

Corporate Plan 2026–27

Commissioner's welcome

As Australia's independent electoral body, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) enables one of the nation's most significant democratic processes – we deliver free, fair and impartial federal elections, by-elections and referendums.



The *AEC Corporate Plan 2026–27* is our key planning document that covers the period 2026 to 2030. It outlines the key activities we will undertake to achieve our purpose and how we will measure our performance in

delivering trusted, accessible and high-integrity electoral services.

In the years ahead, we will focus on further strengthening electoral integrity, continuing to modernise our systems and capability, and maintaining readiness for future electoral events.

In 2026–27, we will continue to plan and prepare for Australia's next federal election in line with our Election Readiness Framework. We will work with the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters and parliament with respect to any potential legislative reform for the next election and beyond. We also aim to finalise electoral division redistribution processes in South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, and begin a redistribution in Queensland.

Another critical area of focus is preparing to implement reforms to funding and disclosure under the *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025*. We are refining our processes, resourcing, tools and systems, and working closely

with stakeholders to support a smooth transition when the scheme commences on 1 January 2027.

We will also continue delivering our Election Systems Modernisation (Indigo) Program, which is replacing our legacy election management system and improving efficiency, security and resilience against external interference.

International counterparts often request our electoral knowledge and capability. Consistent with our functions under section 7 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, and with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, we will continue contributing our expertise beyond Australia's borders. This work advances Australia's national interest by supporting democratic resilience and electoral integrity across our region.

To ensure we can deliver our priorities, we will further develop our workforce capability, strengthen our leadership, and foster a safe, inclusive and adaptable workplace, ensuring our people are equipped to meet current demands and future challenges.

Collectively, this work will strengthen the AEC's capability and preparedness to deliver our responsibilities with integrity and professionalism, while maintaining public confidence and trust in Australia's electoral system. Our reputation has been built over many years through the professionalism, impartiality and care our people bring to every electoral event and every interaction with the public.

In the years ahead, as our environment becomes increasingly complex, we will continue to adapt to maintain and protect that trust, which is central to everything we do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JPope', written over a light blue grid background.

Jeff Pope APM
Electoral Commissioner

Introductory statement

I, as the accountable authority of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), present the *AEC Corporate Plan 2026–27*, which covers the period 2026–30, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Jeff Pope APM
Electoral Commissioner

About us

Who we are

The AEC is an independent statutory authority established under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act), and a non-corporate Commonwealth entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). We operate nationally to maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters.

The Electoral Act also establishes a 3 person Commission, which has exclusive powers, particularly in relation to electoral division redistributions, political party registration, and the Commonwealth Funding and Disclosure Scheme. Current Commission members are:

- The Hon Susan Kenny AM KC, Chairperson
- Dr David Gruen AO, Australian Statistician and non-judicial member
- Mr Jeff Pope APM, Electoral Commissioner.

Our purpose and role

Our purpose and intended outcome is to:

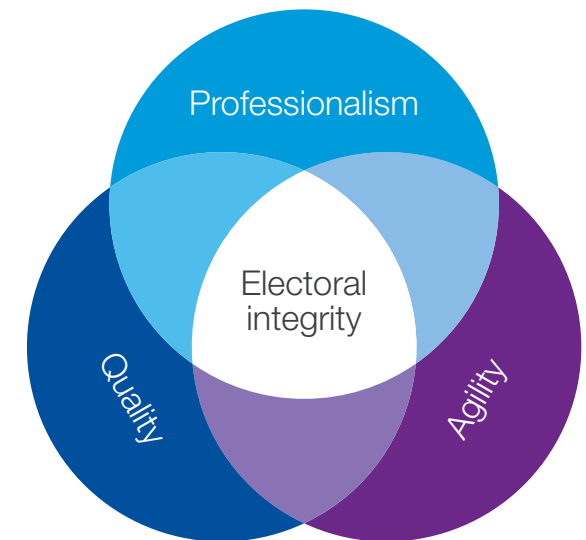
Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services, and targeted education and public awareness programs.

We do this by:

- conducting successful electoral events, including federal elections, by-elections and referendums
- ensuring confidence in the integrity of the electoral system and the Commonwealth Electoral Roll
- regulating political party registrations, financial disclosures, authorisation of electoral communications and voter compliance
- supporting electoral division redistributions
- delivering education and information programs to improve public awareness
- supporting Australia's interests and emerging democracies in the region by assisting other countries with their elections
- managing industrial elections and protected action ballots.

Our vision and values

Our vision is to be a leader in refining and delivering best practice in election management. We are guided by our vision and our values of electoral integrity through quality, agility and professionalism.



