

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing – October 2008

**Australian Electoral Commission
Finance and Deregulation Portfolio**



Outcome 2, Output 2.1.1

Topic: Wheelchair accessible polling booths

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Senator Boyce asked:

Perhaps I could follow up on that with the general disability area. What level of percentage improvement have we had with respect to wheelchair accessible booths from 2004 to 2007?

Answer:

At the 2004 federal election, 6 017 out of a total of 7 729 polling places were either fully wheelchair accessible or accessible by wheelchair with assistance. This represents 78% of all polling places.

For the 2007 federal election, 6 109 out of a total of 7 723 polling places were either fully wheelchair accessible or accessible by wheelchair with assistance. This represents 79.1% of all polling places. Between 2004 and 2007, the AEC introduced a more rigorous polling place inspection checklist which resulted in a downgrade of the assessments of some polling places.

The AEC undertakes inspections of all polling places between federal elections to ensure the best possible venues are available, notwithstanding that the lack of a fixed date for federal elections does mean the AEC cannot always secure optimal premises at short notice. Currently 6 236 polling places (80.7%) are either fully wheelchair accessible or accessible by wheelchair with assistance.