

McGowan, Andrew (REPS)

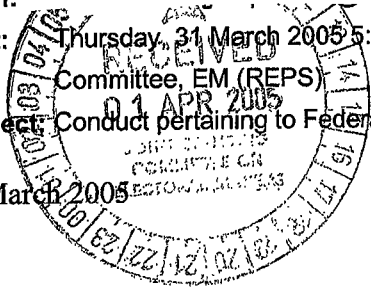
From:

Sent: Thursday, 31 March 2005 5:17 PM

To: Committee, EM (REPS)

Subject: Conduct pertaining to Federal Election 2004

31st March 2005



Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No. ....	21-3-05
Date Received .....	21-3-05
Secretary .....	[Signature]

To the Joint Standing Committee regarding conduct relating to Federal Election 2004.

In response to your request for submissions expressing concerns, mine are as follows: -

In my capacity as a volunteer for the candidate Ross Cameron MP, running to hold the Federal seat of Parramatta, I manned pre poll at Parramatta town Hall, two weeks prior to polling day (9/10/04).

**During that two weeks**, I was disturbed with the non-professional behaviour of another volunteer for the opposition (ALP). A Chinese speaking individual, whom canvassed voters from beyond normal acceptable boundaries to the entry of Parramatta Town Hall polling booth. Escorting them into the booth itself to "assist their votes". This person only targeted Chinese-speaking constituents for this venture.

**The AEC team leader for Parramatta Town Hall** was told of the conduct and complaint rose with him through out the two weeks. Our team then enlisted volunteer support to interpret with Chinese/English constituents the ALP Chinese volunteer canvassed, giving the voter more option with choice & allowing them to move on with their day, without being forced though to vote then & there. Constituents expressed concerns to us on pre poll about Chinese volunteer instructing them they would have to vote then & there or be fined.

**I would like the AEC to put out information to voters earlier and in multi languages. Informing them in the local papers not only the Polling Date but include pre poll with a reminder the week before Polling Day.**

**I would like the AEC to give their Pre Poll team leaders a revisor/update as to the protocols governing Polling Booths.**

**On Polling day Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Oct 2004 – I was Booth Capt/Scrutineer for booth No14 "Macarthur High School" Parramatta Fed electorate**

Concerns as follows due too: -

**Liberals for Forrest** where deceiving in their approach to constituents, deliberately vocalising themselves as Liberals, they did however on this booth change their behaviour after reading information from Liberal Party policies I had on hand during debating on the day...this some what unusual approach to contain them was used after they informed me, they where backpackers with no political affiliation themselves.

They stated they where approached to earn \$200 to hand out flyers for Liberals for Forrest on polling booths & seize an opportunity to earn a quick buck towards their holiday down under, (these two people were from Ireland & Canada). For most of the afternoon, they retreated to sunbaking on

the lawn thus curbing the amount of HTV's they were able to pass out on the day. They resumed hand out HTV's when their boss appeared during the afternoon.

I would like people on polling days handing out HTV's for any political party to have integrity – not have our own feuding parties thrown off by “backpackers” of which the outcome on the day does not affect them. Long term it will be us - Australian constituents affected while they race off to enjoy their \$200 tax-free money. How this can be governed should be looked into and a resolution to this issue sort.

Scrutineering after the polling closed upset me on that night due to the AEC officer not being approachable to:

- 1) Sealing and removing rubbish bins in the scrutineering hall when requested.
- 2) Not allowing anyone to view the 2<sup>nd</sup> preferences being counted.
- 3) Getting heated and defensive when approached to challenge a vote.
- 4) Acting very nervous in the presence of a Parramatta Councillor (ALP) who claimed he had made a deal with the AEC Officer of the night.
- 5) Allowed scrutineers to recommence after ALP Parramatta Councillor left the room with his scrutineer team.

**The AEC Officer seemed very disorganised on the night.**

I reported this to our campaign leaders for Parramatta & to Parramatta AEC returning Officer.

**The candidate for Parramatta did concede defeat** in favour of his ALP opponent Julie Owens two weeks into the postal vote count post-polling day, scrutineers for his team left the scrutineer room. I feel we should still have a presence in the scrut room post a candidate conceding for the sake of the voter not just the party one is supporting. Voters may then be assured the count is infecting true & correct. I guess I felt uneasy on the day Cameron conceded due to the same AEC officer came in to count the remainder of the postal votes...could I as a voter myself have confidence in this individual? I did have covidence in the Parramatta returning officer Stephen Walsh whom I had contacted with many times before on other elections.

Thank you sincerely for accepting my account towards your on going quest for voter's rights.