AEC values

Key activities

To achieve our purpose and intended results, we focus on 2 key activities:

1

Maintain the integrity of electoral and regulatory processes

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1.1 We deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen's right to vote.

Percentage of eligible voters enrolled (enrolment rate).

Percentage of 18- to 24-year-old Australians enrolled (youth enrolment rate).

Percentage of voters enrolled who turn out to vote at all federal electoral events (turnout rate).

Percentage of votes cast formally for the House of Representatives and Senate at federal elections or at referendums, and by-elections (if any held).

Percentage accuracy of the Commonwealth Electoral Roll at the electoral division-level and individual address-level.

Redistributions are determined in accordance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

1.2 We exercise our regulatory functions.

Disclosure information is published and regulated in accordance with the timeframes in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984*.

2

Prepare for and deliver electoral events

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2.1 We maintain an appropriate level of electoral event readiness.

AEC-wide readiness achieved by the directed level of electoral event readiness date.

Deliver public awareness and education products that target all Australian citizens aged 18 years and over.

Percentage of temporary election workforce employees completing election training relevant to their role.

Voting locations (including early voting centres and polling places) published on the AEC website before polling commences.

Undertake a lessons management approach to delivering electoral events.

2.2 The public and stakeholders have confidence the electoral process is well managed in accordance with legislation or rules.

The result – for each event – is delivered in accordance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* or the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984*.

The AEC delivers industrial elections and ballots within required timeframes.

REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

Performance reporting is included in AEC annual reports.

Operating context

Our environment

We deliver electoral services in an increasingly contested and complex operating environment. Declining trust in government institutions means transparency and accountability are more important than ever. Public expectations continue to rise, with voters expecting high-quality electoral services that are responsive, reliable, easy to access and trustworthy.

At the same time, as the political landscape shifts, we are delivering elections with increasingly complex vote counts.

Elections also face growing risks of foreign interference, cyber intrusion, and threats to the safety and security of electoral infrastructure, staff and participants. Digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), bring great opportunities but also enable more rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation, which can undermine public trust.

Our expanded regulatory role is outlined in our new *Regulatory Framework*. It articulates our regulatory objective of being the steward of federal electoral processes and electoral integrity through promoting active, informed and equitable participation by all Australians.

Our new *Compliance Strategy* takes this a step further, providing details about what the regulated community can expect from the AEC as a regulator, and detailing our compliance priorities.

These priorities promote transparency of political donations and ensure political parties are registered, electoral communications are correctly authorised, all eligible Australians enrol, keep their details up to date and vote, and help maintain high levels of public trust in the integrity of electoral events, processes and the roll.

We continue to exercise fiscal responsibility by prioritising our efforts, driving efficiency where possible, and carefully managing expenditure. Like federal elections, industrial elections and ballots are increasingly complex and costly. We deliver around 250 industrial elections each year, with supplier, travel and postage costs continuing to rise. Expenditure for these events fluctuates depending on each organisation's specific rules, number of voters, number of contested positions and voting methods.

Other emerging issues include workforce challenges, operational and security risks, and demographic change. We are assessing how all the challenges in our operating environment might evolve and how we best respond. This will ensure we continue to deliver elections and related services with integrity into the future.

Our capability

A high-trust institution must have strong capability at its core. In a contested and complex operating environment, we must continue to mature our core capabilities – people, technical, corporate and regulatory.

Our people capability

Our work involves managing multiple, significant deliverables simultaneously, often at different stages of planning, delivery and transition to business-as-usual. We recognise the importance of supporting our people through ongoing change by providing clear direction and structured transition approaches.

Diverse and skilled workforce

Our Workforce Strategy sets the long-term direction for sustaining a modern, capable, agile, professional and scalable workforce.

We undertake workforce planning to actively analyse organisational capability against the forecast operating environment, identify gaps and opportunities, and enable us to adapt to priorities as needed.

We support a diverse, inclusive and capable workforce through our recruitment practices, workplace adjustments, recognition programs and Reconciliation Action Plan.

To further strengthen capability and support our workforce, we are piloting a 'Leading with Impact Program' to improve leadership capability, alongside our contemporary National Induction Program and suite of core Australian Public Service (APS) training, much of which is mandatory.

Reduced reliance on contractors

As required by the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, we have identified the following job families as 'core work' for 2026–27: Legal and Parliamentary; Portfolio Program and Project Management; and Policy.

