



Redesigned Voting Screens

After discussions with Vision Australia, the Commission decided to redesign voting booths to make them more accessible for people who have vision impairment. A mock-up voting booth was put together after investigation and advice from Vision Australia and other Electoral Commissions.



The voting screen was put on display at the Association for the Blind of WA. Feedback was provided by consumers and staff – particularly specialist staff who work with consumers in the professional disciplines of Occupational Therapy and Orientation and Mobility.



The amendments resulted in a voting booth design that was an improvement over the Commission’s original voting booth. The vertical “back” surface of the each voting booth was enhanced by having a black border around the “Here’s how you mark your ballot papers!” notice.

Hearing Impairment – Hard of hearing counter cards at all polling places

Polling places were supplied with Hard of hearing counter cards. These were placed at issuing points. They are a tool used to prompt:

- people with a hearing problem to make staff aware.
- provide polling staff with advice on how to speak to hearing impaired clients.



A Telephone Typewriter Service (TTY) is also offered by the Electoral Commission to assist electors with hearing impairment when calling the Commission. The TTY number is: (08) 9214 0487.

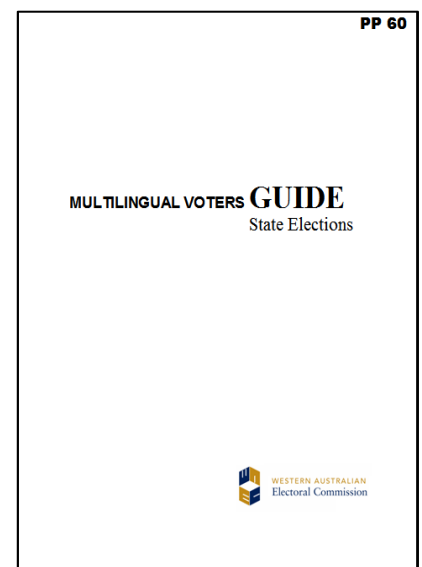


Specialised Assistance to Electors:

Multilingual Voters Guide / Referendum Guide

The Commission has reviewed its *Multilingual Voters Guide* and added two new languages (Japanese and Korean) following WA census research through the ABS and on advice from the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Content for the languages in the guide was simplified, and the layout and format changed, including a multilingual contact page.

The Guide is available from the Commission’s website or in hard copy on request. Information about the Guide passed onto the Returning Officers at their conference, as it was recognised that Polling Place Managers and polling staff were aware of the Guide’s availability, and for it to be made available to assist non-English speaking electors.





If an elector spoke a language that was not included in the book, or still needed language assistance, the Polling Place Manager was able to telephone the Commonwealth Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50 for assistance.

Polling place official's job applications request applicants to note if they speak a language other than English. Using this data polling staff can be recruited in areas where required to assist electors.

Multiple Format Information – Translations, Audio & Braille

All election material can be made available in large print, Braille and tape cassette format upon request. One request was made for the Candidates Guide in audio, which the Commission provided. Although referendum questions were available in audio format, no request was made to the Commission. Other information is also available in alternate formats on request. The Commission is examining modern information technologies for providing information digitally so that electors with special needs can adapt election material to their preferred format at their convenience.

Election Advertising

Prior to an election the Commission has, and will continue to use, Information Radio as a means to broadcast election information to people who are unable to read printed material. Information is also provided in various newspapers and the Election Guide, which is distributed to every household in the State. Locations of polling places with the best wheelchair access and parking facilities for people with disabilities and/or mobility problems are advertised across the state. Similar election information is distributed through the mailing lists of the Disability Services Commission, Office of Seniors Interests and Office of Multicultural Interests.

Medically Unable to Vote – Powers of Commissioner to Remove the Names of Persons from the Roll

The Electoral Commissioner can remove the names of people from the State Electoral Roll where he is satisfied that as a consequence of physical incapacity, mental illness or mental disorder a person is incapable of complying with the provisions of the Act in relation to compulsory voting. (Section 51A) This occurs only where qualified medical advice has been provided, usually from a general practitioner who completes the Western Australian Electoral Commission's Medical Certificate form. Electors, carers or others can contact the Commission to obtain assistance with this process.