

2006 - 2007



A N N U A L R E P O R T

The Hon Morris Iemma MP
Premier
Lvl 40, Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
Sydney New South Wales 2000

31 October 2007

Dear Premier

I have pleasure in submitting for your presentation to both Houses of Parliament the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the New South Wales Electoral Commission (NSWEC).

The activities of the NSWEC for the year ended 30 June 2007 are reviewed in this Report. The Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Annual Report (Departments) Act 1985* and the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

Yours sincerely



Colin Barry
Electoral Commissioner

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The New South Wales Electoral Commission

History

The New South Wales Electoral Commission (NSWEC) occupies a special position within the structure of government in New South Wales. The NSWEC has its roots in the development of representative government dating back to 1843 when the first election of 24 representatives to the NSW Council was conducted by the Elections Branch in the Chief Secretary's Department. The Council was composed of 36 members, 24 elected and 12 appointed. At that election 9,315 electors were enrolled to vote. In 1928 the office of Electoral Commissioner was established pursuant to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*. In 2007 there are some 4.4 million electors enrolled in NSW.

NSWEC's Mission

The NSWEC's mission is to provide high quality election services that are impartial, effective, efficient and in accordance with the law.

NSWEC Values

The NSWEC values:

- integrity in the way that we approach our work;
- impartiality in the conduct of elections to gain and maintain the confidence of clients and the community;
- respect for the needs of all in our community to ensure equal access to democracy;
- professionalism in providing election services; and
- a learning culture amongst our staff members to ensure that the NSWEC reflects on how it delivers its services and remains a modern, forward thinking organisation that can meet the challenges of emerging issues.

Work Governed by Legislation

The NSWEC's work is governed by the following 10 main pieces of legislation:

- *Constitution Act 1902*
- *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*
- *Election Funding Act 1981*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *The City of Sydney Act 1988*
- *Registered Clubs Act 1976*
- *Industrial Relations Act 1996*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*
- *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002.*

In September 2006 the NSW Parliament passed a Bill to amend the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*. The Bill contained a number of recommendations made by the Electoral Districts Commissioners, the Council on the Cost and Quality of Government (CCQG) and the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSEM).

These amendments to the Act increased the responsibility of the Electoral Commissioner and changed a number of procedural aspects of the conduct of elections including postal voting, pre-poll voting, nominations by registered political parties, electoral posters and registration of electoral material including how to vote cards. An amendment included in the Bill changed the name of the State Electoral Office to the New South Wales Electoral Commission.

Electoral Responsibilities

The Electoral Commissioner is responsible for the registration of political parties, enrolment of electors, preparation of lists and rolls of electors and the conduct of elections. The Electoral Commissioner is the returning officer for the periodic Legislative Council elections and is also one of three Electoral Districts Commissioners appointed by the Governor to carry out electoral district redistributions according to law.

The NSWEC is the administrative agency by which the Electoral Commissioner exercises statutory functions.

The NSWEC:

- conducts elections for the Parliament of NSW and for local government Councils;
- conducts elections for registered clubs, statutory boards and State registered industrial organisations;
- works with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) in the management of the electoral roll; and
- provides administrative support to the Election Funding Authority (EFA).

Resources

As at 30 June 2007 the NSWEC had 33 permanent employees. During the year the NSWEC earned \$1,209,000 from user pays and commercial activities and received \$54.3 million from the NSW Government for recurrent expenses. As it was an election year the NSWEC received additional funding from NSW Treasury to cover the cost of conducting the election. The total cost of conducting the election was \$38.6 million.

Stakeholders

Our stakeholders are:

- the people and electors of New South Wales;
- the Parliament of New South Wales;
- local government Councils;
- candidates and other participants at elections;
- registered political parties;
- industrial organisations, registered clubs and statutory bodies;
- the Election Funding Authority; and
- the media.

The Year at a Glance

Key Activities

KEY ACTIVITIES 2006-07	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Number of electors enrolled as at 30 June	4.3M	4.3M	4.3M	4.4M
Parliamentary General Elections conducted	-	-	-	1
Parliamentary by-elections conducted	-	1	4	-
Local government ordinary elections conducted	338	9	1	0
Local government by-elections conducted	-	8	15	14
Registered club elections conducted	43	48	36	22
Statutory board and industrial ballots conducted and enterprise agreements managed	48	51	41	36
Staff numbers as at 30 June (permanent)	19	19	33	33
Total Expenditure	\$13.2M	\$9.2M	\$12.8M	\$53.2M

Review and Reform

Council on the Cost and Quality of Government

The Council on the Cost and Quality of Government undertook a major review of the NSWEC in 2004-05. An overview of the work to implement the review recommendations endorsed by the Government can be found at page 15.

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

In September 2005 the Committee released its report on the inquiry into the administration of the 2003 election and related matters. More information is available at page 17.

In May 2006 the Committee conducted an inquiry into voter enrolment in NSW. The NSWEC made a submission and details on this inquiry are available at page 18.

Legislative Reform

During the reporting year, the NSW Government passed amendments to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*. See page 19 for more information.

Our Election Services

Objectives

- To provide excellent, impartial and reliable election services that meet the needs of the people and electors of NSW and other stakeholders including the Parliament.
- To ensure our electoral processes are efficient, accurate and support equal access to democracy.

Main Achievements and Events

- Implemented amendments made to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*.
- Implemented a programme management approach to planning and managing the 2007 State election projects.
- Introduced a new computerised election management application (EMA) for the use of returning officers.
- Published new party registration handbooks for prospective applicants.
- Managed the continued registration process for 48 registered parties and the de-registration of 3 registered parties.
- Implemented the new returning officer and returning officer support programme.
- Implemented a comprehensive media communications strategy and provided media assistance during the State election and Local Government by-elections.
- Delivered a comprehensive voter information campaign.
- Conducted a review of polling places and declared institutions and their staffing to bring them into line with federal facilities.
- Implemented the recommendations from the Equal Access to Democracy Plan in operations for the election.
- Reformed the procedures for managing the Legislative Council count and enhanced software for counting vote.
- Conducted 14 local government by-elections, 22 registered club elections and 36 statutory boards and industrial ballots.
- Conducted a successful State election in March 2007.

- Issued approximately 180,000 penalty notices for failure to vote in Local Government by-election or State elections.
- Continued implementation of the approach to Local Government election services to ensure they are provided on a true cost-recovery basis.
- Implemented a programme management approach to planning and managing the 2008 Local Government election projects.

Challenge

- The main challenge in the reporting period has been to ensure that the March 2007 State election was well conducted, according to law and without Court challenge.

Our Operations

Objectives

- To maintain a strong system of governance.
- To attract and retain knowledgeable and appropriately skilled people.
- To support our services with robust, relevant and responsive business processes including a systematic programme management and risk management approach to 2007 State election preparations.

Achievements and Events

- Developed the NSWEC's Results and Services Plan 2006-07 to quantify the desired outcomes the NSWEC wishes to achieve from the services it delivers.
- Developed and implemented several business improvement projects.
- Developed a new Information Management and Technology Strategic Plan.
- Supported staff with training.
- Launched a new website for the NSWEC and the EFA.
- Adopted a new corporate brand, including the organisation's new name, across all publications and advertising.
- Implemented legislative changes regarding access to and sale of the NSW electoral roll.
- Provided advice to the community through an average of over 59,000 website visits per month, and in excess of 275,000 telephone and email inquiries during the reporting period.
- Established a new website specifically for election staff recruitment.

Challenges

- Reviewing the Corporate Plan and developing business planning systems.
- Reviewing the Privacy Management Plan.
- Reviewing training needs of election officials to improve training provided for the 2008 Local Government election.
- Implementing a fully integrated electronic records management system.

Our Finances

Objectives

- To prudently manage our financial performance in accordance with the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the Treasurer's Directions.
- To provide effective financial management systems within a recognised risk management framework.

Achievements and Events

- Introduced programme budgeting and implemented appropriate financial reporting to support business requirements;
- Aligned NSWEC's budget to services and worked with Treasury to improve the NSWEC's Results and Services Plan;
- Introduced an activity-based costing model to prepare the budget for the 2007 State election;
- Integrated human resource management and payroll systems;
- Introduced a centralised accounts payable system for returning officers;
- Implemented full cost-recovery for the provision of Local Government election services;
- Managed the NSWEC's financial activities;
- Managed the NSWEC's human resources including providing training opportunities, recruitment and payroll; and
- Implemented a centralised payroll system for over 20,000 electoral employees for the 2007 State election.

Challenges

- Promote election participants' awareness of obligations under the *Election Funding Act 1981*;
- Increase level of compliance by registered political parties and candidates in relation to the disclosure of election funding; and
- Deliver appropriate election services across New South Wales in a fiscally responsible manner.



Electoral Commissioner's Report

This is the first Annual Report for the New South Wales Electoral Commission which was established in October 2006 as a result of amendments to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* (the Act).

