

2025

federal election
report





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This report may contain the names and images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now deceased.

Produced by the Australian Electoral Commission.

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Commissioner's overview

The 2025 federal election commenced on 28 March 2025 when the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, announced that an election for the House of Representatives and half of the Senate would be held on Saturday 3 May 2025. The writs were issued on 31 March 2025 and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) immediately put our well-rehearsed plan into action. Five weeks after the writs were issued, we delivered a successful two weeks of polling and almost six weeks after election day the counting was complete and the last of the writs were returned on 12 June 2025.

This report describes how the AEC delivered the election – the biggest and most accessible to date, with a record number of enrolled voters, a slight increase in the voter turnout compared with the 2022 federal election and the 2023 referendum, and over 19 million ballot papers counted on election night. The election was also the most complex count when compared to previous federal elections.

The AEC's delivery of the 2025 federal election upheld our principles of operational excellence, proven practices, and robust impartial event delivery. Our recent election delivery represents the culmination of over a decade of comprehensive electoral reform and nearly 20 years of electoral roll modernisation. As occurs with every election, the lessons learnt from the 2025 election will support the AEC to continue to deliver best practice election management.

I commend this report to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP', enclosed within a large, loopy circular flourish.

Jeff Pope

Acting Electoral Commissioner



2025

federal election
snapshot



Election timetable

The election timetable is determined by the Constitution and the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act). The Electoral Act sets a minimum election period of 33 days and a maximum period of 58 days from the issue of the writs to election day.

During this time there were three national public holidays, and under the Electoral Act pre-poll voting centres cannot open on public holidays. This was also the shortest possible period between issue of writ and election day, at 33 days.

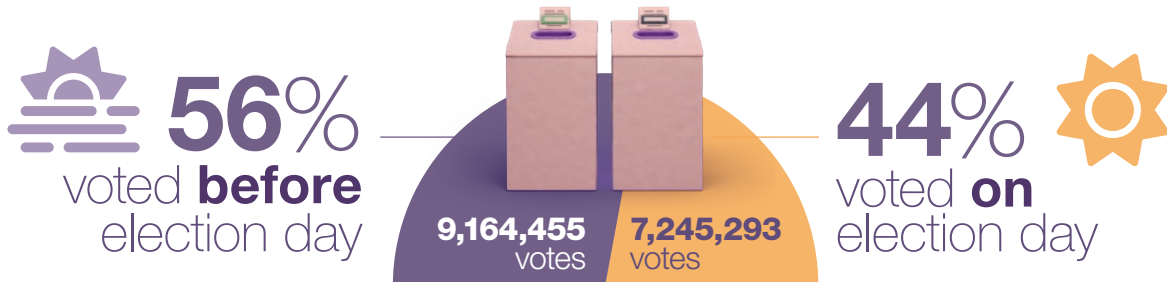
Friday 18 April – Good Friday
Monday 21 April – Easter Monday
Friday 25 April – Anzac Day

1 Remote voting teams commenced 22 April as Monday 21 April was a public holiday.



Highlights

How, when and where Australians voted at the 2025 federal election



- REMOTE**
- 77 remote service delivery teams
 - 469 premises visited across 354 localities
 - 115 local assistants
 - 162,000 km travelled
- MOBILE**
- 598 mobile voting teams
 - 2,762 locations visited overall
 - 130,900 votes issued overall
- POSTAL**
- 2,561,475 postal votes packs dispatched
 - 2,234,834 postal votes returned

TOTAL VOTES COUNTED

16,409,748

6,326,532
Pre-poll
ordinary
votes

6,678,692
Election day
ordinary
votes

557,890
Pre-poll
declaration
votes

539,069
Election
day **absent**
declaration
votes

27,532
Election day
provisional
declaration
votes

2,167,417
Postal votes

**Overseas
voting**

- 111 locations
- 62,862 pre-poll votes

**Telephone
voting**

- 2,507 registrations

81 countries

12,131 postal votes returned via diplomatic mail

2,327 blind and low vision votes

57 Antarctica votes

112,616
Mobile and
remote
ordinary
votes

**Electronic
certified lists (ECLs)**

12,300
Total ECLs

6,540,072
Ordinary votes
issued

963,606
Declaration
votes issued

Polling places

7,208
total pre-poll and static
polling locations

1,149
pre-poll voting centres
at 578 locations

6,966
polling places on election
day at 6,630 locations

Call centre

1,461
people worked in the call centre

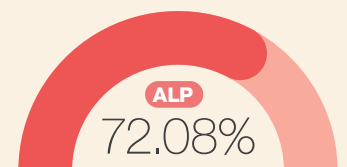
301,752
phone calls received

31,369
web enquiries and emails received

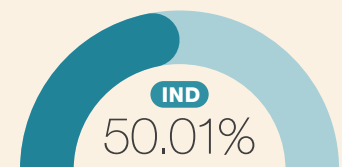
1,736
interpreter calls received

Election results

The **safest** House seat based on TCP percentage is **Fenner**, ACT (ALP 72.08%).
The **most marginal** seat is **Bradfield**, NSW (IND 50.01%).



Fenner ACT



Bradfield NSW

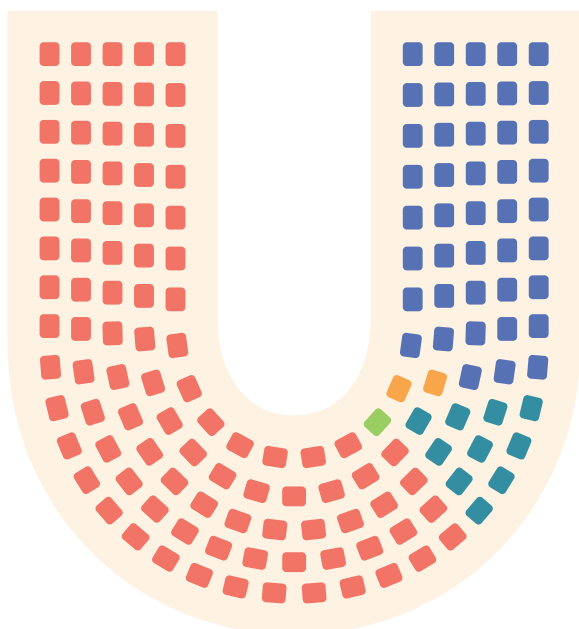
2025 FEDERAL ELECTION – RESULTS BY STATE





House of Representatives results

2025 FEDERAL ELECTION



150 seats contested

ALP Australian Labor Party **94**

Liberal/National Coalition (43)

LP Liberal **18**

LNP Liberal National Party of Queensland **16**

NP The Nationals **9**

GRN The Greens **1**

CA Centre Alliance **1**

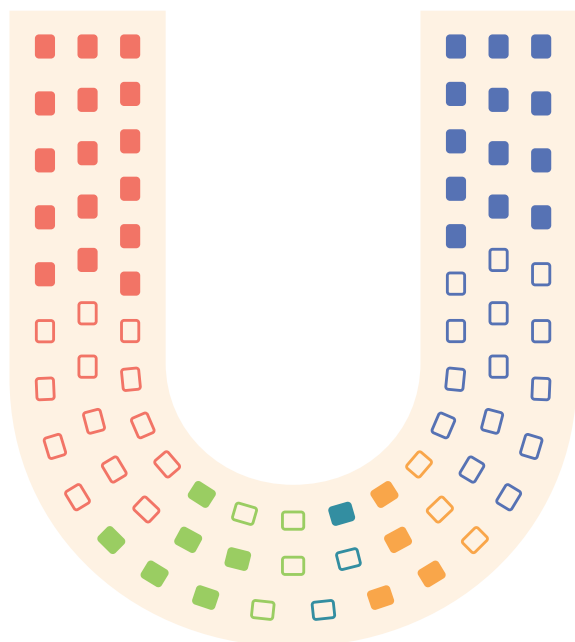
KAP Katter's Australian Party **1**

IND Independent **10**



Senate results

2025 FEDERAL ELECTION



40 seats contested (76 seats total)

ALP Australian Labor Party **16**

Liberal/National Coalition (13)

LP Liberal **10**

LNP Liberal National Party of Queensland **2**

CLP Country Liberal Party **1**

GRN The Greens **6**

ON Pauline Hanson's One Nation **3**

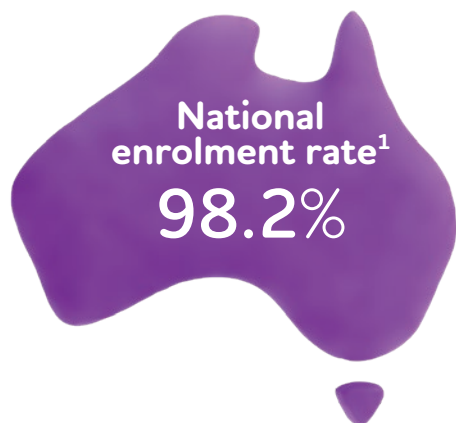
JLN Jacqui Lambie Network **1**

IND Independent (David Pocock) **1**

Note: These results reflect the outcomes for the vacancies contested at this election, not the full composition of the Senate.

Participation

Enrolment, turnout, formality and the national **participation rate** are all measures of **electoral participation**.



Enrolment

18,432,193 estimated eligible population

18,098,797 electors

Youth enrolment rate **92.0%**

Estimated Indigenous enrolment rate (as of 30 June 2024) **92.9%**

This is the third election in a row at which we've set a record for Australia's national enrolment rate. **Record enrolment like this doesn't happen by accident.** It represents a huge amount of work on the part of the AEC to **engage with voters** and **reduce barriers** for enrolment, and of course a **fantastic effort from eligible Australians to get enrolled.**

Jeff Pope
ACTING ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

Formality

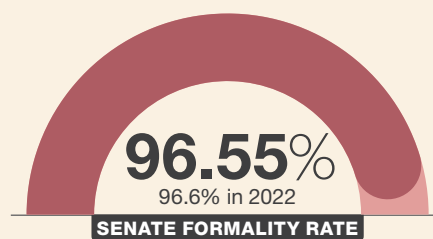
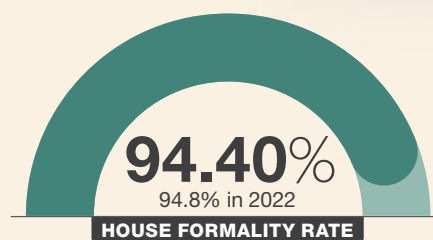
House of Representatives formality rates

	VOTES	%
Formal	15,490,236	94.40
Informal	919,512	5.60
Total	16,409,748	100.00

Senate formality rates

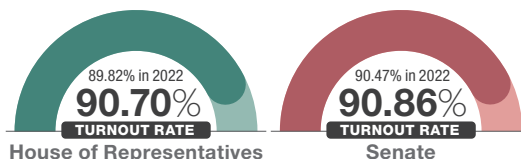
	VOTES	%
Formal	15,871,189	96.55
Informal	567,305	3.45
Total	16,438,494	100.00

See Chapters 10 and 12 on formality



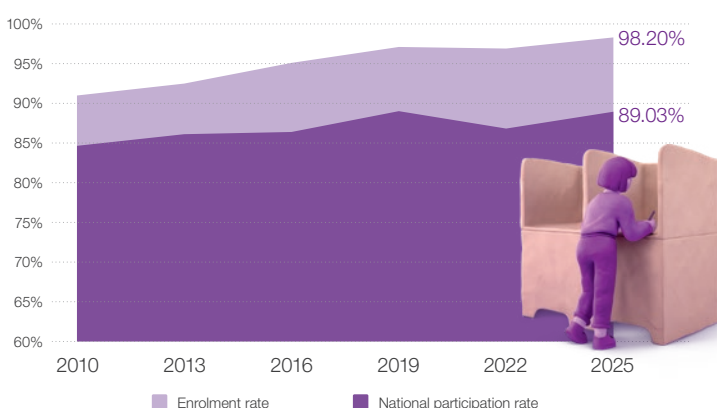
Turnout

Turnout is the number of votes admitted to the count as a percentage of enrolled electors. At a federal election, the turnout rate can differ between the House of Representatives and the Senate because of instances when a declaration vote is partially admitted to the count. This occurs where the voter has voted in the state or territory for which they are enrolled, but not the division for which they are enrolled, meaning only their Senate ballot paper can be admitted to the count.



Turnout has been positively impacted by the **expansion of polling place technology** (see Chapter 9).

Participation rates in federal elections since 2010



The AEC has been particularly focused on **Australia's youth enrolment rates**, and as a result it's now extremely healthy.

Jeff Pope
ACTING ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

First time voters



National participation rate is House of Representatives votes counted as a proportion of the total estimated eligible population. This is an alternative method of considering voter turnout, as trends for traditional turnout calculations may appear skewed as enrolment rates continue to rise.

chapter 1
Trust and the electoral
environment



Maintaining public trust

‘Australia has one of the most trusted electoral systems in the world, with broad-ranging safeguards in place to protect its integrity, including through the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce. The electoral system belongs to voters, and we all have to protect it.’

Jeff Pope, Acting Electoral Commissioner

Maintaining public trust in the integrity of electoral processes and results is a critical part of the AEC’s role in defending Australia’s democracy.

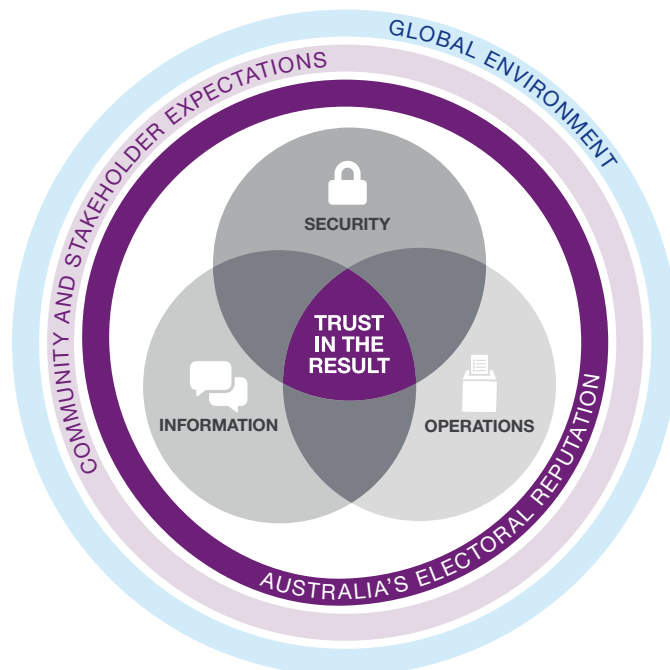
Impartial electoral event delivery is the most important and effective way for us to maintain electoral integrity and voter trust in the electoral process and its reputation; operational excellence is the foundation of our approach to this.

However, due to the exponential growth of digital information and communication technologies, and with mis and disinformation questioning the integrity of electoral processes around the world, Australians’ trust in the electoral process cannot be taken for granted.

It is also the case that electoral service delivery has grown significantly more complex in recent years. At international forums such as the Canberra Series on Electoral Integrity, electoral management bodies from Australia and overseas have identified the shared challenges of operating in an evolving threat landscape, with charged political environments, and decreased levels of trust in government institutions.

In response to these challenges, the **AEC’s Reputation Management System (RMS)** further embeds a focus on electoral integrity across all facets of our business. The system provides a tangible connection from all individual tasks and roles to the broader purpose of the AEC, with a focus on delivering high-quality, trusted elections and referendums for Australians.

AEC REPUTATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



In addition to the RMS, we have implemented, and continue to develop, a number of other strategies to maintain electoral integrity and voter trust in electoral processes in the lead-up to and during federal elections, including the 2025 election.

Disinformation Register

While we have no role in regulating truth in political communication, we do have a responsibility to ensure voters have access to factual information about Australia's electoral system and processes.

Before the 2022 federal election, we established an online Disinformation Register in response to the changing information environment, and to help defend the electoral system against mis and disinformation.

Now a permanent feature of federal elections and referendums, the Disinformation Register lists prominent pieces of disinformation regarding the electoral process, alongside the correct, fact-based information. In this way, the Register helps to de-bunk false narratives and encourage voters to stop, consider and assess the reliability of the information they are consuming.

Throughout the 2025 election, the AEC updated the Disinformation Register in response to pieces of disinformation about the electoral process as they emerged. By the time the writs were returned, the Disinformation Register contained nine entries covering themes such as the AEC's role in the electoral process and information about the electoral roll and enrolment.

The Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce

The Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce (EIAT) and its Board are constituted by relevant agencies across the Australian Government, working together to provide information and advice to the Electoral Commissioner on matters that may compromise the real or perceived integrity of federal elections or referendums.

Potential threats to electoral integrity can arise in the form of cyber or physical security incidents, mis or disinformation campaigns, and foreign interference in electoral processes. Public trust in the integrity of an election can be undermined by the realisation or perceived realisation of such threats.

The EIAT ensures information about these threats is efficiently referred to the relevant agencies, facilitates cooperation and coordination between these agencies, and enables them to work together to take any appropriate action.

The EIAT is not involved in the delivery of electoral events and does not have any role in other elements of electoral integrity, such as electoral processes, policies, procedures or administrative or regulatory decisions.

To support the integrity of the 2025 election, the EIAT:

- ran several scenario exercises in the lead-up to the election so it would be prepared to respond to events that could affect the integrity of the election
- published resources to assist voters and candidates to understand the changing nature of the election security environment¹
- met regularly ahead of the election, including daily from the issue of the writs, to monitor for any threats to the integrity of electoral processes

¹ See media release, [Taskforce provides assurance on the 2025 federal election](#).

- engaged with issues as they arose in the electoral environment
- successfully facilitated inter-agency engagement and information-sharing.

Following the return of the writs for the election, on 1 July the Board of the EIAT formally advised the Acting Electoral Commissioner that:

EIAT agencies did not identify any foreign interference, or any other interference, that compromised the delivery of the 2025 federal election and would undermine the confidence of the Australian people in the results of the election.¹

The Board also noted the important role the Australian community played in protecting the integrity of the electoral process.

Protective security

The AEC's key role in maintaining an impartial and independent electoral system can make us a target for those who may want to disrupt Australia's political system or use it as a platform for negative activism. In advance of the 2025 election, we undertook an Event Security Risk Assessment to identify the security risks of most concern. This suggested the security environment would add political charge to any existing negative community sentiments, potentially amplifying frustrations and discord.

Enhancing physical security

Informed by this assessment, we took a range of steps to enhance physical security across AEC offices and election sites. These included:

- delivering targeted staff and supplier briefing sessions, focusing on the threat environment and providing guidance in accordance with the Australian Government's Protective Security Policy Framework
- providing briefing materials and instructions to polling staff on managing security incidents
- raising approximately 58,500 Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks for temporary election workers in key roles
- installing anti-jump screens at 13 high-risk, public-facing sites
- deploying security guards to high-risk sites or in response to a particular security event
- engaging with police authorities in each state and territory to ensure a shared understanding of the security environment and ensure police were aware of the scope and location of voting services in each jurisdiction.

In the lead-up to and during the election, and due to the dynamic nature of the security environment, the AEC also:

- actively monitored media and digital platforms for groups of interest and possible threats
- worked with the Australian Federal Police to monitor physical demonstrations with the potential to affect AEC offices and polling places, assess and manage security incidents, and report on persons of interest
- drew on the National Emergency Management Agency's National Situation Room to monitor for potential disturbances.

¹ See [EIAT Board advice to the acting Electoral Commissioner on the 2025 federal election](#).

We will use the incident and risk data from the election to help identify key security trends and inform the broader security strategy for future elections.

Security and the campaigning environment

By its nature, the campaigning environment is highly contested at every election. At past elections, the number of incidents involving hostile or intimidating behaviour, or other conduct that made voters, campaign workers or our staff feel unsafe, have generally been small.

While this type of behaviour was again the exception in most parts of the country at the 2025 election, there was an increase in intimidation and hostile interactions at some polling locations in Victoria.

Overall, the number of incidents logged by AEC staff nationally was relatively modest, with the majority relating to antisocial, intimidating or threatening behaviour, including behaviour targeted at electoral processes.

Enhancing cyber security

The AEC is committed to aligning our cyber security posture with the Australian Cyber Security Centre Essential Eight (E8) maturity targets. As part of our preparations for the 2025 federal election, we further enhanced our cyber security monitoring capability, encompassed in the Security Operations Centre (SOC). The SOC acts as a frontline defence against external and insider cyber threats, by identifying and addressing risks to critical data, systems, and networks to ensure business continuity.

The AEC also further strengthened the security of its election systems against cyber threats by:

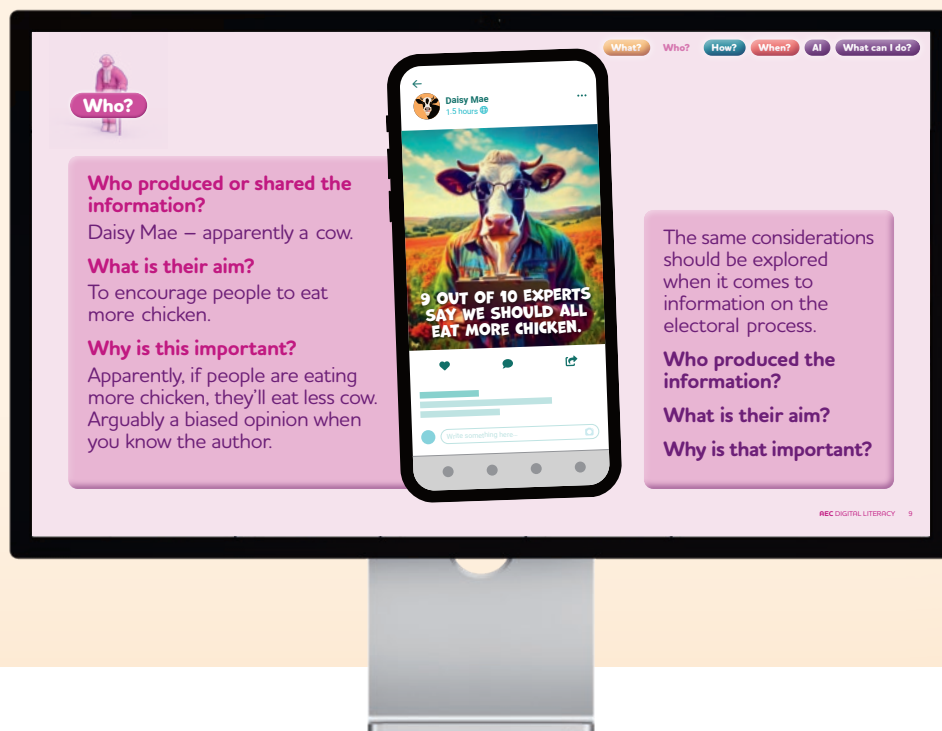
- conducting penetration testing of critical election systems and supporting information technology (IT) infrastructure
- completing the Infosec Registered Assessors Program assessments for critical election systems
- issuing internal authorisation for relevant IT systems to operate, in line with our cyber security governance program, to ensure visibility and, where possible, remediation of the risks associated with those systems and applications.

