

Annual Report

2023–24

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The terms 'Indigenous' and 'First Nations' in this report refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples unless otherwise stated. This report may contain the names and images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples now deceased.

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About this report

This report outlines the performance of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the financial year ending 30 June 2024.

The report meets the requirements of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* for annual reports.

There are eight sections:

1. **Commissioner's review** – the Electoral Commissioner, Tom Rogers, reflects on the year
2. **Overview of the AEC** – the AEC's role, functions and organisational structure
3. **Performance report** – performance against the AEC's purpose and key activities in our Corporate Plan 2023–24 with reference to the Portfolio Budget Statements
4. **International highlights** – the AEC's contributions to democracy and election management in the region
5. **Management and accountability** – information on the AEC's management and accountability including governance, scrutiny and managing staff and assets
6. **Financial statements** – financial performance including audited financial statements

7. **Appendices** – additional information on AEC resources, governance, Commonwealth Electoral Roll information, electoral events data, electoral redistribution data, financial disclosure data, AEC workforce statistics and electoral communications complaints
8. **Reader guides** – abbreviations and acronyms, glossary, index to the list of annual report requirements and alphabetical index.

Tools to assist readers

To assist readers, this report includes:

- a table of contents
- lists of figures and tables
- an alphabetical index
- an indexed list of report requirements
- cross references
- a list of abbreviations and acronyms
- a glossary of terms.

See **page ii** for accessible services.

This report is available online at **transparency.gov.au**

A PDF version is also available at **www.aec.gov.au**

Letter of transmittal



Electoral Commissioner

Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Special Minister of State
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Cc: Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher
Minister for Finance

Dear Minister Farrell

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for the year ending 30 June 2024.

The report has been prepared for the purposes of:

- (i) section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*; and
- (ii) section 17 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

As required by section 10 and paragraph 17AG(2)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, I also certify that the AEC:

- has prepared fraud risk assessments and a fraud control plan;
- has in place appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud; and
- has taken all reasonable measures to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the AEC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Rogers', is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is stylized and extends downwards and to the right.

Tom Rogers

10 October 2024

10 Mort Street, Canberra ACT 2600 P 02 6271 4411

www.aec.gov.au

SECTION 01

Commissioner's review

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

The Electoral Commissioner,
Tom Rogers, reflects on the year

Commissioner's review



As I reflect on this year, I am incredibly proud of all we have achieved and how far we have come in our journey to deliver first class electoral services to Australian citizens.

Our achievements have occurred against a backdrop of rapid and substantial changes to the electoral operating environment, making election delivery more complex and unpredictable than ever before. The AEC is meeting the challenges of this environment by performing in ways beyond the traditional expectations of electoral administrators, with a key focus on actively promoting the positive, trusted reputation of the Australian electoral system.

The AEC celebrated its 40th birthday this year, which was a time to celebrate many years of delivering high integrity elections and also to reflect on how much has changed. There was a time when the role of an electoral management body (EMB) was to simply produce a statistically valid result. EMBs must also now focus on maintaining trust by first ensuring all citizens have access to accurate information through a vast range of formats and channels. Then we must monitor a volatile information environment, listen to a multitude of feedback through social media and other channels, swiftly respond to concerns, and provide constant assurance about the integrity of electoral processes.

First referendum in a quarter of a century

Delivering the first referendum in nearly a quarter of a century was an immense task for our agency. The world is a vastly different place from when the previous referendum was held in 1999. Australia is far more dynamic, and citizens' expectations have changed dramatically. This brings with it new challenges in ensuring our democratic institutions and processes remain relevant, robust and trusted.

The AEC achieved record enrolment ahead of the referendum. The electoral roll for the 2023 referendum provided the best base for democratic participation of any federal electoral event to date – with the highest enrolment rate in the history of federal electoral events in Australia, a record high Indigenous enrolment rate, and a record high youth enrolment rate.

We conducted more diverse and comprehensive communication, education and engagement than ever before to support participation.

Given this was the first referendum in 24 years, it was critical to ensure voters had access to accurate information about the process of voting and the administration of the event.

The campaign achieved unprecedented voter reach, including over 1 billion impressions of our advertisements on our digital and social channels. The Yes/No pamphlet was delivered to over 12.8 million Australian residential addresses, as well as to caretakers, those in hotels, motels, settlements, caravan parks, marinas/houseboats, defence housing, hospital accommodation, convents, commercial premises with residences and boarding schools. We also delivered more than 380 referendum community education sessions in over 40 languages to address barriers to meaningful participation in Australia's democracy. This included First Nations and multicultural community education sessions, as well as sharing information with community and faith leaders who used our material with their networks and communities.

We went to greater lengths to deliver voting services than ever before. We worked with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade to offer in-person voting at 107 overseas posts in 78 countries. We offered mobile polling, pre-poll and voting day polling places in remote and very remote locations. In total, in-person voting was offered in 585 remote localities across 801 premises.

The neutrality of the AEC was an essential element that underpinned the AEC's integrity and reputation in delivering the referendum. We worked with our staff, including temporary election workers and contractors, as well as our suppliers, to support an understanding of impartiality and our issue neutrality requirements.

Election delivery and preparedness

In addition to the referendum, we delivered three by-elections this year in the divisions of Fadden, Dunkley and Cook. These events provide an important opportunity for us to engage with voters and continue to improve our processes. Our approach to conducting elections continues to evolve, to meet increasing public and stakeholder expectations and the challenges presented by the dynamic operating environment.

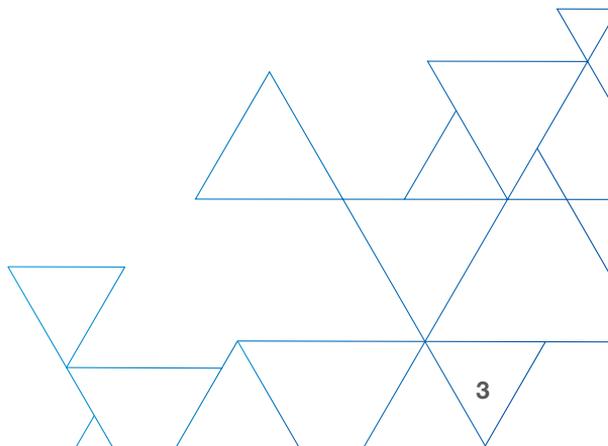
Alongside this work, we continued election readiness work for the 2024/25 federal election, including procurement activities for key contracts associated with election delivery.

Redistribution processes also began in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory this year.

Trust

Public trust in the AEC is intrinsically linked to trust in the integrity of Australia's electoral processes and results. Maintaining this trust is a critical part of our role in conducting successful electoral events and defending Australia's democracy.

While the global, open information ecosystem has countless benefits, it can also be difficult for voters to discern factual and authoritative sources of information from false or misleading information.



Due to the exponential growth of digital information and communication technologies, and misinformation and disinformation questioning the integrity of electoral processes, voter trust in electoral processes can no longer be taken for granted. Australia is facing several new and evolving threats to the perceived and actual integrity of the electoral system, which could impact trust in electoral results and democracy at large.

To further safeguard Australians' trust in the electoral process, we matured our Reputation Management System this year. This system guides AEC staff to uphold the AEC's positive reputation. It recognises and builds on the numerous operational, electoral integrity and reputation management activities already taking place across the AEC.

Transformation journey continues

Extensive work was undertaken as part of the AEC's Election Systems Modernisation program (Indigo) in 2023–24. Indigo is a once-in-a-generation investment to modernise Australia's election management systems, improve the citizen experience, and safeguard citizen data by replacing old election management systems with modern, secure and citizen-focused technology.

This year, we delivered new IT platforms, streamlined recruitment for our temporary staff, improved our contact centre operations and enhanced our security as part of the first tranche of work.

The modernisation of our election systems will improve our capacity to adapt to the ever-changing environment and citizen expectations, as well as effectively manage security risks by enhancing our ability to detect, prevent and respond to external interference in Australia's elections. This transformation will help ensure ongoing integrity of the electoral system, enable us to think well beyond the next election, and expand our capability to meet the needs of all Australians.

Improvements for our staff

We made a great many improvements for the benefit of our people this year, which is why I am also proud to say the AEC is a great place to work. These include a significant focus on training and development initiatives and a range of activities to support the wellbeing of our staff.

We have well-established initiatives to monitor, evaluate and maintain health, safety and wellbeing across our agency. We provide access to quality training for our staff, including critical operational and leadership capabilities to support election readiness and delivery.

Surveys consistently show that our staff have a profound sense of affinity with our agency purpose, they feel they can make a difference and are working towards a common and meaningful goal.

Sharing global best practice

The AEC continued our commitment to supporting democracy and building the technical capacity of electoral management bodies in the region, including supporting the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission in the delivery of the Joint Elections in April 2024.

In partnership with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, we also delivered the virtual Canberra Series Seminars on Electoral Integrity, which brought together more than 200 electoral practitioners from around 40 electoral jurisdictions across the world. The series culminated in an international conference at the Australian National University's National Security College, where electoral commissioners heard from experts and exchanged best practice responses to maintain electoral integrity.

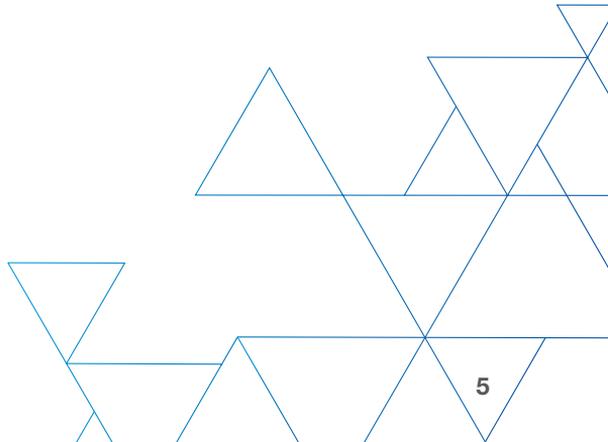
Looking forward

Our election readiness work continues as we prepare to be ready, at any time, to deliver the largest federal election in Australia's history. While maintaining the electoral roll for all jurisdictions in Australia, we also expect to complete redistributions in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory in 2024–25.

The AEC is a service delivery agency that also has an important regulatory function. We must be rigorous and above reproach in both domains.

Alongside this work, our transformation journey continues – further bolstering the integrity and security of electoral processes and systems, and our ability to respond to future challenges.

We will also continue to monitor the environment and work closely with our partners, to maintain trust in electoral results and Australia's democratic processes.



SECTION 02

Overview of the AEC

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

The AEC's role, functions and
organisational structure

Overview of the AEC

Role

The AEC is the Australian Government's independent electoral body.

Our purpose is to:

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

Functions

In line with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act) and the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984* (Referendum Act), we achieve our purpose by:

- conducting successful electoral events, including federal elections, by-elections and referendums, and industrial elections and ballots
- ensuring confidence in the Commonwealth Electoral Roll
- regulating political party registrations and financial disclosure
- supporting electoral redistributions
- undertaking public awareness activities.

We also provide a range of electoral information and education programs both in Australia and in support of Australia's national interests.

Our purpose aligns directly with our intended outcome, as expressed in the AEC Portfolio Budget Statements. We are funded to deliver our outcome through one program:

1.1 To deliver electoral events.

Organisational structure

The AEC is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and an independent statutory authority, established under the Electoral Act.

Our agency has:

- a national office in Canberra
- state and territory offices
- divisional offices.

Our Executive Leadership Team is made up of the Electoral Commissioner, who is appointed under the Electoral Act and is responsible for managing and operating the AEC, a Deputy Electoral Commissioner and four First Assistant Commissioners.

The organisational chart on **pages 10 and 11** provides details of our senior executive and their responsibilities at 30 June 2024.

In addition, Section 6 of the Electoral Act establishes a three-person Commission. The Commission has exclusive powers, particularly in relation to electoral redistributions, political party registration, and funding and disclosure. At 30 June 2024, members of the Commission were:

- the Hon Justice Susan Kenny AM, Chairperson
- Mr Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner
- Dr David Gruen AO, Australian Statistician and non-judicial member.



Our vision

The AEC's vision is to be a leader in refining and delivering best practice in election management.

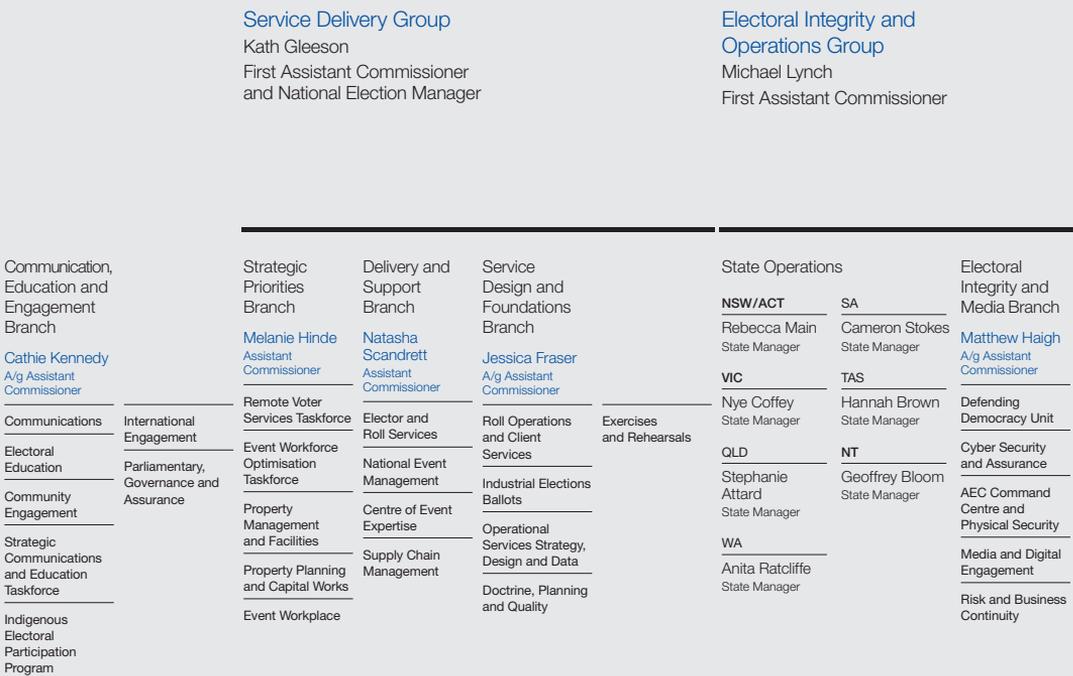
Figure 1: AEC organisation chart at 30 June 2024

Electoral Commissioner

Tom Rogers

Deputy Electoral Commissioner (Chief Operating Officer)

Jeff Pope



Enterprise Transformation Group

Thomas Ryan
First Assistant Commissioner

Chief Information Officer Division

Tania Wilson
First Assistant Commissioner

Enterprise Strategy and Transformation Division

Rhianne Jory
A/g First Assistant Commissioner

Enabling and Regulation Group

Rachael Spalding
First Assistant Commissioner

Chief Technology Officer Branch	Enterprise Digital Delivery Branch	Indigo Delivery Branch	Indigo Program Management Office Branch	Indigo Product and Design Branch	Enterprise Transformation Branch	People Branch	Legal Services Branch	Disclosure, Party Registration and Redistribution Branch	Finance and Corporate Performance Branch
Toby Wright A/g Assistant Commissioner	Toby Randell-Sly A/g Assistant Commissioner	Stewart Kerr Assistant Commissioner	Con Sfyris Assistant Commissioner	Karen Redhead Assistant Commissioner	Michael Van Belkom A/g Assistant Commissioner	Robyn Black Chief People Officer	Andrew Johnson Chief Legal Officer	Joanne Reid Assistant Commissioner	Sally So Chief Financial Officer
Enterprise Architecture	IT Solutions	Agile Delivery Teams (Tranche 1)	Program Planning and Reporting	Indigo Service Design and Business Analysis	Enterprise Change Management Office	Workforce and Engagement Strategies	Electoral Law	Regulatory Law	Financial Accounting and Services
AEC Service Operations and Management	ICT Testing and Assurance	Agile Delivery Teams (Tranche 2)	Indigo Governance and Assurance	Indigo Product Management	Data Capability Exchange	Employee Relations, Performance and Bargaining	Corporate Law	Party Registration and Redistribution	Corporate Performance and External Budgets
IT Infrastructure	IT Integration	Systems Teams	Program Support	T2B Future Planning	Information Management	National Training Unit	Disclosure and Compliance	Disclosure Reform Working Group	Strategic Sourcing and Systems
			ICT Vendor Management	Indigo Service Design and Strategy	Enterprise Transformation and Portfolio Management Office	WHS and Wellbeing			Management Accounting
			Digital Strategy Implementation and Agile Integration	Service Design and Assurance Lead		Payroll and Systems			
						Recruitment			
						TEW Support			
						TEW Modernisation Business Unit			

Australian Electoral Commission (the Commission)

Chairperson: the Hon Justice Susan Kenny AM

Electoral Commissioner: Mr Tom Rogers

Non-judicial member: Dr David Gruen AO, Australian Statistician

IT = Information Technology

ICT = Information and Communications Technology

WHS = Work Health and Safety

TEW = Temporary Election Workforce



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

SECTION 03

Performance report

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

Performance against the AEC's
purpose and key activities in
our Corporate Plan 2023–24
with reference to the Portfolio
Budget Statements

Performance report

Statement by Electoral Commissioner

I, Tom Rogers, as the Accountable Authority of the Australian Electoral Commission, present the agency's 2023–24 annual performance statements as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the agency's performance, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the Act.

Tom Rogers
Electoral Commissioner
10 October 2024

How we measure our performance

The AEC's performance is measured against the key activities described in our corporate plan. In 2023–24, we worked towards achieving our purpose and outcome through two key activities:

1. Maintain the integrity of electoral and regulatory processes.
2. Prepare for and deliver electoral events.

Our key activities guide our priorities and actions, while our performance management promotes continuous improvement.

We manage our performance against our key activities in relation to two cycles:

- four-year *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* performance cycle
- three-year federal election cycle.

The three-year electoral cycle focuses on the three phases of election preparedness in our Election Readiness Framework: lessons; implement change; and mobilisation.

Figure 2: The three phases of the AEC's Election Readiness Framework



Within this framework, we prepare for federal electoral events through our Election Ready Road Map, while balancing other priorities. Each phase of the framework directs our activities and provides a path towards delivering the next federal electoral event. These phases synchronise event preparation across the AEC to meet the Directed Level of Election Readiness. The Election Readiness Framework gives the Electoral Commissioner assurance that the AEC is at an appropriate 'level of readiness' to conduct a federal event when required.

Following the successful delivery of the referendum in 2023, the AEC has moved to the 'mobilisation' phase as we prepare for the next federal election.

We are using lessons from events to shape future organisational capability and drive modernisation efforts. In this way, we will ensure our systems remain fit for purpose in a constantly changing environment.

Annual performance statements

Our annual performance statements detail the AEC's performance against our two key activities.

Table 1 summarises our performance measures, functions and results for each key activity.

This is followed by discussion and performance details (in the tables on **pages 20 to 55**) which include the:

- **Intended result** – as set out in our Corporate Plan 2023–24
- **Performance measure** – from our Portfolio Budget Statements/Corporate Plan 2023–24
- **Source** – the data sources we use to assess our performance
- **Method and frequency** – how, and how often, the data is compiled
- **Target** – from our Portfolio Budget Statements/Corporate Plan 2023–24
- **Result** – whether we met our target
- **Explanation of result** – brief context for the result.

Table 1: Summary of results against performance measures for 2023–24

Outcome (Portfolio Budget Statements)/Purpose (Corporate Plan)	
Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services, and targeted education and public awareness programs.	
Key activity 1: Maintain the integrity of electoral and regulatory processes	
Performance measure	Result
Electoral roll management functions	
• Percentage of eligible voters enrolled (enrolment rate)	Met
• Percentage of 18 to 24-year-old Australians enrolled (youth enrolment rate)	Met
• Percentage of voters enrolled who turn out to vote at all federal electoral events (turnout rate)	Partly met
• Percentage of votes cast formally for the House of Representatives and Senate at next federal election or at a referendum or for by-elections (if any held)	Met
• Percentage accuracy of the Commonwealth Electoral Roll at the electoral division-level and individual address-level	Met
• Redistributions determined in accordance with the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Met
Regulatory functions	
• The AEC maintains an up-to-date public register of political parties	Met
• Disclosure returns are published and regulated in accordance with timeframes in the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> and the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>	Met
• The AEC conducts compliance reviews in line with the approved program	Partly met
Key activity 2: Prepare for and deliver electoral events	
Performance measure	Result
Election readiness functions	
• AEC-wide readiness achieved by the directed level of electoral event readiness date	Met
• Deliver public awareness and education products that target all Australian citizens aged 18 years and over	Met
• Percentage of the temporary election workforce (TEW) employees completing election training relevant to their role	Met
• Voting locations (including early voting centres and polling places) published on the AEC website before polling commences	Met
• Undertake a lessons management approach to delivering electoral events	Met
Elections, by-elections and referendums functions	
• The election result – for each event – is delivered in accordance with the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> or the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>	Met
• Industrial election and ballot results are delivered with integrity and withstand scrutiny	Met

Key activity 1

Maintain the integrity of electoral and regulatory processes

The AEC maintains an impartial electoral system and processes for elections, referendums and by-elections in accordance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act) and the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984* (Referendum Act). An essential feature of Australian democracy is an electoral system that operates with a high level of integrity. As the Australian Government's independent electoral body, the AEC considers electoral integrity as central to our values of quality, agility and professionalism.

To maintain electoral integrity, we regulate important aspects of the electoral system. This includes:

- maintaining a complete and accurate Commonwealth Electoral Roll
- driving voter turnout
- supporting electoral redistributions
- registering political parties
- regulating the funding and disclosure scheme for political entities and individuals
- regulating the authorisation of electoral communications.

This ensures all eligible Australians can enrol, nominate as candidates, vote and have their votes counted accurately and securely.

The AEC manages
an electoral system
that is free, fair and
appropriately regulated.

Electoral roll management functions

Key electoral roll activities

The Commonwealth Electoral Roll – the list of Australians eligible to vote at federal electoral events – is integral to election delivery. Our key electoral roll activities are:

- encouraging eligible voters to enrol and keep their enrolment up-to-date
- conducting targeted enrolment programs
- processing enrolments
- measuring and driving accuracy and integrity of the roll.

We also support state, territory and local government elections by managing the electoral roll through joint roll arrangements.

Providing roll data extracts

Under the Electoral Act, the AEC provides electoral roll extracts to members of the House of Representatives, senators, federally registered political parties, federal government departments and agencies, and other specified recipients. This includes providing identity verification against the electoral roll through a restricted access Document Verification Service administered by the Attorney-General's Department.

Unauthorised access to electoral roll information is prohibited by law.

We provide guidelines to help entitled entities or their delegates understand when and how they can use electoral roll data, as well as penalties, privacy and security requirements.

A list of recipients of roll information and extracts is in **Appendix C: Commonwealth Electoral Roll information**. Further details can be found at www.aec.gov.au

Enhancing the roll through continuous improvement

The electoral roll continues to grow, with more than 17.8 million Australians enrolled at 30 June 2024. This represents 97.9 per cent of the eligible population.

We remain committed to further enhancing enrolment services through a program of user-centric, continuous improvement that incrementally gives more eligible Australians the chance to exercise their democratic responsibilities. AEC enrolment campaigns are part of our legislative obligations under the Electoral Act to communicate about election events and services, as well as maintain an electoral roll that is as accurate and complete as possible.

Enabling online enrolment

The AEC works to increase the number of people using our online enrolment facilities – the Online Enrolment Service and webforms – to enrol or update their details. In 2023–24, we processed:

- more than 3 million enrolment transactions
- approximately 720,000 transactions from the Federal Direct Enrolment Update program, which allows the AEC to directly enrol and update voter details using third-party data
- approximately 1.7 million transactions submitted via the Online Enrolment Service
- a further 115,000 transactions submitted via webforms or forms downloaded from the AEC website.

Record enrolment for 2023 referendum

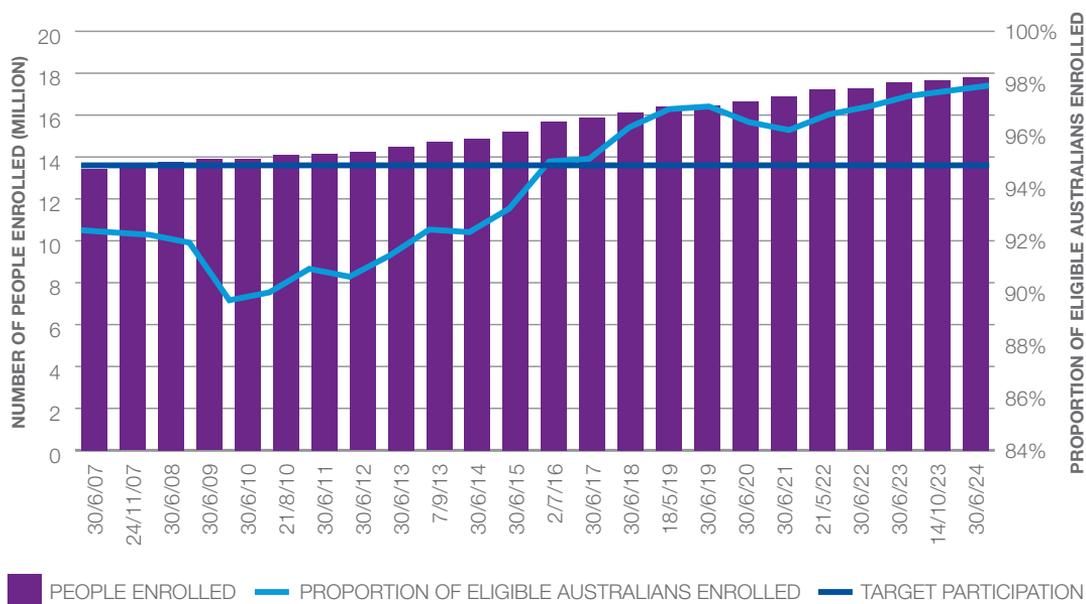
The federal electoral roll for the 2023 referendum provided the best base for democratic participation of any federal electoral event to date. It was the highest enrolment rate in the history of federal electoral events in Australia, including a record high Indigenous enrolment rate and a record high youth enrolment rate.

Between the announcement of the referendum date on 30 August 2023 and the close of rolls on 18 September 2023, we processed around 455,000 enrolment transactions, including 79,000 roll additions and 376,000 updates.

We provided enrolment services online, with paper enrolment forms also available from AEC offices, partner government agencies and selected Australia Post outlets in regional and remote areas. Completed paper applications could be uploaded to the AEC website or lodged by email, mail or in person. Over 90 per cent of enrolment applications were submitted online.

A record 17,676,347 voters were enrolled at the close of rolls on Monday 18 September 2023, an increase of 2.6 per cent since the close of rolls for the 2022 federal election. With an estimated eligible population of 18.1 million, this represented an enrolment rate for the referendum of 97.7 per cent, an increase of 0.9 percentage points compared with the 2022 federal election. This exceeded our target of 95 per cent in all states and territories except the Northern Territory. However, there was still a marked increase in the Northern Territory enrolment rate, up from 85.6 per cent at the 2022 federal election to 91.7 per cent for the 2023 referendum.

Figure 3: Enrolment rate trend from 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2024



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ enrolment increase

More First Nations people were enrolled to vote for the 2023 referendum than ever before. The Indigenous enrolment rate was 94.1 per cent, compared with 81.7 per cent at the 2022 federal election.

This reflects a steady increase over the past few years, with targeted activities through our Enhancing Indigenous Electoral Participation project, ongoing communication campaigns and engagement work to increase Indigenous enrolment. We established local partnerships and worked with state and territory agencies on an extensive remote enrolment program in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. We also delivered culturally appropriate information and education sessions.

We continue to work with First Nations people to enrol and keep their enrolment current through a multi-faceted approach, which includes:

- enhancing the Federal Direct Enrolment Update program

- expanding evidence of identity to include Medicare cards
- using an online attester capability
- improving accessibility of online forms
- improving access to physical enrolment forms.

We are also continuing targeted education by building partnerships with community groups that have connection and reach into the communities we are seeking to engage. Further, we are extending the effectiveness of direct enrolment processes for First Nations people. This involves using trusted third-party data to enrol people without them having to initiate the transaction – aligning with our ongoing improvements in user-centric service design.

The estimated Indigenous enrolment rate was 92.9 per cent in June 2024, a slight decline attributable in large part to an increase in the eligible population.