The year in review saw the implementation of the recommendations of the Council on the Cost and Quality of Government review (2005). This included implementing a new organisational structure for the NSWEC; appointing new Directors and senior staff; and a move to new premises.

These amendments to the Act came into force in October 2006 and made significant improvements to the administration of the electoral process.

The main areas of reform included:

- establishing the NSWEC as a body corporate;
- establishing the Electoral Commissioner as responsible for the administration of the State election;
- modernising arrangements regarding the role of returning officers in the conduct of elections;
- providing for registered political parties, Members of Parliament and candidates to receive a copy of the electoral roll subject to certain conditions;
- clarifying provisions for candidates and parties regarding the display of electoral posters and the distribution of how to vote cards at polling places on election day; and
- making improvements to postal and pre-poll voting process.

The new organisational structure for the NSWEC has provided a logical basis for organising work groups and for the delivery of high quality electoral services to our stakeholders. The preparation for a State election is a large scale logistical operation. The NSWEC introduced programme management as a basis for planning and monitoring key projects for the 2007 State election. This required the commitment of all staff members to approach work in a more structured environment to ensure the timely delivery of projects. Programme management is also an important approach to risk management within the NSWEC as it enables the senior managers to have a sound understanding of the status of key projects.

The NSWEC is conscious of the cost of providing election services. There is often a tension between stakeholders' expectations for services and the capacity of the NSWEC to pay for the services. The demographic history of NSW is that more and more people are moving from rural and regional areas to the coast. As well, the population is ageing and this brings challenges in providing voting facilities at a reasonable cost. It is not possible to have a polling place in every rural hamlet and coastal location as the cost of such services is prohibitive. The NSWEC developed a bottom up budget for the 2007 State election taking into account recommendations made by CCQG. This approach enabled the NSWEC to provide government with information regarding the real cost of the election. In the past it was not possible to identify costs of key services.

I am pleased to report that the 2007 State election was conducted without any Court challenges to the results. In 2 electorates candidates requested a recount and in each case the returning officer conducted the recount in the presence of scrutineers without change to the result.

Following the election the NSWEC conducted debriefings with election officials, returning officers, registered political parties and media. The results of the debriefings are an important foundation for improving services to key stakeholders. In general, all stakeholders were supportive of the direction that the NSWEC is now taking. The new website was particularly identified as being a helpful source of information.

The NSWEC has produced a report on the administration and conduct of the 2007 State election. The report gives information on services provided; comments on issues that arose during the election; provides commentary on future directions; and details results for each district. The results of the Legislative Council election are on the NSWEC website and are available on CD Rom.

The focus in 2007-08 is on the preparation and conduct of the September 2008 Local Government elections. In many ways Local Government elections are more challenging than the State election. There are some 152 Local Government Councils and the NSWEC is required to conduct the elections for each Council. Unlike the State election, the Government provides no specific funding for the conduct of Local Government elections and each Council is required to pay the full cost of its election. A real challenge for the NSWEC is to work with each Council to ensure quality election services at a minimum cost.

During the reporting year the NSWEC reviewed its charging rates regarding non-parliamentary elections. Councils have now been provided with a budget estimate for the cost of their election based on a proportion of the overall likely cost of conducting the Local Government elections. NSWEC staff will meet with each Council to discuss election services. This is an important process in ensuring that each Council has a clear understanding of the true costs of services and furthermore enables each Council to have a say in how those services will be provided.

In the year ahead we will develop a new 3 year Corporate Plan; undertake further maintenance of the computerised election management application including working with the Electoral Commission of Queensland on joint developments; make use of geospatial information to, amongst other things, assist in identifying suitable locations for polling places and assist Councils re-draw internal ward boundaries; and investigate approaches to improve the quality of the electoral roll by assisting citizens who are eligible to enrol to be correctly enrolled.

The challenges will be met with our dedicated workforce who are keen to take advantage of opportunities to use technology in order to provide better electoral services to our stakeholders.



Colin Barry
Electoral Commissioner



Review and Reform

Council on the Cost and Quality of Government Review

In 2004-05 the Council on the Cost and Quality of Government undertook a wide-ranging review of the NSWEC and the Government endorsed a number of recommendations for strategic and operational change.

Implementation of the review recommendations

During the reporting year the NSWEC completed the implementation of those recommendations for which it has direct responsibility and has worked with the Government to implement those recommendations requiring amendments to the Act (See Legislative Reform page 19).

In the reporting year the NSWEC has:

- reviewed staffing levels of field staff and the number and location of polling places to ensure optimal staffing and budget arrangements (over a 4 year cycle);
- continued to monitor financial and budget management systems, including global and divisional budgeting and activity-based costing of services;
- implemented a performance and programme management strategy for the delivery of all core services, covering:
 - a strategic programme approach for planning and conducting elections on a 4 year basis

- environmental scanning and business planning
- a formal stakeholder management programme including needs analysis, consultations and satisfaction surveys
- a communications strategy for all stakeholders based on State and Local Government election cycles
- clear public guidelines and reports on the conduct, administration and outcomes of elections
- relevant training for head office and field staff, particularly in project management skills
- a programme for mapping, re-engineering and documenting core business functions and processes
- improved risk management controls, including a more strategic internal auditing programme;
- engaged the AEC to provide their staff to assist in managing the count of Legislative Council ballot papers;
- implemented a programme to increase support to returning officers (and other field staff) including:
 - updating, compiling and simplifying procedure manuals using plain English
 - improving returning officer training and formal post election evaluation processes.
- published comprehensive plain English manuals and guidelines for candidates and registered political parties; and
- implemented a new website which provides readily accessible information to stakeholders and clients especially during elections.

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

In 2004 the NSW Parliament established a Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters to inquire into and report on any of the following matters upon reference from either House of Parliament or a Minister.

- (a) The following electoral laws:
- (i) *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* (other than Part 2)
 - (ii) *Election Funding Act 1981*
 - (iii) those provisions of the *Constitution Act 1902* that relate to the procedures for, and conduct of, elections for members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council (other than sections 27, 28 and 28A); and
- (b) The administration of and practices associated with the electoral laws described at (a).

In October 2004 the Committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into the 2003 State election and related matters.

Report on the 2003 State Election

In September 2005 the Committee tabled its report on the Inquiry into the 2003 State election and related matters. A copy of the report can be found on the New South Wales Parliament website (www.parliament.nsw.gov.au).

The Committee made 34 recommendations under 3 broad categories:

- the role of the State Electoral Office
 - electoral legislation
 - resources of the SEO
 - input by political parties in the operations of the SEO
 - electoral education.
- administration of elections
 - improve the lines of accountability for officers involved in the election process
 - consistency in advice provided by polling officials and staff of the SEO
 - consistency of procedures across State and Federal elections
 - postal voting
 - how to vote material
 - information for scrutineers
 - information about and designation of polling place
 - declaration voting
 - overseas voting arrangements
 - reporting on elections by the SEO
 - nominations process
 - voting by people with disabilities
 - security of ballot papers
 - political advertising
 - voter identification
 - confirmation of enrolment and voter registration
 - counting of votes for the Legislative Council at the 2003 State election.

The NSWEC has commenced implementing those agreed recommendations for which it has direct responsibility. For more detail see the Achievements of Elections Branch (page 22), Corporate Communications Branch (page 31), Finance and Administration Branch (page 40) and Information Technology Branch (page 44).

2006 Inquiry into Voter Enrolment

In May 2006 the JSCEM received a reference from the Premier of NSW, The Hon Morris Iemma, MP, to inquire into and report on:

1. the current level of voter enrolment in New South Wales, particularly among young people and any other group with special needs in relation to voter enrolment;
2. the impact on voter enrolment of Commonwealth reforms to introduce new identification requirements for people seeking to enrol to vote, or change their enrolment details; and
3. any additional strategies to maintain or improve the level of voter enrolment and, to ensure that the roll remains up to date, with particular regard to the needs of particular groups (such as young people) and other demographic changes (such as the ageing population).

NSWEC Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

On 25 May 2006 the JSCEM called for submissions on matters within the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry. The NSWEC made a submission to the JSCEM regarding each of the Terms of Reference. The Final Report was issued by the Committee in September 2006 and a copy of the report can be found on the New South Wales Parliament website www.parliament.nsw.gov.au.

