

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

**Question: F38**

**Outcome 1.2, Output 1.1.1, 2.1.1**

**Topic: Budget and Restructure**

**Hansard page: N/A**

**Written Question on Notice: 11 February 2003**

**Senator Faulkner asked:**

- (a) How many DRO positions are currently vacant or have people acting in the position of DRO? Please provide full details.
- (b) How many DRO positions does the AEC expect will become vacant over the next 12 months because of retirement? Please provide full details.
- (c) How many Divisional offices do the AEC currently have, broken down into stand-alone offices and joint offices? Currently, how many of the joint offices are co-located (working from same office, but separately) and how many are amalgamated (integrated functions)? Please provide details of the relevant Divisions and where the office is situated.
- (d) Does the AEC have a timetable for the proposed amalgamation / co-location of Divisional offices? Please provide full details of any strategic plans.
- (e) What is the maximum number of Divisions the AEC proposes be amalgamated or co-located in any one place?
- (f) What staffing structure does the AEC propose to use for offices covering 2, 3, 4 or 5 Divisions?
- (g) Given DROs are currently at the level of APS6, how will the AEC ensure there are enough qualified people to run future Federal elections? Does the AEC plan to use lower level staff to act as DROs or, alternatively to use a higher-level person as DRO for more than one electorate?
- (h) Given the requirements of Section 32 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act, has the AEC obtained legal advice on whether a person can act as DRO for more than one Division? If so, please provide a copy of that advice.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

**Answer:**

The answer provided to me by the Australian Electoral Commission is as follows:

(a) There are 150 Divisional Offices with DRO positions. On 11 February 2003, 24 positions were filled by staff on temporary assignment from other duties. Of the 24 positions, 11 of these were actually vacant i.e. there was no usual occupant of the position at that date, because the DRO had resigned, transferred permanently to another role within AEC or retired. The remaining 13 were temporarily vacant, because the usual occupant of the position was on leave or working temporarily in another role within AEC.

(b) This is difficult to estimate accurately, as we already have a number of staff over 55 years of age and choosing to continue to work, including CSS members who might have been expected to retire at age 55.

15% of AEC's total of 757 ongoing current staff, or 113 people employed by AEC on an ongoing basis, were aged 55 or over at 11 February 2003. Recent attrition rates of staff in this age cohort are provided below.

FY 1998 – 1999 19% of staff age 55 or over

FY 1999 – 2000 12% of staff age 55 or over

FY 2000 – 2001 4% of staff age 55 or over

FY 2001 – 2002 11% of staff age 55 or over

If 10% of this age cohort were to retire over the next 12 months, this would equate to 11 staff. However, the actual number of retirements will depend on the personal circumstances of each employee and cannot be predicted with any certainty.

(c) The AEC currently has 115 stand-alone offices and 35 joint offices. Thirteen of the joint offices are collocated and 1 is amalgamated.

Details regarding the location of the relevant Divisions are contained in Attachment A.

(d) There is no specific timetable for amalgamations, but no more than seven will occur prior to the next elections. Of these 6 are already collocated. As for collocations, the strategic property plan contains the timetable. See Attachment B.

(e) The AEC proposes that the maximum number of Divisions that it currently considers will be amalgamated or collocated (in any one place) will be six.

(f) The AEC is currently consulting with staff in State and Territory offices on creation of enhanced staffing structures, including positions which will:

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

- enhance career structures for APS 2 and APS3 employees in Divisional Offices for whom direct progression APS3 to APS6 is problematic;
- create a better working environment, by removing the rigid hierarchical 3 person office environment and creating a variety of opportunities for employees across larger functional teams; and
- assist with succession planning and skilling of staff for election periods
- facilitate the delivery of services to meet the particular local needs of the electorates concerned.

The AEC does not have a predetermined structure and a “one size fits all” approach is not appropriate. Divisional Offices have significantly different workloads and communities to service. Local consultation with staff will ensure that the most appropriate structure for each set of Divisions is developed.

No decision will be made on the final structures until consultations have been completed, roles designed and work levels for the new roles assessed against the AEC work level standards.

- (g) Planning for a Federal election starts well before the likelihood of an election being announced. Election planning includes workforce planning to assess the likely effects of forthcoming attrition (due to resignation or retirement), skills/knowledge training requirements of ongoing and temporary staff and other factors such as local labour shortages.

To avoid potential shortfalls in experienced and qualified staff, the AEC has a policy of developing staff from within the organisation, including offering development opportunities between election events whenever possible. Internal promotions are supplemented by external recruitment as required. This is not a new experience for the AEC. For the 1998 elections in Victoria, over 40% of DROs had no prior election experience. This arose from redundancy ‘package swapping’ between AEC staff and staff of other agencies such as the CES and DEETYA. There was no deterioration in the quality of the services provided.