Use of generative artificial intelligence in the election

The use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is now firmly embedded in the global online information environment, and the AEC observed it being used in several ways during the 2025 federal election, for example, for political messaging and advertising.

The AEC is aware, and it was widely reported prior to the election, that AI had the potential to amplify existing threats to electoral integrity, particularly by increasing the volume and velocity of the spread of mis and disinformation – for example, by the creation of deceptive ‘deepfakes’. However, as assessed by the EIAT post-election, the use of AI did not interfere with election delivery nor was it likely to have impacted Australians’ trust in the results.

... the use of **AI did not interfere with election delivery** nor was it likely to have impacted Australians' trust in the results



While we have no role to play in regulating truth in political communication, as discussed in **Chapter 2** it is our responsibility to ensure that electoral communications are correctly authorised and do not mislead or deceive voters about the act of casting a vote. Noting there were no regulatory tools that the AEC could use to specifically address harms to electoral integrity from AI, our approach for the election was to:

- ensure staff delivering our public communications initiatives, including direct engagement on social media and online educational resources, were prepared to understand, recognise and appropriately respond to AI use
- further expand our programs such as the 'Stop and Consider' campaign and educational resources made available via social media and our website
- continue to engage directly with technology companies and expand this engagement and monitoring to include key providers of this technology (such as ChatGPT's OpenAI). The purpose of this was to ensure these companies understood the AEC's responsibilities and the Australian information environment and improve our understanding of, and how to respond to, the potential impacts of AI.

Notably, in February 2024, X, Meta, Snapchat, TikTok, Microsoft, Google, OpenAI, and Adobe signed the global 'Tech Accord to Combat Deceptive Use of AI in 2024 Elections'. In addition to our regular engagement, the AEC wrote to each of these platforms in late 2024 to enquire if the commitments they made in the Accord extended to Australia's 2025 federal election. All but one of these platforms responded by outlining their continued commitment to the Accord, their efforts to date, and how this work would be applicable to the 2025 federal election.

chapter 2

Legislation and redistributions



Legislative framework

The Australian Constitution requires that elections for the House of Representatives are held at least once every three years but does not prescribe fixed terms; that is, it does not require elections to be held on the same date every three years. The Constitution also provides that half Senate elections are to be held every three years, with state Senators serving six-year terms.¹ Therefore, a typical federal election involves 158 individual polls: 150 for the election of members to the House of Representatives, and eight for the election of Senators for each of the six states and two territories.

Under the Constitution and the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act), each of these polls is commenced by the Governor-General or relevant State Governor issuing a writ, which is a formal legal document commanding an electoral official to hold an election.

Within the parameters set by the Electoral Act, the writs set out when an election will be held and the dates and times by which key steps in the process must be completed. An election ends with the return of the writs after the results are declared.

Conduct of elections

In addition to matters affecting election timetabling, the Electoral Act also prescribes the way key aspects of an election must be conducted. For example, the Act:

- sets out who is eligible to enrol and vote at elections, and the requirements for candidate eligibility and nomination
- prescribes the rules for voting, ballot paper formality, scrutiny procedures and recounts
- requires certain communications (e.g. campaign materials) to be properly authorised
- confers on AEC officials the power to make certain decisions in relation to elections
- provides that the High Court sits as the Court of Disputed Returns and determines election disputes.

Changes before 2025 election

Since the 2022 election, several changes have been made to the Electoral Act. In January 2023, changes made by the *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Assurance of Senate Counting) Act 2021* came into effect. These changes required us to arrange for independent assurance that the counting software used for Senate elections distributes preferences and determines results in accordance with the Electoral Act.

In February 2025, further amendments were made by the *Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025*. A number of these took effect before the election, including amendments that:

- expanded the grounds on which voters can apply for a postal vote or cast a pre-poll vote to include disability
- streamlined requirements in relation to the counting of declaration votes

¹ Senators for the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory serve three-year terms.

- strengthened a process designed to allow for postal vote envelopes returned incorrectly by the voter to be admitted for preliminary scrutiny
- established new offences to prevent temporary election workers being filmed without permission at polling places and the publication, without permission, of audio or visual recordings from polling places.

Issue of writs

On 31 March 2025, three days after the Prime Minister announced the election, the Governor-General issued to the Acting Electoral Commissioner writs for the election of all 150 members of the House of Representatives and the election of Senators for the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory.

On the same day, each State Governor issued to the relevant Australian Electoral Officer a writ for the election of six Senators for their state.

The writs specified key dates for the election, namely:

- the close of rolls on 7 April 2025
- the close of nominations on 20 April 2025
- election day on 3 May 2025
- the return of the writs by no later than 7 July 2025.

As required by the Electoral Act, on 2 April 2025 the AEC published notices of receipt of the writs and the key dates for the election in newspapers in each state and territory.



Acting Electoral Commissioner, Jeff Pope, and Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC at the issue of writs for the 2025 federal election.

Authorisations

As noted above, the Electoral Act requires certain communications to include an authorisation statement or message about the person or entity responsible for the communication. This is to ensure voters know the source of certain communications that are likely to influence how they vote in a federal election.

The AEC is responsible for ensuring compliance with these authorisation requirements and we take a proactive approach to performing this regulatory function. In addition to public and participant education, we publish a Better Practice Guide to support greater compliance, and we investigate electoral communications in response to complaints received and concerns raised through active monitoring by our staff.

From 2 February 2025 through to election day on 3 May 2025,¹ the AEC:

- considered 2,910 complaints about electoral communications
- reviewed 7,418 electoral communications for compliance with authorisation requirements
- identified 1,677 breaches of those requirements.

¹ While the election was not officially announced until 28 March, 2 February is the date the pre-election period was deemed to commence for the purposes of monitoring the authorisation of electoral communications.

While this is higher than the number of breaches detected at the last two federal elections, it represents a lower overall breach rate considering the significant increase in the number of communications reviewed.

Other legislative obligations

In addition to our responsibilities under the Electoral Act, the AEC must comply with a range of other legislative obligations during a federal election. For example:

- the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* ensures the protection of our staff, temporary workers, and voters
- the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) found in that Act, govern the AEC's handling of personal information, such as electoral roll and employee data
- the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* provides a framework for the proper management of public funding and the multiple procurement processes required to conduct an election.

The AEC's compliance with these obligations supported the safe, secure and effective delivery of the 2025 election.

Redistributions

The AEC is also responsible for determining the electoral boundaries for each division used to elect members of the House of Representatives.

Redistributions ensure, as close as practical, an equal number of voters in each electoral division within a state or territory. Since the 2022 federal election, redistributions occurred in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory.

The redistributions resulted in the abolition of two electoral divisions – Higgins (Victoria) and North Sydney (New South Wales) – and the creation of one new electoral division of Bullwinkel (Western Australia).

At the 2025 federal election, voters were electing 150 members to the House of Representatives, one less than in 2022.

MORE INFORMATION

Details about these recent redistributions, as well as current redistributions process reviews, are at: aec.gov.au/redistributions



chapter 3

Parties, nominations and candidates



Party registration

The AEC maintains the Register of Political Parties and administers the Commonwealth party registration scheme. The main purpose is to establish a register of party names, abbreviations and logos that can be printed on the House of Representatives and Senate ballot papers at elections. Registration as a federal political party is not compulsory to contest federal elections – unendorsed (independent) candidates can also nominate for election.

We can de-register a party for reasons including obtaining their registration by fraud or misrepresentation, failing to comply with a renewal notice, or having fewer than 1,500 members and no parliamentary members. Parties can also apply to voluntarily deregister.



55 parties registered in 2025 (**61** in 2022)



8 new parties registered since 2022

- Better Together Party (non-parliamentary) registered 7 March 2025
 - Australia's Voice (parliamentary) registered 17 December 2024
 - Tammy Tyrrell for Tasmania (parliamentary) registered 12 December 2024
 - Gerard Rennick People First (parliamentary) registered 5 December 2024
 - Family First Party Australia (non-parliamentary) registered 20 September 2024
 - Libertarian Party (non-parliamentary) registered 12 January 2024
 - Dai Le & Frank Carbone Network (parliamentary) registered 8 August 2023
 - Voices for the Senate (non-parliamentary) registered 1 July 2022 *[since deregistered]*
-

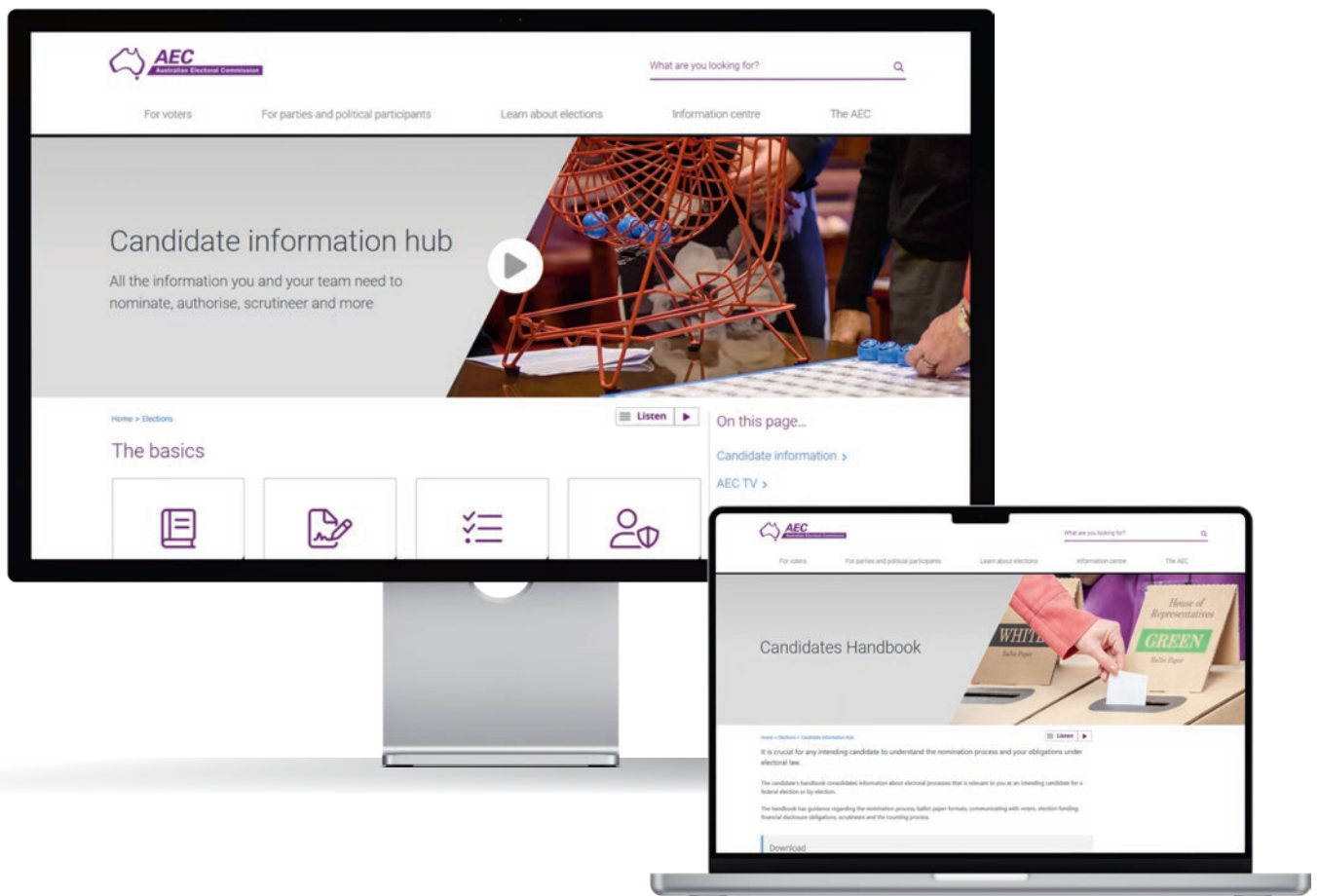


14 parties deregistered since 2022



4 parties did not endorse candidates for this election

- Better Together Party (non-parliamentary)
- Dai Le & Frank Carbone W.S.C. (parliamentary)
- Kim for Canberra (non-parliamentary)
- Tammy Tyrrell for Tasmania (parliamentary).



Candidate nominations

Part XIV of the Electoral Act sets out the process for nomination of candidates and the relevant eligibility requirements to nominate for a federal election. A qualification checklist relating to section 44 of the Australian Constitution forms part of the candidate nomination. Intending candidates must complete the checklist and provide documents as required, to help demonstrate their eligibility to be elected to Parliament.

In the lead-up to this election, we updated the Candidate Information Hub on the AEC website, to provide access to information related to eligibility, nominating, authorisations, funding and disclosure, scrutineer and campaign worker management and other resources.

For this election, we saw an increase in the number of independent and non-affiliated candidates.

Nomination type	Total
Endorsing parties bulk nominations (individual branches not included)	28
Independent/non-affiliated House of Representatives candidates	330
Independent/non-affiliated Senate candidates	28



In 2025, more nominations were lodged later in the lodgement period than in 2022, with a spike in lodgements on **day 7** of the nominations period (Monday 7 April 2025)



there were **898** male candidates and **547** female candidates and **11** of gender unspecified



nationally, **1,456** nominated as candidates (**1,624** in 2022)



the largest number of candidates fielded in a division was **13** in both the divisions of Calwell (VIC) and Riverina (NSW)



330 candidates contested **40** vacancies in the **Senate** (**421** in 2022)



the smallest number of candidates fielded in a division was **4** in each of the divisions of Bean (ACT), Fenner (ACT) and Maribyrnong (VIC).



1,126 candidates contested the **150 House of Representatives** divisions (**1,203** in 2022)

chapter 4

Readiness



Preparing and planning

The AEC meticulously planned and rehearsed for the election to ensure we were ready when the writs were issued.

Our planning efforts were rigorously governed by internal committees and coordinated across the agency, which helped to ensure we met our key readiness dates.

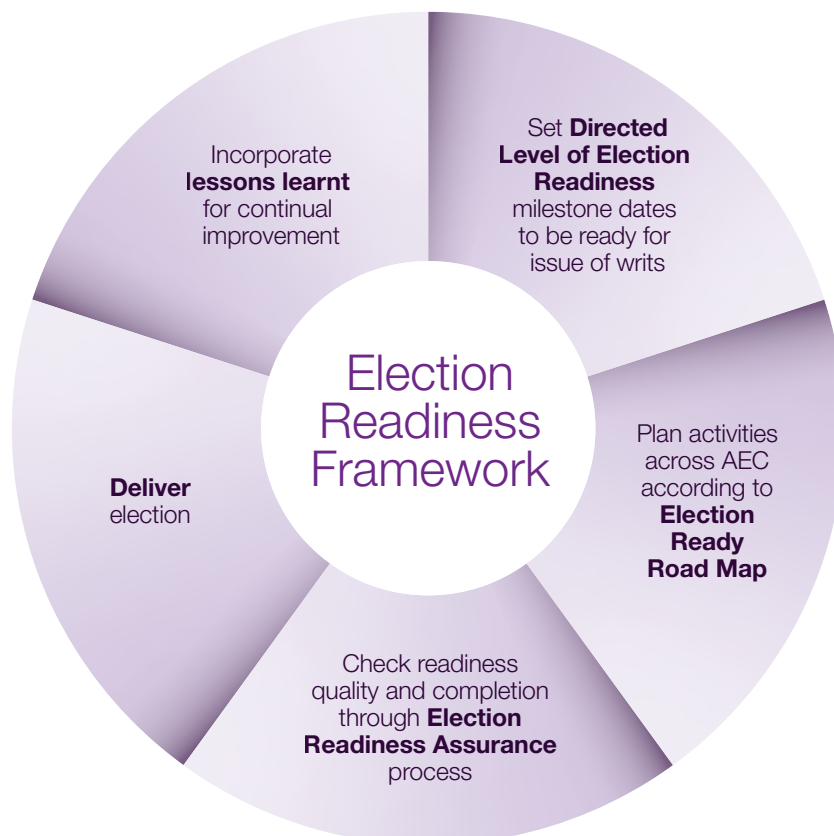
Additionally, to ensure we met increasing public and stakeholder expectations, we introduced new and expanded technology solutions which improved the accuracy and speed of polling activities.

Election Readiness Framework

The AEC's election readiness framework is used to set critical readiness milestones. This framework involves four phases – plan, mobilise, deliver and finalise. After setting the milestone dates, we then monitor and move through the various planning activities underpinned by the AEC's Election Ready Road Map.

However, in preparing for an election, we need to strike a careful balance between the likelihood of an event occurring with the cost and complexity of maintaining a readiness posture. Event readiness must also be balanced against other agency priorities, available resource capacity, and the lead-time for sourcing election materials. Integrated planning is key to our success in this area.

ELECTION READINESS FRAMEWORK



Governance and assurance

Governance committees

In the lead-up to and during the election, internal AEC governance committees provided oversight and management of election preparation and delivery activities. The focus on key risks ensured changes in the election operating environment were identified and systems of controls remained effective.

The following committees provided governance and assurance over election preparation, delivery and review.

Before election announcement

- **Executive Leadership Team** – the senior executive team that assists the Electoral Commissioner to deliver strategic leadership and operational management of the AEC.
- **National Operations and Readiness (NOR) Committee** – a senior executive-level governance committee that convened every six weeks before the election announcement to oversee and monitor AEC operations with a particular focus on preparation and readiness of election services.
- **Director Operations and Readiness (DOR)** – a director-level governance committee that convened every six weeks before the election announcement, providing support, advice and readiness reporting to NOR.

During the election period

- NOR became the **National Election Delivery Committee (NEDC)** – a senior executive-level committee that met daily including on weekends as required throughout the writ-to-writ period to drive, coordinate, monitor and command the conduct of the electoral events across the country.
- DOR became the **DOR Delivery Scrum (DDS)** – a director-level governance committee that met during the writ-to-writ period to support the operations of NEDC, including monitoring election activities through our delivery tracker and dashboards. DDS reported and escalated issues when required to NEDC.
- **Australian Electoral Commission Command Centre** – provided critical input to assist NEDC in its operations.

Assurance activities

Our election readiness assurance activities occur between mobilising for and delivering the election, to assess the AEC's state of election readiness. Assurance activities align with our Quality Management System and risk tolerance levels.

Assurance activities included regular reporting against our Election Ready Road Map, oversight by our governance committees, assurance interviews after key milestones, checkpoint activities such as load testing our election systems, and exercises and rehearsals.

Transforming our technology

A core component of our election readiness is making sure that the technology is fit for purpose and ready to be used. Our Election Systems Modernisation Program (the Indigo Program) involves a large-scale uplift of AEC legacy information technology (IT) infrastructure and systems used to plan, deliver and execute electoral events. We used a new employment system for the temporary election workforce (TEW) for the first time at this election (see Chapter 7), along with improving a range of existing systems to enhance election delivery including expanded technology used in polling places (see Chapter 8).

Divisional planning and scheduling

As part of getting ready for the election, the AEC prepares detailed daily and hourly plans for the count in all 150 electoral divisions in all states and territories. To do this, the AEC has evolved a scheduling program in partnership with Deakin University, which Divisional Returning Officers use to plan the count before it starts. During delivery, the Divisional Planning and Scheduling Platform tracks the count results for each polling place and adjusts the schedule to help resource and plan the count for the next day. This tool helps to ensure all ballot papers are counted, and the election results are delivered to a high quality and in a timely manner.

chapter 5

Engagement and participation



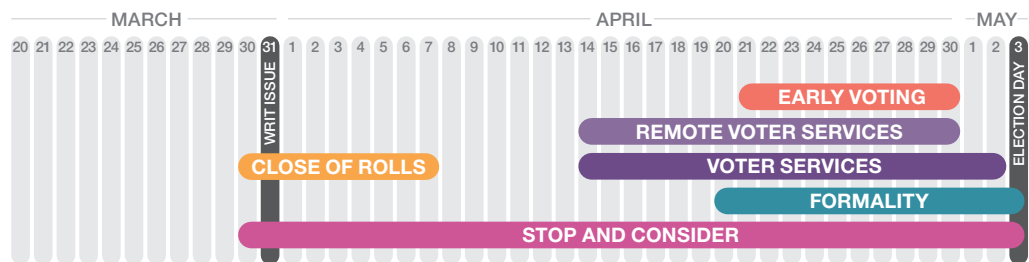
Engagement strategy

The AEC's communication, education and engagement strategy played a central role in enabling voters to participate confidently and equitably and helped to increase enrolment and voting. The use of clear, accessible and inclusive information helped voters understand their rights and responsibilities. This was supported by engagement with First Nations, multicultural and disability communities.

Our focus was to build electoral literacy, remove barriers to participation, build trust and strengthen confidence in the electoral system. We achieved this by providing practical guidance on enrolling, considering electoral information, voting correctly and understanding the electoral process.

Advertising campaign

The AEC delivered a national advertising campaign from 30 March to 3 May to support voter participation. The campaign educated voters on why it is important to vote, enrolment and close of rolls, voter services and formality. This was supported by the Stop and Consider campaign to help voters identify false and misleading information about the electoral process.



Channels included television, press, radio, online video, cinema, outdoor, digital and social media. Approaches were customised and translated for First Nations and multicultural audiences.

Digital literacy

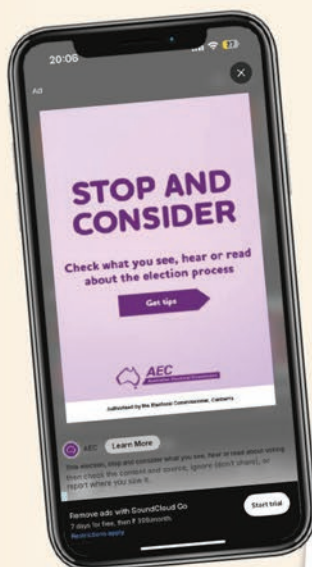
The AEC increased communication, education and engagement activities to support voters' improved awareness and understanding of mis and disinformation through our Stop and Consider campaign.

Voters were encouraged to apply healthy scepticism to all electoral information they saw, heard or read. We encouraged them to check the content and source of information that may be trying to influence their vote. We reminded them that artificial intelligence makes it easy to create false information and that anyone can be affected. A strong message throughout was on the secret ballot and a reminder that 'your vote is your choice'.

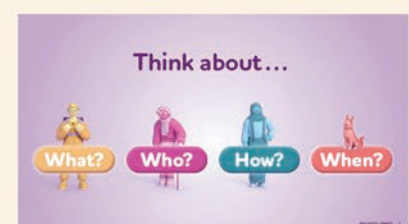
In addition to the advertising campaign, we shared these messages in the official guide, on our website, through our media channels including dedicated videos on AEC TV, and during our community engagements and community education.