The Committee made 13 recommendations:

- that the Electoral Commissioner be given a specific mandate to conduct research on electoral issues under the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1911*;
- that the Electoral Commissioner liaise with the Australian Electoral Commission on the wording of the new enrolment form to ensure that the different requirements for Commonwealth and New South Wales elections are clearly stated on the form;
- that the government investigate the feasibility of and requirements for a smart enrolment system following the conclusion of the 2007 NSW election;
- that the State Electoral Office draft material on the process of enrolment that can be displayed and distributed by other New South Wales government agencies;
- that the government investigate how a system of automatic enrolment for certain groups such as young people can be implemented when a study is conducted on the feasibility of a smart enrolment system;
- that consideration be given to implementing a strategy to encourage senior high school students to enrol similar to the bounty scheme that is applied in Tasmania;
- that consideration be given to implementing a strategy where information on enrolment is sent to young people on their 17th birthday similar to that currently applied in Victoria if the proposed amendments to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* are enacted;

-
- that the State Electoral Office consider the possibility of using Vision Australia offices across New South Wales as polling places, including pre-poll;
 - that the State Electoral Office conduct an audit of polling places used at the March 2007 election in relation to a number of disability access issues;
 - that the State Electoral Office investigate the use of electronic voting for specific groups of people, utilising a system which provides a printed record of the vote, with a view to introducing such facilities for the 2011 NSW election;
 - that the State Electoral Office work with peak bodies to develop information on electoral processes that are simple and easy to understand for people with intellectual disability;
 - that the criteria in the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* to lodge a postal and pre-poll vote be amended to include an elderly person who is unable to get to a polling booth on election day; and
 - that the State Electoral Office liaise with the Australian Electoral Commission and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to develop strategies to promote active and informed citizenship among indigenous Australians.

A number of these recommendations have been implemented, others are under consideration.

Legislative Reform

In September 2006 the New South Wales Parliament passed amendments to the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*. These amendments commenced on 20 October 2006 and were based on the Electoral Districts Commissioners' recommendations and the CCQG and JSCEM reviews into New South Wales electoral issues.

In 2004-05 the CCQG made recommendations that the Act be amended to give the NSW Electoral Commissioner similar responsibilities, authority and accountabilities to his counterparts in other jurisdictions, for example, overall management of election processes, direct supervision of returning officers and accountability for the accuracy of election results.

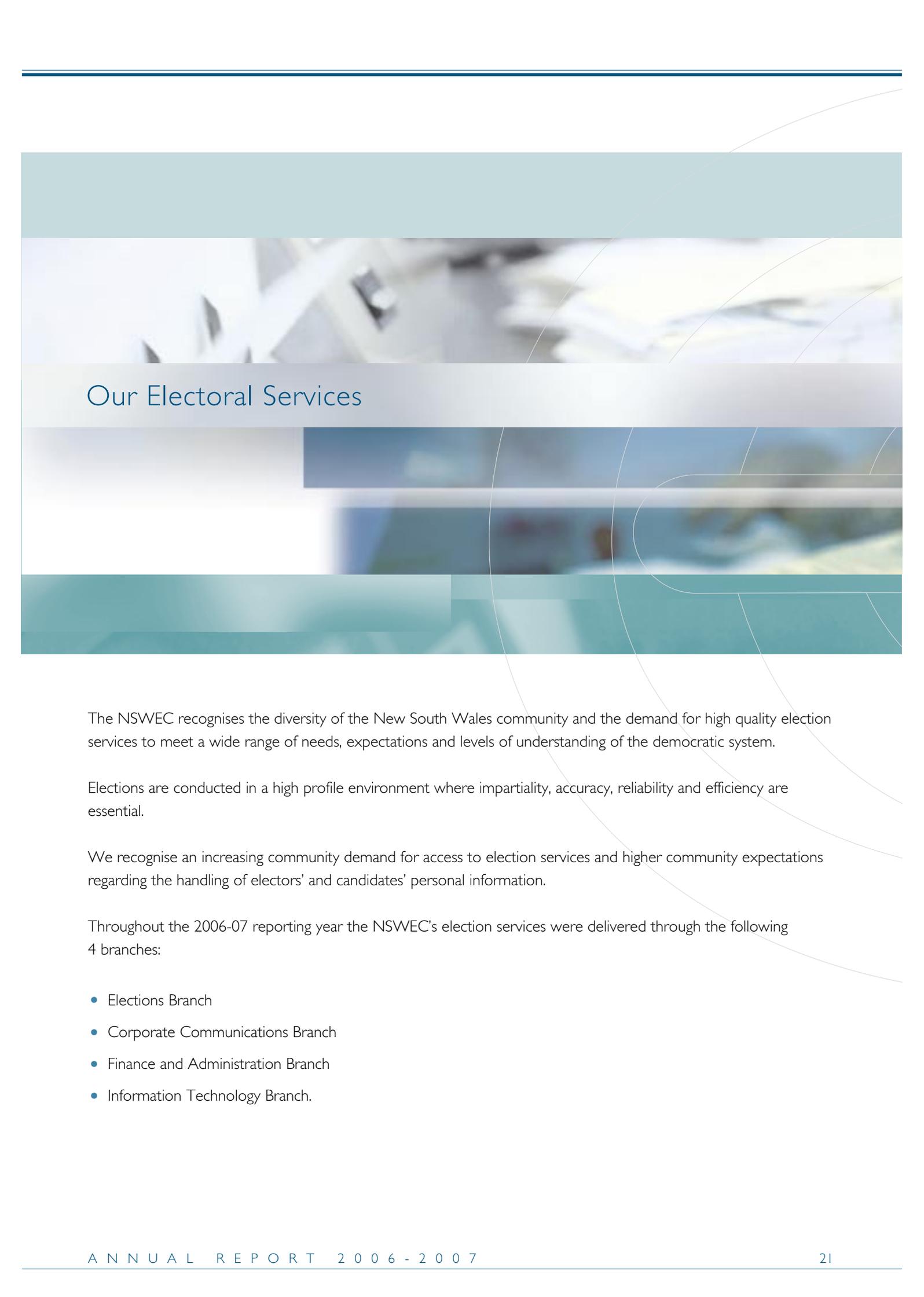
The JSCEM in its 2005 report into the 2003 State election identified other areas where reform of the legislation would be beneficial.

The amendments to the Act have modernised the structural arrangements for the conduct of elections in New South Wales, and enhanced the role and responsibilities of the Electoral Commissioner in the process.

Some of the key changes are:

- the name of the State Electoral Office was changed to the New South Wales Electoral Commission;
- the appointment of the Electoral Commissioner is on a fixed-term basis;
- the Electoral Commissioner has been given enhanced powers relating to election staffing including recruitment and performance review of returning officers and remuneration arrangements for election officials;
- employment of returning officers for a specified period or election;

- a number of registered general postal voter enrolment-related requirements have been brought into line with Commonwealth legislation;
- measures to regulate access to enrolment information has been introduced along with significant penalties for its misuse;
- all how to vote material to be distributed on election day must be registered with the Electoral Commissioner;
- the canvassing of votes within 6 metres of a polling place has been prohibited in line with Commonwealth legislation;
- the size restriction of election posters has been removed except in limited circumstances;
- pre-poll voting requires an oral declaration from the elector that he or she meets the eligibility requirements; and
- registered political parties are able to nominate their candidates in bulk with the Electoral Commissioner.



Our Electoral Services

The NSWEC recognises the diversity of the New South Wales community and the demand for high quality election services to meet a wide range of needs, expectations and levels of understanding of the democratic system.

Elections are conducted in a high profile environment where impartiality, accuracy, reliability and efficiency are essential.

We recognise an increasing community demand for access to election services and higher community expectations regarding the handling of electors' and candidates' personal information.

Throughout the 2006-07 reporting year the NSWEC's election services were delivered through the following 4 branches:

- Elections Branch
- Corporate Communications Branch
- Finance and Administration Branch
- Information Technology Branch.

Elections Branch

Elections Branch is responsible for the planning, preparation and conduct of operational aspects of Parliamentary, Local Government and other elections, including the selection and training of returning officers.

Achievements of the Branch

2007 State Election

Throughout the reporting year the Elections Branch contributed to the 2007 State election by delivering a comprehensive returning officer programme, voting arrangements across the State and successful management of the Legislative Council election.

More detailed information on the 2007 State election is available in the 2007 State Election Report to Parliament on our website www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Returning Officers

Returning officers play a pivotal role in the conduct of a State election. They are the front line managers responsible for the impartial administration of electoral laws, policies and procedures to ensure the integrity of election results.

For a State election the NSWEC requires 93 returning officers. The number required to conduct the Local Government elections is 152. Unlike the AEC the NSWEC does not have full-time election officials. This requires the recruitment of people who can work full-time during the election period. As this is a very demanding role, it suits those who have well developed organisational skills and/or a background in administration.

After having selected 130 applicants through the interview process the NSWEC required all of them to participate in a competency based training programme after which 93 were appointed returning officers.

Recruitment and Training

Elections Branch developed and delivered a high quality, professional training programme to senior election officials prior to the election.

The 4 day training programme covered key aspects of returning officers' duties. The training seminars were based on adult learning principles and developing competencies in key performance areas. At the seminars, participants were provided with a manual and given practical activities in key duties that they would be required to perform during the election. Feedback from attendees indicated that the program was very comprehensive, covered key business processes and was professionally presented.

