

## AEC communications campaign mandatory checklist

Compliance with the principles outlined in the *Guidelines on Information and Advertising campaigns by non-corporate Commonwealth entities*.

**Campaign:** AEC Senate education campaign

**Duration:** Initial two weeks from 26 April – 10 May. Additional two weeks to be placed depending on election announcement.

**Key components:**

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is responsible for conducting federal elections and referendums and maintaining the Commonwealth electoral roll. The AEC’s key objective 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.*

The AEC is required to inform and educate Australian voters about electoral events including federal elections and referendums. Through this communication campaign, the AEC will be educating electors on changes to the Senate voting system.

The campaign will run in two phases:

- An initial two weeks from 26 April
- An additional two weeks that will be placed either following on from the first phase, or during an extended election period.

The overall objective of the campaign is to inform voters that there has been a change to the Senate voting system since the last federal election.

### Principle 1: Campaigns should be relevant to government responsibilities

Check box as appropriate	Principle sub-point	AEC specific information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The subject matter of campaigns should be directly related to the Government’s responsibilities. As such, only policies and programs underpinned by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ legislative authority</li> <li>▪ appropriation of the Parliament; or</li> <li>▪ a Cabinet Decision which is intended to be implemented during the current Parliament should be the subject of a campaign.</li> </ul>	<p>The campaign relates directly to the AEC’s responsibility to inform electors as set out in Section 7 of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i></p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Examples of suitable uses for government campaigns include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ inform the public of new, existing or proposed government policies, or policy revisions;</li> <li>▪ provide information on government programs or services or revisions to programs or services to which the public are entitled;</li> <li>▪ inform consideration of issues;</li> <li>▪ disseminate scientific, medical or health and safety information; or</li> <li>▪ provide information on the performance of government to facilitate accountability to the public.</li> </ul>	<p>Eligible Australian citizens, aged 18 years and older are required to enrol and vote in federal elections.</p> <p>The campaign informs eligible Australians of the change in the Senate voting system, and how to vote correctly under the new system.</p>
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**Principle 2: Campaigns should be presented in an objective, fair and accessible manner and be designed to meet the objectives of the campaign**

Check box as appropriate	Principle sub-point	AEC specific information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns should enable the recipients of the information to distinguish between facts, comment, opinion and analysis.	The information provided in the campaign is factual and informative. There is no opinion or analysis provided.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where information is presented as a fact, it should be accurate and verifiable. When making a factual comparison, the campaign should not attempt to mislead the recipient about the situation with which the comparison is made and it should state explicitly the basis for the comparison.	The information provided in the campaign is factual, accurate and verifiable.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-existing policies, products, services and activities should not be presented as new.	No policies, products and services are discussed as part of the campaign.  The campaign informs eligible Australians of the change in the Senate voting system, and how to vote correctly under the new system.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Special attention should be paid to communicating with any information (sic) disadvantaged individuals or groups identified as being within the target audience. Particular attention should be paid to meeting the information needs of Indigenous Australians, the rural community and those for whom English is not a convenient language in which to receive information.	Through both phases, the campaign will include information that is developed for special audience groups including Australians with disability, Indigenous Australians and Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Imagery used in campaigns should reflect the diverse range of Australians. There should be recognition of the full participation of women, Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities by realistically portraying their interests, lifestyles and contributions to Australian society.	The campaign is representative of an appropriate mix of the diverse range of Australians.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns should be tested with target audiences to indicate they are engaging and perform well against the objectives of the campaign.	The campaign materials have been market tested at developmental and final stages and are working well towards the campaign objectives.

**Principle 3: Campaigns should be objective and not directed at promoting party political interests**

Check box as appropriate	Principle sub-point	AEC specific information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns must be presented in objective language and be free of political argument.	The campaign materials are objective and informative with no political argument.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns must not try to foster a positive impression of a particular political party or promote party political interests.	The campaign materials are apolitical and do not promote party political interests.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Campaigns must not:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. mention the party in Government by name;</li> <li>b. directly attack or scorn the views, policies or actions of others such as the policies and opinions of opposition parties or groups;</li> <li>c. include party political slogans or images;</li> <li>d. be designed to influence public support for a political party, a candidate for election, a Minister or a Member of Parliament; or</li> <li>e. refer or link to the web sites of politicians or political parties.</li> </ol>	<p>The campaign materials do not mention or promote political parties, views or slogans.</p> <p>All website links referred to in campaign materials direct viewers to the AEC website.</p>

**Principle 4: Campaigns should be justified and undertaken in an efficient, effective and relevant manner**

Check box as appropriate	Principle sub-point	AEC specific information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns should only be instigated where a need is demonstrated, target recipients are clearly identified and the campaign is informed by appropriate research or evidence.	<p>Australian citizens aged 18 years or older are required by law to enrol and vote.</p> <p>This campaign was informed by appropriate developmental research.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaign information should clearly and directly affect the interests of recipients.	<p>Enrolling and voting in federal elections is compulsory in Australia.</p> <p>The campaign provides important information on the changes to Senate voting since the last election and how voters can complete their ballot paper to ensure their vote is valid.</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The medium and volume of the advertising activities should be cost effective and justifiable within the budget allocated to the campaign.	The AEC sought advice from the Australian Government’s master media buying agency, Dentsu Mitchell, on the most cost effective mix of channels to reach the campaign’s target audiences identified for each phase of the campaign.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Distribution of unsolicited material should be carefully controlled.	<p>The AEC has a responsibility to inform eligible Australians of their obligation to enrol and vote in federal elections and referendums. Enrolment and voting for eligible Australians is compulsory.</p> <p>The AEC distributes the Official Guide to the Federal Election to all households as part of its election time campaign. This carefully crafted publication informs eligible Australians of their legal obligation to vote in the election and provides information on where and how to vote.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaigns should be evaluated to determine effectiveness.	The campaign will be the subject of comprehensive quantitative research which will measure the effectiveness of the campaign against its stated objectives.

**Principle 5: Campaigns must comply with legal requirements and procurement policies and procedures**

Check box as appropriate	Principle sub-point	AEC specific information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The manner of presentation and the delivery of campaigns must comply with all relevant laws including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. laws with respect to broadcasting and media;</li> </ul>	<p>No non-compliance has been identified.</p> <p>The AEC’s Legal Services Section reviews campaign materials prior to campaign</p>

- b. privacy laws; implementation.
- c. intellectual property laws;
- d. electoral laws;
- e. trade practices and consumer protection laws; and
- f. workplace relations laws.



Procurement policies and procedures for the tendering and commissioning of services and the employment of suppliers are to be followed, and there must be a clear audit trail regarding decision making.

AEC procurement policies and procedures have been adhered to and there is a clear audit trail regarding decisions on the campaign.