A series of videos available on our website had around 60,000 views.

Your vote will help shape Australia national advertising campaign



Stop and Consider campaign



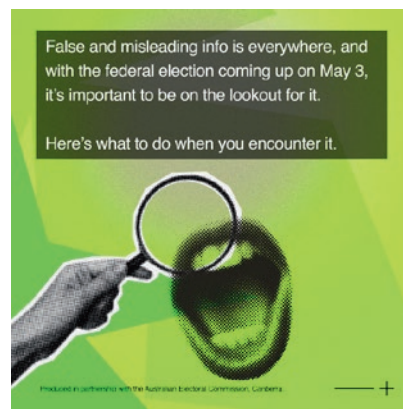
Digital literacy resource

Targeted media partnerships

While the wider advertising campaign targeted all eligible voters, media partnerships helped to reach First Nations, multicultural and youth voters.

Partners included:

- specialist culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) radio and press
- Australian Radio Network (ARN) Blakcast
- Pedestrian TV, Listnr and Snapchat.



over **93 million** completed views of video ads



10.8 million reached through television advertising



1.8 million impressions on new social platforms on Pinterest and Reddit



over **721 million** impressions through video display, audio, search, social media, and media integrations (the number of times ads were either displayed or viewed)



over **9 million** people reached through out-of-home advertising such as digital screens in public places



more than **9 million** people reached through paid Meta (Facebook and Instagram) advertising



86,000 radio spots, **4,600** outdoor panels and **810** newspaper insertions

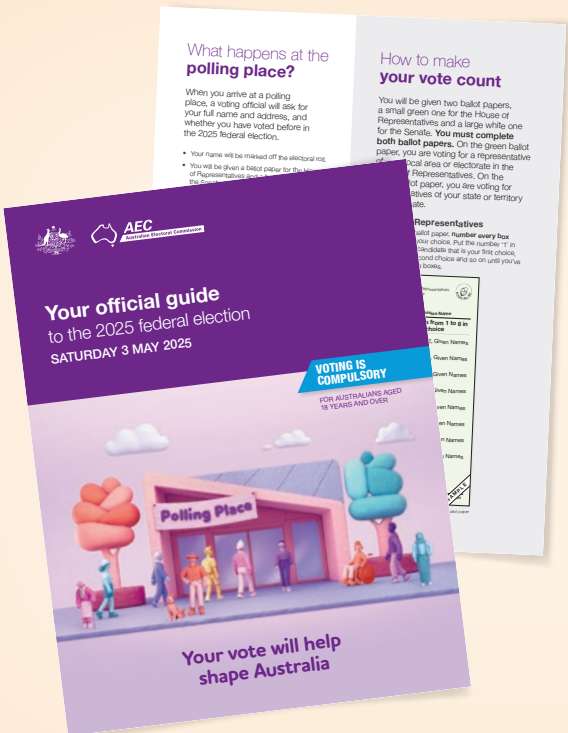
Public notice advertising

Public notice advertising provided voters with information relevant to their local area. As required by the Electoral Act, the AEC advertises in newspapers the receipt of federal election writs and information about polling places and pre-poll voting centres.

We also published public notices about federal electoral boundary redistributions, remote voter services, event clashes, information for interstate voters, and information on candidates as shown the table below.

2025 federal election public notices

Ads published	Details	Number of publications	Published date	Readership (approximate)
Writ issue	NSW, VIC, QLD, WA, SA, TAS, NT and ACT	12	2 April	2,709,449
Redistributions	NSW, VIC, WA, NT and 2 national ads	12	Various	2,527,262
Remote voter service (locations and times)	NSW, VIC, QLD, WA, SA and NT	37	Various	685,359
Remote voter services (general information pointing to AEC website)	National only	1	23 April	100,000
Interstate visitors	QLD and NT	7	Various	461,584
Event clash	NSW and QLD	8	Various	1,155,135
Candidate and polling places	NSW, VIC, QLD, WA, SA, TAS, NT and ACT	12	2 May	2,709,449
Total published				89
Total readership (approximate)				10,348,238



The official guide

Your official guide to the 2025 federal election informed voters of important election information. It explained how to cast a vote correctly, where to get more information, how to access translated information and accessible formats, and answered frequently asked questions.



distributed to more than **11.8 million** households



available in large print, e-text, audio, and braille



available on the AEC website



achieved more than **53,000** downloads from the website



translated into **34** languages





Media


In the lead-up to the election, we visited newsrooms across the country and hosted 16 press briefings to discuss election issues and help to ensure accuracy in media reporting.

During the election period, we responded to over 4,000 media enquiries, conducted more than 300 media interviews, and distributed 46 media releases. We drew on our 24 media spokespeople, including staff who were bilingual to undertake interviews in language.

We conducted weekly media briefings for local journalists and psephologists after election day to provide updates on the count progress in close and complex seats. These briefings ensured the count process was well understood and supported appropriate reporting.

 **300+**
media
interviews

 **4,000+**
media
enquiries

 **46**
media
releases

 **16**
media
briefings



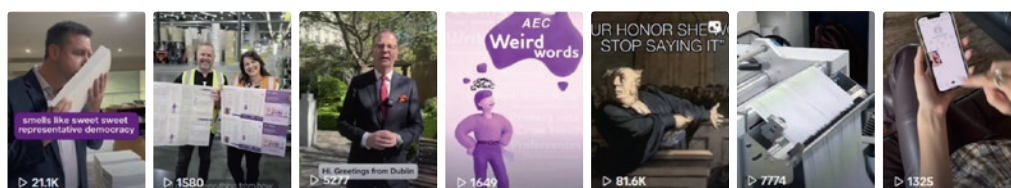
Social media

Our social media approach contributed to positioning the AEC as the expert on the election process. Across our platforms we published 536 organic pieces of proactive content.

In March 2025, the AEC became one of the first government agencies to launch a TikTok account to help broaden our reach to young people. Between its launch and the return of the writ, 106 videos were posted, receiving some 472,000 views. The TikTok videos featured content about electoral processes and where to access online information, including voter services.

A social media operations group was rostered during the election to rapidly answer questions and monitor social media for emerging trends and issues. In the writ-to-writ period, the AEC's social media accounts received more than 79,900 pieces of incoming content, with more than 5 million impressions across AEC social posts (an impression is the number of times a piece of content is displayed on someone's screen).

Members of the AEC's Executive Leadership Team were available to the public through a Reddit 'Ask Me Anything' session, on the r/Australia subreddit.



79.9K+
Incoming
content



4.4K+
AEC replies



5.08M+
Impressions



943K
Video/reel
views



536
Published
posts



386K+
Total
engagements

Working with online platforms

Since 2018, the AEC has engaged with policy representatives from most major online media platforms, including foreign language platforms.

In the lead-up to the election, we provided platforms with an overview of AEC strategies to combat mis and disinformation about electoral processes, an outline of relevant electoral laws, and a brief on the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce.

To promote trust in, and mitigate threats to the integrity of, Australian electoral processes, the AEC refers content to online media platforms for review and moderation, where required. This occurs when content is assessed to have breached, for example, the Electoral Act and/or platform policies.

Most platforms replied to our requests for review quickly and in line with the resources they had indicated would be allocated.

Translated materials

Information was translated into up to 59 languages. This included 34 languages spoken by multicultural communities and 25 First Nations languages.

New languages for this election were Maltese, and First Nations languages Anmatyerr (Anmatjerre) and Arrarnta/Western Arrentre (Northern Territory), Meriam Mir (Queensland), and Kukatja and Walmajarri (Western Australia).

Translated resources included:

- advertising on TV, digital video, out-of-home digital display, press, radio and social (Weibo and WeChat)
- general details about the election process and tips to identify false and misleading information
- 'How to vote' information available at every polling place
- videos explaining the electoral process, how to complete a ballot paper, and insights into why people vote
- community education, including delivery by bi-lingual educators.

We provided access to interpreter services in 19 languages, with an additional phone number for other languages depending on availability of interpreters.


Contact centre

The AEC worked in partnership with other government agencies and third-party providers to deliver contact centre support.

Common queries related to enrolment and postal voting, and there was an increase in contacts (including complaints) regarding political party messaging, in particular, voters receiving SMS messaging.

 operated from **29 March** to **16 May 2025**

 over **1,400** operators serviced **301,752** phone calls and **31,369** email/web contacts

 over **1,500** interpreter-assisted contacts, with the top three languages being Mandarin, Cantonese and Arabic

 over **25,000** AEC products were mailed out, including **160** products through Vision Australia

 over **1,500** 'knowledge articles' were used to ensure consistent and accurate messaging.

Complaints received during the election

For the 2025 federal election, there were:

- 7, 807 complaints were received during the election period. This is approximately a 19 per cent increase from 2022.
- Key themes include postal voting applications, political party communications and electors not wanting to be enrolled.
- The category of complaint with the most significant increase from the previous federal election was the political party category (primarily communications) up from 298 in 2022 to 2,222 in this election.

Multicultural community engagement and education

The AEC expanded our multicultural community engagement. We met with 226 community leaders from 135 organisations to inform refinements to our approach for the 2025 federal election.

We piloted a network of multicultural Community Electoral Participation Officers in New South Wales and Victoria to deliver place-based education and outreach – including in language. This included at social gatherings, community events, citizenship classes, cultural festivals and temples. Many activities during education sessions included mock voting practice with a tally board to help build an understanding of preferential voting and how to vote formally.



we partnered with multicultural organisations and migrant resource centres in NSW, QLD, SA, TAS and VIC



a total of **581** electoral education sessions were delivered in **27** languages



we produced *Why vote?* cards in **13** languages



we produced an electoral education kit, which included information in **13** languages.



Response from participants and partners

‘Many first-time voters and newcomers to Australia expressed a newfound confidence in casting their votes correctly. One participant admitted that she simply followed a family member’s instructions without understanding the process in previous elections. After the session, she felt empowered to make her own informed choices.’ – *Information session partner*

A Nepali-speaking participant shared how translated materials and sessions in-language helped him understand voting procedures for the first time. Previously, he found the English instructions overwhelming, but after reading and hearing the information in his language, he felt prepared and assured about voting correctly. – *Information session partner*

‘Participants especially love the mock up voting exercise – it has become one of my favourite things to observe the moment it clicks in participants.’ – *Community education facilitator*





Indigenous Electoral Participation Program

Established over a decade ago, the AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Program (IEPP) promotes participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in federal elections and referendums. Recent funding has expanded its reach, focusing on community led initiatives to boost enrolment, voter turnout, formality, and employment opportunities for First Nations Australians.

Our IEPP staff, Community Electoral Participation Officers and partners collectively undertook 1,032 engagements including our 'Yarn and Learn' education sessions, enrolment drives, partner interactions and events in Indigenous communities. This included 430 education sessions including in remote communities, which covered the process of the election, what happens at the polling place and how to vote formally.

Partnerships

The IEPP has long-term partnerships with 53 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Partners deliver culturally appropriate electoral initiatives including co-designed, localised resources, materials in language, outreach events and education sessions. The AEC ensures political and issue neutrality for partner-supported enrolment drives, voter education and the recruitment of temporary election workers.

Community Electoral Participation Officers

We employed 60 Community Electoral Participation Officers (CEPO), who live in regional and remote communities and delivered electoral information, facilitated enrolment and promoted voter awareness. Most of our CEPOs speak community languages.

Communication

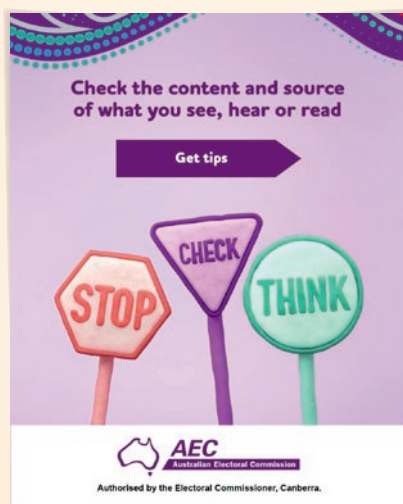
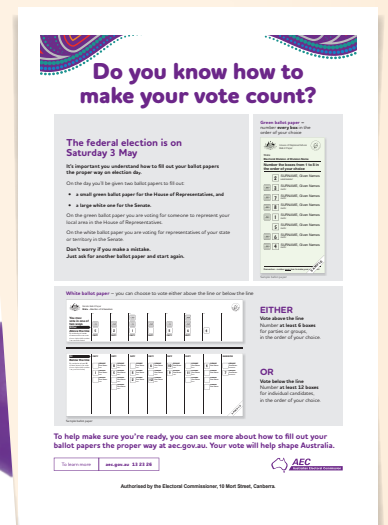
Communication was informed by post-referendum research, which recommended shifting the focus from enrolment to encouraging First Nations voters to consider why voting was important to them. It also included general information about how the voting process works to build foundational knowledge. Activities included:



- media partnerships with First Nations Community Radio (FNCR), First Nations Broadcasting and the Australian Radio Network, which reached 900,000 listeners through 3,100 radio spots
- campaign advertising including radio ads in 25 languages
- an electronic direct mail to over 400 First Nations stakeholders, which had a 40 per cent open rate, double the 19.4 per cent government benchmark
- new products including education videos and social media, which were shared with stakeholders and IEPP partner organisations.

'I really want you to take this back to Canberra. We have, and have done, many contracts with government and private business. The way the IEPP and the AEC is doing this work is special. No one else is doing it like you are, and it is paying off, it is respectful and we can feel the AEC's genuine commitment and care for our Indigenous communities. Keep doing what you are doing.'

Daniel (Danny) Brown, General Manager, Social Innovations, Ngarliyarndu Bindirri Aboriginal Corporation

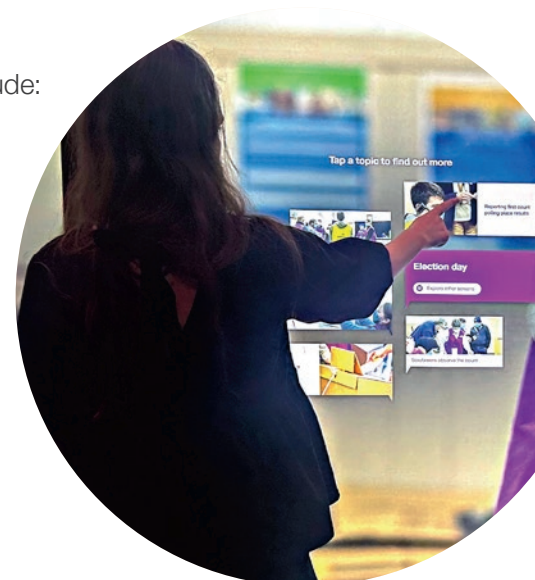


School education

Our school-based initiatives, aligned with the Australian Curriculum, include:

- immersive in-person learning experiences at the National Electoral Education Centre in Canberra, which hosts around 80,000 visitors a year
- resources on the AEC for Schools website and a Teacher Professional Learning program.

To further extend the reach of our educational programs we collaborate with civic and citizenship organisations to participate in special events. In addition, our *Writs to Referendums* exhibition at the Australian Museum of Democracy in Canberra showcases Australia's democratic and electoral systems. Since it launched on 29 November 2022, the exhibition has attracted more than 113,664 visitors.

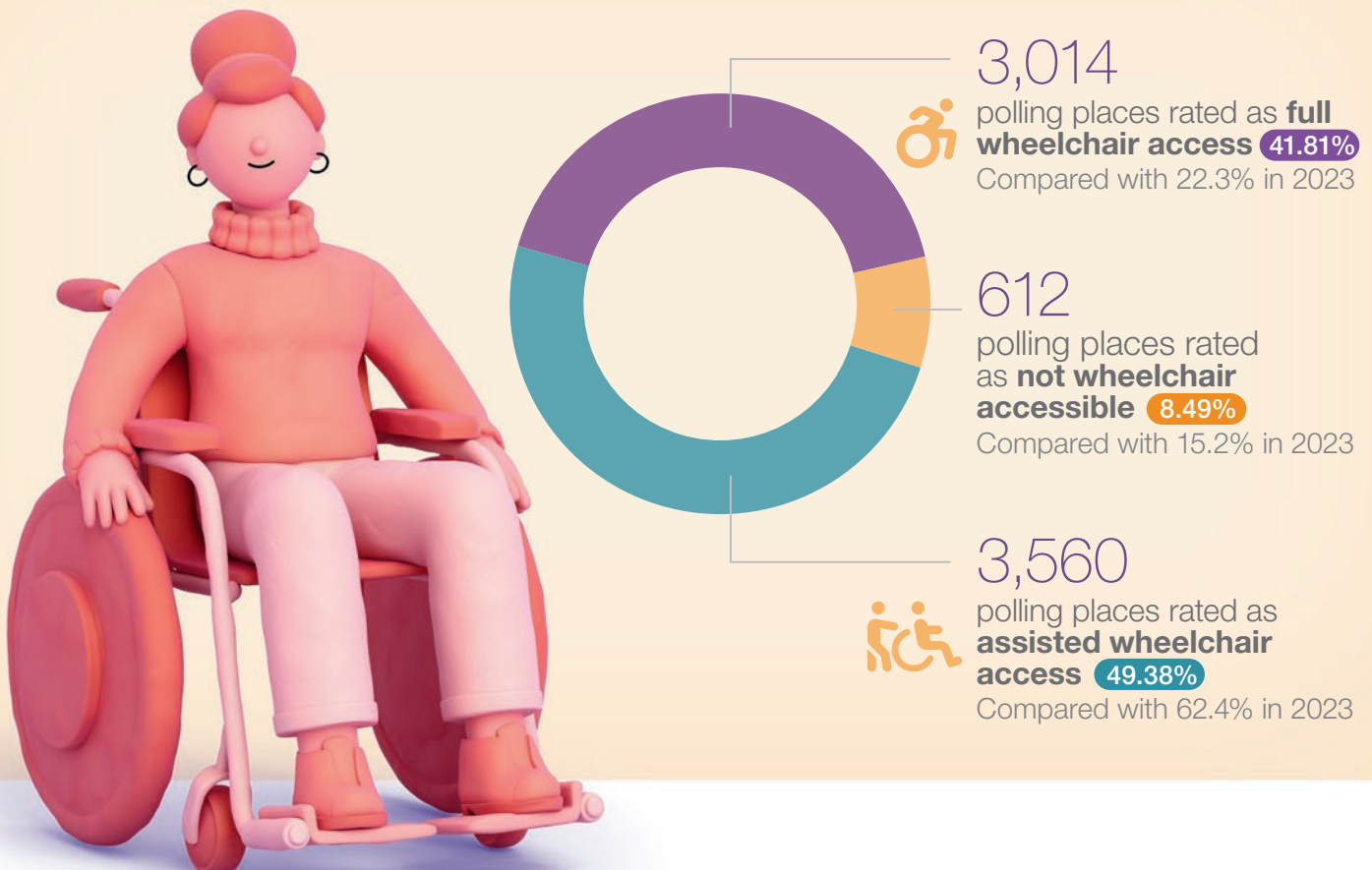


Greater equity of access

The AEC prioritises supporting electoral participation for all Australians including improving access for voters with barriers to participation. We delivered greater equity of access, safe and appropriate services through:

- a review of polling place accessibility, which saw an increase in premises rated as either fully or assisted wheelchair accessible from 84.7 per cent to 91.2 per cent
- an increased mobile voting service offering for older Australians, people with disability, First Nations peoples, mental health residents, prisoners, people experiencing homelessness and hospital in-patients (see Chapter 8 – Voting)
- an online learning course for our mobile teams, developed in consultation with expert working groups and focused on inclusive and respectful service to voters including supporting voters with disability
- enhanced remote voter services for people in remote and very remote Australia (see Chapter 8)
- a partnership with Services Australia to provide telephone voting for electors who are blind or have low vision, and electors working in Antarctica, with over 2,300 people casting their vote via this secure telephone voting service (see Chapter 8).

Of the **7,208 polling places** used:



Aged care, mental health, disability and hospital engagement and consultation

The 2025 federal election saw the AEC further expand mobile voting services for residential aged care and residential mental health services.

We engaged extensively with consumer peak bodies, profit and not-for-profit service providers and advocates through committees and working groups to inform mobile voting policy settings, service offering and resource planning. This included the AEC's Aged Care Advisory Working Group, the Disability Advisory Committee and the newly formed Mental Health Advisory Group. This was pivotal in identifying opportunities to improve enrolment, voting services and resources, and to increase awareness and understanding of AEC processes.

For example, during and after the 2023 referendum, we received feedback from stakeholders regarding the voting options for people in hospital. In response, we reviewed our policy and service offering for the 2025 federal election. We consulted with the public sector, consumer and service providers and analysed service delivery options to better understand the health sector and support decision-making. We returned to mobile voting in mid-size hospitals for the 2025 federal election, the first time since the 2019 federal election. For those hospitals that did not have mobile voting, residents had access to postal voting. More details on voting services are in **Chapter 8**.

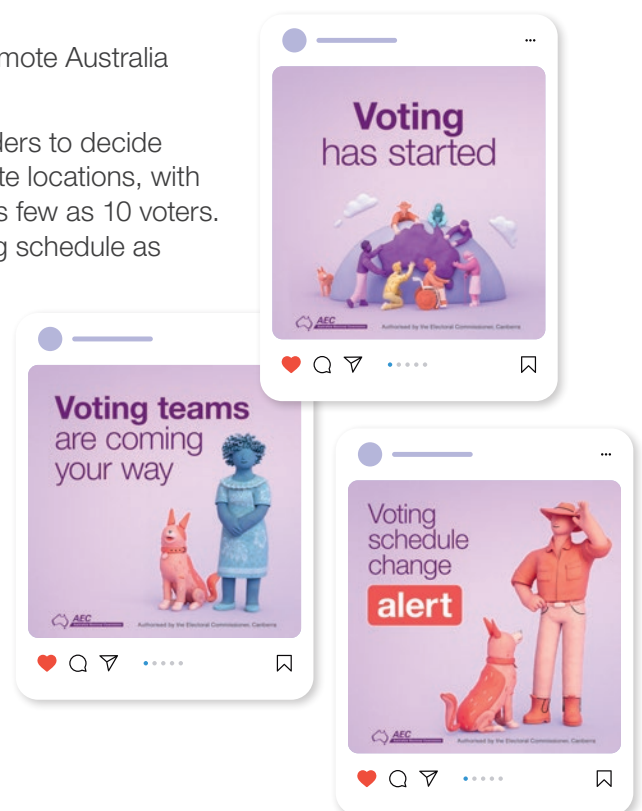
Insights from the election and further engagement will continue to support informed recommendations regarding mobile voting services, as well as staff and voter resources for future events.