Following the 4 day training programme, the participants were given home study exercises to complete and return to the NSWEC. Upon completion of all training activities the selection panel responsible for recruiting returning officers assessed the performance of each candidate. Based on this assessment the successful candidates were appointed as returning officers for the 93 electoral districts. Those participants, who successfully completed the training but were not selected on this occasion, were offered other administrative positions in returning officers' offices.

The appointed returning officers and their key clerical assistant attended a further 2 day training session in early 2007. This training covered key changes to the legislation, how to deal with the media, the public, candidates and staff within the office and how to use the election software package. The training also covered procedures detailed in the finance manual.

This new recruitment and training programme ensured that all appointments to the position of returning officer were made on a competency and merit basis through a transparent process.

As part of the amendments to the Act, returning officers for this election were appointed by the Electoral Commissioner for the State election. Returning officers appointed for the 2007 State election held their position until the return of the Writs.

Manual

To assist the returning officers in their duties, Elections Branch produced a returning officer election manual and diary. The returning officers referred to this manual on a daily basis to ensure consistent application of the procedures issued by the NSWEC.

This manual included:

- an overview of the election process and the NSWEC expectations on issues such as the returning officers' role, customer service standards and Occupational Health and Safety requirements;
- comprehensive descriptions of all election procedures and tasks from the issue of the Writ to the return of the Writ;
- requirements for resourcing including office accommodation, polling places and staff; and
- details of all forms associated with their duties.

The diary set out tasks from the opening of their office to the completion of the election.

The manual and diary, in conjunction with the returning officers' support centre, was an important part of the support provided by the NSWEC to returning officers. Providing better support to the returning officers was recommended by CCQG in its review.

Support Centre

The NSWEC created a group of 10 returning officer support officers, 4 EMA support officers and 2 receptionists to provide returning officers with advice on complex issues.

Each returning officer support officer attended comprehensive training on how to provide support services and training relevant to the procedures to be implemented at the 2007 State election. The computer application support officers were trained in the software the returning officers would be using throughout the election.

Each returning officer support officer was allocated a group of returning officers who they provided support services to throughout the election. The returning officer support officers were the central point of contact between the returning officers and NSWEC staff.

Accommodation

An important part of returning officers' duties is to secure office premises, within their electoral district, from which they will conduct the election.

All returning officers secured their premises by January 2007 and were working full-time in their offices from 19 February 2007. The real estate market dictates the cost for temporary office accommodation however, returning officers sought value for money when looking for suitable premises.

The NSWEC provided returning officers with guidelines to assist them to find appropriate office accommodation including advice on the required space, wheelchair accessibility and location within their district. Returning officers sought to meet the criteria wherever possible.

The NSWEC provided a range of services and materials to returning officers to assist them in establishing their office. By early February all returning officers had received their office supplies including:

- computer equipment;
- stationery;
- polling place material; and
- postal and pre-poll voting material.

Communications, including computer and telephone connections, were installed in returning officers' offices in late January. Preparation and distribution of these materials was a large logistical exercise managed through the NSWEC warehouse premises at Riverwood.

Returning officers' premises were open to the public from 1 March 2007.

Polling Places

During the reporting year the NSWEC completed a review of polling places, which was necessary following the redistribution of electoral boundaries in 2004. The review was based on a statistical analysis of past voter patterns, analysis of available premises and projected enrolment figures as at March 2007. The review process included consultation with registered political parties and Members of Parliament, who provided feedback regarding the requirements of their constituents.

Above all, the NSWEC endeavoured to ensure that the location of polling places met the needs of the community. The review process requires a balance of efficiency and cost versus public interest and convenience.

The review of polling places was completed by November 2006, and premises were then booked and a full analysis of the staffing and material requirements for each polling place was completed. The NSWEC provided this information and appropriate materials to each returning officer who was responsible for recruiting staff and arranging access to the polling places and setting them up on election day.

Declared Institutions

The NSWEC also conducted a review of declared institutions (convalescent homes, nursing homes or similar institutions appointed by the Electoral Commissioner), to enable voting for residents who may have difficulty leaving the premises.

This review used the same rationale and consultation process as that for the polling places review. A priority was to align the premises and services with those used by the AEC at Federal elections. This provides the voting public with a seamless approach to elections at both state and federal levels and makes it easier for electors at the time of voting.

The NSWEC provides a voting service to electors in declared institutions in the week of the election. Scrutineers are invited to attend the visits.

Ballot Papers

Following the amendments to the Act the NSWEC assumed responsibility for the printing of all ballot papers for both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. The preparation, printing and distribution of these ballot papers is a complex process which requires precision in a short timeframe.

The Legislative Council ballot papers have to be distributed across the State, the Legislative Assembly ballot papers must be distributed to the relevant electoral district and a limited number of ballot papers from all electoral districts must be provided to each polling place for electors voting outside their electoral district.

This printing and distribution process must be completed in the 3 days between the close of nominations and the draw for ballot paper order (in 2007 this was Thursday 8 March) and the start of pre-poll voting on the following Monday (in 2007 this was Monday 12 March).

At this election the printing process for the ballot papers was improved as pre-prepared templates were directly populated with electronic data following the draw for order on the ballot paper. This reduced the risk of errors occurring in the design process and is also time saving.

Electoral Roll

The NSWEC prepares copies of the NSW electoral roll for each electoral district at a State election. There are 2 types of roll provided for the election: reference rolls and certified lists. The reference rolls are used by the returning officer and polling place managers throughout the election to verify roll details. The certified lists are used during the election to record elector attendance. After the election the certified lists are analysed to identify those electors who did not vote and any occurrences of multiple voting.

The preparation of the electoral roll must be carried out with precision in a short timeframe. One of the greatest challenges in this process is ensuring that each roll is distributed to the electoral district to which it relates. An extensive quality assurance process is used to ensure the rolls are correctly printed and distributed.

Each copy of the roll is uniquely identified and tracked throughout the election period. After the election all copies of the roll are returned to the NSWEC for processing and secure storage. For the 2007 State election 9,300 reference rolls and 8,003 certified lists were produced.

Voting Services

The NSWEC provided a variety of voting services to electors, both prior to the election and on election day. These included:

- voting for electors who would be overseas or interstate at the time of the election including a facility for those on 2 P&O cruises;
- pre-poll, postal and declared institution voting for electors who were unable to vote on election day; and
- absentee voting for electors who were unable to vote in their electoral district on election day.

Over 700,000 electors took advantage of these services, which were advertised on the NSWEC's website and in major metropolitan newspapers.

Reform to the Management of the Legislative Council Election

Following the JSCEM's report on the administration of the 2003 State election the NSWEC took steps to reform how the Legislative Council count would be managed. This included:

- business reform of election operations and procedures including comprehensive training of staff in the new procedures;
- establishment of a new counting system with regional and central counting centres; and
- modifications and enhancements to the counting software.

Business Reform of Election Procedures

The NSWEC completed a business reform process which included the re-engineering of procedures for the conduct of the election as well as the count. The procedures that were reviewed included:

- counting procedures for polling places, returning officers and regional counting centres;
- ballot paper handling including recording, batching and packaging at regional counting centres; and
- counting centre staffing.

The NSWEC published comprehensive procedure manuals to assist staff and to ensure the approach was consistent and transparent. All staff in head office, regional counting centres and the Legislative Council counting centre were given comprehensive training in the new procedures and software. This reform implements key recommendations of the CCQG review and the 2005 JSCEM Report, both of which advocated greater use of AEC expertise in supporting the Legislative Council count.

Regional Counting Centres

In January 2007 the NSWEC secured 50 premises across the State for the regional counting centres where the Legislative Council ballot papers were sorted and counted from the Monday after election day. Regional counting centres operated through to the second week after election day. Most regional counting centres were co-located with returning officers, however some required the acquisition of separate premises.

Experienced staff from the AEC managed these centres and in most cases each centre received Legislative Council ballot papers from 2 electoral districts. The ballot papers were received from polling places on election night. Following counting on election night the Legislative Council ballot papers were transferred to the 50 RCCs.

Most centres employed approximately 20 casual staff to assist with the count. Scrutineers were in attendance during the counting, batching and packaging of ballot papers. Security guards were present during the operation of some regional counting centres where this was considered necessary.

Legislative Council Counting Centre

A central counting centre for the data entry of Legislative Council ballot papers was established at the NSWEC warehouse premises at Riverwood.

Details of the count of ballot papers marked above the line were sent to the central counting centre from the regional counting centres for data entry into a purpose built computer application designed to produce the final results for the Legislative Council election. Below the line ballot papers were sent to the central counting centre for individual data entry.

Enhancements to the Counting Software

During the reporting year the NSWEC implemented enhancements to the computerised Legislative Council counting system. For more information on this system please see page 45.

Services to Registered Political Parties and Candidates

Throughout the election period the NSWEC offered a wide range of services to registered political parties and candidates including:

- circulars to the registered political parties advising of key information;
- briefings to registered political parties on operational processes and legislative changes;
- information sessions for candidates and registered political parties conducted by returning officers;
- advertising nomination requirements and registration of electoral material details;
- producing a suite of handbooks for candidates and registered political parties detailing legislative requirements, election procedures and forms;
- providing electoral results in a variety of formats for analysis; and
- providing the NSW electoral roll as prescribed in the Act.

