



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

Federal Election Reporting Guide

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From the Commissioner

As a media representative, you are a crucial part of the Australian federal election. Accurate and reliable communication, particularly regarding the electoral process itself, is more important than it has ever been.

The sheer number of communication channels, and the pervasive nature and amount of disinformation and misinformation present a significant challenge as voters try to inform themselves about the electoral process.

Please use the resources within this guide to avail yourself of key procedural information and to contact my staff when you need to. We are here not just to provide the logistical operation required to deliver a federal election but also to accurately inform the nearly 17 million Australian voters about the voting system and how to participate effectively.

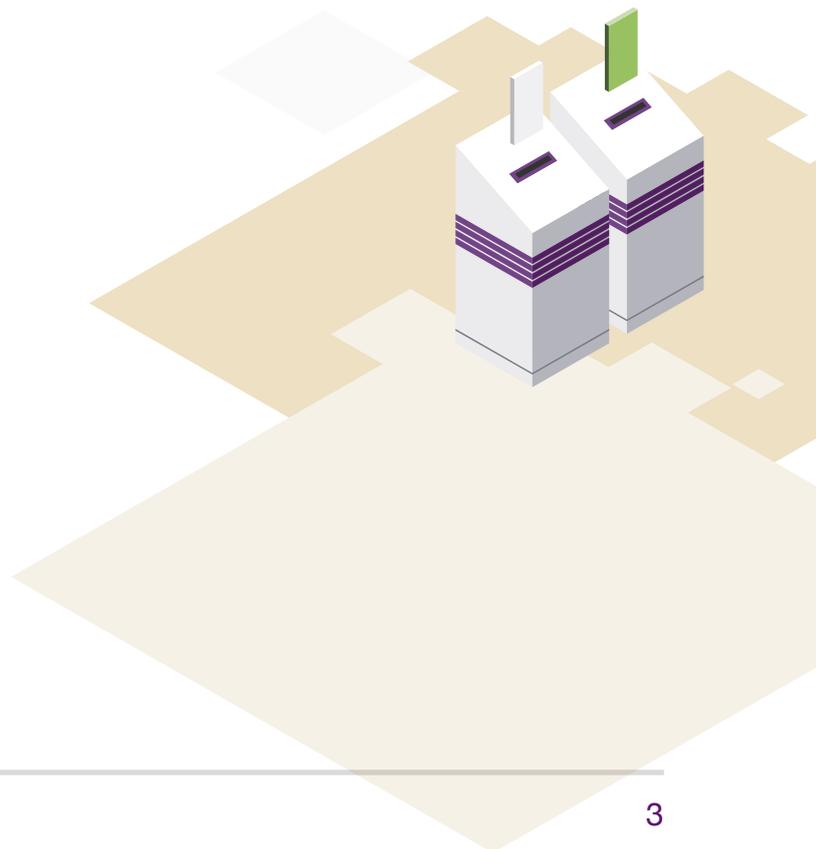
I appreciate your efforts to be one of the voices of reason and integrity, to appropriately scrutinise (as is your job) and to always be mindful of the significant impact that your words will have during this important democratic event.



Tom Rogers
Australian Electoral Commissioner

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The guide

The media play an important role in shaping social attitudes and perceptions of voting.

The AEC is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with media and communications professionals to accurately report on the process and outcome of major elections to the Australian public.

This guide is designed to provide all relevant background information required to report accurately and efficiently.

The rules

Members of the media who would like to visit a voting or counting centre must first contact the AEC's media team. This is essential to ensure you are authorised to attend, the officers at the venue are notified and that you are briefed on protocols at polling places.

Once at a polling place you must follow the guidelines.

The resources

Website: **aec.gov.au**
Media releases: **aec.gov.au/media** and distributed via Stream
Socials: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
Imagery: Flickr
Our contacts: See the front/back cover footer

 Search for **AEC** or **@AusElectoralCom**

The experts

AEC TV is a series of videos featuring AEC staff explaining key AEC processes. **[Youtube.com/AECTV](https://www.youtube.com/AECTV)**

AEC spokespeople are available by contacting the media team - they include the Electoral Commissioner, each state and territory manager and a national spokesperson.



