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The Honourable Meg Webb MLC
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

By email to: electoralmatters@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Chair

Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2024 House of Assembly General Election and 2024 Legislative Council elections

Thank you for the invitation to the Tasmanian Electoral Commission (TEC or the Commission) to provide information to this Inquiry into the administration, operation and conduct of the 2024 general election of Members of the House of Assembly and the 2024 Legislative Council elections.

As this is the inaugural public hearing of the Committee, we take the opportunity to refresh Committee members' knowledge and understanding of the TEC, as well as speaking directly to the two electoral events.

An introduction to the Tasmanian Electoral Commission (the Commission)

The Commission is established under section 6 of the *Electoral Act 2004* ("the Act") and is comprised of the Chairperson, the Electoral Commissioner and one Member.

The following functions and powers of the Commission are specified in section 9 of the Act.

- 1) In addition to the functions conferred on it by any other provisions of this Act or any other Act, the Commission has the following functions:
 - a) to advise the Minister on matters relating to elections,
 - b) to consider and report to the Minister on matters referred to it by the Minister,
 - c) to promote public awareness of electoral and parliamentary topics by means of educational and information programs and by other means,
 - d) to provide information and advice on electoral issues to the Parliament, the Government, Government departments and State authorities, within the meaning of the *State Service Act 2000*,
 - e) to publish material on matters relating to its functions,
 - f) to investigate and prosecute illegal practices under this Act.

- 2) The Commission may do all things necessary or convenient to be done, including employing persons, for or in connection with, or incidental to the performance of its functions.
- 3) Without limiting subsection (2) and in addition to any power conferred on the Commission by any other provision of this Act or any other Act, the Commission, in addition to conducting Assembly elections or Council elections, may conduct ballots or elections for a person or organisation and may charge fees for that service.

Legal Responsibilities

The Commission and the Electoral Commissioner have legal responsibilities under the following legislation:

- *Electoral Act 2004*
- *Electoral Regulations 2015*
- *Electoral Disclosure and Funding Act 2023*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*
- *Juries Act 2003*
- *Legislative Council Electoral Boundaries Act 1995*
- *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995*
- *Water Management Act 1999*

Electoral roll management

The Commission, and the Electoral Commissioner, have statutory responsibilities for the independent and impartial conduct of Tasmanian elections and referendums.

An up-to-date and accurate electoral roll is an essential prerequisite for the conduct of elections. The State of Tasmania and the Commonwealth of Australia have a joint management arrangement whereby the TEC and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) jointly manage and maintain the electoral rolls for Federal, state and local government elections. The Electoral Commissioner is a member of the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ) which regularly discusses strategies for maintenance of the electoral roll.

All electors enrolled on the State roll are entitled to vote at the local government elections for the municipal area in which their enrolled address is recorded.

Our Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027

The TEC has a strategic plan in place. The plan reviews the TEC's organisational structure, responsibilities and workload against current and future environmental impacts to produce high level goals and initiatives for the organisation across a five year period. See Attachment A.

It articulates the TEC's purpose, vision and values and is intended as a living document, to inform our annual work programs, the way we develop initiatives and projects and the way

we structure our individual performance plans. It will sit at the centre of our leadership conversations and set the agenda for teams across the organisation.

Our core business

The TEC's core business includes:

- The provision of appropriate and expert electoral advice.
- The conduct of accurate, transparent and accessible electoral events.
- The provision of clear and impartial electoral information that enhances understanding and participation.
- The development and maintenance of an agile, creative and cyber secure organisation that empowers, supports and develops staff.
- Ensuring compliance with electoral legislation.

TEC Organisational Goals (2023 – 2027)

1. Expand TEC resourcing and processes to meet the additional workloads established under current, proposed and future legislation amendments.
2. Ensure the TEC has the appropriate systems and infrastructure to deliver all its electoral services in a more complex and changing environment.
3. Bring TEC organisational structure in line with modern business organisational standards and processes – including reducing single point dependencies and clarity of staff member responsibilities.
4. Broaden elector inclusivity and partner with communities within the TEC's sphere of influence to equip and educate electoral stakeholders on the electoral environment and integrity issues.