In the year ahead, we will continue to take steps to embed the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework and strengthen our capability. While outsourcing of core work is already minimal at the AEC, we are implementing a staged and sustainable approach to reducing reliance on external providers and bringing work in-house. We are also embedding structured knowledge transfer to build and retain internal capability over time.

Our property footprint

For more than 20 years, we have been carefully consolidating the AEC property portfolio. However, we still have a disproportionate number of offices compared with many Commonwealth agencies.

Offices comprising a single electoral division were common when enrolment transactions could only be submitted in paper form. However, people rarely visit AEC offices now, following the introduction of online enrolment, our Federal Direct Enrolment and Update (FDEU) program, and more modern online and telephone support.

Over the coming years we will create more Larger Work Units – offices comprising more than one electoral division. This will help drive efficiency while maintaining an acceptable level of service to the Australian community. These decisions are made in consultation with our staff and, where required, with the approval of the Special Minister of State.

Our technical capability

Delivering trusted federal elections and regulating Australia's electoral system depends on complex, nationally significant digital infrastructure. In the current environment, electoral integrity, public confidence and regulatory assurance are inseparable from the way we design, govern, secure and sustain our digital systems over time. These systems underpin every aspect of electoral delivery and regulation. They must be reliable and secure, operating across election events, non-event periods and times of significant legislative reform.

Strategic direction and governance

Our technical capability is guided by clear strategic direction, defined investment and fit-for-purpose governance frameworks that ensure clear accountabilities and strong business and technical collaboration in managing core systems and services. We recognise that digital risk is systemic rather than episodic, and is best managed through disciplined lifecycle management, balanced architectural choices, and sustained focus on physical and cyber security, resilience and operational stability. This includes a deliberate and accountable approach to the use of AI, in line with government direction and Australian Public Service policy. AEC adoption of AI will be supported by clear governance, designated accountable roles, and a defined strategy that balances opportunity with the need to protect electoral integrity and public trust.

Roll management

The AEC maintains the national electoral roll – one of the most accurate and complete electoral rolls in the world, and a cornerstone of Australia's electoral system. We are committed to protecting the integrity of the roll by keeping it up to date, using trusted data sources to ensure records remain correct, and using

our Roll Integrity Assurance System of continual checks to maintain quality.

Each day, there are approximately 7,000 changes to the roll, due to eligible Australians changing address, turning 18, becoming new citizens, moving overseas or passing away. This makes for a highly dynamic roll. Our approach combines strong safeguards with practical, risk-based checks to ensure the roll continues to reflect Australia's eligible population and remains a trusted foundation for Australian elections.

Digital capability

We are renewing and strengthening our digital capability through major initiatives including the Indigo Program, Funding and Disclosure Reform Program, and the Enabling Eight Project. These initiatives are progressively modernising core electoral and regulatory systems, reducing technical debt, and uplifting enterprise systems and services to deliver secure, reliable and transparent outcomes at scale. They are part of our broader approach to stewarding our digital environment and transitioning new capability safely and sustainably into ongoing operations.

Indigo Program – modernising our election management systems

Our multi-year Indigo Program is replacing the legacy information technology infrastructure and systems we use to plan and deliver electoral events. Tranche 1 has delivered new systems for managing the temporary election workforce and an integrated public contact centre, as well as the AEC's Command Centre – a central hub that provides an overview of all aspects of our operational work during a federal election or referendum.

In 2026–27, we will build on this foundation, with Tranche 2 focusing on replacing our election management system. The new Australian Electoral Management System (AEMS) will be a modern and flexible platform better able to accommodate the increasing size and complexity of Australia's federal elections. Production will involve significant testing and assurance, and the system will be fully implemented by the 2030–31 federal election.

Future tranches will decommission our legacy election management system and, subject to government funding decisions, replace our roll management system that houses the national electoral roll for Australia.

Enabling Eight Project – modernising our corporate systems

Our Enabling Eight Project will modernise 8 key corporate systems we use for enterprise resource planning (ERP), risk management and internal collaboration. We are aiming to use commercial off the shelf solutions where possible by pursuing systems or new contract terms that will remove or limit customisation. Our goal is to position our corporate systems for sustainability in the future while saving costs and time, and limiting risks associated with custom development not meeting future needs.

Cyber security

As our electoral and regulatory functions become increasingly digital, so too does our exposure to cyber security risk. We operate in an environment where cyber threats are persistent, adaptive and increasingly sophisticated, requiring a proactive and coordinated response.

We are strengthening our cyber security posture by enhancing our in-house monitoring and detection capabilities, uplifting protective controls, and deepening collaboration across government and with security partners, including the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) Australian Cyber Security Centre. This is enabling us to better identify and respond to threats, protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our systems and data, and maintain trust in electoral services.

