



30 December 2017

Mr Roger Wilkins
Chair, iVote® System Inquiry
c/o Electoral Commission NSW

Dear Mr Wilkins

RE: Inquiry into the iVote® System

Australian Election Company is a stakeholder experienced in the conduct of NSW local government elections, including elections for multiple councils in 2012, 2016 and most recently for Maitland Shire Council in 2017. Australian Election Company also successfully and professionally conducted the inaugural council election for Norfolk Island in 2016.

My company, Australian Election Company, seeks to recommend that all future references for the function of technology assisted voting are termed in a generic manner, which accurately and appropriately describes that desired function. For example, the term “electronic” or “technological voting” should be utilised instead of the Product Trademark “iVote®” so as to ensure opportunity for future proofing, which encompasses any technological, corporate or other change/s to the internet and telephone system that may arise. The utilisation of generic terminology in legislation, regulatory frameworks and guiding documents ensures the delivery and performance of the function, rather than an application of a Product.

Australian Election Company has significant and extensive experience in conducting electronic voting through the use of internet only, telephone only, or a combination of telephone and internet voting since the early 2000’s and offers its recommendations from this experience.

The voting system my Company utilises is powerful and fully redundant. For example, previous elections we have conducted, some 1,200 employees voted by Internet, in the first minute of the Ballot; and with elections or ballots being successfully conducted using a combination of attendance, telephone, postal and internet voting, without issue. I have personally successfully conducted elections utilising voter choice of internet or postal voting methods and for an election with 428,000 eligible voters.

By comparison, in terms of system security; the systems utilised by Australian Election Company always apply a minimum of two (2) level authentication model, but can apply multiple level authentication. For practical terms, for two level authentication, usually a unique identifier (for example an Elector ID number) and a “Unique” Password comprising of four to eight digits, is used.

The Passwords may be numeric only or a combination of alpha/numeric. The Passwords are generated within Australian Election Company and remain secret to Australian Election Company and the relevant eligible elector.

The electronic voting system used by Australian Election Company is hosted in a secure Tier 3 data centre. All data transfers to and from the system are made using encrypted TLS1.2 encryption technology that prevents in-transit data capture and protects both personal information about the voter and the vote itself. The data arrives safely at its confirmed destination and is not visible to anyone else.

Australian Election Company provides trusted, Election services, we employ user ID/Password access control and log all access attempts such that there is a clear audit trail back to all those operating on the system.



AUSTRALIAN ELECTION COMPANY

All our hardware is replicated with full redundancy. The web servers and application servers are load-balanced for best performance. If any piece of the equipment fails, others will service the load until the failed device is returned to service. "State-of-the-art" intrusion detection and firewall systems are applied to ensure that an Election server is safe from unauthorised access and denial of service attacks.

The systems utilised by Australian Election Company have complete transparency and provisions for auditing with routine annual independent audits conducted to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the systems.

There is no matching of an elector name to vote selection(s) and accordingly, Australian Election Company will guarantee confidentiality of an elector's vote. This preserves the integrity of the Election or Ballot. Should an elector attempt to vote twice using Internet (or Telephone) Voting (or both these media), voting access will be denied.

Australian Electronic Company, from its extensive electronic and electoral experience makes the following recommendations for improvement to the current NSWEC system and processes for technologically assisted voting:

- Ensure reference to technology assisted voting is generic to accurately describe the function.
- Remove conditional application for technology assisted voting and broaden its accessibility to all eligible enrolled electors.
- Enhance the process and application of the technology to remove the archaic requirement for the production of a ballot paper image and printing of the electronic image.
- The secrecy of the elector's vote under the current system has questionable / perception of inadequate secrecy separating the elector's ID from their vote cast.
- That the technology used has the demonstrated capability to provide the accurate tabulation of results, within hours of the close of the poll.
- The effective utilisation of an accurate and appropriate electronic voting system and processes will result in significant cost savings across the logistical aspects including polling official staffing costs, premise hire and printing costs.

I formed Australian Election Company in 2006, after working in the election industry for over 46 years. I possess detailed knowledge and experience of election theory, policies, practices and procedures, together with a demonstrated capacity to project manage large scale electoral events in environmentally and/or culturally challenging situations.

I worked with the Australian Electoral Commission for 26 years; over 20 years in senior and executive positions. On the basis of my electoral experience, I would be amenable to provide further recommendations, expertise or in fact demonstration of the systems, processes and reporting that Australian Election Company utilises, for your knowledge, comparison and assessment.

Yours sincerely



Richard Kidd
Director and Principal

Australian Election Company

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