

Increasing the participation of Indigenous and homeless electors

6.1 Some Indigenous and homeless electors face particular challenges in engaging with the electoral system. This chapter examines the extent of under participation by these groups and assesses a range of proposals to encourage and facilitate their participation in the electoral system.

Indigenous electors

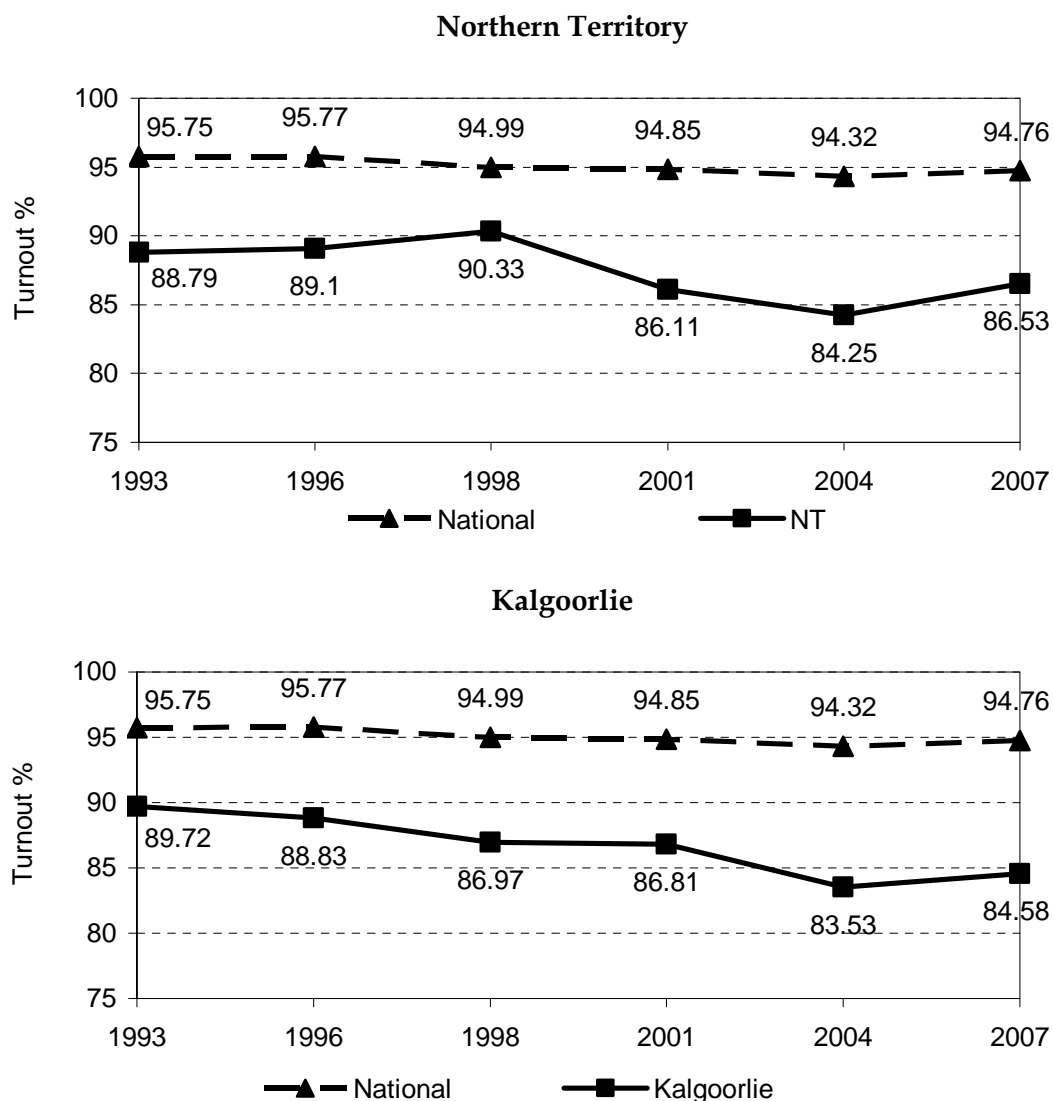
6.2 Since 1962, Indigenous Australians have been granted access to the enrolment and voting franchise; with legislative reforms in 1984 extending compulsory enrolment and voting requirements to Indigenous Australians, granting them the same enrolment and voting rights enjoyed by the majority of Australians.

6.3 Data from the 2007 federal election relating to those electoral divisions, in which a significant number of Indigenous Australians live, indicates that they are also under-represented in terms of voting participation.

6.4 Nowhere is this under-representation more obvious than in the division of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia and in the divisions of Lingiari and Solomon in the Northern Territory.

6.5 When turnout in House of Representatives elections from 1993 to 2007 in those divisions is compared to the national average for the relevant election, the level of under-representation in these divisions can be seen to be significant. A comparison showing turnout in the Division of Kalgoorlie compared to the national average and for the Northern Territory is provided at figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Voter turnout, House of Representatives, Kalgoorlie and Northern Territory, 1993 to 2007 elections



Source Appendix C, table C.1.

- 6.6 The Northern Territory was a single electoral division prior to the redistribution of 2001, during which it was distributed into the electoral divisions of Lingiari and Solomon. For the purposes of the comparison shown above, the data for Lingiari and Solomon has been combined to provide continuity over the period 1993 to 2007.
- 6.7 Prior to 1996, the AEC undertook specific strategies including providing a program known as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service (ATSIEIS) in an attempt to address the relatively lower levels of participation by Indigenous Australians evident at that time.

- 6.8 Since the abolition of the program in 1996, the participation of Indigenous Australians in elections appears to have decreased.

Indigenous participation

- 6.9 Indigenous electors are not formally identified on the electoral roll. Therefore, participation by Indigenous electors is generally assessed by examining enrolment and voting statistics in those divisions where Indigenous people make up a significant share of the population. The 10 divisions at the 2007 election with the highest proportion of people (as measured by the 2006 census) who are of Indigenous origin is shown in table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Divisions with the highest proportion of Indigenous population, 2006

Division (Jurisdiction)	Type	Indigenous population (per cent)
Lingiari (NT)	Rural	43.5
Kalgoorlie (WA)	Rural	18.3
Leichhardt (Qld)	Rural	15.8
Kennedy (Qld)	Rural	12.5
Parkes (NSW)	Rural	11.3
Solomon (NT)	Inner metropolitan	10.3
Calare (NSW)	Rural	8.2
Herbert (Qld)	Provincial	6.9
New England (NSW)	Rural	6.5
Grey (SA)	Rural	6.4

Source Parliamentary Library, 'Electoral division rankings: Census 2006 second release', Research paper no 23 2007-08, p 132.

