

**Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration**

**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2009**

**Australian Electoral Commission**

**Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**

**Outcome 2, Output 2.1.5**

**Topic: Protected Action Ballots**

**Question reference number: F53**

**Type of Question: Hansard F&PA 95, 24 February 2009**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 April 2009**

**Number of Pages: 1**

**Senator Abetz asked:**

Mr Dacey, with your wealth of experience, are you able to indicate to us, just in rough terms, what the cost would be to conduct one of these protected ballots?

**Answer:**

Up until 25 February 2009, the AEC conducted 611 Protected Action Ballots (PABs) since their introduction in May 2006. Total cost has been \$1,178,234 of which 20% or \$235,647 has been recovered from trade unions, with the other 80% funded by government.

The average cost per PAB is \$1,928 with the average trade union contribution \$386.

It should be noted however that the cost of PABs does vary considerably with some PABs only having a small number of voters and some having thousands.