Environmental challenges

Major expansion to responsibilities

Over the next three years, the breadth and diversity of the TEC's responsibilities will significantly expand. The known legislative changes that already have, and will continue to impact on our workload and resourcing, include:

- The *Electoral Disclosure and Funding Act 2023* establishes the creation of a disclosure and funding scheme for the Tasmanian Parliament, which will be fully administered by the TEC.
- The *Electoral Matters (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2023*, amongst other things, extends the investigative powers of the TEC in relation to offences listed under the Act.
- The *Expansion of House of Assembly Act 2022* restored the House of Assembly to 35 Members for State elections, which increased the complexity of Hare Clark counts and the number of casual vacancies.

- The *Local Government Amendment (Elections) Act 2022* resulted in all local government elections and by-elections becoming compulsory for all electors on the State Roll.

The following State Government reviews are expected to lead to additional responsibilities:

- The Office of Aboriginal Affairs has proposed changes to the enrolment process under the *Aboriginal Land Council Act 1995* which will increase the Commissioner's, and the Office of the TEC's, involvement in a new, and more comprehensive, enrolment assessment and support process.
- The 2018 Local Government Review recommended the creation of separate election legislation, the TEC Office's administration of the General Managers Roll and the creation of a disclosure structure for all local government candidates.

National and international trends in electoral administration

The following trends and risks are impacting electoral administration in Australia:

- Growing foreign interference and domestic misinformation and disinformation campaigns undermining electoral integrity.
- The growing spread of "truth in political advertising" legislation in Australia administered by electoral management bodies during elections.
- The need to develop services that are inclusive, serving a broader range of electors.
- An increasing reliance on technology and IT infrastructure and related systems to deliver timely, inclusive and accessible electoral services.
- Upward trend of co-ordinated physical disruption of services and intimidation of electoral officials during electoral events.
- Real and present cyber security threats to systems and data.
- The increase in the number of registered parties, groups and candidates contesting elections.
- Growing stakeholder expectations of electoral management bodies.
- In recent times, electoral management bodies are being seen as a target to undermine the integrity and results of electoral events.

2024 House of Assembly General Election and 2024 Legislative Council elections

House of Assembly General Election

With the government moving into minority in May 2023, the Commission assessed there was a higher likelihood of an early election and therefore moved to address a range of risks relevant to the conduct of a successful electoral event.

Resourcing of experienced electoral staff

To ensure the Commission could be resourced for a snap election, for the first time, the TEC identified and trained experienced returning officers from New South Wales as a contingency resource.

On Wednesday 21 February 2024, Her Excellency the Governor informed the Commissioner that, on the advice of the Premier, she had prorogued the Parliament and dissolved the House of Assembly to enable a general election to be held on Saturday 23 March 2024.

Following the calling of this early State election, several of the experienced returning officers from New South Wales and local returning officers, were immediately mobilised. Taking this immediate action was vital to the success of the State election.

Securing physical spaces to undertake electoral processes

Given the TEC's reliance on short-term commercial building leases to house election offices, scrutiny centres, and training venues for State elections, the ever-tightening leasing market saw the TEC move to take on mid-term leases on two properties, one at Glenorchy and one at Cambridge.

Securing these sites at an early stage ensured fit-for-purpose premises were available for a potential State election and for the annual Legislative Council elections. Taking this proactive action allowed the TEC to fully establish election offices, telephone voting and call centre facilities, secure ballot paper storage, the large preparation of polling place materials and centralised distribution points in advance of the snap announcement. It also allowed for the robust testing of surge capacity in an expanded telephone voting service for interstate and overseas electors.

Managing changes due to the increase in the House of Assembly membership

Impacts of the increase in size of the House of Assembly

This election was the first conducted since the *Expansion of House of Assembly Act 2022* increased the number of members to 35, restoring the House to pre-1998 levels, with seven members to be elected from each of the five divisions.

