the most suitable times, the staff of these services facilitated the access and active participation of people. Two members of the Council to Homeless Persons Peer Education and Support Program formed part of the outreach team, participating in both the outreach enrolment and mobile voting activities. These two team members provided strong linkages with the service users and facilitated communication and access.

Feedback from service provider:

"… it is such a valuable thing that the VEC does … if this [mobile voting] did not happen at our centre, the majority of our clients due to their circumstances would not have voted at a normal polling booth unsupported. Keep up the great work, we love it and fully support the VEC in continuing the mobile sessions."

People Living with a Disability

The VEC seeks to enable people with disabilities to fully participate in enrolling and voting. In 2014, the VEC developed a resource pack specifically for people living in shared group homes. The Department of Health and Human Services played a key role by assisting with the distribution of these packs to over 1,000 shared group homes in early October 2014. A total of 23 education sessions were delivered to 538 people with a disability between February and November.

The DHHS and the VEOHRC were identified as partners in this project. DHHS played a key role in distributing the election kits to shared group homes and subsequently distributing, via email, the VEC letter to shared group homes seeking input to the online survey.

The VEC's Electoral Access Advisory Group provided advice about the *Voting is for Everyone* initiative and, more generally, about how the VEC could facilitate participation in the electoral process by people with a disability.

Election Questions 2014

An online youth engagement project - Election Questions 2014 (EQ14) – targeted, amongst others, first time voters. The aim of EQ14 was to help young voters make the connection between issues that they care about and politics, through an experience of positive community participation.

The VEC contracted OurSay – an online youth engagement company with expertise in this area – to conduct the project, and it leveraged popular social media networks to drive active engagement on issues relevant to young people with regard to the State election.

EQ14 attracted 4,600 unique visitors and 1,200 participants. Of the 1,200 who participated, 267 registered a question. A total of 111 candidates committed to participating and ultimately, 42 candidates across 37 electorates responded to questions.

Following the State election and formal completion of the EQ14 program, OurSay surveyed all participants on the level of impact the project had/has on their personal engagement in elections, electoral matters and civic action generally. The survey found that as a result of participating in EQ14:

- 36% of participants were more engaged in electoral matters and the Victorian State election
- 50% simply felt engaged, as a result of participating
- 9% felt less engaged and
- 4% did not know.

OurSay received some informal feedback from voters expressing their disappointment with the low candidate response rate.

The survey also investigated the relative influence participation in EQ14 had on further community participation and related behaviours. The survey found that as a result of participating in EQ14, participants were more likely to:

- know candidates in their electoral division: 54%
- research who their candidates were: 37%
- research the policies of candidates: 46%
- research the policies of political parties: 35%
- know when the Victorian State election was being held: 33%
- think about who they would vote for prior to election day: 41%
- vote on election day: 11%.

Democracy Live

In place of a tally room (see Media Services section), which had been poorly attended by parties, candidates and the public in the past, the VEC hosted a public event at Federation Square to celebrate democracy on election night. An events company (RBK Productions) was contracted to organise the event.

The event commenced at 6.30 pm and ran through to 10.30 pm in terms of activity, which included street performers, a cover band, a coffee cart and live crosses to election coverage on the ABC on the giant screen in Federation Square. Increased security measures were taken to ensure the event proceeded without incident.

Several thousand members of the public attended the event, some for brief periods of time and some staying longer to enjoy the entertainment and coverage – even up to the concession and acceptance speeches. The event organiser recorded a number of positive comments in relation to the event.

Services to the Media

Media Briefing

The media were invited to a briefing on Thursday 9 October. Nineteen State political reporters and journalists attended, representing *3AW, AAP, ABC, Financial Review, Herald Sun, Nine Network ,The Age,* and *The Australian.*

Senior VEC staff provided a rundown of the State election timeline, voter information campaign, State electoral boundaries, legislative changes, complaints process and the methods of accessing results on election night. Attendees were also provided with a range of resources, such as a media handbook, the *Electoral Boundaries Commission 2012-2013 Report*, candidate handbooks for both the Upper House and Lower House, various maps and the *State Election Service Plan* for their reference.

Media Handbook

A media handbook was developed and distributed to Victorian metro and regional media outlets prior to the election period.

The handbook contained State election information such as timelines, key facts and figures, State boundary and legislative changes, maps, an electoral pendulum, and details about various VEC programs and the voter information campaign.

Media Releases

Forty-four media releases and advisories were issued to targeted contacts of metro and regional media outlets to keep them informed of key electoral information during the election.

Four media releases, based on the main phases of the election cycle, were translated into 17 languages and distributed to over 200 ethnic media publications.

In addition, the VEC organised the pre-recording of five radio grab sets for the State election. Each grab set corresponded to the main phases of the election cycle, while also taking into consideration the best timing for optimal airplay. These grabs were downloaded for broadcast by 259 syndicates and broadcast stations.

Media Interviews

More than 350 State election media enquiries and interviews were logged during the election period.

The highlights included an interview on ABC's 7.30 program, where the Electoral Commissioner discussed the VEC's preparations in the lead up to election day and the reasons for discontinuing the Tally Room.

During the election period, 10 metro media outlets, including SBS Radio, interviewed community educators and covered the VEC's Democracy Ambassador Program.

Media Centre

A dedicated media centre was created on the VEC website, providing a hub of useful links, resources, and information for the media.

The media centre received 4,697 page views during the election period, with the State election releases landing page receiving an additional 725 views, and media releases receiving a collective total of over 1000 views.

Results Feed and Virtual Tally Room

Election results were provided as downloadable data files in a form that could be programmed for media coverage. These files included information on candidates, party affiliation (where applicable) and voting locations. The XML feed drilled down to the provisional results at individual voting centres within each district.

The results data files were also published at regular intervals on the Virtual Tally Room, which was hosted on a secure site dedicated to the publication of results. The Virtual Tally Room site received a total of 1,268,502 page views.

Tally Room

Stakeholder requirements for a tally room have varied as technology has led to more flexible options for the media, analysts and interested parties to access results data directly.

In mid-2013, the Electoral Commissioner wrote to all the mainstream media outlets, political parties and analysts to gauge the level of interest in continuance of a central tally room on election night for the 2014 State election.

Feedback from a number of stakeholders indicated a preference to access data directly from their own premises, and the VEC decided to discontinue the tally room on election night.

This decision accords with the situation in other states and the Commonwealth, where the tally room is no longer part of the electoral landscape.

Voting

Along with enrolment, voter turnout and formal voting rates are useful indicators of the health of an electoral system. These participation indicators (Figure 10) 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.

By providing Victorians with the voting services and information they needed to participate fully and appropriately in the election, the VEC sought to maximise voter participation and reduce informal voting.

Voter Turnout

Voter turnout at the 2014 State election for the Lower House was 93.02% of total electors enrolled, slightly higher than the 92.96% at the 2010 State election and the 92.72% at the 2006 State election. Figure 11 shows the proportion of votes by vote type for the 2014 State election.

Formal Voting

The VEC presents a variety of programs and activities on an ongoing basis to help ensure that voters know how to vote correctly so that their vote counts (see Community Education and Engagement section). Election-specific campaigns also focus on how to vote correctly. The proportion of voters who voted formally at the 2014 state election was 94.78%. The 5.22% of voters who voted informally appear to have done so for a range of reasons including numbering errors, apparently deliberate intention and misunderstanding of how to cast a formal vote (use of crosses and ticks). An analysis of informal votes conducted after the 2014 state election is included in this document.

Of the total votes counted for the election, 2,333,007 (65.89%) were issued on Election Day. This compares with 2,538,460 (76.23%) in 2010 and 2,641,340 (84.93%) in 2006, and reflects the increasing trend towards early voting.
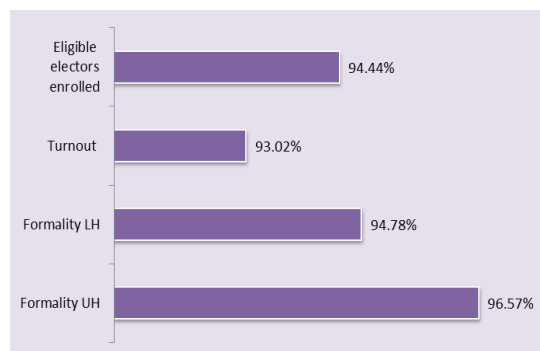
Figure 10: Participation: Enrolment, turnout and formality rates, Victorian State election 2014
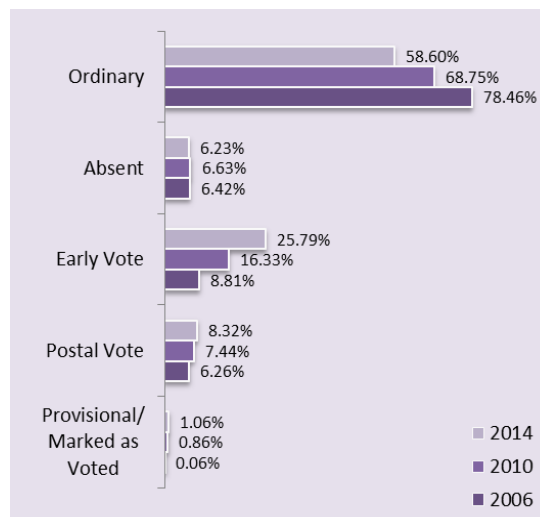
Figure 11: Votes by vote type, Victorian State election 2014

Voting Services

Arrangements for Voting on Election Day

Voting took place between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm at 1,786 voting centres throughout Victoria on Election Day, Saturday, 29 November 2014. 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'.

The VEC establishes a number of joint voting centres with the aim of reducing the number of absent votes issued at voting centres located close to electorate boundaries, thereby speeding up the voting process for affected electors. A total of 97 joint voting centres were established for this election, compared with 158 in 2010 and 147 in 2006. See Figure 12 for voting centres by type.

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 continues to be disappointed with the lack of wheelchair accessible venues available for use as voting centres – particularly given that most of the venues are State government-owned.

Voting centre locations were promoted through the VEC's telephone enquiry service and online through the voting centre look up and mobile app. In addition, all voting centres were listed in major daily and regional newspapers. The accessibility rating of all centres was included and those venues rated as 'assisted access' included a brief description of their accessibility limitations.

Estimates for the number of voters anticipated to attend at each Election Day voting centre were based on statistics from the 2010 State election, the 2013 Federal election, and consideration of the impact of the 2012-13 State redivision. An analysis of ordinary votes taken at each venue against the estimates showed that estimates accuracy has increased, with 99.83% of estimates within 550 voters (one issuing table) of the actual figures. This is an increase on the 99.02% achieved in 2010 and 97.68% in 2006.

The Victorian Electoral Commission reviewed its election workforce planning, and incorporated feedback and observations from the 2010 State election, along with consideration of the EMC recommendations, when developing the plan for the 2014 State election. Targets were set for completion of tasks in each voting centre no later than 10.00 pm.
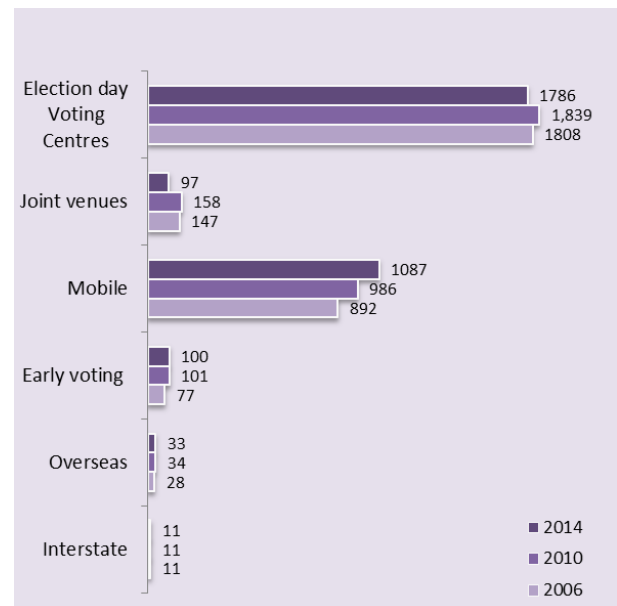
Figure 12: Voting Centres, by type, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014
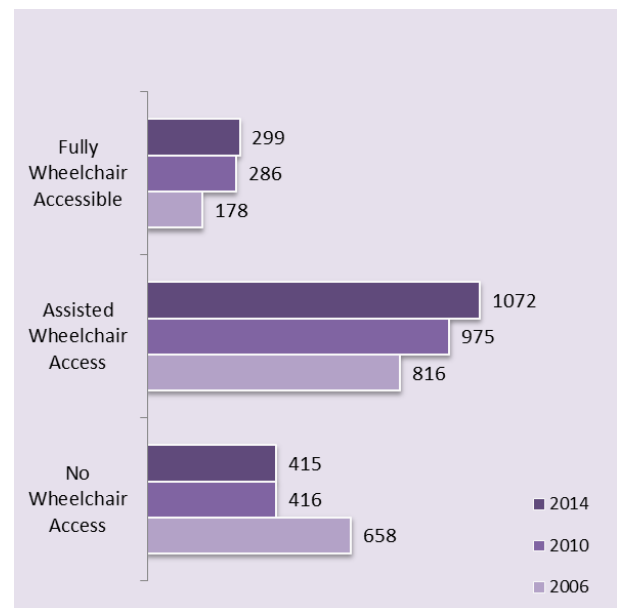
Figure 13: Wheelchair accessibility ratings, Election day Voting Centres, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Arrangements for Voting Before Election Day

There has been a significant and notable increase in the number of votes being cast before Election Day at Victorian State elections. In planning for the 2014 State election, the VEC made a variety of arrangements for electors who were unable to attend a voting centre on Election Day.

A total of 1,207,538 Victorians voted before Election Day, representing 34.11% of all votes cast. This was a 52.58% increase on the number of votes cast before Election Day at the 2010 State election (791,405 votes) and a 157.71% increase on that of 2006 (468,567 votes).

Early Voting in Person

Early voting in person was available prior to Election Day at 100 early voting centres throughout the State. These early voting centres were open for two weeks, from Friday, 14 November to Friday, 28 November. In addition to business hours, these centres were open until 8:00 pm on Thursday, 27 November, and from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm on Saturday, 22 November, to meet the needs of those members of the community who could not attend a voting centre on Election Day or during business hours.

There were 912,967 votes cast at early voting centres prior to Election Day, 67.90% more than the number of votes cast at early voting centres in 2010 and 233.26% more than in 2006.

In most cases, the election office was considered to be appropriately located for the purpose of voting prior to Election Day. However, an additional 44 early voting centres were established to supplement election offices, including one each at Melbourne and Avalon airports. The VEC received a small number of complaints relating to the location of early voting centres, the majority of which involved a change of usual location.

Operating hours at early voting centres at both airports were extended to ensure that electors leaving Victoria on all major flights were catered for. At Melbourne Airport, operating hours were 5.00 am to 10.00 pm from Monday 17 to Thursday, 27 November and until 6.00 pm on Friday, 28 November. At Avalon Airport, operating hours were 5.00 am to 8.00 pm from Monday, 17 November to Thursday, 27 November and until 6.00 pm on Friday, 28 November. Operating hours also included the weekend of 22 and 23 November at both airports.

The VEC ran a pilot model during early voting whereby six of the early voting centres were designated as "fully accessible supercentres". Voting amenities, services and resources at these centres were fully accessible to electors with a varying range of special needs. Services included Auslan interpreters, CCTV, and electronically- assisted voting.

Electors with special circumstances were able to vote from 4.00 pm on Friday, 14 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. The very short period between the close of nominations and commencement of early voting does not allow enough time for the production and distribution of ballot papers, so ballot papers used during that period were printed on-site at election offices.

The use of Netbooks 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 directly on the VEC's central database as having voted. A list of early voting centres is included as Appendix 1.

Mobile Early Voting

The Electoral Commissioner has the authority to appoint certain establishments as mobile early 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 early voting teams may visit establishments such as nursing homes, hostels and hospitals. There were 1,106 mobile early voting centres appointed for the 2014 State election, compared with 986 locations in 2010. Some venues requested postal voting services only and 989 requested a mobile voting team to visit.

Netbooks were used at mobile voting centres and provided access to the State election roll to assist election officials to identify each elector's correct enrolment details and to mark them directly on the VEC's central database as having voted.
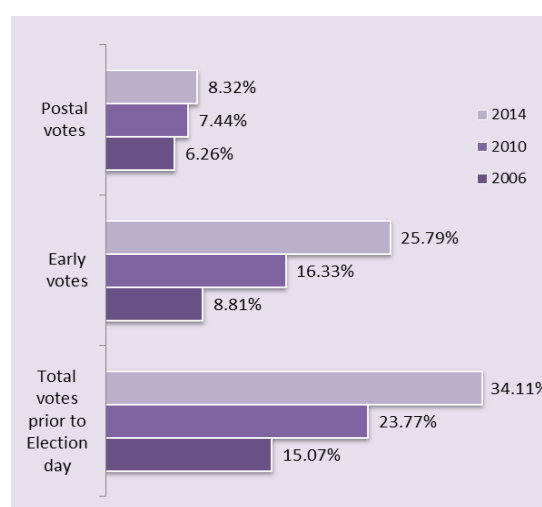

Figure 14: Votes cast prior to Election Day, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Interstate and Overseas Voting

Early voting was available at 11 interstate and 32 overseas locations. A total of 12,872 votes were returned from outside Victoria during the 2014 State election (see Appendix 7 for interstate Voting Centres and Appendix 8 for Overseas Voting Centres. This is an approximately 20% increase on 2010 (10,758) and 2006 (10,805). A list of early voting centres within Victoria is included as Appendix 1.
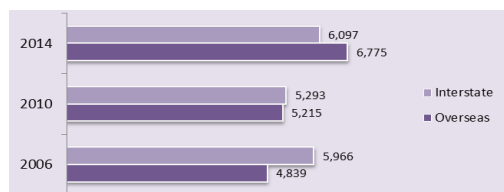

Figure 15: Votes taken at interstate and overseas locations, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Early Voting by Post

Electors unable to attend a voting centre on Election Day could access a postal vote by:

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

Most 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. Applications that could not be scanned were processed manually. The VEC's Election Management System enabled election officials to track all applications and inform electors of the status of their application at any time.

