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Roll How

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Published 18/7/2025

FDEU: Processing Responses

In February 2025, the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* was updated to replace the phrase 'unsound mind' with the more inclusive 'cognitive impairment'. References on this page have been updated accordingly.

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Updated with Potential Ineligible for Enrolment (PIER), April 2024

As per NOC 2024-2101, name exclusions from the FDEU program are now processed in GENESIS.

More information on PIER is available at [Potential Ineligible for Enrolment Register - PIER](#).



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Response to letters received

These are either scanned by the external scanning provider or dropboxed into GENESIS, and then processed in GENESIS as Federal Direct Enrolment transactions and approved where possible.

Defects must be resolved if possible. Where a defect requires investigation, this must be conducted before an FDEU application is defectured or rejected, e.g. client and address matching.

In particular, when the client has indicated they are not an Australian citizen, this must be confirmed before the application can be rejected. Citizenship information, such as a passport or Births, Deaths and Marriages reference can be found from the *Audit* tab, then the *SMT* hyperlink.

Potentially ineligible for enrolment

When an FDEU letter of intent is returned and found to be ineligible to be approved for one of the reasons below, it must be processed in GENESIS as a Federal Direct Enrolment application, but rejected instead of approved.

When the FDEU application is rejected with reasons:

- *Potentially Ineligible - Cognitive Disability,*
- *Potentially Ineligible - Citizenship, or*
- *Potentially Ineligible - Address,*

the client will automatically be added to the PIER.

Potentially Ineligible - Cognitive Disability

Client enrolment status	Advice type	Action	Result
Not enrolled – included in FDEU	Returned letter of intent with potentially ineligible due to cognitive disability indication.	GENESIS: Create application and reject with reason “Potentially ineligible – Cognitive Disability”.	Client added to PIER and excluded from current and future FDEU.
Currently enrolled – included in FDEU	Returned letter of intent with potentially ineligible due to cognitive disability indication.	GENESIS: Create application and reject with reason “Potentially ineligible – Cognitive Disability”. Add an IN notation to the client in RMANS.	Client added to PIER and excluded from current and future FDEU.

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RMANS non-enrolment change and notations

On this page...

- ✓ [Introduction](#)
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- ✓ [Adding a Notation in RMANS](#)
- ✓ [Elector Notations Carried/Not Carried](#)
- ✓ [Elector Notation List](#)
- ✓ [IN \(Incapable\) notations](#)



Introduction

The Elector Update – Non Enrolment Change facility in RMANS allows users to store information against an elector's record in the form of a notation, which can be added or removed depending upon the notation.

Note: Notation reports are generated on a regular basis for checking by Divisions (e.g. to remove notations which no longer apply i.e. 'OS') and during election periods to assist in the culling of non-voter notices.



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IN (Incapable) notations

An IN (incapable) notation should be added to an elector's enrolment when information is received that the elector is incapable of understanding the nature and significance of enrolment and voting. An IN notation may also be added in other circumstances if deemed appropriate. This notation does not prevent the elector from voting or updating their enrolment **s47E**

s47E An IN notation is a permanent notation that carries forward from one enrolment to the next, so should not be used in cases of short-term illness or injury.

An IN notation is automatically added to an elector's enrolment when an unsound mind objection is started in GENESIS ([Processing Objections in GENESIS](#)) and can also be manually added to an elector's enrolment using RMANS (instructions below).

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FDEU Legislative Basis

On this page...

- ▼ [Overview](#)
- ▼ [FDEU Legislation Extract](#)
- ▼ [103A Updating or transferring a person's enrolment without claim or notice from the person](#)
- ▼ [103B Enrolling unenrolled person without claim or notice from the person](#)

Overview

Sections 103A and 103B of the CEA permit the AEC to directly enrol or update electors. These changes to the CEA commenced on 25 July 2012.

In practice the FDEU program will closely integrate with the existing mail review program of data sourcing, matching and sending letters.