This Act changed the formality requirement for voting, with electors to number at least 1 to 7 preferences on their ballot paper instead of the previous 1 to 5.

The increase in size saw a record number of candidates with 167 candidates (67 female, 96 male and 4 other) contesting the election and a record number of columns on ballot papers across the five divisions.

This compares with 105 candidates in 2021 and represents the largest field of candidates for election to the House of Assembly since its establishment in 1856.

Proactive management of risk of informal voting

Leading into this election, a principal concern was the potential for an increased number of informal votes if electors failed to number a 6th and 7th preference. To manage this risk, a supplementary public awareness campaign was developed featuring the tagline '7 or more to make your vote count', with visual prompts to emphasise the number 7. This message was delivered concurrently with the longstanding 'Your vote is bigger than you think' campaign. Further information about the '7 or more' campaign will be available in the TEC's 2023-24 Annual Report.

Delivery of modern voting services

A new approach to election phone services

The 2024 State election presented an opportunity for the TEC to rethink how phone services might be rolled out for this large-scale event, by bringing together resourcing and infrastructure that would include call centre operations for customer support and election results together with the inclusion of a telephone-assisted voting (TAV) service.

The TEC introduced TAV at a smaller scale for the 2022 Legislative Council elections, approved under Division 10 of the Act for electors in an area declared by the Commission to be remote. This included electors who could not attend a polling place due to COVID-19 isolation requirements and interstate or overseas electors.

Following the success of this initial event, TAV has been offered at subsequent Legislative Council elections as the preferred option for electors who are overseas or interstate on polling day. These experiences provided valuable insights when planning for an expanded service at a State election, considering the additional human and hardware resources required to accommodate a significantly larger number of electors across the polling period.

Election call centre services have traditionally operated from the TEC's Moonah office, with 10-12 staff spread across the site where space allowed. During advance preparations for the State election, the TEC's Glenorchy site was identified as an ideal location for a more cohesive call centre setup and a TAV service that would be considerably larger than that provided for Legislative Council elections.

At its peak, the Glenorchy phone services centre accommodated up to 45 staff, including TAV registration and transcription, call centre teams, their respective supervisors, and on-site IT support staff.

In recognition of the skill set required by telephone operators in such an environment, this was the first time the TEC utilised a recruitment services agency to provide TAV and call centre staff. This change streamlined the recruitment and onboarding of a large cohort of suitably qualified staff with a short lead time, providing consistent staffing across the election period while easing the burden on internal employment teams.

Securing a medium-term lease for the Glenorchy site, as part of the TEC's election preparedness initiative, allowed IT infrastructure to be installed and tested in advance of an election announcement. This included a full-day test of call surge capacity with a large cohort of casual agency staff, many of whom would return for the telephone voting period some weeks later.

These efficiencies, and advanced preparations, meant that phone services teams were well placed to address additional complexities brought about by the greater number of members elected in each division and the increased number of candidates. These factors impacted both the training required for operators and the call times experienced.

The call centre team received more than 9,800 calls across the election period. TAV teams received 3,936 registrations, with 3,901 Tasmanians casting their votes using the service.

Feedback from the supervisors, telephone operators and electors using the services was positive and will inform future improvements.

Conduct of the elections

New counting challenges

The expanded House of Assembly membership also introduced complexities to counting processes. The record number of candidates called for larger ballot papers containing up to 11 columns, in Bass and Clark. Along with the need to verify the formality of ballot papers to 7 preferences, this significantly increased the period of time required to complete first-preference counts and the two subsequent rechecks.

To address the high demand for results in the face of these extended counting timelines, media releases issued after polling day provided more detailed explanations of the scrutiny process.

The TEC is working with the Victorian Electoral Commission to secure an updated version of their Computer Count system to facilitate the data-entry of House of Assembly ballot papers (like the process undertaken at the four yearly local government elections).