- 6.10 Indigenous disadvantage and lower levels of electoral participation are unlikely to be confined to the largely rural divisions highlighted above.
- 6.11 The extent of the difference in these 10 divisions for key indicators of participation, such as turnout, and number of provisional votes cast is shown in table 6.2. While there are likely to be a number of factors that influence the outcomes for these indicators, it is clear that some divisions where a significant share of the population is Indigenous generally exhibit poorer participation in the electoral system, particularly in terms of turnout. Similarly, the number of provisional votes cast expressed as a percentage of close of rolls enrolment, indicates that the currency of the electoral roll in those divisions is lower when compared to the national average.

Table 6.2 Indicators of electoral participation at the 2007 election in divisions with the highest proportion of Indigenous population

Division (Jurisdiction)	Turnout (Senate)	Number of Provisional votes cast (Senate)	Provisional votes cast as percentage of close of rolls enrolment
Lingiari (NT)	81.6%	939	1.55%
Kalgoorlie (WA)	85.3%	1842	2.28%
Leichhardt (Qld)	93.0%	2450	2.60%
Kennedy (Qld)	93.9%	1983	2.16%
Parkes (NSW)	96.1%	1215	1.35%
Solomon (NT)	92.4%	1236	2.14%
Calare (NSW)	96.1%	996	1.12%
Herbert (Qld)	94.3%	1686	1.86%
New England (NSW)	96.2%	939	1.03%
Grey (SA)	95.3%	1439	1.47%
National average	95.2%	1118	1.23%

Source Australian Electoral Commission, 'Virtual Tally Room, Senate turnout by division', viewed on 26 May 2009 at <http://results.aec.gov.au/13745/Website/SenateTurnoutByDivision-13745-NAT.htm>; 'Virtual Tally Room, General, declaration votes issued by division', viewed on 26 May 2009 at <http://results.aec.gov.au/13745/Website/GeneralDecVotesIssuedByDivision-13745-NAT.htm>; 'Virtual Tally Room, General information, enrolment by division', viewed on 26 May 2009 at <http://results.aec.gov.au/13745/Website/GeneralEnrolmentByDivision-13745-NAT.htm>.

6.12 The AEC estimate that voter turnout in remote areas of Australia was around 77 per cent, compared to 95 per cent voter turnout across Australia.¹ The AEC's state manager for the Northern Territory highlighted the significant challenge faced by the AEC in the Northern Territory in its efforts to engage with Indigenous electors:

Elector participation in remote parts of the Territory can be summarised generally by this statement: if you live in a remote part of Northern Territory, you are almost half as likely to vote as an elector living in an urban area, and if you do vote, you are twice as likely to vote informally.²

6.13 There are a number of barriers to participation in the electoral system by Indigenous electors. These include literacy and numeracy levels, cultural activities, school retention rates, health and social conditions, as well as the general remoteness of Indigenous communities and the transient nature of their inhabitants.³

1 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 55.

2 Loganathan I, Australian Electoral Commission, transcript, 17 October 2008, p 37.

3 Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, *Civics and Electoral Education* (2007), Commonwealth of Australia, p 88.

- 6.14 The committee notes the government's commitment and positive efforts to reduce disadvantage in a range of areas including life expectancy, education and employment.⁴

Efforts to engage with Indigenous electors

- 6.15 While the AEC's mainstream press and radio enrolment and election advertising were adapted (and translated into six languages for radio) for Indigenous media, the AEC undertook a range of activities targeting Indigenous electors in rural and remote communities.
- 6.16 The AEC noted that the Northern and Central Australia Remote Area Strategy (NACARAS) and the Community Education and Information Officers (CEIO) program were important components in its efforts to reach Indigenous electors.⁵
- 6.17 NACARAS was implemented in 2006 and was designed to ensure consistent electoral services and service standards are applied across regional and remote areas of northern and central Australia. At Indigenous communities, local assistants who speak the relevant Indigenous languages and have a good understanding of the community were employed by the AEC to provide linguistic services and advice on cultural matters. As with all polling staff, local assistants were required to sign a political neutrality form.⁶
- 6.18 The AEC identified remote mobile polling, and cross-border cooperation as some of the key issues for consideration under NACARAS.⁷
- 6.19 The CEIO program was an integral part of NACARAS, and was designed to encourage participation for electors in remote areas in the lead up to and during the 2007 election. Given the demographics of these regions, a primary focus of the program was to service Indigenous electors. The CEIO program commenced on 1 July 2007 and operated in remote and rural parts of the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales. The CEIO program also visited Indigenous electors in urban areas.⁸

4 Australian Government, *Closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage: The challenge for Australia* (2009), p 5.

5 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

6 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

7 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

8 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

- 6.20 In the lead up to the 2007 election CEIOs visited over 800 communities (a number of communities had multiple visits) and organisations (the vast majority being Indigenous). Indigenous staff with valuable contacts, language skills, and who held knowledge of the communities to be visited were recruited as CEIOs.
- 6.21 The CEIOs made contact with community councils, Indigenous organisations, schools, resource centres, Indigenous sporting and other organisations. They also provided targeted AEC publications and pamphlets, enrolment forms, and postal vote applications.⁹
- 6.22 Field visits were conducted to raise awareness of the electoral process, to generate enrolment, and to encourage greater participation in the 2007 election. CEIOs collected 1,409 enrolment forms and confirmed the enrolment status of a further 14,500 remote electors. Total expenditure on the 2007 CEIO program was \$466,994.¹⁰
- 6.23 Some of the difficulties the AEC encountered in providing electoral services to Indigenous electors in the Northern Territory were demonstrated by reference to the community of Wadeye. The AEC's state manager for the Northern Territory noted that:

Wadeye is the sixth largest town in the Territory. It has a population of 2,500, of whom 1,044 are on the electoral roll. Wadeye is made up of 20 tribal groups living on the traditional lands of one clan group. In the 2001 election, we collected 424 enrolment forms out of a roll of 800. After the election we met with the council to discuss why the turnout was low. Part of the response we got back was that we polled in one location, at the school, which is on the traditional land of that one clan. Other clan members were reluctant to go into that land as they were uncomfortable in doing it. In speaking to the community and to the elders, we came up with a regime, rather than just polling at the school, of polling at seven locations around that one community. We did that in 2004 and we had a marginal increase of 507 electors.