Local Government Elections

During the reporting year the NSWEC conducted 14 Local Government by-elections. Each by-election was due to a vacancy in a Local Government ward or Council. By law a by-election must be held within 3 months of the vacancy occurring.

Details of the Local Government by-elections conducted are at Appendix I.

Implementation of the New Approach to Managing Local Government Elections

The NSWEC continued its consultative approach to working with Local Government Councils in providing election services. The *Local Government Act 1993* provides that the Electoral Commissioner is responsible for the conduct of Local Government elections and that each Council will pay to the NSWEC the costs of the conduct of their election. The NSWEC receives no funding from the Government for the conduct of these elections as it is expected that they will be fully self-funding.

The new consultative approach involves the NSWEC providing tailored election services to each individual Council. This is an important initiative so that Councils have a say in the services that are provided to their residents.

For each by-election the NSWEC consulted with the Council's General Manager to discuss service arrangements. The NSWEC provided each Council with options in regard to advertising and direct mail to ensure that all electors were aware of their obligation to vote, as well as predictive budgets that allowed Councils to have a say in the cost of their election.

Following the by-elections, the NSWEC held a debriefing with General Managers and staff to provide the NSWEC with important information on how processes and services can be improved. Feedback from these elections indicated that Councils appreciate the pre-election cost estimate and post-election reporting arrangements including a comprehensive analysis of the conduct of the elections and de-brief.

The NSWEC has begun consulting with Councils to ensure suitable arrangements are in place for the 2008 Local Government elections.

Services to Local Government Candidates and Scrutineers

The NSWEC held information sessions as a service to potential candidates. The information sessions were conducted by an experienced NSWEC staff member, and the returning officer was present to answer any questions regarding local administrative arrangements. In some cases the Council used the opportunity to have one of their staff members provide information regarding the duties, responsibilities and commitment required of elected Councillors.

The information sessions are an important forum for the NSWEC to explain election procedures including:

- the nomination process;
- the rules regarding candidates forming groups;
- group voting squares and above the line voting (if applicable);
- registration of how to vote material;
- how votes will be counted in above the line voting; and
- postal and declared institution voting arrangements.

As a service to candidates and their scrutineers in those elections where above the line voting applied, the NSWEC held a briefing session on the Sunday after election day to explain the operations of the ballot paper data entry process for calculating the election result. This was considered to be an important initiative to assist candidates and their scrutineers.

Aboriginal Land Council Elections

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* the NSWEC is responsible for conducting Aboriginal Land Council elections in New South Wales.

On Saturday, 19 May 2007 the NSW Aboriginal Land Council election was conducted in accordance with the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* and associated Regulations. It was the first time the Aboriginal Land Council election had been held in NSW since the Aboriginal Land Council election in 1999.

Following the appointment of an administrator in 2003, elections were postponed. In October 2005 the then Minister for Aboriginal Affairs determined that this election would be held on 19 May 2007.

The election was conducted to elect a Councillor for each of the 9 Regional Aboriginal Land Council areas in NSW namely:

- Central
- Central Coast
- Northern
- North Coast
- North Western
- South Coast
- Sydney/Newcastle
- Western
- Wiradjuri

To be eligible to nominate as a candidate, a person must be a voting member of a Local Aboriginal Land Council area which is within the region for which they wish to nominate. Candidates must also be nominated by 6 other people on the roll from the region. Nominations for candidates closed on Monday, 23 April 2007 with a total of 51 candidates nominating across the 9 regions.

To be eligible to vote for a Councillor to represent a region, a person must be on the roll of voting members of a Local Aboriginal Land Council, the area of which is within the Region. Neither enrolment nor voting is compulsory.

The NSWEC established 143 polling places across New South Wales where electors were able to cast their vote. Electors unable to attend a polling place on election day were able to cast a postal vote.

16,643 people were on the roll for the Aboriginal Land Council elections with 4,663 votes cast.

Elections for clubs and statutory boards and industrial ballots

During the reporting year the NSWEC conducted 58 elections for clubs, statutory boards and industrial organisations.

Voting Services for Interstate Electors

The NSWEC provides services for interstate jurisdictions to allow electors who are in New South Wales at the time of their home State election, the opportunity to cast their vote in advance of polling day.

During the reporting year the NSWEC provided voting services for the following interjurisdictional elections:

- Victorian General election; and
- Queensland General election.

For these interstate elections, the NSWEC provided a dedicated voting facility at 201 Kent Street for visitors from these States.

These services are provided on a reciprocal basis with interjurisdictional electoral authorities.

Corporate Communications Branch

The Corporate Communications Branch is responsible for developing and implementing information strategies for Parliamentary and Local Government elections, managing the Joint Roll Agreement, dealing with requests for access to electors' enrolment information, maintaining the registration of political parties, producing reports to Parliament on the conduct of elections and managing the corporate plan, business plan and annual reporting processes.

Achievements of the Branch

2007 State Election

Throughout the reporting year the Corporate Communications Branch contributed to the election by relaunch of the NSWEC's website, providing an information kit for media, electors and political parties, delivering a comprehensive voter information campaign, media services, election information centre and election night tally room.

Voter Information Campaign

The NSWEC developed the voter information campaign across all media - television, radio and press - for the 2007 State election. The campaign was designed to provide key election information to electors across the State.

The creative theme for the campaign was an animated figure in the shape of the State of NSW with the tag line "Your vote is your voice. Be heard." This creative theme clearly identified the geographic area affected by the election and encouraged electors to exercise their democratic right.

The campaign included key messages for electors such as enrolment requirements, voting arrangements before election day, voting arrangements on election day, how to cast a formal vote, candidates for the election, where to vote on election day and election results.

Television advertisements encouraging electors to enrol to vote or update their enrolment commenced the campaign on 11 February 2007. The campaign concluded with the publication of the election results in the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph on 13 April 2007. The full suite of television and radio advertisements and some of the press advertisements were prepared prior to the issue of the Writs so that the campaign could commence immediately after the Writs were issued.

The NSWEC worked with an independent specialist to ensure that the campaign reached across metropolitan, regional, rural and electors from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Following the election the NSWEC evaluated the campaign by measuring its effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. Overall the campaign was found to be highly effective in reaching different demographic groups of NSW electors, successful in reaching the vast majority of NSW electors on several occasions, and achieved credible and cost effective reach based on the amount spent. The campaign evaluation also identified radio as having the highest reach (especially in rural and regional areas) and being the most cost effective medium. Based on this conclusion the NSWEC will consider an increase in radio advertising for future campaigns.

Media Communications Strategy

The media communications strategy included a comprehensive schedule of media releases, a 24/7 media protocol for responding to enquiries and requests for interviews, a media log to record all enquiries, an interview co-ordination and briefing process, a media access protocol and a thorough media monitoring service. This system included arrangements for head office staff as well as returning officers working across the State.

These systems were piloted at Parliamentary by-elections in the previous reporting year to ensure they were appropriate for the 2007 State election. To evaluate the effectiveness of these systems and the services provided, key journalists were interviewed after the election. Overall, the surveyed journalists recognised the NSWEC's improved commitment to open communication.

The election provided an opportunity to continue to develop effective relationships with political reporters in metropolitan, suburban, rural and regional media.

Election Information Centre

An election information centre was established to provide high quality information services to electors. The election information centre was situated in Riverwood (south-west Sydney) at the NSWEC's warehouse premises and commenced operations on 23 January 2007 with standard operating hours of 8.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

At maximum capacity the election information centre was staffed with 70 operators. All operators were fully trained in election business and the election information centre environment prior to commencing work, and each operator received a question and answer manual to assist them in answering enquiries from electors.

The election information centre phone number was featured in the advertising campaign to ensure it was widely publicised throughout the State. Between 23 January and 4 April the operators responded to over 200,000 calls from electors with call volumes reaching their peak in the week before the election.

The election information centre was open on election day to provide information and assistance to electors and it was on this day that the election information centre received the highest volume of calls (11,393).

Tally Room

The tally room provided a centralised point for the display of election results on election night for politicians, registered political parties and media. The venue for the tally room was Acer Arena (formerly Sydney Superdome), Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush Bay.

The results were displayed at the venue on 4 electronic screens located at one end of the arena. They were displayed in real time through a direct link with EMA being used by returning officers to record results. The election results were also available on the virtual tally room website, linked to the NSWEC website, as well as via a direct data feed to numerous organisations on election night.

Radio and print journalists were provided with facilities including furniture, telecommunications and electrical access and a WIFI connection direct to the Virtual Tally Room website. Television stations established temporary sets on the arena floor to present election coverage with the electronic screens as their backdrop.