Ballot paper stock issue in Lyons

Following the commencement of the early voting period on Monday 4 March, an issue with the production of ballot papers for the division of Lyons was identified.

A small number of ballot papers in an initial batch had not received the required security wash—a coloured watermark printed onto the paper stock in advance of an election. Ballot papers that do not bear this security wash, and have not been signed by an issuing officer, are not valid.

An investigation into this printing issue found that one batch of ballot paper stock used for this division was affected. Approximately one in every 100 sheets in this batch did not receive the required colour wash, and it was immediately quarantined.

A full audit of Lyons ballot papers in pre-poll centres was conducted and a small number of unwashed (white) papers were identified, removed and quarantined. All 1,997 general postal voters (GPVs) in Lyons were posted ballot packs before the issue was identified. Therefore, it was estimated that approximately 20 of these ballot papers may not have received the appropriate security wash.

While this error affected a small number of electors, the issue was considered serious and urgent. The Commissioner unreservedly apologised when the error was identified and took steps to ensure that no electors were disenfranchised as a result.

A team was established to contact GPVs in Lyons by email, phone, and SMS. Replacement ballot packs were issued to any elector who received an unwashed ballot paper or if they believed they may have done so having already completed and returned their original pack. The TEC's Integrated Postal Vote Management System was used to flag and remove duplicate and invalid ballot papers from the count.

A dedicated phone service was set up to receive elector queries, and overseas postal voters were further encouraged to make use of the TAV service.

There was a single white ballot paper identified as part of the informal ballot paper survey conducted post the election.

Increased informal voting

The statewide rate of informal voting rose to 6.31% from 5.13% in 2021, with speculation that the change in the formality requirement may have contributed to this outcome. However, analysis of the more than 23,000 informal ballot papers determined that this was not the case and, notably, only 212 of the ballot papers contained just 1 to 5 preferences.

Ballot papers containing apparently unintentional errors accounted for nearly 60% of the informal vote. The repetition or omission of preferences between 1 and 7 was the most frequently observed issue (6,557 ballot papers). The *2022 to 2024 Report on Parliamentary Elections*¹ provides informal ballot paper survey statistics.

Early voting trends

A short form analysis of early voting trends was provided to the House of Assembly Standing Committee B Inquiry into the *Electoral Funding and Disclosure Amendment Bill 2024 (No.9)* following an appearance before the Committee of both the Chairperson and the Commissioner. This is Attachment B.

¹ Expected to be issued in late October 2024

Outcome

The full list of elected Members will be included in the TEC's 2023-24 Annual Report and will also be available on the TEC website².

² Expected to be issued in late October 2024.

Legislative Council elections – Elwick, Hobart and Prosser

On Wednesday 3 April 2024, Her Excellency the Governor issued the writs for the 2024 Legislative Council elections for the divisions of Hobart and Prosser, and a by-election for the division of Elwick.

The outcome of the March State election included two Legislative Council members being elected to the House of Assembly, which then resulted in a Legislative Council by-election being conducted in parallel with the periodic elections during the April-May period.

The TEC was cognisant of this and other risks and, prior to the completion of the March State election, was already moving to address them to ensure the successful conduct of these Legislative Council electoral events.

When nominations closed at 12 noon on Thursday 11 April, 16 candidates (5 women and 11 men) had been nominated - 7 candidates for Hobart, 5 candidates for Prosser and 4 candidates for Elwick. Cassy O'Connor was elected as the Member for Hobart; Kerry Vincent was elected as the Member for Prosser and Bec Thomas was elected as the Member for Elwick.

The election to the Legislative Council of two current southern mayors then triggered mayoral and councillor vacancies and subsequent by-elections for Glenorchy City and Sorell councils.

Resourcing of experienced electoral staff

The TEC had already commenced recruitment, or in several cases secured the continuation of employment, of experienced Tasmanian election management team members between the State election and the Legislative Council elections.