The classification of staff immediately preceding employment as a DRO in either an ongoing or temporary situation has, more often than not, been of a lower or higher classification than APS6. So long as the CEA remains unchanged, there will be a single DRO for each Division for the conduct of the election and depending on work value determinations one would expect, similar classifications.

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

- (h) The AEC does have the advice, but as this is a highly sensitive issue for the Commission at the moment, feels it is inappropriate to release this information publicly, as it would be likely to compromise the Commission's independence at a crucial stage in its management of its responsibilities.

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

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Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

#### Attachment A

#### DIVISIONAL OFFICE CONFIGURATION

Division	Office Configuration
<b>Boothby / Hindmarsh / Kingston</b> 297 Diagonal Road, Oaklands Park, Adelaide	Amalgamated
<b>Franklin / Denison</b> 86 Collins Street, Hobart	Collocated
<b>Bass / Lyons</b> 87 George Street, Launceston	Collocated
<b>SA Head Office / Adelaide</b> 1 King William Street, Adelaide	Collocated
<b>NT Head Office / Northern Territory</b> 79 – 81 Smith Street, Darwin	Collocated
<b>Bradfield / Bennelong / North Sydney</b> 67 Albert Avenue, Chatswood	Collocated
<b>Canberra / Fraser</b> 9 – 10 Hobart Place, Canberra City	Collocated
<b>State Head Office</b>	Collocated
<b>Grayndler / Sydney / Wentworth</b> 24 Campbell Street, Sydney	
<b>Werriwa / Macarthur</b> 138 Queen St, Campbelltown	Collocated
<b>Deakin / Menzies / Casey / Chisholm</b> 41 – 43 Ringwood Street, Ringwood, Melbourne	Collocated
<b>Melbourne / Melbourne Ports</b> 2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne	Collocated
<b>Queensland Head Office</b>	Collocated
<b>Brisbane / Moreton / Lilley</b> 484 – 488 Queen Street, Brisbane	
<b>McPherson / Moncrieff</b> 3 Short Street, Southport	Collocated
<b>Oxley / Blair</b> 37 South Street, Ipswich	Collocated
<b>Rankin / Fadden / Forde</b> 108 George Street, Beenleigh, Qld	Collocated
<b>Pearce / Hasluck</b> 9 – 11 The Crescent, Midland, Perth	Collocated
<b>WA Head Office / Perth</b> St Georges Tce, Perth	Collocated
<b>TASMANIA</b>	
<b>Braddon</b> 49-51 Cattley Sts, Burnie	Stand Alone
<b>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</b>	
<b>Barker</b> 2 Mitchell Street, Mt Gambier	Stand Alone
<b>Bonython</b> Oxenham Drive, Elizabeth	Stand Alone
<b>Grey</b> Cnr Jervois & Marryatt Sts, Port Augusta	Stand Alone
<b>Makin</b> 959 North East Road, Modbury	Stand Alone
<b>Mayo</b> Mt Barker Road, Stirling	Stand Alone
<b>Port Adelaide</b> 220 Commercial Road, Port Adelaide	Stand Alone
<b>Sturt</b> 46-54 George Street, Norwood	Stand Alone
<b>Wakefield</b> 6 Digby Street, Kadina	Stand Alone
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES</b>	
<b>Banks</b> 4 – 10 Selems Parade, Revesby	Stand Alone
<b>Barton</b> 21 – 25 King Street, Rockdale	Stand Alone
<b>Berowra</b> 22 – 28 Edgeworth David Ave, Hornsby	Stand Alone
<b>Blaxland</b> 23 Marion Street, Bankstown	Stand Alone
<b>Calare</b> 122 Kite Street, Orange	Stand Alone
<b>Charlton</b> Cnr Brighton Ave & Pernell St, Toronto	Stand Alone
<b>Chifley</b> 13 Mount Street, Mt Druitt	Stand Alone
<b>Cook</b> Jackson Avenue, Miranda	Stand Alone
<b>Cowper</b> 2 – 10 Belgrave Street, Kempsey	Stand Alone
<b>Cunningham</b> 43 Burelli Street, Wollongong	Stand Alone
<b>Dobell</b> Margaret Street, Wyong	Stand Alone
<b>Eden-Monaro</b> 7 – 9 Morrissett Street, Queanbeyan	Stand Alone
<b>Farrer</b> 526 Swift Street, Albury	Stand Alone
<b>Fowler</b> 224 – 238 George Street, Liverpool	Stand Alone