Remote voter services

We continued to ensure access to voting services in remote Australia genuinely met the needs of communities.

We consulted with communities and external stakeholders to decide on the most appropriate level of polling service in remote locations, with mobile voting services delivered to communities with as few as 10 voters. We worked directly with communities to align the voting schedule as closely as possible to local needs. We considered known significant community activities, permit requirements, venue locations and weather impacts. We also considered how to best source staff to ensure support was available in language, where required. We worked through community contacts, the AEC's Indigenous Electoral Participation Program network and partners, and with Services Australia, our delivery partner for remote voter services.

We took a multifaceted approach to ensure the widest possible reach of communication. This included advertising (newspapers, radio, television, digital, search and social), media outreach, posters for community noticeboards, SMS messages to voters, social media, and the AEC website.



Greater equity of access for people with disability

We provided accessible information and services to support the participation of voters with disability.

In the lead-up to the election, we continued to engage our Disability Advisory Committee, which comprises representatives whose lived experience helps inform ways to improve the voting experience for people with disability.

We established three working groups to co-design education materials for people with cognitive and intellectual disability, uplift our Auslan resources, and consider polling place accessibility.

We produced new resources in accessible formats:

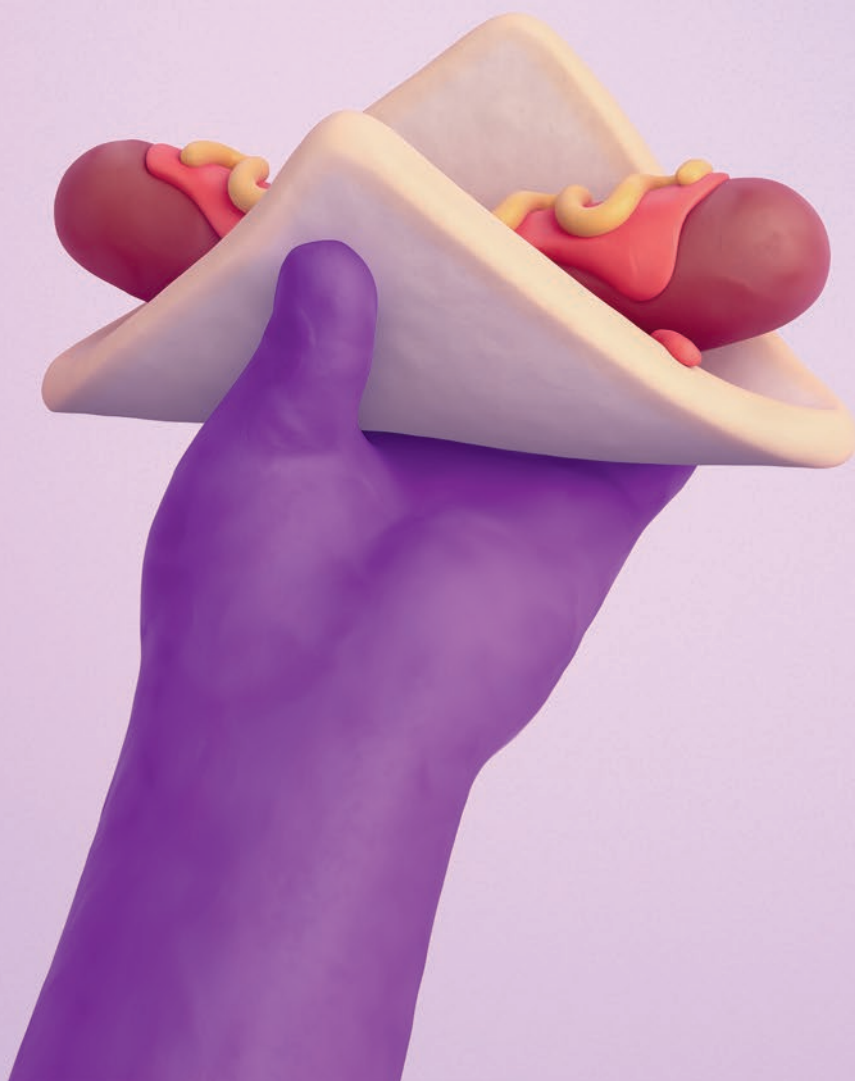
- four videos in Auslan (*Why vote?*, *Enrolling to vote*, *Voting services*, and *How to complete ballot papers*)
- two social stories on voting at a polling place or by mail, in written and video formats
- *My plan for voting* forms, to support people with a cognitive or intellectual disability
- an accessible education portal on the AEC website that provided content to enhance electoral literacy
- a guide to using the 'Where can I vote?' tool on our website, to enable voters to more easily search information about the accessibility of polling places.

Easy read guides, videos with captions, and a 'listen button' on every page of our website were provided to facilitate information access.

We continued to provide assistive technology at polling places including a virtual Auslan interpreter service available at every polling place, and hearing loops and text-to-speech pens at selected polling places in each electorate.



chapter 6
Enrolment



Enrolment and the electoral roll

Subject to some minor exceptions, the Electoral Act provides that a person who is 18 years of age and an Australian citizen is entitled to enrol to vote at a federal election.

While a person may meet these criteria for enrolment, the Electoral Act also provides that they will only be entitled to vote at an election if they are enrolled (or 'on the electoral roll').¹ This means enrolment is critical to electoral participation.

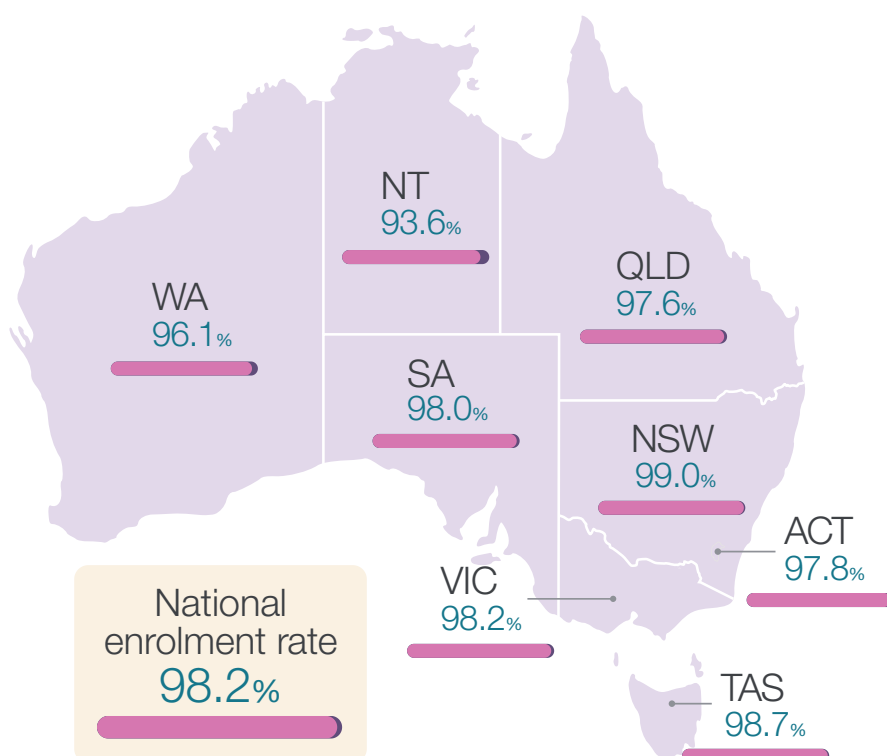
The AEC maintains an electoral roll for each state and territory. This is a comprehensive list of people who are enrolled (called 'electors') for each electoral division within the relevant state or territory. Together, these rolls form a single national electoral roll.


Following the close of rolls for a federal election, and after all applications for enrolment have been processed, we use the roll to produce a certified list of electors. The certified list is used by election staff to confirm that people who attend a polling place to vote, or otherwise cast a vote at the election, are entitled to do so.


Once the writs for the election were issued on 31 March, people had until 8pm on Monday 7 April to apply to enrol or to update their enrolment details.


¹ Once enrolled, a person may still be ineligible to vote at a particular election because they have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three years or more or are only provisionally enrolled and still under 18 years old on election day.


ENROLMENT RATES 2025





 **18,098,797** voters on certified list

 **18,432,193** estimated eligible population

 Youth enrolment rate (eligible Australians aged 18 to 24) **92.0%**

 Estimated Indigenous enrolment rate (as of 30 June 2024) **92.9%**

 **85,769** roll additions during close of rolls period (including **78,796** new enrolments)

 **419,564** roll updates during close of rolls period.

Enrolment rate

Enrolment rate nationally and by state and territory

The enrolment rate is the proportion of the estimated eligible population at a given time that is enrolled to vote.

Based on population data produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, we estimated that 18.4 million Australians were eligible to enrol at the election. With 18,098,797 people on the certified list, the enrolment rate for the 2025 election was 98.2 per cent. This exceeds our national enrolment target of 95 per cent and is the highest national enrolment rate achieved for a federal election to date, meaning the electoral roll was the most complete it has ever been.

The enrolment rate in all states and territories except the Northern Territory also exceeded the national enrolment target.

While below that target, the enrolment rate of 93.6 per cent achieved in the Northern Territory was a significant improvement on the 2023 referendum (91.7 per cent) and 2022 federal election (85.6 per cent). This shows that the enrolment rate in the Territory continues to increase.

Enrolment rate has continued to increase

In large part, the size of the electoral roll depends on the size of the population. In recent years, the estimated eligible population has grown consistently, due predominately to new citizens and young people becoming eligible to enrol. This has led to a commensurate increase in the size of the electoral roll.

However, while it is compulsory for people who are eligible to enrol to do so, changes in the size of the population do not necessarily translate into changes in the enrolment rate. Rather, the enrolment rate is a relative measure of the extent to which eligible people understand their enrolment obligations and are motivated and supported to enrol or maintain their enrolment.

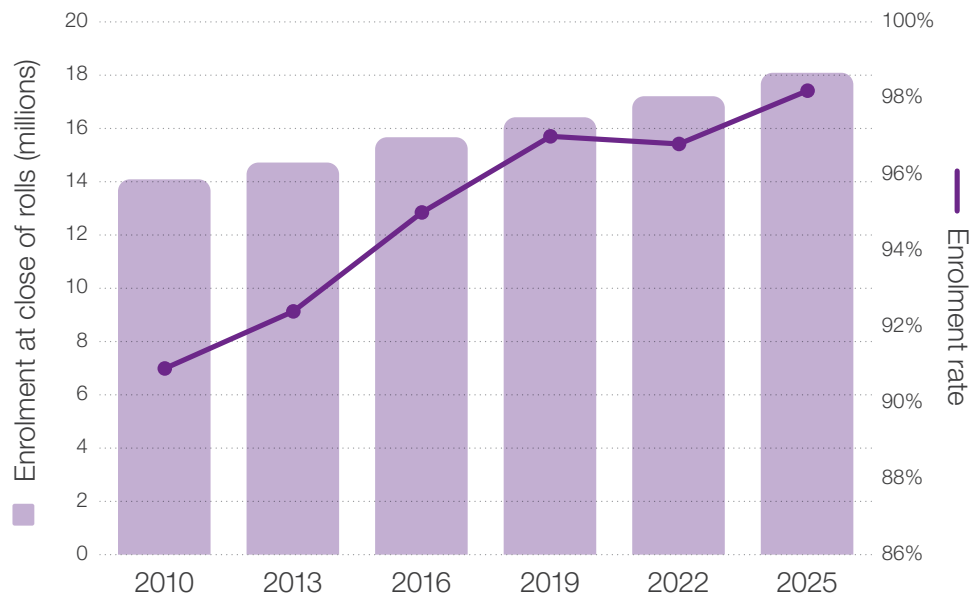
This is clear from a comparison of the enrolment data from the 2025 and 2022 elections, which shows that the growth in enrolment across the last electoral cycle exceeded growth in the size of the eligible population during the same period, resulting in a 1.4 per cent increase in the enrolment rate.

Enrolment rate comparison

Measure	2022 election	2025 election	Change
Estimated eligible population	17,793,140	18,432,193	Up by 639,053 or 3.6%
Enrolled at roll close	17,228,900	18,098,797	Up by 869,897 or 5%
Estimated eligible population not enrolled	564,240	333,396	Down by 230,844 or 41%
National enrolment rate	96.8%	98.2%	Up by 1.4 per cent

As the graph below shows, this growth continues a steady upward trend in the national enrolment rate since the 2010 election, with the roll growing by an average of about 800,000 electors from one election to the next.

Enrolment growth



This positive trend highlights the success of our efforts over the last 15 years to increase electoral participation. During this period, the roll program has incorporated a range of strategies to both prompt newly eligible people to enrol and reduce the number of eligible people not enrolled. These include:

- Updating the roll through the Federal Direct Enrolment and Update (FDEU) program, which uses trusted data from other government agencies to identify people who are not enrolled or need to update their details on the roll. We can apply this information directly to the roll after writing to notify the person of intended enrolment action. This assists Australians to meet their enrolment obligations.
- Attending iconic citizenship ceremonies (and other ceremonies as requested by local councils) and other strategies to actively encourage and support new citizens to enrol. More than 459,000 people (aged 18 years or older) acquired Australian citizenship between the 2022 and 2025 elections.
- Working closely with the eight state and territory electoral commissions to take advantage of state, territory and local government elections to maintain the currency of the roll between federal elections.
- Running public information campaigns (see Chapter 5).

Youth and Indigenous enrolment

Young people are an important focus for new enrolments, with close to 600,000 Australians turning 18 between the 2022 and 2025 elections.

The youth (ages 18 to 24) enrolment rate for the election was 92.0 per cent, which is an increase of 3.9 per cent compared with the 2022 election (88.1 per cent).

Increasing the rate of Indigenous enrolment is also a priority focus of the AEC's enrolment program. As of 30 June 2024,¹ the estimated Indigenous enrolment rate was 92.9 per cent, which is an increase of 13.6 per cent compared with the rate at the time of the 2022 election (79.3 per cent, as of 30 June 2021).

The AEC will continue to focus on increasing youth and Indigenous enrolment rates.

Enrolment services

The AEC provides a range of user-centred enrolment services to support eligible people to enrol and maintain their enrolment.

Between announcement of the election and the close of rolls, almost 400,000 electors used our online **Confirm my enrolment** facility to check their enrolment details. We also received over 450,000 online enrolment applications, which is around 94 per cent of all enrolment applications received during this period.

To supplement online enrolment, paper enrolment applications were also available at AEC offices and could be downloaded from our website. Completed paper enrolment applications could be uploaded to the website, lodged by email or mail or returned in person.

A majority of electors enrolling after the election was announced provided their drivers licence to confirm their identity (71.4 per cent), with passports (14.4 per cent) and Medicare cards (12.4 per cent) being the next two preferred forms of evidence of identity.

Roll integrity

Just as we have maintained our focus on increasing the enrolment rate, we have also continued efforts to strengthen the accuracy, currency and security of the electoral roll.

We have an integrated program of rolling activities designed to ensure that integrity of the electoral roll is maintained and remains in line with legislative requirements. These include:

- the Roll Integrity Assurance System, which comprises 350 controls across five elements – entitlement, accuracy, completeness, correct processing and security
- the FDEU program, which enables the AEC to maintain a more accurate and complete electoral roll at all times, including between federal elections.

Public confidence in the integrity of the roll is further supported by:

- public reporting by the AEC of key indicators of roll integrity, including enrolment rates, processing timelines, and findings from the Annual Roll Integrity Review
- the ability of members of the public and eligible organisations and individuals to access the roll in accordance with legislative provisions
- external scrutiny by bodies such as the Australian National Audit Office and the Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters .

This focus on roll integrity helped ensure public confidence in the roll at this election.

¹ Rate is calculated annually, therefore this rate applied at the time of the 2025 election.

Additional measures during election period

As in previous elections, we had a number of additional measures in place during the election to ensure roll integrity and enfranchisement.

For example, if when going to vote, a voter's name could not be found on the certified list, they were required to complete a declaration envelope to cast their vote. The voter's name and address details as captured on the envelope were checked against the electoral roll (called 'preliminary scrutiny') before their ballot papers were admitted to the count. If, during preliminary scrutiny, we found a voter was incorrectly removed from the roll, their enrolment was reinstated and their ballot papers included in the count.

At the election, around 1,400 voters were reinstated to the roll during preliminary scrutiny. This is roughly half as many as were reinstated at the 2022 election, which evidenced a high level of accuracy and currency in the electoral roll.

We also maintained a 'notebook roll' or list of corrections made to the certified list after the roll closed. Relevant corrections included roll additions (e.g. people who became new citizens after the roll closed) and roll deletions (e.g. people who died between roll close and voting day).

The table below shows the number of notebook roll additions and deletions at the election compared with the 2022 election. It also shows how these corrections, together with reinstatements, resulted in a final enrolment number for the election of 18,091,591, which was 7,206 fewer voters than at the close of rolls on 7 April.

Notebook roll additions and deletions comparison

Measure	2022 election	2025 election
Close of rolls enrolment	17,228,900	18,098,797
Notebook roll additions	360	415
Notebook roll deletions	-18,414	-9,036
Reinstatements during preliminary scrutiny	2,587 (0.02% of roll)	1,415 (0.01% of roll)
Final enrolment	17,213,433	18,091,591

chapter 7

Workforce



Staffing an election

Being able to engage the right people, in the right places and at the right time is critical to our ability to manage the many activities involved in delivering an election that meets the requirements of the Electoral Act and public expectations.

In addition to the roles performed by the AEC's core public service workforce, a large range of temporary roles are required to deliver an election. As illustrated in the figure below, some of these are public facing, while others are not.

Election delivery roles



Polling Place and Early Voting Liaison Officer

Manages up to 5 polling locations, providing support to the Officer in Charge and managing complex issues as they arise.



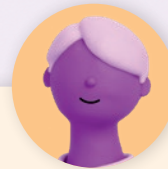
Officer in Charge

Manages a polling location including supervising staff, managing voters and party workers and managing election materials.



Declaration Vote Issuing and Inquiry Officer

Issues declaration votes and assists with voter enquiries in a polling location.



Polling Assistant

Issues votes, manages queues and monitors the ballot boxes in a polling location.



Mobile Polling Team Leader

Manages the delivery of voting services in locations such as residential aged care and mental health facilities, homeless shelters and correctional facilities.



Remote Voter Services Team Leader

Manages the delivery of voting services in remote communities.



Scrutiny Assistant (Return of Materials)

Supports the end-of-day tasks in a polling location and is responsible for returning election material to the counting centre or other locations once polling activities are finalised.



Temporary Assistant

Provides administrative support prior to election day and assists with counting ballot papers and receiving materials on or after election day.

Staffing continues to be one of the most challenging aspects of election delivery. This is the result of a number of factors, including:

- the number of temporary staff required
- the geographic spread of these roles, which extends to regional and remote Australia
- the relatively short duration of these roles, ranging from one day through to several weeks
- the fact that federal election dates are not fixed, meaning we typically have just five weeks to source, engage, onboard and train the majority of staff once an election is announced.

Adding to the challenge of rapidly scaling up and mobilising a workforce in this context, we also need to ensure that staff have the knowledge, training and tools to perform their roles to a high standard in an increasingly complex environment.

2025 election workforce

The workforce that delivered the 2025 election comprised:

- statutory officeholders appointed to specific positions under the Electoral Act, including Australian Electoral Officers and Divisional Returning Officers
- Australian Public Service (APS) employees engaged by, or seconded to the AEC, under the *Public Service Act 1999*
- temporary election workers (TEW) employed under the Electoral Act to perform roles necessary to deliver an election
- staff engaged via labour hire, and independent contractors and consultants to undertake specific duties required to support delivery of the election.

Temporary election workers employed under the Electoral Act represented the largest component of the election workforce, with 84,010 temporary workers engaged across 98,931 positions.

These temporary election workers were broadly split across preparatory activities, early voting, mobile polling (including remote voter services), election day and count positions, as illustrated below.



4,863
AEC APS staff
involved in
event delivery



98,931
TEW positions
filled by **84,010**
employees



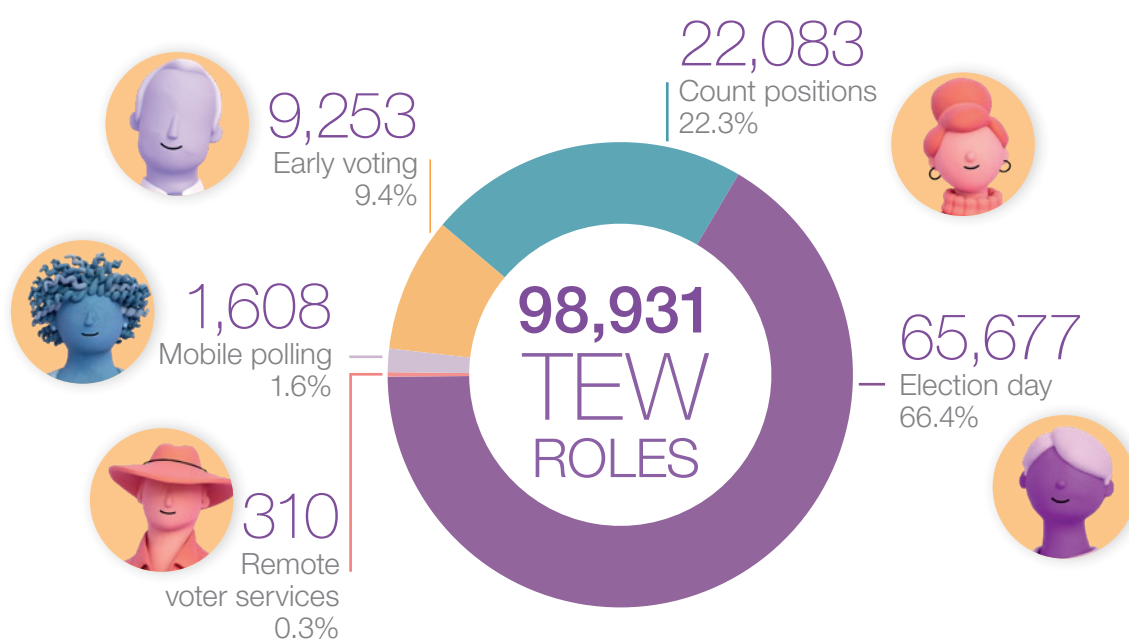
145,000
TEW letters
of offer



51,035
police checks



1,458
labour hire
staff



Composition of the TEW

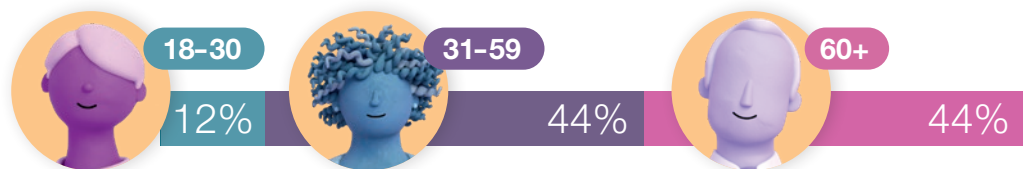
Under the Electoral Act, AEC policy and the terms and conditions of employment set out in the relevant Collective Determination, to be employed as a temporary election worker, a person must be:

- an Australian Citizen
- politically neutral
- at least 18 years old (for any position that involves managing or issuing ballot papers).