Securing physical spaces to undertake electoral processes

Similarly, the two properties secured on mid-term leases at Glenorchy and Cambridge were transitioned to election offices, telephone voting and call centre facilities, secure ballot paper storage and centralised distribution points for the Legislative Council elections.

Where necessary and available, pre-poll centres identified and utilised during the State event were also secured for use at these elections.

To address the ongoing issue of a lack of suitable sites for the TEC to access for election scrutines, the TEC secured the use of the MyState Bank Arena for scrutines post close of polling at these elections.

Delivery of modern voting services

Election phone services

The TEC provided TAV services on a smaller scale for these elections but promoted the service as the preferred option for electors who were overseas or interstate for a period in advance of, and on, polling day. Seeking to leverage learnings and efficiencies from the State election event, the TEC again utilised a recruitment services agency to identify TAV

and call centre staff, providing consistent staffing across the election period while continuing to ease the burden on internal employment teams.

TAV teams received 930 registrations, with 929 Tasmanians casting their votes using the service.

Conduct of the elections - Informal voting

Informal voting at these elections varied between the divisions.

In the division of Elwick, 816 informal votes were made (4.26% of total ballot papers counted). Ballot papers containing apparently intentional errors accounted for 66% of the informal vote.

In the division of Hobart, 497 informal votes were made (2.51% of total ballot papers counted). Ballot papers containing apparently intentional errors accounted for 63% of the informal vote.

In the division of Prosser, 856 informal votes were made (3.83% of total ballot papers counted). Ballot papers containing apparently intentional errors accounted for 66.5% of the informal vote.

The *2022 to 2024 Report on Parliamentary Elections* will provide informal ballot paper survey statistics.

Upcoming publications containing relevant information

These House of Assembly and Legislative Council electoral events fall within relevant reporting periods for the following publications due for tabling and/or submission in October 2024:

- 2023-24 Annual Report
- 2022 to 2024 Report on Parliamentary Elections.

The reports provide detailed information about the TEC's performance and conduct of the elections subject to this Inquiry.

In addition, later in the year, the TEC will publish a special report providing an analysis of informal voting at both elections within the terms of reference of this Inquiry.

In conclusion, the Commission acknowledges the significant electoral events undertaken this year would not have been successful without our staff's endurance, professionalism, compassion and care for Tasmanian democracy.

The Commission welcomes any questions the Committee may have.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Blake
Chair

Karen Frost
Member

Andrew Hawkey
Electoral Commissioner

30 August 2024

Attachments

Attachment A Strategic Plan 2023-27

Attachment B Short form analysis of early voting trends - HoA Standing Committee B

A blurred photograph of a person in a workshop or classroom setting. The person is wearing a dark t-shirt, dark leggings, and white sneakers, and is walking from left to right. In the background, there are white cardboard boxes and a yellow wall. A diagram is visible on one of the boxes.

Tasmanian Electoral Commission Strategic Plan 2023-27

Who are we

The Tasmanian Electoral Commission (TEC) is responsible for the electoral infrastructure enabling democracy to function in Tasmania.

Due to increased complexities within the electoral environment, together with the constant cycle of known and unknown events, important work is being compromised or postponed. This, coupled with the impact of significant legislative change expected in 2023, has driven the need to develop a new strategic plan for the organisation.

This plan reviews the TEC's organisational structure, responsibilities and workload against current and future environmental impacts to produce high level goals and initiatives for the organisation across the next five years.

It is intended as a living document, to inform our annual work programs, the way we develop initiatives and projects and the way we structure our individual performance plans. It will sit at the centre of our leadership conversations and set the agenda for teams across the organisation.

Purpose

To provide independent, impartial and high-quality electoral services to the people of Tasmania.

Vision

To maintain confidence in the integrity of Tasmania's electoral processes and make it simple for people to understand and participate.

Aims

- » Provide compliant, effective, inclusive and secure electoral services.
- » Build a diverse, resilient and high performing organisation with a positive and values driven culture.
- » Build external relationships and electoral knowledge, understanding and engagement.
- » Maintain our credibility as independent, impartial and trustworthy in providing electoral expertise.