The VEC again established an emailed ballot material service for the 2014 State election. This facility was only available to electors in remote areas or overseas who would experience difficulty in accessing postal facilities. Electors could submit a postal vote application by email, and provide an email address for receipt of ballot material. The VEC processed each application and then sent two emails to each elector who requested the email ballot material service; the first containing a secure file with all ballot material required to vote, and the second containing a password for the elector to access the ballot material file. A total of 2,603 emailed ballot packs were despatched during the election compared to 1,212 at the 2010 State election.

Once the initial backlog of postal vote applications was cleared (two working days), the VEC endeavoured to process all further postal vote applications on the day they were received by the VEC.

As occurred at the 2010 State election, some electors who applied for a postal vote also voted at an early voting centre prior to receiving their ballot packs. The use of Netbooks at all early voting centres enabled the VEC to identify any elector who had been issued with, but had not returned a postal vote. The computerised system used to mark electors off the roll prior to issuing a vote cancelled the postal vote issued to any elector who wished to cast an early vote instead. If the postal vote was inadvertently returned, it was rejected by the system and not counted.

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

All processed postal vote applications were made available electronically to election offices (as a scanned image) progressively as they were processed. From the Monday prior to Election Day an elector's declaration could be quickly checked against that elector's signature on the scanned image of the postal vote application. As a result, a high proportion of postal votes were included in the count on election night.

Antarctic Electors

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. Nineteen votes were returned by Antarctic electors and included in the count.

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 a General Postal Voter. By registering as a General Postal Voter, electors automatically receive ballot papers in the mail for all State elections and local government elections. There were 54,370 (1.43% of enrolment) General Postal Voters registered for the 2014 State election, a slight decrease proportionally on 2010.
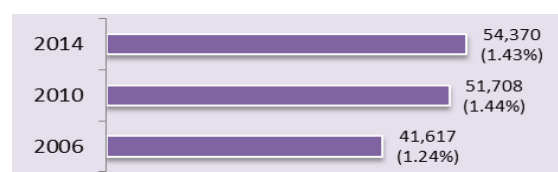

Figure 16: General Postal Voters, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Electronically Assisted Voting

The legislation that governs electronic voting in Victoria is the *Electoral Act 2002* , section 100 and Part 6A and the Electoral Regulations 2012 Part 5. Electronically assisted voting (EAV) has been available at Victorian State elections since 2006. In 2010, EAV was available during the early voting period within Victoria, interstate and in the United Kingdom.

At the 2014 Victorian State election, EAV was again provided during the early voting period and was available to eligible electors within Victoria and to Victorian electors in the United Kingdom. The VEC deployed a completely new voting system created in-house by local and overseas expert developers. The new system is the first of its kind to provide end-to-end independently verifiable EAV, and fully open service software.

For the 2014 State election, a touchscreen tablet-based voting system was deployed, providing a secure, secret, voting session with a range of functions that allowed electors with motor or vision impairments, or insufficient literacy skills (whether in the English language or the elector's primary spoken language) to vote independently.

For electors with no vision, or those who could not operate a touchscreen (or preferred not to), the voting system provided audio guidance and took commands via the blackened tablet screen or tactile phone type keypad overlaid on the screen. Voting was available in English and 19 other languages: Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Croatian, Dari, Greek, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Persian, Russian, Serbian, Somali, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. Some audio support was also available in other languages.

Electors who voted electronically were marked off the roll by an election official and provided with a printed candidate list for their district and region. The candidate list is a new security feature forming part of the system's end-to-end verifiability. The elector placed the candidate list under a scanner in order to commence the voting session. A number of configurable options were available at this stage including language, print and audio settings

The elector then moved through the voting session, voting first for the relevant District (Legislative Assembly) then the Region (Legislative Council). When completing a region vote the elector could choose to vote above-the-line for a particular group or below-the-line for five or more candidates. It was not mandatory to vote formally. However, the system would alert the elector if they were about to make an informal vote, and would accept the vote as informal if the voter indicated that was their intention.

On completion of the vote the elector was able to review their vote to confirm that they had voted as intended. Changes could be made at this stage. Once the elector was satisfied with their vote it was submitted and transferred to the VEC. On successful transmission a receipt automatically printed for the elector as a record of their vote. The receipt could be compared to the original candidate list to confirm that the VEC had recorded exactly how they voted. Candidate lists could not be removed from the voting centre however the receipt could be.

The elector could then further check their receipt on the VEC website. The receipt did not display how the voter voted, and could not be linked to the elector's identity. However, the website showed the elector that the VEC had an exact copy of the same voting receipt. The website also offered public audit trails from the system that provided independent evidence that electronic voting has operated securely and that all receipts from all electors were present.

After 6.00 pm on election night, the collected receipts were shuffled and decrypted to reveal the votes, reconciled and printed ready for despatch to their relevant electorate for counting in the week after Election Day.

Although the EAV solution used electronics in the capture and recording of votes, there were a number of checkpoints available that provided a means to independently confirm the system performed as expected. These were:

- End-to-end voting observation – observation of the passage of votes from the elector being marked off the roll to the central printout of electronically cast votes and distribution to election offices.
- Real time election management – observation of the process of running and supporting the election including reports and information emitted from the system in real time.
- System verification outputs made available on the VEC website by way of a publicly accessible record of all key technical data (except the votes themselves) daily during the election. The data could be independently checked to verify a range of critical functions of the system such as ballot generation, encryption and after the election, decryption. After close of polls, the collected votes were also made available for all districts and regions where there were adequate numbers not to pose a privacy risk.
- Reports and analyses commissioned by the VEC from independent experts (available on the VEC website).

At the close of early voting 1,121 votes had been cast electronically compared to 961 in 2010.

The average formality rate in 2014 for votes cast electronically was 97.40% for district votes and 98.84% for region votes compared to the overall total for all districts (paper and electronic votes counted) of 93.01% and 93.0% for all regions. This is slightly lower than in 2010 when the overall formality rate was 99%. A total of 17.04% of region votes cast electronically were completed below-the-line. By contrast, an average of 6.10% of all region votes were cast below-the-line.

Two independent surveys of users indicate that the EAV solution provided at the 2014 State election was considered to be a success. Forty-six electors who used EAV services in London were surveyed at random in face-to-face interviews as they exited the voting location. A smaller number of electors in Victoria who voted electronically left their details with the VEC so that they could be interviewed by telephone after the election.

When electors were questioned about the ease of use of the system, their comprehension of the messaging during the voting process, the tasks relevant to the verification printed lists, and the duration of the voting process, more than 80% reported they were satisfied or very satisfied. This was comparable to, or better than the findings in 2010, and pleasing considering the new steps introduced with the verification processes in 2014. Of the open ended questions asked of the London electors, almost all answers were positive about this system. Overall, this is an important finding that shows independent verification is not an impost on electors when voting electronically.
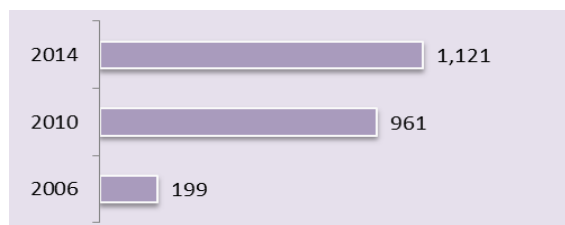
Figure 17: Electronically assisted votes, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Region	TOTAL
Eastern Metropolitan	177
Eastern Victoria	75
Northern Metropolitan	198
Northern Victoria	99
South-Eastern Metropolitan	96
Southern Metropolitan	290
Western Metropolitan	93
Western Victoria	93
Total	1,121

Figure 18: Voters accessing electronically assisted voting (vVote), by Region, 2014 Victorian State election

Assistance for Voters with Special Needs

Along with the availability of electronically assisted voting in English and 19 other languages, voting instructions in a range of languages were printed on the voter-facing side of voting screens. The VEC's online registration facility again included questions about foreign language fluency, for people seeking election work. The number of staff identifying as having skills in language/s in addition to English increased from 2,931 in 2010 to 3,780 in 2014. The VEC's personnel system enabled Election Managers to identify election staff with language skills relevant to locations within an electorate.

Publishing key election information in accessible formats including Easy English is a major commitment outlined in the VEC's Disability Action Plan. The VEC published an Easy English Guide to the 2014 State election, which was extremely popular.

Electoral information in 20 languages and English was available on the VEC's website, and a telephone interpreter service was advertised. The telephone service provided pre-recorded information specific to an event and an option for the caller to request the services of an interpreter.

The VEC website conforms to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 conventions for accessibility. A link to BrowseAloud, a downloadable application that reads the text on a website, is provided on the VEC website.

Additional Voting Services

The VEC is committed to ensuring maximum accessibility to voting. An analysis was conducted to identify any key events that were scheduled to occur on Saturday, 29 November, so that suitable voting services could be provided for electors attending these events.

The VEC contacted the organisers of these events to coordinate information for participants, examine opportunities to advertise in relevant publications, or in some instances to provide information regarding voting centres close to the events.

Major events catered for included the Corporate Games, Great Victorian Bike Ride, Queenscliff Music Festival, Wedderburn Christmas Festival, Harvest 'N' Graze Festival, Bright Food Music Wine, Frankston's Christmas Festival of Lights, Albert Park Paspaley Polo in the City, The Alpine Challenge - Alpine National Park, Earthcore Music Festival Pyalong, Daylesford Agricultural Show, RACV Energy Breakthrough Maryborough, Paradise Music Festival Marysville and Mt Eliza Yoga Retreat.

Voting Trends

The number of electors has increased by 13.49% since 2006. Trends in voting behaviour do not correlate directly with this level of growth. Over the past three Victorian State elections (and in other States) substantial increases have been observed in the number and proportion of electors voting early and by post.

At the 2014 State election, almost 913,000 people voted early compared with around 543,000 in 2010 and 273,000 in 2006. This represents a 233% increase in actual numbers and a 193% increase as a proportion of turnout since 2006. When compared with the early voting figures at the 2002 state election, these increases are 407% and 331% respectively.

The number of electors voting by post has increased by 18.95% since 2010 and 51.36% since 2006. Almost 50,000 more voters used postal voting at the 2014 State election than in 2010. As a proportion of turnout, this represents 8.32% of voters using postal voting at the 2014 State election compared with 7.44% in 2010 and 6.26% in 2006.

The proportion of electors voting outside their electorate on Election Day (absent voters) has marginally decreased since 2006, with actual numbers of absent voters increasing by around 10 percent.

The number of provisional voters has increased due to new legislation in 2010 enabling people to enrol on the day. Though still a comparatively small number (37,622) the proportion has grown from 0.06% of voters in 2006 to 1.06% in 2014. Figure 19 shows the number of votes counted by vote type for Victorian State elections 2006-2014. Figure 20 shows the vote types as a proportion of total votes counted.
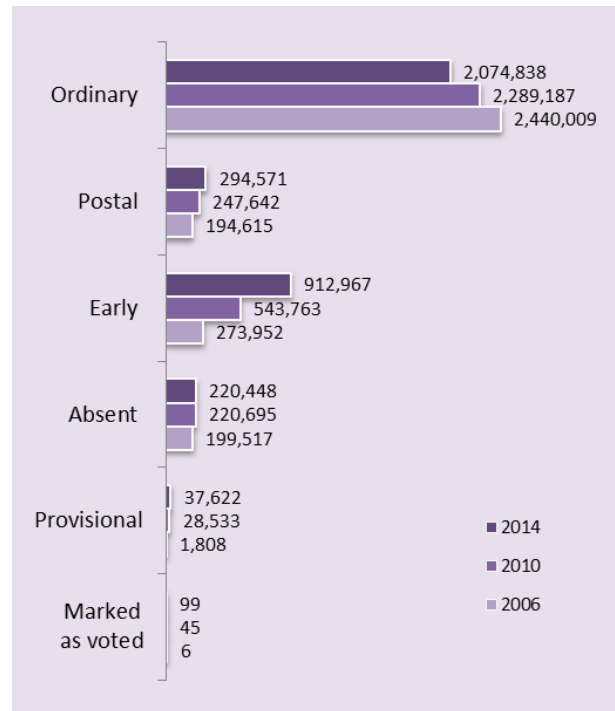

Figure 19: Votes by vote types, Victorian State elections, 2006 - 2014
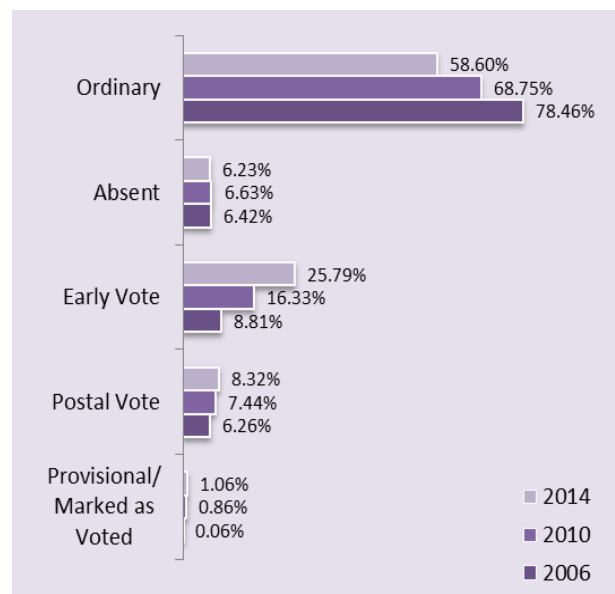

Figure 20: Vote types as a proportion of total votes, Victorian State elections, 2006 – 2014

Enforcement of voting provisions

After the conduct of a State election, the VEC carries out activities related to compulsory voting provisions contained in the *Electoral Act 2002* and integrity checks that include follow-up of apparent multiple voting.

Roll Scanning

Scanning of the 8,386 rolls from Election Day voting centres commenced in mid-January 2015. This activity is a major component of the non-voter follow-up exercise, taking approximately four weeks to complete.

The technology used for roll scanning allows for a two percent tolerance when reading the marks on the roll against the number of marks detailed on the scannable roll cover completed by the issuing officer. A tolerance is set to allow for errors by the issuing officer at a voting centre, during the reconciliation of ballot papers.

Where the tolerance level is exceeded, each scannable roll is manually reconciled by counting every mark on each page of the roll. This ensures that every elector marked on a roll as having voted at a voting centre is recorded in the VEC's Election Management System, and helps ensure that electors are not incorrectly issued with an 'Apparent Failure to Vote' notice.

Enforcement of Compulsory Voting

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 do not respond to, or who provide an invalid response is conducted under the *Infringements Act 2006*.

Stage one — Apparent Failure to Vote Notices

Despatch of Apparent Failure to Vote Notices to those electors who appear not to have voted in an election. Apparent non-voters have 28 days from the date of the notice to provide a valid excuse for failing to vote.

For the 2014 State election, the first stage of the non-voter follow-up process commenced in mid-December 2014. Elector information reports completed at voting centres on Election Day were processed through the compulsory voting module of the Election Management System. These electors and those whose postal vote declarations were received too late to be admitted to the count were marked in the system.

A total of 199,366 Apparent Failure to Vote Notices were generated in early-March 2015 and mailed to electors in three stages. The deadline for response to this notice was 21 April 2015.

Stage two – Infringement notice

Follow-up (by Infringement Notice) of electors who did not respond, or who provided an invalid response to the Apparent Failure to Vote Notice. A penalty amount is applied (currently set at $74.00). Non-voters have 42 days to respond to the Infringement Notice by making the penalty payment or seeking a review of the infringement. Consideration is given to written correspondence detailing reasons for failing to vote.

A total of 126,238 Infringement Notices were generated in early May and mailed to those electors who did not respond, or who provided an invalid response to the Apparent Failure to Vote notice. A penalty amount was applied (set at $74.00 for the 2014-15 financial year).

Stage three – Penalty Reminder Notice

A Penalty Reminder Notice is sent to those who do not pay the infringement penalty. An amount for prescribed costs is added to the original penalty amount. Non-voters have 42 days to respond to the Penalty Reminder Notice by making the penalty payment or seeking a review of the infringement.

The 98,154 non-voters who had not paid the infringement penalty by the due date (mid-June) were sent a Penalty Reminder Notice in early July, with a added amount for prescribed costs. The anticipated completion date of the Penalty Reminder Notice stage is mid-September 2015. Follow-up of all remaining non-voters will be instigated in the Infringements Court anticipated to be mid-October, and reported in future Annual Reports.

Total electors enrolled	3,806,301
Total marked as voted	3,540,140
Electors who did not vote	266,161
Apparent Failure to Vote Notices sent	199,366
Infringement Notices sent	126,238
Penalty Reminder Notices sent	98,154

Figure 21: Compulsory voting enforcement, 2014 Victorian State election

Multiple Voting Follow Up

When all excuse and late return processing and roll scanning had been completed, the VEC generated a file of 'possible' multiple voters. A total of 846 multiple records required further investigation and these voters were sent a letter on 18 March 2015 seeking clarification of how and where they voted. Follow-up (by reminder notice) of voters who did not respond was sent to 199 voters on 15 May. It should be noted that associated integrity checks include ensuring that the number of apparent multiple voters in any one electorate does not impact on the final result. In almost all cases, an administrative error has contributed to the elector being marked on the roll more than once.

Counting the votes

Counting on Election Day

Counting of votes commenced on election night after the close of voting at 6.00 pm. Ordinary votes issued in Election day voting centres were counted in voting centres. Postal vote counts commenced in election offices, with Election Managers counting at least 2,000 postal votes per district, or all postal votes where there were less than 2,000 votes in their possession. Three counts were conducted as follows:

- First preference count — Legislative Assembly
- Two candidate preferred count — Legislative Assembly
- First 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.

Also commencing at 6.00 pm on election night, early votes were sorted to their correct district and region and reconciled. The higher than anticipated number of early votes together with the increased size of ballot papers at this election made this a labour intensive task involving large teams often working into the Sunday to complete the process. Election Managers must ensure full reconciliation of the number of sorted ballot papers against their record of votes issued before counting commences. Given the continued trend in early voting, the VEC will consider options to enable some early votes to be counted on election night at future elections.