... In 2007, there were 1,044 electors on the roll, and we changed our program after meeting with the council to polling at these seven community areas, and what they were telling us was that a lot of the electors were around or moving and they missed out on voting. So what we needed to do was travel around the

9 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

10 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 54.

communities and still provide another service at the council office once that was done. This was trialled in 2007 and we collected 770 votes.¹¹

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service program

- 6.24 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service (ATSIEIS) program was conducted by the AEC between 1984 and 1996. This program evolved from the Aboriginal Electoral Education Program which had been established in the late 1970s.¹²
- 6.25 According to the AEC, the objectives of the ATSIEIS program were to:
- conduct an effective national electoral education and information program that meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - establish, promote and support where practical, an information resource network of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Community Electoral Assistants (CEAs);
 - provide electoral information other than through the CEA networks to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - undertake electoral education activities in educational institutions with a significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student population;
 - promote an awareness of and participation in the electoral process through the electronic and print media; and
 - enrol Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander electors and check existing enrolment during visits to relevant communities and groups.¹³
- 6.26 In 1995-96 the ATSIEIS program was managed centrally and consisted of three Canberra-based staff to coordinate and develop curriculum resources, 17 field staff mostly of Indigenous background and a further network of Indigenous CEAs.¹⁴
- 6.27 AEC field officers, who were all permanent staff, were responsible for an ongoing program of community visits, providing electoral education/information sessions also updating and verifying enrolments in

11 Loganathan I, Australian Electoral Commission, transcript, 17 October 2008, pp 38–39.

12 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 3.

13 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 3.

14 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 3.

those communities. Field staff were also responsible for identifying (through community consultation) appropriate people in each community who could be trained and then act as CEAs. These positions, which were not permanent or AEC staff, were essentially a community resource that people could go to for electoral information. CEAs were paid to attend AEC training and assisted field staff update enrolment within the community. Many electoral assistants were deployed during election periods to undertake remote mobile polling.¹⁵

- 6.28 Funding of \$2 million per annum was discontinued for the ATSIEIS program in the 1996-97 federal budget. Following the abolition of the program, the AEC noted that it had funded an information officer position in all states, other than Tasmania, and in the Northern Territory. These officers ensured that Indigenous clients were kept informed of electoral matters, undertook field work in conjunction with electoral events (when additional funding would be available) and undertook other duties of an informational/educational nature.¹⁶

Future efforts to increase participation by Indigenous electors

- 6.29 The AEC considered that an ongoing program of regular visits is required to better engage Indigenous electors. The AEC noted that:

Whilst the CEIO program was beneficial in improving roll accuracy and encouraging voter participation for the federal election, an ongoing program of regular visits to remote communities is required as part of a long term strategy to improve roll accuracy, reduce informal voting rates and increase voter participation in remote and rural areas.¹⁷

- 6.30 The committee requested that the AEC provide the committee with an outline of a future possible program to provide ongoing services to better address Indigenous participation in rural and remote areas. The AEC's response, detailed in submission 169.4, noted that the diversity of the Indigenous population meant that a flexible program would be required.¹⁸ The AEC noted that:

There are many challenges to improving the enrolment and electoral engagement of the Indigenous population. Indigenous people are not one homogenous community but rather a variety of

15 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 4.

16 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 4.

17 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, Annex 5, p 55.

18 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 6.

people from sophisticated, educated urban dwellers, to people living in remote areas for whom English is a second or third language. This means that the type and delivery of electoral information cannot be a 'one size fits all'.¹⁹

- 6.31 While the AEC acknowledged a future program would first require extensive consultation with Indigenous communities and organisations as well as government agencies providing services to Indigenous people, a future program would seek to:
- improve the AEC's capacity and capability for communication and engagement with Indigenous Australians including establishment of more formal national, state and local consultation processes;
 - undertake dedicated research to gain a better evidence base to improve targeting of Indigenous communication and identify enrolment and voting issues for Indigenous people;
 - develop a tailored new curriculum involving Indigenous Australians for delivery through CEIO and school based electoral education programs;
 - conduct an expanded ongoing CEIO program engaging Indigenous staff, with regular visits to regional and remote and urban communities, not just in the lead up to an election;
 - develop a bank of communication products and resources specifically for Indigenous audiences;
 - develop and maintain an information system to support, plan and monitor the effectiveness of electoral services and education particularly in regional and remote communities;
 - build partnerships with Indigenous organisations and networks, including Indigenous Co-ordination Centres, and other agencies to further promote enrolment and electoral education (this could involve trialling new initiatives or establishing joint service delivery arrangements);
 - undertake more public awareness and advertising for Indigenous audiences, including through use of newer communication channels such as the Koori Network, WARU website, and other Indigenous radio and television, and internet network; and

19 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 6.

- engage more local Indigenous people to work in remote mobile polling teams and as polling officials, including in regional and urban areas.²⁰
- 6.32 The AEC also recommended that that the priority of any expanded activity should continue to be on Indigenous Australians residing in remote and regional communities where enrolment and voter turnout is lower and where informality appears to be higher. Activities should also be undertaken to better understand and address the gaps in electoral participation and engagement of Indigenous Australians in urban areas.²¹
- 6.33 The costs of such a program were estimated by the AEC to be in the order of \$5 million in the start up year and \$3.5 million thereafter. Major costs would be for:
- engagement of some additional permanent and temporary staff to plan and deliver electoral education and enrolment drives to Indigenous communities across Australia - this would include undertaking consultation processes building partnerships with other agencies and groups who deliver services to Indigenous Australians;
 - travel costs including provision of equipment and vehicles to support field staff visits;
 - staff training;
 - strategic research to inform program targeting, priorities and assess program effectiveness;
 - development and production of appropriate electoral information and education materials;
 - development and media buy of appropriate supporting Indigenous communications -(eg advertising of upcoming field visits, Koori communications channels); and
 - IT costs for development and maintenance of a system to capture program activity and local information to monitor program performance.²²
- 6.34 At a practical level, one area highlighted by the AEC where access could be improved is the provision of polling services to Indigenous electors at town camps.²³ The AEC noted that:
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20 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, pp 6-7.