Our values

Respect

We will:

- » be actively inclusive
- » be broadly accessible
- » be accountable
- » be mindful and considerate
- » support diversity

We will not:

- » be biased

Adaptability

We will:

- » be responsive
- » be flexible
- » be prepared
- » commit to improvement
- » work to find a solution

We will not:

- » be stuck in our ways
- » take unnecessary risks

Integrity

We will:

- » be impartial
- » uphold our independence
- » be accurate
- » be transparent
- » comply with electoral law

We will not:

- » comment on political matters
- » hide errors

Collaboration

We will:

- » be supportive
- » be consultative
- » engage
- » empower
- » share knowledge

We will not:

- » set unrealistic expectations

Our core business

We conduct accurate, transparent and accessible electoral events

This involves:

- » Managing all election processes including:
 - Election preparation
 - Creating roll products
 - Short term staff recruitment
 - Hire of election premises
 - Candidate management
 - Roll out of election material
 - Provision of voting services
 - Counting votes
 - Conducting recounts
 - Processing candidate returns
 - Return of material and
 - Non-voter processes
- » Managing suppliers and contractors
- » Developing and maintaining appropriate and cyber secure IT infrastructure and systems
- » Secure management of electoral data and materials
- » Long-term storage, disposal and maintenance of election equipment and material
- » Filling all Parliamentary and local government casual vacancies
- » Undertaking other statutory and non-statutory elections
- » Conducting elector polls and referendums
- » Undertaking the review and determination of Legislative Council electoral boundaries.

Our core business

We provide expert electoral advice and ensure compliance with electoral legislation

This involves:

- » Ensuring electoral processes are compliant with legislation
- » Consulting and liaising with other organisations
- » Making public submissions and providing electoral advice
- » Responding to electoral complaints
- » Investigating possible breaches of legislation
- » Provision of electoral roll products.

We provide impartial electoral information that enhances understanding and participation

This involves:

- » Providing timely and accurate election information
- » Rolling out election awareness campaigns
- » Publishing Commission reports
- » Developing curriculum-based resources that support civics and citizenship education in Tasmanian classrooms
- » Engaging with key community groups to develop learning opportunities and resources
- » Providing real time responses to electoral misunderstanding within public discourse
- » Providing training and skills development across all areas of electoral administration.

We are an agile, creative and cyber-secure organisation

This involves:

- » Managing the expansion of the TEC workforce from 15 permanent employees in a central office up to approximately 2000 employees located across the state
- » Undertaking recruitment, training, payment and support for election casuals
- » Managing risks while providing a supportive, innovative and facilitative work environment
- » Developing the skills and knowledge of ongoing TEC staff
- » Maintaining and developing the physical and digital/ICT infrastructure for the organisation.

Environmental impacts on the TEC

Major expansion to responsibilities

Over the next five years, the breadth and diversity of responsibilities of the TEC will significantly expand. The known legislative changes that will impact on our workload and resourcing include:

- » The Electoral Disclosure and Funding Bill 2022 establishes the creation of a Disclosure and Funding Scheme for the Tasmanian Parliament, which will be fully administered by the TEC.
- » The Electoral Matters (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2022, amongst other things, extends the investigative powers of the TEC in relation to offences listed under the Electoral Act 2004.
- » The Expansion of House of Assembly Bill 2022 restores the House of Assembly to 35 Members for future State elections, which increases the complexity of Hare-Clark elections and number of casual vacancies.
- » The Local Government Amendment (Elections) Bill 2022 resulted in all local government elections and by-elections becoming compulsory for all electors on the State Roll.