The VEC achieved its target to have more than 75% of first preference results for voting centres published by 8.00 pm on election night, achieving 76.60% by that time. By 9.00 pm the VEC had published 94.80% of first preference results for voting centres. Figure 22 shows the District results timeline on election night for the past three Victorian State elections.
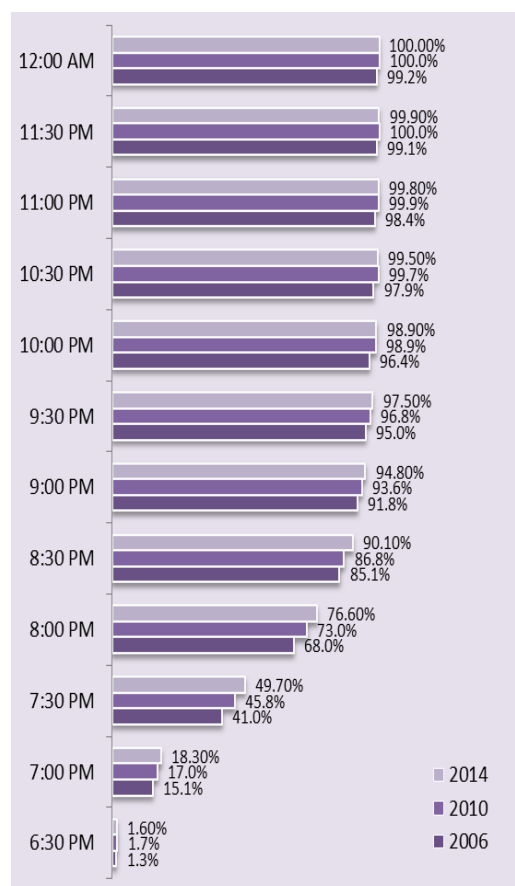
Figure 22: District results election night timeline, Victorian State elections, 2006-2014

Vote Types

Ordinary votes made up 58.6% of the total votes counted for the election. With the inclusion of postal votes, 62.9% of the total votes for this election were counted on election night.

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. There are several different types of declaration votes (described below) each with a specific method for processing.

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 he or she is eligible to cast an early vote. Early votes cast outside the elector's district are forwarded after Election Day to the appropriate election office for counting.

Absent votes are cast by voters at voting centres outside their own districts on Election Day. Most absent votes are included in declaration envelopes, but where absent votes are issued from voting centres with access to an electronic copy of the State-wide roll, ballot papers are combined for the same electorate and enclosed in specially designed envelopes. After Election Day, the envelopes containing absent ballot papers are sent to the appropriate Election Managers.

Marked as voted declaration votes are completed by electors who are found to have already been marked on the roll when they attend to vote. The elector completes a declaration that they have not voted previously at this election.

Provisional votes are cast by voters who complete a provisional enrolment form and vote on the day. After Election Day, provisional vote applications are checked to ensure electors are eligible to enrol, prior to the votes being admitted for further scrutiny.

The VEC processed 50,653 'on-the-day enrolment/provisional declarations, of which 39,736 were subsequently admitted to the count. On-the-day enrolment provisional declarations admitted to count represents electors who were eligible to enrol and could prove their identity. Figure 23 shows the number of provisional declarations issued and admitted for counting for the past two elections.
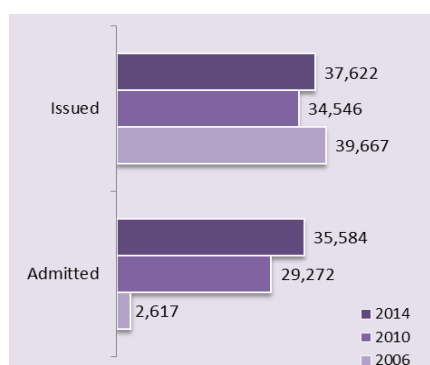
Figure 23: Provisional declarations issued and admitted, Victorian State elections, 2010 -2014

To ensure the number of electors enrolling on the day is manageable at voting centres, the VEC will continue to focus the enrolment phase of its election advertising on the close-of-roll date, so that enrolment on the day remains only as a savings provision for those electors who inadvertently miss the close-of-roll.

At the 2014 State election, all early voting centres were equipped with computers containing the electoral roll for the entire State. All voting centres were equipped with a tablet containing the entire State roll for look-up purposes, enabling voting entitlement to be checked at the time, prior to voting.

Six hundred and thirty netbooks (mini computers) were distributed to 106 voting centres, and netbooks were used for roll mark off at most mobile voting centres. The netbooks gave election officials access to a central copy of the entire State roll to mark off each elector's name directly. The netbooks greatly assisted in ensuring elector enrolment details for declaration votes were correct, and meant that absent electors marked off this way were not required to complete a written declaration. Election officials could also see if an elector had been marked as having voted previously, which helped prevent multiple voting.

Counting after Election Day

Further primary counts were carried out after Election Day, when Election Managers received declaration votes from other electorates and completed any processing required before counting. By Thursday 4 December, five days after Election Day, 91.3% of all primary counts had been completed.

In the lead up to the election, Australia Post advised the VEC of a change to procedures that meant they could no longer guarantee that all mail posted before 6.00 pm on Election Day would be processed on the Sunday, and that some processing of mail posted after 6.00 pm on a Friday would be carried over to the Monday. Accordingly, the Electoral Commissioner advised all registered parties of his intention to admit for further scrutiny any postal votes that were postmarked Sunday 28 November or Monday 29 November, where the voter's signature was witnessed on or before Election Day. All registered parties accepted the proposed arrangement. The VEC considers this decision reflected the intention of Section 106(3)(aa) of the *Electoral Act 2002*. The VEC will consider recommending legislative change to clarify the matter.

Region Count

First-preference votes for the Legislative Council were counted at voting centres and election offices on election night. All first-preference counts for Region ballot papers took place in the District.

For the 2014 State election, the VEC established one Region Recheck Centre in each of the eight Regions. On completion of the first-preference count, and commencing on the Sunday and Monday after Election day, all Region ballot papers held in District election offices, up to and including election night, were transferred to one of the eight Region Recheck Centres.

A full recheck of all Region ballot papers took place in the Region Recheck Centres. During the recheck, all votes were kept in their specific parcels. No amalgamation of votes took place at the Region Recheck Centre. Each individual ballot paper was checked for correct sorting and all ballot papers were recounted.

As the recheck for each parcel was completed, the ballot papers were packaged into 'those marked below-the-line (BTL)', 'those marked above-the-line (ATL)' and 'those deemed to be informal'. Individual parcels containing BTL ballot papers were transferred to the centralised computer-count centre at Etihad Stadium from Friday 5 December with the final transfer of BTL ballot papers on Friday 12 December.

All formal ballot papers marked ATL, and informal ballot papers were retained at the Region Recheck Centres. If a recount had been required, these ballot papers would have been transported to the computer count centre. Reconciliation of all BTL ballot papers for each parcel of votes was carried out at the computer-count centre. Once reconciled, the BTL ballot papers were batched in preparation for data entry into the VEC's computer-count application.

Three teams of 20 data-entry operators were established for the computerised count. Each team was responsible for data-entry of ballot papers for two or more regions. During data-entry, the computer-count application identified ballot papers deemed to be informal. Once data-entry had been completed for each batch of ballot papers, the informal papers were passed to the informal checking team for further scrutiny and if declared to be informal by the Election Manager were removed from the batch and counted as informal papers.

Data from BTL ballot papers was entered into the computer count application twice. The application identified discrepancies between first round and second round data entry. The data entry operator was able to review the preferences entered and, if incorrectly entered, rectify the issue prior to saving the preferences from the ballot paper.

When all BTL ballot paper data had been entered a second time, the total number of ATL ticket votes for each group for each voting centre or declaration parcel of votes was uploaded into the computer-count system.

The total ticket votes for each voting centre or declaration parcel of votes consisted of the ATL ballot papers held at the Region Recheck Centre, plus the number of ATL ballot papers identified at the count centre.

Once all ATL and BTL data had been entered into the computer-count application for each region, the total number of informal ballot papers for each region (comprising those held at the Region Recheck Centre, and those identified at the count centre) was entered into the system.

When all ballot papers to be included in the calculation of results had been included in the computer count application, a final reconciliation of all ballot papers for each Region took place prior to the results being calculated. Scrutineers were able to observe all aspects of the count.

The calculation of results commenced at 9.30 am on Tuesday 16 December. Results were published as 'provisional' awaiting the declaration of results which took place at 4.30 pm on Tuesday 16 December. This was ahead of the proposed schedule outlined in the Service Plan.

Rechecks

All district and region ballot papers were rechecked by election officials following the completion of primary counting. Results were adjusted following each recheck to correct any discrepancies in counting or sorting identified and verified during the recheck process.

Preference Distributions

Preference distributions to determine the result of an election are required in any Legislative Assembly district in which no candidate obtains an absolute majority (more than 50 per cent) of the first-preference votes. Preference distributions were conducted in 45 districts.

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 nine districts, the preference distribution established a result with more than two candidates remaining un-excluded.

District Recount

One recount was conducted for the 2014 State election. This recount was for the Prahran District. While the final margin between candidates Hibbins (Greens) and Newton-Brown (Liberal) was 262, at a critical exclusion during the preference distribution the margin between Hibbins (Greens) and Pharaoh (ALP) was 41 votes.

The recount was conducted on 10 December and confirmed candidate Hibbins as the elected candidate. The critical margin changed from 41 to 31.

Count Process Summary and Transparency

Scrutineers are permitted to be present at all stages of counting. For the Legislative Assembly, preliminary first-preference counts were conducted in voting centres and election offices. All ballot papers were rechecked for correct sorting and counting. 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 election offices, and a full recheck of above and below-the-line ballot papers was conducted in region recheck centres.

Prior to calculating provisional upper-house results, candidates and registered political parties were provided with the opportunity to collect a comprehensive set of reconciliation reports including:

- Full Region reconciliation reports showing the total votes expected in the count for each Region
- Ticket allocation reports showing the number of ballot papers marked above the line for each group and the preference allocation according to that group's ticket(s)
- Rechecked Region results by voting centre and other vote types for all Regions
- Results showing ATL and BTL totals, indicative seats and the proportion of votes for each group and ungrouped candidate across each region
- A comparison of total District and Region votes by voting centre and other vote types.
- Following the calculation of provisional results for each region on Tuesday 16 December, the full distribution of preferences for each region was made available for interested parties for review.

Human Resource Management

During the election the VEC's workforce increases to over 20,000. The management of the extraordinary recruitment and selection campaign, the induction and training of appointees and casuals and the Health and Safety of our workforce requires significant planning, coordination and ongoing evaluation.

Election Managers and Region Coordinators

The VEC has approximately 300 Senior Election Officials (SEO) on standby, who have been recruited and trained for engagement as Election Managers during State and local government elections. From this pool of SEOs, individuals were selected for appointment to management roles for the election.

Appointment and Training of Election Managers

A total of 56 Election Managers were appointed to conduct elections for 88 members of the Legislative Assembly. Each Election Manager was responsible for one or two districts; most Election Managers in metropolitan areas were responsible for two districts, while most Election Managers in rural areas with larger geographic boundaries were allocated one district. See Appendix 3 for a list of Election Managers.

All Election Managers completed extensive training, comprising 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). Assistant Election Managers from the VEC's pool of SEOs were appointed to assist each Election Manager. Two Assistant Election Mangers were appointed for each office. The Assistant Election Managers also completed the VEC's training program.

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 dispatched completed ballot material to other electorates, finalised payroll tasks for election officials and conducted counts for postal, early and other declaration votes. All ballot papers were rechecked, even if a preference distribution was not required.

A total of 45 preference distributions were conducted for district electorates by the relevant Election Managers. One recount was required for Prahran district.

Appointment and Training of Region Coordinators

Region Coordinators are responsible for rechecking all region ballot papers for their appointed region. The Region Coordinator was responsible for receiving region ballot papers from Election Managers, supervising the checking and reconciliation of those ballot papers and dispatching those marked 'below-the-line' to the central computer counting venue. An Assistant Region Coordinator was appointed to assist each Region Coordinator.

All Region Coordinators and Assistant Region Coordinators completed two days of face-to-face training plus home study.

Support for Election Managers and Region Coordinators

Election Support Officers

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

Helpdesk

Six Helpdesk operators provided support to Election Managers and Region Coordinators. Principally, they assisted the Election Managers and Region Coordinators with the operation of the VEC's Election Management System, the new Personnel system which was used for the first time this election and other technical matters.

Election Officials

Recruitment

Election Managers and Region Coordinators were responsible for recruiting administrative staff to work in their offices, at early voting centres and at voting centres on Election Day.

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.

To assist with the appointment of staff, the VEC implemented a new personnel system which involved self-registration by people

interested in working on the election. For the first time casual staff were responsible for entering and maintaining their own details within the system. Election Managers used the Personnel system to search for staff with appropriate community languages for their area and to ensure they could offer opportunities to people who may otherwise be underrepresented in general employment, such as people from ATSIC backgrounds or those identifying as having a disability.

Online Recruitment

The VEC provided an online application for prospective employees to register for employment as either election officials or as casual workers. The VEC received more than 28,000 expressions of interest and the application enabled the VEC to efficiently manage a central pool of prospective appointees, reducing the considerable administrative effort required to employ such a large number of staff.

Training

The majority of election officials were required to complete online training. There were three streams of online training, depending on the specific appointment: one for Voting Centre Managers (VCMs), Assistant Voting Centre Managers (AVCMs) and ELOs, one for Declaration Issuing Officers, and one for other election officials. In addition, Election Managers conducted a three-hour training session for their VCMs, AVCMs and ELOs and a one-hour training session for Declaration Issuing Officers. The VEC developed a standard training package, which included a PowerPoint presentation and practical activities to assist Election Managers with their training. This ensured that training sessions were conducted in a professional and consistent manner across the State.

All election officials were provided with a manual, which covered voting centre procedures in detail, and a new DVD produced for this election which provided an overview, with an emphasis on the context of their role, good customer service and accountability.

Online Training

An online training application was utilised to train around 16,500 election officials employed at voting centres on Election Day. The software and hosting was provided by a third party company and content was developed by the VEC to suit training requirements. The online training program was completed by approximately 95% of election officials compared with around 81% in 2010.

Staff Evaluation

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

Measures to Ensure Impartiality

A justified community perception of political neutrality is critical to ensuring a high level of public trust and confidence in the independence and impartiality of the VEC.

Accordingly, prospective election staff are asked to disclose their political memberships and activities prior to appointment. The *Electoral Act 2002* authorises the VEC to discriminate against a person in relation to offering appointment on the basis of political membership or activity. This discrimination is lawful under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010.*

The VEC's Personnel system allows for potential staff to fill out an online Disclosure of Political Activities questionnaire at the time they are offered an appointment. Anyone who was ineligible for appointment after assessment of their questionnaire was notified within 24 hours. An appeals process was utilised for anyone who challenged the decision made regarding their perceived impartiality. Of all the disclosures made, 197 prospective appointees were initially disqualified. Requests for review were subsequently received from 35 provisionally disqualified applicants of which eight decisions were overturned and offers of appointment subsequently made. A total of 189 prospective appointees were disqualified from being appointed as an election official or election casual.

Payroll

The VEC implemented a new payroll system for the 2014 State election. The new system was specifically configured to manage large volumes of casual appointments over a very short period of time. A total of 16,494 election official positions were filled to support voting on Election Day and a further 3,164 casuals were appointed to support early voting, counting and other election office functions. Prospective election staff were able to register interest in working at the election online, and offers of appointment could be dispatched and responded to electronically. The system also allowed election staff to manage their own personal and banking details online by providing access to the VEC system via a private self-service portal. Election Managers were able to administer the appointment of election officials more efficiently and over a much shorter time period compared to previous elections. A designated Helpline was established to support election staff in using the new system. The Helpline operated from Friday 18 July with staff numbers continually adjusted to support demand. The major periods of activity occurred when registration commenced in July and after Election Managers began dispatching offers of appointment during October and November. Pleasingly, 95% percent of election staff were paid within 2 weeks of election day. A number of election staff did not complete all the required personal and banking details which resulted in a delay to their payment. The VEC will look at further strategies to address this issue at future elections.

Occupational Health and Safety

All Election Managers attended a training session in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) covering areas such as the Victorian OH&S legislative requirements, hazard identification, incident reporting and workplace assessments. The VEC created an Election OH&S risk register identifying Fatigue and Manual Handling as the two highest risks for the election period (10 October to 16 December 2014). As a result controls were put in place to reduce the risk level. These included a Manual handling Safe Work Procedure (SWP) which was provided to election staff, 'heavy lift' labels for packages, a Fatigue self-assessment form and Fatigue checklist. There were 82 incidents reported over the election period of which 41 involved election appointees/casuals, 37 involved members of the public and 4 incidents involved VEC employees. There were 61 incidents that resulted in an injury. Of note, 50% of all incidents were slips, trips and falls.

Staff Feedback

Election Managers

Feedback received from Election Managers often provides a useful perspective on the VEC's delivery of election services and leads to improvements. As part of the evaluation of the State election, the VEC conducted debriefing sessions with Election Managers and Region Coordinators. Suggestions and feedback will be used to aid our continuous improvement strategy.

Election Officials and Casuals

This election provided an opportunity for many people who have not previously worked at an election to do so.

All election casuals and officials were invited to participate in an online survey to provide feedback on the training and preparation they received. This feedback will be used to analyse and improve the VEC's approach to training and supporting our election workforce. Over 8,100 responses were received which represents over 35% of those who worked. More than 45% of those completing the survey indicated they were new to election work or new to the role they were undertaking. Electoral experience by category is shown in Figure 25. Figure 26 shows how respondents rated different elements of training in terms of effectiveness in preparing them for their role.

Other findings include:

- responses regarding how well the training and support provided by VEC assisted them to understand and undertake their roles and responsibilities were exceptionally positive. On scale of 1-5 (where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent), the overall rating was 4.31

- 97.48% (7,433) indicated that they were interested in working at future elections and only 2.58% (197) said they were not. Length of the day, pay rates and people getting older were the main reasons for those not interested in working at future elections

- satisfaction with staffing levels, role rotation, occupational health and safety and support from immediate supervisors were all rated an average of above 4

- forms and manuals were rated with a rated average of above four in relation to being clear and easy to understand.

For areas in which poor or unsatisfactory ratings were given, participants were invited to comment. Recycling was by far the most consistent and significant issue noted in this section. Comments were made regarding the 'huge waste of paper generated by the election processes', particularly in regard to the amount of HTVCs which are printed and dumped.

Separate training sessions for new staff and more hands on examples during training were identified as being the most helpful options to improve preparation.