Section 103A (updates) and 103B (new enrolments and re-enrolments) permit the Electoral Commissioner to update or enrol a person where they are eligible and the Commissioner is confident that their address is correct.

Extracts of section 103A and 103B are below.

Before updating or enrolling the person, the AEC must give them at least 28 days notice to make comment on the proposed change. The update to the roll will take place after the 28th day (see Notification)

If the person responds positively before the conclusion of the 28 days, the change to the roll may take place earlier.

If an elector replies to the letter by completing the back of the letter, this will in some cases constitute an enrolment pursuant to section 96 of the CEA. For more information see Response Processing.

Once the enrolment takes place, either through a positive response or the 28 days expiring, a normal acknowledgement letter will be produced.

Special arrangements apply at the close of roll. See Close of Rolls FDEU.

FDEU Legislation Extract

The extract of the relevant parts of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 is current as at 7 December 2012.

103A Updating or transferring a person's enrolment without claim or notice from the person

Application

- (1) This section applies if the Electoral Commissioner:

(a) is satisfied that a person's address is entered on a Roll (the old Roll); and

(b) is satisfied, for reasons other than a claim under section 98 and a notice under subsection 101(5), that the person lives at another address (the new address).

Notice of proposed action to update or transfer enrolment

(2) The Electoral Commissioner may give the person a notice in writing setting out the date of the notice, the new address and the fact that the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that the person lives at the new address and stating:

(a) if the person's residence at the new address entitles the person to have his or her name placed on the old Roll—that the Electoral Commissioner proposes to enter the new address for the person on the old Roll; and

(b) if the person's residence at the new address entitles the person to have his or her name transferred to another Roll (the new Roll)—that the Electoral Commissioner proposes:

(i) to delete the person's name from the old Roll; and

(ii) to enter on the new Roll the person's name and other particulars required by section 83; and

(c) in any case—that the Electoral Commissioner will not take the proposed action if satisfied by information given by the person to the Electoral Commissioner within 28 days after the date of the notice that the person does not live at the new address.

Taking action to update or transfer enrolment

(3) The Electoral Commissioner may take the proposed action described in paragraph (2)(a) or (b) unless satisfied by information given by the person to the Electoral Commissioner within 28 days after the date of the notice that the person does not live at the new address.

(4) The Electoral Commissioner may take the action before the end of the 28 days if the person indicates to the Electoral Commissioner within that period that the person does live at the new address.

(5) Despite subsections (3) and (4), the Electoral Commissioner must not take the proposed action described in paragraph (2)(b) within a period:

(a) starting at 8 pm on the day of the close of the Rolls for an election to be held in a Division to which the new Roll relates; and

(b) ending on the close of the poll for the election.

Notice of decision or decision not to take action

(6) If the Electoral Commissioner takes the proposed action described in paragraph (2)(a) or (b) or decides not to take that action, the Electoral Commissioner must give

the person notice in writing of the action or the decision.

(7) If:

(a) under subsection (6) the Electoral Commissioner gives the person notice in writing of the action; and

(b) the Electoral Commissioner has received a claim for transfer of the person's enrolment to the new address;

the Electoral Commissioner need not give the person notice under subparagraph 102(1)(b)(ii).

Electronic notification

(8) A notice may be given under this section by an electronic communication as defined in the Electronic Transactions Act 1999, whether or not the person consents as described in paragraph 9(2)(d) of that Act. This does not limit the ways in which the notice may be given.

103B Enrolling unenrolled person without claim or notice from the person

Application

(1) This section applies if the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that a person:

(a) is entitled to enrolment; and

(b) has lived at an address (the proposed enrolment address) in a Subdivision (the relevant Subdivision) for at least one month; and

(c) the person is not enrolled.

Notice of proposed action to enrol a person

(2) The Electoral Commissioner may give the person a notice in writing setting out the date of the notice, the proposed enrolment address and the fact that the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that the person lives at that address and stating:

(a) that the Electoral Commissioner proposes to enter the person's name and other particulars required by section 83 on the Roll for the relevant Subdivision (the proposed action); and

(b) that the Electoral Commissioner will not take the proposed action if satisfied by information given by the person to the Electoral Commissioner within 28 days after the date of the notice that the person:

(i) does not live at the proposed enrolment address; or

(ii) is not entitled to enrolment.