The following State Government reviews are expected to lead to additional responsibilities:

- » The Office of Aboriginal Affairs has proposed changes to the enrolment process under the Aboriginal Land Council Act 1995 which will increase TEC involvement in a new more comprehensive enrolment assessment and support process.
- » The 2018 Local Government Review recommended the creation of separate elections legislation, the TEC administration of the General Managers Roll and the creation of a disclosure structure for all local government candidates.
- » The 2022 Local Government Review flags changes to the nature and size of local councils.

Environmental impacts on the TEC

National and international trends in electoral administration

The following trends and risks are impacting electoral administration in Australia:

- » Growing foreign interference and domestic misinformation and disinformation campaigns undermining electoral integrity.
- » The growing spread of “truth in advertising” legislation in Australia administered by electoral management bodies during elections.
- » The need to develop services that assist a broader range of electors.
- » An increasing reliance on technology and IT infrastructure and systems to deliver timely, inclusive and accessible electoral services.
- » Upward trend of co-ordinated physical disruption and intimidation during electoral events.
- » An increasing legislative requirement for the use of technology to deliver new services.
- » Real and present cyber security threats on systems and data.
- » The increase in the number of registered parties and candidates contesting elections.
- » Growing stakeholder expectations of electoral management bodies.
- » The inclusion of discrete indigenous involvement within Australian parliaments – such as the proposed, at the Federal level, Voice to Parliament and the recommendations of the House of Assembly Committee into the inclusion of separate aboriginal representation within the Tasmanian Parliament.

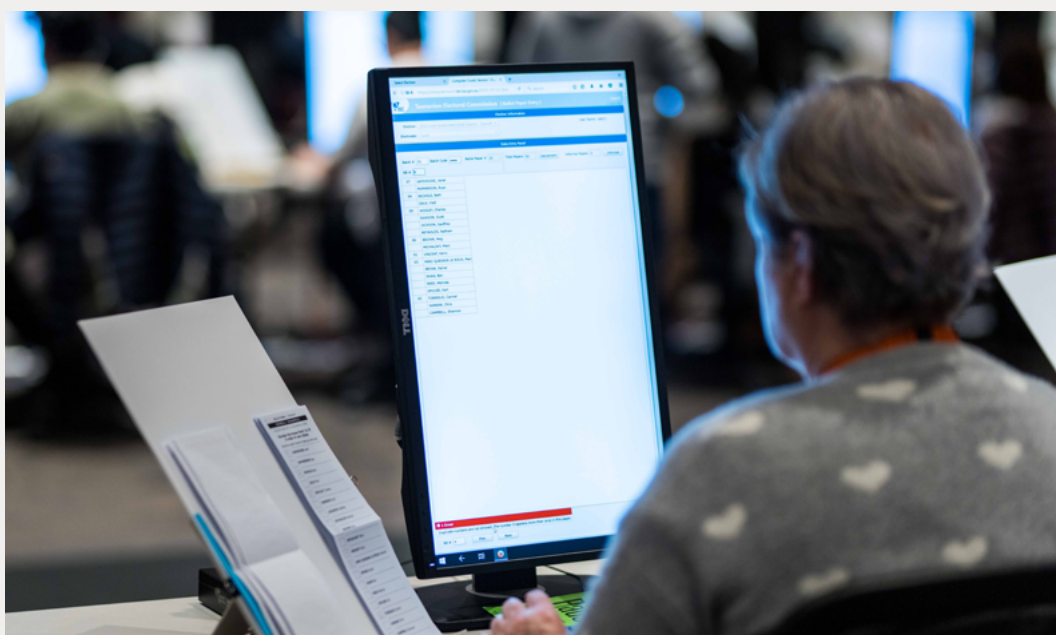
Other critical business issues

The following issues also impact our ability to conduct business:

- » Limited availability of suitably skilled short-term staff.
- » The need to ensure business continuity while working to immutable deadlines.
- » Growth in the Tasmanian population.
- » An aging and increasingly diverse population, for many of whom English is not their first language.
- » An increasingly challenging workplace that impacts staff resilience and sustainability while at the same time enhancing opportunities.