Employment category	Proportion with no previous experience
Election Official	38.50%
Voting Centre Manager/ Assistant Voting Centre Manager /District Liaison Officer	7.73%
Early/ Mobile voting staff	22.53%
Election casuals	43.70%
Counting Staff	53.20%

Figure 24: Proportion of election officials with no previous experience declared, by employment category

Training method	Effectiveness rating
Manual	4.20
Manager/Supervisor	4.17
On-the-job instruction	4.12
Face to face training	3.96
Online training	3.80
DVD	3.45

Figure 25: Election officials employment survey results, Effectiveness of training methods (1= low, 5= high)

Complaints Management

The VEC received 454 written complaints relating to the 2014 State election between October 2014 and March 2015. This is a significant increase on the 167 received in 2010. The VEC believes that the increase is largely due to the fact that unlike in 2010 when all formal complaints had to be in written (letter) form, in 2014 the VEC accepted complaints lodged by email through its complaints email address.

Many complaints related to issues beyond the VEC's control such as fundraising at voting centre venues, candidates' campaign material being distributed or displayed on public and private property or automated phone calls made by candidates or parties.

A significant number of correspondents registered complaints related to a misunderstanding of the electoral process, or to the content of candidates' campaign material. The VEC will consider ways of including relevant explanations and information in its communication and electoral education materials.

The VEC aimed to acknowledge complaints within one business day of receiving the complaint and in the majority of cases this was achieved. In some cases where a complaint required investigation or follow up with third parties, the complainant was notified of the receipt of the complaint as quickly as possible, and a response was sent as soon as possible.

Complaints about Services to Voters

The VEC received 302 complaints relating to its services to voters. Although this is a significant increase on the number of complaints received in this category when compared to 2010, as noted above, the use of email has increased the accessibility of the complaints process and a large proportion of these complaints involved a misunderstanding of the electoral process. The majority of these complaints were resolved through the provision of further information.

Voting Centres

Ninety-three complaints were received in relation to the service, staff members and facilities provided at voting centres both throughout the early voting period and on Election Day.

Thirty-three complaints related to the queues and waiting times at voting centres. Although the VEC estimates the number of votes issued at each voting centre to within 99.83% accuracy, the times people choose to vote is less predictable. Queue lengths were monitored throughout the voting period and additional staff members were deployed as soon as possible after the need was identified. Due to issuing a higher number of votes than was anticipated, a small number of voting centres could not supply electoral materials including ballot papers to voters.

Four complaints were received relating to this issue. All voting centres were resupplied with materials as quickly as possible.

The provision of accessible voting centre venues continues to be a challenge for the VEC and 37 complaints were received relating to location, accessibility and appropriateness. A significant number of complaints (15) referred to the limited number of venues accessible to wheelchairs and the elderly. Despite its best efforts, the VEC was not able to ensure that all venues were wheelchair accessible. To assist voters, an accessibility audit was conducted to ensure that all venues were classified according to recognised national accessibility standards. A number of complaints (9) also referred to the limited number of early voting centres available for the district of Euroa, (a change in the location of the early voting venue in that area occurred as result of the State re-division) and accessing early voting centres in Melbourne Airports, with a number of electors mistakenly assuming that the early voting facility would be located beyond the customs area.

Election Officials

Forty-five complaints were received in relation to staff, including complaints relating to attitude or conduct, knowledge of VEC processes, provision of correct information and materials and centre management skills. All complaints were investigated, and rectified where necessary. A small number of officials were provided with additional training to ensure correct procedures were followed.

Twenty complaints were also received in relation to the employment conditions of officials working in voting centres. Complaints related to the skills and competence of election managers (5), the number of staff allocated to voting centres (4), the significant length of time worked on Election Day (7), and the process of hiring and allocating working hours (4).

Postal Voting

Eighteen complaints were received in relation to regional and overseas postal voting. These complaints related primarily to the delay in receiving ballot papers (14). A small number of complaints resulted from confusion arising from the differing postal voting requirements prescribed by State and Commonwealth legislation.

Regional and Overseas Voting

Fifteen complaints were also received from regional and overseas electors. Seven related to the limited number of overseas voting centres and three to a mistaken assumption that overseas voters would automatically be sent ballot papers.

Information and Advertising

Twelve complaints were received in relation to information and advertising. Four complaints related to the content and issuing date of the EasyVote Guide. Despite priority postage to regional areas, the VEC was not able to ensure that all voters received their EasyVote Guide in sufficient time to lodge a postal vote application. Three complaints also related to the timing of the notification of electoral boundary changes. One complaint was received in relation to electronically assisted voting advertising material sent to blind or vision impaired voters. This complaint was resolved to the satisfaction of the voter.

Other Complaints

Other complaints received related to the provision of enrolment details to candidates (4), direct enrolment by the VEC (9), difficulties encountered with the VEC website (7), training and employment as an election official (3) and dissatisfaction with VEC processes and procedures (17). A number of complaints and two court actions were raised in relation to the number of voters who chose to vote early and the associated processes.

Enforcement of Voting Provisions

At the completion of the election, the VEC enforced provisions prohibiting individuals from failing to vote and voting multiple times. Twenty-six complaints were received from voters regarding compulsory voting enforcement with the majority originating from overseas voters whom wished to be excused from any infringement as they were absent from Victoria over the election period. The majority of these complainants misunderstood VEC processes and expected that the submission of an overseas notification form would result in automatic excusal from voting (21). An additional 15 complaints were received by voters who were alleged to have voted multiple times. All of the complainants objected to the VEC posting correspondence outlining the allegations and the potential consequences should the claim be established.

Complaints about Candidates or Political Parties

One hundred and fifty-two complaints were received in relation to political parties and candidates. The majority of complaints concerned candidate postal voting applications, authorisation of electoral material and misleading and deceptive advertisements.

Under the *Electoral Act 2002* (the Act), organisations and individuals other than the VEC are able to reproduce postal voting application forms and include them with campaign materials. Many of these applications are not marked as originating from a party or candidate and are often mistaken for VEC letters and materials. The redirection of postal voting applications, containing voter details, to campaign

headquarters also results in delays in the application being received and processed, causing confusion and frustration for voters. Twenty-eight complaints related to the legislative authority for parties to distribute postal vote applications, and/or the use of electors' details for this purpose.

Forty-nine of the remaining complaints related to candidates failing to authorise electoral material, or allegations that electoral material was deceptive or misleading. A High Court determination in 1981 found that an equivalent federal legislative provision would only regulate publications intended to influence the manner in which the ballot paper was marked, not the political judgement of voters. Twenty-four complaints related to allegedly misleading and deceptive advertisements with the majority of complainants misunderstanding the law and alleging that candidate publications contained untruths designed to influence voter judgement. Where a complaint regarding the authorisation or misleading nature of material was founded, the relevant candidate or party was asked to appropriately amend the material and undertake to observe correct authorisation procedures in future.

Investigation of complaints relating to a lack of authorisation or a misleading and deceptive nature has become increasingly complex due to publication of electoral advertisements on the Internet. Sections 83 and 84 of the Act prohibit publication of electoral advertisements without authorisation and publication of misleading or deceptive electoral material. The Act provides that 'publish' includes publication on the internet, but there are practical limits on the VEC's ability to enforce these provisions in the online environment. Internet websites hosted overseas often require proof of legal processes initiated in the hosting country before content will be removed. The VEC is not in a position under the Act as it currently stands to initiate such legal processes and the VEC's power is often limited to requesting that the material be removed.

Seventeen complaints were also received in relation to the conduct of party workers and a further eleven in relation to the conduct of candidates. The majority of these complaints related to rude or aggressive behaviours to electors often located outside voting centres. Although election officials closely monitor the conduct of candidates and party workers at voting centres the presence of determined party volunteers can be intimidating for some voters.

Other complaints related to the display and distribution of electoral advertisements on public or private property (6), the appropriateness and fairness of how-to-vote cards (5) and telephone calls from candidates and political parties (7).

Evaluation

Voters were nearly unanimous in their praise for the services provided at the 2014 State election. Election officials were praised for their helpfulness, assistance and efficiency, and the layout and organisation of voting centres was well received.

Voters remained satisfied at an overall level, however extreme satisfaction has generally declined since the previous election and this was evident across a range of voter types.

Queues before and on Election Day were reported as an issue and impacted on the voters' overall satisfaction. Half of voters on the day had to wait to vote and the reported length of time in the queue has increased.

Ordinary and Absentee Voters

Eight in ten voters recalled seeing or hearing information about the election and this figure rose to nine in ten when prompted. Recall across traditional media was down and the VEC's foray into social media (for the first time for a State election) was noticed. Fewer voters could recall receiving an EasyVote Guide (37% in 2014; 60% in 2010), however a similar proportion cut out the EasyVote Card to take with them to the voting centre.

Minimising the time spent voting was the key to satisfaction, with most wanting it to be quick and easy with no queues. Nearly half of voters queued for five minutes or less (22% - 6-10 minutes; 1% - 11-15 minutes; 6% - 16-20 minutes; 14% - longer than 20 minutes). Voting centre layout and signage were seen as having improved compared to previous elections.

Voters were most happy with the helpfulness and efficiency of staff and the only cause for complaint was the queue time.

Six out of ten voters were aware of the VEC's website and 31% had used the website to gain information. Of those who had used the website, 78% were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the information available. A third used the Voting Centre Lookup application and 82% agreed that it was extremely easy to use. Overall satisfaction was 92%

CALD Voters

It was difficult to find and survey voters whose first language was not English at voting centres (31 interviewed). Consequently, the potential for error in these results is greater, and care must be taken in their interpretation.

Eight in ten CALD voters recalled seeing some form of communication in the lead up to the election and again, there were drops across the recall in traditional media. TV had the highest recall but was down 21% on 2010. Around seven in ten perceived the information to be very effective or effective. A total of 21% wanted further information and this was seen to be, in equal measures: candidate/party information, early voting information and additional information about the legal age of voting. Fewer voters could recall receiving the EasyVote Guide and there was a 50% drop in the number of those who cut out and used the EasyVote Card compared to 2010. Eight in ten recipients felt that information was easy to find and understand in the EasyVote Guide. A quarter of CALD voters recalled seeing information about the election in their first language and all were satisfied with its quality.

More CALD voters were satisfied with their voting experience in 2014 (95%) compared to 2010 (86%). Quick and easy voting with no queues and helpful and efficient staff contributed to satisfaction, however more CALD voters reported being in queues for longer periods. Only 22% of CALD voters queued for five minutes or less.

Only 18% of CALD voters had visited the VEC's website and 71% were satisfied with the experience. Overall satisfaction was 95%

Early Voters

Convenience was the main factor in the early voters' motivation to vote early (39%), particularly if they were in the older age bracket (65 plus), whilst younger early voters had to be at work. Other reasons for voting early included: being in another part of the State or interstate (22%); being too busy with other commitments on Election Day (7%), health reasons (3%) and being overseas (2%).

Six in ten early voters recalled seeing or hearing VEC communication in the lead up to the election. The EasyVote Guide reached a greater proportion of early voters compared to the previous election (38% vs 23%), perhaps indicating that they were looking for information on early voting. Although recall of communication was down compared to 2010, the message takeout was stronger. After a decline in 2010, 2014 early voters indicated the highest level of satisfaction for effectiveness of information when comparing data from the three most recent State elections.

More than nine out of ten (92%) early voters were satisfied with their experience at the voting centre. However, 20% of early voters felt they had to queue for too long in 2014 as opposed to 1% in 2010, which could be due to the option of early voting becoming more popular. Three in ten early voters found out where they could vote early via the EasyVote Guide (up from 12% in 2010). Some 27% saw the centre when passing by, a further 23% were told by family or friends and 17% used the VEC's Voting Centre Lookup. Overall satisfaction was 92%

Postal Voters

Only 60 postal voters were able to be interviewed for this survey. Consequently, the potential for error in these results is greater and care must be taken in their interpretation.

In 2010 and 2014, health reasons were the most common motivator for selecting a postal vote over voting in person. It was also seen as a more convenient option for voting for a further 26% of respondents. Other reasons for postal voting cited included not being able to easily access the voting centre on Election Day.

Communication did not cut through as strongly with postal voters as in previous years with drops across all forms of media. Four in ten recalled seeing or hearing some form of communication, with 67% perceiving it to be effective – down from 75% in 2010. A total of 94% of postal voters were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the information provided on how to complete the postal vote.

In both 2010 and 2014, postal voters most commonly applied for a postal vote in response to an application that was sent to them by a political party, however it was less common in 2014 (39%) than it was in 2010 (56%). In 2014, more postal voters obtained their application for a postal vote from the post office (31% compared to 10% in 2010). Although awareness of the website hadn't increased

between the last two elections, usage of the website had – rising from 17% in 2010 to 32% in 2014. Overall satisfaction was 91%

Political Parties

Political party representatives were unanimously positive about the VEC's overall performance in the 2014 State election. Communication from the VEC and voting services provided to the public were all generally considered to be of a high standard, well run and professional. Communication from the VEC and that delivered to voters was believed to have been relevant and useful.

The process for nominating and enrolling ran smoothly and has improved over time. The VEC's management of HTV cards was perceived to have improved over time – the cards were well presented and easy to find on the website.

On the whole, the provision and operation of voting centres received very positive feedback; they were considered to be generally well run by knowledgeable, helpful and courteous election officials.

The marked increase in the volume of early votes was universally attributed to an increase in public awareness of this provision and a relaxation in the requirement to provide a valid reason for voting early. On the whole, the VEC was considered to have coped with the increase in early voting efficiently, and the number and location of early voting centres was generally believed to be appropriate.

Relatively few negatives were identified, however the most commonly suggested areas of improvement for future elections included:

- shortening of the early voting period
- faster counting of early votes
- discontinuing the practice of joint voting centres
- a requirement for all postal votes to be returned directly to the VEC (rather than political parties)
- more attention to voting centre logistics (shade, toilets etc.)
- improved training of voting centre staff to ensure that they operated appropriately within their areas of responsibility
- a separate section of the VEC website for political parties.

Candidates

In line with the 2010 results, candidates were typically quite positive about election managers within their electorate. Almost all candidates (97%) were either extremely satisfied (84%) or satisfied (13%) with the election manager's impartiality at all times – a big improvement on the 78% result in 2010. Nominations, ballot draws, responding to enquiries and registration of how-to-vote cards all received extremely favourable responses.

The areas for potential improvement nominated by a small number of candidates were the counting of votes and keeping the candidate informed of the progressive results.

Almost nine in ten candidates (88%) thought the Candidate's Handbook was either extremely effective or effective. The same number could recall seeing or hearing some form of communication from the VEC and two thirds of them indicated that the communication was either extremely effective or effective.

A total of 88% of candidates were either extremely satisfied or satisfied with the operation of voting centres, and more than two thirds (69%) of candidates were satisfied with the service to voters in terms of how efficiently and effectively the early voting centres were managed. The early voting figure is slightly down from 2010 and is very likely due to the huge increase in the number of early voters. Suggestions for improvements on the subject of voting centres included more staff (17%), improve the facilities e.g. shelter, parking, toilets, wheelchair access (13%) and better locations and signage (11%).

Overall satisfaction with communication and services dropped a significant amount from the previous election (82% in 2014, down from 93% in 2010).

Suggestions for improvement included:
- more regulations on the early voting centres (17%)
- counting results/earlier tallying of results (16%)
- better explanations of how to vote (14%)
- better voting centre locations and signage (13%)

Overall satisfaction was 82%

Response to the Evaluation

Two major issues arise from these results. Compared to previous State elections, the 2014 results showed declines in awareness of VEC communication across all forms of traditional media for all voter groups (despite a new campaign and materials which tested well with focus groups, and increased reach and frequency of the advertising campaign). Further, the level of satisfaction has shifted - fewer voters are as extremely satisfied compared to previous elections.

After examining these results, it is believed that the proliferation of online and digital media and the increase in multi-screening is having a significant impact on cut-through in traditional media. Viewers have more choice in free to air TV, paid/subscription TV, newspapers online, and music streaming online (Spotify), so to maintain a similar level of cut-through the VEC would need to increase its advertising budget by up to 300% and/or change its placement strategy to include a greater online/digital presence. This is affecting all advertisers, not just the VEC and as a result, the VEC is reviewing its media placement strategy for all electoral events. The positive aspect is that if voters did see or hear any communication from the VEC, they rated it highly.

The second issue – declining levels of high satisfaction is a little more problematic to address. When you have high levels of satisfaction, based on quality services and products, over time voters will see the offerings as becoming standard and their expectations increase. Therefore, to obtain a similar level of extreme satisfaction, you need to deliver innovation, new services or improve upon what was delivered last time. For example, the speed with which new technology is being introduced in society translates into higher expectations about how a voter will transact with your service or product. Many voters are now used to banking and shopping online and are frustrated that they cannot vote online from the comfort of their home. Similarly, whereas previously voters would have been content to stand in line for up to 10 minutes to vote, now five minutes is perceived to be too long. Without a doubt, queueing for any length of time has impacted on satisfaction levels at the 2014 State election and this will be considered prior to the 2018 State election.

Statistical Overview of the Election

Participation and Informal Voting

The voter turnout rate for the State as a whole was 93.02% of enrolled electors – a slight improvement on the 92.96% recorded in 2010, and the second election in a row at which voter turnout has increased. This is particularly notable given the higher proportion in 2014 of directly enrolled electors, some of whom may have been reluctant to vote.

Voter turnout was highest across much of country Victoria and on the eastern and northern fringes of the metropolitan area, with Bellarine District having the highest rate in the State (95.38%). As in 2010, the lowest rate was in Melbourne District (87.54%). Low voter turnout was concentrated in two types of district: four inner urban districts (Albert Park, Melbourne, Prahran and Richmond) that have young and very mobile populations; and four districts that have high proportions of residents who are not proficient in English and a degree of social disadvantage (Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Footscray and St Albans).

The informal voting rate for the Legislative Assembly was 5.22% of total votes, which was the highest ever recorded for a Lower House election, and an increase of 0.26 percentage points on the rate in 2010. The informal voting rate for the Assembly has increased at every election since 1999, when it was 3.02%. In contrast, the informal voting rate for the Legislative Council barely shifted, rising from 3.38% in 2010 to 3.43% in 2014. The fact that such a minimal increase occurred when the ballot papers were much larger than in 2010 (as a result of the many new registered parties standing candidates) confirms the VEC's view that voters have become used to the Upper House voting system. The informal voting rate for the Council has barely changed since 1999, when it was 3.37%.

