

Inquiry into the delivery of electoral education

The Electoral Commission Queensland is committed to educating youth in relation to the Queensland electoral process, voting systems and their rights and responsibilities as future voters.

The commission undertakes a number of educational activities to promote this awareness amongst Queensland's youth.

The following activities have been implemented into the Commission's Education and Public Awareness programme;

- **Kids Election** – The kid's election invites schools to participate in voting activities based on the Queensland state electoral system of voting during a State Election. Students are able to vote on replica ballot papers for the candidates in which their school is located. This exercise enables students to experience running a polling booth, voting and assist in the counting of the votes. An open discussion with the students is encouraged after the election during a de-briefing session lead by an ECQ officer.
- **School visits** – ECQ offers electoral information sessions and mock elections to primary and high school students. These sessions include a power point presentation on the 3 levels of Government, the importance of enrolment and voting, basic formality, voting systems and the history of voting. Students are encouraged to enter into open discussions about these topics and have hands on experience during the mock election. The mock election can be on a topic selected by the school or one by ECQ. These have included favourite food, best super hero and who should be the next Prime Minister of Australia.

If ECQ is unable to provide in person support to a school, information kits are available to educators on request. These kits include a copy of the power point presentation with helpful hints on how to conduct the session as well as copies of fact sheets and brochures in both print form and on a USB.

- **Online resources** - The Electoral Commission Queensland recognises the importance of utilizing technology to deliver information and to reach a wider audience. As such, ECQ is in the developmental phase of creating on-line, interactive modules for the use of students and teachers in primary and high schools.

These modules will cover topics such as the importance of enrolment and voting and challenge their knowledge with online quizzes. One of the biggest challenges the commission faces is the land size of the Queensland. While we strive to visit as many schools as possible, encouraging the use of these online services will enable ECQ to reach more classrooms not only in the greater Brisbane area, but all of Queensland.

Currently, the commission has published brochures and fact sheets on the ECQ website that can be used as an education tool. These include;

- Voting in Queensland brochure
 - Queensland Electoral History brochure
 - Information About Enrolment brochure
 - Counting the Votes brochure
 - OPV (Optional Preferential Voting) fact sheet
 - Electoral Process fact sheet, and;
 - History of Electorate Names fact sheet
- **High school education programme** - The Commission is open to new ideas and ways of educating our electors and inspiring positive attitudes towards voting. One method of achieving this goal is to develop an education program targeting year 11 and 12 students of enrolment age. While still in the development phase of this project, the desired outcome is to see information packs sent to high schools across the state with a video about enrolment and voting, enrolment forms and information with a heavy focus on the importance of having your say through voting.
 - **Ekka Royal Queensland Show Educational Trail** – The Electoral Commission Queensland in conjunction with the Australian Electoral Commission host a joint stall at the Ekka each year. The Commissions enter into the Ekka’s Adventure Trail to attract young people to the stall. As part of this trail the Commission offers a range of educational activities including a digital, interactive information session and quiz. This encourages young people to learn about the enrolment and voting process in Queensland.
 - **Schoolies** – The Electoral Commission Queensland has been approached by the marketing manager of Schoolies Queensland to supply a presence in the form of an information awareness kiosk targeting the 17 – 18 year olds who will be participating in Schoolies late 2015. This facility will allow the Commission to provide physical and personal contact with school leavers, encouraging them to enrol and to participate in the democratic process.
 - **AUSLAN** – To ensure that electoral information is available to students and the public alike, the Commission has invested in the development of an Auslan sign language video with information about enrolment, voting and the 3 levels of government. Once production is complete, this video will be posted to the Electoral Commission Queensland website, Facebook page and YouTube.

The future of electoral education and public awareness

A YouTube channel could be utilized to advertise elections and display videos on enrolment and voting information.

ECQ is using Facebook and twitter to deliver important messages to Queenslanders.