Taking action to enrol a person

(3) The Electoral Commissioner may take the proposed action unless satisfied by information given by the person to the Electoral Commissioner within 28 days after the notice that the person:

- (a) does not live at the proposed enrolment address; or
 - (b) is not entitled to enrolment.
- (4) The Electoral Commissioner may take the proposed action before the end of the 28 days if the person indicates to the Electoral Commissioner within that period that the person:
- (a) does live at the proposed enrolment address; and
 - (b) is entitled to enrolment.
- (5) Despite subsections (3) and (4), the Electoral Commissioner must not take the proposed action within a period:
- (a) starting at 8 pm on the day of the close of the Rolls for an election to be held in a Division to which the Roll for the relevant Subdivision relates; and
 - (b) ending on the close of the poll for the election.

Notice that action has or has not been taken

- (6) If the Electoral Commissioner takes the proposed action, or decides not to take that action, the Electoral Commissioner must give the person notice in writing of:
- (a) the action or the decision; and
 - (b) the person's full name and address as entered on the Roll for the person (if applicable).
- (7) If:
- (a) under subsection (6) the Electoral Commissioner gives the person notice in writing of the action; and
 - (b) the Electoral Commissioner has received a claim for enrolment in respect of the relevant address;
- the Electoral Commissioner need not give the person notice under subparagraph 102(1)(b)(ii).

Electronic notification

- (8) A notice may be given under this section by an electronic communication as defined in the Electronic Transactions Act 1999, whether or not the person consents as described in paragraph 9(2)(d) of that Act. This does not limit the ways the notice may be given.

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Objections FDEU

In February 2025, the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* was updated to replace the phrase 'unsound mind' with the more inclusive 'cognitive impairment'. References on this page have been updated accordingly.

On this page...

- ✓ [Pending objections impacted by FDEU](#)
- ✓ [Objecting to an FDEU enrolment](#)
 - ✓ [Source Documents](#)
 - ✓ [Cognitive impairment](#)
 - ✓ [Decisions on Objection notifications](#)

Pending objections impacted by FDEU

If information is received that an elector has moved to a new address, emphasis should be placed on enrolling the elector at their new address and not on removing them from the roll.

When attempting to commence a [manual objection](#) on a client on the grounds of non-residence, the system will advise the user if the client has an active application in progress. The user will need to investigate. Note, legislatively the AEC cannot commence non-residence objection action if an FDEU application is in progress s 114(6).

Objecting to an FDEU enrolment

If a person is directly enrolled in error, they must be objected from the roll in accordance with Part IX of the CEA which provides that:

- an elector's enrolment may be objected to
- prescribes the form of objection
- sets out the procedures for determining objections.

Source Documents

Information that an elector is no longer eligible for enrolment can come from:

- continuous roll update (CRU) activities. If information from CRU activity shows an elector has left their enrolled address, objection action must be started.
- rejected enrolment applications
- failure to vote notices
- local government authorities
- state electoral authorities (including advice of state electoral mail returned undelivered)
- members of the public

- returned enrolment acknowledgements
- official mail returned by Australia Post and
- advice from MPs including returned to sender mail.

When information is provided via the telephone divisional staff should encourage the person to complete and send back any letters they may have received so they can be processed. Staff should record any information taken over the phone on a Notification of Enrolment Change form so this information can be used as a source document to commence objection action.

With the introduction of FDEU, letters returned with the descriptor “RTS – Return to sender”, “Left Address”, “Unknown”, and “address unoccupied” that are received by a division after records have been applied to the roll (28 days after the issue of the Letter of Intent) will be automatically identified by the system to enable manual objection action to be commenced. These objections are to be raised in GENESIS – manual objection system.

Cognitive impairment

If a person is claimed to have 'cognitive impairment' (referred to as 'unsound mind' prior to 2025) the [private objection](#) process must be followed.