The tally room was attended by approximately 500 people including print and radio media, television networks, Members of Parliament, registered political parties and invited electoral officials from other jurisdictions. It is noted that fewer television networks and journalists attended the tally room than in previous elections.

Information Kit

An information kit about the 2007 State election prepared by the Corporate Communications Branch was distributed to media, registered political parties and other stakeholders.

The kit includes information about the NSW Parliament, registered political parties, NSW electoral history, legislative changes and profiles of the 93 electoral districts in New South Wales. It is a valuable resource to those interested in the NSW elections.

Report on the 2007 State Election

The NSWEC will publish a report on the administration and conduct of the election in the next reporting year. This report will be delivered to the Premier for tabling in the Parliament. Once tabled, the report will be distributed to key stakeholders and made available to the general public on the NSWEC website.

Redistribution of Electoral Boundaries

Transfer of Electors to New Legislative Assembly Electoral Districts

In December 2004 the Electoral Districts Commissioners released new electoral boundaries for the Legislative Assembly in New South Wales, which came into effect at the 2007 State election. As a result of this redistribution, 1.1 million electors voted in a different electoral district to previous elections.

During the reporting year the NSWEC, the NSW Department of Lands and the AEC continued to work on the transfer of electors to their new electoral districts. This included the completion of the quality assurance processes which ensured the integrity of the transfer of information on the computerised roll management system.

The transfer of all electors to their new electoral district was completed by November 2006, well before the 24 March election.

Elector Brochure

Prior to the election the NSWEC informed all 4.4 million electors of their new electoral districts in an individualised brochure mailed to each elector. This strategy supported the NSWEC's commitment to maximise voter turnout at the election.

The creative theme used in the voter information campaign was also used for the elector brochure which contained key electoral information including:

- elector's enrolment details;
- an electoral district map;
- pre-poll and postal voting arrangements;
- key election dates; and
- NSWEC contact information.

The brochure was received by electors between 30 January 2007 and 9 February 2007. This allowed electors time to check and, if necessary, change their details prior to the close of rolls, which in NSW occurs at 6pm on the day the Writs are issued.

Due to legislative changes, each elector is now asked to state their date of birth before being issued ballot papers at polling places. For this reason it was important to ensure that the date of birth information on the roll was correct and therefore these details were included on the elector brochure. The inclusion of this information raised some concerns in the community and as a result the NSWEC will not include date of birth details in future.

Mapping

As the election was the first time the new electoral boundaries were used, the Branch produced a suite of maps for a variety of purposes. There were:

- maps of each electoral district for the electoral profiles and elector brochures;
- wall maps showing the polling places in each electoral district for returning officers' premises;
- town maps showing polling places for returning officers in large electoral districts; and
- handouts showing the polling places in each electoral district for candidates and registered political parties.

The NSWEC works closely with the NSW Department of Lands to produce maps to accurately portray the geographic area of each electoral district.

Party Registration

New Handbooks

In the reporting year the NSWEC published new party registration handbooks for applicants seeking to register State and Local Government parties. These handbooks incorporate the changes to the Act and the internal reform processes implemented in the 2005-06 reporting year.

The handbooks are valuable resources for applicants and others seeking information about the party registration process in New South Wales. Both handbooks are available on our website www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Registration of Parties under the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* and the *Local Government Act 1993*

The NSWEC is responsible for the registration of political parties according to the requirements of the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* and the *Local Government Act 1993*. No new parties were registered under either of these Acts during the reporting year.

State parties currently registered are set out in Appendix 3. Local Government parties currently registered are set out in Appendix 4.

Under the legislation the NSWEC is required to maintain public registers that contain key information relating to each registered political party.

Continued Registration of Political Parties

Once registered, it is a requirement under the legislation that parties seek continued registration on an annual basis. The NSWEC assists parties to understand the requirements of the legislation and provides ongoing advice to enable them to comply with those requirements. In the reporting year the NSWEC provided this high level assistance to 18 State parties and 30 Local Government parties.

Cancellation of Parties' Registration

During the year 1 party had its registration cancelled under the provisions of the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* while 2 parties had their registration cancelled under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Parties de-registered are set out in Appendix 5.

Local Government elections

Information Services

The provision of information to electors at the time of a by-election is a priority. There are a statutory minimum number of advertisements which must be placed in respect of Local Government elections. The NSWEC provides advice on what information campaigns are available beyond the minimum required under the Statute. Councils usually want to use the most economic means of getting essential election information to the community. Many additional approaches have been adopted by Councils to maximise voter turnout including:

- a comprehensive suite of advertisements in local newspapers;
- householder brochures;
- individualised letters to every enrolled elector;
- the use of regular Council newsletters;
- regular Council articles in local newspapers; and
- local radio and television advertisements.

In the lead up to the 2008 Local Government elections the NSWEC will work with each Council to enhance communication strategies to increase voter turnout.

Election Information Centre

An election information centre was available (at the cost of a local call) to all electors for each Local Government by-election held during the year. The enquiries service operated Monday to Friday from 8:30am – 5:00pm over the period of each election. This service offered electors key electoral information such as election dates, enrolment requirements, Council information and results.

Media Services

The NSWEC has a protocol for dealing with media enquiries relating to Local Government by-elections. The Corporate Communications Branch offered an enquiries service to radio, TV and newspaper journalists. Local media were able to quickly access media officers of the NSWEC for information in respect of all elections.

Website

The NSWEC website provided valuable information to electors regarding Local Government by-elections throughout the reporting year. The website includes a section which contains information on Council structures, terms of office, voting methods, enrolment requirements and results. It also provides information to prospective candidates and political parties.

The specific details relating to each Local Government by-election are also published in a timely manner throughout the election period. This information often includes key election dates, enrolment requirements, Council information and results.

For the 2008 Local Government elections the NSWEC is redeveloping the Local Government component of the website.

Policy

Equal Access to Democracy

The NSWEC has an Equal Access to Democracy Plan which aims to improve access to election services for people with a disability. The Plan fulfils a commitment made in the NSWEC's Corporate Plan for 2005 to 2007 to provide election services that promote equal access and participation, and addresses the priority areas identified in the NSW Disability Policy Framework.

A number of key initiatives identified in the Plan were implemented at the election. Listed below are some of these initiatives:

- disability awareness training to educate returning officers on how to recognise the needs of people with disabilities and how to assist electors with a disability was conducted by Vision Australia for all returning officers;
- review of election furniture for all pre-poll voting centres and polling places to include wheelchair accessible voting screens and luminous contrast design on cardboard furniture;
- review of polling place layouts to facilitate access and egress;
- trial of an Easy English Train the Trainer electoral education module with the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association and the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability;
- distribution of Equal Access to Democracy newsletters through disability peak community networks;
- provision of key election information in Braille, audio, large print and electronic formats;
- use of Vision Australia and the Spastic Centre premises as pre-poll voting centres and polling places on election day;
- provision of hand held magnifiers and user friendly chunky pencils at all pre-poll voting centres and polling places;
- use of open captioning on NSWEC television advertisements, a first for a NSW Government ad campaign; and
- conduct of an accessibility audit to enable all pre-poll voting centres and polling places to be classified according to whether full wheelchair access was available or not. This was requested by the peak disability groups.

In July 2007 the NSWEC will convene the Equal Access to Democracy Access Reference Group to evaluate the implementation of the Plan at the election. Representatives from the peak disability consumer and industry organisations who participated in the Equal Access to Democracy Consultations in February 2006, and who have continued to provide the NSWEC with valuable feedback during the election period, will be invited to participate in the discussions.

This Group will also serve as a forum for ongoing consultation to identify strategies to further progress the Equal Access to Democracy project in the lead up to the 2008 Local Government elections.

In addition to the Equal Access to Democracy initiatives identified in the Plan, the NSWEC supported the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care initiative to promote disability awareness through their "Don't DIS my ABILITY" campaign as part of the International Day of People with a Disability on 3 December 2006.

To download a copy from the website go to www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Aboriginal Elector Strategy

In September 2006 the NSWEC developed an Aboriginal Elector Information Strategy to identify key goals to assist Aboriginal electors, and particularly Aboriginal youth, to enrol, vote and participate fully in the democratic process.

Key initiatives were:

- the NSWEC had an enrolment and information stall staffed by Aboriginal people and NSWEC staff at Yabun, an Aboriginal festival held annually on 26 January, which focused on new enrolment and updating enrolment details for Aboriginal youth. Approximately 100 people were enrolled for the first time, about 200 people updated their enrolment details and more than 200 electoral information packs were distributed;
- distribution of enrolment information through Aboriginal networks;
- distribution of an electronic version of the voter information pack to Aboriginal community organisations for distribution through their networks;
- Dean Widders, an Aboriginal rugby league player, was engaged to endorse the value of enrolling and voting for young Aboriginal community members in the NSWEC radio advertising campaign;
- young Aboriginal actors were engaged for the NSWEC television advertising campaign;
- the Aboriginal Employment Strategy, which is a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in placing Aboriginal people into employment, was provided information on working as electoral officials and electoral official recruitment packs for the 2007 State election; and
- the Information Kit and media releases were distributed to major Aboriginal newspapers and radio stations.