We will continue to mature our protection against cyber threats in line with the ASD's Essential Eight mitigation strategies. This involves progressively implementing and enhancing key controls to achieve higher maturity levels, improving resilience against increasingly sophisticated and persistent cyber threats and ensuring alignment with Australian Government security expectations.

Artificial intelligence

As set out in our AI Transparency Statement, the AEC uses AI in a controlled and limited way to support staff productivity, analysis and service delivery. This includes using tools such as Microsoft 365 Copilot, and targeted use of GitHub Copilot and virtual assistants. AI is not used in core electoral functions such as enrolment decisions or vote counting, and all use is governed by a formal policy framework, senior oversight, and strict risk controls to protect electoral integrity and public trust. Our AI Accountable Officer and our Chief AI Officer are responsible for AI governance and report regularly to the Senior Executive Committee.

Our regulatory capability

We are responsible for administering and regulating Australia's electoral system. We help stakeholders meet their obligations and responsibilities under the Electoral Act and *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984*. This includes administering the Commonwealth Funding and Disclosure Scheme, providing information and services to support political party registrations and maintaining an up-to-date Register of Political Parties, and publishing disclosure information on the Transparency Register. In addition, we regulate the authorisation of electoral communication, administer compulsory voting and investigate cases of multiple voting.

Funding and disclosure reform

The *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025* is the most significant update to the Electoral Act in 40 years, with the new Commonwealth Funding and Disclosure (FAD) Scheme commencing on 1 January 2027.

To prepare, we are uplifting our regulatory capability through an extensive program of work, which includes engaging with and educating stakeholders, and delivering new information and communications technology (ICT) capabilities required to effectively manage the scheme.

We will continue to develop and implement the FAD portal as an integrated capability for stakeholders to meet their disclosure and reporting obligations. This includes the capability to submit donation disclosure notices and annual returns and manage notices and correspondence about the obligations of the regulated community. This will improve visibility of donation disclosures, support monitoring of donation caps, and strengthen regulatory oversight and assurance. We will also enhance the Transparency

Register to enable automated publication of disclosures and entity information.

Our comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy is supporting the effective implementation of the new FAD scheme through a dedicated web page, practical guidance materials, system demonstrations, and digital training resources to explain stakeholder obligations and support compliance.

Our regulatory approach

With these significant changes to electoral funding and disclosure laws starting in 2027, we have begun uplifting our regulatory approach. We have published our new Regulatory Framework and Compliance Strategy to support our enhanced regulatory scope and functions. These documents outline the core principles that underpin our activities as a regulator, our regulatory approach as risk-based, intelligence-informed and technology-enabled, and how we will operationalise this approach in line with our compliance model.

This new regulatory approach positions us as a model regulator able to respond to emerging challenges. By upholding our regulatory principles – impartial, proportionate, transparent and accountable – we ensure Australia’s voters can continue to trust in the integrity of our electoral processes.

Risk oversight and management

Our risk management framework provides a structured approach to identifying, assessing, managing and monitoring risks. It aligns with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and is based on International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) 31000:2018 Risk Management guidelines.

An important component of the framework is our risk management policy, which defines our approach to managing risk, our risk appetite and tolerance, and key accountabilities and responsibilities for risk management practices – embedding risk management into governance, decision-making and day-to-day operations.

Strategic risks

Our strategic risks are:

- 1 The AEC is unable to deliver our legislative functions and transformation programs.
- 2 The AEC is not sufficiently prepared for changes in our operating environment or ready for future challenges.
- 3 The AEC loses the public’s trust and confidence in our integrity.

Enterprise risks

Our enterprise risks are:

1 Change management: The AEC is unable to effectively apply change management practices.

2 Privacy management: The AEC fails to collect, use, disclose or store personal information in compliance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

3 Information and data: AEC governance and management of agency information and data are insufficiently mature to provide consistent assurance over the integrity, maintenance and ongoing availability of information and data assets.

4 Legislative obligations: There is a risk of a material or systemic breach of the AEC's legislative obligations, which could compromise outcomes, integrity, and public trust.

5 Workforce: The AEC does not have the workforce capability and capacity required to deliver agency outcomes.

6 Financial management: Failure to use and manage resources in line with AEC priorities or relevant legislation.

7 Security: Failure to detect and prevent security threats.

8 Service delivery: Inability to deliver electoral events and services effectively, efficiently, and in a manner that maintains integrity and public confidence.