The participation of so many new parties contributed to a record number of candidates (545) for the Legislative Assembly. An increase in the number of candidates can lead to a rise in the informal voting rate, as voters make numbering errors in completing their ballot papers. This appears to have been a factor in the informal vote in 2014. The district with the most candidates (Frankston, with 14), also had the highest informal vote at 8.88%. Tarneit, with ten candidates, also had a high informal vote at 8.08%. Conversely, districts with few candidates, such as Hawthorn and Polwarth, had low informal votes.

Overall, there was a moderate positive correlation of 0.46 between the informal vote and the number of candidates, meaning that the informal vote tended to increase with the number of candidates.

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The rate of informal voting ranged from 3.47% in Burwood to 8.88% in Frankston. The informal vote was lowest in affluent suburbs to the east and south-east of the central business district of Melbourne, and also in some inner suburbs. As in previous elections, informal voting was highest in the northern, western and south-eastern suburbs. In a departure from previous experience, two country districts, Mildura and Ripon, also had high informal votes at 7.05% and 6.38% respectively. There has been a long standing association between high proportions of residents who are not proficient in English and high informal votes. This pattern continued to some extent in 2014.

There was a moderate negative correlation (-0.38) between the informal vote and the proportion of residents who speak only English, meaning that the informal vote tended to increase with the proportion of residents speaking other languages. However, several districts – Frankston, Melton, Mordialloc and the two country districts – had comparatively low proportions of non-English speakers, and the large numbers of candidates for those districts seems a better explanation for their high informal vote.

Analysis of Informal Votes

For the first time, the VEC examined the informal votes from all districts and regions, measuring the incidence of various types of informal voting. At previous elections, the VEC has selected a sample of electorates for analysis.

Informal District Ballot Papers

Virtually the same categories were used as in the 2006 and 2010 surveys, enabling comparison with previous elections. The only difference is that the category of "administrative error" has been removed, as the exhaustive recheck process after Election Day should eliminate any such errors. The categories of informal votes used by the VEC in its analysis are shown in Figure 27.

Blank ballot papers were by far the largest category of informal votes, comprising 30.30% of the total, and coming first in 75 of the 88 electoral districts. Ballot papers marked just with a "1" were the second largest category, with just under 23.00% of the total. This group was the largest in 11 districts, and second largest in 68 districts. Other categories of informal votes were much smaller. The third largest categories were ballot papers including insufficient numbers to constitute a formal vote, at 9.80%. Ballot papers containing writing indicating a deliberate intention to vote informally were the fourth largest category, at 8.57%. Ballot papers indicating a preference for a candidate through a single tick or cross were the fifth largest group overall, but were the third largest in 20 districts, many of which had high proportions of residents who are not proficient in English..

Category	Description
Blank	
Numbers – 1 only	
Numbers – insufficient	Ballot papers starting with 1 but including insufficient numbers to constitute a formal vote.
Numbers – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers including number sequences such as all 1, 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.

Figure 26: Categories used by the VEC in analysis of District ballot papers

Category	Proportion of total informal
Blank	30.30%
Numbers – 1 only	22.98%
Numbers – insufficient	9.80%
Numbers – apparently deliberate	6.65%
Numbers – other	6.44%
Ticks/crosses – preference	8.10%
Ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	4.01%
Ticks/crosses – other	0.90%
Writing – apparently deliberate	8.47%
Writing – other	2.14%

Figure 27: Results of the analysis of District informal votes

Figure 29 shows the results of grouping the informal ballot papers into larger categories. Numbering errors made up almost forty-six percent of the total, outnumbering blank ballot papers. Ticks/crosses and writing were much smaller categories. While ticks/crosses were the third largest category overall, they were the fourth largest in 33 districts

Broad category	Proportion of total informal
Blank	30.30%
Numbers	45.87%
Ticks/crosses	13.01%
Writing	10.71%

Figure 28: Results of the analysis of District informal votes – broad categories

A key question in the analysis of informal votes is how many were the consequence of mistakes by voters who were trying to cast a real vote, and how many appeared to be deliberately informal. Figure 30 shows for each district the proportion of informal votes that were apparently deliberate, the proportion of deliberate votes including blanks (on the basis that most blank votes would have been purposely informal), and the proportion of votes showing a preference.

Just under half of those who voted informally appear to have done so on purpose. More than forty percent of the informal voters indicated a clear preference, but one that could not be counted under the Act. This corresponded to 2.13% of all votes, or more than 75,000 votes.

The proportions of deliberately informal votes and votes indicating a preference varied across districts, but no clear pattern was apparent. The 47 districts which had an absolute majority of deliberately informal votes were scattered across the State, including inner urban, affluent, strongly ethnic, outer suburban, regional urban and rural areas. The 16 districts where preference informal votes outnumbered the deliberately informal votes were similarly mixed. There was a weak negative correlation of -0.24 between the proportion of residents speaking English only and the preference informal vote, meaning that the preference informal vote showed a slight tendency to be higher in districts with lower proportions of English-only speakers. Inner urban and country districts had higher than average proportions of numbering errors. Districts with high proportions of residents speaking languages other than English also had high proportions of ticks and crosses – perhaps a reflection of the method of voting in the countries of origin of many residents.

Category	2010 (%)	2014 (%)	Change 2010-2014 (percentage points)
Blank	25.10	30.30	+5.20
Numbers – 1 only	23.70	22.98	-0.72
Numbers – insufficient	7.40	9.80	+2.40
Numbers – apparently deliberate	6.55	6.65	+0.10
Numbers – other	12.44	6.44	-6.00
Total numbers	50.10	45.87	-4.23
Ticks/crosses - preference	6.47	8.10	+1.63
Ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	3.04	4.01	+0.97
Ticks/crosses – other	0.65	0.90	+0.25
Total ticks/crosses	10.16	13.01	+2.85
Writing – apparently deliberate	12.83	8.47	-4.36
Writing – other	1.06	2.14	+1.08
Total writing	13.9	10.71	-3.19
Total apparently deliberate	22.43	19.23	-3.20
Total apparently deliberate including blank	47.53	49.52	+1.99
Total preferences	37.57	40.88	+3.31

Figure 29: Categories of District informal votes, 2010 and 2014

.District	Apparently deliberate (%)	Apparently deliberate including blank (%)	Preference (%)
Albert Park	26.70	54.81	43.40
Altona	18.77	50.27	41.38
Bass	21.10	51.93	38.86
Bayswater	19.73	50.73	39.10
Bellarine	14.52	39.21	51.74
Benambra	25.15	55.27	39.38
Bendigo East	19.35	49.41	39.88
Bendigo West	12.27	52.24	42.78
Bentleigh	11.84	42.89	40.70
Box Hill	23.34	52.50	47.44
Brighton	8.18	41.51	44.3
Broadmeadows	21.43	47.46	42.35
Brunswick	19.86	41.87	39.78
Bulleen	23.79	49.70	49.95
Bundoora	17.34	50.37	40.34
Buninyong	26.15	55.44	44.07
Burwood	26.33	54.65	36.50
Carrum	13.55	48.09	38.82
Caulfield	22.64	52.36	40.02
Clarinda	15.63	50.93	38.80
Cranbourne	16.95	52.63	41.72
Croydon	23.51	57.12	34.79
Dandenong	26.53	51.63	48.34
Eildon	14.39	39.60	38.33
Eltham	21.35	53.88	26.66
Essendon	20.11	62.39	33.37
Euroa	19.02	45.80	38.99
Evelyn	17.44	50.83	39.13
Ferntree Gully	25.07	56.85	40.14
Footscray	26.13	47.61	47.01
Forest Hill	18.26	44.6	49.34
Frankston	12.66	42.72	33.43
Geelong	21.04	51.06	33.06
Gembrook	20.12	53.89	28.76
Gippsland East	14.46	50.21	46.83
Gippsland South	13.88	50.22	43.86
Hastings	30.85	68.32	30.89
Hawthorn	15.64	43.49	49.55
Ivanhoe	18.19	51.29	31.76
Kew	14.34	36.67	53.40
Keysborough	15.64	44.57	47.62
Kororoit	12.03	41.20	46.27
Lara	17.11	55.89	40.59
Lowan	19.11	53.71	38.41

.District	Apparently deliberate (%)	Apparently deliberate including blank (%)	Preference (%)
Macedon	18.76	51.98	40.17
Malvern	15.36	39.01	50.90
Melbourne	13.24	45.20	40.33
Melton	11.72	40.10	52.59
Mildura	17.08	38.98	39.81
Mill Park	11.19	54.09	40.62
Monbulk	11.99	52.37	36.92
Mordialloc	15.12	42.80	33.08
Mornington	23.49	60.72	34.94
Morwell	27.45	54.73	32.40
Mount Waverley	19.65	45.11	49.52
Mulgrave	14.91	44.67	31.20
Murray Plains	13.64	42.88	39.01
Narracan	17.03	50.87	40.01
Narre Warren North	20.89	48.44	51.41
Narre Warren South	19.62	50.81	42.69
Nepean	27.77	59.82	36.82
Niddrie	20.27	46.60	37.46
Northcote	19.68	43.90	40.84
Oakleigh	17.49	51.65	37.17
Ovens Valley	10.38	49.12	36.63
Pascoe Vale	15.44	49.77	28.89
Polwarth	24.81	53.83	42.09
Prahran	15.81	45.60	40.38
Preston	26.30	52.93	40.35
Richmond	10.29	33.49	58.69
Ringwood	23.98	53.57	35.57
Ripon	14.40	48.04	36.99
Rowville	23.69	53.01	46.89
Sandringham	13.66	47.63	44.78
Shepparton	13.56	41.60	41.89
South Barwon	15.57	47.10	39.27
South-West Coast	20.42	51.3	41.03
St Albans	25.76	52.44	38.88
Sunbury	24.3	54.04	44.74
Sydenham	18.27	45.31	47.07
Tarneit	18.67	46.64	35.04
Thomastown	28.69	52.00	47.00
Warrandyte	17.45	49.36	42.50
Wendouree	34.39	63.61	35.36
Werribee	26.63	57.54	38.39
Williamstown	21.69	52.39	38.30
Yan Yean	12.94	49.47	46.82
Yuroke	20.11	48.28	39.68
TOTAL	19.23	49.52	40.88

Figure 30: Deliberate and preference informal votes by District

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 17 categories of informal votes used in the survey are included in Figure 32. The results of the survey can be seen listed in percentages below in
Figure 33. Blank ballot papers were by far the largest category, comprising just under half of the total. Perhaps the very large size of the Region ballot papers in 2014 deterred some voters from attempting them.

Writing: deliberate was the second largest category, with about one seventh of the informal votes. The writing on these ballot papers ranged from a detailed text, to drawings, to striking out of the ballot paper.

The third largest category was below the line "1 only" ballot papers, making up just under a tenth of the total. These voters appear to have misapplied the direction to vote "1" above the line, and to have voted "1" for the lead candidate in their preferred group below the line.

The remaining informal votes – about a quarter of the total – were dispersed in small numbers across 14 categories. It is clear that certain mistakes are not a major issue. For instance, few voters were so confused by the presence on the ballot paper of both the ALP and the DLP, and both the Liberal Party and the Liberal Democratic Party, that they put "1" in both squares above the line.

The proportions of votes in the different categories varied from Region to Region, with no distinct pattern evident. One striking number is that more than 20.00% of informal votes in Northern Metropolitan Region were "1 only" below the line – more than twice the proportion for Victoria as a whole.

Grouping the results of the survey in broader categories helps to clarify the picture, as shown in Figure 34.

Numbering errors made up slightly less than a quarter of the total. Less than 9.00% were ticks and crosses – a lower proportion than for the Districts, probably because on a Region ballot paper a single tick or cross above the line is a formal vote.

Apparently deliberate informal votes comprised some 23.00% of the total. If blank votes are added, almost three quarters of the informal votes can be classified as deliberately informal. Only one ninth of the informal votes indicated a clear preference, either as a "1" or a tick or cross below the line. This is a much lower proportion than for the Districts (check), presumably because of the ease of voting "1" above the line.

There were more below-the-line (BTL) informal votes than above-the-line (ATL) ones, even though the total number of ATL votes vastly outnumbered BTL votes. Only 0.49% of all ATL votes were informal, compared to 9.43% of all BTL votes. There were substantial variations across the eight Regions. Northern Metropolitan Region had a far higher proportion of numbering errors than the other Regions.

The three Regions with the highest proportions of residents speaking languages other than English (Northern, South-Eastern and Western Metropolitan) had fewer deliberately informal votes than the other Regions.

Figure 34 compares the informal votes in 2010 and 2014 by broad categories. There were no major changes. The number of blank ballot papers increased significantly. The apparently deliberate votes fell, but when these ballot papers are combined with the blanks, the total is almost identical to that in 2010. Somewhat surprisingly, the proportion of ATL votes has increased and that of BTL votes has fallen, but there are still substantially more BTL informal votes. The overall results of the survey of Region informal votes confirm the picture established in 2010. The great majority of informal votes were apparently deliberate, with small proportions of voters making numbering errors or writing ticks or crosses below the line. Victorian voters are now well accustomed to the method of voting that began in 2006, and the ease of completing the Region ballot paper means that nearly all voters get it right.

Category	Description
Blank	
Writing – apparently deliberate	
Writing – other	
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 and Liberal/LDP	Ballot papers with a 1 in both the ALP and DLP squares or the Liberal and Liberal Democrat squares.
ATL: numbers – apparently deliberate	
ATL: numbers – other	
ATL: ticks/crosses – apparently deliberate	Ballot papers with ticks or crosses in all the squares, indicting 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 have misapplied the way to vote above the line.
BTL: numbers – insufficient	Ballot papers starting with 1 but not reaching 5.
BTL: numbers – repetitions	Ballot papers with sequences of 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	

Figure 31: Categories used by the VEC in analysis of Region ballot papers

.Category	E Met	E Vic	N Met	N Vic	SE Met	S Met	W Met	W Vic	Total
Blank	49.93	53.27	43.96	56.76	47.82	48.46	48.99	54.1	**49.76**
Writing: deliberate	17.53	18.58	13.00	18.14	12.30	16.48	9.73	12.47	**14.21**
Writing: other	2.52	5.37	1.58	4.33	6.43	2.25	3.30	6.43	**3.92**
Fragments	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.13	0.10	0.07	0.17	0.1	**0.10**
ATL: Nos, ALP/DLP or Lib/LDP	0.23	0.49	0.29	0.77	1.48	2.84	1.38	0.31	**0.92**
ATL: Nos, deliberate	4.60	3.56	3.20	2.67	5.78	2.87	3.26	5.27	**3.90**
ATL: Nos, other	5.26	2.50	2.18	2.88	1.45	3.67	8.53	0.61	**3.48**
ATL: ticks/ crosses, deliberate	3.03	3.70	3.61	1.32	3.52	2.31	1.89	5.89	**3.18**
ATL: ticks/ crosses, other	2.72	0.68	1.23	2.23	1.03	3.01	3.96	1.48	**2.02**
BTL: Nos, 1 only	6.75	6.59	20.28	3.58	6.73	11.24	8.46	6.56	**9.59**
BTL: Nos, insufficient	2.07	1.30	2.01	1.18	2.03	1.55	2.04	1.86	**1.81**
BTL: Nos, repetitions	1.90	1.97	2.70	1.20	4.65	1.71	2.68	2.13	**2.51**
BTL: Nos, deliberate	0.57	0.43	0.50	0.51	0.47	0.89	0.96	0.48	**0.60**
BTL: Nos, other	0.36	0.19	0.27	1.09	0.40	0.77	0.95	0.21	**0.52**
BTL: ticks/ crosses, preference	0.53	0.30	3.13	0.72	3.60	0.84	1.18	0.50	**1.57**
BTL: ticks/ crosses, deliberate	1.09	0.89	1.71	0.71	1.71	0.85	0.88	1.31	**1.20**
BTL: ticks/ crosses, other	0.82	0.15	0.27	1.79	0.50	0.20	1.63	0.30	**0.72**

Figure 32: Results of survey of informal Region ballot papers, in percentages

Category	E Met	E Vic	N Met	N Vic	SE Met	S Met	W Met	W Vic	Total
Blank	49.93	53.27	43.96	56.76	47.82	48.46	48.99	54.10	**49.76**
Total Writing	20.05	23.94	14.57	22.48	18.73	18.72	13.04	18.90	**18.13**
Total Numbers	21.74	17.02	31.44	13.87	22.98	25.54	18.26	17.42	**23.32**
Total Ticks/ crosses	8.20	5.72	9.95	6.77	10.36	7.21	9.54	9.48	**8.69**
Total Deliberate	26.82	27.16	22.01	23.34	23.77	23.40	16.72	25.41	**23.09**
Total Deliberate including Blank	76.76	80.42	65.97	80.11	71.60	71.85	65.72	79.51	**72.85**
Total Preference	7.28	6.88	23.41	4.29	10.33	12.08	9.64	7.06	**11.16**
Total ATL	15.84	10.93	10.52	9.87	13.26	14.69	19.02	13.55	**13.50**
Total BTL	14.09	11.81	30.87	10.77	20.08	18.06	18.78	13.35	**18.51**

Figure 33: Results of survey of informal Region ballot papers, by broad categories

Category	2010 election	2014 election	Percentage point change
Blank	44.50%	49.76%	+5.26
Total Writing	21.02%	18.13%	-2.89
Total Numbers	25.01%	23.32%	-1.69
Total Ticks/crosses	7.18%	8.69%	+1.51
Total Deliberate	26.66%	23.09%	-3.57
Total Deliberate including Blank	71.15%	72.85%	+1.70
Total Preference	14.14%	11.16%	-2.98
Total ATL	8.90%	13.50%	+4.60
Total BTL	23.29%	18.51%	-4.78

Figure 34: Categories of Region informal votes, 2010 -2014

Below-The-Line Votes

The proportion of voters deciding to vote below the line on their Region ballot paper increased from 4.04% in 2010 to 6.11% in 2014. There was significant variation between Regions, ranging from 4.42% in South-Eastern Metropolitan to 8.51% in Northern Metropolitan. The range was much wider at district level, from 3.24% in Thomastown to 15.31% in Brunswick. Below-the-line voting was concentrated in the inner suburbs, with higher than average proportions in a band stretching out to the east, and pockets in the "tree changer" Districts of Macedon and Monbulk. The outer suburbs and urban/rural fringe areas, particularly to the north and west, had the lowest proportions of people voting below the line.

