Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Australian Electoral Commission

Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2007

Question: F43

Outcome 2, Output 2.1.5

Topic: Enrolment Verification Inquiry

Written Question on Notice

Senator Webber asked:

Can the AEC outline the process of handling queries received via the check your enrolment on-line service? On the night of the Peel by-election in Perth a number of people decided to check their enrolment on-line - all advised they were not on the roll. When one constituent e-mailed querying this - giving full name and dates of birth for both residents of the address, their full address and the length of time they had lived there, they received an automated reply asking for full name, date of birth, address etc so the query could be followed up. Is this standard practice? To date no final response has been received. A copy of the e-mails exchanged can be provided on request.

Answer:

Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) staff manually process queries received via the online enrolment verification facility and respond by using one of a series of standard replies.

The reply provided to Senator Webber's constituents was not appropriate as the constituents had already provided their full names and addresses.

As a consequence of this error, processing staff have been reminded of the importance of carefully reading incoming correspondence to ensure the correct response is provided.

Senator Webber 's constituents are correctly enrolled. The online enrolment verification was not generated for Senator Webber's constituents because they entered their suburb name as 'Mount Hawthorn'. In accordance with Department of Land Information standards in Western Australia, this suburb is referred to as 'Mt Hawthorn'. The AEC adopts Department of Land Information standards within its computerised roll management system.