

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2012-2013

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Electoral Commission

Outcome/Program: Outcome 1

Topic: Discrimination of political parties in polling places

Senator: Rhiannon

Question reference number: F82

Type of question: Hansard F&PA Committee, page 101, 23 May 2012

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 6 July 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question: What do you do to stop polling places discriminating against certain parties? There has been an example at the Gymea Catholic church hall where there was, I understand, discrimination against the Sex Party putting up posters and having other materials. How do you go about guaranteeing that the polling places you use will be non-discriminatory, particularly with regard to entry, posters et cetera.

Answer:

The AEC does not have any record of a complaint of this nature from the Gymea polling place in relation to the 2010 federal election. It is, however, aware that this issue was noted by the Australian Sex Party, NSW, in Submission Number 4 to the New South Wales Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters' enquiry into the administration of the 2011 NSW State election.

The AEC does not impose any conditions about non-discrimination when hiring venues for polling places. However, if a condition on the hire meant that a candidate or candidates would not be able to participate in the election on an equal footing, the AEC would try to negotiate the condition out of the agreement or seek other premises.