As Figure 36 shows, the incidence of voting below the line varied greatly by party. Voters for the major parties were little inclined to vote below the line, probably because at nearly all voting centres they received how-to-vote cards advising to vote in the square above the line for their party. The rate of below-the-line voting was much higher for most of the small parties and the non-party groups. They did not have the resources to distribute how-to-vote cards, and voters for those parties (most of which were new) may have been less disposed to follow the party ticket. An exception was the Liberal Democratic Party, whose below-the-line voting rate was only 3.62%.

The Greens stood out as having a much higher rate of below-the-line voting than the other larger parties, and in fact votes for the Greens made up almost a third of all below-the-line votes.

Of those who voted below the line, more than half (52.67%) simply voted 1 to 5. One seventh (14.65%) numbered all the squares on the ballot paper. The remaining below-the-line voters finished at various points, with fairly small numbers for each finishing point (though several thousand voted 1 to 10, possibly for two groups on the ballot paper). There was some variation among the Regions; broadly, voters in Regions with a higher below-the-line voting rate were less inclined to stop at 5, and showed a slight tendency to go to the end. For instance, in Northern Metropolitan Region, 45.42% voted 1 to 5, and 15.15% numbered all the squares on the largest ballot paper in the election.

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Party	BTL votes	Total votes	BTL votes as proportion of total
Animal Justice Party	6,173	58,128	10.62%
Australian Christians	4,807	35,156	13.67%
Australian Country Alliance	2,519	23,159	10.88%
Australian Cyclists Party	4,598	20,699	22.21%
Australian Greens	65,680	367,592	17.87%
Australian Labor Party	42,786	1,143,774	3.74%
Democratic Labour Party	5,301	79,298	6.68%
Family First	5,081	62,422	8.14%
Liberal Party of Australia	19,356	711,548	2.72%
Liberal Democratic Party	3,788	104,510	3.62%
Liberal/The Nationals (joint ticket in country Regions)	13,119	523,510	2.51%
Palmer United Party	4,318	66,674	6.48%
People Power Victoria – No Smart Meters	1,779	12,022	14.80%
Rise Up Australia Party	2,581	17,670	14.61%
Sex Party	11,583	89,737	12.91%
Shooters and Fishers Party	5,071	56,527	8.97%
The Basics Rock'n'Roll Party	1,369	6,340	21.59%
Voice for the West	2,160	11,064	19.52%
Voluntary Euthanasia Party	3,700	16,769	22.06%
Vote 1 Local Jobs	843	7,108	11.86%
Non-party groups	1,277	3,586	35.61%

Figure 35: Below-the-line votes by Party

Analysis of Results

Changes in Parliament

There was a substantial turnover of members in 2014, partly related to the change of electoral boundaries and partly a consequence of the swing at the election. In the Legislative Assembly, 15 members stepped down at the election, three transferred to the Legislative Council (two of them successfully), and six members were defeated at the election. These departures were replaced by 23 new members, and one member who transferred from the Legislative Council (the Hon Matthew Guy). The Legislative Council saw a higher proportion of changes, with ten retirements, two transfers to the Assembly (one of whom was unsuccessful), and four members defeated. Fourteen new members were elected to the Legislative Council, and two members transferred from the Assembly.

Overall, there were 25 retirements at the State election, comprising 13 members of the ALP, eight Liberals and four Nationals. Members stepping down included the Hon Ted Baillieu (Premier, 2010-2013), the Hon John Lenders (former Treasurer and leader of the Government in the Legislative Council), the Hon Jeanette Powell (former Minister for Local Government), the Hon Ken Smith (former Speaker of the Assembly), the Hon Candy Broad (former Minister for Energy and Resources and for Local Government and Housing), the Hon Justin Madden (former Minister for Planning), the Hon Andrew McIntosh (former Minister for Corrections) and the Hon Peter Hall (former Minister for Higher Education).

Of the 103 members who stood at the State election, 91 were re-elected and 12 were defeated. Three of the defeated members belonged to the ALP, six were Liberals, two were Nationals, and there was one Independent (Mr Geoff Shaw, who was elected as a Liberal in 2010). Of the 37 new members, 18 were ALP, six Liberal, three Nationals, four Greens, one DLP, one Sex Party, two Shooters and Fishers Party, one Vote 1 Local Jobs and one Independent. Across both houses, 29% of the members elected were new, compared with 21% at the 2010 State election.

Candidates and Parties

Twenty-one registered political parties stood candidates, compared with ten of the eleven parties that stood in 2010 and the twelve parties that stood in 2006.

The total of 896 candidates eclipsed the previous record of 711 candidates in 2010. The proliferation of registered political parties is the main reason for the growth in candidate nominations.

The increase was much greater in the Legislative Council than in the Assembly. The new parties concentrated their efforts on the Legislative Council, where they had more chance of being elected. Several parties, notably the DLP and Family First, stood fewer candidates than in 2010. The number of independent candidates (including candidates for unregistered parties such as Stephen Jolly for the Socialist Party in Richmond) increased substantially.

The number of candidates per Legislative Assembly district ranged between three and fourteen, with five being the most common number (occurring in 22 districts). The average number of candidates per district was 6.2, compared with 5.7 in 2010. The number of candidates per Legislative Council region ranged from 37 (Northern Victoria) to 52 (Northern Metropolitan), with an average of 8.8 candidates for each of the 40 seats (a marked increase from 5.2 in 2010).

The number of women nominating as candidates was 290 (32.40% of the total) – an increase in both raw numbers and proportionally from the 2010 election, when there were 223 female candidates (31.40% of the total). The number of women in Parliament increased from 42 (32.80% of all MPs) after the 2010 election to 48 (37.50%) after the 2014 election. In the district of Brighton, the four candidates contesting the election were all female.

Party	2014 election			2010 election total
	Legislative Assembly	Legislative Council	Total	
Animal Justice Party	9	16	25	-
Australian Christians	30	14	44	10
Australian Country Alliance	38	14	52	37
Australian Greens	88	40	128	128
Australian Labor Party	88	38	126	128
Democratic Labour Party	5	16	21	67
Family First	39	16	55	91
Liberal Party	80	34	114	113
Liberal Democratic Party	0	16	16	-
The Nationals	12	6	18	21
Palmer United Party	0	20	20	-
People Power Victoria – No Smart Meters	4	17	21	-
Rise Up Australia Party	32	16	48	-
Sex Party	9	16	25	25
Shooters and Fishers Party	3	16	19	-
Socialist Alliance	2	0	2	4
The Basics Rock'n'Roll Party	1	2	3	-
Voice for the West	14	7	21	-
Voluntary Euthanasia Party	0	10	10	-
Vote 1 Local Jobs	0	4	4	-
Independent	91	16	107	87
TOTAL	**545**	**351**	**896**	**711 (LA: 502 LC: 209)**

Figure 36: Candidates contesting 2014 State election, by Party

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 electoral District 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 other parties and independents. The two-party-preferred vote was calculated as follows.

In 29 districts, the result of the preference distribution constituted the two-party-preferred vote. These were Districts where the preference distribution continued until there were only two candidates left in the count, and those two candidates were ALP and Liberal/National.

In 53 Districts, the two-candidate-preferred (2CP) count constituted the two-party-preferred vote. These were districts where the 2CP count was between an ALP and a Liberal/National candidate, and where a preference distribution was not required because one candidate gained more than half of the first-preference votes (43 Districts were in this position), or a preference distribution concluded with more than two candidates still in the count (there were nine such Districts), or, in the case of Prahran, the 2CP count was between an ALP and a Liberal candidate and the preference distribution was between Liberal and Greens.

In six Districts, there were special two-party-preferred counts. In these Districts, neither the preference distribution nor the 2CP count was between the ALP and the Liberal/national candidates – in Brunswick,

Melbourne, Northcote and Richmond the final contest was between the ALP and the Greens, and in Mildura and Shepparton it was between The Nationals and an independent. In these Districts the special count revealed the balance between the ALP and the Coalition.

In four districts both the Liberal and National parties stood candidates. In each District it was clear from the preference distribution which would be the leading Coalition party: Liberal in Buninyong, Eildon and Ripon, and National in Euroa.

It is worth noting that the two-party-preferred vote is obtained for information purposes only. It provides a measure – for 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 affect 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 until one candidate has a majority, regardless of the party affiliations of the candidates.

In most State elections there are several cases where the ALP or Liberal/National candidates are not the two leading candidates in a District. There were 11 such cases in the 2002 election, nine in 2006, seven in 2010 and six in 2014 (Brunswick, Melbourne, Northcote and Richmond, where the Liberal candidate was third in terms of first-preference votes; and Mildura and Shepparton, where the ALP candidate was third). In each case, preferences were distributed to the ALP and to the Liberal or National candidate, in order to maintain a consistent approach and establish a two-party-preferred vote. In the 2014 State election, the two-party-preferred vote was 51.99% ALP and 48.01% Liberal/National.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Early Voting Centres

EAV - Electronically Assisted Voting available

Albert Park District			
Albert Park EO - EVC	(AWA)		Level 2 60 Albert Road, South Melbourne
Altona District			
Altona - EVC	(FWA)		Laverton Community Hub (Enter Donald St), 95-105 Railway Avenue, Laverton
Bass District			
Bass - EVC	(FWA)	Supercentre EAV	Corner Lakeside Boulevard and Shearwater Drive, Pakenham
Bass District			
Cowes - EVC	(AWA)		Shop 2, 15 Warley Avenue, Cowes
Bass District			
Wonthaggi - EVC	(FWA)		19 Murray Street, Wonthaggi
Bayswater District			
Bayswater - EVC	(AWA)		141 Boronia Road, Boronia
Bellarine District			
Bellarine EO - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 2, 509 Bellarine Highway, Moolap
Benambra District			
Benambra EO - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 5, 155 Melbourne Road, Wodonga
Bendigo East District			
Bendigo East - EVC	(AWA)		Shop 47, Strath Village Shopping Centre Condon Street, Kennington
Bendigo West District		EAV	
Bendigo West EO - EVC	(AWA)		Level 1, Building H 136 McCrae Street, Bendigo
Bentleigh District			
Bentleigh EO - EVC	(AWA)	Supercentre EAV	Virginia Park, 18 North Drive 236-262 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East
Box Hill District			
Box Hill EO - EVC	(FWA)		12-14 Nelson Road, Box Hill
Brighton District			
Brighton - EVC			120 Bay Street, Brighton
Broadmeadows District	(AWA)		
Broadmeadows EO - EVC			Level 1, Building A 61 Riggall Street, Broadmeadows
Brunswick District	(AWA)	EAV	
Brunswick EO - EVC			462-464 Sydney Road, Brunswick
Bulleen District	(AWA)		
Bulleen - EVC			Suite 1 600 Doncaster Road, Doncaster
Bundoora District	(AWA)	EAV	
Bundoora EO - EVC			Unit 8, 19 Enterprise Drive, Bundoora
Buninyong District	(AWA)	EAV	
Buninyong - EVC			6 Victoria Street, Bakery Hill
Burwood District	(AWA)	EAV	
Burwood EO - EVC			Unit 1 15-23 Huntingdale Road, Burwood
Carrum District	(AWA)	EAV	
Carrum EO - EVC			Unit 1 684-700 Frankston-Dandenong Road, Carrum Downs
Caulfield District	(FWA)	EAV	

Caulfield EO - EVC			28 Derby Road, Caulfield East
Clarinda District	(AWA)		
Clarinda EO - EVC			Unit A7, Hallmarc Business Park 2A Westall Road, Clayton
Cranbourne District	(AWA)		
Cranbourne EO - EVC			Showroom 2, Cranbourne Homemaker Centre 398 South Gippsland Highway, Cranbourne
Croydon District	(AWA)		
Croydon - EVC			166 Main Street, Croydon
Dandenong District	(AWA)		
Dandenong EO - EVC			2nd Floor 237 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong
Eildon District	(AWA)		
Eildon EO - EVC			Unit 3, 7-13 Symes Road, Woori Yallock
Eltham District			
Eltham - EVC			11 Were Street, Montmorency
Essendon District			
Essendon EO - EVC	(FWA)	Supercentre EAV	18-36 Keilor Road, Essendon North
Euroa District			
Euroa EO - EVC	(AWA)		16-18 Station Street, Seymour
Evelyn District			
Evelyn EO - EVC	(AWA)		Factory 40 Cavehill Industrial Gardens, 70-72 Cave Hill Road, Lilydale
Ferntree Gully District			
Ferntree Gully EO - EVC	(FWA)		Unit 3, 794 Burwood Highway, Ferntree Gully
Footscray District			
Footscray EO - EVC	(AWA)		84 Buckley Street, Footscray
Forest Hill District			
Forest Hill EO - EVC			Ground Floor 378 Burwood Highway, Burwood East
Frankston District			
Frankston EO - EVC	(AWA)		Suite G4, 431 Nepean Highway, Frankston
Geelong District			
Geelong EO - EVC	(AWA)		Ground Floor, Focus 5 Building 23-31 Gheringhap Street, Geelong
Gembrook District			
Gembrook EO - EVC	(FWA)		122 Old Princes Highway, Beaconsfield
Gippsland East District			
Gippsland East EO - EVC	(AWA)		231-233 Main Street, Bairnsdale
Gippsland South District			
Gippsland South - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	348 Raymond Street, Sale
Gippsland South District			
Gippsland South EO - EVC	(AWA)		1 Church Street, Leongatha
Hastings District			
Hastings EO - EVC	(AWA)		Factory 1 & 2, 2141 Frankston-Flinders Road, Hastings
Hawthorn District			
Hawthorn EO - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	Level 1, 257 Auburn Road, Hawthorn
Ivanhoe District			
Ivanhoe EO - EVC			37 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg

Kew District			
Kew - EVC			Suite 503 (Level 5), 1 Princess Street, Kew
Keysborough District			
Keysborough - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	6 Pauline Avenue, Dingley Village
Kororoit District			
Kororoit EO - EVC	(AWA)		Level 1, 2-8 Lake Street, Caroline Springs
Lara District			
Lara - EVC	(FWA)	Supercentre EAV	34-36 Cowie Street, North Geelong
Lara District			
Avalon - EVC	(FWA)		Avalon Airport, 80 Beach Road, Lara
Lowan District			
Hamilton - EVC	(AWA)		114 Thompson Street, Hamilton
Lowan District			
Lowan EO - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	41 Hamilton Street, Horsham
Macedon District			
Macedon EO - EVC	(AWA)		Office 4, 17 Goode Street, Gisborne
Malvern District			
Malvern - EVC	(AWA)		St George's Anglican Church, 296 Glenferrie Road, Malvern
Melbourne District			
Melbourne - EVC			Drill Hall 51-57 Victoria Street, Melbourne
Melbourne District			
Victoria University - EVC			Level 9 300 Flinders Street, Melbourne
Melbourne District			
Melbourne EO - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	Level 3 530 Collins Street, Melbourne
Melton District			
Melton EO - EVC	(AWA)		Melton Sport Stadium Building 2, Victoria University Rees Road, Melton South
Mildura District			
Mildura EO - EVC	(AWA)		116 Eighth Street, Mildura
Mill Park District			
Mill Park - EVC	(FWA)		Level 1, 2 Murdoch Road, South Morang
Monbulk District			
Monbulk - EVC	(AWA)		Unit 4, 1527 Burwood Highway, Tecoma
Mordialloc District			
Mordialloc - EVC			Shop 4 & 5, 230 Nepean Highway, Edithvale
Mornington District			
Mornington - EVC	(AWA)		29 Main Street, Mornington
Morwell District			
Morwell EO - EVC	(AWA)		23 Hazelwood Road, Morwell
Mount Waverley District			
Mount Waverley - EVC	(AWA)		18 Hamilton Place, Mount Waverley
Mulgrave District			
Mulgrave - EVC			211 Springvale Road, Springvale
Murray Plains District			
Swan Hill - EVC	(AWA)		232 Campbell Street, Swan Hill

Murray Plains District			
Murray Plains EO - EVC	(AWA)		217 Pakenham Street, Echuca
Narracan District		EAV	
Narracan EO - EVC	(FWA)		136 Queen Street, Warragul
Narre Warren North District			
Narre Warren North - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	Mossgiel Park Pre-School, 20-24 Heathmere Crescent, Endeavour Hills
Narre Warren South District			
Narre Warren South - EVC	(AWA)		Shop 2 & 41 Hampton Park Shopping Centre, 166 Somerville Road, Hampton Park
Nepean District			
Nepean EO - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 13 143 Point Nepean Road, Dromana
Niddrie District			
Niddrie - EVC	(AWA)		Shop 27B, Milleara Shopping Centre 233 - 235 Milleara Road, Keilor East
Northcote District			
Northcote EO - EVC	(AWA)		345-347 High Street, Northcoate
Oakleigh District			
Oakleigh - EVC	(AWA)		Ground Floor, 1283 North Road, Huntingdale
Ovens Valley District			
Ovens Valley EO - EVC	(AWA)		52 Norton Street, Wangaratta
Ovens Valley District			
Bright - EVC	(AWA)		28A Ireland Street, Bright
Ovens Valley District			
Yarrawonga - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 1A, 59-63 Belmore Street, Yarrawonga
Pascoe Vale District			
Pascoe Vale - EVC			Shop 16, 471 Sydney Road, Coburg
Polwarth District			
Polwarth EO - EVC	(AWA)		6 Murray Street, Colac
Prahran District			
Prahran - EVC			290 Chapel Street, Prahran
Preston District			
Preston - EVC			581 Plenty Road, Preston
Richmond District			
Richmond - EVC	(AWA)	Supercentre EAV	Shop 7, Richmond Plaza 263-265 Bridge Road, Richmond
Ringwood District			
Ringwood EO - EVC	(FWA)	EAV	160-166 Maroondah Highway, Ringwood
Ripon District			
Ripon EO - EVC	(FWA)	EAV	Federation University Australia, 13 Sloane Street, Stawell
Rowville District			
Rowville EO - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	Unit 3, 36 Koornang Road, Scoresby
Sandringham District			
Sandringham EO - EVC	(AWA)	EAV	Shop 3, 116 Balcombe Road, Mentone
Shepparton District			
Shepparton EO - EVC	(AWA)		Shop 1, 33 Vaughan Street, Shepparton
South Barwon District			
South Barwon - EVC	(FWA)		Waurn Ponds Shopping Centre, Shop 701 173-199 Pioneer Road, Grovedale

