



ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING WITH AEC

**MEDIA ALERT**

*Issued: 2 April 2001*

## **ATT: National Media**

**PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2001**

### **AEC TO FACE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

The Australian Electoral Commission will appear before the Electoral Matters Committee tomorrow at a public hearing of the inquiry into the integrity of the electoral roll.

'The AEC has an enviable reputation, particularly internationally, with increasing recognition of the role the AEC plays in providing electoral assistance to the international community', said Committee Chairman Mr Christopher Pyne MP (Member for Sturt). 'But is the AEC a victim of its own success'?

Mr Pyne said 'the Committee is concerned with a number of aspects of the AEC's management of the electoral roll. We will be looking for answers from the AEC on a number of issues ranging from fraud control to the AEC's response to calls for it to be involved in party preselections'.

During the course of this inquiry the AEC has said it believes the electoral system is in very good shape. 'However the enrolment fraud uncovered in Queensland and other allegations that the Committee has investigated provide a powerful warning about the potential for widespread enrolment fraud', said Mr Pyne.

The Committee expects to discuss improved deterrents to enrolment fraud including longer prison terms, larger fines and banning those convicted of enrolment fraud from holding public office. The Committee also expects to discuss the implementation of the Government's regulations requiring proof of identity documentation and witnesses from a prescribed list when a person enrols to vote for the first time.

'After the exposure of electoral fraud in Queensland and elsewhere over the past year, Australians need to be assured that AEC procedures are being improved so that enrolment fraud can be prevented and Australians can have every confidence in the integrity of the electoral roll', said Mr Pyne.

Ends // 2 April 2001

**To arrange comment:**

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PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Date:** Tuesday 3 April 2001  
**Time:** 6.00 pm – 10.00 pm  
**Place:** House of Representatives Committee Room 2R1  
Parliament House, Canberra

**Witnesses:** 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm Australian Electoral Commission  
8.00 pm – 8.15 pm Tea break  
8.15 pm – 10.00 pm Australian Electoral Commission  
(continued)

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**MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mr Christopher Pyne MP (Chair)  
Mr Laurie Ferguson MP (Deputy Chair)  
Senator Andrew Bartlett  
Senator the Hon. John Faulkner  
Senator Jeannie Ferris  
Senator Brett Mason  
Senator Andrew Murray  
The Hon. David Jull MP  
Mr Robert McClelland MP  
Mr Stuart St Clair MP

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**INQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL**

On 23 August 2000 the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon. Chris Ellison, asked the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters to examine the issue of the integrity of the electoral roll and fraudulent enrolment. At its meeting on 5 September the Committee agreed that in examining the matter it would look at the following.

That the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquire into and report on:

- the adequacy of the Commonwealth Electoral Act for the prevention and detection of fraudulent enrolment;
  - incidents of fraudulent enrolment; and
  - the need for legislative reform.
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