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

<b>Division</b>	<b>Office Configuration</b>
<b>Gilmore</b> 3B Nowra Lane, Nowra	Stand Alone
<b>Greenway</b> 19 Campbell Street, Blacktown	Stand Alone
<b>Gwydir</b> 100 Maitland Street, Narrabri	Stand Alone
<b>Hughes</b> 154 Flora Street, Sutherland	Stand Alone
<b>Hume</b> 40 Goldsmith Street, Goulburn	Stand Alone
<b>Hunter</b> 178 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri	Stand Alone
<b>Kingsford Smith</b> 152 Bunnerong Road, Eastgardens	Stand Alone
<b>Lindsay</b> 311 High Street, Penrith	Stand Alone
<b>Lowe</b> The Boulevard, Strathfield	Stand Alone
<b>Lyne</b> 20 Manning Street, Taree	Stand Alone
<b>Mackellar</b> 20 Bungan Street, Mona Vale	Stand Alone
<b>Macquarie</b> 64 March Street, Richmond	Stand Alone
<b>Mitchell</b> 2 – 4 Old Castle Hill Road, Castle Hill	Stand Alone
<b>New England</b> Suite 3 97-101 Faulkner Street, Armidale	Stand Alone
<b>Newcastle</b> 400 Hunter Street, Newcastle	Stand Alone
<b>Page</b> 22 King Street, Grafton	Stand Alone
<b>Parkes</b> Wingewarra & Macquarie Sts, Dubbo	Stand Alone
<b>Parramatta</b> 2 – 12 Macquarie Street, Parramatta	Stand Alone
<b>Paterson</b> 20 – 22 Church Street, Maitland	Stand Alone
<b>Prospect</b> 24 Smart Street, Fairfield	Stand Alone
<b>Reid</b> 1 Station Road, Auburn	Stand Alone
<b>Richmond</b> 69 Wharf Street, Tweed Heads	Stand Alone
<b>Riverina</b> 4 Twynam Street, Narrandera	Stand Alone
<b>Robertson</b> 86 – 88 Mann Street, Gosford	Stand Alone
<b>Shortland</b> 45 Pearson Street, Charleston	Stand Alone
<b>Throsby</b> Shellharbour Road, Warilla	Stand Alone
<b>Warringah</b> 22 Darley Road, Manly	Stand Alone
<b>Watson</b> 34 McMahon Street, Hurstville	Stand Alone
<b>VICTORIA</b>	
<b>Aston</b> 31 Macauley Place, Bayswater	Stand Alone
<b>Ballarat</b> 5B Doveton St Nth, Ballarat	Stand Alone
<b>Batman</b> 62 High Street, Thornbury	Stand Alone
<b>Bendigo</b> 371 – 370 Hargraves Street, Bendigo	Stand Alone
<b>Bruce</b> 52 O'Sullivan Road, Glen Waverley	Stand Alone
<b>Calwell</b> 830 – 834 Pascoe Vale Rd, Glenroy	Stand Alone
<b>Corangamite</b> 55 Dennis Street, Colac	Stand Alone
<b>Corio</b> 35 – 54 Broughman Street, Geelong	Stand Alone
<b>Dunkley</b> 20 Davey Street, Frankston	Stand Alone
<b>Flinders</b> 82 High Street, Hastings	Stand Alone
<b>Gellibrand</b> 304 – 320 Hampshire Road, Sunshine	Stand Alone
<b>Gippsland</b> 79 – 91 Raymond Street, Sale	Stand Alone
<b>Goldstein</b> 24 Bay Road, Sandringham	Stand Alone
<b>Gorton</b> 16 Brook Street, Sunbury	Stand Alone
<b>Higgins</b> 1343 Malvern Road, Malvern	Stand Alone
<b>Holt</b> 147 – 151 Foster Street, Dandenong	Stand Alone
<b>Hotham</b> 20 – 22 Atherton Road, Oakleigh	Stand Alone
<b>Indi</b> 31 Ely Street, Wangaratta	Stand Alone
<b>Isaacs</b> 350 Charman Road, Cheltenham	Stand Alone
<b>Jagajaga</b> 65 Burgundy Street, Heidelberg	Stand Alone
<b>Kooyong</b> 695 Burke Road, Hawthorn East	Stand Alone
<b>Lalor</b> 75 – 79 Watton Street, Werribee	Stand Alone