Movement in the enrolment rate is a natural part of Australia’s electoral cycle and reflects the dynamic and active nature of the national roll. We continually monitor and quality assure the roll to ensure this national asset remains accurate, up to date and maintained to the highest levels of integrity.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen’s right to vote		
Performance measure		
Percentage of eligible voters enrolled (enrolment rate)	Source	Electoral roll and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population data.
	Method & frequency	Calculated and reported internally monthly and published quarterly on the AEC website. Reported annually at the end of each financial year and at close of rolls for a federal electoral event.
	Target	≥95%
	Result	 Met
<p>Explanation of result: At 30 June 2024, electoral roll completeness – measured through the enrolment rate – was 97.9%. More than 17.8 million Australians are enrolled to vote, the largest number of eligible electors on the electoral roll since Federation. We continue to exceed our target enrolment rate of 95%.</p>		

Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen’s right to vote		
Performance measure		
Percentage of 18 to 24-year-old Australians enrolled (youth enrolment rate)	Source	Roll data from AEC enrolment systems and ABS population data.
	Method & frequency	Calculated monthly and published quarterly on the AEC website. Reported annually at the end of each financial year and at close of rolls for a federal electoral event.
	Target	≥87%
	Result	 Met
<p>Explanation of result: At 30 June 2024, the youth enrolment rate was 90.2%.</p>		

Voter turnout and percentage of formal votes

A total of 15.9 million Australians voted in the 2023 referendum, including via postal, pre-poll and telephone votes, as well as on the day. Most votes were formal, with an informality rate of just 0.98 per cent.

The turnout rate of 89.95 per cent was slightly lower than the 2022 federal election (90.5 per cent) and the 1999 referendum (95.1 per cent), but because of the record-high enrolment rate, the referendum saw the largest number of voters turnout in Australia's history.

We publish voter turnout rates at www.aec.gov.au

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen's right to vote

Performance measure

Percentage of voters enrolled who turn out to vote at all federal electoral events (turnout rate)	Source	AEC Tally Room.
	Method & frequency	Number of ballot papers admitted into scrutiny as a proportion of enrolled population.
	Target	≥90% for federal electoral events. Where applicable, turnout rate will be reported for by-elections.
	Result	 Partly met

Explanation of result: The turnout for the 2023 referendum was 89.95%. The AEC conducted three by-elections in 2023–24:

- division of Fadden on 15 July 2023, with turnout of 72.54%
- division of Dunkley on 2 March 2024, with turnout of 83.79%
- division of Cook on 13 April 2024, with turnout of 82.28%.

Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen's right to vote

Performance measure

Percentage of votes cast formally for the House of Representatives and Senate at next federal election or at a referendum or for by-elections (if any held)	Source	AEC Tally Room.
	Method & frequency	Percentage of formal votes cast as a proportion of all votes cast.
	Target	≥90% for federal electoral events. Where applicable, formality rate will be reported for by-elections.
	Result	 Met

Explanation of result: The formality rate for the 2023 referendum was 99.02%. For the three by-elections the AEC conducted in 2023–24:

- Fadden formality rate was 93.20%
- Dunkley formality rate was 95.86%
- Cook formality rate was 93.24%.

Assessing the accuracy of the electoral roll

To support electoral integrity, the AEC undertakes an Annual Roll Integrity Review. This involves assessing the accuracy of division and address data on the electoral roll. We do this by comparing AEC data with trusted third-party data from other agencies, such as Services Australia and the Australian Taxation Office.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen’s right to vote		
Performance measure		
Percentage accuracy of the Commonwealth Electoral Roll at the electoral division-level and individual address-level	Source	The Annual Roll Integrity Review, which measures the accuracy and integrity of electoral roll data.
	Method & frequency	AEC roll data and other agency data, calculated, compared and publicly published annually and at the end of each financial year.
	Target	≥95% (division) and ≥90% (address)
	Result	■ Met
Explanation of result: The accuracy and integrity of the electoral roll was 98% at the division-level and 94% at the individual address-level, which exceeds our targets.		

Supporting electoral redistributions

A redistribution of electoral divisions is undertaken in accordance with Part IV of the Electoral Act. Redistributions ensure, as close as practical, an equal number of voters in each electoral division within a state or territory. Each member in the House of Representatives represents an electoral division.

A redistribution is required when:

- there is a change in the number of members in the House of Representatives that a state or territory is entitled to; or
- the number of electors in more than one-third of the electoral divisions of a state (or one electoral division in the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory) deviates from the average divisional enrolment of that state or territory by more than plus or minus 10 per cent for a period of more than two months; or
- seven years have elapsed since the last redistribution was determined.

In 2023–24, the AEC supported the timely conduct of four redistributions. This included assisting the work of the respective independent Redistribution Committees, which are individually responsible for an initial redistribution proposal.

In 2023–24, redistributions began in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. They are expected to be completed in 2024–25.

The redistributions in the three states were required following a determination of the entitlement to members of the House of Representatives for all states and territories. The Electoral Commissioner made the determination in July 2023, based on official population figures.

The population in Western Australia had increased sufficiently to gain one seat, while the statistics in New South Wales and Victoria required these states to decrease by one seat:

- Western Australia: 15 to 16 seats
- New South Wales: 47 to 46 seats
- Victoria: 39 to 38 seats.

The redistribution in the Northern Territory was required because seven years had elapsed since the most recent redistribution that was determined on 7 February 2017.

Based on population figures, the House of Representatives entitlement for the Northern Territory remains unchanged at two members. However, the redistribution process provides opportunities for the public to suggest changes to the electoral division boundaries or the name of the electoral divisions.

The redistribution changes will result in the total size of the House of Representatives decreasing from 151 to 150 members for the next parliament.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

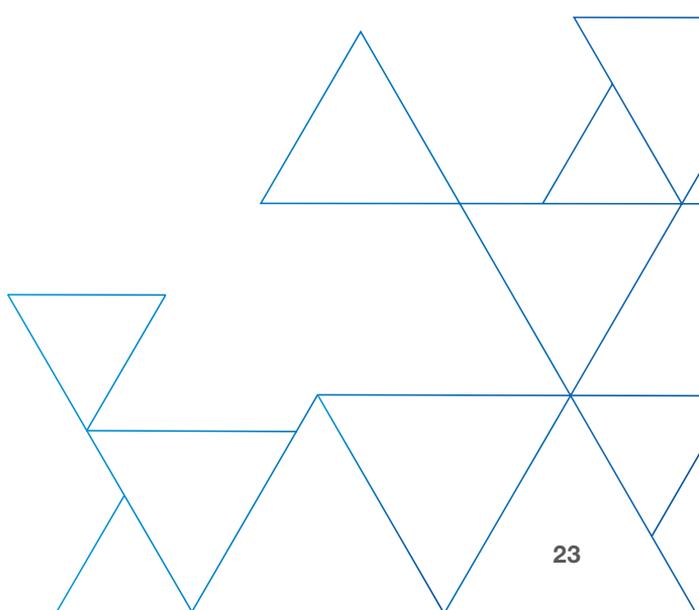
Intended result 1.1 Deliver the franchise – an Australian citizen’s right to vote

Performance measure

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

Source	Government Gazette and newspaper notices, and the date of letters to electors lodged with Australia Post.
Method & frequency	For each redistribution, publication of notices and letters to electors comply with requirements in the Electoral Act.
Target	All redistributions are determined in accordance with the planned determination date and impacted electors are notified prior to the relevant election.
Result	■ Met

Explanation of result: The AEC commenced redistributions in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia when notices were published in the Gazette on 9 August 2023. The redistribution in the Northern Territory commenced when a notice was published in the Gazette on 22 February 2024.



Redistributions: With Australia's population booming, why are electoral divisions being abolished?

In the last 40 years, Australia's population has grown by more than 10 million people, almost doubling in size. With a higher population comes a higher density of voters for each politician to represent in parliament. For example, in 1984 when the House of Representatives was last expanded, New South Wales had an average of 66,000 (approximately) voters per electoral division, while today the average is around 121,000. So why are seats being abolished in New South Wales and Victoria?

There is no fixed number of seats for the House of Representatives – the total number fluctuates with population changes. Since 1984, the number has varied between 147 and 151. The number, based on the principle of 'one vote, one value', is determined by a series of formulas and statistics to ensure that, as far as practicable, all Australians are equally represented.

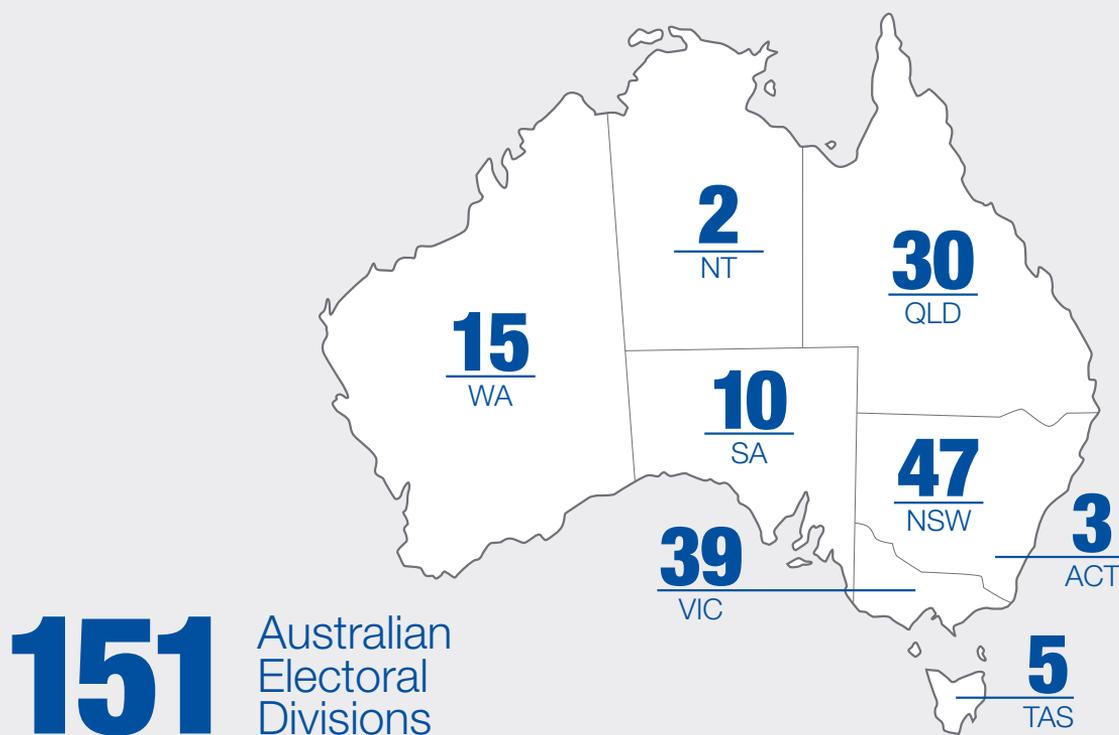
Twelve months after each federal election, the Electoral Commissioner uses the formulas set out in the Electoral Act and the population of Australia to determine how many seats in the House of Representatives each state and territory is entitled to, based on their proportionate size to the rest of the country.

Although the population of all states and territories has grown since the Electoral Commissioner's last determination in 2020, Victoria and New South Wales have grown at a much slower rate than the rest of the country. This has resulted in those states being entitled to fewer seats in the House of Representatives. On the other hand, Western Australia has grown at a much faster pace, which has resulted in that state gaining an extra seat.

Information on determining the number of seats, including details on the July 2023 entitlement determination, is available at www.aec.gov.au

More details are in **Appendix F: Electoral redistribution data**.

Figure 4: Australia's 151 electoral divisions at 30 June 2024



151 Australian Electoral Divisions

New South Wales

Banks	Macarthur
Barton	Mackellar
Bennelong	McMahon
Berowra	Macquarie
Blaxland	Mitchell
Bradfield	Newcastle
Calare	New England
Chifley	North Sydney
Cook	Page
Cowper	Parke
Cunningham	Parramatta
Dobell	Paterson
Eden-Monaro	Reid
Farrer	Richmond
Fowler	Riverina
Gilmore	Robertson
Grayndler	Shortland
Greenway	Sydney
Hughes	Warringah
Hume	Watson
Hunter	Wentworth
Kingsford Smith	Werriwa
Lindsay	Whitlam
Lyne	

Tasmania

Bass	Franklin
Braddon	Lyons
Clark	

Victoria

Aston	Holt
Ballarat	Hotham
Bendigo	Indi
Bruce	Isaacs
Calwell	Jagajaga
Casey	Kooyong
Chisholm	Lalor
Cooper	La Trobe
Corangamite	McEwen
Corio	Macnamara
Deakin	Mallee
Dunkley	Maribyrnong
Flinders	Melbourne
Fraser	Menzies
Gellibrand	Monash
Gippsland	Nicholls
Goldstein	Scullin
Gorton	Wannon
Hawke	Wills
Higgins	

South Australia

Adelaide	Kingston
Barker	Makin
Boothby	Mayo
Grey	Spence
Hindmarsh	Sturt

Australian Capital Territory

Bean	Canberra	Fenner
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Western Australia

Brand	Hasluck
Burt	Moore
Canning	O'Connor
Cowan	Pearce
Curtin	Perth
Durack	Swan
Forrest	Tangney
Fremantle	

Northern Territory

Lingiari	Solomon
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Queensland

Blair	Hinkler
Bonner	Kennedy
Bowman	Leichhardt
Brisbane	Lilley
Capricornia	Longman
Dawson	McPherson
Dickson	Maranoa
Fadden	Moncrieff
Fairfax	Moreton
Fisher	Oxley
Flynn	Petrie
Forde	Rankin
Griffith	Ryan
Groom	Wide Bay
Herbert	Wright

Regulatory functions

Administering political party registrations

The AEC helps stakeholders carry out their obligations and responsibilities under the Electoral Act and Referendum Act.

This includes providing information and services to support political party registrations and maintaining an up-to-date Register of Political Parties.

In 2023–24:

- two new political parties were registered
- seven political parties were deregistered
- three decisions made by a delegate to deregister parties were reviewed and affirmed by the Electoral Commission
- one review of a delegate’s decision was under consideration (at 30 June 2024).

The register of political parties is published in our Transparency Register at www.aec.gov.au

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.2 Exercise our regulatory functions		
Performance measure		
The AEC maintains an up-to-date public register of political parties	Source	Electoral Act (s125 (1) of Part XI), AEC funding and disclosure, Client and Return Management system and www.aec.gov.au
	Method & frequency	No identified breaches of s125 (1) of Part XI of the Electoral Act.
	Target	Target: Compliance with s125(1) of Part XI of the Electoral Act.
	Result	 Met

Explanation of result: The AEC maintained a publicly available Register of Political Parties during the year, consistent with the Electoral Act. The register was updated after every party registration application or review had been finalised. These included new parties, changes to existing information, appointments or revocations of a party official, and deregistration applications.

Publishing financial disclosures

Under the Commonwealth funding and financial disclosure scheme, we require groups and individuals to lodge annual or electoral period financial disclosure returns. Financial information about donations to political parties and election campaigns can be securely lodged online through the AEC’s eReturns system.

The AEC also administers public funding for political parties and candidates contesting federal elections and by-elections. We publish the election funding rates at www.aec.gov.au

In 2023–24, as part of the Electoral Act financial disclosure scheme:

- 41 candidate returns were received
- 597 annual financial disclosure returns, including 49 amendments, were received
- 85 per cent of returns were completed online
- 14 compliance reviews of annual financial disclosure returns were conducted, resulting in nine amended returns lodged by the party or entity

- five compliance reviews of election funding claims related to the 2022 federal election were conducted
- four compliance checks were performed, over by-election election funding claims, prior to determinations being finalised.

As part of the Referendum Act referendum financial disclosure scheme:

- 347 referendum disclosure returns, including 31 amendments, were received
- 88.5 per cent of returns were completed online.

Financial disclosures are in our Transparency Register at www.aec.gov.au

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.2 Exercise our regulatory functions

Performance measure

Disclosure returns are published and regulated in accordance with the timeframes in the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> and the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>	Source	For annual returns and election returns, the source is the Transparency Register which can be found at www.aec.gov.au
	Method & frequency	Annual returns measured annually. Election returns measured for each event.
	Target	a) Annual returns published on the first working day in February. b) Election returns published 24 weeks after polling day for each electoral event.
	Result	 Met

Explanation of result:

- a) The 2023–24 annual disclosure returns received by the AEC were published on 1 February 2024.
- b) All election returns were published on the Transparency Register within the required 24 weeks after polling day for each event, with the:
- Aston by-election returns published on 18 September 2023
 - Fadden by-election returns published on 2 January 2024
 - referendum returns published on 2 April 2024.
- For the 2022 federal election, the AEC engaged a law firm to undertake enforcement action in relation to six candidates (five candidates and one political party) for outstanding disclosure returns. This action continued into 2023–24 with the following outcomes:
- two enforceable undertakings were issued in relation to non-lodgement (returns subsequently lodged)
 - three candidates lodged returns late and have not signed enforceable undertakings
 - one candidate return is still outstanding, with enforcement action ongoing.
- Further enforcement action is underway in relation to two outstanding 2022–23 annual disclosure returns. Outcomes of enforcement action will be reported once these matters have been finalised.

Transparency Register

We maintain the Transparency Register with information about political parties, significant third parties, associated entities, members of the House of Representatives, senators, third parties, Senate groups and donors registered with or recognised by the AEC.

The public can access information in the Transparency Register, including the current register of entities, annual financial disclosure returns, referendum disclosure returns, enforceable undertakings and election funding claims.

AEC privacy update

Privacy and protecting personal information continued to be a focus for the AEC in 2023–24. Activities to improve privacy included implementing systems to reduce the manual handling of personal information and establishing an internal Privacy Advocates Network across the country. We also upgraded our processes for reporting, escalating and managing privacy incidents.

Through our innovative Indigo program to modernise AEC systems, we have embedded the Privacy by Design principles into all stages of system design, project planning and implementation.

We have implemented a robust privacy impact assessment process to identify and minimise privacy risks in any new project or significant process change. A Register of Privacy Impact Assessments is available on the AEC website at www.aec.gov.au

Transparency Register

In May 2024, the AEC discovered an inadvertent data release that involved the publishing of residential addresses of election candidates, including some current parliamentarians, on our Transparency Register. In some cases, these candidates were silent electors. Our investigation revealed the data release was caused by an internal process issue and not a cyber security release.

The AEC took the Transparency Register offline within hours of discovering this internal process issue. The AEC contacted individuals who either were or have since become a silent elector, as they may have been at greater risk due to the incident. The Electoral Commissioner initiated a fulsome external review into the data release, for the AEC to understand how the release occurred and to identify opportunities to continue to improve our privacy outcomes. The final report for this independent review can be found on our website.

Lessons learned

The Transparency Register has now been reinstated on the website without the addresses of candidates. All the required disclosure data is available within the Register. The AEC is obliged to publish disclosure returns, and the independent external review of the incident recommended amendments to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* to enable the AEC to redact, remove or amend personal information in disclosure returns, which we are currently required to publish.

The AEC has a strong focus on protecting personal information in system design and output. We pay particular attention to protecting silent electors.

The AEC has enhanced governance over project management and information and communication technology projects to minimise the risk of future privacy incidents. We have implemented a robust legal and privacy assurance process for the Indigo program, and we will regularly review the management of personal information holdings and data flows, in particular where silent elector information is involved.

Compliance reviews

To support the integrity of the financial disclosures, the AEC undertakes an annual compliance program of disclosure returns. This involves examining a sample of lodged disclosure returns using a risk-based approach to compliance.

We publish compliance reviews at www.aec.gov.au

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 1

Intended result 1.2 Exercise our regulatory functions

Performance measure

The AEC conducts compliance reviews in line with the approved program

Source	Compliance reviews can be found at www.aec.gov.au
Method & frequency	Compliance reviews measured annually as at reporting date.
Target	Compliance reviews completed annually compared to the approved program.
Result	■ Partly met

Explanation of result: We undertake regular compliance reviews examining a sample of disclosure returns and use a risk-based approach to compliance. The compliance review program runs on a calendar year as opposed to a financial year. In 2023–24, the AEC completed 14 compliance reviews of annual financial disclosure returns and five compliance reviews on election funding claims relating to the 2022 federal election.

Compliance checks over by-election election funding claims (prior to payment of election funding claims being made) have been introduced during 2023–24. The AEC performed four compliance checks over by-election data.

At 30 June 2024, 11 reviews from the 2023 program were in progress (including four issued to the client in draft for comment).

A total of 72 compliance reviews were approved for commencement of the 2024 compliance program. This is a higher number than the regular program due to the inclusion of 50 returns for the 2023 referendum.

The number of reviews completed is lower than anticipated due to the impact of the 2023 referendum and work associated with the three by-elections.

Key activity 2

Prepare for and deliver electoral events

Electoral event delivery is more complex than ever before, and the AEC is meeting the challenges of this environment by operating in ways beyond the traditional expectations of electoral administrators. We focus on actively promoting the positive, trusted reputation of the Australian electoral system.

We aim to provide the best possible electoral services and events to stakeholders and the public within this complex environment. Our operating context includes the exponential growth of digital information and increasing community expectations.

To prepare for and deliver electoral events, we undertake a range of activities and have supporting processes in place to maintain quality and maximise the efficient use of resources.

This includes:

- ensuring AEC-wide readiness to conduct successful electoral events in line with legislation
- delivering public awareness and education programs
- engaging and managing the temporary election workforce
- providing voter services
- undertaking a lessons management approach to continually improve.

Election readiness functions

Conducting successful electoral events

We deliver federal electoral events, industrial elections, protected action ballots, and Torres Strait Regional Authority elections in accordance with the relevant legislation and rules. In addition, we conduct Senate special counts.¹

It is compulsory for all eligible Australian citizens to enrol and vote in federal elections, by-elections and referendums. We support this by:

- providing a range of enrolment and voting options and supporting greater equity of access
- monitoring and responding to voter turnout and formality.

We use an Election Readiness Framework, with associated dates outlining the Directed Level of Election Readiness, to guide operational planning for federal electoral events. AEC efforts are coordinated and assured through adherence to the Election Ready Road Map, which outlines tasks and activities to be undertaken ahead of key readiness dates.

The AEC is committed to ongoing improvement of our services and engagement with voters to best understand their needs.

¹ A Senate special count may occur when a vacancy in the Senate (that is not a causal vacancy) should be filled. This is determined by the High Court of Australia sitting as the Court of Disputed Returns.

On 14 October 2023, the AEC delivered the first referendum in nearly a quarter of a century. During 2023–24, we also conducted by-elections in the seats of Fadden, Dunkley and Cook. Results for these electoral events can be found at the AEC Tally Room website, at <https://results.aec.gov.au/>

Continuous improvement

The way we hold elections continues to evolve, to meet increasing public and stakeholder expectations and the challenges presented by a dynamic operating environment. Each election event is carefully analysed internally and externally. Lessons are documented, leading to continuous improvement, doctrine and protocols. This is informed by the AEC's lessons management approach and the Quality Management System.

The time between electoral events allows for internal and external scrutiny, legislation changes and lessons management to be incorporated into the learning cycle. This allows AEC staff, contractors and temporary workforce to prepare to deliver the next electoral event.

Doctrine at the AEC

Doctrine is one of the AEC's most important assets. It enables the collective understanding and sharing of our agreed approach, including how we learn and apply correct practice. Our doctrine is drafted with users in mind, and tested to ensure it works for all our employees.

Our doctrine, values and behaviours form the foundations for the way we work, supporting electoral integrity and maintaining community trust across everything we do.

The AEC Doctrine Framework sets out how our existing and new doctrine is developed and implemented across the agency. Our doctrine is not merely a set of guidelines.

It serves to ensure we uphold the highest standards of integrity in everything we do.

Quality Management System

In 2024, we established the Quality Management System (QMS) as a keystone resource for the AEC. The QMS helps us understand what doctrine we need, through business process mapping of the activities we undertake. Our QMS also shows us how to audit our doctrine to make sure it remains effective.

Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce

The Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce (EIAT) comprises relevant agencies across federal government including the AEC. Members work together to provide information and advice to the Electoral Commissioner on matters that may compromise the real or perceived integrity of a federal electoral event.

During 2023–24, the EIAT provided timely and coordinated advice on matters relating to the integrity of the 2023 Fadden by-election, 2023 referendum, 2024 Dunkley by-election and 2024 Cook by-election. EIAT agencies did not identify any foreign interference, or any other interference, that compromised the delivery of these events and would undermine the confidence of the Australian people in the results of these events. The EIAT also continued preparations to support the 2024/25 federal election.

Following the lessons process of the 2023 referendum, the EIAT reviewed and updated its operating model and 2024/25 federal election work plan.

At the request of the relevant state electoral commissioners, the EIAT also provided support for the 2024 Tasmanian state election and the 2024 South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament election.

The EIAT comprises the:

- Australian Electoral Commission
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
- Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Federal Police
- Australian Signals Directorate
- Australian Security Intelligence Organisation
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)
- Office of National Intelligence.

The same members are also represented on the EIAT Board, along with the:

- Attorney-General's Department
- Department of Finance
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Defending Democracy Unit

Through our Defending Democracy Unit, the AEC responds in a coordinated and consistent manner to any threats to electoral integrity and Australia's democracy. The unit also provides the secretariat for the EIAT.

In 2023–24, the unit oversaw referendum integrity, counter interference initiatives, and worked closely with online media platforms and other government agencies through the EIAT. Together, we checked for potential threats to integrity, including cyber or physical security incidents and foreign interference.

The unit continues to monitor the rapidly changing information ecosystem, including the rise in electoral misinformation and disinformation. We also note the influence of global events on electoral service delivery and public perceptions of the electoral process. This includes work relating to reputation management.

Public trust and reputation management

Public trust in the AEC is intrinsically linked to trust in the integrity of Australia's electoral processes and results. Maintaining this trust is a critical part of our role in conducting successful electoral events and defending Australia's democracy.

This year, our Defending Democracy Unit built on work to update the AEC's Reputation Management 'Strategy' to an all-encompassing Reputation Management 'System' (RMS), and public release of an executive summary. We also finalised and released the internal RMS. The RMS guides AEC staff to uphold the AEC's positive reputation. It recognises and builds on the many operational, electoral integrity and reputation management activities already taking place across the AEC, to further safeguard Australians' trust in the electoral process.

In 2023–24, the AEC's efforts in this area included the initiatives outlined below.

Disinformation register

We used a disinformation register for the 2023 referendum, the 2023 Fadden by-election and the 2024 Dunkley and Cook by-elections – debunking deliberately spread false information about referendum and election processes.

AEC disinformation registers now also include information for voters on techniques used by those trying to circulate misleading or deceptive information about an election or referendum process. Research shows once someone is familiar with the techniques, they are more likely to be able to identify disinformation and be more resistant to future attempts to manipulate them.

Social media and news media

During the year, our approach to media and public engagement for the referendum reinforced our efforts to address misinformation and disinformation and to uphold electoral integrity. For example we:

- educated voters about the need to ‘Stop and consider’ the source of information
- developed social media relationships to address electoral disinformation posted on key platforms
- used the AEC’s own social media and online platforms to respond to voter questions and post a series of animated videos addressing potential misinformation or disinformation and to educate the public on election and referendum processes
- made ourselves available to the news media as the experts on referendum issues and processes.

Details are in the Public awareness, education and engagement section on **page 36**.

AEC Command Centre

The AEC Command Centre provides a secure, leading edge, central point of command with an overarching view of the AEC’s operations. It is integral to election readiness in terms of ensuring electoral integrity, driving nationally consistent service delivery, strengthening stakeholder confidence and mitigating potential risks posed to staff and voter safety. Our Command Centre engages across government to increase inter-agency collaboration, including working with the National Situation Room, the Australian Federal Police and Australia Post.

In 2023–24, the Command Centre went into ‘election mode’ for the referendum as well as the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections.

The centre provided the AEC senior executive and relevant governance forums with visibility, reporting and analysis during these federal events. The centre’s ability to rapidly assess and escalate issues supported timely decision-making, which ensured organisational agility. Early inter-agency engagement also helped resolve issues and ensure uninterrupted election delivery.

We have reviewed the Command Centre’s operations to ensure there is a focus on continual improvement ahead of the next federal election, including through data management and analysis.

Protective security

The safety of AEC staff and voters remains an absolute priority. The physical security environment for electoral events around the world continues to deteriorate, and Australia is not immune from threats of this nature.

The environment surrounding the 2023 referendum was different to any other electoral event in the AEC’s history. Where campaigners at federal elections are usually party affiliated, the referendum involved many individuals and entities campaigning who would not usually do so. This meant an increased AEC focus on authorisations, as well as funding and disclosure, to ensure appropriate education, regulation and compliance mechanisms were in place.

The contested information and security environment presented the AEC with new risks and challenges, particularly regarding physical and cyber security, and the strength of IT systems.

Our protective security team builds a robust culture through messaging – driven by senior manager support – and physical security upgrades, in line with our Protective Security Policy Framework obligations.

We undertake a comprehensive security risk assessment before each major electoral event, which is considered by the AEC Electoral Integrity Committee.

These assessments also cover broader environmental assessments by the national intelligence community. We implement risk mitigation strategies to ensure physical security risks remain at acceptable levels.