21 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 7.

22 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.4, p 7.

23 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 54.

Town camps in Darwin and Alice Springs provide temporary refuge for remote based Indigenous electors who are visiting urban centres. Under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, the AEC has not been able to provide town camps with remote mobile polling services, due to their geographic proximity to static polling booths. By its very nature 'remote' mobile polling takes place outside urban areas.²⁴

6.35 The AEC suggested that the provision of mobile polling in town camps would provide remote Indigenous electors with the opportunity to cast their vote in a familiar setting with the provision of an electoral service identical to that provided at remote communities. In doing so, the AEC considered that it would increase the opportunity for the residents of Indigenous town camps to cast their vote.²⁵

6.36 In the absence of an ongoing program to engage with Indigenous electors, there has been a decline in voter participation in some of the divisions with a significant share of the population of Indigenous origin since the 1996 election, with the exception of Leichhardt, Parkes, Herbert and Grey (table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Voter turnout, selected divisions, House of Representatives, 1993 to 2007 elections (per cent)

Division (Jurisdiction)	1993	1996	1998	2001	2004	2007
Kalgoorlie	89.7	88.8	87.0	86.8	83.5	84.6
Leichhardt	93.4	92.3	92.0	92.1	91.2	92.6
Kennedy	93.9	93.7	93.2	93.4	92.6	93.4
Parkes	95.6	95.9	94.9	95.6	95.7	95.9
Calare	96.9	96.8	96.2	96.2	95.7	95.8
Herbert	95.6	94.1	94.7	95.2	93.8	94.1
New England	96.6	96.1	95.2	96.0	95.4	95.9
Grey	94.6	95.0	94.6	94.6	94.2	95.0
NT (Lingiari and Solomon 2001 onwards)	88.8	89.1	90.3	86.1	84.3	86.5
National average	95.8	95.8	95.0	94.9	94.3	94.8

Source Appendix C, table C.1.

6.37 Notably, the gap between national turnout and turnout in the Northern Territory (which was a separate division prior up to the 1998 election and includes the divisions of Solomon and Lingiari thereafter) and the Kalgoorlie has widened significantly – increasing from 6.7 percentage

24 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 54.

25 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 54.

points in 1996 to 8.2 percentage points in 2007 in the Northern Territory, and from 6.9 percentage points in 1996 to 10.2 percentage points in 2007 in Kalgoorlie.

- 6.38 The committee notes that in the 2009-10 Budget, the Australian Government will provide \$13.0 million over the next four years to the AEC to close the gap in areas of Indigenous disadvantage by improving the electoral enrolment and participation of Indigenous Australians.²⁶
- 6.39 According to the Minister, the initiative 'will improve electoral knowledge in Indigenous communities including such specifics as how and when to enrol and how to vote formally in elections'.²⁷
- 6.40 The committee notes that under the initiative, enrolment, turnout and informality will be addressed through a continuous program of electoral education and additional promotion of enrolment and voting tailored to the needs of Indigenous communities in remote, regional and urban areas. The Minister also indicated that consultation with Indigenous communities will be undertaken will full commencement in July 2010.²⁸

Committee conclusion

- 6.41 While many of the factors that reduce participation by Indigenous electors are not directly within the AEC's control, efforts by the AEC to engage Indigenous electors and provide flexible voting services will, nevertheless, make a difference to lifting Indigenous participation.
- 6.42 The committee is concerned by the relatively lower levels of participation in divisions where a significant share of the population is of Indigenous origin. The abolition of the former ATSIEIS program in 1996 has not helped to improve levels of participation in a number of those divisions where Indigenous people make up a significant share of the population; indeed, the level of participation has fallen.
- 6.43 The committee considers that the re-introduction of an ongoing program to engage Indigenous electors is an essential element of enabling greater participation by Indigenous electors.

26 Senator the Hon John Faulkner, Special Minister of State, '\$13.0 million to help improve Indigenous electoral participation', media release, 12 May 2009.

27 Senator the Hon John Faulkner, Special Minister of State, '\$13.0 million to help improve Indigenous electoral participation', media release, 12 May 2009.

28 Senator the Hon John Faulkner, Special Minister of State, '\$13.0 million to help improve Indigenous electoral participation', media release, 12 May 2009.

- 6.44 The proposal put forward by the AEC should form the basis for such a program. The committee notes that the costs of establishing such a program and providing for its continued operation are significant. The committee considers that the government, as part of its broader social inclusion agenda for Indigenous Australians, should provide appropriate funding for an ongoing program to better engage Indigenous Australians with the electoral system and lift participation.
- 6.45 The committee considers that the AEC's proposals seeking additional flexibilities for mobile polling would complement the establishment of such a program.
- 6.46 The committee welcomes the Australian Government's commitment in the 2009-10 Budget to allocate \$13 million to such a program over the next four years.

Recommendation 17

- 6.47 **The committee recommends that the Australian Government provide ongoing and appropriate funding for the Australian Electoral Commission to establish, deliver and maintain a program similar in purpose to the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Electoral Information Service program to provide ongoing engagement with Indigenous electors.**

Recommendation 18

- 6.48 **The committee recommends that the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* be amended to enable the provision of remote mobile polling at town camps, such as in Darwin and Alice Springs.**

Homeless electors

- 6.49 The reasons for homelessness are many and varied – domestic violence, a shortage of affordable housing, unemployment, mental illness, family breakdown and drug and alcohol abuse all contribute to the level of homelessness in Australia.²⁹
- 6.50 In delivering its White Paper on Homelessness in December 2008, the Australian Government has set an ambitious target to halve homelessness by 2020 and offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it.³⁰ The White Paper noted that ‘the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, through its Inquiry into the 2007 Federal Election, has received submissions and heard evidence about the barriers for voters who are homeless and itinerant and will consider this issue in its report.’³¹
- 6.51 Three categories of homeless people have been identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS):
- Primary homelessness – People without conventional accommodation, such as people living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings, or using cars or railway carriages for temporary shelter;
 - Secondary homelessness – People who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another. It covers: people using emergency accommodation (such as hostels for the homeless or night shelters); teenagers staying in youth refuges; women and children escaping domestic violence (staying in women’s refuges); people residing temporarily with other families (because they have no accommodation of their own); and those using boarding houses on an occasional or intermittent basis; and
 - Tertiary homelessness – People who live in boarding houses on a medium to long-term basis. Residents of private boarding houses do not have a separate bedroom and living room; they do not have kitchen

29 Australian Government, *The Road Home: A national approach to reducing homelessness, White Paper on Homelessness* (2008), p iii.

