



Local Government News

New Manager of Local Government Business

Mark Ducksbury has been appointed to the position of Manager, Local Government as part of the Commission's elections group team.



Mark was most recently Senior Project Manager for the Department of Land Information (DLI) and brings with him 20 years of customer service and project management experience.

With qualifications in Business and Project Management, Mark is keen to consult with local governments to review operations; ensuring the Commission continues to deliver postal election services in the most cost-effective manner.

Phil Richards continues in the role of Senior Project Officer, providing the benefit of over 24 years of electoral experience including 12 years of direct local government election experience with the Commission.

Tracey Shooter has moved to the position of Commission Training Officer; and will augment her election project responsibilities with developing packages and training sessions for Returning Officers, Electoral Officials and local government staff. Recruitment is underway for a new Project Officer to join the local government team.

If you have any queries or require further information on the 2007 election program, please contact Mark on 9214 0422 or Phil on 9214 0443.

Legislation review

As all local governments will be aware, an amendment to *The Local Government Act 1995* has changed the ordinary election day from the first Saturday in May to the third

Legislation review (continued)

Saturday in October —with 20 October 2007 being the date proposed for this year.

A Parliamentary Committee is considering the introduction of further amendments, including the introduction of the Preferential Proportional Representation (PPR) counting system for multi-member wards. The committee will submit a report to Parliament on 3 April 2007.

Due to a need to identify and resolve the impact of these potential changes, the Commission is proceeding on the understanding that PPR will be in place for the local government ordinary elections to be held this year and has started the process of providing for a new count system early.

Decision to conduct postal elections

In accordance with section 4.20(4) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Electoral Commissioner must agree to be responsible for the conduct of a postal election.

Councils requesting the Commission to manage their election need to obtain this agreement, then pass the following two motions by absolute majority:

- Declare, in accordance with section 4.20(4) of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Electoral Commissioner to be responsible for the conduct of the 2007 ordinary elections together with any other elections or polls which may also be required; and
- Decide, in accordance with section 4.61(2) of the *Local Government Act 1995* that the method of conducting the election will be as a postal election.

For the 2007 election, although the last day for a decision to conduct postal elections is 1 August, the Commission would appreciate this advice as soon as possible for system development and planning purposes.

October 2007 postal elections

As at 21 February 2007, the following 23 local governments, representing 673,450 electors, had confirmed that the Electoral Commissioner is to be responsible for the conduct of the October 2007 ordinary election as a postal election:

- City of Albany
- Shire of Augusta-Margaret River
- City of Bayswater
- City of Belmont
- City of Bunbury
- Town of Cambridge
- Shire of Chittering
- City of Cockburn
- Shire of Dardanup
- Shire of Denmark
- Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup
- City of Fremantle
- City of Gosnells
- City of Joondalup
- Town of Kwinana
- City of Mandurah
- Shire of Merredin
- Shire of Murray
- City of Perth
- City of Rockingham
- City of Stirling
- City of Swan
- Town of Victoria Park

Committee — election issues.

With the potential for the introduction of a new count system for the October elections, the Commission has convened a small consultative committee to examine operations.

The Commission took this initiative when the postal voting process was under scrutiny and it was useful in identifying necessary changes.

This committee will comprise representatives of some of the major metropolitan and regional councils, WALGA and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. The first meeting is scheduled for early March.

Residents' rolls

Councils are reminded that it is a requirement of section 4.40 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, that on or before the 56th day before election day, you must advise the Electoral Commissioner in writing

Residents' rolls (continued)

of the need to prepare a residents roll for the election. This requirement applies irrespective of whether the election is conducted by the Council or by the Electoral Commissioner.

Owner/occupier details

In order to generate address labels for postal election packages, local governments need to provide the Commission with selected data from the owners' and occupiers' roll, as outlined in the guidelines provided.

Phil Richards, can be contacted on 9214 0443 to discuss data requirements and the technicalities of exporting that data to the Commission.

Extraordinary and other elections

The Commission has conducted 20 extraordinary postal elections, one postal referendum, one voting in person referendum and one Section 4.13 postal election since the May 2005 ordinary elections. The average turnout for the 13 contested extraordinary postal elections was 33.76%.

Currently, the Commission is conducting extraordinary postal elections for the City of Joondalup and Shire of Ashburton.

Venue for scanning centre

With October not far away, the search for a new venue for the central scanning centre is underway. Unfortunately the Claremont Showground pavilion is unavailable in late October because of the Royal Show.

A minimum of 600m² is needed in a secure building that would be available for at least all of October 2007, preferably with communication facilities and good public transport access.

If any Council has a suitable building or knows of one that may be available for lease for this period, please contact the Local Government team at the Commission to discuss further.

Newsletter Format

If you would prefer to receive future local government newsletters by email, please contact Mark or Phil.