The AEC has commissioned the development of a Core Business Security Risk Assessment. It will provide recommendations to address security risks during both 'business as usual' periods and electoral events over a three-year cycle. This will improve the AEC security posture leading up to the next federal election and enhance our agency's security maturity level under the Protective Security Policy Framework.

Property management

Part of being election ready is making sure we have the property required to deliver electoral events.

The AEC manages a portfolio of 81 leases across 76 properties throughout Australia. These are mainly office spaces but also include three warehouses and five multipurpose sites (office and warehouse space), as well as the National Electoral Education Centre at Old Parliament House in Canberra. In addition, we leased 56 temporary counting centres for the 2023 referendum.

In 2023–24, we reapproached the market to source new accommodation for our national office staff in Canberra. The previous year, we had jointly approached the market with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Education. However, we were informed that the selected developer had terminated the planned project, resulting in the need to reapproach the market.

A second joint approach to market was released in November 2023 and at 30 June 2024, the tender evaluation process was ongoing.

Information technology

Delivering the AEC's core functions with integrity depends on reliable information technology (IT). In 2023–24, the AEC's Chief Information Officer Division prepared for and delivered IT operations to support the 2023 referendum, the 2023 Fadden by-election and the 2024 Dunkley and Cook by-elections. Activities included:

- testing critical election systems, applications and platforms to provide assurance for event readiness (including disaster recovery, penetration, and capacity/load testing)
- implementing system changes, enhancements and remediations to support these events
- providing IT infrastructure, including equipment used as part of the Mobile Office Solution to out-posted centres during an event.

The division also supported the delivery of the AEC's Indigo program, a citizen-centric, agile technology program to modernise Australia's election management system. This included providing the necessary IT environments, equipment and tools while also helping to recruit a significant number of technical staff. More details are in the following feature.

Modernising the AEC's election and enrolment systems

Indigo program to transform engines of democracy

The AEC's Indigo program is a once-in-a-generation investment to modernise Australia's election management systems. It will improve the citizen experience and safeguard citizen data by replacing old election management systems with modern, secure and citizen-focused technology.

This modernisation program will improve our capacity to adapt to the ever-changing environment and increasing citizen expectations. It will also help us effectively manage security risks by enhancing our ability to detect, prevent and respond to external interference in Australia's elections.

This transformation will reposition how we provide electoral services and ensure ongoing integrity of the electoral system. It is enabling us to think well beyond the next election and expand our capability to meet the needs of all Australians.

Phased delivery

The Indigo program is being delivered in tranches. Tranche 1 delivered:

- new IT platforms to ensure readiness for future planning
- streamlined recruitment and management of the AEC's temporary election workforce
- improved election contact centre operations to better facilitate voter self-service
- agile business processes to drive productivity
- delivery of the inaugural AEC Command Centre to support election delivery and daily operations
- enhanced security capabilities to support our coordination of federal elections.

Tranche 2 began from 1 July 2023 and builds on the core platforms and technology delivered in Tranche 1. It will deliver innovative solutions and decommission legacy platforms in between electoral cycles so that we can actively address electoral delivery risks as modernised systems go live.

This tranche will deliver business capabilities for electorate management, election planning, election delivery, and candidate management. Tranche 2 will be delivered in two phases:

- Phase A will build on the foundations laid in Tranche 1 to replace the legacy election management systems with modern technologies over four years to June 2027
- Phase B will replace and decommission the Roll Management System and associated systems (subject to consideration in the 2027–28 Budget).

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.1 The AEC maintains an appropriate level of election readiness		
Performance measure		
AEC-wide readiness achieved by the directed level of electoral event readiness date	Source	AEC electoral event frameworks.
	Method & frequency	Undertaken as required at key times prior to each electoral event.
	Target	Agency-wide readiness meets the directed level of electoral event readiness date.
	Result	 Met
<p>Explanation of result: This measure relates to federal elections only. Readiness checks at the directed level of electoral event readiness date show no significant barriers to overall election readiness. The process has matured and moved to multi-cycle election planning, overseen by management.</p>		

Public awareness, education and engagement

Our public awareness communication, education and engagement activities aim to support more than 17 million Australians to fulfil their right, and responsibility, to vote under Australia’s compulsory voting system.

We conducted more diverse and comprehensive communication, education and engagement than ever before to support participation for the 2023 referendum.

As this was the first referendum in 24 years, it was critical to ensure voters had access to accurate information about the process of voting and the administration of the event.

Referendum advertising campaign

The AEC ran a national, multi-channel, multi-phase advertising campaign to reach all people aged 18 and over to support their compulsory participation in the referendum.

Given the time since the last referendum, research showed low awareness and widespread misconceptions about referendums. For example, some believed voting was not compulsory, that you needed to enrol separately and that the result was not binding. People expected the AEC to educate them, and it was important to provide tailored information for those who needed more support to participate.

This included culturally and linguistically diverse audiences, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with disability, Australian voters overseas, and the large group (47 per cent) of people who had not voted in a referendum before, particularly young people.

The advertising campaign was delivered over five phases covering education, disinformation, enrolment, voter services and completing the ballot paper. Advertising channels included television, radio, online video, cinema, press, outdoor, and digital and social media. This incorporated channels for voters from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (such as SBS and ethnic press) and First Nations voters (such as NITV, Indigenous TV and in-language radio).

The campaign achieved unprecedented voter reach, including over 1 billion impressions of our advertisements on our digital and social channels, over 110 million completed video views, 22.5 million impressions on our Snapchat quiz, 6.5 million click-throughs to the AEC website, and 116,000 downloads of our first podcast series.

Public notice advertisements are part of our overall public information strategy and complement campaign advertising.

As required by the Referendum Act, the AEC advertised key information such as polling places and pre-poll centres. In addition, we published notices for remote voter services, event clashes (such as major sporting fixtures, concerts or festivals) and interstate voting centres.

This campaign featured paid advertising and organic (unpaid) content produced for social media.

As shown in this example, the aim was to educate people to stop and consider the source of information they see, hear or read.

Stop and consider campaign

Building on the ‘Stop and consider’ campaign launched ahead of the 2019 federal election, the AEC expanded on the advertising program for the referendum.

Figure 5: Example of our ‘Stop and consider’ advertising



Referendum Yes/No pamphlet

Legislative requirement

The Yes/No pamphlet is a legislative requirement unique to a referendum. The Referendum Act requires the AEC to print and distribute the Yes/No pamphlet with the cases for and against the proposed law to change the Constitution.

Your official Yes/No referendum pamphlet for the 2023 referendum contained the Yes and No cases as provided by parliamentarians, and a statement showing the proposed alterations to the Constitution text. We issued submission guidelines to parliamentarians to ensure their cases met the legislated requirements. The submitted cases were included exactly as provided, without alteration or amendment to content.

Cases presented equally

It was critical the Yes and No cases were treated and presented equally to minimise the risk of perceived bias towards either case. We commissioned research to inform how we could best present the Yes and No cases equally. The research tested design options to identify the most effective impartial treatment of the Yes and No cases, as well as clarity and readability of the design and layout.

Distribution

We received the Yes and No cases by 17 July 2023 and published the unformatted versions on the AEC website on 18 July 2023. These were replaced with the designed pamphlet on 21 July 2023.

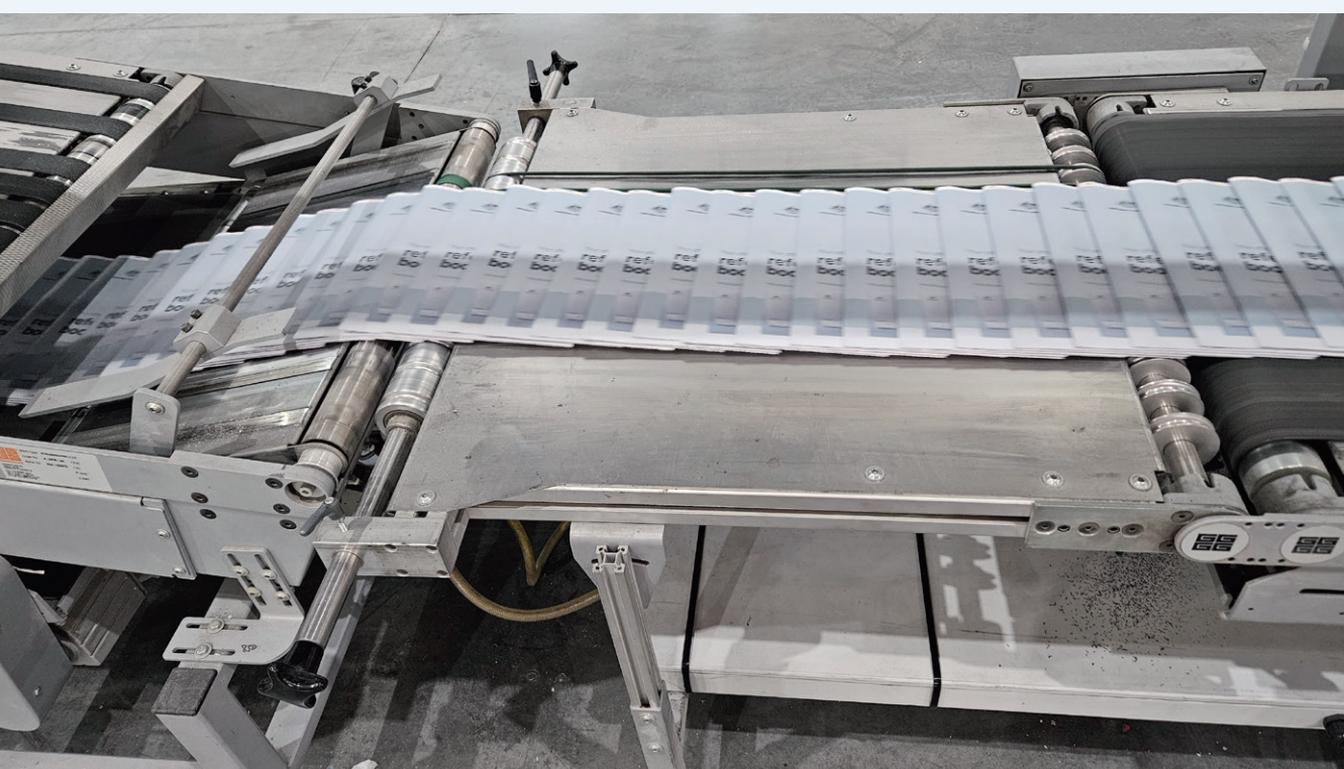
The legislation requires the AEC to send the Yes/No pamphlet to every address on the electoral roll not later than 14 days before voting day. To meet these requirements, the pamphlet was combined with the guide, *Your official guide to the 2023 referendum*, which included information on voting options, what happens at polling places and sample ballot papers with instructions on how to complete them. Given the delivery requirements under the legislation, the printing process began before the referendum date was announced on 30 August 2023 and, as a result, the pamphlets did not include the referendum date.

Printing and national distribution within tight timeframes was a complex logistical challenge. We worked closely with our suppliers to source sufficient and appropriate paper stock well in advance (from a certified pine plantation grown and milled in Tasmania), set achievable print and delivery schedules, obtain secure and accurate distribution data, and meet all quality control processes.

A total of 13 million copies were printed. Over 12.8 million copies were distributed to every Australian residential address on Australia Post records. We also provided pamphlets to caretakers, those in hotels, motels, settlements, caravan parks, marinas/houseboats, defence housing, hospital accommodation, convents, commercial premises with residences, and boarding schools. Bulk copies of the booklet were delivered to places such as refuges, prisons, aged care facilities, hostels and to overseas posts. Additional pamphlets were sent to historical, educational and archival facilities.

We produced versions of the pamphlet in translated and accessible formats, including international and First Nations languages, and a version for people who are blind or have low vision.

Accessible formats were made available online, including large print, e-text and audio, with e-Braille and hard copy versions available on request.



Printing and collating of the Yes/No pamphlet in Melbourne.

News media

During 2023–24, we made ourselves more open and available to the media. In the lead-up to the 2023 referendum, we organised a series of media briefings across Australia, establishing relationships and setting the basis for key issues. Led by the Electoral Commissioner, these sessions provided an early example of the AEC's approach to reputation management. Building these relationships with the media early allowed the AEC to effectively monitor, discuss and frame referendum issues as they emerged during the referendum period and ensure accuracy in media reporting.

This proactive approach continued throughout the event period, with the AEC media team being highly responsive and personable in media communication, and more AEC spokespeople than ever before. We responded to approximately 4,000 media enquiries, conducted more than 400 media interviews, distributed 24 media releases, and monitored more than 28,000 news items that related to AEC operations.

We expanded our multilingual media offering, arranging interviews with AEC spokespeople in eight community languages – Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Greek, Italian, Macedonian and Urdu. This was the largest active media presence in the AEC's history, a deliberate approach to combat the most misinformation and disinformation about electoral processes we had ever experienced.

Social media

Our social media approach included regular communication to position the AEC as the expert on the referendum process. While still aiming to be engaging, we took a more serious tone than the 2022 federal election due to more users questioning electoral integrity.

We rostered a dedicated Social Media Operations Group to rapidly answer questions from voters and monitor social media for emerging trends and issues. In the five-week, writ-to-writ period of the 2023 referendum, our social media accounts had more than 133,000 tags with 12.15 million views of AEC posts (a mix of proactive posts and replies) with a noticeable shift in the nature of the content as more users questioned electoral integrity than ever before.

We also conducted two successful 'ask me anything' sessions on Reddit in the lead-up to and during the 2023 referendum, on the r/Australia subreddit. Both sessions ran for an hour and provided an opportunity for the public to engage directly with AEC Executive Leadership.

AEC TV

Our YouTube channel, AEC TV, supported our social media and media approach. We used a range of internally produced short videos to address areas of potential electoral misinformation or disinformation and to educate on election and referendum processes. Producing these videos in house gave us greater flexibility – the AEC's Media and Digital Engagement Section could create videos in a matter of hours to debunk emerging disinformation or respond to frequently asked questions.

AEC TV was present at various stages of the referendum process, documenting the delivery through photography and videography. Between the combined efforts of AEC TV and other staff filming on the ground, we documented and highlighted the process through 60 new referendum-specific videos.

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

We continue to work to improve democratic outcomes for First Nations Australians.

One of the ways we do this is by working with communities and local organisations to ensure our information, education, engagement and services are culturally suitable. This includes:

- helping people enrol
- talking about the importance of voting and participating in electoral events
- explaining the different levels of government and types of elections
- showing how to correctly complete a ballot paper
- promoting temporary job opportunities to help at election time
- seeking advice on culturally suitable locations for polling places.

Responding to barriers faced in relation to First Nations electoral participation in a respectful, collaborative, user-centred and positive way is essential to achieving sustainable long-term democratic outcomes.

Through our Indigenous Electoral Participation Program, the AEC forms partnerships with organisations to promote electoral participation and invest in the production of additional localised resources in First Nations languages. Program partners lead, co-design and champion localised, culturally appropriate engagement in their communities. This includes collaborating with the AEC to develop programs, outreach events and engagement materials. The AEC's political and issue neutrality requirements are accounted for in all partnership agreements and associated activities.

We employ Community Electoral Participation Officers to maintain First Nations community engagement and awareness throughout an electoral cycle. These casually employed officers play an important role in providing electoral information to their local community, acting as a liaison between the AEC and their local communities, and promoting

and fostering awareness of electoral and referendum events. Of the 82 community electoral participation officers engaged ahead of the 2023 referendum, 42 spoke one or more local languages, covering 16 First Nations languages.

The AEC also engaged around 230 local assistants who used their cultural and language skills to help increase participation in the voting process. It was important to have someone known to the community to support the polling and advise the AEC on local issues that may arise. Many of our local assistants were bilingual. We also supplied teams in numerous locations with tablet devices that included audio and video resources in language to help explain what happens at the polling place and how to correctly complete a ballot paper.

In-language materials included advertising in 25 First Nations languages, the official referendum booklet in 13 languages, videos on *What is a referendum?* in 27 languages, audio recordings on *Misinformation and disinformation* in 22 languages, and videos on *What to expect at the polling place* in 22 languages.

Culturally and linguistically diverse engagement

In Australia, 8.2 million people, or 30.7 per cent of the population, were born overseas. Newly arrived migrants and voters with low English language proficiency face additional challenges understanding Australia's complex voting system and the wider political landscape.

Our comprehensive community education program was also delivered in multicultural communities, in places where people meet, such as men's and women's groups, playgroups and neighbourhood community events. This was informed by insights from community leaders to ensure they were culturally suitable.

Translated information about the 2023 referendum in up to 34 international languages included advertising, website information and resources, videos, telephone translation services and in-language media interviews.

Interpreting services were available in 19 languages through a dedicated phone number. Callers could listen to recorded messages about enrolment, polling places, postal voting and where to find translated information on the AEC website. They could also be put through to an interpreter. We received over 2,500 calls through to interpreters including from Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National), a service provided by the Department of Home Affairs.

The AEC also provided additional supports at polling places including printed multilingual information on how to complete a ballot paper, as well as through our diverse workforce and bilingual temporary workers. At the 2023 referendum, 15,037 temporary workers indicated they were bilingual.

Accessibility

The AEC has a long history of working with the disability community to improve equity of access and support people with disabilities to actively participate in electoral services and events.

We assess the accessibility of all 7,000+ polling places and publish details on the AEC website. Assistive technology is available in polling places, including text to speech pens, hearing loops and virtual Auslan interpreters. We also support people to vote who may be in the carpark of a polling place but who are unable to enter, with AEC staff and scrutineers/party workers witnessing this process to meet the legislative requirements.

Telephone voting is available for people who are blind or have low vision and for voters in the Antarctic.

The service allows voters to register and vote in secret from any location without attending an AEC office or polling place. In total across the referendum and the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, 2,339 electors voted by telephone.

We provide mobile polling for people unable to access polling places, such as those in residential aged care and residential mental health facilities.

Education and information materials to meet the needs of Australians living with disability include community education in Auslan and Easy Read.

Information is also available in accessible formats on the AEC website, including e-Braille, e-text and audio. Hard copies in accessible formats are available on request, including Braille (Grade one and Grade two), large print, audio, and Easy Read format.

The AEC's Disability Advisory Committee promotes greater accessibility, inclusion and participation in the electoral process by people with disability. The committee's role is to:

- seek feedback from Australian peak disability organisations on AEC service offerings
- understand new and emerging issues of concern for people with disability
- collaborate with Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand partners in the delivery of accessible electoral services across jurisdictions
- learn about initiatives being developed in other sectors for people with disability
- promote relevant AEC initiatives to their members.

The committee met three times in 2023–24. At the last meeting, three advisory working groups were established to focus on key priority areas to improve accessibility at the next federal election.

These include accessibility of polling places, Auslan education and engagement, and education for people with intellectual disability and cognitive disability.

Committee membership comprises:

- AEC (chair)
- disability peak bodies:
 - Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
 - Blind Citizens Australia
 - Deaf Australia
 - National Ethnic Disability Alliance
 - Council for Intellectual Disability
- Vision Australia
- Government agencies:
 - Australian Human Rights Commission
 - National Disability Insurance Agency
- Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand, which includes the state and territory electoral commissions and the New Zealand Electoral Commission.

Disability reporting

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (the Strategy) is the overarching framework for inclusive policies, programs and infrastructure that will support people with disability to participate in all areas of Australian life. The Strategy sets out where practical changes will be made to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia. It acts to ensure the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into Australia's policies and programs that affect people with disability, their families and carers. All levels of government have committed to deliver more comprehensive and visible reporting under the Strategy. A range of reports on progress of the Strategy's actions and outcome areas will be published and available at www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/ads

Disability reporting is included the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service reports and the APS Statistical Bulletin. These reports are available at www.apsc.gov.au

Disability support

The AEC Disability Contact Officer provides employees with disability, their managers and colleagues with a knowledgeable point of contact. This role is designed to help people navigate systems and access support within the AEC. The 2023 referendum saw an increase of support requests from our temporary election workforce for workplace adjustments.

Engaging with people in prison

For the 2023 referendum, we consulted with all corrective services departments in states and territories to determine the most appropriate voting service for prisons and other correctional facilities in each jurisdiction. Where authorities determined that postal voting was the preferred service, we worked collaboratively with them to ensure those affected could vote via mail. This included providing information and resources, enrolment packs and paper postal vote application forms to each affected correctional facility.

Most states and territories determined mobile polling as the preferred voting service. We worked closely with the relevant departments and individual facilities to develop delivery plans, identify the best days and times for voting, and determine the number of AEC staff required to provide the service. This was a complex logistical exercise due to the operational and security requirements of each facility but resulted in a very high rate of prisoners voting compared with previous events.

With the assistance and support of state and territory departments of corrections, we significantly expanded mobile polling in prisons for the referendum. A total of 43 mobile polling teams visited 49 prisons across most states and territories and issued 7,274 in-person votes. The AEC also received 200 postal votes from people in prison. This resulted in over 7,400 prisoners across Australia voting in the referendum, a significant increase from the 274 prisoners who voted in the 2022 federal election.

Referendum community education

We delivered over 380 referendum community education sessions in over 40 languages in First Nations and multicultural communities. We also shared information with community and faith leaders who used our material with their networks and communities.

Our education sessions were designed to address barriers to meaningful participation in Australia's democracy. We explained the Constitution, the referendum process, ballot paper formality and how the results of a referendum should be determined. We also provided participants with assistance to enrol or update their details, as well as information on temporary employment with the AEC. The sessions focused on experiential learning with participants able to take part in a hands-on voting activity including checking for formality and counting the vote.

We also developed education resources for organisations to educate their community members, which were available on the AEC website.

We created animated videos to educate voters on referendums and how to make their vote count. These were translated into 22 First Nations languages and used by our remote voter services teams as they delivered mobile polling to remote communities.

National Electoral Education Centre

Based at Old Parliament House in Canberra, the AEC's National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) provides free, interactive, curriculum-aligned education programs for schools. Students experience the entire writ-to-writ election process during their 90-minute session. This high-quality program is facilitated by our dedicated team of expert electoral educators, who tailor every education session to visiting school groups. International delegations, parliamentary stakeholders, community groups and AEC staff also visit the NEEC to learn the fundamentals of the electoral system.

In 2023–24, the NEEC delivered 2,262 education sessions to 78,685 visitors from 150 electoral divisions. Visitors included 65,427 primary school students and 6,121 secondary students. Numbers projected using current bookings indicate that the NEEC will host over 85,000 visitors in 2024–25. Reported figures and projections provide a strong indication that the centre is returning to pre COVID-19 capacity.

Exit surveys reflect the success of the NEEC program, with satisfaction ratings of over 96 per cent from students and 99 per cent from teachers.

AEC for Schools website

The AEC for Schools website provides free education resources and programs for teachers to deliver civics and electoral education in the classroom. Our Get Voting program provides free election equipment kits to schools to conduct school elections using a preferential system, providing students a practical experience of voting. In 2023–24, our Get Voting program reached 70,907 students, with 568 packs sent to schools. More than 560,000 students have experienced the voting process in the classroom through the program since it was launched in 2012.

DemocraCity electoral education video game for schools

DemocraCity is the AEC's immersive 3D electoral education video game, designed to engage school-aged children in electoral education using contemporary digital education techniques.



Following successful implementation at the National Electoral Education Centre, the AEC is expanding the game. It will be released online to all Australian schools in early 2025. The game will help teachers achieve student learning outcomes in the civics and citizenship curriculum.

Students are helped along their learning journey by DemocraBot and the DemocraBus as they discover unique facets of Australian democracy. This includes learning about the Australian Constitution, how representatives are elected to Australian Parliament, enrolling to vote, how to complete a formal vote and how votes are counted. The game goes 'behind the scenes' of a federal election by allowing players help the AEC issue ballot papers, count votes and answer questions, as part of a virtual election in DemocraCity.

Teachers will be supported to use the DemocraCity game with a range of teacher resources and suggested lesson plans. The game also works alongside the AEC's existing resources for teachers on the AEC for Schools website. The game will be made available for download free of charge from the Google and Apple app stores, as well as Apple and Microsoft downloadable files.

Collaborative education projects

The AEC participates in collaborative education programs with a range of other civic and cultural institutions. The *National Schools Constitutional Convention* is an annual event exploring the Australian Constitution for senior school students in Years 11 and 12. We offer education on the referendum voting process and conduct a vote, providing the results according to the double majority system. The AEC also participates each year in the *ACT Schools Constitutional Convention*.

In May 2024, we participated in *Democracy Day in the NT*, a collaborative initiative with the National Capital Educational Tourism Project, Australian Parliament House and the Museum of Australian Democracy. It provided civics and electoral education sessions to students in the Northern Territory, along with teacher professional development. The initiative was delivered in Alice Springs and Darwin over four days.

It reached around 150 students and 15 teachers face-to-face, as well as 2,000 pre-service teachers through a digital recorded session.

Writs to Referendums electoral exhibition

The AEC's public exhibition, *Writs to Referendums: Celebrating Australia's unique electoral system*, is housed at the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra. It brings together interactive technology, historic objects and cinematic-style videography. The exhibition tells the story of Australia's democratic system and offers visitors a glimpse into the delivery of one of the largest and most complex logistical peacetime events in Australia. It also documents the experiences of the many Australians who help make elections and referendums happen – including voters, temporary election workers, party workers, scrutineers and AEC staff. In 2023–24, over 43,000 people visited the exhibition, with more than 76,000 visitors since it opened in November 2022.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.1 The AEC maintains an appropriate level of election readiness		
Performance measure		
Deliver public awareness and education products that target all Australian citizens aged 18 years and over	Source	Campaign evaluation report.
	Method & frequency	Specific communication activities delivered for mainstream and identified special audience groups measured for each federal electoral event.
	Target	The AEC's public awareness campaign is delivered in accordance with key objectives outlined in the campaign strategy.
	Result	■ Met
<p>Explanation of result: The AEC delivered a national advertising campaign to explain the purpose and process of referendums, help voters participate and support electoral integrity. The campaign ran in four phases over eight weeks from Sunday 20 August to Saturday 14 October 2023.</p> <p>Independent market research after the referendum found that 22 of the 23 communication objectives were met or partially met.</p> <p>The AEC also delivered other public awareness and education products, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our 'Stop and consider' campaign over 380 referendum community education sessions in over 40 languages in multicultural and First Nations communities 2,262 education sessions by the NEEC at Old Parliament House. 		

The temporary election workforce

The AEC used a multi-faceted approach to build the temporary election workforce of up to 100,000 people required to deliver the 2023 referendum. Our approach included social media, public relations, and advertising on job platforms such as Seek, LinkedIn and Indeed. Communication activities were informed by a robust evidence base to determine who and where we should target recruitment efforts and how to drive interest in the available roles.

The approach also focused on increasing diversity of the temporary workforce by attracting registrations of interest from First Nations people, people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disability. Targeted advertising, outreach and engagement helped us reach and attract these workers. Increasing diversity in our workforce better reflects the community we serve, and provides language skills, cultural understanding and inclusivity, assisting with other key AEC objectives including voter participation and formality.

In line with striving to professionalise the AEC’s workforce, we engaged with the Australian Public Service Commission and other APS agencies and state electoral management bodies. A secondment program provided a contingency pool of 69 secondees from seven APS agencies and two state electoral management bodies. The secondees were ready to be rapidly deployed as needed in remote, regional and metropolitan locations nationally, to ensure event delivery in all locations and jurisdictions.

Following the referendum, we conducted an online survey with our temporary election workforce to affirm the 2023 Referendum Workforce Strategy and to assess our performance against temporary workforce success measures. The results were overwhelmingly positive, with an overall satisfaction rate of 94 per cent, an increase on the 2022 federal election satisfaction rate of 87 per cent.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.1 The AEC maintains an appropriate level of election readiness		
Performance measure		
Percentage of temporary election workforce (TEW) employees completing election training relevant to their role	Source	AEC Learning Management System.
	Method & frequency	Training completion data for each federal electoral event.
	Target	≥ 95%
	Result	 Met
<p>Explanation of result: During the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the AEC delivered election training to identified TEW staff for the 2023 Fadden by-election, 2023 referendum and 2024 Cook and Dunkley by-elections. For the referendum, a completion rate of 96% was achieved. For the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, a completion rate of over 99% was achieved.</p>		

Voter services

Postal voting

Australians are expected to vote in person at elections. However, electors who cannot attend a polling booth can apply for a postal vote.

The AEC issued postal vote packs to over 2 million people at the 2023 referendum. This was down 27 per cent from the 2022 federal election when a significant spike in demand for postal voting was due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 67 per cent of these electors requested a postal vote online, 12 per cent via paper applications and 20 per cent as general postal voters. Our postal vote service partner issued 2,062,306 packages from Melbourne and Sydney, with an additional 11,612 packages issued from divisional offices. The AEC received 1,799,785 (86 per cent) completed postal votes from electors before the 13-day deadline after polling day.