This meant it was open to the vast majority of the adult population to put their hand up to join the TEW, and ensured everyday Australians were involved in delivering the election in their communities.

However, as is the case at every federal election, people who met the above requirements and were interested in working at the election also needed to be available to work during the election period, and on the days and hours required based on the election timetable. Depending on the role, this included weekday business hours, weekends and at night. This made it more difficult for some people – such as those with full-time jobs or caring responsibilities – to get involved.

As a result of these availability requirements, those of or above retirement age again comprised the largest cohort of the TEW at this election, with 44 per cent of temporary election workers aged 60 years old or over. By contrast, only 12 per cent of the TEW were aged 30 years old or under.



To ensure the TEW better reflected the diversity within the Australian community and could provide a service that better met the varied needs of the community, we introduced national diversity targets for TEW positions at the election. These were: three per cent for First Nations; 20 per cent bilingual; and above three per cent people with disability.



2,392 positions filled by TEW who identified as **First Nations**



Of the TEW positions filled:

- 2,392 (2.42 per cent) were filled by workers who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 20,165 (20.38 per cent) were filled by bilingual workers (there were also 125 people who spoke an Indigenous language)
- 2,518 (2.55 per cent) were filled by workers with disability.

The AEC has more work to do to achieve all our targets, and this will continue to be a focus for future electoral events.

Training the TEW

In the lead-up to the election, the AEC invested heavily in further refining and developing the training approach and content that would be delivered to TEW employees.

Built on the approach taken at the 2023 referendum, the training requirements for TEW employees were tailored to each role, reflecting that these roles perform distinct functions and carry different levels of responsibility. For the 2025 election, TEW training requirements consisted of:

- A mandatory suite of online training modules, which covers topics such as political and issue neutrality, security, disinformation, health and wellbeing, and inclusive and respectful service to voters.
- One or more of 39 role-specific training programs, which use a learning approach that mixed online, face-to-face instructor-led training and/or briefings, and training videos.
- The election procedures handbook, which is the primary reference document for all polling officials.

This approach enabled us to deliver quality, targeted training to TEW employees in the short period available to engage and prepare them to succeed in their roles once the election was announced.

We achieved an overall TEW training compliance rate of 99 per cent for the election.

TEW challenges

The TEW model enables the AEC to deliver federal elections that meet the requirements of the Electoral Act and public expectations with just a few weeks' notice of the election date. It also allows Australians to be involved in delivering democracy in their local community.

Yet, despite the strengths of the TEW model, securing the workforce required to fill all positions, and ensuring they have the training they need, remain key challenges. There are a number of reasons for this:

- The pool of available workers in rural and remote areas is often small, and distance can make it more difficult to replace a staff member with someone from the next closest town.



- The drop-out rate among people who register their interest in and are offered temporary election work is relatively high. At the election, 30 per cent of people who were offered work either declined the offer or, if they did accept, dropped out in advance or failed to turn up on the day. In some divisions, this figure was over 40 per cent. Put another way, we sent over 145,000 letters of offer to fill the 98,931 positions required.
- As discussed above, it is more difficult to attract younger and working-age people to temporary election work.

We continue to work on addressing these challenges by identifying new ways to attract people to temporary election roles, including the next generation of election workers. At the 2025 election, this involved expanding community outreach efforts, introducing new engagement channels, and actively reaching out to under-represented groups.

Launch of new employment systems

Given the scale of the workforce required, and the limited time available to identify, engage, onboard and train temporary workers once an election is announced, we have for some years used a registration of interest process to source applicants for temporary election work.

Previously, this has involved:

- maintaining a centralised employment register on an ongoing basis, which allowed individuals to express interest in temporary election work at any time, including between electoral events
- reviewing registrations in the lead-up to and during election periods to identify suitable applicants
- engaging with applicants via phone, email and post to offer employment and coordinate training, rostering and other employment arrangements
- manually recording attendance into an independent payroll system for processing.

To improve workforce management ahead of the 2025 election, as part of the Indigo Program, we launched a new employment system in June 2024, AEC EmployMe. Designed to be more modern, mobile-friendly and easily accessible, the new system streamlined the recruitment and onboarding of temporary election workers. It also provided the AEC with improved oversight of workforce planning, including real-time visibility of vacancies, training completion and overall progress towards election staffing targets.

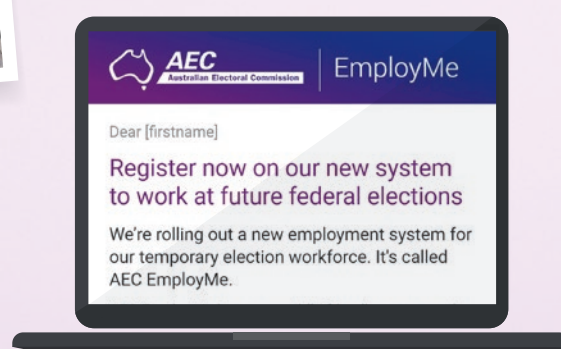
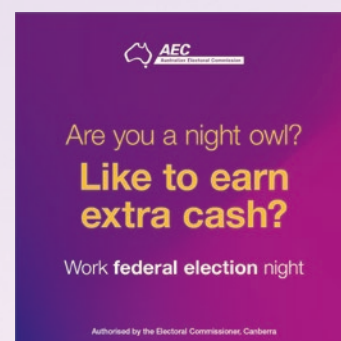
At the same time, through the Indigo Program we also rolled out a new temporary employee payroll system, called AEC Pay4TEW.

We were unable to transfer the existing 350,254 registrations of interest into AEC EmployMe due to several factors, including privacy and data security considerations. As a result, all individuals previously registered were required to re-register in the new system to be considered for work.

To meet staffing needs for the election, we projected we would need at least 200,000 registrations of interest. With no certainty of having more than a few months to recruit, the need to rapidly build a new pool of registrations became a priority.



The AEC typically has just **5 weeks** to onboard and train staff



Given this, we commenced an intensive campaign to encourage previous temporary election workers or applicants to re-register in AEC EmployMe. This campaign involved us sending 216,561 SMS messages and 611,590 emails, and making 384,458 phone calls. The campaign resulted an initial 130,000 registrations of interest being submitted by November 2024.

Following this re-registration campaign, we enacted a broader public communications strategy to generate interest beyond the pool of previous workers and applicants. This included:

- **four phases of paid advertising**, including on social media, Google search, radio, video, Spotify (for the first time), display advertising, and advertising on job platforms Seek and Indeed
- **community outreach** to more than 5,000 local organisations (or local branches of larger organisations) to seek their help to promote temporary election employment opportunities within their communities.

By 31 March 2025, AEC EmployMe had received approximately 200,000 registrations of interest.

After the election was announced on 28 March 2025, our communications strategy pivoted to a range of more targeted activities that continued up to election day. These included:

- **paid media placements** targeting hard-to-fill locations in rural, regional and remote areas
- pitching up-to-date vacancies to **local journalists**



216,561 SMS



611,590 emails



384,458 calls

- **public relations activities**, including engagement with large private companies with a regional footprint to seek assistance to promote opportunities to their local staff.

By election day, there were over 245,000 registrations of interest in AEC EmployMe, meaning we were in a strong position to fill the positions required to deliver the election.

Following election day, the new systems enabled us to approve timesheets and process payments for TEW employees within five days. Under previous arrangements, payments could take up to 10 days, and the completion of all TEW payments often extended well beyond the immediate post-election period.

Importance of contingency workforce

Despite the significant work the AEC has done to address the challenges of the TEW model discussed above, we also needed to prepare for the risk that we would not be able to fill all critical positions with local temporary election workers.

Given this, ahead of the 2025 election, we worked on maturing our approach to contingency workforce arrangements. Having a contingency workforce trained and available to be deployed at short notice to any part of the country was critical to our ability to ensure we could deliver all planned voting services.

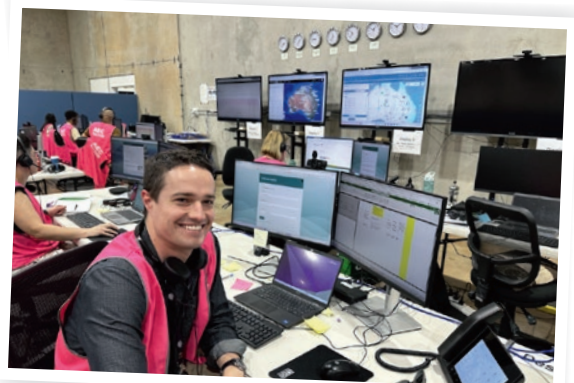
In particular, the AEC worked to further develop and embed two of our central contingency workforce programs:

- **The APS Seconded program** – piloted for the 2023 referendum, this program trains public servants from other Australian Government agencies and state and territory electoral commissions to take on temporary election roles that require particular capabilities and specialist training
- **The Travelling TEW program** – a cohort of eligible and trained TEW staff who are willing to travel and be available for deployment to work in regional or remote polling places or with teams at risk of not being able to operate due to vacancies in critical roles.

Through these programs, we engaged 177 contingency staff at the election. These included:

- 124 employees engaged through the Travelling TEW program – these employees were deployed to 25 locations across all states, many to perform critical Officer in Charge or Second in Charge roles
- 53 public servants engaged through the APS Seconded program – of these, 36 staff were deployed to fill Remote Voter Services Team Leader positions and last-minute vacancies at early voting centres and on election day.

In addition, we called on 64 staff from our own internal contingency pool, which sees experienced permanent staff from areas of the AEC not directly involved in election operations being deployed to support key functions in the states and territories.



chapter 8

Property, equipment and partnerships



Bringing it all together

Conducting an election is a massive logistical effort that relies on more than just people. The places and materials we use, the technology that supports the voting and counting process, and our service delivery partners all play a critical role in the smooth delivery of an election.

Out-posted centres

Out-posted centres (OPCs), also referred to as counting centres, are the primary processing point for all electoral material and supplies in the lead-up to and throughout the election. They provide critical short-term warehouse and office accommodation to ensure we can deliver elections safely, securely and efficiently within legislative requirements.



to support this election, we leased **62** OPCs nationally



the AEC's footprint stretched **265,345 m²** across all sites, with buildings ranging from **1,000** to **10,000 m²**



Weather considerations

In early March 2025, Queensland was impacted by flooding caused by ex-tropical cyclone Alfred, which affected staff and premises in Townsville, Mackay and Cairns.

Persistent wet weather and warm humid conditions in some parts of the country meant dealing with mould and its remediation within OPCs was an ongoing activity. We used highly qualified experts and careful management of workplace health and safety and operational requirements to ensure all affected OPCs experienced no impact to event delivery, while maintaining a safe working environment for all staff.

New South Wales was also impacted by flooding during the election, with the OPC in Taree closed during the vote counting process and ballot papers securely transported to Sydney so counting processes could be completed.



Voting locations

While potential voting locations are identified and assessed throughout the electoral cycle, the AEC cannot secure these locations until an election date is known.

There are a range of considerations when assessing the suitability of a voting location, with a focus on the size and accessibility of a location, along with the availability of parking, entrances and more.

As noted in **Chapter 5**, the AEC continues to prioritise and focus on improving access for voters, and a review of polling place accessibility saw an increase in premises rated as either fully or assisted wheelchair accessible from 84.7 per cent at the 2023 referendum to 91.2 per cent at this election.



6,988 premises hired for voting
(including premises for polling places on election day and for early voting centres)

Election materials and equipment

A large amount of cardboard equipment and materials are required to deliver an election. This also means a significant supply chain exercise with fixed deadlines that requires careful planning and preparation. To facilitate all forms of voting across the country and overseas, we produced 56.6 million ballot papers using 357 tonnes of paper. In addition, more than 2.3 million individual stationery items were dispatched.



240,000 vests



90,000 transport containers



471,450 pieces of cardboard for polling place equipment



350,000 pencils with string for securing pencils to the voting screen



5,000 rolls of tamper-proof tape



10,050 cardboard tables used in polling places.



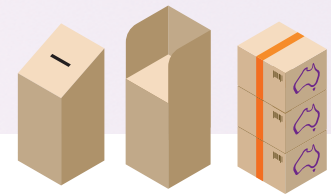
40,000 transport routes



80,000 ballot boxes



1.4 million security seals



Ballot paper printing

The AEC commenced printing ballot papers on Friday 11 April, just hours after the declaration of nominations, with the last ballot paper proof sent to the printers at 12.10am on Saturday 12 April. We used nine print sites across New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland to print ballot papers. A number of these sites, along with an additional site in the Australian Capital Territory printed copies of the electoral roll (called reference rolls and certified lists).



4.8 million bulk print items across **200** individual products



28,000 certified lists printed and dispatched across the country in under **10** days



3,000 reference rolls printed and dispatched across **150** electoral divisions in **3** days



▶ Watch our video to learn more about ballot paper printing and dispatch



Reduce, re-use, recycle

The AEC reduced the amount of paper and cardboard waste generated for the election by introducing more sophisticated forecasting of material requirements and offering polling places a ‘cardboard retention payment’ to reduce the impact of additional freight and to encourage the reuse of our cardboard products.

The national OPC decommissioning approach supported a re-use strategy with stock from each state moved to a central location to be refurbished and readied for the next electoral event. This strategy also supported the donation of products that cannot be stored long-term to 60 registered charities for the benefit of local communities, along with other organisations, including state electoral commissions.

We continue to proactively look at the lifecycle management of all products and investigate options to reduce waste.

Expanded use of electronic certified lists

An electronic certified list (ECL) is the modern alternative to the traditional paper certified list. Polling officials use the ECLs to efficiently search the list of eligible voters, print the correct House of Representatives ballot paper on demand, and record that an elector has been issued their ballot papers.

The AEC significantly expanded the number of ECLs as part of the government funded *Polling Place Technology* project – deploying 12,300 ECLs along with 10,300 printers – more than double the number deployed in 2022.

ECLs were used at all issuing points in:

- early voting centres
- remote voter service delivery teams
- mobile polling teams
- interstate voting centres on election day
- multi-division polling places in capital city central business districts on election day.



For the first time, ECLs were used on election day at:

- all declaration vote issuing points in polling places in New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia
- all issuing points in polling places in the Tasmanian divisions of Clark and Franklin.

ECLs also provide near real-time visibility and monitoring of voting queues and assist in preventing multiple voting. ECLs were reused post-election day for the preliminary scrutiny of absent and pre-poll declaration votes (see Chapter 10).

Benefits

The expanded use of ECLs realised many benefits including faster and more accurate issuing of votes.

The ECLs were used on election day in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia following the redistribution of electoral boundaries, which can lead to an increase in declaration votes as some electors are less likely to know which electoral division they are enrolled in. Using the ECLs in these states contributed to significantly reducing the number of declaration votes issued by 20 per cent from 494,829 in 2022 to 397,827 in 2025. The rate of incorrect ballot paper issuing in these states also dropped to less than one in 200 (compared with one in 12 in 2022 when ECLs weren't used at declaration vote issuing points).

We will use observations, benefits analysis and evaluation to determine the future footprint and further development of polling place technology.

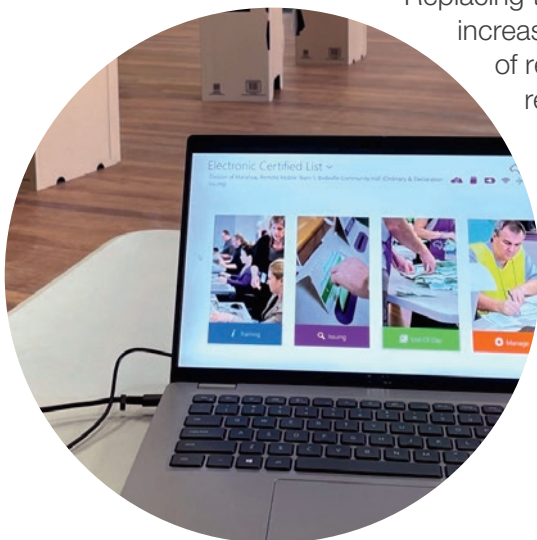
Digital Officer in Charge return

A new digital Officer in Charge (OIC) return was trialled using an additional 900 laptops at:

- all early voting centres
- all interstate voting centres on election day
- multi-division polling places in capital city central business districts on election day
- all polling places on election day in Tasmania.

Replacing the traditional paper OIC return, the bespoke software increased the efficiency, consistency, accuracy and completeness of required OIC activities. It also improved ballot paper reconciliation and access to information and guidance documentation.

On election night, as part of the trial, all polling places in Tasmania were able to electronically submit the House of Representatives and Senate results directly into the AEC election management system, bypassing the need to make multiple calls to an AEC office to relay the results.



Service delivery partners

To deliver the 2025 election, we partnered with many Australian Government agencies, as well as state, territory and local government jurisdictions and external suppliers to deliver secure and accessible voting options and other services across Australia and overseas.

Services Australia

Services Australia partnered with the AEC to deliver:

- Contact Centre services, including telephone, email and mail house services
- electronically assisted voting services by telephone for blind and low vision voters and voters working in Antarctica
- remote voting services.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade provided both premises and staff to facilitate in-person voting and postal vote collection services for Australians overseas. The AEC used the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade diplomatic mail service to distribute and return ballot and non-ballot material to and from all posts.

DHL

Due to the changes in postal services and transit times, we contracted DHL to help ensure voters living overseas received their postal vote packs within the legislated timeframe. Over 46,000 postal vote packs were delivered to overseas voters at this election.

Dell Technologies

Dell Technologies supported the expanded rollout of ECLs and the trial of digital OIC return by providing 13,200 laptops and 10,300 printers.

FUJIFILM Data Management Solutions

FUJIFILM Data Management Solutions supported the AEC to deliver the Senate ballot scanning solution at a location in each state and territory (see Chapter 10).

FUJIFILM also provided services for the scanning and reconciliation of paper certified lists used nationally at polling places on election day. This data, along with voter data from the ECLs and postal votes, is used for multi- and non-voter compliance activities (see Chapter 11).

Deakin University

Since 2017, the AEC has partnered with Deakin University's Institute for Intelligent Systems Research and Innovation to implement a metrics data collection program, along with data modelling and analysis. The metrics program collects data on a range of election activities including polling and counting processes. These metrics provide an evidence base that informs improvements to the voter and staff experience for future electoral events.



Property and logistics service providers

Property service providers are critical external stakeholders that facilitate the leasing, facilities management, commissioning and decommissioning of all out-posted centres. With the execution of the new Whole of Australian Government Property Services Provider (PSP) contract in December 2024, the AEC had to change property service providers between February and April 2025 – the crucial commissioning timeframe for OPCs. Through a highly collaborative effort between the AEC and the two new property service providers, a smooth transition occurred resulting in no loss of service delivery to the network prior to, during and post-election.

Our logistics provider, Team Global Express, moved more than 24,500 items or parcels and over 11,400 pallets of materials weighing more than 5,300 tonnes around the country in the lead-up to and during the election.

Computershare

Computershare manages the scanning of paper postal vote applications and the production and lodgement of postal vote packs. While the majority of postal vote applications are lodged by voters online via the AEC's website, a total of 435,088 paper applications were scanned and processed by Computershare across Australia. Additionally, more than 2.5 million postal vote packs were printed and sent to voters from Computershare sites in Sydney and Melbourne.

Australia Post

Australia Post managed the delivery of over 2.5 million postal vote packs, along with the return by voters of over 2.2 million postal vote certificates to the AEC.

Australia Post was also a critical partner in the distribution of the official guide to the 2025 federal election, which was distributed to more than 11.8 million households nationally.

Information and communications technology service providers

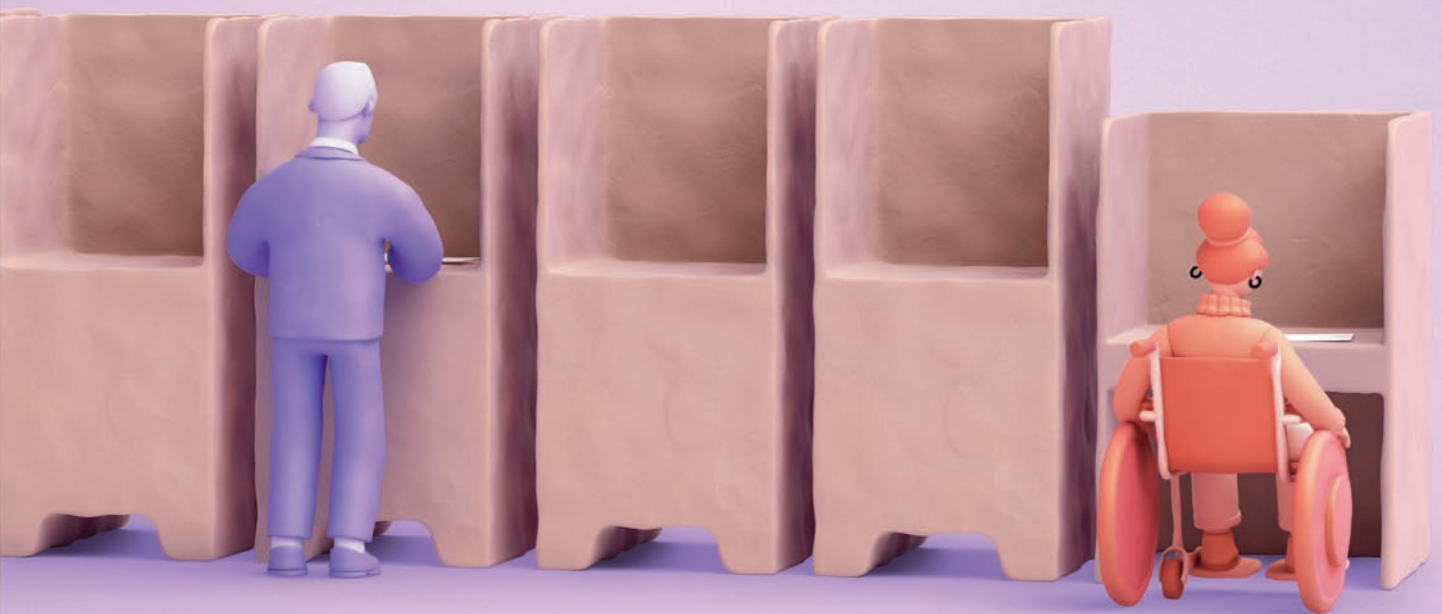
Ensuring our ICT systems are stable and secure and able to perform at scale is a critical part of election delivery and the agency works closely with a number of key partners in the plan, mobilise and deliver phases of the Election Ready Road Map to ensure our systems are event ready.

