



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
Electoral Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

ALL IN READINESS AT WA ELECTORAL COMMISSION TO COUNT SOME 350,000 VOTES IN TOMORROW'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The return this week of over 68,000 postal votes to the WA Electoral Commission's processing centre has seen the current turnout figure for tomorrow's local government elections rise to 31.82%.

When final postal vote returns on Saturday morning and the votes delivered by hand to Returning Officers throughout the day are included in the counts being conducted across the State, the final turnout figure is set to be around the 34% achieved in the 2007 local government elections.

Currently 345,013 ballot papers have been returned.

WA Electoral Commissioner Warwick Gately is satisfied with the outcome and conduct so far of the election.

Commenting today Mr Gately said: "Historically the postal vote return rate at local government elections has averaged around 35%, not only in this State but also across the nation, so today's figure is consistent with that rate.

"Whilst all involved in local government in WA would wish for the percentage to be higher, it remains a fact that voter participation at such elections varies from council to council and often reflects local issues.

"Lifting that participation rate is a challenge for us all."

With polling day tomorrow, Mr Gately said all was in readiness for the counting of ballots at the Commission's client councils throughout WA.

"My Returning Officers have all done an excellent job, in some cases under pressure, and are well prepared for tomorrow's count – I am sure the counts will be run smoothly and efficiently.

"Given the size and complexity of the local government election process and the tight timeframes we operated under, overall, the election has gone extremely well, with over a million electors across the State given the opportunity to have a say on who will represent them on their local council," he said.

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Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, 16th October 2009

Contact: Peter Villiers, WAEC Manager Communications and Corporate Strategy
9214 0484 0417 936 171 peter.villiers@waec.wa.gov.au