



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN  
Electoral Commission

# MEDIA RELEASE

## COUNTRY COUNCILS LEAD THE TURNOUT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

With the 2009 local government election results now declared in all 71 of the WA Electoral Commission's client councils, the final turnout figure has been determined at 33.35%, with 354,552 ballot papers returned from 1,084,504 electors.

Elector turnout was highest in country districts, with Shark Bay 65.74%, Lake Grace 60.85%, Irwin 60.26%, and Ravensthorpe 60.17% leading the way.

Other country districts with an excellent turnout included Gingin 59.90%, Coorow 55.94%, Denmark 55.16%, and Exmouth 51.36%.

In the metropolitan area districts with an above average turnout included Cottesloe 50.57%, Fremantle 46.77%, Claremont 43.94%, and Subiaco 40.74%.

WA Electoral Commissioner Warwick Gately today expressed his satisfaction with the turnout rate.

"The postal vote return rate at local government elections has averaged around 35% in recent years so the final 2009 figure is consistent with that rate, and I am pleased that so many electors chose to exercise their right in having a say in who would represent them on their local council," he said.

"It remains a fact that voter participation in local government elections varies from council to council, and from election to election, often reflecting issues within the community and with such variables as population growth, public profile of candidates, the number of wards, and whether there is a concurrent mayoral election, all impacting on the turnout.

"This fluctuating situation is evident when analysing the individual district figures for 2009 with some councils having a considerably improved turnout figure to that of the 2007 elections and with others marginally down.

"Overall, given the size and complexity of the local government election process and the tight timeframes the Commission operated under, the election went extremely well, with over a million electors across the State given the opportunity to have a say and I congratulate the one-third who chose to do so."

**...ENDS/.**

Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009

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