Internal risks

- » Important work is compromised or postponed due to critical electoral events dominating the Commission's workload.
- » Awareness and educational information does not cater for any language other than English.
- » Electoral services continue to present barriers to participation of some electors.
- » Past end of life IT election systems are not fit for purpose for current and future TEC responsibilities.
- » Current systems do not enable modern effective or efficiency measures.
- » Cyber security maturity levels require ongoing improvement.
- » The continuation of a limited staffing and organisational profile.



Organisational goals 2023-27

1. Expand TEC resourcing and processes to meet the additional workloads established under current, proposed and future legislation amendments.
2. Ensure TEC has the appropriate systems and infrastructure to deliver all its electoral services in a more complex and changing environment.
3. Bring TEC organisation structure in line with modern business organisational standards and processes – including reducing single point dependencies and clarity of staff member responsibilities.
4. Broaden elector inclusivity and partner with communities within the TEC's sphere of influence to equip and educate electoral stakeholders on the electoral environment and integrity issues.

Key initiatives	Alignment to goals
Establishment of a Disclosure & Funding Unit and associated processes.	1
Modernisation of business processes .	3
Modernisation of TEC election ICT systems.	1, 2 & 4
Establishment of processes and resources that enable more Tasmanians to learn about, understand and participate in electoral processes.	3 & 4
Establishment of a southern election operational centre and a relocation of the TEC.	2
Establishment of a new training structure and capability (an Election Lab).	1, 2 & 4

Initiative	End of 2023	End of 2024 In readiness for HoA '25 election	End of 2025	End of 2027
Establishment of a Disclosure & Funding Unit (subject to new legislation).	Establishment of Unit. Recruitment of two staff.	Unit is operational July 2024. Website established, and processes and educational information developed.	Expansion of staffing to support commencement of LC reporting requirements.	Unit is fully operational.
Organisational expansion and restructure.	Organisational review finalised and preferred new model endorsed.	Recruitment processes well underway. Additional roles filled.	New structure reviewed and monitored.	All roles filled and restructure fully applied.
Modernisation of election ICT (systems and data).	Agreement in place to adopt VEC IT systems.	Initial systems transfer and updates complete in readiness for HoA '25. Data entry established for HoA '25.	Further TEC specific adaptations applied to prioritised systems.	Prioritised systems fully implemented.
Modernisation of election ICT (infrastructure).	Stocktake against the Essential Eight Maturity Model taken, with risks and priorities identified.	Key risks and priorities addressed to increase maturity.	IT maturity levels increasing towards "green" levels.	IT maturity improved to "green" levels.
Increase understanding and participation in electoral processes.	Commencement of an inclusion strategy. Commencement of an education and communication strategy.	Broad community engagement occurring. Implement pilot projects for parliamentary elections.	Continuation of community engagement. Continual review and expansion of strategies.	Processes and resources reviewed and adjusted for ongoing engagement.
Establishment of a southern election operational centre.	Business plan supported and approved. EOI process commenced.	Site identification confirmed, contract awarded. Commencement of fit-out/build.	Construction continuing and staff change processes addressed and supported.	Build complete and site fully operational.
Establishment of a new training structure and capability (an Election Lab)	Training management structure confirmed following organisational review process.	Training strategy developed and pilot model priorities confirmed. Election lab testing and feedback commenced.	Prioritised training resources ready for parliamentary elections. Model reviewed and any changes applied.	Full, broad structure fully implemented. Election lab structure and regularity fully functional.

Attachment B

Early voting: 2024 State Election

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Postal after polling day	Total
Postal voting	1,891	7,519	13,536	4,429	27,375
Telephone assisted voting	0	833	1,971		2,804
Pre-poll voting	8,647	13,896	60,245		82,788
Mobile voting			4,787		4,787
TOTAL	10,538	22,248	80,539	4,429	
Progressive total	10,538	32,786	113,325	117,754	
% of all ballot papers counted	2.83%	8.81%	30.46%	31.65%	

Figures do not include declaration votes