Throughout the lead-up to an election, we conduct quarterly Product Verification Tests to test the resilience of both our systems and people and exercise our disaster recovery plans. We then establish event plans with each of our key ICT partners to ensure we have appropriate heightened support arrangements in place for the entire writ-to-writ period.

Working in close partnership with Microsoft, AWS, NRI, Hitachi, Red Hat, CDC, DXC, ServiceNow, Switch Connect, Optus, Telstra, Versant, Accenture and Panotek, we were able to deliver an event with high-quality IT services.

chapter 9

Voting



Voters

Voting is compulsory at federal elections and eligible Australians have access to a range of voting options so they can meet their citizen obligations. Throughout the voting period, 16.4 million Australians had their say using one of a number of voting services that suit their individual needs and circumstances.

The percentage of voters choosing to vote before election day has been steadily increasing over the last 15 years. It grew again this election with more than 9 million votes (approximately 56 per cent) were cast at early voting centres, with a mobile polling or remote voting team or by post (up from just over 51 per cent in 2022).



6.84 million people voted in person at **578** early voting locations



2.16 million people voted by post



7.24 million people voted at **6,630** polling locations on election day

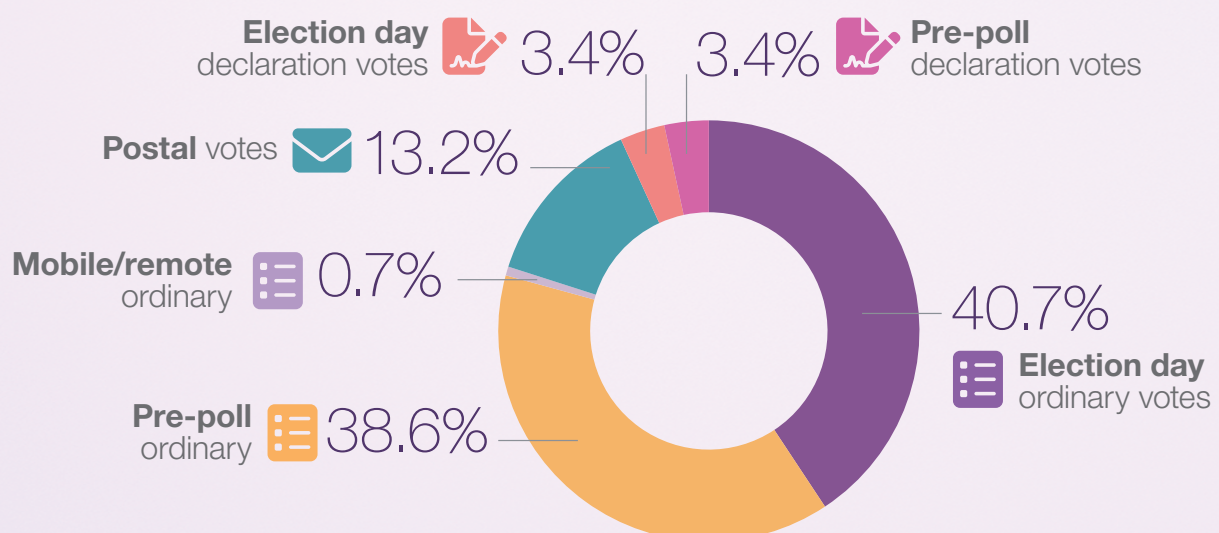


27,459 votes issued by **77** remote voting teams visiting **469** locations



130,000 votes issued by **598** mobile voting teams visiting **2,700** locations

Votes counted by **voting option**



Early voting

Voters are entitled to vote early in person or by post if they meet a set of eligibility requirements as described by the Electoral Act. Amendments to the Electoral Act in February 2025 expanded the eligibility requirements to include people with disability and their carers, along with women who have recently given birth and those expecting shortly.

In the lead-up to and during the election, communication was sent from the Electoral Commissioner to over 1,000 disability sector organisations nationally to inform them of the legislation changes, our accessible service offering, and the suite of accessible resources available for the federal election.



Early voting centres

Early voting centres are typically open in the two weeks prior to election day. At this election, the timing of two national public holidays condensed the early voting period, along with school holidays in some states, resulting in busier than usual days. The final day of operation, Friday 2 May, was our busiest day ever at early voting centres with 1,098,820 votes issued (1,000,962 ordinary and 97,858 declaration), comprising 16.1 per cent of all votes issued for the entire period.

In-person voting at early voting centres continues to rise with approximately 6.88 million votes issued this election, an increase of nearly 22 per cent from 2022 (5.63 million).



6.32 million ordinary votes were issued in early voting centres, an increase of almost **25%** from 2022 (5.07 million)



516,212 declaration votes were issued, a decrease of approximately **8%** from 2022 (563,208 declaration votes)



In-person early voting accounted for almost **42%** of the total votes issued at this election



578 early voting locations, an increase of **38** locations from 2022



Average number of voters per early voting centre was **11,842**



Postal voting


Voters unable to get to a polling place to vote on election day can apply for a postal vote. From Friday 28 March 2025, voters could apply online via the AEC website or they could submit a paper postal vote application (PVA) form. Voters registered with the AEC as general postal voters automatically received their ballot papers via the mail. Amendments to postal vote eligibility criteria in the Electoral Act had a positive effect with 14.5 per cent of postal voters being voters with disability and their carers.


Under the Electoral Act, political parties, candidates and other third parties are permitted to encourage eligible voters to apply for a postal vote. This includes distribution and collection of PVA forms. We received 316,117 paper PVAs from third parties – making up 72 per cent of all paper applications. We also observed a rise in voters navigating to the AEC's online PVA form, from third party websites. During the election, we warned voters about using unsolicited PVA forms from third parties noting concerns about privacy and timeliness of PVAs being returned to us for processing, and reminded voters that the best way to apply for a postal vote is directly to the AEC.

The AEC's service provider Computershare began production of postal vote packs on Saturday 12 April 2025. The postal vote packs were delivered from Monday 14 April 2025 to voters across the country by Australia Post or by a DHL international courier if overseas. The legislated cutoff for applying for a postal vote was 6pm on Wednesday 30 April 2025, and all postal vote packs dispatched in the final week before election day were sent via Express Post.


Electors voting by post had to have their ballot papers completed and signed by 6pm on election day and, as required by the Electoral Act, the AEC waited up to 13 days after election day to receive completed postal votes.




 AEC received **435,088** paper postal vote applications


 **2,561,475** postal votes were issued (**2.71 million** issued in 2022)

Of the total postal votes issued:

 **65%** were online postal vote applications

 **17%** were paper postal vote applications

 **18%** were general postal voters


 **2,234,834** postal votes were returned (**87%** return rate)

Overseas voting

Working with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, we provided in-person and postal voting services to Australians living, working or travelling overseas.


Eligible Australians overseas at the time of the election were able to vote in-person at one of 111 overseas posts in 81 countries in the two weeks prior to election day. This is the largest overseas voting footprint in the AEC's history. These locations also acted as a postal vote collection centre. The diplomatic mail service was used, via an international courier, to safely and securely return votes collected at overseas posts to the AEC in Australia.

Information on how to vote from overseas was available on the AEC website, and overseas posts shared information through the Smarttraveller website and their social media channels.

 in-person voting available at **111** Australian diplomatic posts in **81 countries**

 **62,862** in-person votes issued

 **26,015** postal votes received from overseas


 the largest post was London, issuing **13,118** in-person votes and receiving **2,629** postal votes

Telephone voting

Telephone voting, also referred to as electronic assisted voting in the Electoral Act, is a voting service for voters who are blind or have low vision and for electors working in Antarctica.

We partner with Services Australia to provide this voting service, which follows a simple two-step process where the voter calls to register to vote first and then calls again to cast their vote using a secure pin to ensure secrecy of the vote. The completed ballot papers are placed in an envelope marked with the voter's division and placed in a sealed ballot box.

We work closely with our Disability Advisory Committee and other disability representative organisations to inform the service we provide.

 **2,327** voters who are blind or have low vision cast their vote using this service

 **57** voters working in Antarctica cast their vote using this service



Mobile voting (other than remote)

AEC mobile voting teams provide an accessible in-person voting service to voters in locations who face barriers to being able to vote at a polling place. In the 12 days before election day, mobile voting teams visited hospitals, residential aged care, mental health in-patient services, people living in residential facilities for people with disability, correctional facilities and homeless services.

We review mobile voting services after each electoral event with a focus on increasing electoral participation and equity of access to in-person voting services for all eligible Australians. For example:

- We expanded our service to include visits to non-remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, non-remote discrete Indigenous communities and mental health hospitals and in-patient units for the first time
- With the support of state and territory departments of corrections, we significantly expanded to provide mobile voting services in 82 prisons (49 prisons at the 2023 referendum and five prisons at the 2022 federal election)
- We trialled mobile voting at mid-size hospitals (200–500 beds), and the outcomes from this trial will inform the voting service offered to hospitals at future electoral events.

In the lead-up to the election, we provided additional support through mobile voting support cells. The support cells offered an enrolment service to over 3,500 establishments to support voters to have their enrolment details up to date. Where an establishment was ineligible or declined a mobile voting service, the support cells provided voting options information to over 1,500 establishments.

598 mobile voting teams visited **2,762** voting locations issuing **130,900** votes
90,298 ordinary votes and **40,602** declaration votes were issued

65 hospitals were visited by **26** mobile voting teams issuing **17,796** votes

134 mental health services were visited by **17** mobile voting teams issuing **4,102** votes

82 correctional facilities visited by **79** mobile voting teams issuing **9,729** votes

Mobile voting locations by state and type

State	Residential aged care	Mental health in-patient services	Correctional facilities	Hospitals	Others ¹	Total
NSW	671	52	27	16	18	784
VIC	650	16	13	13	43	735
QLD	431	24	14	14	29	512
WA	219	18	12	9	9	267
SA	246	18	8	4	22	298
TAS	65	9	3	3	4	84
ACT	22	2	1	1	1	27
NT	6	1	4	5	39	55
Total	2,310	140	82	65	165	2,762

¹ includes Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, specialist homelessness service organisations, residential care for disability, discrete non-remote Indigenous communities and other providers.

Remote voting services


The delivery of remote voting services is challenging and complex but is a critical part of the voting service the AEC provides at elections. Remote voting teams visit communities classified as being in remote or very remote Australia based on their distance to major population centres and services. This service is offered to communities with as few as 10 people on the electoral roll, who were more than 20 kilometres from a polling place.


Remote voting services commenced on 21 April 2025, 12 days before election day and were managed closely by our Remote Operations Centre based in Canberra. The centre was responsible for safety monitoring, operational compliance and a helpdesk function to ensure the delivery of remote operations runs smoothly.


This election, remote voting was impacted by the timing of national public holidays, changes in community advice, unexpected weather events, safety incidents and premises availability. There were 112 schedule changes and, despite our best efforts, eight locations were not visited by a remote voting team due to circumstances outside our control. During the delivery of remote voting services, a small number of administrative errors occurred, which resulted in incorrect ballot papers being issued to some voters. When these errors were identified, they were investigated immediately and rectified where possible. We continue to focus on refining our training and procedures to ensure that we deliver high-quality services and reduce errors.


We employed Local Assistants who assist the remote voting teams. Local Assistants are people within the community who are employed by us to assist voters inside the polling place, and they play an important role in supporting voters to access AEC services.




 **300** people made up the **77** remote voting teams in operation

 **2,099** hours of polling conducted in communities

 **111** Local Assistants employed

 voting services were delivered in **469 locations**, taking **27,459** votes across **13** electoral divisions in **6** states and the Northern Territory

 **4WDs, helicopters, small planes and ferries** were used to travel more than **162,000 km** during the voting period





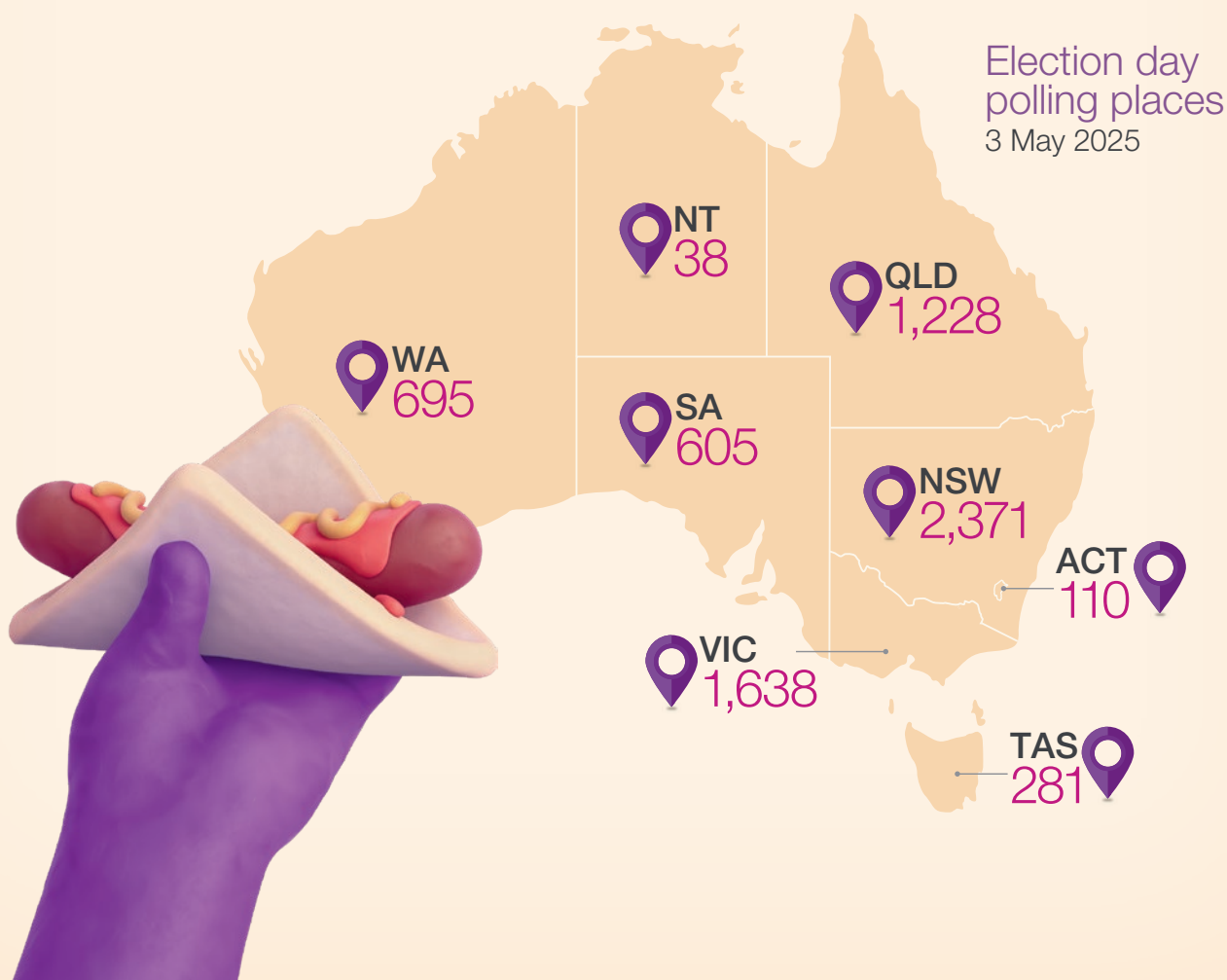
Election day

On election day, the AEC operated **6,966 polling places** from 8am to 6pm local time. A total of **6,678,692 ordinary votes were issued** (40.7 per cent of all votes counted), a decrease from 6,979,162 (45.1 per cent of all votes counted) in 2022.

At this election there were several sporting and community events happening on election day.

Events included 'Magic Round' NRL fixtures in Brisbane, interstate AFL matches in Victoria and Western Australia, and community events across the country including Agfest (Tasmania), the Boyne Tannum Hookup (Queensland), the Central Coast Show (New South Wales) and the Adelaide Equestrian Festival (South Australia).

The AEC contacted event organisers, the NRL and AFL, individual sporting teams, and ticketing providers to collaborate on communication activity to raise awareness of pre-voting and interstate voting options. Activity included providing each with emails and social media posts for their online audiences as well as, in the case of Magic Round in Brisbane, the distribution of flyers that were strategically placed in hotels throughout Brisbane. This approach enabled the AEC to reach a wider audience, ensuring that Australians attending events on election weekend were aware of early voting and election day voting options.





Interstate voting

There are a range of services available to interstate voters throughout the voting period.

Interstate voters away from home on election day have the option of voting in advance at an early voting centre or by post. They also have the option of voting at an interstate voting centre (IVC) on election day.

 **186** IVCs nationally were open on election day

 **56,633** votes¹ were issued by IVCs nationally on election day

¹ IVCs can also issue votes for divisions within the state where they are located (referred to as intrastate votes). This is the total interstate and intrastate votes issued by IVCs.

Finding voting information

The primary source of voting information in the lead-up to and during the voting period is the 'Where can I vote?' tool on the AEC website.

For this election, we also released a new mobile voting search function that provided information to voters and their family and friends on the locations AEC mobile and remote voting teams were visiting, along with the date and time voting would take place at that location.

Our voting information was widely used, for example:

- the 'Where can I vote?' tool was viewed over 10.9 million times, by more than 6.8 million individuals
- there were 373,000 views of the mobile voting page, including 323,000 active users of the mobile voting search function
- on the first day of pre-poll voting, the AEC website had 640,275 unique visitors with 82.4 per cent of visitors accessing the 'Where can I vote?' tool
- on election day, the AEC website peaked with 1.95 million unique visitors, with the 'Where can I vote?' tool having 1.1 million unique visitors.



chapter 10

Counting the votes





Counting

The counting of votes is known as the scrutiny, and it is observed by scrutineers appointed in writing by the candidates. Counting votes is an extensive logistical process for the AEC, with significant stakeholder and public expectations for us to determine a result as quickly as possible. We balance these expectations with the need to ensure the count is conducted transparently and with care to produce accurate, high-quality results.

Counting on election night

Counting began in polling places across all states and territories after polling closed at 6pm local time on election day. A majority of the votes counted on election night are ordinary votes where the elector is marked off a certified list and places their ballot paper directly into a ballot box.

The initial count of ordinary votes on election night is conducted in polling places by polling place staff. The Officer in Charge of each polling place then phones through the results for their polling place to the relevant AEC divisional office, so they can be entered into our election management system.

Postal and pre-poll vote count

The Electoral Act allows for the early extraction of ballot papers from postal vote envelopes from the Monday prior to election day. By 6pm on 3 May 2025, more than 1.2 million postal votes had been extracted from postal vote envelopes and secured in sealed ballot boxes ready for counting.

AEC staff could also open pre-poll ballot boxes after 4pm on election day in the presence of candidate-appointed scrutineers to unfold and sort ballot papers, ahead of counting commencing from 6pm.

The counting of these postal and pre-poll votes on election night is conducted in OPCs across the country, led by permanent AEC staff and thousands of temporary election workers.

Counting and declaration vote scrutiny processes then continue in OPCs until the results in all House of Representative contests have been determined.

Over **19 million** ballot papers were counted on election night



6.2 million
Senate ballot papers



12.8 million House of
Representatives ballot papers



6.6 million
ordinary polling
place votes



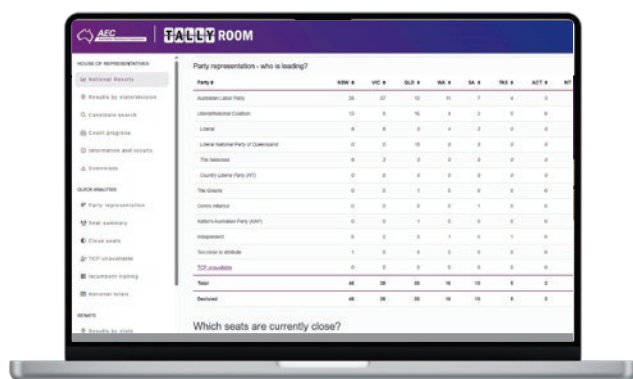
5.7 million
ordinary
pre-poll votes



16,300
mobile voting
votes



419,000
postal votes



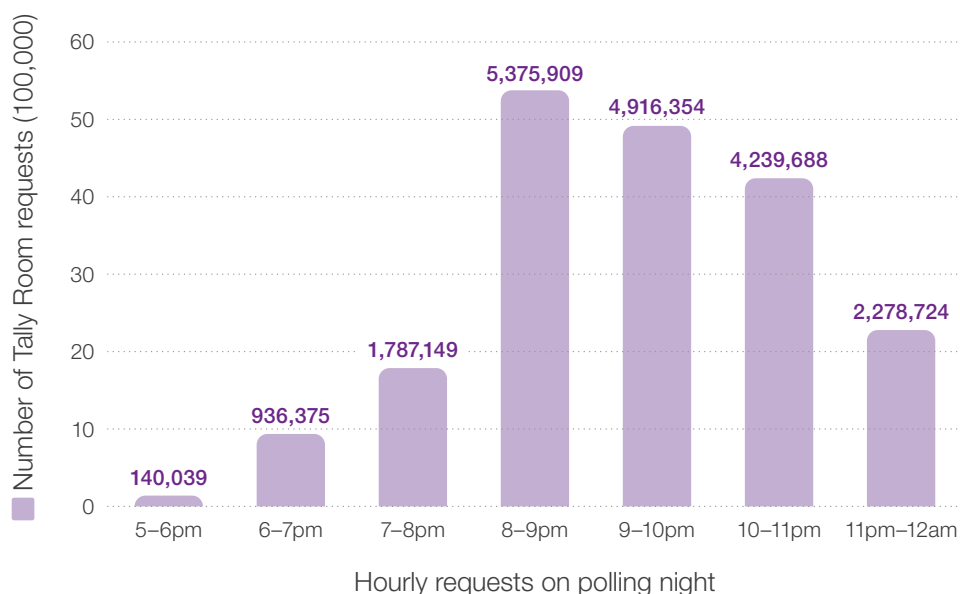
On election night, the AEC Tally Room received **19,762,363** requests

AEC Tally Room

The official election results are published to the AEC Tally Room website in real time as votes are counted across the country.

On election night, the AEC Tally Room received 19,762,363 requests for updates on the count, which peaked with 5,375,909 requests between 8pm and 9pm (AEST). The election results were also shared in real time to participating media organisations via the AEC's media feed.

Tally Room web traffic



The count results for over 400,000 postal votes and more than 5.4 million pre-poll votes were available on the AEC Tally Room on election night. This was the first time on an election night the AEC published the results of postal counts on the AEC Tally Room, which helped to provide an early indication of the likely overall election result.

