



JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Inquiry into the 2007 election and related matters

Chair: Daryl Melham

Deputy Chair: Scott Morrison

Electoral reform proposals including reinstatement of seven day close of rolls period

Federal Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee tabled two reports in the House of Representatives yesterday evening that proposed a range of reforms to protect the franchise and modernise the electoral system.

The first report examines the conduct of the 2007 federal election and recommends the reinstatement of a number of longstanding provisions to protect the franchise to those who are entitled to exercise it, including:

- restoring the traditional seven day close of rolls period to enrol or update enrolment details;
- restoring provisions allowing electors to notify changes to enrolment details in writing;
- removing the need for provisional voters to prove their identity when voting; and
- restoring provisions to save votes from being ruled informal where clear preferences are expressed, but numbers are repeated.

The report includes a range of other recommendations aimed at improving the conduct of federal elections and modernising enrolment and voting processes so that they meet the expectations of the community both now and into the future whilst maintaining appropriate integrity measures. Key recommendations cover:

- simplifying the proof of identity requirements for enrolment;
- new provisions aimed at facilitating electronic updates to enrolment information and electronic receipt of postal vote applications; and
- allowing for information collected by trusted agencies to be used to directly update the electoral roll where electors indicate their consent for this to occur.

The second report examines a proposal by Senator Bob Brown (in the *Commonwealth Electoral (Above-the-Line Voting) Amendment Bill 2008*), to change voting arrangements for Senate elections.

Copies of the reports are available from the committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/elect07/index.htm>.

Fact sheets on key issues and recommendations in the 2007 election report are available from the committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/elect07/media.htm>.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Daryl Melham, on (02) 6277 2054 (Parliament House Office).

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 2374, email jscem@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/em>