The NSWEC will convene an Aboriginal Electoral Education Consultative Group, consisting of representatives from Peak Aboriginal groups, in early 2008. This group will develop longer term strategies for education and communication with Aboriginal communities across NSW including initiatives to be implemented at the 2008 Local Government elections.

Strategies for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

The NSWEC is keen to ensure that its services are accessible to all members of the NSW public, including those from CALD communities and indigenous communities, who may face difficulties in finding out election information or accessing services. We are committed to consulting with community groups regarding election services and maintaining strong relationships with key organisations.

The NSWEC ran a specific information campaign for people from CALD communities. This campaign covered a range of community languages with advertisements appearing throughout the State in print, radio and television. The key messages for the campaign included enrolment, pre-poll and postal voting, where to vote, how to vote and remember to vote.

Multi-Lingual Voters Guides were available at every polling place and pre-poll voting centre. The Guide included information on ballot papers, how to vote, ballot boxes, absent voting, the roll and secret voting and was available in 24 languages. The translated guides are also available on the NSWEC website.

Posters identifying the community languages spoken by polling place election officials were displayed at every polling

place throughout the State. The poster included information in 24 languages and directed people to an election official for assistance.

The Department of Immigration's telephone interpreter service was available to enquirers and was widely advertised throughout the advertising campaign. This service was highlighted in the community languages on the elector brochure which was distributed to all electors by direct mail.

Our Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement is detailed in Appendix 6.

Revision of Privacy Policy

The protection of personal information and the privacy of individuals are of paramount concern to the NSWEC and are provided for in the NSWEC's Privacy Management Plan developed under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PPIPA). That plan is currently under review.

In the previous reporting year, the NSWEC commenced a review of the policy on the handling of personal information. The review's progress was delayed while changes were considered. The review will consider the NSWEC's policy regarding the disclosure of electoral enrolment information and ensure full compliance with PPIPA and the Codes and Directions made by the NSW Privacy Commissioner. It is expected that this review will be completed in 2007-2008.

Finance and Administration Branch

The Finance and Administration Branch is responsible for managing the NSWEC's financial activities, human resources, and administrative functions such as non-voter penalties, accommodation and office support. The Branch also provides services to the Election Funding Authority.

Achievements of the Branch

2007 State Election

Throughout the reporting year the Finance and Administration Branch contributed to the election by improving EFA processes, producing a Finance Manual for returning officers and centralising the recruitment and payment of election officials, the payment of accounts and the courier booking system.

Finance Manual for Returning Officers

The manual included procedures and requirements for financial processes relevant to returning officers including:

- processing organisational finance forms;
- acquiring courier services;
- employing staff;
- processing payroll details;
- paying accounts; and
- processing nomination deposits.

The manual was a valuable resource for returning officers as it assisted them with the new procedures. It was an important publication for the NSWEC as it provided a means of ensuring the conduct of the election and its financial management was consistent and transparent.

Centralised Election Officials Recruitment and Payment

During any election, be it a State election or a by-election, the NSWEC requires temporary staff to assist with operations. Previously the recruitment and payment of additional staff has been the responsibility of the returning officer.

For a State election the NSWEC needs to recruit over 19,000 employees to temporary positions. The NSWEC often experiences difficulties in recruiting such a large number of staff for such a short period of time. For this reason the NSWEC worked with the AEC to generate a list of 37,000 previous employees from State and Federal elections. Advertisements were also placed in the Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Telegraph, Public Sector Notices and a selection of regional papers to encourage applicants without an electoral background to apply. The individuals on the list of previous employees, along with other individuals interested in working at the election, were contacted by mail and invited to apply online for work at the 2007 State election.

People then applied online at the NSWEC website, where they registered their details and their preferred district and polling places. The details of prospective staff were then made available to returning officers via the computerised election management application. Returning officers completed the recruitment process and obtained staff for their offices as well as polling places. The new application and recruitment process enables returning officers to better manage their election officials and to ensure that polling places are well resourced. This system was an important initiative of the NSWEC as it provided efficiency gains in the recruitment processes.

Payment of staff was previously a manual process where each returning officer wrote cheques to each staff member. For the 2007 State election this process was centralised in head office. Forms were scanned and loaded directly into the payroll system. All payments were made by electronic funds transfer with an interface to email systems for the distribution of payslips.

The centralisation of both the recruitment and payment of election officials proved successful. Some 19,000 temporary employees were paid through the system.

Centralised Account Payment System

The NSWEC centralised the payment of all accounts associated with the election. Previously returning officers were responsible for the payment of accounts they incurred in running their office. These include accounts for goods and services ranging from office rent and utilities to stationery and cleaning.

The new centralised process involved:

- returning officers acquiring goods and services;
- invoices being forwarded to head office;
- full certification of payments by 2 officers; and
- payment of invoices by head office.

All returning officers were informed of the new process in the Finance Manual.

This new centralised system proved successful and will be used in future elections. The streamlined process allowed the majority of accounts to be paid by electronic funds transfer in a timely manner. It also provided efficiency gains and established a sound auditable process in the account payment system.

Centralised Booking System for Couriers

During an election the NSWEC has an increased demand for transport of documents, goods and equipment between head office and returning officers' offices. On average a returning officer will courier documentation to head office on a daily basis.

The NSWEC contracted 2 providers, 1 to handle transport between interstate and intrastate locations, and 1 to transport goods between metropolitan locations.

The NSWEC utilised a new web-based system for booking couriers. Returning officers were able to place bookings via the website or phone depending on their preference. Written instructions were provided to all returning officers to ensure they were familiar with the requirements of the booking system. The new system worked well and with minor improvements it will be used for the 2008 Local Government election.

Administration

Results and Services Plan

The NSWEC has developed a Results and Services Plan to quantify the desired outcomes the NSWEC wishes to achieve from the services it delivers. The key results outlined in the plan are aligned with the key service areas identified in the Corporate Plan. Consideration has been given in the plan to operational constraints and business risks. Unlike many other government agencies the NSWEC's work demands fluctuate according to electoral cycles. The plan reflects the key results that the NSWEC aims to deliver, namely, maximisation of voter participation, impartial elections, and open disclosure of campaign funding.

Business Improvement Projects

The NSWEC continued to implement and refine several business improvement projects initiated in the previous financial year. The NSWEC has benefited from the following:

- the introduction of electronic funds transfer for payments;
- a new chart of accounts to reflect areas of corporate responsibility;
- detailed 'zero based' budgets and monthly variance reporting;
- consolidated payroll systems;
- electronic systems for the recording of flex time; and
- transfer of paper based leave records to electronic systems.

These improvements ensured adequate systems were in place for the election. All these business improvements have been designed around principles of ensuring excellent corporate governance and minimising risk management concerns.

Managing Compulsory Voting

Failure to vote at Parliamentary and Local Government elections

The *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912* and *Local Government Act 1993* prescribe that an elector who fails to vote at an election without sufficient reason, is guilty of an offence. After an election the NSWEC is responsible for following up all enrolled electors who, for whatever reason, did not vote. This involves issuing penalty notices and/or considering the electors' reasons for not voting.

The penalty notice provides recipients with the options of supplying a sufficient reason for failing to vote, paying a penalty, or having the matter dealt with by a Court.

Penalty reminder notices are issued to electors who do not reply to the penalty notice or who provide an insufficient reason for failure to vote. Matters which are outstanding, or for which an unacceptable reply was received, are subsequently referred to the State Debt Recovery Office for enforcement. Increases or decreases in the number of enforcement matters are influenced by elector turnout and the size and number of electoral events across a period of time.

During the reporting year the NSWEC established online and telephone autopay systems. These systems have made it easier for people to respond to penalty notices. The NSWEC established an election information centre to provide timely and accurate advice to people enquiring about penalty notices.

There was a decrease of approximately 50,000 penalty notices issued at the 2007 State election compared with the 207,000 penalty notices sent at the 2003 State election.

Penalty notices issued in the past 3 financial years

STATE GOVERNMENT	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Penalty notices issued for State election	N/A	N/A	152,091
Penalty notices issued for State by-elections	3,109	19,566	N/A
Enforcement orders issued for State election and by-elections	N/A	903	6,863
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Penalty notices issued for Local Government elections	N/A	N/A	N/A
Penalty notices issued for Local Government by-elections	30,998	21,529	27,767
Enforcement orders issued for Local Government elections and by-elections	104,094	3,729	5,839

Multiple Voting

Any instance of multiple voting at State or Local Government elections is investigated. Some matters are referred to the police and/or the Crown Solicitor for further action. During the reporting year there was 1 instance of multiple voting at the State election and no instances of multiple voting at Local Government by-elections. The case was referred to the Crown Solicitor who advised that although securing a conviction may not succeed a reprimand letter should be sent to the elector.