9 Portfolio management: The AEC fails to invest in, or deliver, the optimum portfolio of programs and projects to meet our strategic objectives.

10 Work health and safety: Workplace hazards lead to incidents that threaten the health, safety or wellbeing of our workers, visitors or others.

11 Labour hire: The AEC does not have the labour hire capability and capacity to deliver agency outcomes or does not effectively manage labour hire arrangements.

12 Digital dependency: Reliance on ageing or poorly governed core IT systems may lead to service disruption, security compromise, or data integrity loss, undermining electoral operations and public trust in the AEC.

13 Fraud and corruption: The AEC fails to prevent, detect or respond to fraudulent behaviour or corrupt conduct that may compromise the integrity, accountability or probity of public administration.

All strategic and enterprise risks have identified controls and treatments, managed at senior executive level through corporate governance committees. The Audit Committee reviews and provides advice on the appropriateness of the arrangements through its structured forward work program.

Cooperation

External cooperation is critical for us to continue to succeed in our contested and complex environment, delivering a safe and trusted electoral system into the future.

Electoral partners in Australia

We work with many Australian Government agencies, as well as state, territory and local government jurisdictions and external suppliers.

Government partners help us deliver crucial voting options safely, securely and with resilience in the face of emerging risks and disruptions.

We work with the **Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand** to consider contemporary electoral challenges and ensure alignment and cooperation between regional electoral management bodies.

We work with our **Joint Roll Partners** to manage the national electoral roll used for Commonwealth, state, territory and local government elections.

Key government partners include:

- **Australian Bureau of Statistics** – which provides population information used to support redistributions and calculate projected enrolment rates
- **Services Australia** – which assists with remote voter services, electronically assisted voting, and providing call centre assistance during federal elections
- **Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)** – which provides access, via a Memorandum of Understanding, to financial data that supports our regulation of political financing, in particular the detection of foreign funding

- **Australian Federal Police and state and territory police agencies** – which provide threat and risk information, support protective security planning and public and staff safety at voting locations, and assess and respond to suspected criminal offences or breaches of the Electoral Act to ensure a safe and secure voting experience for all
- **Australia Post** – which helps ensure voters can readily access postal services for enrolment and voting
- **Department of Corrections in each jurisdiction** – which support eligible people in prison to vote via our mobile polling team or postal vote
- **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade)** – which facilitate voting in many overseas posts, and work with us to deliver international electoral assistance and capability building
- **National Emergency Management Agency** – which supports whole-of-government coordination, situational awareness, and escalation arrangements in the event of national or large-scale incidents that may affect the delivery of electoral events.

We also chair the **Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce**, which provides coordinated information and advice to the Australian Electoral Commissioner on matters that may compromise the real or perceived integrity of an electoral event. The taskforce brings together capabilities and expertise from Commonwealth agencies across law enforcement, intelligence, operations and policy to assess and address these threats. It ensures information is efficiently referred to relevant agencies, facilitates cooperation and coordination, and enables agencies to work together to take any appropriate action.

Electoral participation and outreach

To support electoral participation, we will continue to research effective ways to communicate and engage with voters across Australia's diverse demographics and communities. It is important we clearly explain why and how to enrol and vote in engaging and targeted ways that increase understanding and support informed participation.

We deliver advertising campaigns for electoral events, providing timely and accurate information to all eligible voters.

We collaborate with community groups and stakeholders including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, youth, people with disability, aged care providers and correctional facilities to co-design information and resources.

We received funding in the 2026 Federal Budget to embed our **Indigenous Electoral Participation Program (IEPP)**, a centrepiece of the AEC's efforts to support the democratic participation for First Nations people. The program uses an integrated approach to improve enrolment, turnout and electoral understanding, while addressing structural, cultural and geographic barriers that can limit participation in the electoral process. Through the IEPP, we partner with **Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations** and **Indigenous Businesses** to co-design resources, outreach events and programs.

Information is available in accessible formats and in up to 59 languages (including 25 First Nations and 34 community languages). We are committed to continuing our community education and delivering face-to-face education and other flexible formats throughout Australia, including in languages other than English. Our work helps people who might

otherwise face barriers to participating, and ensures they know the importance of enrolling, voting formally, and that their vote is their choice.

We champion inclusivity by delivering accessible services. Our **Disability Advisory Committee** includes representatives from Australian disability peak bodies, as well as members of the **Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand**. We also chair an **Aged Care Advisory Working Group**, with representatives from across the sector including from consumer peak bodies, and profit and not-for-profit service providers and advocates. A **Mental Health Advisory Working Group** helps us ensure services are provided in an appropriate way for vulnerable voters.

