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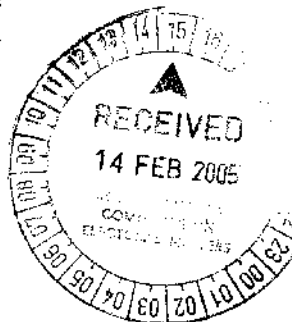
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<b>SUBMISSION NO. 9</b>	
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	9
Date Received	14-1-2005
Secretary	<i>[Signature]</i>

## Laurie Ferguson MP

B.Ec. (Syd) M.A. (Syd)  
Federal Member for Reid



14 January 2005

Secretary  
Electoral Matters Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

I would raise a number of matters relating to the 2004 election. Whilst some are seemingly local, I feel they may represent national patterns.

1. I had more complaints than usual about staffing competence. These derived from Party poll workers, voters and the families of people working in the polling booths. This reflected a seeming need for greater training and more examination of staff applications. In one case the polling booth had long delays as the employee lamented that she could not read names due to poor eyesight. There was also the failure of staff to appear. There should be recourse to a large reserve roster.
2. The contracting out of the postal vote processes lead to gross incompetence and the effective deprivation of voting rights to many Australians due to that company's postal performance.
3. I continue to be extremely concerned with the disastrous use of the Treves Street Merrylands polling booth. It is situated on a major thoroughfare, occasions very long frustrated waiting lines and some danger proximity to a shopping centre leads to extra pressures. The site also presents major problems for disabled entry. I appreciate the fact that efforts were made to find an alternative. It has to be found and more publicity for other polling booths at Myee Street, Fowler Road and Hilltop.
4. The postal vote form lacked proper privacy. It should have received more market testing. Convenience for the AEC in opening envelopes should not be the only criteria. Electors were also concerned about the possible use of this material for fraud.
5. There appeared to be no improvement in the informal vote despite claims of an education campaign. Seminars in ethnic communities may perhaps only reach those who are somewhat interested.

Yours sincerely

*[Signature]*  
Laurie Ferguson MP  
Federal Member for Reid  
Shadow Minister for Immigration