The candidates

SEATS

151 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

40 SENATE

- HALF THE SENATE POSITIONS FROM EACH STATE (6 PER STATE)
- FOUR TERRITORY-BASED SENATE SEATS (TWO PER TERRITORY)

	2013	2016	2019
	Saturday 7 September	Saturday 2 July	Saturday 18 May
Candidates	1,717	1,625	1,514
HoR	1,188	994	1,056
Senate	529	631	458

The voters

This election will be one of the most complete electoral rolls in history with around 17 million Australians enrolled to vote. For the latest national figures, go to the information centre on aec.gov.au

	2013	2016	2019
	Saturday 7 September	Saturday 2 July	Saturday 18 May
Enrolled	14.7 million	15.7 million	16.4 million
Enrolled %	92%	95%	97.0%
Turnout			
HoR	93.23%	91.01%	91.89%
Senate	93.88%	91.93 %	92.48 %
Informality			
HoR	5.91%	5.05%	5.54%
Senate	2.96%	3.94%	3.81%

The operations

ON ELECTION DAY

100,000 TEMPORARY STAFF

500+ EARLY VOTING CENTRES + **7,000+** POLLING PLACES

25,000 COPIES OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL + **5,800** ELECTRONIC CERTIFIED LISTS

70,000 BALLOT BOXES

- 155,000 VOTING SCREENS
- 10,000 RECYCLING BINS

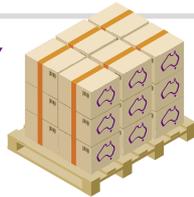


60M BALLOT PAPERS

- 4.5M PENCILS
- 160 KILOMETRES OF STRING

850,000 SECURITY SEALS

- 26,000 ROLLS OF TAMPER PROOF TAPE



40,000 BALLOT TRANSPORT CONTAINERS + **40,000** TRANSPORT ROUTES

63,000L OF HAND SANITISER



34,000 BOTTLES OF SURFACE CLEANER

10.5M HOUSEHOLD GUIDES DELIVERED



The process

Early voting has been rising for a number of elections in just about every jurisdiction around the world that offers it. During the pandemic some jurisdictions have seen the number of people voting at early voting centres or casting a postal vote rise significantly.

	2013	2016	2019
Early voting			
Pre-poll as %	18.15%	22.67%	32.53%
Postal as %	8.26%	8.58%	8.27%
pp & post as %	26.41%	31.25%	40.8%
BLV telephone votes	2,832	1,998	2,044
Antarctic votes	37	41	49

The safeguards

A range of measures are in place to help protect voters and secure electoral processes. Each election we implement enhanced integrity measures to the voting process and work closely with partner agencies as part of the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce to monitor and respond to emerging threats.

COVID-19 safety measures will of course be in place at all voting locations as well as for other activities that support the conduct of the election.

Go to aec.gov.au/safeguards for detailed information

The changes

Since the previous federal election in 2019 there have been a range of changes put in place.

Redistributions have been completed in Victoria, where the new seat of Hawke was established, and Western Australia where the seat of Stirling was abolished.

Legislative changes have also been made that changed party registration requirements, amended the early voting period and provided a range of procedural efficiencies for the counting process.

The communication

The Australian parliament has determined that the Electoral Act should not regulate the content of political messages contained in electoral communications. Rather, the intent of the Act is to ensure electors are informed about the source of electoral communications and to ensure that these communications do not mislead or deceive electors about the way in which a vote must be cast.

Each election the AEC conducts a digital advertising campaign called 'Stop and Consider' that reminds people to check the source of the communication they consume. This campaign, and our efforts to correct any disinformation regarding the electoral process itself, have been increased for this federal election.

aec.gov.au/stopandconsider

The count

Right, not rushed - that's our motto.

While the count begins at 6pm on election night final results will take time. Whether there is an indication of an overall result on election night has always depended on how close the result is and how many people vote by post or away from home.

As always, our focus is on integrity of the results and the security of ballot papers.

Go to aec.gov.au/counting

The results

A link to the tally room will be made available at aec.gov.au just before 6pm on election day.

The AEC also provides a results feed in raw-data formats to allow media outlets with appropriate software to use the data for graphics and analysis.

More information about the media feed is available at aec.gov.au/media

