

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Australian Electoral Commission

Additional Budget Estimates Hearings – 14 February 2006

Question: F53

Outcome: Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)

Topic: Proof of Identity

Written Question on Notice

Senator Carr asked:

1. What additional administrative requirements would the new proof of identity requirements proposed by the Government, in the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Electoral Integrity and Other Measures) Bill, entail for the AEC?
2. What is the estimated cost of any additional administrative requirements?
3. What training will the AEC need to provide staff with to ensure that they are able to manage any new administrative procedures resulting from these changes?
4. Has a training package or plan been designed? Who will provide staff with this training?

Answer:

1. To implement proof of identity requirements the AEC will establish access to driver's licence data in order to undertake database matching to verify the proof of identity of applicants for enrolment, re-enrolment and those updating their enrolment details. In addition to applications for enrolment being checked for substantial compliance prior to processing, the AEC will also introduce additional audit arrangements. However, it is not anticipated that these additional arrangements will significantly impact on current administrative requirements.
2. The estimated cost of implementing and administering proof of identity requirements will result in a fiscal balance impact of \$8.1 million in 2006-07 (including \$950,000 in capital) and \$5.4 million in 2007-08 together with ongoing funding with an estimated fiscal balance impact of \$2.2 million in 2008-09 and \$4.9 million in 2009-10. These estimates include funding for advertising and public awareness activities and systems development.

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3. and 4. A training plan is currently being developed and a range of strategies will be identified to ensure relevant staff have access to some form of training prior to implementation of proof of identity requirements. Following passage of the Bill, a training package will be developed and number of suitably skilled AEC staff in each state will be trained as facilitators. These facilitators will provide relevant operational staff with face-to-face training and all staff will have access to online e-learning facilities. User manuals will be updated to reflect changes to enrolment systems and processing procedures. Manuals provided to non-ongoing staff such as polling officials and field officers will be updated to reflect the new proof of identity requirements. Change management strategies will be implemented as appropriate.