South West Coast District			
South West Coast EO - EVC	(AWA)		165 Fairy Street, Warrnambool
South-West Coast District			
Portland - EVC			121A Percy Street, Portland
St Albans District			
St Albans - EVC			21 Alfrieda Street, St Albans
Sunbury District			
Sunbury EO - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 2 57-59 Horne Street, Sunbury
Sunbury District			
Melbourne Airport - EVC	(AWA)		Terminal 1 Qantas Check In, Airport Drive, Melbourne Airport
Sydenham District			
Sydenham - EVC	(AWA)		Town Well Uniting Church, 514-516 Melton Highway, Sydenham
Tarneit District			
Tarneit EO - EVC	(AWA)		Unit 2, 352 Old Geelong Road, Hoppers Crossing
Thomastown District			
Thomastown EO - EVC	(FWA)		Showroom 14C, 560-620 High Street, Epping
Warrandyte District			
Warrandyte - EVC			Unit 9, 1012 Doncaster Road, Doncaster East
Wendouree District			
Wendouree EO - EVC	(FWA)	Supercentre EAV	Unit 3 311 Gillies Street, Wendouree
Werribee District			
Werribee - EVC		EAV	1/63 Synnot Street, Werribee
Williamstown District			
Williamstown EO - EVC	(AWA)		Factory 3, 92-100 Champion Road, Williamstown
Yan Yean District			
Yan Yean EO - EVC			Office 106, 95 Hazel Glen Drive, Doreen
Yuroke District			
Yuroke - EVC	(FWA)		Shop 29 & 29A Greenvale Shopping Centre, 1-11 Greenvale Drive, Greenvale

Appendix 2: New Political Parties Registered July – November 2014

Party	Date of application	Date of registration	Number of objections
Palmer United Party	04-Apr	01-Jul	0
People Power Victoria – No Smart Meters	13-May	23-Jul	1
Vote 1 Local Jobs	02-Jun	31-Oct	2
Voluntary Euthanasia Party (Victoria)	06-Jun	25-Jul	1
Rise Up Australia Party	06-Jun	08-Oct	0
Animal Justice Party	09-Jul	02-Oct	0
Australian Cyclists Party	21-Jul	14-Oct	0
Shooters and Fishers Party Victoria	12-Aug	20-Oct	1
Liberal Democratic Party	18-Aug	03-Nov	2
Save the Planet	28-Aug	Not registered	0
Voice for the West	08-Sep	03-Nov	1
No East West Link	10-Sep	Not registered	4
The Basics Rock'n'Roll Party	17-Sep	03-Nov	0

Appendix 3: Election Managers

District	Election Manager
Albert Park/Prahran	Vici Funnell
Altona/Williamstown	Rose McVicar
Bass/Hastings	Ian Herron
Bayswater/Ferntree Gully	Leonie Taylor
Bellarine/South Barwon	Noel McPhee
Benambra	Alan Cuman
Bendigo East/Bendigo West	Peta Watson
Bentleigh/Oakleigh	Peter Cole
Box Hill/Bulleen	Helen Halliday
Brighton/Sandringham	Jill Esplan
Broadmeadows/Yuroke	Sandra McGregor
Brunswick/Pascoe Vale	Chris Browne
Bundoora/Preston	Sue Maclellan
Buninyong/Wendouree	Colin Nicholson
Burwood/Malvern	Ed Stewart
Carrum/Mordialloc	Brian Cullen
Caulfield	Therese Camm
Clarinda/Keysborough	Bill Lang
Cranbourne/Narre Warren South	Peter Lee
Croydon/Ringwood	Keith Crothers
Dandenong/Narre Warren North	Bill Irvine
Eildon	Peter Williams
Eltham/Ivanhoe	Judith Walsh
Essendon/Niddrie	Kathryn Freeman
Euroa	Alison Ridley
Evelyn/Monbulk	Les Johnson
Footscray/St Albans	Bob Guest
Forest Hill/Mt Waverley	Maureen Lafranchi

District	Election Manager
Frankston	Ian Smyth
Geelong/Lara	Colin Riley
Gembrook	Evelyn Rak
Gippsland East	Sandra Wood
Gippsland South	Janine Taylor
Hawthorn/Kew	Graeme Cobb
Kororoit/Sydenham	Heather Oke
Lowan	Graeme Sargent
Macedon	Kate Daniel
Melbourne	Trevor Sutherland
Melton	Peter Long
Mildura	Trevor Leighton
Mill Park/Thomastown	Ann Butler
Mornington/Nepean	Julie Allan
Morwell	Julie Duffy
Mulgrave/Rowville	Jenni Colgan
Murray Plains	Wayne Park
Narracan	Rob Rutter
Northcote/Richmond	Paul Werner
Ovens Valley	Sue Abotomey
Polwarth	Elizabeth Reeves
Ripon	Iain Maclean
Shepparton	Mick Bastian
South West Coast	Kevin Waterhouse
Sunbury	Ted Marks
Tarneit/Werribee	John Francis
Warrandyte	Dave Botherway
Yan Yean	Mike King

Appendix 4: Electors on Roll Statistics Report

Include Silent Electors:	Yes
Current Date Time:	13 November 2014 3:20 PM
Close of Roll Date:	11 November 2014
Election Date:	29 November 2014
Election Name:	State Election 2014
Roll Number:	346

Electorate No	Electorate Name	Region No	Region Name	Elector Count
4	Bayswater	1	Eastern Metropolitan	42,719
10	Box Hill	1	Eastern Metropolitan	43,389
14	Bulleen	1	Eastern Metropolitan	44,072
22	Croydon	1	Eastern Metropolitan	40,730
25	Eltham	1	Eastern Metropolitan	44,409
29	Ferntree Gully	1	Eastern Metropolitan	40,780
31	Forest Hill	1	Eastern Metropolitan	40,991
39	Ivanhoe	1	Eastern Metropolitan	44,366
55	Mount Waverley	1	Eastern Metropolitan	39,993
71	Ringwood	1	Eastern Metropolitan	40,419
83	Warrandyte	1	Eastern Metropolitan	43,008
			Total	**464,876**
3	Bass	2	Eastern Victoria	44,492
28	Evelyn	2	Eastern Victoria	40,174
34	Gembrook	2	Eastern Victoria	42,239
35	Gippsland East	2	Eastern Victoria	43,113
36	Gippsland South	2	Eastern Victoria	40,241
37	Hastings	2	Eastern Victoria	47,150
51	Monbulk	2	Eastern Victoria	41,906
53	Mornington	2	Eastern Victoria	43,622
54	Morwell	2	Eastern Victoria	45,409
58	Narracan	2	Eastern Victoria	46,055
61	Nepean	2	Eastern Victoria	44,669
			Total	**479,070**

Electorate No	Electorate Name	Region No	Region Name	Elector Count	
12	Broadmeadows	3	Northern Metropolitan	41,717	
13	Brunswick	3	Northern Metropolitan	46,954	
15	Bundoora	3	Northern Metropolitan	39,435	
47	Melbourne	3	Northern Metropolitan	43,801	
50	Mill Park	3	Northern Metropolitan	42,969	
63	Northcote	3	Northern Metropolitan	44,273	
66	Pascoe Vale	3	Northern Metropolitan	45,879	
69	Preston	3	Northern Metropolitan	42,297	
70	Richmond	3	Northern Metropolitan	46,690	
82	Thomastown	3	Northern Metropolitan	39,826	
88	Yuroke	3	Northern Metropolitan	43,811	
				Total	**477,652**
6	Benambra	4	Northern Victoria	44,259	
7	Bendigo East	4	Northern Victoria	43,982	
8	Bendigo West	4	Northern Victoria	42,505	
24	Eildon	4	Northern Victoria	41,479	
27	Euroa	4	Northern Victoria	45,847	
45	Macedon	4	Northern Victoria	41,580	
49	Mildura	4	Northern Victoria	42,452	
57	Murray Plains	4	Northern Victoria	45,327	
65	Ovens Valley	4	Northern Victoria	41,110	
75	Shepparton	4	Northern Victoria	46,190	
87	Yan Yean	4	Northern Victoria	44,963	
				Total	**479,694**
18	Carrum	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	44,578	
20	Clarinda	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	43,698	
21	Cranbourne	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	45,863	
23	Dandenong	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	41,199	
32	Frankston	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	41,747	
41	Keysborough	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	42,381	
52	Mordialloc	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	43,607	
56	Mulgrave	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	40,682	
59	Narre Warren North	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	43,281	
60	Narre Warren South	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	45,818	
73	Rowville	5	South-Eastern Metropolitan	38,834	
				Total	**471,688**

Electorate No	Electorate Name	Region No	Region Name	Elector Count	
1	Albert Park	6	Southern Metropolitan	43,134	
9	Bentleigh	6	Southern Metropolitan	40,981	
11	Brighton	6	Southern Metropolitan	42,924	
17	Burwood	6	Southern Metropolitan	41,878	
19	Caulfield	6	Southern Metropolitan	41,992	
38	Hawthorn	6	Southern Metropolitan	42,149	
40	Kew	6	Southern Metropolitan	43,898	
46	Malvern	6	Southern Metropolitan	40,708	
64	Oakleigh	6	Southern Metropolitan	39,556	
68	Prahran	6	Southern Metropolitan	44,075	
74	Sandringham	6	Southern Metropolitan	41,456	
				Total	**462,751**
2	Altona	7	Western Metropolitan	48,044	
26	Essendon	7	Western Metropolitan	44,129	
30	Footscray	7	Western Metropolitan	46,116	
42	Kororoit	7	Western Metropolitan	46,173	
62	Niddrie	7	Western Metropolitan	42,548	
78	St Albans	7	Western Metropolitan	46,041	
79	Sunbury	7	Western Metropolitan	41,877	
80	Sydenham	7	Western Metropolitan	45,303	
81	Tarneit	7	Western Metropolitan	43,971	
85	Werribee	7	Western Metropolitan	41,377	
86	Williamstown	7	Western Metropolitan	47,162	
				Total	**492,741**
5	Bellarine	8	Western Victoria	42,541	
16	Buninyong	8	Western Victoria	40,891	
33	Geelong	8	Western Victoria	45,026	
43	Lara	8	Western Victoria	43,000	
44	Lowan	8	Western Victoria	42,979	
48	Melton	8	Western Victoria	44,915	
67	Polwarth	8	Western Victoria	43,277	
72	Ripon	8	Western Victoria	45,147	
76	South Barwon	8	Western Victoria	44,738	
77	South-West Coast	8	Western Victoria	44,766	
84	Wendouree	8	Western Victoria	40,549	
				Total	**477,829**
				Total all District	**3,806,301**

Appendix 5: Comparison of Numbers of Ballot Papers Counted, Districts and Regions

	District	Region	Variance	Variance %
Eastern Metropolitan	436,339	436,091	248	0.057%
Eastern Victoria	450,254	450,123	131	0.029%
Northern Metropolitan	434,782	434,930	-148	-0.034%
Northern Victoria	450,189	449,989	200	0.044%
South Eastern Metropolitan	438,030	438,072	-42	-0.010%
Southern Metropolitan	425,299	425,108	191	0.045%
Western Metropolitan	454,628	454,830	-202	-0.044%
Western Victoria	451,024	451,025	-1	0.000%
State-wide	3,540,545	3,540,168	377	0.011%

Appendix 6: Complaints

Category of complaint	# complaints
Accessibility of voting - general	4
Conduct of candidate	11
Conduct of party workers	17
Direct enrolment	9
Election administration	17
Electoral material - Authorisation	25
Electoral material - Display and location	6
Electoral material - HTVC How-to-vote cards	5
Electoral material - Misleading or deceptive	24
Electoral material - Other	29
Electronically assisted voting	2
Enforcement of compulsory voting	26
Enforcement of multiple voting	15
Information and advertising	12
Interstate and Overseas voting	15
Online employment application	1
Online training	3
Phone calls from political groups and candidates	7
Postal vote applications from candidates/political party	28
Postal voting	18
Provision of enrolment details to candidates and parties	4
Staff, head office	2
Voting centres - Accessibility	15
Voting centres - Employment conditions and management	21
Voting centres - Location	16
Voting centres - Staff, service and facilities	93
Website	7
Other	22
Total complaints	**454**

Appendix 7: Interstate Early Voting Centres

Adelaide	Electoral Commission SA
	Level 6
	60 Light Square
	Adelaide SA 5000

Alice Springs	Northern Territory Electoral Commission
	Suite 3, Yeperenye Centre (Next to CBA)
	Gregory Terrace
	Alice Springs NT 0870

Brisbane	Electoral Commission of Queensland
	Level 6, Forestry House
	160 Mary Street
	Brisbane QLD 4000

Cairns	Magistrates Courts Office
	Level 1
	5D Sheridan Street
	Cairns QLD 4870

Canberra	ACT Electoral Commission
	Ground Flr, North Building, Civic Square
	180 London Circuit
	Canberra City ACT 2601

Darwin	Northern Territory Electoral Commission
	Level 3, TCG Centre
	80 Mitchell Street
	Darwin NT 0800

Hobart	Tasmanian Electoral Commission
	Level 2, 70 Collins Street
	Hobart TAS 7000

Noosa	Magistrates Courts Office
	Langura Street
	Noosa QLD 4567

Perth	Western Australian Electoral Commission
	Level 2, 111 St George's Terrace
	Perth WA 6000

Southport	Magistrates Courts Office
	Cnr Davenport & Hinze Streets
	Southport QLD 4215

Sydney	New South Wales Electoral Commission
	Level 25, 201 Kent St
	Sydney NSW 2000

Appendix 8: Overseas Early Voting Centres

Athens, GREECE	Australian Embassy
Auckland, NEW ZEALAND	Australian Consulate-General
Bali, INDONESIA	Australian Consulate-General
Bangkok, THAILAND	Australian Embassy
Beijing, CHINA (People's Republic of)	Australian Embassy
Berlin, GERMANY	Australian Embassy
Colombo, SRI LANKA	Australian High Commission
Dili, Timor-Leste	Australian Embassy
Geneva, SWITZERLAND	Australian Consulate-General
Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM	Australian Consulate-General
Hong Kong, CHINA (People's Republic of)	Australian Consulate-General
Jakarta, INDONESIA	Australian Embassy
Kathmandu, NEPAL	Australian Embassy
Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA	Australian High Commission
London, UNITED KINGDOM	Government of Victoria
Los Angeles, USA	Australian Consulate-General
Manila, PHILIPPINES	Australian Embassy
New Delhi, INDIA	Australian High Commission
Paris, FRANCE	Australian Embassy
Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA	Australian Embassy
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea	Australian High Commission
Rome, ITALY	Australian Embassy
San Francisco, USA	Australian Consulate-General
Singapore, SINGAPORE	Australian High Commission
Suva, Republic of Fiji	Australian High Commission
Taipei, TAIWAN	Australian Office
The Hague, NETHERLANDS	Australian Embassy
Tokyo, JAPAN	Australian Embassy
Toronto, CANADA	Australian Consulate-General
Vancouver, CANADA	Australian Consulate
Washington, USA	Embassy of Australia
Wellington, New Zealand	Australian High Commission

Appendix 9: Informality and Formality Rates by District

	% Informal	% Formal
Albert Park District	4.13%	95.87%
Altona District	5.45%	94.55%
Bass District	5.41%	94.59%
Bayswater District	5.07%	94.93%
Bellarine District	4.84%	95.16%
Benambra District	4.53%	95.47%
Bendigo East District	3.49%	96.51%
Bendigo West District	4.40%	95.60%
Bentleigh District	5.24%	94.76%
Box Hill District	3.75%	96.25%
Brighton District	3.61%	96.39%
Broadmeadows District	8.52%	91.48%
Brunswick District	4.92%	95.08%
Bulleen District	4.91%	95.09%
Bundoora District	4.54%	95.46%
Buninyong District	4.80%	95.20%
Burwood District	3.47%	96.53%
Carrum District	5.12%	94.88%
Caulfield District	4.17%	95.83%
Clarinda District	6.14%	93.86%
Cranbourne District	6.56%	93.44%
Croydon District	4.41%	95.59%
Dandenong District	8.30%	91.70%
Eildon District	5.23%	94.77%
Eltham District	4.29%	95.71%
Essendon District	3.93%	96.07%
Euroa District	4.68%	95.32%
Evelyn District	5.72%	94.28%
Ferntree Gully District	4.71%	95.29%
Footscray District	5.87%	94.13%
Forest Hill District	4.27%	95.73%
Frankston District	8.88%	91.12%
Geelong District	4.78%	95.22%
Gembrook District	5.28%	94.72%
Gippsland East District	5.63%	94.37%
Gippsland South District	5.50%	94.50%
Hastings District	5.89%	94.11%
Hawthorn District	3.75%	96.25%

	% Informal	% Formal
Ivanhoe District	4.59%	95.41%
Kew District	4.11%	95.89%
Keysborough District	6.06%	93.94%
Kororoit District	6.69%	93.31%
Lara District	4.60%	95.40%
Lowan District	4.53%	95.47%
Macedon District	3.67%	96.33%
Malvern District	4.02%	95.98%
Melbourne District	3.50%	96.50%
Melton District	8.13%	91.87%
Mildura District	7.05%	92.95%
Mill Park District	5.70%	94.30%
Monbulk District	5.16%	94.84%
Mordialloc District	6.44%	93.56%
Mornington District	4.04%	95.96%
Morwell District	5.38%	94.62%
Mount Waverley District	3.81%	96.19%
Mulgrave District	5.18%	94.82%
Murray Plains District	5.49%	94.51%
Narracan District	4.22%	95.78%
Narre Warren North District	6.75%	93.25%
Narre Warren South District	5.63%	94.37%
Nepean District	4.97%	95.03%
Niddrie District	6.41%	93.59%
Northcote District	4.22%	95.78%
Oakleigh District	4.56%	95.44%
Ovens Valley District	4.49%	95.51%
Pascoe Vale District	6.37%	93.63%
Polwarth District	3.89%	96.11%
Prahran District	5.11%	94.89%
Preston District	5.32%	94.68%
Richmond District	3.72%	96.28%
Ringwood District	4.34%	95.66%
Ripon District	6.38%	93.62%
Rowville District	5.54%	94.46%
Sandringham District	3.54%	96.46%
Shepparton District	5.84%	94.16%
South Barwon District	3.91%	96.09%