A total of 19,348 postal votes were sent for the Fadden by-election, with 17,169 (88 per cent) returned to the AEC before the 13-day deadline after polling day. More than half (54 per cent) of all postal vote applications were completed online, and 35 per cent were paper postal vote applications. General postal voters made up the remaining applications (11 per cent).

For the Dunkley by-election, 21,983 postal votes were sent, with 18,650 (85 per cent) returned before the deadline. Online applications accounted for 46 per cent, while 38 per cent applied through paper applications and the remaining applications were general postal voters (16 per cent).

We sent 11,513 postal votes for the Cook by-election, with a return rate of 73 per cent (8,441). Applications were made up of 48 per cent online, 30 per cent paper applications and 22 per cent as general postal voters.

The AEC conducts quality assurance checks on the postal vote pack production process for each event, ensuring all ballot papers and packs are produced and handled within AEC guidelines.

We continue to improve our 'how to postal vote' brochure and other information for electors to make postal voting requirements clear and easy to follow.

Pre-event mobile polling support

Before an electoral event, we engage closely with establishments where groups of voters who experience barriers to attending polling places might reside. We work to ensure currency of the roll before launching mobile polling services. We provide information, resources and support to ensure staff understand enrolment processes and legislative requirements for enrolment activities. We want them to feel confident to assist their residents/clients without compromising voters' privacy.

For the 2023 referendum, 24 staff provided enrolment services nationally to over 3,100 establishments. In addition, they provided voting options support to over 800 establishments that did not accept, or were unable to have, mobile polling. These staff also provided outreach services to hospitals and mining sites in the months leading up to the referendum to ensure hospital staff, patients and mining site staff knew about available voting options. This service included providing information and resources to over 700 hospitals nationally.

Mobile polling for events

Following the 2022 federal election, the AEC conducted an in-depth review of the mobile polling policy to ensure it remained fit for purpose. The review included lessons learned from the election and feedback from a range of stakeholders.

Following this review, the AEC provided a full service offering to residential aged care facilities, specialist homelessness services and correctional facilities (expanded from five to 49) for the 2023 referendum. For the first time, we further expanded the service to include over 30 residential mental health facilities.

More than 1,100 staff in 482 mobile polling teams visited 2,316 establishments and issued 109,453 votes (excluding locations and votes issued by remote mobile teams) for the 2023 referendum. Our evaluation of the mobile polling service following the referendum has informed continuous improvement activities and the policy settings for the next event.

Mobile polling services were also provided at each by-election during 2023–24:

- Fadden – two mobile teams visited 19 establishments (residential aged care facilities) and issued 370 votes
- Dunkley – four mobile teams visited 15 establishments (residential aged care facilities, a specialist homelessness service and an Aboriginal community centre) and issued 386 votes
- Cook – two mobile teams visited 14 establishments (residential aged care facilities) and issued 337 votes.

Review of voting services in hospitals

During and following the 2023 referendum, the AEC received correspondence from several stakeholders regarding the voting services available to hospital patients during the polling period, including those in mental health inpatient units.

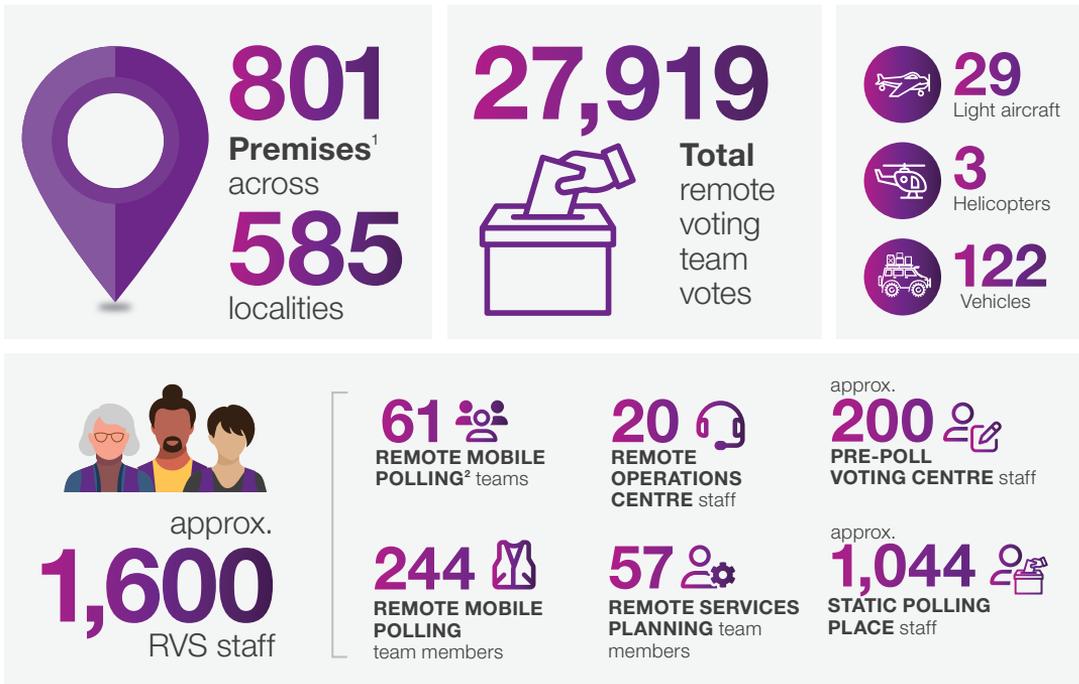
In response, we committed to working with health departments in each state and territory and other stakeholders to consider improvements that could be implemented by both the AEC and hospitals. The outcomes of this review will inform the service offering for the next federal election.

Remote voter services

In response to community and stakeholder feedback, we delivered remote voter services across Australia in more comprehensive and tailored ways than ever before for the 2023 referendum. In addition, legislative change to the Referendum Act allowed the AEC to begin conducting mobile polling in remote locations up to 19 days before voting day. Our Indigenous Electoral Participation Program staff delivered around 200 education sessions in remote communities before the referendum. We offered mobile polling, pre-poll voting and static polling places in remote and very remote locations. In total, in-person voting was offered in 585 localities across 801 premises. This was a considerable expansion of the 2022 federal election remote in-person polling service. We visited 68 per cent more localities and increased the amount of time spent in communities by 113 per cent.

This service required the support of over 500 people to plan, coordinate and deliver, including 244 people across 61 mobile teams on the ground. We used four-wheel drives, helicopters, small planes and ferries, and travelled over 214,000 kilometres to make sure people had every opportunity to participate.

Figure 6: Remote voter services for the 2023 referendum



1. Premises refers to unique premises utilised by the AEC at the 2023 referendum. If a premises was used for multiple types of polling (e.g. static and pre-poll voting centre), it will only appear once in this figure.

2. Remote mobile polling refers to polling undertaken by remote services delivery teams only.

Overseas voters

For federal elections and referendums, Australians living or travelling overseas may be able to vote in person at an overseas voting centre or by postal voting. For the 2023 referendum, we worked with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade to offer in-person overseas voting at 107 overseas posts in 78 countries.

Security and service delivery considerations precluded 12 posts from being able to provide services for the referendum. A small number of posts required a reduction in the hours originally published for in-person voting due to local factors. The Tel Aviv post was only able to offer in-person voting for seven days, instead of the planned 10 days due to the deteriorating security situation in that area at the time.

All materials, ballot and non-ballot, were transported to and from overseas posts using diplomatic mail services to ensure timely and secure delivery.

In-person voting services for Australians overseas are not offered for by-elections, but voters can apply for a postal vote, which is delivered by a contracted courier accompanied by a return satchel allowing voters an expedited return of their postal vote.

For the next federal election, in-person voting and/or postal collection services will be offered at most overseas posts. We will work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade again to identify locations suitable to provide voting services.

Electronically assisted voting (or telephone voting)

The AEC provides electors who are blind or have low vision and electors working in the Antarctic (or on a ship that is in transit to or from the Antarctic) with the ability to cast a secret vote using a telephone voting process. In 2023–24, telephone voting was available for electors for the referendum and the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections. Telephone voting involves a witness checking the vote is recorded accurately.

In the lead-up to the referendum, the AEC responded to a request from Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia to allow the witness to introduce themselves to the elector. The AEC changed equipment and procedures to facilitate this request. The witness now explains directly to the voter that their role in observing the telephone voting call is to ensure the vote is recorded in accordance with the elector’s instructions.

Telephone voting – how it works

Telephone voting is a simple two-step process for the elector, in which the secret ballot and electoral integrity are of utmost importance.

1. The elector calls and registers to vote. At this step, the elector provides the required personal details so they can be identified on the electoral roll. They make a declaration regarding their eligibility to use the telephone voting service, and they are asked to choose a six-digit PIN. The elector then receives an SMS, email or telephone call back from the AEC with an eight-digit telephone voting registration number.
2. The elector then calls again to cast their vote. When the elector calls, they do not give their name. The elector provides their telephone voting registration number and chosen PIN to the voting assistant who enters the details on the AEC system. An AEC voting assistant records the elector’s vote. A second voting assistant acts as a witness and ensures their vote is recorded according to the elector’s instructions to ensure accuracy and integrity. Once the vote is completed, the voting assistant reads back the elector’s completed vote to the elector to ensure the vote has been captured correctly. The ballot paper is then placed into an envelope marked with the elector’s division and deposited into a sealed ballot box.

Pre-poll voting

A total of 554 pre-poll voting centre locations operated during the early voting period for the referendum, compared with 540 at the 2022 federal election. These pre-poll voting centres issued 5,603,134 ordinary votes, a significant increase from the 5,071,528 ordinary pre-poll votes issued at the 2022 federal election. The final day of the early voting period, Friday 13 October, was our

busiest early voting day ever at pre-poll voting centres. A total of 1,171,354 votes were issued (1,039,336 ordinary and 132,018 declaration), comprising 18.8 per cent of all votes issued at pre-poll voting centres for the entire period. This was the first time in history that more than 1 million votes had been issued in a single day during the early voting period.

Pre-poll voting centres also operated at each by-election during 2023–24:

- Fadden – six pre-poll voting centres issued 35,571 ordinary votes
- Dunkley – three pre-poll voting centres issued 29,928 ordinary votes
- Cook – four pre-poll voting centres issued 29,692 ordinary votes.

Electronic certified lists

The writs for each electoral event contain a deadline for Australian citizens to be included on the electoral roll. The roll is then used to create a certified list of voters for each division and each state and territory. AEC staff use the certified lists at each polling place to manually mark off a voter as having attended a polling place and been issued a ballot paper.

At some polling places, the polling officials may use an electronic certified list on a laptop. This is an alternative to the traditional paper certified list and enables polling officials to search the list of eligible electors more efficiently, improving polling place operations and meeting expectations of efficient voting services.

For the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, the AEC deployed electronic certified lists at all ordinary issuing points at mobile polling, early voting centres and polling places on polling day. At the referendum, electronic certified lists were used by remote voter service teams and at all mobile polling, early voting centres and interstate voting centres. They were also available at five multi-division static polling places in capital city central business districts.

Helping First Nations voters with alias names

As part of the Enhancing Indigenous Electoral Participation project, the AEC conducted a trial in six divisions (Lingiari, Solomon, Kennedy, Leichhardt, Grey and Durack) ahead of the 2023 referendum. We worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voters with known 'alias' names. The trial linked the known alias names to voters' names on the certified list, and this information was contained within the electronic roll during the polling period.

The trial tested the effectiveness of finding a voter on the certified list if they used their enrolled name or any one of their alias names linked to their enrolled name. With this linking action, the voter could be immediately marked off on the certified list at the polling place and be eligible to cast an ordinary vote. Without an ability to link these names, voters with alias names are sometimes not found on the electoral roll and are then required to cast a provisional declaration vote. This can be frustrating for voters who are enrolled under one name but are known by another name in their community, or who are unable to use their enrolled name due to cultural sensitivities.

Across the six divisions, a total of 5,016 voters were located on the certified list using an alias, with these voters therefore able to lodge an ordinary or declaration vote. Of those 5,016 votes, 61.4 per cent were issued by a remote mobile polling team, 32.3 per cent were issued at pre-poll voting centres, and 6.3 per cent were issued through mobile voting teams (in prisons or nursing homes). This trial was highly successful in improving the voting experience for affected voters and reducing cost and post-voting day administration for the AEC. It strengthened voter enfranchisement and found efficiencies in identifying the voter's enrolled name, while also recognising and adapting our approach to suit cultural needs of First Nations voters. We will look to expand this capability for future events.

Advising of voter locations

Voters can attend any polling place in their state or territory on polling day. Polling places are usually located at local schools, churches and community halls, or public buildings. Voters who cannot get to one of the 7,000+ polling places on polling day can vote at an early voting centre, while voters who are interstate on polling day can vote at an interstate voting centre. We publish information about the location and accessibility of voting centres, early voting centres and polling places at www.aec.gov.au

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.1 The AEC maintains an appropriate level of election readiness

Performance measure

Voting locations (including early voting centres and polling places) published on the AEC website before polling commences	Source	AEC Election Management System data and the AEC website.
	Method & frequency	Publication on the AEC website for each electoral event.
	Target	100% of polling locations are published.
	Result	 Met

Explanation of result: For the referendum and the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, the AEC published 100% of locations before polling commenced.

Lessons management

The AEC prioritises organisational agility and continuous improvement to help meet the immediate needs of event delivery and respond to our operating environment. We adopt a lessons management approach for federal electoral events to improve the reliability and consistency of our electoral delivery and services. The 2023 referendum lessons exercise involved engaging with staff across the AEC’s national, state and divisional offices. We identified three strategic lessons, with a focus on building our inclusive culture, refining our approach to remote voter services, and managing the supply, quality and design of materials. We have designed a range of existing and new actions to improve and learn for the next federal election and beyond. These include implementing the Quality Management System to provide staff with user-focused and workable doctrine that defines expectations and the steps needed to achieve our objectives.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.1 The AEC maintains an appropriate level of election readiness

Performance measure

Undertake a lessons management approach to delivering electoral events	Source	AEC Lessons Management Framework and AEC Election Readiness Framework.
	Method & frequency	Agency-wide qualitative analysis undertaken for each federal event.
	Target	Agency lessons identified from the previous electoral event are to be considered and implemented at the next electoral event.
	Result	 Met

Explanation of result: Three strategic lessons were identified from the 2023 referendum and 38 strategic lessons were identified from the 2022 federal election. For these 41 strategic lessons:

- 18 actions have been completed
- 16 actions are on track for completion
- 7 actions are overdue, with rectifying actions underway to bring them back on track.

The AEC’s governance committees continue to track the implementation of actions for each strategic lesson.

Elections, by-elections and referendums functions

Public enquiries for the referendum and by-elections

The AEC event contact centre delivers high quality, consistent and timely services to voters who need assistance during an event.

For the 2023 referendum, the AEC worked in close partnership with other government agencies and third-party providers to deliver increasingly innovative and functioning contact centre support for all Australians. Together, we responded to more than 440,000 phone calls and 23,000 web inquiries over the referendum period (including 2,500 interpreter phone calls, with the top three languages being Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese). The referendum cycle of calls was consistent with other events, with peaks around the close of rolls and polling day milestones.

For the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, the AEC managed all calls, public enquiries and complaints, with our respective division or state office responding directly.

Publishing election results

Several factors, including legislative requirements, affect the speed of results and our ability to declare a poll. The AEC is required to wait 13 days after voting day to receive declaration and postal votes before finalising the count. Further, we must ensure mathematical certainty before declaring a result. We must be absolutely assured that the margin in the count is larger than the potential number of votes left to receive. We also engage the Institute of Intelligent Systems Research and Innovation at Deakin University to assist with modelling and analysing data on polling and counting processes. We used this analysis to inform resourcing required for the referendum to support timely results on voting night and throughout the post-voting day period.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

Intended result 2.2 The public and stakeholders have confidence the electoral process is well managed in accordance with legislation or rules		
Performance measure		
The result – for each event – is delivered in accordance with the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> or the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>	Source	Electoral Act, Referendum Act, Electoral Commissioner’s advice published on www.aec.gov.au and outcomes of the Court of Disputed Returns.
	Method & frequency	For each electoral event, writs are issued and returned to the Governor-General or State Governors or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; Electoral Commissioner’s advice published on www.aec.gov.au and Court of Disputed Returns advice.
	Target	a) For each event, the writs are issued and returned in accordance with legislative requirements and timeframes. b) The AEC will report on the number of Court of Disputed Returns matters which challenge AEC conduct, and whether these challenges are dismissed or upheld in favour of the AEC.
	Result	■ Met
Explanation of result:		
a) The writs for the Fadden, Cook and Dunkley by-elections were issued and returned within the timeframes specified in the Electoral Act.		
b) The writ for the referendum was issued and returned within the timeframes specified in the Referendum Act. In the lead-up to the referendum, a Victorian Senator challenged the formality of some referendum votes in the Federal Court. This challenge was dismissed by the Federal Court by a single judge and, on appeal, by the Full Court. There were no other challenges to the conduct of a referendum or by-election.		

Industrial elections and ballots

The AEC is required to conduct elections for office holders of organisations registered with the Fair Work Commission, and protected action ballots when ordered by the Fair Work Commission. The ballots allow employees engaged in bargaining for an enterprise agreement to vote on initiating protected industrial action. These elections and ballots are primarily delivered in accordance with the provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) and the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* (Cth).

Table 2: Industrial elections and ballots key figures, 2023–24

Industrial elections	Events	Decisions
	248	174
Protected action ballots (orders)		190
Total official decisions and orders declared by the AEC		364

Note: Events include the multiple stages conducted to complete a Fair Work Commission decision, that is, for 174 Fair Work Commission decisions, the AEC conducted 248 events, as some elections have two or three stages.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT – KEY ACTIVITY 2

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

Performance measure

Industrial election and ballot results are delivered with integrity and withstand scrutiny	Source	Federal Court outcomes.
	Method & frequency	Federal Court outcomes for the year as at reporting date.
	Target	The AEC will report on the outcomes and number of events in which the AEC's conduct is challenged before a court.
	Result	■ Met

Explanation of result: The AEC had one Federal Court inquiry in relation to an election for offices within the Automotive, Food, Metals, Engineering, Printing and Kindred Industries Union, known as the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union. The applicant discontinued the matter, and the court did not find any fault with the AEC's conduct.

On 20 June 2024, the AEC filed an application in the Federal Court in a matter related to an election for an office of the Flights Attendants' Association of Australia. The matter had not been listed by the court at 30 June 2024.

Regulator performance

The Australian Government is committed to reducing the cost of unnecessary and inefficient regulation imposed on individuals, business and community organisations. In line with this, the AEC reports annually on our performance in reducing the regulatory burden for electors through more efficient enrolment and voting services.

Our regulatory performance is measured against the principles of regulator best practice:

- continuous improvement and building trust – regulators adopt a whole-of-system perspective, continuously improving their performance, capability and culture to build trust and confidence in Australia’s regulatory settings
- risk-based and data-driven – regulators manage risks proportionately and maintain essential safeguards while minimising regulatory burden, and leveraging data and digital technology to support those they regulate to comply and grow
- collaboration and engagement – regulators are transparent and responsive communicators, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way.

Table 3: AEC performance against the regulator performance guide, 2023–24

What the AEC does	Result	Mandatory performance indicator reference
The AEC maintains an up-to-date public register of political parties.	✓	See Key activity 1.
We regulate the funding and disclosure scheme, ensuring disclosure returns are published and regulated in accordance with timeframes.	✓	See Key activity 1.
We undertake regular compliance reviews to examine a sample of disclosure returns. We use a risk-based approach to compliance. The outcomes of compliance activity are published at www.aec.gov.au	✓	See Key activity 1.
We administer the funding and disclosure scheme, political party registrations and electoral authorisations. We provide guidance and information to ensure stakeholders are aware of the need to comply with electoral legislation as well as how to comply.	✓	<p>Under the Electoral Act, the funding and disclosure scheme establishes transparency around political donations. The electoral authorisations scheme requires electoral participants to be transparent to voters with the electoral communications they make.</p> <p>We provide guidance and information to stakeholders at www.aec.gov.au, through our public enquiry line, and through a dedicated phone number for funding and disclosure matters.</p> <p>Stakeholders with disclosure obligations under the Act are also sent written reminders of those obligations at appropriate times.</p> <p>Also see Key activity 1, Regulatory functions.</p>
We apply a risk-based proportionate response in addressing multiple voting and non-voter prosecutions, and in administering electoral communications requirements.	✓	<p>We take a risk-based approach to address multiple voting and non-voter prosecutions, and in administering the funding and disclosure, and electoral communication requirements.</p> <p>Where necessary the AEC provides notices and warnings to regulated individuals and entities to inform them of their obligations.</p>
We continue to improve our risk management maturity to build organisational capability. We have revised our strategic and enterprise risks, published in our Corporate Plan 2023–24. We are also maturing and embedding our lessons management approach and capability.	✓	See Key activity 2.
We manage feedback and complaints in line with the AEC complaints management policy and seek improvements in administration when relevant.	✓	Our service charter outlines the agency's role and purpose, and the services the public can expect to receive. We manage complaints in line with the AEC complaints management policy.

SECTION 04

International highlights

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

The AEC's contributions to
democracy and election
management in the region

International highlights

International engagement

This year, the AEC continued our commitment to supporting democracy and building the technical capacity of electoral management bodies in the region. Central to the stability of democracy is the continued independence and strengthening of electoral management bodies to deliver credible elections.

We assist foreign countries for elections and referendums under section 7(1)(fa) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act). Our work is underpinned by strong relationships, developed over the last three decades, and funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

We also collaborate closely with our international development partners. In 2023–24, we worked with the New Zealand Electoral Commission, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Supporting election management in the Pacific

Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network

We continued to build linkages between electoral management bodies in the Pacific through support to the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network (PIANZEA).

The AEC has helped members develop new skills with meetings, workshops and training, including through Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) workshops.

In 2023–24, the PIANZEA Secretariat delivered three workshops for over 100 participants. These workshops were delivered in conjunction with various partners including PIANZEA members, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. They covered the topics of election observation, gender and elections, introduction to election administration, and roll integrity. Participants were grateful for these opportunities to learn from each other and to take home new information to share with their colleagues.

The AEC continued to support voter registration and electoral roll management for PIANZEA members through our Generic Voter Registration System. This system is currently used by five countries in the PIANZEA Network. We are upgrading the system to ensure it remains suitable for modern roll management needs.

Fiji

We partnered with the Fijian Elections Office (FEO) to help deliver a BRIDGE workshop for staff in November 2023, focusing on operational planning. In May 2024, we supported the FEO to hold a Voter and Civic Education workshop. The 26 participants represented 15 civil society organisations and FEO staff. The workshop was designed to enable participants to develop and deliver voter and civic education for their stakeholders in partnership with the FEO.

In June 2024, the AEC was pleased to host the FEO's newly appointed Supervisor of Elections and the Manager of Stakeholder Engagement and Awareness for a knowledge exchange program in Canberra.

This included attending the Canberra Conference on Electoral Integrity alongside representatives from electoral management bodies across the world, including from the PIANZEA Network.

Papua New Guinea

In 2023–24, the AEC supported the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) in its efforts to improve and reform enrolment and roll management practices. In February 2024, we hosted an ICT specialist from the PNGEC for a visitor program in Canberra to learn about Australia’s enrolment systems. We then hosted the electoral practitioners’ Papua New Guinea roll management workshop in Brisbane, with senior representatives of the PNGEC and regional partners. As improving the integrity of the roll in Papua New Guinea is a long-term project, the group discussed models and initiatives that could be implemented over

the next three electoral cycles. Attendees developed a proposal for an initiative to trial and evaluate new concepts during upcoming electoral events. In May 2024, we ran an implementation workshop in Port Moresby with the PNGEC to develop detailed plans for the trial.

Republic of the Marshall Islands

The AEC supported the Republic of the Marshall Islands Electoral Administration (RMIEA) to deliver the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ general elections, held in November 2023. We played a key role in providing technical assistance to support the successful delivery of the elections. A focus of our support was assisting the RMIEA to manage its electoral roll via the Generic Voter Registration System. AEC staff were deployed to the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the lead-up to the election to train RMIEA staff on roll management processes.

The AEC’s support to Solomon Islands Joint Elections

A key focus for 2023–24 was supporting the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) in the delivery of the Joint Elections in April 2024.

This was Solomon Islands’ first electoral event where national parliament, provincial assembly and Honiara City Council elections were held simultaneously. The AEC provided a range of assistance to support preparations for this complex and logistically challenging change to elections.

Starting in May 2023, we co-chaired monthly partner coordination meetings with the SIEC to manage activities between partner organisations and avoid duplication of effort.

In the lead-up to the election, an AEC training specialist worked with the SIEC to update manuals and training materials for biometric voter registration, polling and counting processes. During the writ-to-writ period, we deployed five technical advisers to assist with executive support, logistics and preparation of materials. We also assisted with the procurement of critical election materials.

In addition, the AEC also hosted the SIEC Chief Electoral Officer during the Fadden by-election in Australia.

The AEC's contribution to global best practice

Engaging with the international community

In addition to supporting partners in the Pacific, during the year we also engaged with the international community to share our experience as leading electoral administrators.

The AEC hosted many high-level international delegations and virtual meetings with organisations interested in learning about how we deliver electoral events. These engagements occurred with senior officials from Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Lithuania, the European Commission, Mauritius and Nepal. In March 2024, we hosted the Chairman and staff from the Central Election Commission of Ukraine, discussing electoral integrity, civic engagement and effective electoral delivery.

We were also proud to support many countries through material assistance and discussions. For example, we provided voting screens and polling material, which enabled Vanuatu, Romania, Lithuania and Indonesia to conduct polling in Australia for their electoral events.

International programs are a valuable opportunity for us to learn about electoral practices in other countries and apply lessons to the Australian context.

In 2023–24, senior AEC staff attended programs for India's general election, the senate selection process of Thailand, and the 6th Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum. In March 2024, we participated in the third Summit for Democracy in South Korea and conducted a showcase of BRIDGE for summit participants. This conference was a key opportunity to meet like-minded electoral practitioners and experts to discuss opportunities for strengthening democracy around the globe.

In November 2023, we hosted an international event, presenting the virtual Referendum in Review program to electoral practitioners from around the world. Approximately 60 attendees heard about the AEC's work to increase enrolment and strengthen trust in the electoral system, as well as our comprehensive community engagement and education campaigns.

The AEC's Defending Democracy Unit further expanded our international engagement with other democracies and international organisations. This has enhanced the AEC's global reputation as a leading electoral management body, at the forefront of responding to new and emerging threats to electoral integrity, particularly in the digital information age.

Supporting professional development

Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) is a modular professional development initiative focusing on electoral processes. The AEC continues to play a central role as one of five BRIDGE partners, as well as being responsible for the BRIDGE secretariat. The other BRIDGE partner organisations are the:

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
- International Foundation for Electoral Systems
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

BRIDGE is a critical and important area of focus for the AEC and we remain committed to protecting and maintaining its high quality. In June 2024, we hosted the BRIDGE partners in Canberra to discuss the future of BRIDGE and responses to emerging risks and challenges.

Talks also addressed ongoing efforts to ensure the BRIDGE curriculum remained contemporary and fit for purpose, as well as engagement with members of the BRIDGE facilitator community.

Canberra Series on Electoral Integrity

Since September 2023, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the AEC have been running an international seminar series called the Canberra Series on Electoral Integrity. Designed as a platform for information exchange, the first three Canberra Series Seminars were virtual and brought together more than 200 electoral practitioners from some 40 electoral jurisdictions around the world. As part of these seminars, senior representatives from various election management bodies participated in panel discussions to share challenges to electoral integrity and approaches to combatting these challenges.

To build on the success of these seminars, the AEC, the International IDEA and the Australian National University's National Security College brought electoral practitioners together for a two-day Conference in Canberra in June 2024. Facilitators, panellists and guests, including experts from important fields in election management, exchanged experiences. Under the theme of 'Defending Democracy: Strengthening Public Trust in Election Management Bodies', conference participants considered threats to electoral integrity such as artificial intelligence, cyber security, foreign interference, misinformation and disinformation.

Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand

The Electoral Commissioner attended four meetings of the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ) in 2023–24. These meetings provided a platform to share information on best practice in electoral operations and electoral integrity. They were also a forum to develop shared approaches to workforce and skills, develop protocols to support staff safety and progress Australia's response to foreign interference in elections.

The Deputy Electoral Commissioner engaged with a sub-group reporting to ECANZ. The Deputy Electoral Commissioner sub-group is a valuable networking and information sharing forum on operational matters among electoral authorities.

SECTION 05

Management and accountability

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

Information on the AEC's
management and accountability
including governance, scrutiny and
managing staff and assets

Management and accountability

Corporate governance – principles and objectives

The AEC has the following structures in place to implement the principles and objectives of corporate governance:

- an Executive Leadership Team, which monitors performance, ensures accountability and steers our agency
- decision-making management committees – see **Appendix B, Table 16** for a list including functions and membership
- an advisory Audit Committee, established by the Electoral Commissioner pursuant to the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

Ethical standards

The AEC's ethical standards are implicit in:

- our values of electoral integrity through professionalism, agility and quality
- the Australian Public Service ICARE values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical
- the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027, which reflects the values and ethical standards of the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct
- our strategic planning framework and staff conduct policies.