30 Australian Government, *The Road Home: A national approach to reducing homelessness, White Paper on Homelessness* (2008), p iii.

31 Australian Government, *The Road Home: A national approach to reducing homelessness, White Paper on Homelessness* (2008), p 55.

and bathroom facilities of their own; their accommodation is not self-contained; they do not have security of tenure provided by a lease.³²

6.52 In 2006, the ABS found that 105,000 Australians were homeless on Census night, an increase of 4.8 per cent since 2001 (table 6.4).³³ The Council to Homeless Persons considers that marginal residents in caravan parks should be included in statistics for the recorded homeless population, adding another 18,000 people to those that could be categorised as homeless.³⁴

Table 6.4 Persons experiencing homelessness, living circumstances, 2001 and 2006

	2001	2006	% Change 2001-2006
SAAP accommodation	14,251	19,849	+39.3
Sleeping out, improvised dwellings	14,158	16,375	+15.7
Friends and relatives	48,614	46,856	-3.6
Boarding houses	22,877	21,596	-5.6
Caravan parks	22,868	17,496	-23.5
Total	122,768	122,172	-0.5

Source Council to Homeless Persons, *Counting the Homeless 2006: Information Paper (2008)*, p 2.

6.53 Single adults and adult couples (aged 19+ years) form the largest group within the recorded homeless population, accounting for almost 60 per cent of the homeless population, with young people aged 18 or less accounting for around 20 per cent of the homeless population (table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Changes in broad household groups within the homeless population, 2001 and 2006

	2001	2006	% Change 2001-2006
Families with children	22,944	26,790	16.8
Adults (singles and couples only)	54,356	59,995	10.4
Youth aged 12-18	22,600	17,891	-20.8

Source Council to Homeless Persons, *Counting the Homeless 2006: Information Paper (2008)*, p 4.

32 Chamberlain C, *Counting the Homeless: Implications for Policy Development (1999)*, pp 1, 9-11, 13, 49.

33 Mission Australia, *Latest homeless figures reflect 'wasted years of inaction'*, viewed as: <http://www.missionaustralia.com.au/news/media-releases/708-latest-homeless-figures>, viewed 19 March 2009.

34 Council to Homeless Persons, *Counting the Homeless 2006: Information Paper*, September 2008, p 2.

- 6.54 Indigenous people are over-represented amongst the homeless population, with 10,363 Indigenous people (approximately 10 per cent of the total homeless population) recorded as homeless in the 2006 Census.³⁵
- 6.55 The Australian Government, with state and territory governments, assists people who are homeless, or at risk, primarily under the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994* - the SAAP V program.³⁶ The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence.³⁷
- 6.56 In 2007-08, some 125,600 people had accessed the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) homelessness services.³⁸ Of closed support periods (a service provided to a client with a defined beginning and end) that lasted 1 day or longer, accommodation lasted for one week or less in 42 per cent of cases, for between 1 week and 1 month in 24 per cent of cases and from 1 to 3 months in 20 per cent. In 7 per cent of cases the accommodation lasted for between 3 and 6 months, and in another 7 per cent it lasted longer than 6 months. The median length of accommodation nationally was 12 days.³⁹

Engaging homeless electors

- 6.57 Homeless electors face particular barriers in enrolling to vote and maintaining their enrolment as they move between accommodation service providers or other places of residence. Once enrolled, homeless electors also typically find it difficult to vote on or before polling day.
- 6.58 Despite these barriers, Homelessness Australia considered that engagement in the electoral system was an important element of social inclusion. Homelessness Australia noted that:

35 Council to Homeless Persons, *Counting the Homeless 2006: Information Paper*, September 2008, p 5.

36 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Demand from SAAP accommodation by homeless people 2006-07: A report from the SAAP National Data Collection*, SAAP NDCA Report Series 12, October 2008, p 1.

37 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Demand from SAAP accommodation by homeless people 2006-07: A report from the SAAP National Data Collection*, SAAP NDCA Report Series 12, October 2008, p 1.

38 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Homeless People in SAAP: National Data Collection Annual Report 2007-08* (2009), p 14.

39 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Homeless People in SAAP: National Data Collection Annual Report 2007-08* (2009), p 40.

It is understandable that voting may not be seen as a priority given the issues involved in being homeless. These can include lacking safety and security, being disconnected from one's support and social network and finding it extremely difficult to participate in the community, including employment. However, participating in the electoral process can help a person become connected with mainstream society.⁴⁰

- 6.59 Taking into account the previous Census statistics, the Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) estimated that some '64,000 people experiencing homelessness who were eligible to vote did not do so in the 2007 federal election'.⁴¹
- 6.60 Hanover Welfare Services (Hanover) assessed the number of clients who were not voting to be as large as a whole federal electorate.⁴²
- 6.61 Following the 2007 election, Hanover undertook a census of 148 of its clients, who were in a range of accommodation services such as transitional housing, crisis accommodation and living with families.⁴³ Of these clients:
- 89 per cent (132) were eligible to vote;
 - of the 89 per cent who were eligible to vote, just over half (57 per cent) actually voted; and
 - more women (65 per cent) exercised their democratic right to vote, while only 45 per cent of men did so.⁴⁴
- 6.62 Hanover research showed that the most common reason for not voting was that clients were not enrolled (60 per cent). For some, there were 'too many other issues to deal with' (32 per cent), and some reported that they were 'not interested in the election' (19 per cent).⁴⁵
- 6.63 There can be complex reasons for the lack of electoral engagement by homeless electors, with the priority of homeless people often the very basic of needs – food, shelter and safety on any one day, including

40 Homeless Australia, submission 34, p 2.

41 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 67.