We run electoral information and education programs including dedicated programs for school children at the **National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC)**. For schools unable to visit the NEEC, we expand our reach through classroom resources such as Teach the Vote and DemocraCity, our 3D interactive game.

International engagement

Under the Electoral Act, we support democratic institutions in the Indo-Pacific region by building institutional and technical capability through information sharing and on-the-ground assistance.

At the request of our international partners, with support and funding from the **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade** and approval of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, our locally led engagement activities may include:

- technical assistance
- strategic planning and advice
- training courses
- reviewing and updating policies and manuals
- knowledge exchange programs
- workshops
- operational support.

We support the **Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA)** network, which is an Australian Government-funded electoral support program. The network has been in place for more than 25 years, with a strong track record of strengthening the capability of Pacific Island electoral management bodies and supporting them to manage contemporary and future threats to electoral integrity.

We continue to play an integral role as a founding partner of the **Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE)** partnership, alongside the **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, United Nations Development Programme** and **United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs**. BRIDGE is a world-renowned professional development program focusing on electoral administration. It is the only initiative of its type delivered to electoral officials and other election stakeholders around the world.

Our international engagement is a hallmark of our contribution to the national interest – safeguarding democracy and enhancing stability in our region.

Industrial elections and ballots

Every year we conduct hundreds of industrial elections for office holders of organisations registered with the **Fair Work Commission**, including unions, employer associations and enterprise associations. We also conduct hundreds of protected action ballots each year, which are part of the process required for employees to take protected (legal) industrial action when bargaining for a new enterprise agreement. We conduct these ballots and elections under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, associated regulations and the rules of registered organisations.

Performance

Our corporate plan fits within the broader APS Performance Management Framework. There is a direct link between our corporate plan and portfolio budget statements. Our Performance Reporting Framework guides our approach to developing, managing and reporting performance information.

We report our performance through the performance statements in our annual report. We operate on 2 reporting cycles:

- externally, as part of our annual corporate planning cycle
- internally, as part of the electoral cycle focusing on the 4 phases of election readiness – plan, mobilise, deliver, finalise.

As we must always be ready to deliver an electoral event, the phases of election readiness direct our work and are reflected in the performance measures for the year. In 2026–27, we will move from the ‘plan’ to ‘mobilise’ phase.

The measurement and assessment of the performance measures outlined in the *AEC Corporate Plan 2026–27* will be published in our annual performance statements in the *AEC Annual Report 2026–27*.

Key activity 1

Maintain the integrity of electoral and regulatory processes

An essential feature of Australian democracy is an electoral system that operates with a high level of integrity. Our work in this area enables all eligible Australians to enrol, nominate as candidates, vote and have their votes counted accurately and securely in a free, fair and appropriately regulated electoral system.

The following table sets out our intended results for this key activity, including our contribution, performance measures and targets, as well as the sources and method and frequency for assessing our performance.

Electoral roll management				
INTENDED RESULT 1.1 We deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen's right to vote.				
AEC contribution	Performance measure	Targets (2026–27 to 2029–30)	Source	Method and frequency
Maintain impartial and independent enrolment and electoral services and processes that enable voters to participate in electoral events. Actively manage the electoral roll throughout the electoral cycle. Process enrolments in a timely manner and quality assure a representative sample of enrolments for accuracy. Support the delivery of state, territory and local electoral events by delivering joint roll services to state and territory electoral commissions.	Percentage of eligible voters enrolled (enrolment rate).	≥ 95% enrolment rate is met or exceeded.	Electoral roll and Australian Bureau of Statistics population data	Calculated and reported internally monthly and published quarterly on the AEC website. Reported at the end of each financial year and at close of rolls for a federal electoral event.
	Percentage of 18- to 24-year-old Australians enrolled (youth enrolment rate).	≥ 87% enrolment rate is met or exceeded.	Electoral roll and Australian Bureau of Statistics population data	Calculated monthly and published quarterly on the AEC website. Reported at the end of each financial year and at close of rolls for a federal electoral event.
	Percentage of voters enrolled who turn out to vote at all federal electoral events (turnout rate).	≥ 90% voter turnout rate is met or exceeded for elections for the Senate and House of Representatives. Where applicable, turnout rate will be reported for by-elections.	AEC Tally Room	Number of ballot papers admitted into scrutiny as a proportion of enrolled population.
	Percentage of votes cast formally for the House of Representatives and Senate at federal elections or at referendums, and by-elections (if any held).	≥ 90% formality rate is met or exceeded.	AEC Tally Room	Percentage of formal votes cast as a proportion of all votes cast.
	Percentage accuracy of the Commonwealth Electoral Roll at the electoral division-level and individual address-level.	≥ 95% accuracy rate is met or exceeded for division-level. ≥ 90% accuracy rate is met or exceeded for address-level.	The Annual Roll Integrity Review, which measures the accuracy and integrity of electoral roll data	AEC roll data and other agency data, calculated, compared and published at the end of each financial year.