Assurance

AEC has a strong integrated system of assurance. Together, our values, Quality Management System (QMS) and Assurance Framework constitute our integrated system of assurance. Quality is one of our values and a critical element of organisational governance. This helps us achieve operational excellence, effective risk management and sound corporate administration. Our QMS delivers an integrated approach to governance, planning, consistent delivery and evaluation of the AEC's business processes. Our Assurance Framework extends our QMS by guiding the delivery of assurance across all areas of the organisation, to provide confidence that operations are being undertaken efficiently and effectively, with risks managed to achieve objectives.

Internal audit

Internal audit is an important component of our governance and assurance arrangements. Under our Assurance Framework, internal audit provides independent and unbiased assurance. It provides the Electoral Commissioner, Audit Committee and management with advice to strengthen accountability and improve risk-based decision-making across AEC operations. During the year, internal audit delivered assurance to support both management and the Audit Committee and provide confidence in the effective operations of the AEC. The AEC has oversight arrangements in place to manage the implementation of improvements identified through assurance work.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee provides independent advice to the Electoral Commissioner. Its functions include reviewing the appropriateness of the AEC's:

- financial reporting
- performance reporting
- system of risk oversight and management
- system of internal control.

The Audit Committee Charter is available on our website at www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Publications/audit-committee-charter.htm.

Audit Committee membership is in **Appendix B, Table 14**.

External audit

During the year, the AEC was included in a performance audit by the Australian National Audit Office, assessing the effectiveness of implementation of the Australian Government's campaign advertising framework by the Department of Finance and selected entities. At 30 June 2024, the performance audit was still in progress and we look forward to working with the audit team to finalise the report.

We review all tabled Australian National Audit Office reports and 'Insights' articles for relevance to provide our management with opportunities for learning from other Australian Government entities.

Risk management

The AEC is committed to integrating risk management principles and practices into our business processes and fostering a positive risk culture. We manage risk in accordance with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and the Electoral Commissioner's Instructions for Risk Management.

This is encapsulated in our risk management policy, which defines how we identify, manage and communicate risks affecting the achievement of AEC objectives. The policy provides clear systems of delegated ownership, oversight, escalation and reporting.

As the Accountable Authority, the Electoral Commissioner determines key responsibilities and accountabilities. AEC senior management defines and reviews the overall policy setting, including risk appetite and accountability arrangements.

Governance committees provide oversight and management of key risks to ensure changes in the operating environment are identified and our systems of controls remain effective. The following governance and advisory committees lead and drive effective risk management across the AEC:

- Executive Leadership Team
- Audit Committee
- Organisational Health, Performance and Risk Committee
- Electoral Integrity Committee
- People Committee
- Transformation and Investment Committee
- National Operations and Readiness Committee/National Election Delivery Committee
- Director Operations and Readiness Group
- National Work Health and Safety Committee.

More information on committees is at **Appendix B, Table 16**.

We undertook considerable work in 2023–24 to further mature the AEC’s risk capability and risk culture. This included:

- developing and gaining endorsement of our Risk Management Improvement Plan and its first deliverable, implementing the Risk Managers Network to increase agency risk maturity
- undertaking deep dive reviews across the Enterprise Risk suite, including reporting outcomes to responsible governance committees
- supporting dynamic risk reporting across all AEC committees, including implementing communication procedures to decrease overdue risk reporting
- providing learning and development activities to continually improve risk management knowledge and skills across our agency
- bolstering collaboration in managing shared risks, both across the AEC and with our external partners
- connecting findings from internal audit activities with our operational and strategic risks
- considering new risks such as the potential impacts of artificial intelligence.

We assess AEC risk maturity by participating in Comcover’s biennial risk management benchmarking survey. The next survey is due in 2025.

Fraud control

The AEC Fraud and Corruption Control Plan outlines strategies to prevent, detect and respond to fraud, including prevention strategies for both corporate and electoral fraud. Our Electoral Integrity Committee (see **Appendix B, Table 16**) is responsible for providing governance and assurance over our Fraud and Corruption Control Plan.

As required by section 10 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, we have:

- prepared fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans
- developed appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, recording and reporting mechanisms that meet the AEC’s specific needs
- taken all reasonable measures to deal with fraud appropriately.

We examined all allegations of suspected fraud during the year, including any allegations relating to the 2023 Fadden by-election, 2023 referendum, 2024 Dunkley by-election and 2024 Cook by-election.

Information on reporting suspected fraud is available:

- to staff through the AEC intranet and mandatory fraud awareness training
- for the public at **www.aec.gov.au**

Internal planning processes

The AEC’s planning processes support corporate governance and are undertaken in line with the requirements of the PGPA Act. Our corporate plan informs operational planning and performance, and is reflected in our business planning documents. Internal reporting and mid-term performance assessments help track progress against performance measures. Our corporate plan is available at **www.aec.gov.au**

Corporate planning documents, including internal monitoring and reporting mechanisms, are listed in **Appendix B, Table 15**.

Voter integrity

The AEC is committed to upholding electoral integrity and defending our democratic system through a robust approach to addressing apparent multiple voting and non-voting.

Multiple voting

Following each electoral event, we conduct a thorough process to identify electors suspected of multiple voting. Multiple voting is a criminal offence under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act) and *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984* (Referendum Act). Cases of apparent multiple voting are referred to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) for further investigation.

Following the 2023 referendum, we wrote to 3,179 voters whose names appeared to have been marked off the electoral roll more than once. The letters asked voters to provide further information about when and where they voted, to determine whether there was an apparent case of multiple voting. As a result of our investigations, we referred 171 cases of apparent multiple voting to the AFP for further investigation. At 30 June 2024, the investigations were ongoing.

Separately, the AEC is considering whether to declare voters reasonably suspected of having multiple voted as 'designated electors' under Part XVC of the Electoral Act. Designated electors are required to vote by declaration vote at future federal electoral events.

Non-voting

As a proactive measure ahead of the 2023 referendum, we wrote to electors with a history of alleged non-voting to remind them of their voting obligations. Following the close of rolls, we sent letters to 195,583 electors whose records showed they failed to vote at the previous two federal elections (2022 and 2019).

After elections and referendums, we issue 'apparent failure to vote' notices to electors whose names have not been marked off the electoral roll. In January 2024, we sent these notices to 1,485,503 electors suspected of not voting at the referendum. A voter who receives this notice should provide a valid and sufficient reason for failing to vote, or information on where and when they voted, or pay the \$20 penalty. Failure to do so may result in the person being prosecuted for a criminal offence. At 30 June 2024, we were considering failure to vote cases from the 2023 referendum to identify potential non-voter cases for prosecution.

External scrutiny

Significant developments and judicial decisions

The AEC was involved in six significant matters in the Federal Court during 2023–24:

1. On 21 December 2021, the AEC commenced civil proceedings in the Federal Court seeking orders that Mr Andrew Laming MP breached the authorisations requirements of the Electoral Act leading up to the 2019 federal election. On 9 August 2023, the Federal Court declared that Mr Laming breached the authorisation requirements on 24 December 2018, 7 February and 5 May 2019. The Court ordered Mr Laming pay a total of \$20,000 in pecuniary penalties. The AEC appealed a point of law in the primary judgment related to the number of contraventions found. On 19 February 2024, the Full Federal Court heard the appeal. At 30 June 2024, judgment was pending.
2. On 20 May 2022, the AEC commenced civil proceedings in the Federal Court against Mr Craig Kelly, seeking an interim injunction to add legible authorisations to his corflutes displayed at pre-poll voting centres and likely on polling day. The AEC was unsuccessful at the injunction stage and was ordered to pay the respondent's costs. On 11 August 2022, the AEC filed Court documents seeking civil penalties in relation to the signage. On 27 July 2023, the Federal Court declared that the proceedings be dismissed and ordered the AEC pay Mr Kelly's costs.
3. On 15 February 2023, the AEC commenced civil proceedings in the Federal Court seeking orders that Mr Charles McQuestin breached the authorisations requirements of the Electoral Act in the lead-up to the 2022 federal election. On 26 March 2024, the Federal Court declared that Mr McQuestin breached the authorisations requirements on 12, 18 and 19 May 2022. The Court ordered Mr McQuestin to pay a total of \$40,000 in pecuniary penalties and the AEC's costs. The AEC appealed the primary judgment in relation to the number of contraventions and the penalties imposed. The appeal was ongoing at 30 June 2024. Mr McQuestin applied to vary the costs order in the original hearing. The Court dismissed this application on 26 June 2024.
4. On 10 March 2023, the AEC commenced civil proceedings in the Federal Court seeking orders that the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union breached the authorisations requirements of the Electoral Act leading up to the 2022 federal election. The matter was ongoing at 30 June 2024.
5. On 13 October 2023, the AEC commenced civil proceedings in the Federal Court seeking civil penalties against Mr Dean Patrick Fisher for failing to lodge a candidate return for the 2022 federal election. This matter was ongoing at 30 June 2024.
6. Before the 2023 referendum, Senator Ralph Babet made an application to the Federal Court challenging the AEC's approach to formality on a referendum ballot paper. On 20 September 2023, the Court dismissed the application, stating that a cross does not manifest a clear intention to vote 'no,' making it an informal vote. Furthermore, a tick does manifest a clear intention to vote 'yes,' and therefore constitutes a formal vote. Senator Babet appealed the decision. On 9 October 2023, the Full Court of the Federal Court dismissed the appeal and ordered Senator Babet to pay the AEC's costs.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal decisions

No decisions of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal had a significant effect on the operations of the AEC during the reporting period.

Australian Information Commissioner decisions

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner commenced two reviews of AEC Freedom of Information decisions in 2023–24. At 30 June 2024, the reviews were in progress and outcomes had yet to be notified.

On 31 January 2024, the AEC provided submissions to the Australian Information Commissioner on a review from the previous financial year. At 30 June 2024, an outcome had yet to be notified.

Australian Privacy Commissioner decisions

The Australian Information Commissioner referred one complaint to the AEC during the reporting period, regarding internal AEC privacy administration. The complaint was resolved and did not require a decision from the Australian Privacy Commissioner.

Australian Human Rights Commission decisions

The AEC received three complaints in the reporting period. At 30 June 2024, one complaint matter was ongoing, one was settled at conciliation and the other had been discontinued by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Auditor-General reports

No reports of the Auditor-General referred to the operations of the AEC during 2023–24.

Electoral communications complaints

During 2023–24 the AEC investigated 511 complaints related to electoral and referendum communications. Most complaints related to authorisations of communications. More detail regarding the type of complaints for each electoral event during the period is at **Appendix I**.

Where a breach of the Electoral Act or the Referendum Act was identified, the AEC issued warnings or educational letters in the first instance in accordance with our regulatory action policy. More detail on the volume of electoral and referendum communications we investigated during the 2023 referendum and 2023–24 by-elections is at **Appendix I**.

More information about our compliance and enforcement strategies for authorisation matters is on the AEC website at www.aec.gov.au

Parliamentary committee engagement

The AEC assisted four federal parliamentary committees with inquiries during 2023–24. These included an inquiry by the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters into civics education, engagement and participation in Australia. We made submissions, gave evidence at public hearings and responded to questions on notice about a range of matters. The insight and experience we shared provided parliament with opportunities to consider legislative reform to support the delivery of future electoral events and community expectations of electoral services.

In 2023–24, the AEC:

- made four public submissions to parliamentary inquiries and attended four public hearings
- attended three Senate Estimates hearings
- responded to 59 Senate Estimates questions on notice.

Commonwealth Ombudsman investigations

The Commonwealth Ombudsman did not receive any complaints against the AEC during the reporting period.

Freedom of information

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the AEC’s Freedom of Information Disclosure Log and Information Publication Scheme is available at www.aec.gov.au

Customer scrutiny

The AEC’s service charter – available at www.aec.gov.au – outlines our agency’s role and purpose, and the services the public can expect to receive.

Public engagement policies, procedures and tools are also available for staff. We routinely examine enquiry trends to improve public information and services.

Our people

The AEC relies on highly skilled and professional people to achieve our purpose. We value the critical contributions our people make to delivering our core business and nurturing a positive workplace culture.

At 30 June 2024, the AEC had a regular workforce of 1,043 Australian Public Service (APS) employees. This included:

- 904 ongoing APS employees
- 139 non-ongoing APS employees.

Of these, 23 APS employees identify as Indigenous Australians (20 ongoing and three non-ongoing).

A breakdown of the AEC workforce is in Table 4 below.

The AEC also had:

- a casual APS workforce of 1,863
- 11 Statutory Office holders.

Table 4: AEC APS workforce by employment type and classification (excluding statutory office holders), at 30 June 2024

Classification	Ongoing	Non-ongoing
SES2	4	–
SES1	9	3
EL2	70	3
EL1	192	5
APS6	258	21
APS5	169	13
APS4	128	14
APS3	37	55
APS2	34	25
APS1	3	–
TOTAL	904	139

Detailed workforce statistics, including statutory appointments are in **Appendix H**.

Recruitment

We aim to attract and retain the right people, with the right skills. The AEC's ability to deliver large-scale electoral events relies on our ability to attract, develop and retain a significant number of people to support our national operations. This ensures we maintain a highly skilled, diverse and capable workforce. In meeting requirements for 2023–24, our recruitment activities resulted in:

- 206 ongoing engagements (including 18 graduates and three school leavers)
- 289 non-ongoing engagements
- 1,316 casual engagements
- 575 labour hire engagements
- 121 promotions (both internal and external).

APS recruitment was significant in the lead-up to the 2023 referendum. We attracted 3,949 applicants for ongoing and non-ongoing roles nationally, in response to 159 recruitment activities. We used a range of channels including APSjobs, recruitment job platforms and agencies, and recruitment advertising. We also established temporary registers for APS1, 2 and 3 employees to support flexible recruitment activities nationally, receiving 7,455 applications. We engaged over 99,000 temporary staff for the referendum.

We are preparing to attract over 100,000 temporary staff for the 2024/25 federal election.

Terms and conditions of employment

The AEC's regular workforce is engaged under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Public Service Act) and the temporary election workforce under section 35(1) of the Electoral Act.

The employment of people engaged under the Public Service Act is governed by the AEC Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027, published on the www.aec.gov.au

The Electoral Commissioner may agree to individual flexibility arrangements with employees, which can vary the effect of the terms of the enterprise agreement. At 30 June 2024, individual flexibility arrangements were in place for 44 AEC employees (see **Appendix H, Table 37**).

The employment terms and conditions for the temporary election workforce we engage for election events are outlined in a Collective Determination.

Performance management and performance pay

The enterprise agreement requires all employees engaged under section 22(2) of the Public Service Act to participate in the AEC's Performance Management Program. Eligible employees who meet the requirements receive salary advancement. The AEC does not provide performance bonuses. A list of salary ranges by classification is in **Appendix H, Table 38**.

Remuneration

The AEC is required to disclose the remuneration, policy, practices and governance arrangements of executive officials, including:

- key management personnel
- senior executives
- other highly paid employees, whose total remuneration exceeds the threshold amount of \$235,000 for the reporting period.

The terms and conditions of the AEC's statutory office holders are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and the Governor-General under the *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*. This includes remuneration of the Chairperson of the Commission, Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner and Australian Electoral Officers.

Remuneration for the AEC's senior executive employees is established through individual determinations made under section 24(1) of the Public Service Act, considering:

- the APS Executive Remuneration Management Policy
- the Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2020
- an assessment of the relativities with other APS agencies as indicated in the annual APS Remuneration Report produced by the Australian Public Service Commission and released in June each year.

Salary levels for Senior Executive Service (SES) employees are generally set at rates within a salary band applicable to each SES classification. A list of salary ranges by classification is in **Appendix H, Table 38**.

Details of executive remuneration in **Appendix H, Tables 40, 41 and 42**. They are also published on both the AEC and Remuneration Tribunal websites.

Workforce planning

In 2023–24, we continued to progress strategic and operational workforce planning initiatives to support informed workforce decisions.

We developed the AEC Workforce Strategy 2024–30 to help shape our workforce.

It identifies five strategic goals to guide the leadership and management of our people and ensure success in meeting our organisational outcomes. These goals are to:

1. attract and keep the right workforce
2. support the ongoing growth of our people to lead and manage
3. transform, engage and develop
4. provide a culture that values, includes and supports
5. offer flexibility in our workforce and ways of working.

Building and maintaining an agile organisation and professional workforce is critical to ensure we can respond to the changing environment and community expectations.

We are finalising our people capability framework to further support our workforce to deliver organisational outcomes now and in the future.

Work health and safety

The AEC takes a proactive approach to workplace health, safety and rehabilitation. We adhere to compliance obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011*, applicable Codes of Practice, the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* and Comcare's Guidelines for Rehabilitation Authorities 2019. We have the following systems to monitor, evaluate and maintain health, safety and welfare:

- a Rehabilitation Management System, meeting Comcare's Guidelines for Rehabilitation Authorities 2019 under section 41 of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*
- a work health and safety management system – AECsafety – which is undergoing further refinement
- the AEC's risk management framework.

We also demonstrated a firm commitment to work health and safety by publishing our Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Statement of Commitment last year. It outlines the steps we will take to ensure a safe work environment.

We use well-established initiatives to monitor, evaluate and maintain health, safety and wellbeing across the AEC. These include engaging workplace rehabilitation providers to help injured or ill employees return to work safely and participating in the NewAccess program facilitated by Comcare. We also promote:

- the AEC’s early intervention program, which supports employees injured at work, and helps reduce injury-related absenteeism
- free annual influenza vaccinations for staff
- the AEC’s employee assistance program
- ergonomic workstation assessments to prevent injury and to ensure pre-existing injuries are not aggravated.

Health and safety incident and claim management

In 2023–24, a total of 804 health and safety incidents were reported, compared with 708 the previous year. The increase can be attributed to the increase in staff required to deliver the referendum and by-elections in the reporting period. The majority of incidents (525 of the 804) were recorded

during the writ-to-writ period for the 2023 referendum (11 September to 6 November 2023).

The AEC reported 30 incidents to Comcare as notifiable incidents. While this is a marked increase from the previous year, 17 of these incidents occurred during the writ-to-writ period. Education across the AEC regarding notifiable incidents may also account for part of this increase.

One incident was in relation to the ‘death of a person’ (a member of the public at a polling place).

Twelve incidents were in relation to the ‘serious injury or illness of a person’, and 17 incidents related to ‘a dangerous incident’.

No further action was required by Comcare on these matters.

Injury and illness workers compensation cases decreased in 2023–24, with 22 continuing accepted claims, compared with 25 the year before.

In 2023–24, a total of six new compensation claims were submitted to Comcare, of which:

- four were accepted
- two were denied.

Of the six submitted claims for compensation, the breakdown of injury was:

- four psychological
- two musculoskeletal.

Table 5: Cases for compensable and non-compensable injuries, at 30 June

Case management type	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Compensation	32	21	28	25	22
Non-compensation	48	81	50	28	122
Early intervention	3	17	24	7	47
TOTAL	83	119	102	60	191

Of the 122 non-compensable claims this year:

- 85 were for physical injuries
- 27 were for psychological injuries
- 10 were for a combination of psychological/physical injuries.

Developing our people

The AEC is committed to developing all employees to build capability in our workforce.

The AEC's National Training Unit leads and coordinates learning and development for our workforce to build:

- critical operational and leadership capabilities that underpin election readiness and delivery
- essential workplace and public sector specific knowledge and skills
- a focus on electoral integrity, compliance and quality
- a vibrant learning culture.

Learning and development is guided by the AEC Learning and Professional Development Strategy 2020–2025, through five priorities:

1. developing a vibrant learning culture
2. clarifying accountabilities and responsibilities
3. ensuring a capable temporary election workforce
4. establishing a learning infrastructure
5. building capability.

In 2023, we focused on delivering training to prepare our temporary workforce to conduct the 2023 referendum and by-elections. In 2024, our focus then shifted to developing and delivering learning and development programs to prepare our permanent workforce for the next federal electoral event.

The AEC's flagship operational training program, the Operational Leaders Program, was delivered from April to June 2024. This program was complemented by a suite of opportunities available to the workforce including the National Induction Program and the annual Mandatory Learning Program. The review and update of training packages for the temporary election workforce for the next federal electoral event also commenced in 2024.

The AEC also encourages staff to apply for study assistance and offers support for professional memberships.

Inventory management

Inventory management is essential to manage the product life cycles of AEC election materials. In the lead-up to electoral events, we plan for sourcing, replenishing or replacing a wide range of materials.

To support election readiness, we use a combination of internal warehousing and procured services of a third-party logistics provider. We undertake progressive stocktakes at all sites throughout an election cycle and manage assets in accordance with the AEC's asset management policy or requirements.

Physical assets

The AEC's operating assets such as office fit-outs, machinery and equipment are managed on an end-of-life or end-of-lease schedule.

Office fit-outs are the largest component of this asset base. The AEC uses the services of outsourced providers, who assist with service and maintenance activities, ensuring value for money outcomes.

Environmental performance and sustainable development

In accordance with section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the AEC is required to report on environmental performance and measures that minimise environmental impact.

The Australian Government's Energy Efficiency in Government Operations Policy includes energy intensity targets and minimum energy performance standards. Departments and agencies are to progressively improve their energy performance and consider energy use when purchasing or leasing buildings.

Annual energy consumption

The AEC's reporting on greenhouse gas emissions and energy has been developed with methodology consistent with the whole-of-Australian Government approach, part of the APS Net Zero 2030 target. Emissions statistics are in **Appendix J**.

Fleet vehicles

The AEC has 13 vehicles in our fleet. Usage and kilometres travelled are monitored and replacement vehicles ordered as required. All vehicles meet minimal operational requirements, such as four-wheel drives for remote locations and smaller passenger vehicles for city locations. We are planning to convert the relevant vehicles in the fleet to electric vehicles, in line with the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy.

Waste management

The AEC provides ready access to segregated waste streams in our office environments. Recycling bins are located throughout all Canberra office buildings in kitchens and common areas. We provide bins for general waste, organic waste and commingled recycling.

During each electoral event, we assess the amount of paper and cardboard waste generated to help develop strategies to improve our waste footprint. We continue to review our cardboard products and have reduced both quantities and sizing of the products supplied. This has resulted in less waste and reduced environmental impacts associated with carbon emissions, as fewer products are required to be shipped through existing supply chains.

The AEC continues to proactively look at the life-cycle management of all products and is investigating further options to reduce waste, such as donating materials that we cannot retain for future use.

Purchasing

The AEC procures goods and services consistent with the:

- PGPA Act
- Commonwealth Procurement Rules
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's Sustainable Procurement Guide.

The AEC applies these rules through our Electoral Commissioner's Instructions, supporting operational guidelines, and by developing procurement skills and processes to improve efficiency and value-for-money outcomes.

We have centralised expertise to manage the AEC's procurement and contracting framework. Tenders are evaluated for:

- value for money
- extent to which intended outcomes or results are achieved
- unnecessary consumption
- ethical behaviour.

Australian National Audit Office access clauses

All AEC contract templates include a standard clause to provide Auditor-General access to a contractor's premises. We did not execute any contracts in 2023–24 without these access provisions.

Support for small and medium-sized enterprises and Indigenous business

The AEC supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.

The AEC supports small business participation in government procurement by:

- complying with the Commonwealth Procurement Framework
 - where appropriate, staff are advised of exemption 17 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules relating to the use of SMEs
- complying with government policies to support SME participation
 - Indigenous Procurement Policy
 - Supplier Pay On-Time or Pay Interest Policy
 - Australian Industry Participation plans
- facilitating payment of invoices in a timely manner
- using credit card payment for procurements valued below \$10,000.

The AEC recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available at www.treasury.gov.au

SME and small enterprise participation statistics are available at www.finance.gov.au

Publication of contracts on AusTender

Information on the value of AEC contracts and consultancies – as well as expected procurements – is available on the AusTender website at www.tenders.gov.au

In 2023–24:

- All contracts or standing offers greater than \$10,000 (including GST) were published on AusTender. None of these contracts or standing offers was subject to measures applied by the Electoral Commissioner for the purposes of paragraph 2.6 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
- The AEC did not administer any discretionary grant programs.
- One open tender request was published.

Procurement

The AEC's procurement policies and practices reflect the principles of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and are undertaken in accordance with the PGPA Act. The focus of procurement is on achieving value for money, encouraging competition, as well as efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of government resources. These rules are applied to activities through the agency's Electoral Commissioner Instructions and supporting procedures and guidelines. A central team within the agency provides advice to staff undertaking procurement and contract management activities. The team undertakes quality assurance testing of procurement activities and periodically reviews related documentation and training material to ensure consistency with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and other policies. We use a procurement module within our financial management information system to enhance administrative workflows and compliance.

The AEC's annual procurement plan is available at www.tenders.gov.au

Consultants

Consultants are engaged to provide specialist expertise, independent research, or to review or assess particular elements of electoral events.

We make these decisions in accordance with section 35(2) of the Electoral Act, the PGPA Act and related Regulations (including the Commonwealth Procurement Rules), and relevant internal policies.

Expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts

Table 6: Reportable consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Reportable consultancy contracts	Number	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	7	228
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	13	1,667
TOTAL	20	1,895

During 2023–24, the AEC entered into seven new reportable consultancy contracts, involving total actual expenditure of \$0.2 million. In addition, 13 ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during this period, involving total actual expenditure of \$1.7 million.

Table 7: Organisations receiving a share of consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
The Social Policy group (ABN 81 158 840 325)	455
Compas Pty. Ltd. (ABN 90 008 615 745)	392
Gartner Australasia Pty Limited (ABN 69 003 708 601)	311
SJ Kennedy Consultancy (ABN 53 764 482 998)	182
Axios Advisory Pty Ltd (ABN 13 096 266 358)	105
Maddocks (ABN 63 478 951 337)	101
TOTAL	1,546

Other than those named in Table 7, no further organisations received one or more amounts in total to at least five per cent of the AEC's total expenditure on consultancy contracts.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.

Expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts

Table 8: Reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Reportable non-consultancy contracts	Number	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	601	86,408
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	627	241,613
TOTAL	1,228	328,021

During 2023–24, the AEC entered into 601 new reportable non-consultancy contracts, involving total actual expenditure of \$86.4 million. In addition, 627 ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts were active during this period, involving total actual expenditure of \$241.6 million.

Table 9: Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2023–24

Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
Accenture Australia Pty Ltd (ABN 49 096 776 895)	17,725
Australia Post (ABN 28 864 970 579)	17,697
TOTAL	35,422

Other than those named in Table 9, no further organisations received one or more amounts in total to at least five per cent of the AEC's total expenditure on non-consultancy contracts.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.

SECTION 06

Financial statements

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

Financial performance including
audited financial statements

Financial statements

The AEC's 2023–24 financial results were influenced by the timing of expenditure for the delivery of the 2023 federal referendum and preparation for the next federal election.

The Australian National Audit Office has issued an unmodified audit opinion for the AEC's 2023–24 financial statements.

The AEC's financial reporting consists of a financial performance summary, together with the financial statements and supporting notes. The financial performance summary is a snapshot of the AEC's deficit, cash flow and net asset information.

The financial statements include the:

- auditor's report
- Electoral Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer statement
- various financial statements and administered schedules.

Further information on the financial performance of the AEC is provided in the notes to the financial statements.

Financial performance summary

The AEC's range of electoral activities is subject to external factors which can impact the timing of our expenditure. Consequently, our operating result can fluctuate significantly from year to year. Restricted by the ongoing challenge of the AEC's funding model, the AEC's 2023–24 financial results show an

operating loss of \$37.5 million compared with an operating loss of \$88.7 million in 2022–23.

The 2023–24 result was primarily influenced by costs related to the 2023 federal referendum, preparation for the next federal election and the timing of expenditure against the appropriations.

The statement of financial position at 30 June 2024 held net assets of \$165.0 million, largely comprising appropriation receivables, leasehold improvements and computer software. Total assets increased by \$88.9 million, primarily due to increases in building and leasehold improvements associated with longer term leases to support consecutive federal electoral events (e.g. 2022 federal election and 2023 federal referendum). Total liabilities increased by \$41.7 million, mainly due to the extension of some leases to greater than 12 months to support 2023 federal referendum and the preparation for the next federal election.

No significant issues of non-compliance in relation to finance law were reported to the Minister for Finance in 2023–24. This included any failure to comply with the duties of accountable authorities (section 15–19 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*) (PGPA Act),

significant fraudulent activity and other serious breaches (section 25–29 of the PGPA Act).

The AEC's funding model continues to present an ongoing challenge. It poses significant risk in managing the increasing complexity of federal electoral events and by-elections, as well as the ongoing growth in the size of the electoral roll. Additional departmental appropriations were received in 2023–24 predominantly for the delivery of the 2023 referendum and critical ICT replacement.

