

Rec 28/10/16

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Po Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**Please find my submission to the Inquiry into the Conduct and Related Matters
of the 2016 Federal Election.**

Please find my submission attached.

Judith Hinspeter
Geoffrey Hinspeter

25th October 2016

This submission addresses the first point in the Committee's terms of reference:

All aspects of the 2016 Federal election and matters related thereto, and without limiting the scope of the committee's inquiry

Postal Vote

- We were not going to be in Australia for the federal election, we applied for a Postal Vote which was posted directly to our son's address in New Hampshire.
- All instructions were followed, noting an answer to a previously asked question on the envelope which contained our vote.
- There was also a request to sign the envelope and have it witnessed by another person on the Australian Electoral Roll or someone (Australian nationality) from the list provided: Magistrate, professional person, Public Servant etc.
- We were not in a position near an Australian Embassy or Consular, thus making it impossible to find a witness. We therefore posted our votes back without this signature.
- In early October, we received a letter from the AEC advising us that our votes were not valid and could not be included in the voting count.
- I rang the AEC here in Townsville and asked why this was so, as we were not able to get witness.
- From memory, I seem to recall reading that there was a waiver for people who were in a position like the one we found ourselves in.
- The person I spoke to told me that he would check on this and ring me back.
- I did not receive a return call so about 5 days later I rang again but still did not receive a satisfactory explanation.
- To my mind, our votes were entirely valid – as they contained a pre-arranged word to be written on the inside voting envelope, which provided proof that the votes were made by the persons who had originally applied for the Postal Vote.

I would ask that this matter be considered by the Committee

Judith Hinspeter
Geoffrey Hinspeter