Key activity 1 CONTINUED

Electoral roll management

INTENDED RESULT 1.1 We deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen's right to vote.

AEC contribution	Performance measure	Targets (2026–27 to 2029–30)	Source	Method and frequency
Support the timely conduct of electoral redistributions ensuring, as near as practicable, that each state and territory gains representation in the House of Representatives in proportion to their population.	Redistributions determined in accordance with the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> .	All redistributions are determined in accordance with the planned determination date and impacted electors are notified prior to the relevant federal election.	Government Gazette and newspaper notices, and the date of letters to electors lodged with Australia Post	For each redistribution, publication of notices and letters to electors comply with requirements in the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> .

Regulatory functions

INTENDED RESULT 1.2 We exercise our regulatory functions.

AEC contribution	Performance measure	Targets (2026–27 to 2029–30)	Source	Method and frequency
Regulate the funding and financial disclosure scheme for political parties, entities and individuals with disclosure obligations. Develop education and awareness resources to assist political entities in Part XX of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> and Part VIIIA of the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i> .	Disclosure information is published and regulated in accordance with the timeframes in the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> and the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i> .	Annual return information is published in accordance with the relevant legislative timeframe.	Transparency Register (AEC website)	Annual returns: measured annually Election returns: measured for each electoral event

Key activity 2

Prepare for and deliver electoral events

The AEC delivers federal electoral events, industrial elections, protected action ballots, and Torres Strait Regional Authority elections in accordance with the relevant legislation and rules.

The following table sets out our intended results for this key activity, including our contribution, performance measures and targets, as well as the sources and method and frequency for assessing our performance.

Election readiness				
INTENDED RESULT 2.1 We maintain an appropriate level of electoral event readiness.				
AEC contribution	Performance measure	Targets (2026–27 to 2029–30)	Source	Method and frequency
Using frameworks, comprehensively prepare for electoral events.	AEC-wide readiness achieved by the directed level of electoral event readiness date.	Agency-wide readiness meets the directed level of electoral event readiness date.	AEC electoral frameworks	Assessed as required at key times prior to each electoral event.
Provide timely and accurate electoral information and public awareness products and campaigns to a range of target audiences to support enrolment and participation in electoral events.	Deliver public awareness and education products that target all Australian citizens aged 18 years and over.	The AEC's public awareness campaign and education programs contribute to an enhanced understanding of Australia's electoral system, voter services and formality.	Communication and campaign strategy Independent market research and reports Survey responses	Specific communication activities delivered for mainstream and identified special audience groups measured for each federal electoral event.
Further expand our capability to support and train the AEC's temporary election workforce.	Percentage of temporary election workforce employees completing election training relevant to their role.	≥ 95% election training completion rate is met or exceeded for temporary election workforce employees.	AEC Learning Management System	Training completion data measured for each federal electoral event.
Deliver polling services to the public within the parameters and timeframes set in the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> and the AEC's Event Service Plan. Deliver enrolment services to electors in a timely and efficient manner.	Voting locations (including early voting centres and polling places) published on the AEC website before polling commences.	100% of polling locations are published.	AEC Election Management System data AEC website	Published on the AEC website for each electoral event.
Mature and embed our lessons management approach and capability. Undertake a voter survey following each federal election to inform future planning and delivery of electoral events.	Undertake a lessons management approach to delivering electoral events.	Agency lessons identified from previous electoral events are to be considered and implemented at the next electoral event.	AEC Lessons Management Framework AEC Election Readiness Framework	Agency-wide qualitative analysis undertaken for each election event.

Key activity 2 CONTINUED

Elections, by-elections and referendums

INTENDED RESULT 2.2 The public and stakeholders have confidence the electoral process is well managed in accordance with legislation or rules.