	% Informal	% Formal
South-West Coast District	4.04%	95.96%
St Albans District	7.83%	92.17%
Sunbury District	5.69%	94.31%
Sydenham District	6.62%	93.38%
Tarneit District	8.08%	91.92%
Thomastown District	7.03%	92.97%
Warrandyte District	4.72%	95.28%
Wendouree District	4.87%	95.13%
Werribee District	6.37%	93.63%
Williamstown District	5.01%	94.99%
Yan Yean District	5.10%	94.90%
Yuroke District	6.50%	93.50%
State-wide (Lower House)	5.22%	94.78%

Appendix 10: Nominations Refunded

Candidate (Ballot Paper Name)	Total Candidates	Total Refund Received
Animal Justice Party	25	0
Australian Christians	44	2
Australian Country Alliance	52	9
Australian Cyclists Party	17	0
Australian Labor Party - Victorian Branch	126	126
Australian Sex Party - Victoria	25	1
Democratic Labour Party (DLP)	21	3
Family First Victoria Inc.	55	5
Liberal Democratic Party	16	6
Liberal Party Of Australia - Victorian Division	114	114
National Party Of Australia - Victoria	18	18
Palmer United Party	20	0
People Power Victoria - No Smart Meters	21	0
Rise Up Australia Party	48	0
Shooters And Fishers Party Victoria	19	2
Socialist Alliance (Victoria)	2	0
The Australian Greens - Victoria	128	126
The Basics Rock 'N' Roll Party	3	0
Voice For The West	21	4
Voluntary Euthanasia Party (Victoria)	10	0
Vote 1 Local Jobs	4	1
Independents	107	19
Total	**896**	**436**

Appendix 11: Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service –Telephone Interpreter Service Statistics

Origin	No.
Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS) Calls	1102
Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS) calls	84
Total	1186

Language	No.
Amharic	4
Arabic	60
Bosnian	6
Cambodian	6
Cantonese	119
Croatian	13
Dari	8
Greek	67
Italian	25
Korean	22
Macedonian	13
Mandarin	165
Persian	6
Russian	35
Serbian	26
Somali	3
Spanish	30
Turkish	16
Vietnamese	91
Other	34

Election managers:

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Bayswater District
Leonie Taylor
Unit 3
794 Burwood Highway
FERNTREE GULLY
Tel: 9752 2015

Box Hill District
Helen Halliday
12-14 Nelson Road
BOX HILL
Tel: 9898 8007

Bulleen District
Helen Halliday
12-14 Nelson Road
BOX HILL
Tel: 9898 8007

Croydon District
Keith Crothers
160-166 Maroondah Hwy
RINGWOOD
Tel: 9870 9901

Eltham District
Judith Walsh
37 Burgundy Street
HEIDELBERG
Tel: 9455 1721

Ferntree Gully District
Leonie Taylor
Unit 3
794 Burwood Highway
FERNTREE GULLY
Tel: 9752 2015

Forest Hill District
Maureen Lafranchi
Ground Floor
378 Burwood Highway
BURWOOD EAST
Tel: 9887 9658

Ivanhoe District
Judith Walsh
37 Burgundy Street
HEIDELBERG
Tel: 9455 1721

Mount Waverley District
Maureen Lafranchi
Ground Floor
378 Burwood Highway
BURWOOD EAST
Tel: 9887 9658

Ringwood District
Keith Crothers
160-166 Maroondah Hwy
RINGWOOD
Tel: 9870 9901

Warrandyte District
Dave Botherway
Level 1
1094 Doncaster Road
DONCASTER EAST
Tel: 9841 0228

Eastern Victoria Region

Bass District
Ian Herron
Factory 1 & 2
2141 Frankston-Flinders Rd
HASTINGS
Tel: 5979 1173

Evelyn District
Les Johnson
Factory 40
Cavehill Industrial Gardens
70-72 Cave Hill Road
LILYDALE
Tel: 9737 6339

Gembrook District
Evelyn Rak
122 Old Princes Highway
BEACONSFIELD
Tel: 9796 1013

Gippsland East District
Sandra Wood
231-233 Main Street
BAIRNSDALE
Tel: 5153 0504

Gippsland South District
Janine Taylor
1 Church Street
LEONGATHA
Tel: 5662 0522

Hastings District
Ian Herron
Factory 1 & 2
2141 Frankston-Flinders Rd
HASTINGS
Tel: 5979 1173

Monbulk District
Les Johnson
Factory 40
Cavehill Industrial Gardens
70-72 Cave Hill Road
LILYDALE
Tel: 9737 6339

Mornington District
Julie Allan
Shop 13
143 Point Nepean Road
DROMANA
Tel: 5981 4895

Morwell District
Julia Duffy
23 Hazelwood Road
MORWELL
Tel: 5133 3312

Narracan District
Rob Rutter
136 Queen Street
WARRAGUL
Tel: 5623 4414

Nepean District
Julie Allan
Shop 13
143 Point Nepean Road
DROMANA
Tel: 5981 4895

Northern Metropolitan Region

Broadmeadows District
Sandra McGregor
Level 1, Building A
61 Riggall Street
BROADMEADOWS
Tel: 9302 1008

Brunswick District
Chris Browne
462-464 Sydney Road
BRUNSWICK
Tel: 9380 9020

Bundoora District
Sue Maclellan
Unit B
19 Enterprise Drive
BUNDOORA
Tel: 9467 5609

Melbourne District
Trevor Sutherland
Level 3
530 Collins Street
MELBOURNE
Tel: 9629 1143

Mill Park District
Ann Butler
Showroom 14C
560-620 High Street
EPPING
Tel: 8401 4718

Northcote District
Paul Warner
345-347 High Street
NORTHCOTE
Tel: 9482 1747

Pascoe Vale District
Chris Browne
462-464 Sydney Road
BRUNSWICK
Tel: 9380 9020

Preston District
Sue Maclellan
Unit B
19 Enterprise Drive
BUNDOORA
Tel: 9467 5609

Richmond District
Paul Warner
345-347 High Street
NORTHCOTE
Tel: 9482 1747

Thomastown District
Ann Butler
Showroom 14C
560-620 High Street
EPPING
Tel: 8401 4718

Yuroke District
Sandra McGregor
Level 1, Building A
61 Riggall Street
BROADMEADOWS
Tel: 9302 1008

Northern Victoria Region

Benambra District
Alan Curran
Shop 5
155 Melbourne Road
WODONGA
Tel: (02) 6056 0393

Bendigo East District
Pete Watson
Level 1, Building H
136 McCrae Street
BENDIGO
Tel: 5441 8832

Bendigo West District
Pete Watson
Level 1, Building H
136 McCrae Street
BENDIGO
Tel: 5441 8832

Eildon District
Peter Williams
Unit 3, 7-13 Symes Road
WOORI YALLOCK
Tel: 5961 5280

Euroa District
Alison Ridley
16-18 Station Street
SEYMOUR
Tel: 5799 0072

Macedon District
Kate Daniel
Office 4, 17 Goode Street
GISBORNE
Tel: 5428 2661

Mildura District
Trevor Leighton
116 Eighth Street
MILDURA
Tel: 5021 5517

Murray Plains District
Wayne Park
217 Pakenham Street
ECHUCA
Tel: 5480 0229

Ovens Valley District
Sue Abotomey
52 Norton Street
WANGARATTA
Tel: 5722 1702

Shepparton District
Mick Bastian
Shop 1
33 Vaughan Street
SHEPPARTON
Tel: 5822 1091

Yan Yean District
Mike King
Office 106
95 Hazel Glen Drive
DOREEN
Tel: 9717 2279

South-Eastern Metropolitan Region

Carrum District
Brian Cullen
Unit 1
684-700 Frankston-
Dandenong Road
CARRUM DOWNS
Tel: 8787 7032

Clarinda District
Bill Lang
Unit A7
Hallmarc Business Park
2A Westall Road
CLAYTON
Tel: 9545 5420

Cranbourne District
Peter Lee
Showroom 2, Cranbourne
Homemaker Centre
398 South Gippsland Hwy
CRANBOURNE
Tel: 5991 4024

Dandenong District
Bill Irvine
2nd Floor
237 Lonsdale Street
DANDENONG
Tel: 9706 0226

Frankston District
Ian Smyth
Suite G4
431 Nepean Highway
FRANKSTON
Tel: 9781 3451

Keysborough District
Bill Lang
Unit A7
Hallmarc Business Park
2A Westall Road
CLAYTON
Tel: 9545 5420

Mordialloc District
Brian Cullen
Unit 1,
684-700 Frankston-
Dandenong Road
CARRUM DOWNS
Tel: 8787 7032

Mulgrave District
Jenni Colgan
Unit 3, 36 Koomang Road
SCORESBY
Tel: 9764 0001

Narre Warren North District
Bill Irvine
2nd Floor
237 Lonsdale Street
DANDENONG
Tel: 9706 0226

Narre Warren South District
Peter Lee
Showroom 2, Cranbourne
Homemaker Centre
398 South Gippsland Hwy
CRANBOURNE
Tel: 5991 4024

Southern Metropolitan Region

Albert Park District
Vici Funnell
Level 2, 60 Albert Road
SOUTH MELBOURNE
Tel: 9690 0280

Bentleigh District
Peter Cole
Virginia Park, 18 North Drive
236-262 East Boundary Rd
BENTLEIGH EAST
Tel: 9570 6320

Brighton District
Jill Esplan
Shop 3, 116 Balcombe Road
MENTONE
Tel: 9583 0058

Burwood District
Ed Stewart
Unit 1
15-23 Huntingdale Road
BURWOOD
Tel: 9888 7788

Caulfield District
Therese Camm
28 Derby Road
CAULFIELD EAST
Tel: 9563 5227

Hawthorn District
Graeme Cobb
Level 1, 257 Auburn Road
HAWTHORN
Tel: 9882 6610

Kew District
Graeme Cobb
Level 1, 257 Auburn Road
HAWTHORN
Tel: 9882 6610

Malvern District
Ed Stewart
Unit 1
15-23 Huntingdale Road
BURWOOD
Tel: 9888 7788

Oakleigh District
Peter Cole
Virginia Park, 18 North Drive
236-262 East Boundary Rd
BENTLEIGH EAST
Tel: 9570 6320

Prahran District
Vici Funnell
Level 2, 60 Albert Road
SOUTH MELBOURNE
Tel: 9690 0280

Sandringham District
Jill Esplan
Shop 3, 116 Balcombe Road
MENTONE
Tel: 9583 0058

Western Metropolitan Region

Altona District
Rose McVicar
Factory 3, 92-100 Champion Rd
WILLIAMSTOWN
Tel: 9397 4221

Essendon District
Kathryn Freeman
18-36 Keilor Road
ESSENDON NORTH
Tel: 9374 1101

Footscray District
Bob Guest
84 Buckley Street
FOOTSCRAY
Tel: 9687 7295

Kororoit District
Heather Dka
Level 1, 2-8 Lake Street
CAROLINE SPRINGS
Tel: 8358 5125

Niddrie District
Kathryn Freeman
18-36 Keilor Road
ESSENDON NORTH
Tel: 9374 1101

St Albans District
Bob Guest
84 Buckley Street
FOOTSCRAY
Tel: 9687 7295

Sunbury District
Ted Marks
Shop 2, 57-59 Horne Street
SUNBURY
Tel: 9740 2114

Sydenham District
Heather Dka
Level 1, 2-8 Lake Street
CAROLINE SPRINGS
Tel: 8358 5125

Tarneit District
John Francis
Factory 2, 352 Old Geelong Rd
HOPPERS CROSSING
Tel: 9360 9262

Werribee District
John Francis
Factory 2, 352 Old Geelong Rd
HOPPERS CROSSING
Tel: 9360 9262

Williamstown District
Rose McVicar
Factory 3, 92-100 Champion Rd
WILLIAMSTOWN
Tel: 9397 4221

Western Victoria Region

Ballarine District
Noel McPhee
Shop 2, 509 Bellarine Hwy
MOOLAP
Tel: 5250 1778

Buninyong District
Colin Nicholson
Unit 3, 311 Gillies Street
WENDOUREE
Tel: 5338 1161

Geelong District
Colin Riley
Ground Floor,
Focus 5 Building
23-31 Gheringhap Street
GEELONG
Tel: 5223 1119

Lara District
Colin Riley
Ground Floor,
Focus 5 Building
23-31 Gheringhap Street
GEELONG
Tel: 5223 1119

Lowan District
Graeme Sargent
41 Hamilton Street
HORSHAM
Tel: 5381 0570

Melton District
Peter Long
Building 2, Victoria University
Rees Road
MELTON SOUTH
Tel: 9747 2148

Polwarth District
Elizabeth Reeves
6 Murray Street
COLAC
Tel: 5231 1441

Ripon District
Andy McCann
Federation University Australia
13 Sloane Street
STAWELL
Tel: 5358 2289

South Barwon District
Noel McPhee
Shop 2, 509 Bellarine Hwy
MOOLAP
Tel: 5250 1778

South-West Coast District
Kevin Waterhouse
165 Fairy Street
WARRNAMBOOL
Tel: 5562 1774

Wendouree District
Colin Nicholson
Unit 3, 311 Gillies Street
WENDOUREE
Tel: 5338 1161

Information for candidates

Nominations are now open for the 2014 Victorian State election

Candidates who are not endorsed by a registered political party must nominate with the appropriate Election Manager. To speed the nomination process at the election office, candidates can pre-populate a nomination form via the Candidate Helper online. The form must be completed, printed out, signed and provided to the Election Manager with the nomination fee. Alternatively, a nomination form is included in the Candidate's Kit available at the election office. Nominations close at 12 noon, Friday 14 November.
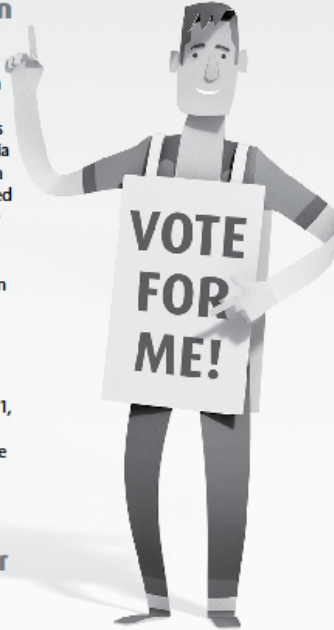
Late nominations cannot be accepted.

Registered political parties must nominate candidates at the VEC, Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne. Nominations for party candidates close at 12 noon, Thursday 13 November. Late nominations cannot be accepted.

Additional information for Upper House candidates

Non-party 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 VEC by 12 noon, Thursday 13 November.

Group voting tickets must be lodged with the VEC by 12 noon, Sunday 16 November and will appear on the VEC website from Monday 17 November.

How-to-vote cards

If a person or organisation intends to distribute how-to-vote cards on election day, Saturday 29 November, the cards must be registered with 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 17 November to 12 noon, Friday 21 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 how-to-vote cards for registration to the VEC, Level 11, 530 Collins Street, Melbourne.

How-to-vote cards will be available to the public on the VEC website after they are registered.

How-to-vote cards submitted after noon on Friday 21 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.

VOTE FOR ME!

/electionsvic @electionsvic **Your vote will help shape Victoria**

131 832   VEC.VIC.GOV.AU   Victorian Electoral Commission

Your vote could make the difference this Saturday

Make sure you vote correctly

In 2002 the seat of Nepean was won by just 114 votes. But over 1000 votes couldn't be counted because they contained errors. Who knows – these votes could have altered the result.

Your vote could make the difference, so take your time to complete both ballot papers correctly.

Small ballot paper for the Lower House

You must number ALL the boxes on this ballot paper.

Put the number 1 in the box next to the candidate you most want to see elected. Then number all the other boxes in the order of your choice.

Large ballot paper for the Upper House

For the Upper House you can vote in one of two ways.

Either vote for a party or group by putting the number 1 in just one of the boxes above the line.

Or vote for individual candidates by putting the numbers 1 to at least 5 in the boxes below the line. You may continue numbering more than 5 if you wish.

Find your nearest voting centre

Voting centres are open from 8.00 am – 6.00 pm this Saturday. Visit vec.vic.gov.au or download the Vote Victoria mobile app to find the one closest to you.

DOWNLOAD THE VOTE VICTORIA APP

SAT 29 NOV

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google play

Your vote will help shape Victoria

f /electionsvic   @electionsvic   131 832   VEC.VIC.GOV.AU   Victorian Electoral Commission

Do you need assistance to vote?

Election staff can help

Everybody should have the same chance to vote in the State election. If you, or someone you know, need help to vote, election staff can provide support.

Assistance at Early Voting Centres

Early Voting Centres are open until 28 November and selected locations have electronically assisted voting facilities for voters who would not be able to cast a vote without assistance. Electronically assisted voting is available for voters who:

- are blind or have low vision
- have English language or literacy difficulties
- have a motor impairment.

All Early Voting Centres also have translated voting instructions, staff trained in the use of talking boards, maxi pencils, magnifying sheets and wheelchair-height voting screens.

Visit vec.vic.gov.au or call 131 832 for locations and opening hours.

Assistance at Accessibility SuperCentres

Accessibility SuperCentres are open until 28 November and have all the features of Early Voting Centres plus Auslan interpreters, audio loops and guaranteed wheelchair accessibility. Visit vec.vic.gov.au or call 131 832 for locations and opening hours.

Assistance on election day

On election day, assistance will be available for anyone who has difficulty understanding English or requires additional support.

Voting centres will also be equipped with maxi pencils, magnifying sheets and wheelchair-height voting screens.

Every voting centre has been rated for accessibility. Check these ratings online at vec.vic.gov.au

Your vote will help shape Victoria

/electionsvic   @electionsvic   131 832   VEC.VIC.GOV.AU   Victorian Electoral Commission

The Victorian Electoral Commission
November 24, 2014

The trick is timing. Here's an approximate timeline of election day voting centre busyness...

approximately 3.00 pm

Like · Comment · Share

Jimmy Nguyen, Aisha McConville, Dee Bear and 50 others like this.   Most Relevant ▾

20 shares

Anne Westwood Also known as: Don't rock up at 10 am with everyone else and then complain to me about how long the queue is. Because my answer IS going to be "Yes, it's always so much quieter in the afternoon!" 😛
1 · November 24, 2014 at 9:46pm

The Victorian Electoral Commission Something like that! The mid-afternoon lull is an electoral phenominon that more people should know about.
1 · November 24, 2014 at 9:47pm

View more replies

Steve Jacobs Early Vote, Insta-Vote.
November 25, 2014 at 4:35am

View 4 more comments