42 Keenan T, Hanover Welfare Services, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 81.

43 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 5.

44 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 4.

45 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 7; Keenan T, Hanover Welfare Services, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 81; Kolar V, Hanover Welfare Services, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 84.

election day.⁴⁶ PILCH considered that often it is the homeless people who are in the most dire of circumstances – dealing with one or more ‘issues on a daily basis, in addition to homelessness, such as mental illness, unemployment, drug and/or alcohol additions, family breakdown and trauma’.⁴⁷

- 6.64 Research by PILCH revealed that at least 54 per cent of homeless people would like to enrol to vote at federal elections, notwithstanding that they confront many other significant issues and concerns in their daily lives to ensure they have stable accommodation, adequate food and access to health and other services⁴⁸.
- 6.65 PILCH also noted that some homeless people have concerns about personal safety issues which might be realised if their name and address details appeared on the electoral roll – with 32 per cent of homeless people having some connection with domestic violence or family dysfunction and 25 per cent of PILCH clients the subject of unexecuted arrest warrants.⁴⁹ Homelessness Australia considered that homeless persons might be unwilling to attend polling places due to the risks associated with their being identified if they attend a polling booth to vote. This was of particular concern where electors have little or no choice about voting locations.⁵⁰
- 6.66 Research undertaken by the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University together with the AEC in 2004 revealed some of the voting behaviours of the homeless as a group. Some 50 per cent had never voted, or indicated they did not ever intend voting.⁵¹ The research noted that some of the impediments to engagement included:
- the provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act are generally difficult to comply with or understand including those relating to enrolment, itinerant enrolment and silent enrolment;
 - transportation – lack of access to, or location of, polling stations;
 - publicised lists – fear of becoming visible to government agencies;
 - faithless – lack of belief in the political system; and

46 Homelessness NSW, submission 131, pp 1, 3.

47 PILCH Homeless Persons’ Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 13.

48 PILCH Homeless Persons’ Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 13.

49 PILCH Homeless Persons’ Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 25.

50 Homelessness Australia, submission 34, p 5.

51 *Bringing Democracy Home – Enfranchising Australia’s Homeless*, Swinburne University and Australian Electoral Commission, 2004, pp 5-6.

- fear – fines because of failing to enrol, or vote, when eligible.⁵²

Enrolment and voting provisions relating to homeless electors

- 6.67 Many homeless electors are unlikely to satisfy the general requirements for enrolment which require an elector to live in a residence for a minimum of one month. Should an elector move, they then need to re-enrol at a new address, after waiting a further month.⁵³
- 6.68 To cater for electors who do not have a fixed address, the Commonwealth Electoral Act includes ‘itinerant’ (also referred to as ‘no fixed address’) voter provisions.⁵⁴ These provisions are not available to people who have a permanent home address but who are temporarily living elsewhere. For example, itinerant workers living away from home for periods of time, or persons travelling round Australia on extended holidays, but who have a permanent home to which they intend to return, do not qualify.⁵⁵
- 6.69 Under the itinerant voter provisions, persons with no fixed address must enrol in the division in which they were last entitled to enrolment. If they have not previously been entitled to enrolment they can enrol for the division in which their next of kin is enrolled, or, if there is no next of kin, the division in which they were born. Electors not born in Australia may enrol in the division with which they have the closest connection.⁵⁶
- 6.70 Voting is not compulsory for itinerant electors in federal elections, nor New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory elections.⁵⁷ However, if an itinerant elector does not vote at an election their name is removed from the electoral roll.⁵⁸
- 6.71 The number of itinerant electors is relatively small. For example, at the end of August 2008, there were a total of 927 itinerant electors enrolled in Victoria, accounting for only 0.027 per cent of total enrolment in Victoria.⁵⁹
- 6.72 Homelessness Australia considered that the itinerant elector provisions were ‘overly stringent and unrealistic’ and suggested that changes should

52 Australian Electoral Commission, *Research Report Number 6*, February 2005, p 6.

53 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 101.

54 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 96.

55 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 96.

56 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 96.

57 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.1, pp 57- 59.

58 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 96.

59 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.1, p 50; ‘Gazetted enrolment as at 29 August 2008’, viewed on 16 May 2009 at http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Enrolment_stats/gazetted/2008/08.htm.

be made to facilitate enrolment of homeless electors.⁶⁰ Homelessness Australia noted that:

A reason of 'homelessness' should be seen as sufficient to register an individual with 'no fixed address'.

A reason of 'homelessness' should be seen as sufficient reason for failing to vote on Election Day. A list of valid reasons should be publicly stated and available.

Individuals who successfully register with 'no fixed address' should not be removed from the electoral roll if they fail to vote in an election.⁶¹

6.73 PILCH also expressed its concerns in relation to the one month period after which an itinerant elector was required to enrol as a normal elector and suggested lengthening the period to six months.⁶² PILCH also suggested the introduction of a definition for 'homelessness' into section 96 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* so homeless people would be more obviously eligible to enrol to vote.⁶³

6.74 PILCH noted that a model to facilitate the enrolment of homeless electors had been adopted in the Victorian *Electoral Act 2002* that incorporated a specific definition of homelessness.⁶⁴ Under the Act, a definition of homeless electors was included in section 3A to cover:

- a person living in:
 - ⇒ crisis accommodation; or
 - ⇒ transitional accommodation; or
 - ⇒ any other accommodation provided under the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994* (Cth); and
- a person who has inadequate access to safe and secure housing within the meaning of section of the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994* of the Commonwealth.⁶⁵

60 Homelessness Australia, submission 34, p 4.

61 Homelessness Australia, submission 34, p 4.

62 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, pp 24-25.

63 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 24, Farrell J (PILCH), transcript, 11 August 2008, p 70.

64 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 24, Farrell J (PILCH), transcript, 11 August 2008, p 70.

65 *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic).