Independent Auditor's report



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Special Minister of State

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Electoral Commission (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2024:

- comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2024 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2024 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by Electoral Commissioner and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of comprehensive income;
- Statement of financial position;
- Statement of changes in equity;
- Cash flow statement;
- Budget variance reporting;
- Administered schedule of comprehensive income;
- Administered schedule of assets and liabilities;
- Administered reconciliation schedule;
- Administered cash flow statement;
- Administered budget variance reporting; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Electoral Commissioner is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Electoral Commissioner is also responsible for such internal control as the Electoral Commissioner determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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In preparing the financial statements, the Electoral Commissioner is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Electoral Commissioner is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Shane Svoboda
Audit Principal

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
8 October 2024

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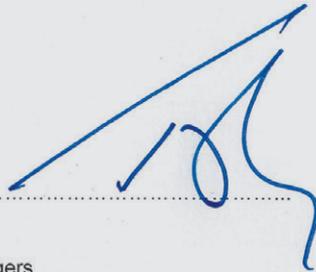
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AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION

STATEMENT BY ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Electoral Commission will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Signed.....

Tom Rogers
Electoral Commissioner
8 October 2024

Signed.....

Stuart Oreo
Acting Chief Financial Officer
8 October 2024

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

for the period ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	1.1A	261,305	124,174	102,736
Suppliers ²	1.1B	323,221	155,071	432,232
Depreciation and amortisation ²	2.2A	77,359	39,902	25,523
Finance costs ²	1.1C	4,335	1,676	781
Write-down and impairment of other assets	2.2A	4,105	13,602	-
Total expenses		670,325	334,425	561,272
Own-source income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	1.2A	14,474	18,425	11,038
Rental income	1.2B	645	-	-
Other revenue	1.2C	1,089	183	-
Total own-source revenue		16,208	18,608	11,038
Gains				
Other gains		2,232	130	183
Total gains		2,232	130	183
Total own-source income		18,440	18,738	11,221
Net (cost of) services		(651,885)	(315,687)	(550,051)
Revenue from Government				
Revenue from Government	1.2D	605,807	235,425	538,085
(Deficit) / Surplus on continuing operations		(46,078)	(80,262)	(11,966)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation reserve		8,622	(8,468)	-
Total comprehensive (loss) / income	3.3	(37,456)	(88,730)	(11,966)

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

2. Prior period balances have been restated (refer Note 6.2).

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents		1,900	1,368	1,868
Trade and other receivables	2.1	79,370	62,979	199,526
Total financial assets		81,270	64,347	201,394
Non-financial assets				
Buildings and leasehold improvements ^{2,3}	2.2A	205,837	166,099	71,107
Plant and equipment ³	2.2A	7,786	12,919	101,839
Computer software	2.2A	109,365	70,360	78,057
Inventories		-	2,520	3,230
Prepayments		11,887	11,029	4,980
Total non-financial assets		334,875	262,927	259,213
Total assets		416,145	327,274	460,607
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers		21,299	14,308	92,606
Other payables	2.3A	7,164	6,581	11,273
Total payables		28,463	20,889	103,879
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases ²	2.4	189,843	145,031	62,131
Total interest bearing liabilities		189,843	145,031	62,131
Provisions				
Employee provisions		26,489	23,320	22,846
Provision for restoration	2.3B	6,380	20,274	5,196
Total provisions		32,869	43,594	28,042
Total liabilities		251,175	209,514	194,052
Net assets		164,970	117,760	266,555
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		271,784	187,118	271,782
(Accumulated deficit) / Retained surplus ²		(135,903)	(89,825)	(34,163)
Asset revaluation reserve		29,089	20,467	28,936
Total equity		164,970	117,760	266,555

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

2. Prior period balances have been restated (refer Note 6.2).

3. Includes right-of-use (ROU) assets.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

for the period ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	187,118	137,159	187,116
Transactions with owners			
Contribution by owners			
Departmental capital budget	<u>84,666</u>	<u>49,959</u>	<u>84,666</u>
Total transactions with owners	<u>84,666</u>	<u>49,959</u>	<u>84,666</u>
Closing balance as at 30 June	<u>271,784</u>	<u>187,118</u>	<u>271,782</u>
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	(89,825)	(9,563)	(22,197)
Comprehensive income			
(Deficit) / Surplus for the period ²	<u>(46,078)</u>	<u>(80,262)</u>	<u>(11,966)</u>
Closing balance as at 30 June	<u>(135,903)</u>	<u>(89,825)</u>	<u>(34,163)</u>
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	20,467	28,935	28,936
Comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income	<u>8,622</u>	<u>(8,468)</u>	<u>-</u>
Closing balance as at 30 June	<u>29,089</u>	<u>20,467</u>	<u>28,936</u>
Total equity as at 30 June	<u>164,970</u>	<u>117,760</u>	<u>266,555</u>

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

2. Prior period balances have been restated (refer Note 6.2).

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Accounting policy

Contributions by owners

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and departmental capital budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the period ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations	676,928	386,676	538,085
Rendering of services	18,413	20,348	11,038
Net GST received	38,109	41,379	-
Total cash received	733,450	448,403	549,123
Cash used			
Employees	258,048	127,454	102,736
Suppliers ²	352,956	275,956	431,866
Interest payments on lease liabilities ²	3,765	1,488	781
Section 74 receipts transferred to the OPA	59,166	51,904	-
Other	-	-	183
Total cash used	673,935	456,802	535,566
Net cash (used by) / from operating activities	59,515	(8,399)	13,557
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from disposal of assets	240	-	-
Total cash received	240	-	-
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	56,677	44,396	84,666
Total cash used	56,677	44,396	84,666
Net cash (used by) investing activities	(56,437)	(44,396)	(84,666)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Contributed equity - departmental capital budget	56,761	80,216	84,666
Total cash received	56,761	80,216	84,666
Cash used			
Principal payments of lease liabilities ²	59,307	27,921	13,557
Total cash used	59,307	27,921	13,557
Net cash (used by) / from financing activities	(2,546)	52,295	71,109
Net (decrease) / increase in cash held	532	(500)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	1,368	1,868	1,868
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	1,900	1,368	1,868

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

2. Prior period balances have been restated (refer Note 6.2).

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

BUDGET VARIANCE REPORTING

for the period ended 30 June 2024

The below table provides explanations for significant variances between the AEC's original budget estimates, as published in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 (PBS), and the actual financial performance and position for the year. The budget is not audited. Variances are treated as significant when it is considered important for a reader's understanding or is relevant to an assessment of the discharge of accountability and for analysis of the AEC's performance. The nature and timing of the Commonwealth's budget process can also contribute to the variances.

Budget variance explanation	Affected statements and line items
<p>The timing of the federal electoral events is a decision for Government. The AEC's budget assumes that all electoral event related costs will be incurred and paid for in the financial year in which they are held.</p> <p>The AEC received funding from Government in 2022-23 and 2023-24 to deliver the 2023 federal referendum. The 2023 federal referendum was held on 14 October 2023.</p> <p>Additionally, the AEC has incurred costs related to the preparation of the next federal election during 2023-24.</p>	<p>Statement of comprehensive income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee benefits Suppliers Revenue from Government <p>Statement of financial position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade and other receivables Suppliers <p>Cash flow statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriations (cash received) Employees (cash used) Suppliers (cash used) Section 74 receipts transferred to the OPA (cash used)
<p>During the year several significant long-term leases were entered into for State and National Offices. In addition, the 2023 federal referendum resulted in a change to the AEC's electoral event property strategy. Leases that were previously held as short-term for federal electoral events were extended to cover the 2023 federal referendum and in preparation for the next federal election.</p>	<p>Statement of comprehensive income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depreciation and amortisation Finance costs <p>Statement of financial position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leasehold improvements (ROU) Leases <p>Cash flow statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal payments of lease liabilities (cash used)
<p>Spending on software projects was delayed due to the 2023 federal referendum. In addition, the budget was incorrectly recorded against plant and equipment.</p>	<p>Statement of financial position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant and equipment Computer software <p>Cash flow statement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of property, plant and equipment – (cash received) Contributed equity – departmental capital budget (cash received)

ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME*for the period ended 30 June 2024*

	2024	2023	Original Budget ¹
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
EXPENSES			
Election Funding	782	-	-
Nomination / Non-voter fine refunds	18	1,707	-
Total expenses	800	1,707	-
INCOME			
Revenue			
Non-taxation revenue			
Political party nominations and registrations	31	42	-
Electoral fines / Penalties	6,390	4,587	33
Other	-	251	-
Total non-taxation revenue	6,421	4,880	33
Total revenue	6,421	4,880	33
Net contribution by services	5,621	3,173	33
(Deficit) / surplus	5,621	3,173	33

ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES*as at 30 June 2024*

LIABILITIES			
Payables			
Suppliers	14	9	-
Total payables	14	9	-
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government	14	9	-
Net (liabilities)	(14)	(9)	-

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

The above schedules should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

ADMINISTERED RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE*for the period ended 30 June 2024*

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July	(9)	(47,081)
Net (cost of) / contribution by services		
Income	6,421	4,880
Expenses	(800)	(1,707)
Transfers (to) / from the Australian Government		
Appropriation transfers from Official Public Account		
Special appropriations (limited)	30	1,624
Special appropriations (unlimited)	815	46,912
Appropriation transfers to Official Public Account		
Transfers to Official Public Account	(6,471)	(4,637)
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June	(14)	(9)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Accounting policy*Administered cash transfers to and from the Official Public Account*

Revenue collected by the AEC for use by the Government rather than the AEC is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the entity on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the administered cash flow statement and in the administered reconciliation schedule.

ADMINISTERED CASH FLOW STATEMENT*for the period ended 30 June 2024*

	2024	2023	Original Budget ¹
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Political party nominations and registrations	31	42	-
Electoral fines / Penalties	<u>6,390</u>	<u>4,587</u>	<u>33</u>
Total cash received	<u>6,421</u>	<u>4,629</u>	<u>33</u>
Cash used			
Election funding	777	46,823	-
Nomination / Non-voter fine refunds	<u>18</u>	<u>1,707</u>	<u>-</u>
Total cash used	<u>795</u>	<u>48,530</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash from / (used by) operating activities	<u>5,626</u>	<u>(43,901)</u>	<u>33</u>
Cash from Official Public Account			
Appropriations	<u>845</u>	<u>48,536</u>	<u>-</u>
Total cash from Official Public Account	<u>845</u>	<u>48,536</u>	<u>-</u>
Cash to Official Public Account			
Appropriations	<u>6,471</u>	<u>4,637</u>	<u>33</u>
Total cash to Official Public Account	<u>6,471</u>	<u>4,637</u>	<u>33</u>
Net cash (to) / from the Official Public Account	<u>(5,626)</u>	<u>43,899</u>	<u>(33)</u>
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held	-	(2)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

1. Budget reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 published in May 2023.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

ADMINISTERED BUDGET VARIANCE REPORTING

for the period ended 30 June 2024

The below table provides explanations for significant variances between the AEC's original budget estimates, as published in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023-24 (PBS), and the actual financial performance and position for the year. The budget is not audited. Variances are treated as significant when it is considered important for a reader's understanding or is relevant to an assessment of the discharge of accountability and for analysis of the AEC's performance. The nature and timing of the Commonwealth's budget process can also contribute to the variances.

Budget variance explanation	Affected statements and line items
By-elections were held for the divisions of Fadden, Dunkley and Cook during 2023-24, which were not budgeted for.	Schedule of comprehensive income <ul style="list-style-type: none">Election funding Cash flow statement <ul style="list-style-type: none">Election funding
The AEC commences issuing non-voter fines following the completion of a federal electoral event. Non-voter fines received during 2023-24 predominantly related to the 2023 federal referendum.	Schedule of comprehensive income <ul style="list-style-type: none">Electoral fines / penalties (revenue) Cash flow statement <ul style="list-style-type: none">Electoral fines / penalties (cash received)Appropriations (to the Official Public Account)

Overview

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is an Australian Government controlled, not-for-profit entity, domiciled in Australia. The AEC's purpose is to maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services and targeted education and public awareness programs.

Additionally, the AEC undertakes the following administered activities on behalf of the Government:

- electoral activities including registrations of political parties, maintain extracts of the electoral roll and conduct fee for service elections;
- administer electoral fines / penalties; and
- pay election funding for political parties / candidates / senate groups to reimburse them for electoral expenditure from a special appropriation established under section 302 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

The continued existence of the AEC in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continued funding by Parliament for its administration and programs.

The basis of preparation

The financial statements are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- (a) Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015 (FRR); and
- (b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

New accounting standards

No new, revised or amending accounting standards and interpretations issued prior to the signing of the financial statements and applicable to the current or future reporting periods are expected to have a material impact on the AEC's financial statements.

Taxation

The AEC is exempt from all forms of taxation except fringe benefits tax (FBT) and goods and services tax (GST).

Material estimates and judgements

In the preparation of the financial statements, management adopts estimates and judgements relating to the treatment of transactions and balances under Australian Accounting Standards. Individually material estimates and judgements are outlined in the notes to which they relate:

Material accounting estimate/judgement	Note
Employee provisions	1.1A

Reporting of administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Events after the reporting period

There were no events after the reporting date that materially affected the financial statements.

Section 83 of the Constitution

Section 83 of the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900* (the Constitution) provides that no amount may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund except under an appropriation made by law. The AEC has controls in place to reduce any instances of non-compliance with section 83 wherever possible and ensure there is no intentional misuse of funds. Recovery action is taken to rectify any instance of non-compliance as soon as it is identified.

In 2024, the AEC identified 2 payments totalling \$14,000 from the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* that were not consistent with section 83 of the Constitution. The amounts were for valid payments however due to an administrative error they were initially drawn down from the incorrect appropriation. All monies were repaid upon identification of the issue.

In 2023, the AEC identified 5 payments totalling \$31,332 from the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and 1 payment of \$20 from the Services for Other Entities and Trust Monies special account that were not consistent with section 83 of the Constitution. The amounts were for valid payments however due to an administrative error they were initially drawn down from the incorrect appropriation. All monies were repaid upon identification of the issue.

Disclosure of prior period error

An accounting error has been identified relating to the reporting of long-term lease liabilities in the 2023 departmental financial statements. These lease liabilities were entered into during 2023 and previously reported as short-term leases. This error did not impact the business operations of the AEC and had a minor impact on the comprehensive loss for 2023. A restatement of the comparative information for the primary financial statements is presented in Note 6.2, and the related notes. In addition, comparative information has also been restated for Net cash appropriation arrangements (Note 3.3) and Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities (Note 6.1A).

Financial performance

1.1 Expenses

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
1.1A: Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries	220,249	93,974
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	22,685	14,386
Defined benefit plans	5,571	4,908
Leave and other entitlements	12,686	10,696
Separation and redundancies	114	210
Total employee benefits	261,305	124,174

Accounting policy

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits and termination benefits expected within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as the net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the entity's superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

Material judgment

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the work of an actuary as at 30 June 2022. The actuary has reviewed the AEC's employee profile in 2024 and confirmed this assessment remains appropriate. The estimate of the present value of the liability considers attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation. Short-term and long-term salary growth rates have been determined with reference to future salary increases in the *AEC Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027* and the Wage Price Index published in the 2024-25 Budget Paper No. 1 - Budget Strategy and Outlook. These remain unchanged from 2023.

Superannuation

Staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap), or other non-government superannuation funds. The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes. The AEC makes employer contributions to defined benefit superannuation schemes at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The AEC accounts for these amounts as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions (refer note 2.3A).

2024	2023
\$'000	\$'000

1.1B: Suppliers

Goods and services supplied or rendered

Contractors	122,731	54,170
IT services	45,847	33,602
Advertising	36,906	8,043
Mail and freight	31,949	8,275
Property	30,485	13,569
Furniture and venue hire	17,256	1,029
Travel	8,869	5,614
Office supplies	8,791	8,864
Other	5,300	4,657
Employee related	4,524	3,353
Inventory consumed	4,339	912
Consultants	1,722	2,385
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	318,719	144,473

Goods supplied	39,645	7,861
Services rendered	279,074	136,612
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	318,719	144,473

Other suppliers

Workers compensation expenses	2,926	1,527
Short-term and low value leases	1,576	9,071
Total other suppliers	4,502	10,598
Total suppliers	323,221	155,071

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2023: 30 days). Settlement of supplier payables is usually made within 20 days.

Accounting policy

Short-term leases and leases of low value assets

The AEC has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low value assets (less than \$10,000 per asset).

The AEC recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.1C: Finance costs

Interest on lease liabilities	3,765	1,488
Unwinding of discount	570	188
Total finance costs	4,335	1,676

Accounting policy

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred.

1.2 Revenue

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000

1.2A: Revenue from contracts with customers

Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers

Type of customer:

Australian Government entities (related parties)	1,828	6,641
State and Territory Governments	12,641	11,779
Non-government entities	5	5
Total revenue from contracts with customers	14,474	18,425

Timing of transfer of goods and services:

Over time	13,949	16,788
Point in time	525	1,637
Total revenue from contracts with customers	14,474	18,425

Revenue from contracts with customers are for services rendered, primarily for the management and provision of the electoral roll. The AEC also supports international elections and conducts protected action ballots.

Accounting policy

The AEC classifies goods and service based agreements as within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* (AASB 15) when all the following conditions are satisfied:

- there is an agreement that has been approved by all parties to the agreement;
- the obligations of each party under the agreement can be identified;
- a pattern of transfer of services can be identified;
- the agreement has commercial substance;
- it is highly probable that the AEC will collect the payments.

The AEC recognises goods and services revenue within the scope of AASB 15 either at a point in time when the performance obligation has been completed or over time with proportionate recognition over the period of the agreement. Where consideration is received in advance of a performance obligation being fulfilled, a contract liability is raised in relation to that performance obligation (refer note 2.3A).

1.2B: Rental Income

Operating leases

Sublease of right-of-use asset	645	-
Total rental income	645	-

In 2024, the AEC in its capacity as a lessor leased several properties to state electoral commissions in New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria on a short-term basis. These properties were sub-licensed under Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) which ceased on 14 April 2024.

Commitments for lease receivables at 30 June 2024 are \$0.1m (2023: nil), relating to an MOU with the Northern Territory Electoral Commission for three months to 30 September 2024.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000

1.2C: Other revenue

Resources received free of charge

Remuneration of auditors	126	100
Australian Taxation Office reporting fees	-	50
Other	<u>963</u>	<u>33</u>
Total other revenue	<u>1,089</u>	<u>183</u>

Accounting policy

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

1.2D: Revenue from Government

Appropriations

Departmental appropriations - operating	3.1A	590,907	220,525
Departmental special appropriations	3.1C	<u>14,900</u>	<u>14,900</u>
Total revenue from government		<u>605,807</u>	<u>235,425</u>

Accounting policy

Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when the AEC gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts (refer Note 2.1).

Departmental financial position

2.1 Financial assets

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
2.1: Trade and other receivables		
Goods and services receivables	2,699	2,433
Appropriation receivables	74,500	58,550
Other receivables		
Statutory receivables	<u>2,258</u>	<u>2,152</u>
Total other receivables	<u>2,258</u>	<u>2,152</u>
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	<u>79,457</u>	<u>63,135</u>
Less expected credit loss allowance	<u>(87)</u>	<u>(156)</u>
Total trade and other receivables (net)	<u>79,370</u>	<u>62,979</u>

Accounting policy

Financial assets

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and on hand.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any loss allowance. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Trade receivables and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flows where the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below-market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on expected credit losses, using the simplified approach which always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

2.2 Non-financial assets

2.2.A: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles

	Buildings and leasehold improvements		Plant and equipment		Computer software		Total \$'000
	Owned \$'000	ROU \$'000	Owned \$'000	ROU \$'000	Total \$'000	Total \$'000	
As at 1 July 2023							
Gross book value	19,016	202,609	13,486	180	126,309	361,600	
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(1,250)	(54,276)	(627)	(120)	(55,949)	(112,222)	
Total as at 1 July 2023	17,766	148,333	12,859	60	70,360	249,378	
Additions	4,933	-	3,577	-	24,820	33,330	
Purchase Internally developed	-	-	-	-	23,967	23,967	
ROU assets	-	104,714	-	114	-	104,828	
Write-down and impairments recognised in net cost of services	(267)	-	(2,323)	-	(1,515)	(4,105)	
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	-	(4,221)	-	-	-	(4,221)	
Depreciation and amortisation	(5,892)	(57,399)	(5,683)	(110)	(8,275)	(77,359)	
Other movements	261	439	(708)	-	8	-	
Transfers	-	(531)	-	-	-	(531)	
Lease modifications, terminations and remeasurements	-	(2,299)	-	-	-	(2,299)	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total as at 30 June 2024	16,801	189,036	7,722	64	109,365	322,988	
Total as at 30 June 2024 represented by							
Gross book value	17,086	286,613	13,603	215	118,036	435,553	
Work-in progress	6,407	-	401	-	52,214	59,022	
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(6,692)	(97,577)	(6,282)	(151)	(60,885)	(171,587)	
Total as at 30 June 2024	16,801	189,036	7,722	64	109,365	322,988	

No property, plant and equipment or intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

Revaluations of non-financial assets

All revaluations were conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy below. The last revaluation was conducted by an independent valuer as at 30 June 2023.

Fair value measurement

At 30 June 2024, leasehold improvements and property, plant and equipment assets were measured at fair value. All right-of-use (ROU) leased assets and intangibles are measured at cost.

Accounting policy

Asset capitalisation thresholds and useful lives for all asset classes remain unchanged from 2023, as set out below:

Class	2024 Useful life	2024 Threshold
Plant and equipment	5 to 10 years	\$5,000
IT Equipment	3 to 5 years	\$5,000
Computer software	1 to 10 years	\$10,000
Leasehold improvements	Lesser of lease term/ useful life	\$10,000
ROU assets	Lease term (including extension options)	\$10,000 ¹

¹ Refers to the underlying asset value, not the calculated ROU asset.

Property, plant and equipment

Unless otherwise stated, depreciation rates are applied on a straight-line basis. Rates, useful lives and indicators of impairment are assessed annually, with any necessary adjustments recognised as appropriate.

Property, plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Computer software

The AEC's intangibles comprise internally developed and purchased software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software assets (including work-in progress) were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2024. The impairment has been reflected in the statement of comprehensive income.

Leased right-of-use (ROU) assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise of the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. Subsequently, ROU assets are measured at cost and accounted for as separate asset classes to the corresponding owned assets.

An impairment review is undertaken annually and where appropriate, the carrying value is adjusted.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
2.2B: Capital commitments payable (GST inclusive)		
Buildings and leasehold improvements	948	4,215
Plant and equipment	2,204	9,072
Computer software	27,082	78,302
Total capital commitments payable	30,234	91,589

Contractual obligations primarily related to the purchase of computer software.

2.3 Other payables and provisions

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
2.3A: Other payables		
Contract liabilities from contracts with customers	3,783	3,232
Salaries and wages	2,720	2,684
Superannuation	498	487
Other	163	178
Total other payables	7,164	6,581

The contract liabilities from contracts with customers relate to support for international elections.

2.3B: Provision for restoration

	\$'000
As at 1 July 2023	20,274
Additional provisions made	2,578
Amounts used (paid)	(772)
Amounts reversed ¹	(16,270)
Unwinding of discount or change in discount rate	570
Total as at 30 June 2024	6,380

1. Amounts reversed include \$15.2m property makegood revaluations for existing arrangements which resulted in a \$12.8m increase to the asset revaluation reserve and \$2.3m decrease in ROU assets. Additionally, \$1.1m has been recognised in other gains. The majority of the \$15.2m revaluation is due to a change in an accounting estimate. During 2024, the AEC undertook a detailed review of each lease to determine the specific requirements for makegood and have adjusted the estimates accordingly.

Accounting judgements and estimates

For property leases where the AEC has an obligation to restore the premises to their original condition, the AEC assesses the value of the provision for restoration in line with the relevant clauses of the lease, based on estimated costs per square metre provided by an independent property valuer. The AEC revalues the provision at the end of each financial year to reflect the present value of this obligation.

2.4 Interest bearing liabilities

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000

2.4: Leases

Lease liabilities	<u>189,843</u>	<u>145,031</u>
Total leases	<u>189,843</u>	<u>145,031</u>

Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2024 was \$63.1m (2023: \$29.4m).

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows

Within 1 year	63,186	34,996
Between 1 to 5 years	111,665	109,770
More than 5 years	<u>26,620</u>	<u>9,469</u>
Total leases	<u>201,471</u>	<u>154,235</u>

The AEC in its capacity as a lessee has office space and fleet motor vehicles leases.

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 2.2, 1.1B and 1.1C.

Accounting policy

For all new contracts entered into, the AEC considers whether the contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the AEC's incremental borrowing rate.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to leases. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the ROU asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

Funding

3.1 Appropriations

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
3.1A: Annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')		
Ordinary annual services		
Annual appropriation		
Ordinary annual services	590,907	220,525
Departmental capital budget ¹	84,666	49,959
Section 74 receipts ²	20,951	18,712
Total appropriation	696,524	289,196
Appropriation applied		
Ordinary annual services ²	(623,281)	(339,084)
Departmental capital budget	(56,761)	(80,216)
Total appropriation applied	(680,042)	(419,300)
Variance³	16,482	(130,104)

1. Departmental capital budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1, 3, 5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

2. Prior year values have been amended to remove the impact of GST refunds.

3. The variance primarily reflects lower than anticipated payments for capital projects during 2024.

3.1B: Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

Departmental

<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-2024 - departmental capital budget</i>	45,548	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023-2024</i>	10	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 5) 2023-2024</i>	28,942	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-2023</i>	-	40,907
<i>Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-2023 - departmental capital budget</i>	-	17,643
Cash and cash equivalents	1,900	1,368
Total departmental	76,400	59,918

3.1C: Special Appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

Authority	Appropriation applied	
<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 section 92 (Departmental)</i>	14,900	14,900
<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 section 302 (Administered)</i>	776	46,823
<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 section 77</i>	39	89
Total special appropriations applied	15,715	61,812

Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 section 92 (Departmental) special appropriation is limited to \$14.9m.

Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 section 302 (Administered) special appropriation is not limited.

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 section 77 special appropriation is an unlimited refund appropriation to enable repayment of funds for incorrect or unidentified payments earlier received and sent to the OPA as an administered receipt.

No entities spent money from the Consolidated Revenue Fund on behalf of the AEC.

3.2 Special accounts

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Services for other entities and trust monies (SOETM)		
Balance brought forward from previous period	4,593	6,177
Increases	30	40
Available for payments	4,623	6,217
Decreases	30	1,624
Total balance carried to the next period	4,593	4,593
Balance represented by:		
Cash held in the Official Public Account	4,593	4,593

Appropriation: *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* section 78.

Establishing instrument: *PGPA Act Determination (Australian Electoral Commission SOETM Special Account 2022)* commenced on 29 September 2022. The special account sunsets on 1 October 2032.

Purpose: For the expenditure of monies held in trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth, for example, political candidate deposits.

The special account balance is held in trust.

3.3 Net cash appropriation arrangements

Total comprehensive (deficit) / income - as per the statement of comprehensive income	(37,456)	(88,730)
Plus: depreciation / amortisation of assets funded through departmental capital appropriations ¹	19,850	10,336
Plus: depreciation ROU assets ²	57,509	29,566
Less: lease principal repayments ²	(59,307)	(27,921)
Net cash operating (deficit) / surplus	(19,404)	(76,749)

1. From 2010-11, the Government introduced net cash appropriation arrangements where revenue appropriations for depreciation / amortisation expenses of non-corporate Commonwealth entities and selected corporate Commonwealth entities were replaced with a separate capital budget provided through equity appropriations. Capital budgets are to be appropriated in the period when cash payment for capital expenditure is required.

2. The inclusion of depreciation / amortisation expenses relating to ROU assets and the lease liability principal repayment amount reflects the impact of AASB 16 *Leases*, which does not directly reflect a change in appropriation arrangements.

The timing of federal electoral events is a decision for Government. The AEC's funding model continues to present an ongoing challenge. The AEC budget assumes that all federal electoral event costs will be incurred and paid for within the financial years that funding is received. For example, the 2022 federal election was held in May 2022, and election expenses continued to be incurred in the 2022-23 financial year. As a result, the AEC may report an operating loss due to the timing of expenditure in relation to federal electoral events.

People and relationships

4.1 Key management personnel remuneration

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the AEC, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the AEC. The AEC has determined the KMP to be the Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner and the four group First Assistant Commissioners who comprise the Executive Leadership team, including acting arrangements where it is determined the individual meets the definition of a KMP. KMP remuneration is reported in the table below:

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Short-term benefits	2,024	1,899
Post-employment benefits	332	281
Other long-term benefits	83	79
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses¹	2,439	2,259

The total number of KMP included in the above table is 6 (2023: 7).