The more than 19 million ballot papers counted on election night represents the highest ever number of ballot papers counted by the AEC on a single night.

Digital transmission of results in Tasmania on election night

The trial of the digital Officer in Charge return at all polling places in Tasmania on election day allowed for the digital transmission of results directly into the AEC election results system for the first time. Instead of phoning through the results to the divisional office, 257 polling places transmitted some or all of their results electronically, resulting in earlier and more accurate reporting on the AEC Tally Room.

Scrutineers



Scrutineers play a critical role in observing the election process on behalf of a candidate and upholding the transparency of the election process and the result. Candidates are not permitted to take part in the actual conduct of an election.

Each scrutineer must be appointed in writing by a candidate and may act as a scrutineer during the polling and the scrutiny. Different people may be appointed for each process.

Scrutineers have the right to observe all stages of the scrutiny and can challenge the formality of ballot papers, but they cannot touch any ballot paper. Scrutineers must also comply with lawful directions from the person in charge of the counting centre and must not attempt to unreasonably delay or interfere with the progress of counting the votes.

Counting after election night

Counting is undertaken in accordance with the AEC's writ-to-writ timetable, which provides target timeframes for key activities. This results in a count that is conducted in a nationally consistent, transparent and high integrity manner.

Fresh scrutiny

The initial count of House of Representatives ballot papers conducted on election night is followed by a fresh scrutiny – a mandatory process where every single ballot paper is rechecked and recounted. On the Tuesday after election day, every division commenced a fresh scrutiny of all ordinary House of Representatives ballot papers received from every polling place, early voting centre and mobile voting team in their division. During this process, some ballot papers treated as informal on election night may be admitted to the count after consideration by the Divisional Returning Officer, and any ballot papers previously regarded as formal may be reclassified as informal.



Declaration vote scrutiny

A declaration vote is cast when an elector votes at a location, or in a way, that does not allow them to be marked off the electoral roll at that time. Declaration votes include absent, pre-poll, postal and provisional votes.

The elector makes a declaration on a declaration vote envelope, providing sufficient details to enable the AEC to validate them against the electoral roll and their ballot papers are sealed in the envelope.

The AEC processed 3,464,199 declaration vote envelopes, a drop in the number from 2022 (approximately 3.7 million envelopes). This was due to fewer postal votes (2.38 million in 2022), and the fact that the use of ECLs at some polling places on election day meant more voters could be found on the electoral roll and issued an ordinary vote instead of a declaration vote (see Chapter 8). There were approximately 117,000 fewer declaration votes issued on election day than in 2022.


Preliminary scrutiny


Preliminary scrutiny is a process where the elector details on the declaration votes are checked against the electoral roll to determine if the elector is entitled to vote and their ballot papers can be admitted to the count. Once validated against the roll, the declaration vote envelope is opened face down and the ballot papers extracted, without being unfolded, and placed in a sealed ballot box – preserving the secrecy of the vote.


The preliminary scrutiny of postal declaration votes began from the Monday two weeks before election day. The preliminary scrutiny of provisional declaration votes began from the Monday after election day, with preliminary scrutiny of absent and pre-poll declaration votes occurring from the Wednesday after election day. The AEC must wait 13 days after election day to receive declaration votes before we can finalise counting. This ensures that electors in remote areas and overseas are not disenfranchised.


There were 563,286 postal votes returned incorrectly packaged by voters, however, recent changes to the Electoral Act allowed us to fix the packaging and allow for preliminary scrutiny to be conducted on these postal votes.

3,464,199 declaration votes were received and underwent preliminary scrutiny:

-  **565,777** absent votes

-  **79,580** provisional votes

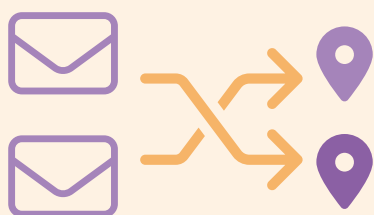
-  **584,008** pre-poll declaration votes

-  **2,234,834** postal votes



Declaration vote exchange

The declaration vote exchange is one of the most complex elements of the election and is the process of sorting, checking, sending and receiving declaration votes to the Divisional Returning Officer for the division the elector claims to be enrolled in. The declaration votes are packaged securely and dispatched and received within the first week after election day. Following receipt, the declaration votes go through the preliminary scrutiny process to determine if the ballot papers can be admitted to the count.



1,146,097 declaration vote envelopes dispatched to another division



Distribution of preferences

A distribution of preferences takes place in every electoral division, even where a candidate already has an absolute majority of first preference votes. The distribution of preferences commences after the cutoff for the receipt of declaration votes, 13 days after election day.

At this election, 88 electoral divisions were required to complete a full distribution of preferences to declare. This is 12 more divisions than in 2022 (76 total) and 54 more than in 2019 (34 total). This increase is largely due to the wider spread of first preference votes among independent and minor party candidates.

Speed of the count and complexities

The AEC is continually working to improve the speed of the count, while at the same time adhering to our processes to deliver final, trusted and legal results. However, this election produced some of the most complex count scenarios in Australia's electoral history.

As highlighted in Chapter 5, we conducted additional, specialised weekly media briefings for local journalists and psephologists in the weeks after election day to provide updates on the count progress in close and complex seats. This was an important part of our continuous efforts to ensure stakeholders are informed and that the counting process is transparent.



Two-candidate preferred count

Where a division is contested by more than two candidates, we are legally required to complete a two-candidate preferred (TCP) count of the House of Representatives ballot papers – a count to give an indication of the likely outcome of the election in that division. After first preferences votes are allocated and counted, votes are re-sorted into two piles – these piles are for the candidates deemed by the AEC as most likely to be the final two candidates in the count.

Before election day, we decide which two candidates are most likely to be the final two candidates in each division after preferences are distributed. This decision is based on factors like previous results, media coverage, opinion polling and impressions on the ground in each electorate. This selection is kept confidential until the close of polling on election night when it is made public.

Once counting commences, we may find the wrong candidates were selected or it is unclear who the correct candidates should be in some divisions. When this happens, we mask the TCP results from public view on the Tally Room. There were nine divisions where a TCP reset was required on election night and an additional six divisions after election night (15 in total).

Three-candidate preferred counts

When the indicative TCP count is not providing a clear indication of the likely outcome, a three-candidate preferred (3CP) count may be conducted. A 3CP count is an administrative count used to give a reliable indicator of the two most likely leading candidates. This is done by sorting votes into piles for three candidates instead of two.

Due to the increase in the spread of first preference votes among independent and minor party candidates at this election, 13 divisions commenced 3CP counts in the days after election day, an increase from the four divisions in 2022.

CASE STUDY

House of Representatives count in the division of Calwell

At this election, the division of Calwell underwent one of the most complex counts we have ever managed.

There were 13 candidates on the ballot paper for the division of Calwell, and the election night results showed a significant spread in first preference votes that meant up to five candidates could potentially be selected for the indicative TCP count.

When the results from the indicative TCP count were unclear on election night, they were masked on the AEC Tally Room. A 3CP count commenced on Monday 5 May to attempt to clarify the TCP candidates, however, this was discontinued the same day as it did not provide enough insight into the final TCP due to the number of possible TCP candidates. An operational decision was made to wait until the full distribution of preferences, which started on Monday 19 May, to identify the final TCP candidates.

Typically, the TCP candidates – and often the likely winning candidate – are known before the start of the full distribution of preferences. In the division of Calwell this was not the case, as the first preference vote share of TCP candidates compared to non-TCP candidates was 42.5 per cent, compared to a national average of 68.7 per cent. This meant that during the distribution of preferences process in the division of Calwell 19,320 more ballot papers were required to be distributed between candidates than in a typical division.

We completed the distribution of preferences count in six and a half days and the formal declaration of the poll for the division of Calwell took place on Friday 30 May, 27 days after election day. During the counting process in the division of Calwell, the AEC – alongside staff from Deakin University – collected counting data to help inform future planning and resourcing for complex count scenarios, which are anticipated to increase at future elections given the changes in voting patterns evident at this election.



13 candidates



19,320 more preferences to distribute than average division

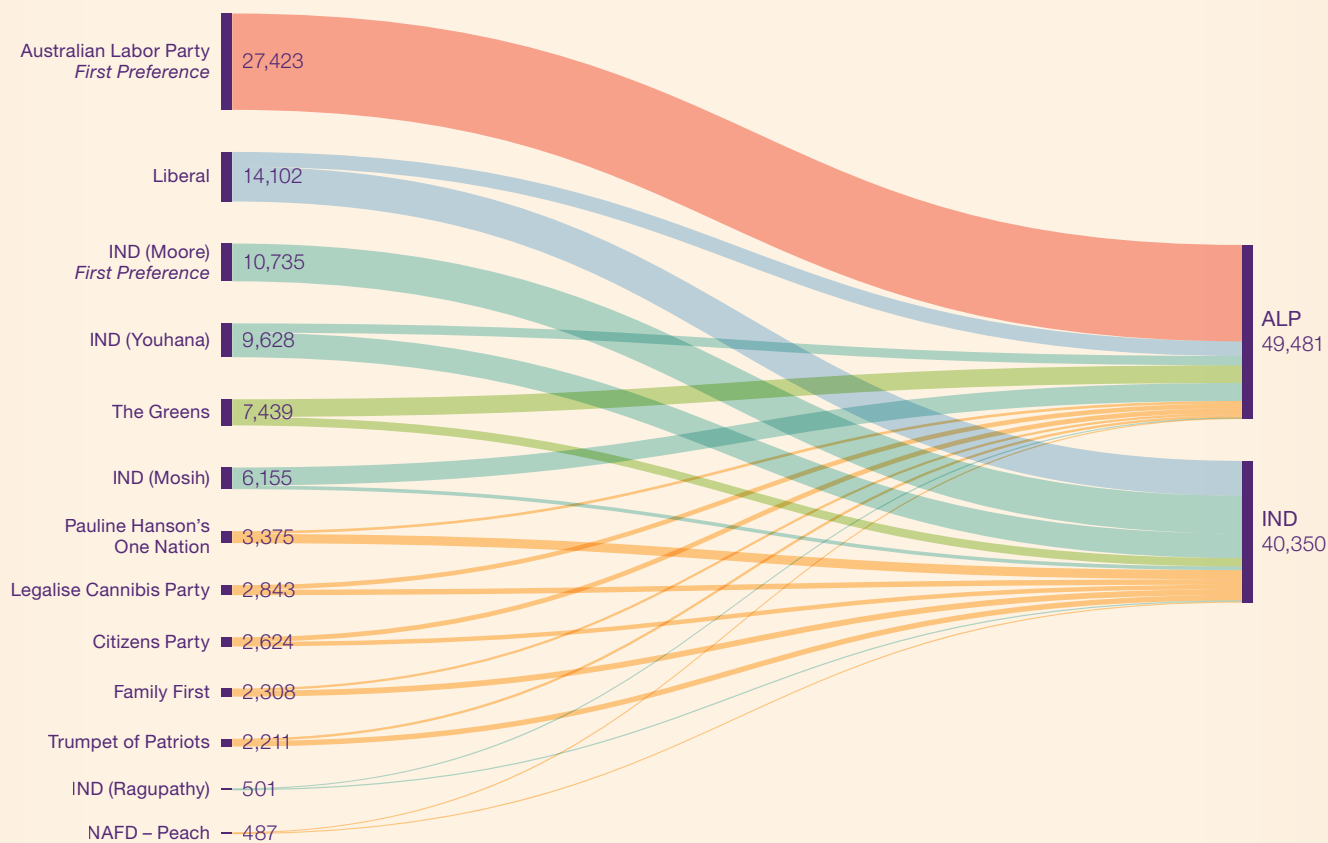


6.5 days to complete distribution of preferences

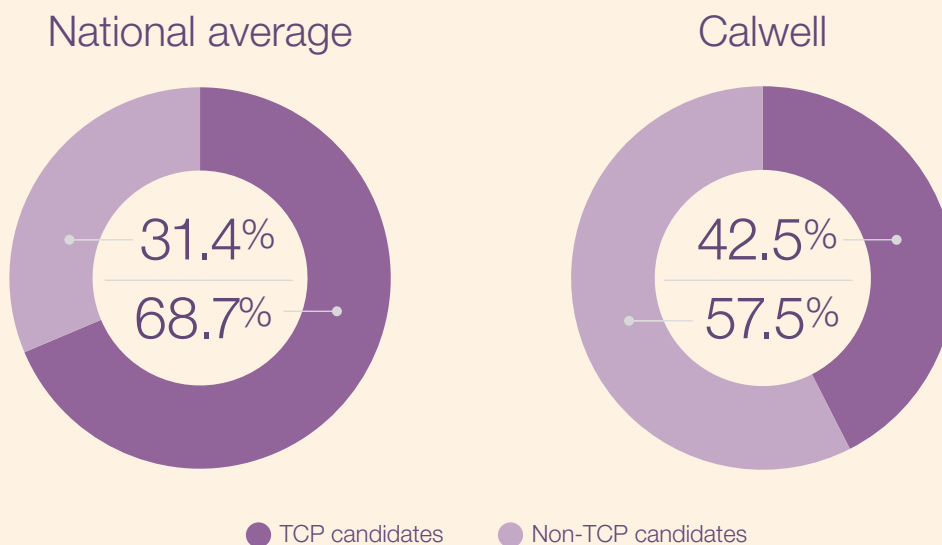


27 days to declaration

TCP FLOW OF PREFERENCES – CALWELL¹



FIRST PREFERENCE SHARE



¹ This graph is produced by the AEC, noting the design was inspired by Joshua Peach and Daniel Reti, 'Existential crisis': 5 charts reveal how Labor decimated Greens, Libs; *The Australian Financial Review*; 25 June 2025.

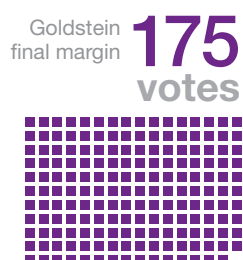
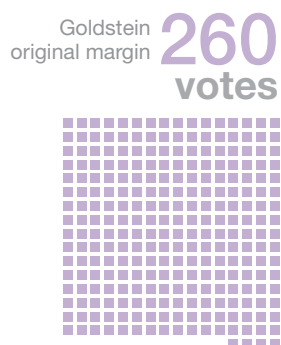
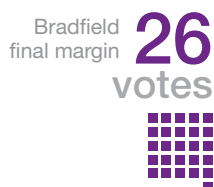
Recounts

A recount may be undertaken, approved or directed at any time before the result of an election is declared.

At any point before the AEC officially declares the result in a seat, a candidate can make a request to the Divisional Returning Officer (DRO) for a recount of every ballot paper. The candidate is required to provide reasons for the request, and it is the responsibility of the DRO to approve or decline that request. If a DRO declines a request for a recount, candidates sometimes appeal the decision to the Electoral Commissioner.

The AEC can also conduct a recount of votes independently. While there is no law for when this activity occurs, AEC policy is to conduct a recount for a division if the final margin between the first and second ranked candidates is 100 votes or less.

At this election, we conducted two recounts – a full recount in the division of Bradfield and a partial recount in the division of Goldstein. The most recent recount prior to these was in 2016 in the Division of Herbert (Queensland), where the final result was 37 votes.



Division of Bradfield

At the completion of the full distribution of preferences for the division of Bradfield, the margin between the first and second ranked candidates was eight votes. Candidates were advised in writing that a recount would be completed and of the arrangements for the recount.

The recount commenced on Monday 26 May and was completed in eight days. Every aspect of the recount process was open to scrutineers to observe. The recount involved:

- a new count of all first preference votes
- a re-examination of all informal votes
- a recount of the previously completed TCP count
- the conduct of a full distribution of preferences.

The final margin was 26 votes in favour of the Independent candidate, Nicolette Boele (see Chapter 11, Court of Disputed Returns).

Division of Goldstein

On 23 May 2025, the AEC received a request from the Independent candidate Zoe Daniels to recount all ballot papers for the division of Goldstein. At the conclusion of the full distribution of preferences, the margin was 260 votes in favour of the Liberal party candidate Tim Wilson.

The request for a full recount was not granted, however, on Monday 26 May, we announced a partial recount would be completed involving a re-examination of all first preference ballot papers for Tim Wilson and Zoe Daniels, as well as informal ballot papers. This decision was made after careful consideration of the results in the division of Goldstein and to ensure the greatest level of confidence in the final result and the utmost integrity in the counting process.

The final margin after the partial recount was 175 in favour of Liberal Party candidate Tim Wilson. The change in margin from 260 to 175 was a result of further

determinations made on ballot paper formality based on challenges by scrutineers, as well as a data entry error on a previous count that was picked up by the recount process (the purpose of the process).

Senate counting process

The AEC manages all aspects of the Senate counting process in accordance with the Electoral Act.

The process begins on election night where Senate ballot papers are initially counted at polling places, then securely packaged and delivered to OPCs. Senate ballot papers from pre-poll voting centres are counted at OPCs commencing from the Monday after election day, as well as ballot papers admitted from declaration envelopes (including postal ballot papers). Senate ballot papers from election day polling places have their first preferences counted again (fresh scrutiny). All used Senate ballot papers are securely repackaged and sent to the Central Senate Scrutiny (CSS) site in each state and territory, commencing on the Tuesday after election day, after they have undergone their count at the OPC.

At the CSS site, every Senate ballot paper marked by a voter is scanned and processed to capture the millions of preferences. Once scanned, all preferences are viewed and data entered by humans and then matched to the scanned preference. Informal ballot papers and ballot papers with ambiguous marks undergo an additional layer of checking.

Candidate appointed scrutineers can observe every stage of the Senate count process.

The final Senate results cannot be calculated until the state or territory-wide total of all formal Senate votes is known. This is used to determine the quota – the proportion of votes required by a Senate candidate to be elected. The full set of preferences captured from the Senate ballot papers is published and available via the AEC Tally Room.

To provide confidence and assurance in the Senate count process, an independent provider reviewed a statistically significant sample of Senate ballot papers from each Senate election. This review demonstrated the Senate count process was a robust and accurate method, ensuring a high-integrity result. The Electoral Commissioner's statement setting out the outcomes of the ballot paper sampling process was published on the AEC website on 26 June 2025, in accordance with the Electoral Act.



more than **39,000 ballot paper transport containers** were securely sent from OPCs to the Senate scanning sites in every state and territory



the AEC captured more than **111 million preferences** from over **16.4 million scanned Senate ballot papers**



the preferences were data entered and **verified within 4 weeks** from election day

AEC statement: **Senate ballot paper sampling outcomes statement – 2025 federal election**



[Learn more about the Senate counting process](#)

Informal voting

A vote is regarded as informal if the ballot paper has not been completed properly. Informal ballot papers are not counted towards any candidate but are set aside.

The House of Representatives informality rate was 5.60 per cent (compared with 5.19 per cent in 2022). The Senate informality rate was 3.45 per cent (compared with 3.42 per cent in 2022). There has not been any significant change in the informality rates over recent federal elections.

Informality rates 2016–2025

	2016 election	2019 election	2022 election	2025 election
House of Representatives	5.05%	5.54%	5.19%	5.60%
Senate	3.94%	3.81%	3.42%	3.45%

The informality rate was higher in some states. The three states with higher numbers of candidates this election all had a higher House of Representatives informality rate compared with 2022. The remaining states that had lower informality rates at this election had a lower number of candidates than in 2022.

2025 federal election – informality rates by state

	House of Representatives		Senate	
	Informality rate (%)	Swing (%)	Informality rate (%)	Swing (%)
NSW	8.06	1.84	4.45	0.54
VIC	4.24	-0.47	3.08	-0.44
QLD	4.93	0.76	3.05	-0.07
WA	3.95	-1.57	2.60	-0.31
SA	5.26	0.14	3.16	0.24
TAS	4.25	-1.60	3.30	0.10
ACT	2.43	-0.03	1.76	0.01
NT	3.99	-1.32	3.25	0.17

Informality is a complex issue influenced by a range of factors including confusion between Senate and House of Representatives ballot paper instructions, particularly when the House of Representatives ballot paper includes more than six candidates, and confusion between federal, state and local voting rules. Some voters also choose to leave their ballot paper blank, which is counted as part of the informality rate.

We proactively provide information to voters about how to complete a formal ballot paper (see Chapter 5).

chapter 11

Finalising the election



Declaration of the poll

Once the votes have been counted and a successful candidate is determined, there is a public declaration of the result.

House of Representatives

The declaration of the poll for each seat of the House of Representatives is conducted by the Divisional Returning Officer as soon as practical after the result has been determined in line with section 284 of the Electoral Act. A candidate can be declared elected once fresh scrutiny of ordinary votes has been completed and the results of all completed scrutinies guarantee mathematical certainty. This may occur while there are declaration votes yet to be dealt with or alternatively, a full distribution of preferences may be required to determine the result.

The division of Maranoa (Queensland) was the first seat declared for the House of Representatives on 15 May 2025. All seats were declared by 6 June 2025.

Individual results are displayed on our website: [Divisional results – AEC Tally Room](#)

More information on results for the House of Representatives is available on our website: [2025 Federal Election – AEC Tally Room](#)

Senate

As outlined in [Chapter 10](#), to be elected to the Senate a candidate needs to gain a quota of the formal votes. Once the quota is determined, the AEC conducts an automated distribution of preferences in accordance with the Electoral Act. Candidates who achieve the quota based on their total first preferences votes are elected immediately. The distribution of preferences process continues until all Senate positions are filled.

The declaration of the Senate election for each state and territory is conducted by the respective Australian Electoral Officer (AEO).

The results of the distribution of preferences for each Senate election is available on our website: [State and territory results – AEC Tally Room](#)

Determination of the Senate election result by state/territory

State / Territory	Determination of Senate election result
NSW	Count completed on 30 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 2 June 2025. To elect six Senators from the 56 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 712,405 votes. It took a total of 249 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.
VIC	Count completed on 28 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 29 May 2025. To elect six Senators from the 65 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 585,967 votes. It took a total of 289 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.
QLD	Count completed on 29 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 30 May 2025. To elect six Senators from the 56 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 460,634 votes. It took a total of 243 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.

State / Territory	Determination of Senate election result
WA	Count completed on 29 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 3 June 2025. To elect six Senators from 49 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 231,717 votes. It took a total of 169 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.
SA	Count completed on 26 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 27 May 2025. To elect six Senators from 40 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 166,297 votes. It took a total of 136 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.
TAS	Count completed on 27 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 29 May 2025. To elect six Senators from the 33 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 53,113 votes. It took a total of 127 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the six Senators.
ACT	Count completed on 28 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 29 May 2025. To elect two Senators from the 14 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 97,825 votes. It took a total of 22 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the two Senators.
NT	Count completed on 27 May 2025 and the formal declaration of the poll was on 28 May 2025. To elect two Senators from the 17 candidates, they each had to obtain a quota of 35,603 votes. It took a total of 24 counts to distribute the preferences and elect the two Senators.