- 6.75 Some of the features of the homeless elector provisions of the Victorian Electoral Act include:
- as an elector with no fixed address, electors enrol using the address of one of the following:
 - ⇒ the address where they were last eligible to enrol;
 - ⇒ the address where a next of kin lives;
 - ⇒ their place of birth; or
 - ⇒ if not born in Australia, a place that they feel the closest connection to; and
 - no fine is imposed if an elector does not vote and their name is not taken off the roll if they do not vote.⁶⁶

Efforts to increase participation by homeless electors

- 6.76 In the lead up to the 2007 election the AEC undertook a broad range of activities to promote enrolment and voting by homeless electors. The AEC noted that it had actively engaged in consultation with state and national peak bodies, and service providers, to ascertain what strategies might engage the homeless in the electoral process – including Homeless Australia, PILCH, the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, the Big Issue, Centacare, Uniting Care Australia and Hanover Welfare Services.⁶⁷
- 6.77 These consultations identified SAAP provider organisations, as a way to disseminate no fixed address enrolment forms and information to electors experiencing homelessness. The AEC designed and dispatched a direct mail to over 1300 SAAP organisations between 27 September and 5 October 2007.⁶⁸
- 6.78 In October 2007, the AEC focused upon a campaign of providing information on the ‘itinerant’ details in terms of enrolling and voting. A special section within the AEC website, explaining enrolling and voting procedures for people experiencing homelessness, was dedicated to this group. Fact sheets and other relevant information was also produced.⁶⁹
- 6.79 The AEC also worked with some Melbourne welfare agencies to encourage the voting experience for homeless electors. A ‘voting day’ was

66 Victorian Electoral Commission, ‘Being homeless does not make you vote-less’, viewed on 16 May 2009 at <http://www.vec.vic.gov.au/nofixedaddress.html>.

67 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.6, pp 13-14.

68 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.6, p 14.

69 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 57.

specially arranged so that the welfare agencies provided, to possible electors, a meal and some basic electoral information. Thereafter, transport was provided to the city where a pre-poll centre had been set up. Approximately 50 electors who were experiencing homelessness, took part in this initiative.⁷⁰ In their submission, the AEC indicated their interest in developing this service further in conjunction with service providers if the Act was appropriately changed to enable mobile polling for such electors.⁷¹

Proposals to increase participation by homeless electors

- 6.80 Previous Joint Standing Committees on Electoral Matters have made various recommendations to enable greater participation by homeless electors.⁷²
- 6.81 Following the 2004 Federal Election, the then committee made several recommendations which related to enfranchisement of people experiencing homelessness including that the:
- AEC to produce, in consultation with homeless provider agencies, an action plan to promote and encourage enrolment and voting amongst disadvantaged groups (including homeless and itinerant persons etc); AEC to report to the committee on the details of the plan; adequate funding for this task to be allocated to AEC; and following the next election, the AEC to seek feedback from the relevant homeless providers, and modify the proposed plan accordingly;
 - AEC to continue consultations with homeless providers to target homeless people in their public awareness campaigns, and give AEC staff appropriate training on the needs of homeless and marginalised citizens.⁷³
- 6.82 The government response to this committee's report expressed its support for these recommendations and noted that the AEC will advise the Special Minister of State on its consultations.⁷⁴

70 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 57.

71 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169, p 57.

72 Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters – reports following Federal Elections 2004, 2001, 1996.

73 Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, Parliament of Australia, *The 2004 Federal Election: Report of the Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2004 Federal Election and Matters Related Thereto* (2005), pp 14, 17, 132.

74 2004 report government response.
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/elect04/Report/govres.pdf>.

6.83 PILCH and Hanover considered that these recommendations were not implemented, in particular that the action plan (recommendation 2), with strategies for engagement, did not eventuate.⁷⁵ PILCH asserted that much of the intended material for homelessness services was not produced and circulated, and it was considered that some of the strategies, when implementation was attempted, were inadequate or too late. PILCH noted that:

...the AEC's fact-sheet was not appropriately focused for its intended audience as its content was too lengthy and complex. In our view, electoral information must be set out clearly and in simple English – a one page step-by-step process would more helpfully assist people wishing to enrol as a 'no fixed address' voter. The materials provided were insufficient for the purposes of engaging people experiencing homelessness in the electoral process.⁷⁶

6.84 PILCH was also critical of the AEC's efforts in relation to the action plan noting that:

...the AEC did not formulate, implement and publicly report against a detailed ongoing action plan to promote and encourage enrolment and voting among homeless persons.⁷⁷

6.85 When PILCH requested access to such a plan, by applying under the freedom of information legislation, the AEC advised there was no such document.⁷⁸ This was further verified by Hanover:

Hanover wishes to formally register its concerns that these materials were not actually produced and circulated. Additionally, it appears that the Action Plan as recommended by the Joint Standing Committee was not developed by the AEC.⁷⁹

75 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 2; PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, pp 14-15.

76 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, pp 14-15.

77 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 15.

78 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 15.

79 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 2.

Victorian model

- 6.86 PILCH and Hanover nominated the facilitation of homeless voting and the positive relationships with the Victorian Electoral Commission as providing a model for engagement with homeless electors.⁸⁰
- 6.87 PILCH provided an example of the Victorian Electoral Commission's initiatives to engage homeless electors in the lead up to the 2006 state election:
- enrolment days at a number of homelessness service providers including St Mary's House of Welcome, Front Yard, St Kilda Crisis Centre, Sacred Heart Mission and St Kilda Drop-in Centre. Lunch was provided at each enrolment day, as well as transport to and from the location for those that required it. Information about the enrolment days were sent to all homelessness service providers in Victoria;
 - development and wide distribution of posters specifically targeting people experiencing homelessness and very simple one page fact sheets in relation to no fixed address enrolment;
 - training for electoral workers who staffed the polling stations on Election Day in relation to homelessness and effective communication;
 - provision of mobile polling at homelessness service providers for organisation that were able to guarantee attendance by 20 people;
 - establishment of homelessness and voting advisory committee, including representatives of homelessness service providers as well as consumers themselves;
 - assistance with development and printing of information kits and brochures by service providers, including the Clinic;
 - attended the Melbourne homelessness festival *Home is Where the Heart is* in 2007 to provide information and assist people to enrol to vote.⁸¹

Assisted voting

- 6.88 Under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, assisted voting is available to electors who satisfy a polling official that they are 'so physically

80 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, pp 19-20 and submission 135.1, p 35; Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 9; transcript, 11 August 2008, pp 81-86.

