

15th January 2014

Dear Committee

**2013 Federal Election
Inquiry Submission from Ken O'Dowd MP – Federal Member for Flynn**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit matters relating to the 2013 Federal Election.

Below are points that I would like to bring to the Committee's attention.

The points noted were either observed by myself or brought to my attention from Staff and Booth Workers.

AEC Enquiries/Telephone Service

- 1300 operators need more training
- Voters situation could be explained to one operator and get one answer then ring back get another operator and be given a different answer
- Operators eager to advise if voter has valid reason for not voting they won't be fined rather than looking into matter and resolving or suggesting an alternative – People want to exercise their right to vote

Example 1. Voters record/name had disappeared from the Electoral Roll – voter wanted to vote AEC advised it was ok they would not be fined

Example 2. Voter in Hospital the mobile voting team had already visited Hospital but missed distributing voting papers to the acute care ward - AEC advised that patient would not be fined - when the patient desperately wanted to vote.

Interstate Voting Papers

- Interstate Voting Papers were delayed in arriving and not available on Day 1 of Pre Polling created disgruntled travellers

Location of Polling Booths

- Ease of pedestrian access when AEC choose booth locations more consideration needs to be given to suitability for variety of individual needs eg steep inclines, too many stairs, wheelchair access

Intimidation & Neutrality of AEC Booth Workers

- When it is necessary for AEC staff to assist voters ensure assisters are A Political eg Woorabinda Community
- Provide list of names of AEC assistants in these instances to Candidates for perusal prior to Election Day

I trust you receive numerous submissions and should you wish for me to expand on any of the above matters please don't hesitate to make contact myself of Lane Buffington in my Emerald Office.

Regards

Lane Buffington

On behalf of

Ken O'Dowd MP

Federal Member for Flynn

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