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

<b>Division</b>	<b>Office Configuration</b>
<b>Latrobe</b> 252 Dorset Road, Boronia	Stand Alone
<b>Mallee</b> 122 Ninth Street, Mildura	Stand Alone
<b>Maribyrnong</b> Main Road West, St Albans	Stand Alone
<b>McEwen</b> 30 Wallis Street, Seymour	Stand Alone
<b>McMillan</b> 76 Smith Street, Warragul	Stand Alone
<b>Murray</b> 373 – 391 Wyndham Street, Shepparton	Stand Alone
<b>Scullin</b> 9 – 11 Flintoff Street, Greensborough	Stand Alone
<b>Wannon</b> 100 Kepler Street, Warrnambool	Stand Alone
<b>Wills</b> 4 Homer Street, Moonee Ponds	Stand Alone
<b>QUEENSLAND</b>	
<b>Bowman</b> 23 – 27 Middle Street, Cleveland	Stand Alone
<b>Capricornia</b> Cnr Fitzroy & East Street, Rockhampton	Stand Alone
<b>Dawson</b> Cnr Victoria and Gregory Sts, Mackay	Stand Alone
<b>Dickson</b> Bells Pocket Rd, Strathpine	Stand Alone
<b>Fairfax</b> Cnr Maud and Currie Sts, Nambour	Stand Alone
<b>Fisher</b> 130 Bulcock Street, Caloundra	Stand Alone
<b>Griffith</b> 281 Montague Road, West End	Stand Alone
<b>Groom</b> Bell Street Mall, Toowoomba	Stand Alone
<b>Herbert</b> 143 – 211 Walker Street, Townsville	Stand Alone
<b>Hinkler</b> 33 Maryborough Street, Bundaberg	Stand Alone
<b>Kennedy</b> Mary Street, Mount Isa	Stand Alone
<b>Leichhardt</b> 104 Grafton Street, Cairns	Stand Alone
<b>Longman</b> 77 King Street, Caboolture	Stand Alone
<b>Maranoa</b> Stuart Street, Dalby	Stand Alone
<b>Petrie</b> 18 Banfield Street, Chermiside	Stand Alone
<b>Ryan</b> 31 Station Road, Indooroopilly	Stand Alone
<b>Wide Bay</b> 277 – 281 Adelaide Street, Maryborough	Stand Alone
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</b>	
<b>Brand</b> 3 Robinson Place, Rockingham	Stand Alone
<b>Canning</b> Cnr Church & Fourth Road, Armadale	Stand Alone
<b>Cowan</b> 56 Creaney Drive, Kingsley	Stand Alone
<b>Curtin</b> 355 Stirling Highway, Claremont	Stand Alone
<b>Forrest</b> 61 Victoria Terrace, Bunbury	Stand Alone
<b>Fremantle</b> 27 William Street, Fremantle	Stand Alone
<b>Kalgoorlie</b> 37 Brookman Street, Kalgoorlie	Stand Alone
<b>Kalgoorlie Sub-division</b> 18 Hedland Place, Karratha	Stand Alone
<b>Moore</b> 140 Grand Boulevarde, Joondalup	Stand Alone
<b>O'Connor</b> 210 Fitzgerald Street, Northam	Stand Alone
<b>Stirling</b> Burroughs Road, Karrinyup	Stand Alone
<b>Swan</b> 1336 Albany Highway, Cannington	Stand Alone
<b>Tangney</b> Gateway Business Centre, Booragoon	Stand Alone

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Finance and Administration Portfolio**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003 – 11 February 2003

**Attachment B**

**STRATEGIC PROPERTY PLAN 2002/03 to 2004/05**

2002/03 Strategic Plan

Office	Lease Expiry	Proposed Relocation Date
Tasmanian Head Office & Dennison/Franklin - collocate	17/11/2002	March 2003
Cook/Hughes - collocation	Cook - 31/12/2005 Hughes - expired	June 2003
Rankin/Fadden/Forde - trilocation	Rankin/Fadden - expired Forde - 31/1/04	March 2003
Sturt to collocate with SA HO	Sturt - 30/4/03	April 2003
Bennelong/North Sydney/Bradfield to relocate with Berowra,	Chatswood - 28/2/03	May 2003
Mackellar and Warringah	Berowra - 31/8/03 Warringah - 31/5/04 Mackella - 30/6/04	
Newcastle/Paterson/Charlton/Shortland/Hunter	Newcastle - 31/3/03 Paterson - 31/8/04 Charlton - 31/1/04 Hunter - expired Shortland - 14/12/04	April 2003
Ringwood quad - downsize	14/05/2003	May 2003
New England - relocate	Expired	November 2002
Karratha - relocate	Expired	April 2003
NT Head Office - relocate with Solomon and Lingiari	31/4/03	April 2003
Watson/Barton/Banks - trilocate	Watson - expired Banks - expired Barton - 30/9/05	May 2003
WA Head Office - relocate with Perth DO	31/07/2012	Completed