

Dear Sirs,

In reference to submissions re changes to our polling booth systems I have some comments for consideration.

I was the voluntary Campaign Manager for Hastings District in the Nov 2014 Victorian Government election and put in 400 hours filling rosters etc for 17 booths and the manning of a pre-poll site for 2 weeks prior to election day in the Hastings District.

On many occasions at pre-poll there were some people turning up giving out unauthorised pamphlets which the VEC had never sighted or signed off on. Some had blatant lies about certain issues and these were put into voters hands often first because they were slightly away from the set-ups of the major parties. The VEC Manager was called on several occasions to make a ruling but mostly these people had free rein to peddle their printed opinions. One woman even put up signs on nearby hoardings and had the cheek to leave them up overnight...whereas all the major parties cleaned and tidied their areas every day before they left.

The VEC people were generally quite busy so don't have time to deal properly with these matters and as I witnessed, some of these people got quite aggressive and abusive with certain people working for certain parties and even with the local candidates and the sitting MP when they turned up on occasions.

Their needs to be trained security people at these booths with knowledge of what these people do and how they operate in my opinion.

Apart from that, I have discussed other more serious problems at other booths with other campaign managers and booth captains...some experienced quite a lot of violence, abuse and stand-over tactics, particularly from union thugs from the Labor Party where certain marginal seats were targeted during the elections, both at pre-poll and on the day. I am sure that some tactics were illegal and the weight of the law should be brought against them.

Lastly the illegal signage put up by every party except the Liberal Coalition was everywhere for weeks up electricity poles and on council fences etc. The police and councils will not do anything about this as I have personally reported it to the authorities since the 1996 federal election in Dunkley electorate and it's about time they were all fined off the planet. In Hastings it cost us a total of \$16,000 to do it legally and within the rules and every other party gets away with it every time.

Sincerely

Barrie Macmillan