1. The above KMP remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the AEC.

4.2 Related party disclosures

Related party relationships

The AEC is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the AEC are KMP, the Portfolio Minister and Executive, and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with related parties

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the Government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions have not been separately disclosed in this note.

Managing uncertainties

5.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

At 30 June 2024, the AEC had no departmental or administered quantifiable or unquantifiable contingent assets or liabilities (2023: nil).

Accounting policy

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are reported in the notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of an asset or liability or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

5.2 Financial instruments

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000

5.2A: Categories of financial instruments

Financial assets

Financial assets at amortised cost

Cash and cash equivalents	1,900	1,368
Trade and other receivables	2,612	2,277
Total financial assets at amortised cost	4,512	3,645

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost

Suppliers	21,299	14,308
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	21,299	14,308

5.2B: Administered - Categories of financial instruments

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost

Suppliers	14	9
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	14	9

Other information

6.1 Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
6.1A: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities		
Assets expected to be recovered in		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,900	1,368
Trade and other receivables	79,370	62,979
Prepayments	9,618	8,094
Total no more than 12 months	90,888	72,441
More than 12 months		
Buildings and leasehold improvements	205,837	166,099
Plant and equipment	7,786	12,919
Computer software	109,365	70,360
Inventories	-	2,520
Prepayments	2,269	2,935
Total more than 12 months	325,257	254,833
Total assets	416,145	327,274
Liabilities expected to be settled in		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	21,299	14,308
Other payables	6,820	6,477
Leases	59,429	31,969
Employee provisions	7,937	6,629
Provision for restoration	1,587	4,139
Total no more than 12 months	97,072	63,522
More than 12 months		
Other payables	344	104
Leases	130,414	113,062
Employee provisions	18,552	16,691
Provision for restoration	4,793	16,135
Total more than 12 months	154,103	145,992
Total liabilities	251,175	209,514

6.1B Administered – Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

At 30 June 2024, all administered assets and liabilities are expected to be recovered or settled within 12 months.

6.2 Restatement of prior period balances

During 2024, the AEC identified an error in the reporting of long-term lease liabilities in the Departmental balances reported at 30 June 2023 which has resulted in the restatement of comparatives. These lease liabilities were previously reported as short-term leases.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	2023 Original Balance \$'000	Increase/ (decrease) due to error \$'000	2023 Restated Balance \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
Expenses			
Suppliers	166,169	(11,098)	155,071
Depreciation and amortisation	28,670	11,232	39,902
Finance costs	617	1,059	1,676
Total expenses	<u>333,232</u>	<u>1,193</u>	<u>334,425</u>
Net (cost of) services	<u>(314,494)</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>(315,687)</u>
(Deficit) / Surplus on continuing operations	<u>(79,069)</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>(80,262)</u>
Total comprehensive (loss) / income	<u>(87,537)</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>(88,730)</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Non-financial assets

Buildings and leasehold improvements	67,071	99,028	166,099
Total non-financial assets	<u>163,899</u>	<u>99,028</u>	<u>262,927</u>
Total assets	<u>228,246</u>	<u>99,028</u>	<u>327,274</u>

LIABILITIES

Interest bearing liabilities

Leases	44,810	100,221	145,031
Total interest bearing liabilities	<u>44,810</u>	<u>100,221</u>	<u>145,031</u>
Total liabilities	<u>109,293</u>	<u>100,221</u>	<u>209,514</u>
Net assets	<u>118,953</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>117,760</u>

EQUITY

(Accumulated deficit) / Retained surplus	(88,632)	(1,193)	(89,825)
Total equity	<u>118,953</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>117,760</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

RETAINED EARNINGS

Comprehensive income

(Deficit) / Surplus for the period	(79,069)	(1,193)	(80,262)
Closing balance as at 30 June	<u>(88,632)</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>(89,825)</u>
Total equity as at 30 June	<u>118,953</u>	<u>(1,193)</u>	<u>117,760</u>

CASH FLOW STATEMENT	2023 Original Balance \$'000	Increase/ (decrease) due to error \$'000	2023 Restated Balance \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Suppliers	287,054	(11,098)	275,956
Interest payments on lease liabilities	<u>429</u>	<u>1,059</u>	<u>1,488</u>
Total cash used	<u>466,841</u>	<u>(10,039)</u>	<u>456,802</u>
Net cash (used by) / from operating activities	<u>(18,438)</u>	<u>10,039</u>	<u>(8,399)</u>
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Principal payments of lease liabilities	<u>17,882</u>	<u>10,039</u>	<u>27,921</u>
Total cash used	<u>17,882</u>	<u>10,039</u>	<u>27,921</u>
Net cash (used by) / from financing activities	<u>62,334</u>	<u>(10,039)</u>	<u>52,295</u>
Net (decrease) / increase in cash held	<u>(500)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(500)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	<u>1,868</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,868</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	<u>1,368</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,368</u>



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

SECTION 07

Appendices

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

Additional information on
AEC resources, governance,
Commonwealth Electoral Roll
information, electoral events data,
electoral redistribution data,
financial disclosure data,
AEC workforce statistics and
electoral communications complaints

Appendices

Appendix A: Resources

Table 10: Entity resource statement 2023–24

	Current available appropriation for 2023–24 (a) \$'000	Payments made 2023–24 (b) \$'000	Balance remaining 2023–24 (a)–(b) \$'000
Departmental			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services ¹	756,442	680,042	76,400
Total departmental annual appropriations	756,442	680,042	76,400
Departmental special appropriations	14,900	14,900	–
Total departmental special appropriations	14,900	14,900	–
Total departmental resourcing (A)	771,345	694,942	76,400
Administered			
Total administered special appropriations ²	–	815	
Total administered resourcing (B)	–	815	
Total resourcing and payments for the Australian Electoral Commission (A+B)	771,342	695,757	

¹ *Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023–2024, Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023–2024 and Appropriation Act (No. 5) 2023–2024*. This may also include prior year departmental appropriation and external revenue under section 74 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). Departmental capital budgets are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts (No. 1, 3, 5) and form part of ordinary annual services items. For accounting purposes, this amount has been designated as a 'contribution by owner'.

² Excludes trust moneys held in the Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys (SOETM) special account.

Table 11: Expenses and resources for Outcome 1

Outcome 1: Maintain an impartial and independent electoral system for eligible voters through active electoral roll management, efficient delivery of polling services, and targeted education and public awareness programs	Budget ¹ 2023–24 (a) \$'000	Actual expenses 2023–24 (b) \$'000	Variation 2023–24 (a)–(b) \$'000
Program 1.1 Deliver Electoral Events			
Administered expenses			
Special appropriations	–	770	(770)
Special account	–	30	(30)
Administered total	–	800	(800)
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation	523,185	615,655	(92,470)
s74 External revenue ²	11,038	15,119	(4,081)
Special appropriations	14,900	14,900	–
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year ³	12,149	24,651	(12,502)
Departmental total	561,272	670,325	(109,053)
Total expenses for Program 1.1	561,272	671,125	(109,853)
Total expenses for Outcome 1	561,272	671,125	(109,853)

1 Full-year budget including adjustments made to the 2023–24 budget at Additional Estimates and Supplementary Additional Estimates.

2 Estimated expenses incurred in relation to receipts retained under section 74 of the PGPA Act.

3 Includes unfunded depreciation and amortisation expenses (excluding depreciation of right-of-use assets), write-down and impairment of assets, and non-cash adjustments to make-good.

Table 12: Average staffing levels 2021–22 to 2023–24

	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Average staffing level (number)	748	745	893

Appendix B: Governance

Accountable authority

Table 13: Details of accountable authority, 2023–24

Name	Position title/position held	Date of commencement	Date of cessation
Tom Rogers	Electoral Commissioner Australian Electoral Commission	15/12/2014	N/A

Audit Committee details

Table 14: Audit Committee, 2023–24

Member	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience
<p>Chair (Independent) Darren Box</p> <p>Remuneration \$20,000 (GST inclusive)</p> <p>Meetings Attended 5 of 5 meetings</p>	<p>Darren Box FCPA, Bachelor of Business (ACC), has over 30 years' experience spanning national social service to national security across the Commonwealth and United Kingdom, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extensive financial management • organisational reform experience with a commitment to driving organisational change and building capability. <p>Founder of Darren Box Pty Ltd in 2020, specialising in consulting with a focus on professional coaching, facilitation, independent assurance and management consulting.</p>
<p>Independent Member Mark Ridley</p> <p>Remuneration \$19,800 (GST inclusive)</p> <p>Meetings Attended 5 of 5 meetings</p>	<p>Mark Ridley has Bachelor degrees in commerce and accounting. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (FCA) and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.</p> <p>Mark:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has served as an independent member and chair of audit and risk committees for several large and medium-sized Commonwealth agencies since 2011, and helps entities oversee ICT projects • was a senior partner of PwC Australia and held leadership roles in risk advisory, internal audit and ICT project assurance, including for large companies in manufacturing and financial services, and state and federal governments.
<p>Independent Member Madonna (Donna) Moody</p> <p>Remuneration \$18,000 (GST exclusive)</p> <p>Meetings Attended 5 of 5 meetings</p>	<p>Donna Moody has a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy) and is a retired senior Commonwealth public servant with a background in finance, governance and change management. Donna:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was a CPA for more than 25 years • was Chief Financial Officer of the Australian Taxation Office • held program and grant management positions in the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health • was Chief Information Officer of the Department of Social Services. <p>Donna has been involved in, or responsible for, major organisational changes.</p>

Business planning documents

Table 15: Business planning documents, 2023–24

Document	Purpose	Reviewed
AEC Corporate Plan 2023–24	The AEC’s central planning document. Sets the strategic direction for the next four years through our key activities. Includes analysis of our operating context (addressing environment, capabilities, risk oversight, management and cooperation) and planned performance of the agency.	Annually
Business Continuity Plans	Improves resilience to enable continuation of identified time-critical business processes during and following a significant disruption to business operations.	Annually and as required
Business Planning and Performance Reporting Framework	Supports staff to deliver outcomes in the AEC Corporate Plan, manage resources and finances, and supports requirements of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (PGPA Act).	Annually
Business Plans	Align activities with business planning and reporting.	Annually
Capital Management Plan	Summary of the AEC’s actual and planned property and other capital expenditure across the budget and forward years.	Annually
Election Ready Road Map	Sets out and monitors the program of activity required to maintain election readiness.	Every election cycle
Fraud and Corruption Control Plan	Prevents, detects and responds to fraud in accordance with Commonwealth law, fraud control policies and memorandums of understanding.	Every two years (or if significant organisational change occurs)
Information Technology Strategic Plan 2023–2025	Sets the AEC’s desired information technology (IT) vision to 2025 and is supported by the IT Architecture Plan.	Annually
Strategic Internal Audit Program	Provides a forward looking flexible and risk based program of internal audit activities to guide delivery of independent assurance.	Every six months
Assurance Map	Provides an illustration of the assurance arrangement for core business as usual functions.	Annually
Property Management Plan	Provides direction on long-term management of leased property.	Annually
Reconciliation Action Plan	Sets activities to recognise and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in internal and external arrangements and activities.	Annually
Agency Security Plan	Strategies to protect staff, visitors, information, equipment and premises against harm, loss, interference and compromise.	Twice a year

AEC management committees

Table 16: AEC management committees, 2023–24

Committee	Function	Members ¹	Meeting frequency
Executive Leadership Team	The senior management team that provides strategic leadership and operational management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC (Chair) • DEC • FAC Enabling and Regulation • FAC Service Delivery/National Election Manager • FAC Enterprise Transformation • FAC Electoral Integrity and Operations 	Weekly
Organisational Health, Performance and Risk Committee	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team and the Electoral Commissioner.</p> <p>Responsible for organisational performance, and complements the Audit Committee in a management capacity by assuring appropriate activities have been completed and meet Audit Committee expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEC (Chair) • FAC Enabling and Regulation (Deputy Chair) • FAC Service Delivery • FAC Enterprise Transformation • FAC Electoral Integrity and Operations • CPO • AC Disclosure, Party Registration and Redistribution • CFO <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAE • CRO 	Every two months
People Committee	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for providing advice on strategic workforce matters, driving implementation of agency-wide initiatives and activities, and coordinating strategic workforce composition and disposition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC Enabling and Regulation (Chair) • FAC Enterprise Transformation (Deputy Chair) • CPO • AEO Tasmania • AC Strategic Priorities • AC Indigo Program Management Office • Director Program Support • Director Queensland Operations <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors People Branch • Director Management Accounting 	Every six weeks

¹ Key: Electoral Commissioner (EC); Deputy Electoral Commissioner (DEC); First Assistant Commissioner (FAC); Assistant Commissioner (AC); Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Chief Information Officer (CIO); Chief People Officer (CPO); Chief Legal Officer (CLO); Chief Audit Executive (CAE); Chief Risk Officer (CRO); Chief Technology Officer (CTO); Australian Electoral Officer (AEO).

Committee	Function	Members ¹	Meeting frequency
National Operations and Readiness Committee (becoming National Election Delivery Committee during an election)	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for oversight of the centrally led, nationally consistent planning, readiness and delivery of electoral event-related services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC Service Delivery/National Election Manager (Chair) • FAC Electoral Integrity and Operations (Deputy Chair) • FAC Enabling and Regulation • AEO New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory • CPO • AEO Victoria • AEO Queensland • AEO Western Australia • AEO South Australia • AEO Tasmania • AEO Northern Territory • AC Delivery and Support • AC Service Design and Foundations • AC Strategic Priorities • AC Electoral Integrity and Media • AC Disclosure, Party Registration and Redistribution • AC Communication, Education and Engagement • AC Enterprise Digital Delivery • CTO • CPO • CLO • CIO <p>Adviser</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFO 	<p>Every six weeks/daily from the announcement of an electoral event through to return of writ; daily from the announcement of an electoral event through to return of writ</p>
Referendum Coordination Committee	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for providing strategic oversight, visibility and coordination of the related policy and operational work across relevant functions of the AEC and across the National Operations and Readiness Committee to support internal planning for the delivery of 2023 referendum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEC (Chair) • FAC Service Delivery (Deputy Chair) • FAC Enabling and Regulation • AC Service Design and Foundations • AC Delivery and Support • AC Strategic Priorities • AC Electoral Integrity and Communications • AC Disclosure, Party Registration and Redistribution • AC Communication, Education and Engagement • AEO Queensland • AEO New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory • CPO • Director, RAMP Taskforce • Director, Community and International Engagement • Director, Communications • Director, Media and Digital Engagement • Director, Workforce and Engagement Strategies <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLO • CFO 	<p>Weekly from 31 January 2023 to August 2023</p>

Committee	Function	Members ¹	Meeting frequency
Electoral Integrity Committee	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for providing governance and assurance on: AEC cyber, physical and personal security, implementation and effectiveness; and AEC fraud control, privacy and related risks. Also responsible for monitoring and administering the AEC's capability, performance, conformance and assurance of regulatory functions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC Electoral Integrity and Operations (Chair) • FAC Service Delivery (Deputy Chair) • CLO • CTO • AC Disclosure, Party Registration and Redistribution • AC Electoral Integrity and Media • AC Enterprise Transformation • AC Electoral Integrity and Media • AC Enterprise Transformation • AC Service Design and Foundations • AEO Queensland • Director Defending Democracy Unit • Director Enterprise Risk and Fraud Control • Director Operations NSW <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Security Adviser • Director Cyber Security and Assurance 	Every six weeks
Transformation and Investment Committee	<p>A strategic advisory and decision-making forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for driving and governing AEC performance against the Corporate Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC Enterprise Transformation (Chair) • FAC Enabling and Regulation (Deputy Chair) • FAC Enterprise Strategy and Transformation • FAC Service Delivery • FAC Chief Information Officer • AC Enterprise Transformation • AC Indigo Delivery • AC Indigo Product and Design • AC Service Design and Foundations • CPO • CFO • AEO South Australia • Director, Enterprise Transformation and Portfolio Management Office <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Enterprise Change Management Office • Two independent advisers <p>Observer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Management Accounting 	Every six weeks

Committee	Function	Members ¹	Meeting frequency
Indigo Steering Committee	<p>A strategic decision-making and assurance forum that reports to the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>Responsible for ensuring the Indigo program is being executed within the parameters agreed to in the business case and as approved by government.</p> <p>Also provides governance oversight for all projects under the Indigo program and is aligned with the broader intent of the AEC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC Enterprise Transformation (Chair) • FAC Enterprise Strategy and Transformation (Deputy Chair) • FAC Enabling and Regulation • FAC Service Delivery • FAC Electoral Integrity and Operations • FAC Chief Information Officer • AC Indigo Program Management Office • AC Product and Design • AC Indigo Delivery • AC Enterprise Transformation • AC Service Design and Foundations • CFO <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLO • AC Delivery and Support • AC Strategic Priorities • AC Electoral Integrity and Media • AEO South Australia • Two independent advisers 	Every six weeks
National Work Health and Safety Committee	<p>A consultative forum that reports to the People Committee.</p> <p>Responsible for addressing AEC health and safety at a national and strategic level, with reference to the requirements of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> and the <i>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPO (Chair) • Management representatives • Employee representatives <p>Advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From People Branch and others as appropriate to the topic at hand 	Quarterly and out-of-session as required

Appendix C: Commonwealth Electoral Roll information

Conditions for providing roll data and extracts

Under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act), the AEC provides electoral roll extracts to members of the House of Representatives, senators, federally registered political parties, Australian Government departments and agencies, and other specified recipients.

The Electoral Roll Access (ERA) portal is the secure portal to provide electoral roll data to members of the House of Representatives, senators and federally registered political parties in line with their legal entitlements. Under section 90B(1) of the Electoral Act, members of the House of Representatives are entitled to access electoral roll information for the division in which they are elected. Senators are entitled to access electoral roll information for the state or territory in which they are elected. Federally registered political parties are entitled to electoral roll data for the states and territories in which they are organised, and any other state or territory where the party has an elected member or senator. Access is only available to members of the House of Representatives, senators and registered political parties and their authorised delegates.

Australian Government departments and agencies may receive electoral roll information if they are a 'prescribed authority' under item 4 of the table in subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act. A list of prescribed authorities currently eligible to receive electoral roll information is set out in Schedule 1 of the *Electoral and Referendum Regulation 2016* (the Regulation). Each prescribed authority may only use electoral roll information for a permitted purpose as set out in the Regulation.

Extracts of the electoral roll may be provided for medical research or health screening purposes under item 2 of the table in subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act. Extracts of the electoral roll may be provided to other organisations with a prescribed purpose under item 3 of the table in subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act.

The AEC also provides identity verification against the electoral roll through a restricted access Document Verification Service (DVS). The AEC is a data issuer to the DVS which is a secure, national online identity verification service administered by the Attorney-General's Department. Through a secure and direct link, the AEC verifies identity queries against data contained on the electoral roll without the need to provide an extract of data.

Under items 5–7 of the table in subsection 90B(4) of the Electoral Act, prescribed organisations may receive roll information for identity verification purposes under the *Financial Transactions Reports Act 1988* and the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006*. Electoral roll information under these items is now provided through the DVS in accordance with the AEC DVS Access Policy and Guidelines, which restricts access to the electoral roll information through the DVS to the purpose of verification only under the *Financial Transactions Reports Act 1988* and the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Act 2006*.

Unauthorised access to electoral roll information is prohibited by law. We provide guidelines to assist entitled entities or their delegates to understand their permitted purpose and use of electoral roll data, penalties, privacy and security requirements.

Commonwealth Electoral Roll extracts and recipients in 2023–24

Table 17: Senators and Members of the House of Representatives provided with electoral roll extracts, 2023–24

Name	Electorate/state	Roll data provided	Date provided
Mr Adam Bandt MP	Member for Melbourne	Division of Melbourne	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Bert van Manen MP	Member for Forde	Division of Forde	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Allegra Spender MP	Member for Wentworth	Division of Wentworth	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Andrew Gee MP	Member for Calare	Division of Calare	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Andrew Wilkie MP	Member for Clark	Division of Clark	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Dai Le MP	Member for Fowler	Division of Fowler	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Elizabeth Watson-Brown MP	Member for Ryan	Division of Ryan	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Dr Helen Haines MP	Member for Indi	Division of Indi	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Jason Wood MP	Member for La Trobe	Division of La Trobe	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Kate Chaney MP	Member for Curtin	Division of Curtin	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Kylea Tink MP	Member for North Sydney	Division of North Sydney	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP	Member for Solomon	Division of Solomon	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Mark Butler MP	Member for Hindmarsh	Division of Hindmarsh	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Max Chandler-Mather MP	Member for Griffith	Division of Griffith	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Michael Sukkar MP	Member for Deakin	Division of Deakin	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Dr Monique Ryan MP	Member for Kooyong	Division of Kooyong	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Peter Khalil MP	Member for Wills	Division of Wills	May 2024 – Jun 2024
Ms Rebekha Sharkie MP	Member for Mayo	Division of Mayo	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Bob Katter MP	Member for Kennedy	Division of Kennedy	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Russell Broadbent MP	Member for Monash	Division of Monash	Jun 2024 – Jun 2024
Dr Sophie Scamps MP	Member for Mackellar	Division of Mackellar	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Mr Stephen Bates MP	Member for Brisbane	Division of Brisbane	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Sussan Ley MP	Member for Farrer	Division of Farrer	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Hon Bill Shorten MP	Member for Maribyrnong	Division of Maribyrnong	Nov 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Zali Steggall OAM MP	Member for Warringah	Division of Warringah	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Zaneta Mascarenhas MP	Member for Swan	Division of Swan	Aug 2023 – Jun 2024
Ms Zoe Daniel MP	Member for Goldstein	Division of Goldstein	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Alexander Antic	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon Anne Ruston	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Barbara Pocock	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon David Fawcett	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator David Pocock	Senator for Australian Capital Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator David Shoebridge	Senator for New South Wales	New South Wales	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024

Name	Electorate/state	Roll data provided	Date provided
Senator Dave Sharma	Senator for New South Wales	New South Wales	May 2024 – Jun 2024
Senator Dorinda Cox	Senator for Western Australia	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Hollie Hughes	Senator for New South Wales	New South Wales	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Jacqui Lambie	Senator for Tasmania	Tasmania	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon James McGrath	Senator for Queensland	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator James Paterson	Senator for Victoria	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Former Senator Janet Rice	Former Senator for Victoria	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Apr 2024
Senator Jordon Steele-John	Senator for Western Australia	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Karen Grogan	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Larissa Waters	Senator for Queensland	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Lidia Thorpe	Senator for Victoria	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC	Senator for Western Australia	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Former Senator Marise Payne	Former Senator for New South Wales	New South Wales	Jul 2023 – Sep 2023
Senator Malcolm Roberts	Senator for Queensland	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan	Senator for Queensland	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Mehreen Faruqi	Senator for New South Wales	New South Wales	Apr 2024 – Jun 2024
Senator Nick McKim	Senator for Tasmania	Tasmania	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Penny Allman-Payne	Senator for Queensland	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham	Senator for South Australia	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Senator Steph Hodgins-May	Senator for Victoria	Victoria	May 2024 – Jun 2024
Senator Tammy Tyrrell	Senator for Tasmania	Tasmania	Nov 2023 – Jun 2024

Table 18: Registered political parties provided with electoral roll extracts, 2023–24

Registered political party	Roll data provided	Date provided
Animal Justice Party	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Christians	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Citizens Party	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Democrats	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Federation Party	National	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Greens	National	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Australian Labor Party	National	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Centre Alliance	South Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Health Environment Accountability Rights Transparency (HEART)	New South Wales	Sep 2023 – Jun 2024
Indigenous – Aboriginal Party of Australia	New South Wales	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Liberal Party of Australia	National	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Libertarian Party	Victoria, Queensland	May 2024 – Jun 2024
National Party of Australia – NSW	New South Wales	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
National Party of Australia – Victoria	Victoria	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
National Party of Australia – (WA) Inc	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
Pauline Hanson’s One Nation	Queensland	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024
The Greens (WA) Inc	Western Australia	Jul 2023 – Jun 2024

Table 19: Australian Government departments and agencies (prescribed authorities) provided with electoral roll extracts, 2023–24

Institution	Data provided			
	Aug 2023	Nov 2023	Feb 2024	May 2024
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	No	Yes	No	No
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Australian Federal Police	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Australian Financial Security Authority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Australian Securities and Investments Commission	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Australian Taxation Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Australian Passport Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Home Affairs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor General	No	Yes	No	Yes
Services Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sport Integrity Australia	Yes	No	Yes	No

Table 20: Medical and electoral research organisations provided with electoral roll extracts, 2023–24

Institution	Data provided
Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated	A random sample of 5,000 records of men and women in two-year age ranges across all federal electoral divisions for the study 'Australian Survey of Social Attitudes: National Identity and Citizenship'.
Monash University	A random sample of 20,000 records of de-identified address and gender for 10,000 electors within the division of Dunkley and 10,000 electors within the division of Flinders, aged between 50 and 70 years of age, with a ratio of 80% male and 20% female for the research, 'Health and Social Outcomes in the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula'.

Appendix D: Electoral events data

2023 Fadden by-election data

Results and information relating to the Fadden by-election can be found at the AEC Tally Room:
<https://results.aec.gov.au/29422/Website/HouseDivisionPage-29422-159.htm>

2023 referendum data

Results and information relating to the referendum can be found at the AEC Tally Room:
<https://results.aec.gov.au/29581/Website/ReferendumNationalResults-29581.htm>

2024 Dunkley by-election data

Results and information relating to the Dunkley by-election can be found at the AEC Tally Room:
<https://results.aec.gov.au/29778/Website/HouseDivisionPage-29778-210.htm>

2024 Cook by-election data

Results and information relating to the Cook by-election can be found at the AEC Tally Room:
<https://results.aec.gov.au/29807/Website/HouseDivisionPage-29807-112.htm>

Appendix E: Public awareness data

Advertising and market research

In 2023–24, the AEC undertook research to refine advertising campaign creative materials for the 2023 referendum. Alongside national advertising campaigns, we created materials for culturally and linguistically diverse voters and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We evaluated the effectiveness of these campaigns through benchmark and tracking research. We produced advertising for the Fadden, Dunkley and Cook by-elections, as well as for the referendum. The AEC also conducted a voter survey for the referendum.

More information is available at www.aec.gov.au and in reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are on the Department of Finance’s website. Table 21 shows payments of \$16,300 or more (GST inclusive) to advertising agencies and market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising organisations, as required under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. Figures reflect payments above the threshold unless otherwise specified.

Table 21: Advertising and media placement payments, \$16,300 or more

Services	Agency name	Details	Amount (GST inclusive)
Advertising creative development	BMF	Creative advertising services including production of materials for the referendum	\$656,242
	Carbon Creative	Creative advertising services including production and translation of materials for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences for the referendum	\$176,028
	Cultural Perspectives Pty Ltd	Creative advertising services including production and translation of materials for multicultural audiences for the referendum	\$846,703
Market Research	Wallis	Undertake a voter survey for the referendum	\$118,008
	Wallis	Evaluation research – AEC 2023 referendum campaign	\$783,471
	Cultural Perspectives Pty Ltd	Research with multicultural voters	\$384,955
	Orima	Developmental research for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communication	\$248,416
Advertising Placement	Universal McCann	Media buy for Fadden by-election	\$21,342
	Universal McCann	Media buy for Dunkley by-election	\$60,138
	Universal McCann	Media buy for Cook by-election	\$59,424
	Universal McCann	Media buy for 2023 referendum	\$28,636,855
	Universal McCann	Referendum awareness disclosure campaign	\$98,894
	Universal McCann	Party registration – advertising of applications	\$90,088
TOTAL			\$32,180,564

Appendix F: Electoral redistribution data

Table 22: Electoral redistribution data, 2023–24

Electoral redistribution	New South Wales	Victoria	Western Australia	Northern Territory
Basis for the determination triggering a redistribution	On 27 July 2023, the Electoral Commissioner determined that the number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen by New South Wales at a general election had decreased from 47 to 46.	On 27 July 2023, the Electoral Commissioner determined that the number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen by Victoria at a general election had decreased from 39 to 38.	On 27 July 2023, the Electoral Commissioner determined that the number of members of the House of Representatives to be chosen by Western Australia at a general election had increased from 15 to 16.	A total of seven years had elapsed since the most recent redistribution was determined on 7 February 2017.
Direction to commence redistribution	The redistribution of federal electoral divisions in New South Wales commenced on 9 August 2023.	The redistribution of federal electoral divisions in Victoria commenced on 9 August 2023.	The redistribution of federal electoral divisions in Western Australia commenced on 9 August 2023.	On 21 February 2024, the Electoral Commission determined that a redistribution for the Northern Territory into two electoral divisions would commence on 22 February 2024.
Public input relating to the redistribution	There were 58 suggestions received between 27 September and 27 October 2023. There were 100 comments on suggestions received between 30 October and 10 November 2023.	There were 63 suggestions received between 25 October and 24 November 2023. There were 75 comments on suggestions received between 27 November and 8 December 2023.	There were 21 suggestions received between 18 October and 17 November 2023. There were seven comments on suggestions received between 20 November and 1 December 2023.	There were six suggestions received between 15 May 2024 and 14 June 2024. There was one comment on suggestions received between 17 June and 28 June 2024.
Release of the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution	The Redistribution Committee for New South Wales released its proposed redistribution on 14 June 2024.	The Redistribution Committee for Victoria released its proposed redistribution on 31 May 2024.	The Redistribution Committee for Western Australia released its proposed redistribution on 31 May 2024.	The Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory is expected to release its proposed redistribution in 2024–25.
Public input relating to Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution ¹	Objections could be received from 14 June 2024 and were to close in 2024–25. Further activities are expected in 2024–25.	There were 508 objections received between 31 May and 28 June 2024. Further activities are expected in 2024–25.	There were 45 objections received between 31 May 2024 and 28 June 2024. Further activities are expected in 2024–25.	Further activities are expected in 2024–25.