81 PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, submission 135, p 19.

incapacitated or illiterate that he or she is unable to vote without assistance'.⁸²

- 6.89 Ms Marette Corby considered that polling officials should be more sensitive when providing assistance to disadvantaged electors. Ms Corby noted that:

I have been voting for a decade and a half and on several occasions I have been to polling booths on election day and requested some assistance in being able to vote.

On not all occasions but on many occasions I have been advised by the voting assistant that I would have to vote above the line as they did not have the time to spend with me completing the 'below the line' Senate electoral ballot. This concerns me because the last time I voted using the electric voting system was the first time when I felt completely enfranchised and able to truly express my opinions in a vote.⁸³

Mobile polling

- 6.90 Under the Commonwealth Electoral Act mobile polling is permitted for remote parts of Australia, but not in urban areas.⁸⁴ Other areas where mobile polling is permitted are hospitals and prisons.⁸⁵
- 6.91 The AEC were supportive of more flexible arrangements being introduced for mobile polling.⁸⁶ The AEC noted that:

Prior to the last election the Commonwealth Electoral Act was amended to allow for commencement of pre-polling in exceptional circumstances by allowing the gazettal of a location as soon as possible after it had commenced operating. However, there may well be circumstances where a mobile team would be the best response, but the current legislation provides no flexibility apart from the specific locations mentioned above.

This flexibility could be achieved by refining section 227 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act to remove the reference to 'remote' divisions. Further, in lieu of gazettal, greater accessibility to information on planned mobile polling could be achieved by

82 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, s 234.

83 Corby M, submission 195, p 1.

84 Barry-Macaulay A, PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 69.

85 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, ss 224, 225 and 226, 226A.

86 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.18, p 9.

requiring the places to be visited to be detailed on the AEC website, rather than gazetted. Existing local arrangements for advising political parties and candidates of the locations of mobile polling would continue to apply.⁸⁷

- 6.92 The committee has recommended earlier in this chapter that mobile polling in town camps be facilitated to give the AEC additional flexibility to provide specified election services to a number of Indigenous electors. The committee notes that the Victorian Electoral Commission established a mobile polling centres in Melbourne during the 2006 state election and collected 68 votes.⁸⁸
- 6.93 PILCH recommended that voting stations be established at 'locations that are easily accessible and appropriate to people experiencing homelessness'.⁸⁹
- 6.94 Hanover was also keen to ensure that mobile polling facilities were provided in homeless crisis services, 'such as Hanover's Crisis Centre operating in Southbank, and our newly opened crisis service in Dandenong'⁹⁰. In terms of the number of locations where such a service was required, Hanover suggested that 'you could get away with 10 across the country if the target included major crisis centres and drop-in centres, and centred around breakfast and/or lunch time'.⁹¹

Committee conclusion

- 6.95 The committee recognises that the itinerant voting provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act do not provide sufficient flexibility to facilitate the enrolment of many homeless electors.
- 6.96 The committee supports the adoption of the model used in Victoria to enfranchise homeless electors. The incorporation of a definition of homelessness within the Commonwealth Electoral Act will facilitate the enrolment of electors who otherwise find it difficult to enrol and maintain their enrolment under the itinerant enrolment provisions.
- 6.97 The committee notes that the Victorian provisions allow homeless electors to nominate a 'home' division based on a range of criteria (such as the address where they were last eligible to enrol, the address where a next of

87 Australian Electoral Commission, submission 169.18, p 9.

88 Victorian Electoral Commission, Report on the 2006 State election, p 35.

89 Barry-Macaulay A, PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 69.

90 Hanover Welfare Services, submission 109, p 9; Hollows A, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 82.

91 Keenan T, Hanover Welfare Services, transcript, 11 August 2008, p 83.

kin lives) that are not dissimilar to the arrangements in place for persons applying to enrol from outside Australia and residents of Norfolk Island under the Commonwealth Electoral Act.⁹²

- 6.98 The committee notes comments from homeless service providers PILCH and Hanover that the AEC did not develop and implement a plan to provide electoral services to homeless electors following the then Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters' inquiry into the 2004 election. The committee considers that while the AEC carried out a number of activities to raise awareness amongst homeless electors about the 2007 election, it is important that the AEC document the different elements of its strategies to engage with homeless electors. In doing so, the AEC should consult with providers of homeless services to ensure that the services are targeted appropriately and make appropriate documents available for comment.

Recommendation 19

- 6.99 **The committee recommends the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* be amended to incorporate a definition of homelessness modelled on those in the Victorian *Electoral Act 2002* to facilitate enrolment or continued enrolment of homeless persons. This definition should include persons living in:**

- crisis accommodation; or
- transitional accommodation; or
- any other accommodation provided under the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*.

- 6.100 The limited flexibility of the mobile polling provisions under the Commonwealth Electoral Act do not provide for the provision of targeted voting services to homeless people – a group of the community that are particularly disadvantaged.

- 6.101 The committee notes the positive experiences with mobile polling at homeless service providers by the Victorian Electoral Commission at the 2006 state election, and considers that the Victorian Electoral

92 *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, ss 94A and 95AA.

Commission's engagement of homeless electors should be a model that the AEC should follow.

Recommendation 20

6.102 The committee recommends that the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* be amended to allow mobile polling and/or pre-poll facilities to be provided at such locations and at such times as the Australian Electoral Commission deems necessary for the purposes of facilitating voting.

For example, mobile polling or pre-poll facilities should be able to be provided where there is likely to be sufficient demand for such facilities by homeless and itinerant electors, or in such other circumstances as warrant their use.

6.103 While many disadvantaged electors are able to vote without assistance, where electors seek assistance from electoral officials it is important that electoral officials treat each elector with respect and understanding. The committee notes that electoral officials involved in the trial of electronically assisted voting at the 2007 election were provided with specific training to instruct polling officials in how to deal with voters who were blind or had low vision.⁹³ The committee considers that client-specific training should be part of the training package for all polling officials where appropriate.

Recommendation 21

6.104 The committee recommends that the Australian Electoral Commission ensure that staff engaged in providing advice or services to electors with special needs (eg homelessness, sight impaired) be provided with appropriate training on how to communicate effectively and with sensitivity to the needs of such electors.

⁹³ Sheridan and Associates, *Evaluation of the electronic voting trial for blind and sight impaired electors at the 2007 federal election: Final evaluation report* (2008), p 6.