Objections should only be raised when the [delegate](#) believes that the information they have received is correct. If a [delegate](#) can establish that information is frivolous they should ignore the information received. Objection notices should not be issued when an elector's enrolment was falsely obtained (these can be removed at any time by the DOM), or an elector is enrolled under [special enrolment provisions](#) such as [Itinerant electors](#) or [Eligible Overseas Electors](#).

When information is received that will result in objection action, the objection should be processed within one working day. If received in the morning, then objections should be entered through the relevant system on that same day. If information is received later in the day it is practical to assume it can be entered into the objection system the next morning.

When sending objection letters the response period given to an elector to respond is 20 days. Two or three days should also be added to this timeframe to allow for mail delivery as the objection period standard is 20 days for the elector to respond once they have received their notice. The [Australia Post Mail Delivery Timetable](#) provides a guide to delivery times. Determinations to the objection will be made at the end of the 20 day notice period. Electors will then be advised on the determination outcome.

Processing responses to Objection notifications.

An elector who receives an objection notice can respond:

- in writing
- by phone
- in person, or
- by completing an enrolment application with the details of their new address.

If there are any changes to the electors name and/or address details they must complete a new enrolment application. **All enrolment applications and amendment source documents must be processed promptly to stop additional objection notices being sent.**

Decisions on Objection notifications

If a reply is received to an objection notice, the [delegate](#) can decide to:

- 'allow' the objection and remove the elector's name from the roll, or
- 'dismiss' the objection and keep the elector's name on the roll.

The decision is made based on the information that led to the objection notice being issued in the first place, as well as any additional information that the elector supplies.

If the person does not reply to a Objection letter within 20 days after the notification date, the elector's name is removed from the electoral roll and a notice describing the [delegate's](#) decision is mailed.

All processing of responses to objection notifications is to occur in line with the instructions set out in Roll-How.

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Roll Why

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Ancillary FDEU Policy

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FDEU and decision making

The FDEU process involves making two decisions, the decision to send a notification letter and the decision to update the roll. In practice these decisions are often made by the CRU subsystem of RMANS, with guidance by divisional staff at key decision points, such as pre-mailout processing, response processing and apply investigations. For some transactions the decisions are made directly by divisional staff, such as during FDEU apply investigations.

The power to send letters and update the roll has been delegated by the Electoral Commissioner to all AEC staff, who must exercise their delegations in line with this policy.



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Response Processing

Responses are the second major point of interaction by divisions in the FDEU process. Response processing is vital in ensuring that individuals are not enrolled incorrectly.

Note that this section on response processing does not cover responses which are provided after the update has occurred, which is covered by [Post Update Corrections](#). It also does not cover enquiries which do not lead to a response being recorded. These are covered by [Elector Enquiries](#).

On this page...

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- ▼ [Aim](#)
- ▼ [Response processing general principles](#)
- ▼ [Response communication methods](#)

Process

Electors and others who have received a notification at the notification step may contact their Division, where they have a concern, or wish to make a change in relation to the notification letter. This includes things like Return to Sender mail.

Aim

The aim of response processing is to gain information from the elector (in a way that is easy for them) to ensure that the roll accurately reflects the situation of the elector.

Response processing general principles

If there is any reason to doubt that the transaction in question is not correct, record a response which will stop the transaction.

You can and should contact the elector if you have any doubt about what response to record.

Response communication methods

The type of response will determine the kind of action the AEC can take, based on the powers of the AEC to affect enrolment changes. Responses will fall into one of three categories:

- Enrolment forms or equivalent: this includes returned letters of intent which were completed correctly. These are considered substantially compliant with an enrolment form.
- Written advice: this includes anything which is capable of producing a written or permanent record. This would include, but is not limited to emails, comments on a letter, SMS and other documents.

- Other temporal communications: this is anything which cannot be considered written advice or enrolment forms. It would include telephone calls, but also other transactions without a permanent record, such as Skype, or people attending an office in person.

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