¹ A Redistribution Committee is established for each state or territory in which a redistribution is occurring. The Electoral Act requires that the Redistribution Committee consist of the following people:

- the Electoral Commissioner
- the Australian Electoral Officer for the state or territory
- the Surveyor-General for the state or territory
- the Auditor-General for the state or territory.

Appendix G: Financial disclosure data

Election funding payments in 2023–24

Election funding entitlements are calculated as at the 20th day after polling day, and an automatic payment is made to eligible candidates and political parties.

To receive election funding greater than the automatic payment, the agent of the eligible political party, candidate or Senate group must lodge a claim with the AEC, setting out the electoral expenditure incurred.

2023 Aston by-election

For the 2023 Aston by-election, the automatic payment amount was \$11,426.00. Claims were required to be submitted to the AEC by 30 September 2023.

Three political parties and one independent candidate were entitled to lodge election funding claims related to the 2023 Aston by-election.

At 30 June 2024, three election funding claims had been finalised. A further election funding claim was assessed in July 2024 by the AEC. The value of election funding attributable to the Aston by-election is \$277,125.00 – with a payment of \$8,655.25 made in 2023–24.

2023 Fadden by-election

For the 2023 Fadden by-election, the automatic payment amount was \$11,803.00. Claims were required to be submitted to the AEC by 14 January 2024.

Five political parties were entitled to lodge election funding claims related to the Fadden by-election.

At 30 June 2024, three election funding claims had been finalised, with two political parties not submitting further claims. The value of election funding paid in relation to the Fadden by-election is \$240,342.00.

2024 Dunkley by-election

For the 2024 Dunkley by-election, the automatic payment was \$12,039. Claims are required to be submitted to the AEC by 2 September 2024.

Three political parties and one independent candidate were eligible to lodge election funding claims related to the Dunkley by-election.

At 30 June 2024, three election funding claims had been finalised, with one further claim outstanding. The value of election funding attributable to the Dunkley by-election is \$274,231.16.

2024 Cook by-election

For the 2024 Cook by-election, the automatic payment was \$12,039. Claims are required to be submitted to the AEC by 14 October 2024.

Four political parties and one independent candidate were eligible for election funding related to the Cook by-election.

At 30 June 2024, two election funding claims had been finalised, with three further claims outstanding. The value of election funding attributable to the Cook by-election is \$267,895.82.

Annual financial disclosure returns 2023–24

Annual financial disclosure returns and amendments received in 2023–24 include:

- 597 annual financial disclosure returns and amendments
- 535 returns and 28 amendments for the 2023–23 financial year
- seven returns and 11 amendments for the 2021–22 financial year
- four returns and four amendments for the 2020–21 financial year
- one return and two amendments for the 2019–20 financial year
- one return and four amendments for the 2018–19 financial year
- 11 election returns for the 2022 federal election.

Referendum financial disclosure returns 2023–24

Referendum financial disclosure returns and amendments received in 2023–24 include:

- 347 referendum disclosure returns
- 31 amendments.

Appendix H: Workforce statistics

Table 23: All ongoing employees by location, current report period 2023–24

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	37	2	39	56	22	68	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107
Qld	22	-	22	58	7	65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	87
SA	9	1	10	30	4	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
Tas	6	-	6	9	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
Vic	35	1	36	55	5	60	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	97
WA	9	-	9	23	4	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
ACT	189	4	193	290	22	312	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	508
NT	2	-	2	8	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
External Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	309	8	317	529	54	583	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	904

Table 24: All non-ongoing employees by location, current report period 2023–24

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	4	1	5	16	4	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Qld	3	-	3	12	3	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
SA	2	-	2	7	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Tas	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Vic	6	-	6	25	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
WA	2	-	2	7	-	7	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
ACT	16	1	17	22	4	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
NT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
External Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	33	2	35	92	11	103	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	139

Table 25: All ongoing employees by location, previous report period 2022–23

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	33	3	36	57	13	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	106
Qld	16	2	18	56	7	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
SA	8	1	9	16	5	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Tas	6	-	6	7	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Vic	38	1	39	63	5	68	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	108
WA	10	-	10	23	4	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
ACT	145	3	148	240	24	264	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	412
NT	4	-	4	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
External Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	260	10	270	466	59	525	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	796

Table 26: All non-ongoing employees by location, previous report period 2022-23

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	2	-	2	9	5	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Qld	5	-	5	10	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
SA	2	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Tas	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Vic	5	-	5	11	1	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
WA	-	-	-	7	-	7	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
ACT	9	1	10	21	3	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
NT	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
External Territories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overseas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	24	1	25	66	9	75	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	101

Table 27: Australian Public Service Act 1999 ongoing employees, current report period 2023–24

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 2	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
SES 1	2	-	2	7	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
EL 2	22	-	22	48	-	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
EL 1	69	2	71	113	8	121	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	192
APS 6	93	-	93	156	9	165	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	258
APS 5	72	1	73	89	4	93	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	169
APS 4	41	2	43	72	12	84	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	128
APS 3	6	-	6	25	6	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
APS 2	-	3	3	16	15	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
APS 1	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	309	8	317	529	54	583	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	904

Table 28: Australian Public Service Act 1999 non-ongoing employees, current report period 2023–24

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 1	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
EL 2	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
EL 1	2	-	2	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
APS 6	7	-	7	13	1	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
APS 5	6	1	7	4	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
APS 4	1	-	1	11	2	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
APS 3	7	-	7	42	5	47	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
APS 2	6	1	7	17	1	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
APS 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	33	2	35	92	11	103	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	139

Table 29: Australian Public Service Act 1999 ongoing employees, previous report period 2022–23

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 2	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
SES 1	1	-	1	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
EL 2	19	-	19	38	-	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
EL 1	57	-	57	102	9	111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	168
APS 6	82	-	82	137	10	147	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	229
APS 5	59	4	63	71	4	75	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	139
APS 4	30	2	32	59	10	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	101
APS 3	8	1	9	31	4	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
APS 2	1	3	4	17	22	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
APS 1	1	-	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	260	10	270	466	59	525	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	796

Table 30: Australian Public Service Act 1999 non-ongoing employees, previous report period 2022–23

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefer not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SES 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EL 2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
EL 1	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
APS 6	5	1	6	7	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
APS 5	7	-	7	12	1	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
APS 4	4	-	4	12	1	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
APS 3	4	-	4	32	5	37	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
APS 2	3	-	3	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
APS 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	24	1	25	66	9	75	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	101

Table 31: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employees by full-time and part-time status, current report period 2023–24

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total ongoing	Full-time	Part-time	Total ongoing	
SES 3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
SES 2	4	–	4	–	–	–	4
SES 1	9	–	9	3	–	3	12
EL 2	70	–	70	3	–	3	73
EL 1	182	10	192	5	–	5	197
APS 6	249	9	258	20	1	21	279
APS 5	164	5	169	10	3	13	182
APS 4	114	14	128	12	2	14	142
APS 3	31	6	37	50	5	55	92
APS 2	16	18	34	23	2	25	59
APS 1	3	–	3	–	–	–	3
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL	842	62	904	126	13	139	1,043

Table 32: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employees by full-time and part-time status, previous report period 2022–23

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total ongoing	Full-time	Part-time	Total ongoing	
SES 3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
SES 2	4	–	4	–	–	–	4
SES 1	7	–	7	–	–	–	7
EL 2	57	–	57	1	–	1	58
EL 1	159	9	168	1	1	2	170
APS 6	219	10	229	12	1	13	242
APS 5	131	8	139	19	1	20	159
APS 4	89	12	101	16	1	17	118
APS 3	39	5	44	37	5	42	86
APS 2	18	25	43	5	1	6	49
APS 1	4	–	4	–	–	–	4
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL	727	69	796	91	10	101	897

Table 33: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employment types by location, current report period 2023–24

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
NSW	107	25	132
Qld	87	18	105
SA	44	9	53
Tas	15	3	18
Vic	97	31	128
WA	36	10	46
ACT	508	43	551
NT	10	–	10
External Territories	–	–	–
Overseas	–	–	–
TOTAL	904	139	1,043

Table 34: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employment types by location, previous report period 2022–23

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
NSW	106	16	122
Qld	81	15	96
SA	30	5	35
Tas	14	3	17
Vic	108	17	125
WA	37	8	45
ACT	412	34	446
NT	8	3	11
External Territories	–	–	–
Overseas	–	–	–
TOTAL	796	101	897

Table 35: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* Indigenous employment, current report period 2023–24

	Total
Ongoing	20
Non-ongoing	3
TOTAL	23

Table 36: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* Indigenous employment, previous report period 2022–23

	Total
Ongoing	17
Non-ongoing	4
TOTAL	21

Table 37: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employment arrangements, current report period 2023–24

	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise Agreement	–	984	984
Individual Flexibility Agreement	–	43	43
Section 24	16	–	16
TOTAL	16	1,027	1,043

Table 38: Australian *Public Service Act 1999* employment salary ranges by classification level (minimum/maximum), current report period 2023–24

	Minimum salary	Maximum salary
SES 3	–	–
SES 2	\$279,419	\$293,772
SES 1	\$210,592	\$279,028
EL 2	\$134,567	\$158,004
EL 1	\$113,821	\$128,264
APS 6	\$91,140	\$102,152
APS 5	\$82,336	\$90,234
APS 4	\$73,821	\$80,896
APS 3	\$66,233	\$72,585
APS 2	\$58,150	\$64,484
APS 1	\$52,164	\$56,788
Other	–	–
Minimum/Maximum range	\$52,164	\$293,772

Note: Non-SES salary ranges are based on the rates included in the AEC's Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027. These rates do not reflect salaries negotiated through individual flexibility arrangements or the maintenance of employee salary on commencement from previous APS agency. SES salaries are set by the Electoral Commissioner in accordance with the Senior Executive Remuneration Policy.

Table 39: Statutory appointments under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, at 30 June 2024

Position	Legislative provision for existence of role	Current occupant	Current term
Electoral Commissioner Australian Electoral Commission	Subsection 18(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Tom Rogers	5 years from 15/12/2019
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	Subsection 19(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Jeff Pope APM	5 years from 19/12/2021
Australian Electoral Officer NSW	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Rebecca Main	5 years from 08/07/2021
Australian Electoral Officer Vic	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Nye Coffey	5 years from 01/04/2021
Australian Electoral Officer Qld	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Stephanie Attard	5 years from 08/02/2021
Australian Electoral Officer WA	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Anita Ratcliffe	5 years from 05/06/2023
Australian Electoral Officer SA	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Cameron Stokes	5 years from 04/02/2021
Australian Electoral Officer Tas	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Hannah Brown	5 years from 12/07/2021
Australian Electoral Officer NT	Subsection 20(1) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Geoff Bloom	5 years from 08/07/2021
Chairperson Australian Electoral Commission	Subsection 6(2)(a) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	The Hon Justice Susan Kenny AM	5 years from 23/09/2020
Non-judicial member Australian Electoral Commission	Subsection 6(2)(c) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>	Dr David Gruen AO	Until 10/12/2024

Table 40: Information about remuneration for key management personnel, 2023–24

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination Benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary	Bonuses	Other benefits and allowances		Long service leave	Other long-term benefits		
Tom Rogers	Electoral Commissioner	\$558,119	–	–	\$78,229	\$22,330	–	–	\$658,678
Jeff Pope	Deputy Electoral Commissioner	\$319,691	–	–	\$48,159	\$11,339	–	–	\$379,189
Thomas Ryan	First Assistant Commissioner	\$282,102	\$3,500	\$100	\$52,234	\$13,174	–	–	\$351,110
Kathleen Gleeson	First Assistant Commissioner	\$283,458	\$3,500	\$1,480	\$41,853	\$10,950	–	–	\$341,241
Michael Lynch	First Assistant Commissioner	\$279,884	\$3,500	\$50	\$51,637	\$16,455	–	–	\$351,526
Rachael Spalding	First Assistant Commissioner	\$283,607	\$3,500	\$1,646	\$59,779	\$8,718	–	–	\$357,250
TOTAL		\$2,006,861	\$14,000	\$3,276	\$331,891	\$82,966	–	–	\$2,438,994

Table 41: Information about remuneration for Senior Executives, 2023–24

Remuneration band	Number of senior executives	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination Benefits	Total remuneration
		Average base salary	Average bonuses ¹	Average other benefits and allowances		Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits		
\$0–\$220,000	2	\$134,925	–	–	\$15,570	\$3,354	–	–	\$153,849
\$220,001–\$245,000	6	\$196,785	\$1,010	\$392	\$27,053	\$8,480	–	–	\$233,720
\$245,001–\$270,000	4	\$217,671	\$1,707	\$3,062	\$31,637	\$5,189	–	–	\$259,266
\$270,001–\$295,000	5	\$229,697	\$2,800	\$1,094	\$36,692	\$8,244	–	–	\$278,527
\$295,001–\$320,000	6	\$257,693	\$1,750	\$684	\$38,940	\$7,270	–	–	\$306,337
\$320,001–\$345,000	2	\$258,026	\$3,500	\$1,393	\$44,625	\$15,228	–	–	\$322,772

1. Retention payment made to eligible personnel who met the qualifying conditions in relation to the 2023 referendum.

Table 42: Information about remuneration for other highly paid staff

Remuneration band	Number of other highly paid staff	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination Benefits	Total remuneration
		Average base salary	Average bonuses ¹	Average other benefits and allowances		Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits		
\$240,001–\$245,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
\$245,001–\$270,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
\$270,001–\$295,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Appendix I: Electoral communications complaints

Figure 7: Electoral and referendum communications complaints investigated by the AEC during 2023–24

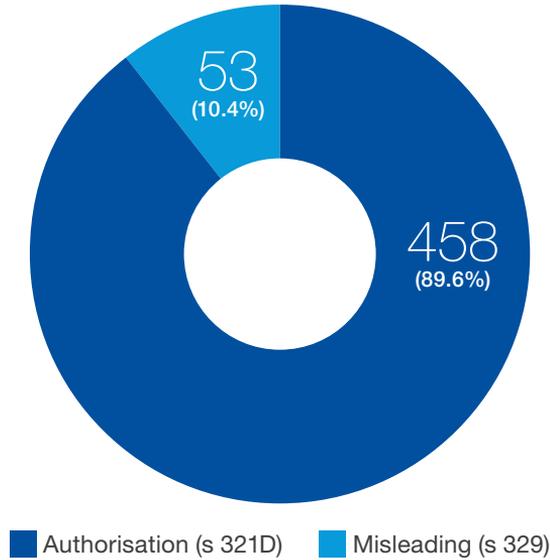


Table 43: Electoral communications complaints investigated and total breaches detected by the AEC during electoral events, 2023–24

Communication type	Total communications investigated	Breaches detected during the 2023 referendum	Breaches detected during the Fadden by-election	Breaches detected during the Dunkley by-election	Breaches detected during the Cook by-election	Total breaches detected	
						Authorisation 321D/110C*	Misleading 329/122*
Social media	147	72	0	9	0	81	–
Signs and print	267	94	2	6	4	106	–
Other communications	97	14	2	5	0	21	–
TOTAL	511	180	4	20	4	208	–

*Section 321D refers to the Electoral Act and section 110C refers to the Referendum Act. Section 329 refers to the Electoral Act and section 122 refers to the Referendum Act.

Appendix J: Greenhouse gas emissions reporting

Table 44: Greenhouse gas emissions – location-based approach, 2023–24

Emission source	Scope 1 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 2 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 3 t CO ₂ -e	Total t CO ₂ -e
Electricity (location-based approach)	–	3,402.182	419.074	3,821.255
Natural gas	1.142	–	0.089	1.230
Solid waste*	–	–	139.526	139.526
Fleet and other vehicles	22.970	–	5.749	28.719
Domestic commercial flights	–	–	781.044	781.044
Domestic hire car*	–	–	142.021	142.021
Domestic travel accommodation*	–	–	671.278	671.278
TOTAL t CO₂-e	24.112	3,402.182	2,158.781	5,585.074

Note: the table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

*Indicates emission sources collected for the first time in 2023–24. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.

Table 45: Electricity greenhouse gas emissions, 2023–24

Emission source	Scope 2 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 2 t CO ₂ -e	Total t CO ₂ -e	Percentage of electricity use
Electricity (location-based approach)	3,402.182	419.074	3,821.255	100.00%
Market-based electricity emissions	3,334.808	411.705	3,746.513	76.71%
Total renewable electricity	–	–	–	23.29%
<i>Mandatory renewables</i> ¹	–	–	–	18.72%
<i>Voluntary renewables</i> ²	–	–	–	4.57%

Note: the table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

1. Mandatory renewables are the portion of electricity consumed from the grid that is generated by renewable sources. This includes the renewable power percentage.
2. Voluntary renewables reflect the eligible carbon credit units surrendered by the entity. This may include purchased large-scale generation certificates, power purchasing agreements, GreenPower and the jurisdictional renewable power percentage (ACT only).



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

SECTION 08

Reader guides

2023–24 ANNUAL REPORT

Abbreviations and acronyms,
glossary, index to the list of
annual report requirements and
alphabetical index

Reader guides

Abbreviations and acronyms

Term	Description
AAS	Australian Accounting Standards
AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AC	Assistant Commissioner
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AECCC	AEC Command Centre
AEO	Australian Electoral Officer
AFP	Australian Federal Police
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
APS	Australian Public Service
APSC	Australian Public Service Commission
ARIR	Annual Roll Integrity Review
ASL	Average Staffing Level
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CBD	Central business district
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CLO	Chief Legal Officer
CPO	Chief People Officer
DEC	Deputy Electoral Commissioner
DDU	Defending Democracy Unit
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DLER	Directed Level of Election Readiness

Term	Description
DSS	Department of Social Services
DVS	Document Verification Service
EC	Electoral Commissioner
ECANZ	Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand
ECL	Electronic Certified List
EIAT	Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce
EIC	Electoral Integrity Committee
Electoral Act	<i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EPMO	Enterprise Portfolio Management Office
FAC	First Assistant Commissioner
FEO	Fijian Elections Office
FDEU	Federal Direct Enrolment and Update
FOI	Freedom of Information
GVRs	Generic Voter Registration System
ICT	Information and communications technology
IEPP	Indigenous Electoral Participation Program
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IT	Information technology
JSCEM	Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
MoAD	Museum of Australian Democracy

Term	Description
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NEEC	National Electoral Education Centre
NRS	National Relay Service
NZEC	New Zealand Electoral Commission
OES	Online Enrolment Services
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PGPA Rule	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014</i>
PIANZEA	Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators
PNGEC	Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission
PLA	Provincial Logistics Assistants
PPVC	Pre-poll Voting Centre
Public Service Act	Public Service Act 1999
Referendum Act	<i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>
RMIEA	Republic of the Marshall Islands Electoral Administration
RVS	Remote Voter Services
SES	Senior Executive Service
SIEO	Solomon Islands Electoral Office
SM	State Manager
SOETM	Services for Other Entities and Trust Monies
TEW	Temporary Election Workforce
WHS	Work health and safety

Glossary

Term	Description
Amortisation	Reductions in the value of assets to reflect their reduced worth over time.
Ballot	A secret vote, normally written.
Ballot box	The sealed container into which a voter 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.
By-election	An election held to fill a single vacancy in the House of Representatives.
Candidate	A person standing for election to the House of Representatives or Senate.
Certified list	The official electoral roll used to mark off voters at an election.
Claims for enrolment	Application form to enrol to vote or update enrolment.
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.
Compulsory voting	The requirement for Australian citizens aged 18 years and over to enrol to vote and to vote at each election.
Constitution (Australian)	The document that sets out the structure under which the Australian Government operates. It can only be amended through a referendum.
Court of Disputed Returns	A court (in Australia, the High Court) that determines disputes about elections.
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.

Term	Description
Declaration of nominations	Formal announcement of candidates, whose names will appear on a ballot paper in an election.
Depreciation	A method of allocating the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life.
Elector	A person whose name appears on an electoral roll.
Electoral cycle	The period from one federal election to the next, usually three years.
Electoral division	The voting area, containing approximately equal numbers of voters, for which one member is elected to the House of Representatives. Australia is divided into 151 electoral divisions.
Electoral roll	The list of people enrolled to vote in an election or referendum.
Electorate	See 'electoral division' above.
Electronic certified list	An electronic list of eligible electors which is accessed through an electronic device to allow polling officials to efficiently search the list of eligible electors and record that an elector has been issued their ballot paper/s.
Employee	Member of staff that is ongoing, non-ongoing, intermittent or irregular.
Enrolment form	Application form to enrol to vote or update enrolment.
Federal election	A general election for the House of Representatives and Senate.
Fee-for-service election	An election or ballot conducted on a full cost recovery basis.
Financial disclosure return	A document detailing information on the receipts and expenditure of participants in the political process.
Formality or formal vote	A vote in an election or referendum where the ballot paper has been marked correctly and is counted towards the result. A ballot paper incorrectly marked is called informal.

Term	Description
Franchise	The right to vote.
Funding and disclosure	Public funding of election campaigns and disclosure of certain financial details by candidates, political parties and others.
General postal voter	A voter who is registered to have postal ballot papers sent automatically.
House of Representatives	The house of Parliament in which the government is formed. Each electoral division elects one member of the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives uses a preferential voting system.
Inventory balance	The worth of held goods and materials.
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	The parliamentary committee appointed to inquire into and report on matters relating to electoral laws and practices and their administration.
Member	Any person elected to Parliament, but commonly used for the House of Representatives.
Mobile polling team	Polling officials who bring polling to aged care facilities, remote locations, and other locations such as prisons and homeless shelters.
Nomination	Submission for candidacy for election to the Senate or House of Representatives.
Ordinary vote	A vote cast on or before voting day where the voter is able to be marked off the certified list.
Out-posted centre	Temporary premises established to house key election activities such as scrutines and dispatch, and return of materials to and from polling places.
Poll	An election – a count of votes or opinions.
Polling day	The day fixed for the election.
Polling place	A location for people to vote.

Term	Description
Postal vote	Ballot papers and certificate posted to a voter and returned to the AEC.
Preferential voting	A system of voting where a voter shows an order of preference for candidates by numbering their choices.
Pre-poll vote	A vote cast before voting day.
Protected action ballot	A workplace voting system whereby employees participate in a fair and secret ballot to determine whether industrial action should proceed in their workplace.
Provisional vote	Declaration vote cast at a polling place where the elector's name cannot be found on the roll, the name has already been marked off, or the voter has a silent enrolment.
Redistribution	A redrawing of electoral boundaries to ensure (as closely as possible) the same number of voters in each electoral division.
Referendum	A vote to change the Constitution.
Returned candidate	Candidate who is officially declared elected by a returning officer.
Returning officer	The person responsible for conducting an election in a particular area. A divisional returning officer is responsible for conducting the House of Representatives election in their electoral division. An Australian electoral officer is the returning officer for the Senate election in their state or territory.
Registered political party	A party registered with the AEC under Part XI of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> .
Roll	The list of people enrolled to vote in an election or referendum.
Scrutineer	Someone nominated by a candidate to watch the issuing, counting or scrutiny of votes.

Term	Description
Scrutiny	The counting of votes is also known as the scrutiny.
Secret ballot	A vote made in secret.
Senate	The house of Parliament representing the states and territories. A total of 76 senators are elected – 12 from each state and two each from the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory – under a proportional representation system.
Silent elector	A voter whose address does not appear on the electoral roll for reasons of personal safety.

Term	Description
Turnout	The percentage of people who voted in the election (formal and informal votes as a percentage of eligible enrolled electors).
Vote	To choose a representative, or indicate a preference, in an election or referendum.
Writ	A document commanding an electoral officer to hold an election, containing dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, the election day and the last day for return of the writ.

List of requirements – non-corporate Commonwealth entities

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal		
17AI	x	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.	Mandatory
17AD(h)	Aids to access		
17AJ(a)	iii-viii	Table of contents.	Mandatory
17AJ(b)	165–170	Alphabetical index.	Mandatory
17AJ(c)	154–155	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.	Mandatory
17AJ(d)	159–164	List of requirements.	Mandatory
17AJ(e)	ii	Details of contact officer.	Mandatory
17AJ(f)	ii	Entity's website address.	Mandatory
17AJ(g)	ix	Electronic address of report.	Mandatory
17AD(a)	Review by accountable authority		
17AD(a)	2–5	A review by the accountable authority of the entity.	Mandatory
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity		
17AE(1)(a)(i)	8	A description of the role and functions of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	8, 10–11	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	8	A description of the outcomes and programs administered by the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	8	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	14, 118	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	14, 118	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	118	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(b)	N/A	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Portfolio departments - mandatory
17AE(2)	N/A	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
17AD(c)	Report on the performance of the entity		
	<i>Annual performance statements</i>		
17AD(c)(i); 16F	14–57	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on financial performance		
17AF(1)(a)	82–83	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory
17AF(1)(b)	116–117	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory
17AF(2)	N/A	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, mandatory.
17AD(d)	Management and accountability		
	<i>Corporate governance</i>		
17AG(2)(a)	68	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems).	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(i)	x, 68	A certification by accountable authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	x, 68	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	x, 68	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(c)	68	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	N/A	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance.	If applicable, mandatory
	<i>Audit committee</i>		
17AG(2A)(a)	67	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(b)	118	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
17AG(2A)(c)	118	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(d)	118	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(e)	118	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
<i>External scrutiny</i>			
17AG(3)	70–72	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory
17AG(3)(a)	70–71	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(3)(b)	71–72	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor-General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(3)(c)	N/A	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Management of human resources</i>			
17AG(4)(a)	72–76	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(aa)	72, 134–144	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full-time employees (b) statistics on part-time employees (c) statistics on gender (d) statistics on staff location.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(b)	134–146	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis; including the following: (a) statistics on staffing classification level (b) statistics on full-time employees (c) statistics on part-time employees (d) statistics on gender (e) statistics on staff location (f) statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)	73, 145	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(i)	145	Information on the number of SES and non-SES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	146	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	75, 76	A description of non-salary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(i)	N/A	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	N/A	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	N/A	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	N/A	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Assets management</i>			
17AG(5)	N/A	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities.	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Purchasing</i>			
17AG(6)	77-78	An assessment of entity performance against the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.	Mandatory
<i>Reportable consultancy contracts</i>			
17AG(7)(a)	79-80	A summary statement detailing the number of new contracts engaging consultants entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all new consultancy contracts entered into during the period (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory
17AG(7)(b)	79	A statement that <i>"During [reporting period], [specified number] new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]"</i> .	Mandatory
17AG(7)(c)	79	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.	Mandatory
17AG(7)(d)	79	A statement that <i>"Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website."</i>	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
<i>Reportable non-consultancy contracts</i>			
17AG(7A)(a)	80	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable non-consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory
17AG(7A)(b)	80	A statement that <i>“Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.”</i>	Mandatory
17AD(daa)	Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts		
17AGA	79–80	Additional information, in accordance with section 17AGA, about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts.	Mandatory
<i>Australian National Audit Office Access Clauses</i>			
17AG(8)	N/A	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100,000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor’s premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Exempt contracts</i>			
17AG(9)	N/A	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10,000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Small business</i>			
17AG(10)(a)	78	A statement that <i>“[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance’s website.”</i>	Mandatory
17AG(10)(b)	78	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule reference	Part of report	Description	Requirement
17AG(10)(c)	78	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature – a statement that <i>"[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury's website."</i>	If applicable, mandatory
<i>Financial statements</i>			
17AD(e)	82–114	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.	Mandatory
<i>Executive remuneration</i>			
17AD(da)	73–74, 146, 148–149	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 2–3 of the Rule.	Mandatory
17AD(f)	Other mandatory information		
17AH(1)(a)(i)	130	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that <i>"During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity's website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website."</i>	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	N/A	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(b)	N/A	A statement that <i>"Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website]."</i>	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(1)(c)	43	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(d)	72	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(e)	N/A	Correction of material errors in previous annual report.	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(2)	77 116–117 124–128 129 131 132	Information required by other legislation.	Mandatory

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