AEC contribution	Performance measure	Targets (2026–27 to 2029–30)	Source	Method and frequency
Successfully deliver federal electoral, referendum and by-election events in accordance with legislation.	The result – for each event – is delivered in accordance with the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> or the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i> .	For each event, the writs are issued and returned in accordance with legislative requirements and timeframes. The AEC will report on the number of Court of Disputed Returns matters which challenge AEC conduct, and whether these challenges are dismissed or upheld in favour of the AEC.	<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i> Electoral Commissioner's advice published on AEC website Outcomes of the Court of Disputed Returns	For each electoral event: - writs issued by and returned to the Governor-General or state Governors or the Speaker of the House of Representatives - Electoral Commissioner's advice published on the AEC website - Court of Disputed Returns advice.
Meet legislative requirements to conduct electoral events for organisations registered with the Fair Work Commission; and protected action ballots when assigned as the Ballot Agency by the Fair Work Commission. Engage with stakeholders to modernise industrial election processes and systems, mature planning and assurance, and detail lessons learned.	The AEC delivers industrial elections and ballots within required timeframes.	> 95% of elections are delivered on time.	<i>Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009</i> <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> AEC electoral event portal	Assessed and reported annually.

Regulator performance

The AEC exercises a broad range of regulatory powers under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984*. These include regulating compulsory voting, the Commonwealth Funding and Disclosure Scheme, political party registrations, and authorisation of electoral communications.

Consistent with the Australian Government's Regulatory Policy, Practice and Performance Framework, and the Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide 128 (RMG 128), we take a risk-based, intelligence-informed and technology-enabled approach, supported by clear governance, transparency and accountability.

We apply a graduated compliance model that emphasises education and engagement, and escalates intervention in proportion to the risk and seriousness of non-compliance – from constructive engagement through to enforcement and prosecution where required.

Regulator best practice principles

We adhere to the 3 principles of regulator best practice set out in RMG 128.

Principle 1 Continuous improvement and building trust

We work to continuously improve our regulatory performance, capability and culture to maintain public trust and confidence in the electoral system.

We achieve this by:

- maintaining a strong focus on regulatory stewardship, including fostering an informed and engaged compliance culture across the regulated community
- providing clear, accessible and up-to-date guidance and education to support voluntary compliance and reduce regulatory burden
- applying a user-centred approach to regulatory design, ensuring our systems, processes and communications are accessible and fit for purpose
- embedding continuous improvement across our regulatory lifecycle – monitor, enforce, evaluate and improve

- strengthening capability through workforce development, digital modernisation and data maturity initiatives
- maintaining transparency through publication of registers, disclosures, regulatory decisions and compliance outcomes.

Measures of success include:

- improved levels of voluntary compliance across the regulated community
- stakeholder confidence in the AEC's regulatory role and integrity of the electoral system
- timely publication of disclosure information and maintenance of public registers
- evidence of continuous improvement informed by performance evaluation and stakeholder feedback.

Principle 2

Risk based and data driven

We target our regulatory effort to areas of greatest risk to electoral integrity, using data, intelligence and evidence to inform our decisions.

We achieve this by:

- applying a risk-based, intelligence-informed approach to identify and prioritise non-compliance
- undertaking environmental scanning and proactive monitoring to detect emerging risks, including those arising from technology and changes in the information environment
- focusing regulatory interventions on systemic and high-risk non-compliance, including deliberate or repeated breaches
- using a graduated and proportionate compliance response, calibrated to the seriousness and impact of conduct
- leveraging data analytics and digital capability to improve regulatory insight, efficiency and effectiveness
- aligning regulatory priorities with our Compliance Strategy and broader organisational risk management framework.

Measures of success include:

- effective identification and management of high-risk compliance issues
- proportionate and timely regulatory responses to non-compliance
- increased use of data and intelligence to inform decision-making
- reduction in systemic non-compliance and deterrence of serious breaches.

Principle 3

Collaboration and engagement

We adopt a collaborative and transparent approach to regulation by engaging with stakeholders to support compliance and improve regulatory outcomes.

We achieve this by:

- engaging with the regulated community through education, guidance, consultation and outreach, to support understanding of obligations
- working in partnership with domestic and international regulators, law enforcement and government agencies, including through the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce
- facilitating effective communication, listening to stakeholder feedback and incorporating insights into regulatory improvement
- promoting co-regulatory and cooperative approaches where appropriate to achieve shared outcomes
- ensuring our regulatory processes are transparent, impartial and consistent, and that we explain decisions clearly.

Measures of success include:

- strong stakeholder engagement and participation in regulatory activities
- improved understanding of regulatory obligations within the regulated community
- positive stakeholder feedback on clarity, accessibility and responsiveness of our regulatory activities.

Our approach ensures that the AEC continues to operate as a modern, trusted and effective regulator, capable of responding to emerging risks while maintaining confidence and trust in Australia's electoral and democratic processes.