Return of writs

The writs for an election must be returned within 100 days of their issue under sections 159 and 283 of the Electoral Act. After the Senate results are declared, the AEO for each state returns the writ for their election endorsed with the names of the successful candidates to the State Governor.

The Electoral Commissioner returns the writs for the 150 House of Representatives electoral divisions, endorsed with the name of each candidate elected, and for the Senate elections for the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory.

All writs were returned by 12 June 2025.

Return of the writs

Senate writ	Return date
NSW	4 June 2025
VIC	4 June 2025
QLD	2 June 2025
WA	4 June 2025
SA	28 May 2025
TAS	27 May 2025
ACT	12 June 2025
NT	12 June 2025
House of Representatives writs	
Writs for 150 electoral divisions	12 June 2025

The Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, and the Acting Electoral Commissioner, Jeff Pope, at the return of writs for the 2025 federal election.



The AEO for each state returning the writ for their election to the State Governor.
From left:

NSW
Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales
Rebecca Main, Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales
Official Secretary to the Governor, Colonel Michael Miller LVO RFD

SA
Cameron Stokes, Australian Electoral Officer for South Australia
Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia

QLD
Stephanie Attard, Australian Electoral Officer for Queensland
Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland

VIC
Nye Coffey, Australian Electoral Officer for Victoria

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria

WA
His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson APM, Governor of Western Australia
Anita Ratcliffe, Australia Electoral Officer for Western Australia

TAS
not pictured



Court of Disputed Returns

A candidate, voter or the AEC may dispute the validity of an election or return by addressing a petition to the High Court, sitting as the Court of Disputed Returns. The petition must be filed within 40 days of the date the writ is returned – or if there is more than one election held on the same day – within 40 days of the date the last writ is returned. The Court of Disputed Returns process is set out in Part XXII of the Electoral Act.

One petition was lodged on 15 July 2025 by Gisele Kapterian for the house of Representatives election in the division of Bradfield. The AEC was formally advised on 25 September 2025 that this petition will be withdrawn. The AEC media statements in relation to this petition and frequently asked questions in relation to the Court of Disputed Returns are available on our website.

AEC media statements: **Challenge to election result in Bradfield**

Non-voting and multiple voting

The AEC is committed to upholding electoral integrity through a robust approach to addressing multiple voting and non-voting.

After each federal electoral event, we scan all the pages from the paper certified lists and combine that voter data with marks from electronic and other system-based certified lists to create a consolidated list of voters recorded as having voted at the election. This task was completed by 23 May 2025, three weeks after election day.

For each division, lists containing the details of voters who appear to have failed to vote, or appear to have voted multiple times, are created and used to conduct the non-voter and multiple marks processes.



22,756 paper certified lists consisting of **13,991,454 pages** and **6.5 million marks** were scanned and processed for non-voter and multiple marks processes



Multiple voting marks process

It is a criminal offence under the Electoral Act to vote more than once in the same election. The AEC has comprehensive administrative mechanisms in place to identify apparent multiple voting, including checking to identify administrative or polling official errors. Cases of apparent multiple voting may be referred to the Australian Federal Police for further investigation.

We undertake a thorough process to identify cases of apparent multiple voting. This includes a process of administrative eliminations where matters that are affected by polling official or other official errors are removed from further investigation. In July 2025, we wrote to 2,187 electors whose cases require further investigation. These letters requested information to assist in determining whether there was a substantiated case of multiple voting.

Managing the potential impact of multiple marks in close seats

In close seats, we prioritise the capture and checking of marks on certified lists to determine if the number of apparent multiple marks would be likely to have any impact on the result.

We conducted targeted investigations for the divisions of Bradfield and Goldstein, concluding that the number of multiple votes were below the final margin.

Non-voter process

Failure to vote at a federal election is a criminal offence under the Electoral Act.

Ahead of this election, we wrote to over 300,000 electors who had been recorded as having failed to vote for the previous two federal elections. The letter provided information to assist electors fulfil their voting obligations under the Electoral Act. We also sent a reminder text message to over 144,000 of these electors (those for whom the AEC had a mobile phone number on record) in the week before election day, as a further proactive measure to encourage participation.

In late July 2025, we sent 1,309,568 'apparent failure to vote notices' to those electors who appear to have failed to vote at the election. These letters ask voters to provide the particulars of having voted or provide a valid and sufficient reason for having failed to vote. If the voter can do neither, they may be asked to pay an administrative penalty.

Electors who have not paid the penalty or provided a valid and sufficient reason for failing to vote may face criminal prosecution. These electors will be issued with a summons to appear in court which may result in a criminal conviction and a fine of up to \$330 (1 penalty unit). Prosecution action arising from a failure to vote at a federal election is required to commence within 12 months of election day.

Financial disclosure obligations

The AEC routinely considers information in the public domain to determine whether persons or entities have a registration requirement and/or disclosure obligations under the Electoral Act. Persons or entities who produce electoral matter (and incur electoral expenditure), fundraise for campaign purposes, or make donations to political entities might be associated entities, significant third parties, third parties and/or donors.

A secondary purpose is to identify any possible foreign flows of monies such as entities who might have accepted restricted foreign donations, foreign entities who may have made donations, or foreign entities engaging in electoral campaigning and/or fundraising for that purpose.

Our environmental scanning activities include:

- monitoring social media accounts such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter)
- reviewing content on entity webpages
- reviewing news pieces, advertisements, and fundraising platforms (such as GoFundMe)
- reviewing advertising monetary spends on Meta Ad Library and Google Ad Transparency Centre (noting the values detailed may not be electoral expenditure)
- answering disclosure enquiries from our funding and disclosure Helpdesk
- responding to tip-offs and referrals.

These activities provide stakeholders with assurance that we have measures in place to actively identify persons or entities who engage in the political process and ensure their compliance with disclosure obligations.

Financial disclosure obligations of candidates and donors related to the election were required to be lodged with us by 18 August 2025. These election disclosures will be published on the AEC Transparency Register from 20 October 2025, 24 weeks after election day.

Election funding

Election funding is payable to candidates who achieve more than four per cent of first preference votes in a division. Changes in voting patterns over recent elections, in terms of the increase in the spread of first preference votes among independent and minor party candidates, is evidenced in election funding outcomes.

Number of political parties and independent candidates entitled to election funding

Payee	2019 federal election	2022 federal election	2025 federal election
Political parties	24	26	24
Independent	34	41	60
Total	58	67	84

chapter 12
After the election



After the election

The AEC is committed to continuous improvement and after each electoral event we conduct various internal reviews and external surveys to measure performance and gain insights into where we need to improve. The lessons learnt process is also used to improve delivery of the next election, subject to priorities and available funding.

Importantly, we are accountable to the Australian Parliament, and we provide submissions on the conduct of the election and offer reflections on possible amendments to the Electoral Act as part of our engagement with the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters.

Lessons learnt

The lessons management process sits within the AEC's Election Readiness Framework and is guided by the OILL methodology, where we gather Observations, form Insights from key themes, identify Lessons and learn Lessons.

Observations were gathered from AEC staff, voters, media, and public feedback and commentary. Analysis then occurred to generate insights, which in turn informs the identified lessons and corresponding actions.











The identified lessons and corresponding actions will be monitored as part of our election readiness program of work for the new electoral cycle.












Federal election service plan

The AEC's 2025 Federal Election Service Plan (**Delivering the 2025 Federal Election – Service Plan**) outlined our election service standards, which underpinned the delivery of the federal election.



A summary of the outcomes we achieved against each of the four election service standards is below.

STANDARD 1	Voters and candidates receive timely and accurate information
MEASURE	The AEC will support effective participation in the federal election by ensuring information provided to the voting public and candidates is timely, accurate, comprehensive and easy to understand.
OUTCOMES ACHIEVED	
	Official guide to the election – distributed to 11.8 million households, available in 34 languages and alternative formats for blind or low vision voters
	National advertising campaign across multiple channels and languages including television, radio, print, online, social, digital and out-of-home media
	Enrolment and voting information on the AEC website, including the location and accessibility of early voting centres and polling places, and improved access to information on mobile and remote voting services
	Easy read guides, videos with captions, and a 'listen button' on every page of the AEC website to facilitate information access
	The Candidate Hub on the AEC website made available a wide range of information and services to prospective candidates, campaign workers and scrutineers including how to submit a nomination
	Collaboration with media, community and other stakeholder groups to provide information, including weekly media briefings for local journalists and psephologists in the weeks after election day to provide updates on the count progress in close and complex divisions
	New contact management system to improve Contact Centre responses
	Extensive translation and interpreting services including recorded messages with information for voters
	The AEC's national telephone number, 13 23 26, operated from 8am to 8pm local time – a telephone interpreter service was available in more than 19 languages, and the National Relay Service was also available
	The AEC's online enquiry form was monitored and the enquiries received were answered promptly

STANDARD 2	The AEC delivers a high-quality service
MEASURE	The AEC aims to deliver a high-quality service which allows voters to ensure their enrolment is up to date and facilitates voting based on individual circumstances.
OUTCOMES ACHIEVED	
	Record enrolment rate of 98.2 per cent
	Record youth enrolment rate of 92.0 per cent
	Voting locations opened in line with advertised dates – 6,966 election day polling places and 1,149 early voting centres
	Mobile voting services provided in 469 remote locations (except eight remote locations that could not be visited) and at 2,700 hospitals, residential aged care, mental health services and correctional facilities
	Postal voting services available through the AEC website, paper postal application forms or third-party applications
	Postal voting services provided to Australian Defence Force personnel serving overseas at the time of the federal election
	Telephone voting services for blind or low vision voters and voters in Antarctica
	In-person overseas voting services at 111 posts in 81 countries
	The AEC Contact Centre serviced over 330,000 elector enquiries via phone and email within service level standards (80 per cent of phone calls answered within five minutes and 95 per cent of emails acknowledged within 24 hours) – including 1,553 via the dedicated language interpretation service
	Over 25,000 electoral products were requested by, and sent out to electors, including 160 products through Vision Australia
	Efforts made to reduce the amount of cardboard waste by offering polling places a ‘cardboard retention payment’ to reduce the impact of additional freight and to encourage the reuse of our cardboard products
	A diverse and inclusive temporary election workforce, with 2,392 workers who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; 20,165 positions filled by bilingual workers; and 2,518 positions filled by workers with disability

STANDARD**3**

Votes are counted in accordance with the Electoral Act and the public and stakeholders have confidence in the result

MEASURE

The AEC will ensure count processes produce a timely and accurate result and are managed in a transparent manner.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

More than 19 million ballot papers counted on election night represents the highest ever number of ballot papers counted by the AEC on a single night



AEC Tally Room displayed progressive results through election scrutines, with updates every 90 seconds on polling night and every 15 minutes in the weeks after election day



Ballot papers counted twice to ensure accuracy of the results



All ballot papers tracked, secured and accounted for



Scrutineers able to observe the election process on behalf of a candidate and uphold the transparency of the election process and the result



Two recounts undertaken to ensure accuracy and integrity of the result, and publication of dedicated 3CP and complex count information to augment information available on the Virtual Tally Room









Arrangements made for divisions to be declared as soon as mathematical certainty of result achieved, with declarations occurring from 15 May 2025 to 6 June 2025



Writs returned confirming final House of Representatives results on 12 June, which was 27 days before the final day for return of the writs (9 July 2025)

STANDARD 4	The public and stakeholders have confidence that the electoral process is well managed
MEASURE	The Electoral Act prescribes how a federal election is to be conducted. All policies, processes and procedures implemented by the AEC during the federal election are designed to operate within the prescribed boundaries of the Electoral Act.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

	Many parliamentarians acknowledged the AEC's professional conduct of the federal election in speeches to the 48th Parliament
	AEC Disinformation Register corrected prominent mis and disinformation to help protect the integrity of, and trust in, the election process
	Complaints able to be lodged using the AEC's online enquiry form or by calling the AEC
	Considered 1,524 complaints about electoral communications and reviewed approximately 4,417 electoral communications, identifying 1,736 breaches
	Implemented ballot paper handling safeguards
	AEC staff, official visitors and scrutineers required to wear badges and/or vests at polling places and counting centres for identification purposes
	<p>The AEC voter survey highlights from this election included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 9 in 10 respondents felt satisfied with their overall voting experience. When asked about specific aspects of their voting experience, respondents who voted in person were most likely to feel satisfied with how easy and quick it was to find and mark their name off the electoral roll. • Respondents generally held positive views of the AEC. Around 9 in 10 stated they were fairly or very confident in the AEC's ability to deliver electoral services, that their votes are counted as intended, and that their personal information and privacy was kept safe and secure. • Around 1 in 8 respondents reported seeing or hearing information about the federal election process that they believed to be incorrect, with those aged 18–34 and those from CALD backgrounds more likely to have reported seeing or hearing it. Social media was identified as the most common source. When asked what they did after seeing or hearing this information, around half stated they ignored it or did nothing, while most others took some form of action, including notifying the AEC and complaining or commenting directly to the source.

Internal and external reviews

We undertake internal and external reviews that assist with evaluating performance against our election service standards.

Voter survey

The AEC surveys voters after each federal election to find out what they think and to measure our performance. Highlights from this survey are captured against Service Standard 4 in the table opposite.

TEW survey

The AEC also surveys the TEW workforce after an electoral event as we continue to focus on improving their experience, which contributes to the delivery of a high-quality service to voters and confidence in our conduct of the election.

Quantitative research was conducted via an online survey with a total of 35,741 TEW employees responding, achieving a response rate of 42 per cent, the highest across the four electoral events this survey has been conducted.

The survey found that 91 per cent of the TEW were satisfied with their experience this election, with only four per cent dissatisfied. Similarly, high proportions agreed that:

- they were proud to have been part of delivering the election (95 per cent)
- given the opportunity, they would work at another federal election event (92 per cent)
- they would recommend working at federal election events (90 per cent).

All these measures were consistent with the results from surveys conducted after the 2023 referendum, and the 2022 and 2019 federal elections.

The AEC actively targets diverse employees across the community to ensure we have a TEW that reflects the community we serve. The survey results highlighted a significant increase in the satisfaction of younger TEW at 92 per cent, up from 85 per cent in previous elections. Satisfaction with their experience this election among diversity groups was also high:

- 91 per cent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 88 per cent for people with disability
- 92 per cent for CALD backgrounds
- 90 per cent for LGBTIQ+
- 90 per cent for neurodivergent people.

Public information campaign review

The AEC implements benchmark, tracking and evaluation research for each federal election. The research for this election was conducted by Wallis Social Research (Wallis) from 17 March to 18 May 2025. It provided evaluation against 10 objectives. The evaluation provides opportunities for the AEC to strengthen future campaign strategy, messaging and media planning ahead of the next federal election.

The campaign met 90 per cent of its objectives:

- **Close of rolls:** continued high-level of self-reported enrolment (99 per cent) and understanding of the need to enrol/update before the deadline
- **Voter services:** was effective at maintaining voter awareness with 93 per cent of respondents knowing they could vote before election day

- **Formality:** more people understood how to complete ballot papers formally (69 per cent improvement in selecting only one valid response for House of Representatives ballot paper, and 156 per cent improvement for the Senate ballot paper)
- **Stop and Consider campaign:** while recognition was low, it recorded strong behavioural outcomes by those who saw it (70 per cent took action).

Ballot paper informality review

As outlined in **Chapter 10**, the national rate of informal voting for the House of Representatives at the 2025 federal election (around 5.6 per cent) is broadly comparable to the national rate at past elections.

After this election, we conducted a targeted review of informal ballot papers from 25 electoral divisions across Australia. These divisions included the top 10 highest informality divisions (by percentage) and the divisions that include polling locations that issued more than 50 ballot papers and had an informality rate over 25 per cent. This review included several aged care and hospital locations visited by mobile voting teams that had high informality rates.

Informality can be a complex phenomenon, caused by a range of factors. The findings of the review will help us understand trends and potential cause of informality and identify possible actions to continue to improve informality rates.

Temporarily missing ballot paper container

The AEC's tracking processes for ballot paper transport containers (BPTCs) identified that one of the two House of Representatives BPTCs for the Hurstville polling place in the Division of Barton was not returned to the OPC on election night.

The AEC investigated and determined that the authorised transport officer inadvertently maintained possession of the single missing BPTC. It was recovered fully intact, all uniquely coded security seals unbroken and with all ballot papers. It was promptly returned to the OPC and underwent fresh scrutiny. The fresh scrutiny count matched the initial count completed in the polling place on election night. The election result in the Division of Barton was unaffected by this incident.

Following this incident, we undertook an assurance activity to identify gaps in safeguards for ballot paper handling between the transfer from the static polling place to the OPC. This review considered the processes and procedures (controls) in place for ballot paper handling, and how they were applied. The review concluded the controls for the transfer of ballot papers were designed effectively and, on this occasion, it was found to be a result of human error with no indication of fraud or malintent. We will implement recommendations to optimise the manual handling controls to reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence.

See: **AEC statement: Ballot transport container temporarily unaccounted for**

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

After each federal election, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters conducts an inquiry into the election and considers public submissions, and the AEC participates in this process. A report, with recommendations for improvement to Australia's electoral system, is subsequently published.

Reader guides



Abbreviations and acronyms

AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AEST	Australian Eastern Standard Time
APS	Australian Public Service
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
DDS	Director Operations and Readiness Delivery Scrum
DLER	Directed Level of Election Readiness
DOR	Director Operations and Readiness Group
ECL	Electronic certified list
EIAT	Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce
Electoral Act	<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>
NEDC	National Election Delivery Committee
NOR	National Operations and Readiness Committee
TCP	Two-candidate preferred
TEW	Temporary election workforce

Glossary

Absent vote

A vote cast by electors who are out of their division but still within their state or territory on election day

Australian Electoral Commission

The Commonwealth agency responsible for providing Australians with an independent electoral service and enhancing their understanding of, and participation in, the electoral process.

Australian Electoral Officer

The AEC's manager in each state and territory. The AEO is the returning officer for the Senate election in their state or territory.

Ballot box

The sealed container into which an elector places a completed ballot paper.

Ballot paper

A paper that shows the questions to be put or the names of the candidates who are standing for election and on which voters mark their vote.

Certified list

The official electoral roll used to mark off voters at an election.

Close of rolls

The date the electoral roll closes for the federal election, which is 8.00pm local Australian time on the seventh calendar day after the writs are issued.

Declaration vote

Any vote where, instead of the voter being marked off the certified list, the vote is sealed in an envelope which is signed by the voter and admitted to the count only after further checks are completed.

Digital Officer in Charge return

A digital OIC return is a laptop that is used to manage and reconcile ballot papers and provide information to help the OIC manage the polling place.

Disinformation

Disinformation is the deliberate spread of false information to deceive or mislead for malicious or deceptive purposes. This can cause confusion and undermine trust in government and institutions.

Distribution of preferences

The process used to determine the winning candidate when no candidate wins an absolute majority of first preference votes (for House of Representatives).

Division

A geographical area of Australia (known as an electoral division or electorate) represented by a member of Parliament elected at a House of Representatives election.

Divisional Returning Officer

The AEC officer responsible for maintaining the electoral roll and conducting the election in each division. The DRO is the returning officer for the House of Representatives election in their division.

Electronic Certified List

Electronic list of eligible electors, accessed through a laptop computer to allow polling officials to efficiently search the list of eligible electors and record that an elector has been issued their ballot paper/s.

Enrolment rate

The enrolment rate (known as the participation rate until December 2014) is calculated by dividing the number of electors on the electoral roll by the estimated eligible population.

Federal Direct Enrolment and Update

The AEC's direct enrolment program, where third party information may be applied to update enrolment details of some Australians on the electoral roll without the need for that person to complete an enrolment application.

Formal vote

A vote cast in an election or referendum that has been marked according to the rules for that election or referendum and can be counted towards the result. A ballot paper that does not meet the rules for formality is called informal and cannot be counted towards the result.

Fresh scrutiny

The check and recount of ballot papers after election/voting day by AEC staff.

Informal vote

A vote cast in an election or referendum that has not been marked according to the rules for that election or referendum and cannot be counted towards the result.

Margin

The margin is the percentage of votes above 50 per cent received by the winning candidate. Margins can be used to calculate the 'swing' of votes required to win or lose a seat.

Marginal seat

A marginal seat is where the winning candidate has less than 56 per cent of the votes.

Misinformation

Misinformation is false, misleading or deceptive information, that is spread due to ignorance, by error or mistake, or without the intent to deceive. It can include made-up news articles, doctored images and videos and false information shared on social media.

Nominations

Candidates must be nominated before they can be elected to the Senate or House of Representatives. Qualifications for nomination are set out in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and the Constitution. Nominations can be made once the writ for an election has been issued and before the time and date specified as the close of nominations. For each nomination a financial deposit must be lodged.

Officer in Charge return

The OIC return is used on election day and is a complete record of how the polling place functioned throughout polling and the scrutiny.

Ordinary vote

A vote recorded by an elector at a polling place within the division for which they are enrolled.

Preferential voting

Australian federal elections use a preferential voting system where voters are required to: mark a preference for every candidate on the green ballot paper (House of Representatives); and mark a preference for a designated number of preferences on the white ballot paper (Senate).

Provisional quota

A provisional quota is used to give an indication of the number of votes ('quota') a candidate in the Senate will need to be elected. It is calculated before the final quota is known and the full distribution of Senate preferences is completed.

Provisional vote

A vote cast when a voter's name cannot be found on the certified list, the voter's name is already marked off the certified list as having voted, or the voter is registered as a silent elector.

Psephologist

Psephologist is a specialist who studies elections and voting statistics.

Redistribution

The redrawing of electoral boundaries for a division to ensure that there are, as near as possible, equal numbers of electors in each division for a state or territory.

Reinstatement

Approved applications that add electors who are not currently enrolled but have previously been enrolled back onto the electoral roll.

Scrutineer

A person appointed by a candidate to observe the voting and counting of the votes.

Scrutiny

The counting of votes, which leads to the election or referendum result.

Two-candidate preferred

The TCP count shows where preferences have been distributed to the probable final two candidates in an election. The TCP count is only an indicative result of the election in a division.

Three-candidate preferred

The 3CP count shows where preferences have been distributed to the probable final three candidates in an election. This count is not standard practice – it is only used if there appears to be three preferred candidates, and it is only an indicative result of the election in a division.

Turnout

The number of enrolled electors who voted in an election or referendum.

Writ

A writ is a document commanding an electoral officer to hold an election. The writ contains dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, the election day and the latest day for the return of the writ. The Governor-General issues the writs for House of Representatives elections and elections for Senators in the territories. The State Governors issue the writs for all other Senate elections.