Financial Management

For more information on the financial management of the NSWEC see page 61.

Human Resources Management

For more information on the NSWEC's Human Resources management see page 53.

Information Technology Branch

The Information Technology Branch is responsible for developing and administering the NSWEC's IT Strategic Plan, including the new election management system and ITC infrastructure for the State election. This Branch is also responsible for managing the IT infrastructure including the provision of a secure information environment, maintaining software and training and supporting users of IT equipment and systems.

Achievements of the Branch

2007 State Election

Throughout the reporting year the Information Technology Branch contributed to the 2007 State election by developing EMA (Election Management Application), implementing the new iRoll initiative, enhancing the Legislative Council count system, rolling out technical supplies and support to 93 returning officers' offices, establishing and managing the technical aspects of the election information centre and providing technology support services throughout the election period.

New Computerised Election Management Application (EMA)

During the reporting year the NSWEC completed the State election development of EMA, which was a new web-based core business system for the 2007 State election. EMA comprises an integrated suite of software including modules that assisted with:

- candidates and nominations;
- election administration;
- declaration voting eg absent, postal, pre-poll, declared institution, silent and section voting;
- election results;
- enquiries and non-voter excuses;
- public funding of elections and funding disclosure information; and
- engaging staff for returning officers' offices and polling places.

In 2005 the NSWEC commissioned contractors to develop the system. The development included business and user needs analysis, system design, software development and comprehensive user acceptance testing prior to implementation. EMA went live in November 2006 and proved to be a valuable asset during the election.

Training in the new system was provided to relevant staff including returning officers and clerical assistants and user manuals for each individual module of the application were developed to assist users of the system.

Following the election, the NSWEC has entered a new phase of the application development. This phase includes development of modules for party registration and the EFA as well as enhancements to the existing system which will enable its use for the 2008 Local Government election.

The NSWEC is also working with interstate counterparts to develop the EMA system for use in other States.

iRoll – NSW Electoral Roll on PDA

iRoll is an initiative of the NSWEC using recent developments in technology to reduce the number of rejected absent declaration votes during State elections. iRoll itself is a small electronic personal organiser which is capable of providing polling place officials with access to the whole NSW electoral roll. Previously, anyone casting an absent vote had to know if, and where, they were enrolled. iRoll provides full confirmation of their enrolment details including the district in which they are enrolled. Access to electors' enrolment details allowed polling place officials to ensure that electors casting an absent vote were entitled to vote and that they received the correct ballot papers.

Interstate Commissions have adopted the iRoll initiative. The Victorian Electoral Commission used iRoll during its State election in November 2006 while the Australian Electoral Commission and the Electoral Commission of Queensland intend to use iRoll at their next elections.

Legislative Council System Enhancements

The NSWEC implemented changes to the existing computerised Legislative Council counting system. These changes were in line with the recommendations of the JSCEM 2005 Report. The objective was to make the system more reliable and to provide a third party endorsement of the system's integrity.

The counting system performs the distribution of preferences and provides final results for the Legislative Council. The vote, as cast on each ballot paper, is recorded in the system through a data entry process. Once all the ballots are entered into the system the software automatically distributes the preferences to arrive at the final list of elected members.

These changes to the counting software are an important part of the new system for management of the Legislative Council election.

Election Results - Virtual Tally Room

Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council results were made available on the NSWEC website from election night onwards.

The website has a full range of results pages for the Legislative Assembly including:

- district summaries;
- results from election night;
- results post election night;
- notional distribution of preferences; and
- preferential count.

The Legislative Council results include detailed reports showing the Members elected to the Council, general statistics on the election, and the quota of votes won by each party.

The results for the Legislative Assembly were displayed in real time through a direct link from the website to EMA which was used by returning officers in 93 offices across the State to record results.

The final results, with full distribution of preferences for the Legislative Council, were released on 12 April 2007.

Telecommunications and Computer Support Service

During the election the NSWEC required additional temporary premises including a warehouse at Riverwood and 93 returning officers' offices across the State. The IT Branch was responsible for ensuring telecommunications, hardware and software systems were installed in all of these temporary premises. The Branch also established the technical resources for the election information centre and the Legislative Council Counting Centre.

The Branch provided a support service to head office, returning officers, the election information centre and the Legislative Council Counting Centre. The Branch implemented a web based problem tracking system, where staff could lodge computer problems via the internet or phone. This ensured that all staff requests were responded to by the Branch.

Website Redevelopment

The NSWEC's website is a major interface with the public and was a key communication tool for the election, with an average of 5,307 visits per day during the election period.

In the previous reporting year the NSWEC commissioned a complete re-development of the website including a full review of the NSWEC's website business requirements and a new content management system.

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis of the needs of registered political parties, media, the community in general and peak disability groups (through the Equal Access to Democracy consultation process) was a key element of the business requirements phase. The result was an extensive redesign of the site structure and navigation.

The business needs analysis also highlighted the need to produce a second website for the Election Funding Authority, which is separate from but has a similar "look and feel" to the NSWEC site. The Branch managed the development of this site in conjunction with the NSWEC site.

A commercial web services provider was engaged to host and support the new sites. Extensive user testing was completed prior to the launch of the new sites in January 2007. This new site includes the NSWEC's name and logo and the EFA's site includes its new logo.

During the election the NSWEC was responsible for managing all content published on the website. This information included:

- polling place addresses and maps;
- candidates;
- pre-poll voting centres;
- interstate voting centres;
- overseas voting centres; and
- returning officer details.

Over the next year the NSWEC will review the content of the website and refine the structure and navigation of the Local Government sections of the site in readiness for the 2008 Local Government election.

IT Strategic Plan

The NSWEC has an IT Strategic Plan in line with the priorities of the NSW Government IT Strategic Plan. The NSWEC IT Strategic Plan supports the NSWEC's Results and Services Plan and identifies the following priorities for the organisation:

- update the NSWEC's recently implemented systems to include the conduct and management of Local Government elections;
- reduce the risk of a repeat of the problems associated with the 2003 Legislative Council elections;
- improve the public's access to information relating to electoral matters;
- improve the voting experience and minimise the level of voter disenfranchisement particularly amongst those who are aged, those with disabilities and/or those who are in remote areas; and
- improve the service levels and cost effectiveness of the 4 year electoral cycle for all stakeholders.

Our Operations



From left to right: Trevor Follett, Colin Barry, Brian DeCelis, Nicholle Nobel, Ian Brightwell

Corporate Governance and Accountability

Our vision is to be recognised as a provider of excellent, reliable and impartial election services. To achieve this our services need to be supported by robust, relevant and responsive business processes. An important part of this is our governance structure which provides direction to staff, monitors our progress against our Corporate and Business Plans, manages key risks and provides oversight of our operations to ensure we are complying with relevant laws, practices and procedures.

Central to the NSWEC's governance is the executive management team which sets the strategic direction of the NSWEC and monitors performance.

The NSWEC has an independent review panel, the Internal Audit Committee, that reviews practices and processes, and can make recommendations designed to reduce business risk and improve corporate governance.

Electoral Commissioner

The Electoral Commissioner is appointed in accordance with section 21A of the Act.

Executive Management Team

Colin Barry

Electoral Commissioner

(From 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2007)

Brian DeCelis

Director, Elections Branch

(From 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2007)

Nicholle Nobel

Director, Corporate Communications Branch

(From 13 September 2005 – 30 June 2007)

Trevor Follett

Director, Finance and Administration Branch

(From 19 October 2005 – 30 June 2007)

Ian Brightwell

Director, Information Technology Branch

(From 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2007)

Details of the NSWEC's Senior Executive Service profile is available at Appendix 7. Details of the work undertaken for external committees and panels can be found at Appendix 8.

New South Wales Electoral Commission Established

Legislation passed by the New South Wales Parliament on 27 September 2006 changed the name of the State Electoral Office to the New South Wales Electoral Commission. The change is not just in name only but the NSWEC is now a body corporate being a legal entity which has status in its own right. The Electoral Commissioner is the single member of the NSWEC.

Following this name change the NSWEC adopted a new style and is in the process of implementing it across all corporate documentation. The Election Funding Authority was also rebranded with a new logo to reflect the business relationship between the NSWEC and the EFA.

Coinciding with the name change, our email domain and website was changed from www.seo.nsw.gov.au to www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Organisational Structure

The NSWEC has a 4 branch structure focusing on its core business, which is the conduct of Parliamentary and Local Government elections, and the provision of election services to registered clubs, statutory boards and industrial organisations.

During the year:

- the number of positions in the NSWEC increased by 2 to 41 permanent positions;
- a position was created in Corporate Communications Branch, to provide policy support to political party registration operations;
- mapping services were transferred from Corporate Communications Branch to the Information Technology Branch, with a position created in the Information Technology Branch to provide a more senior mapping, electoral boundary and demographic analysis function; and
- a restructure occurred in Finance and Administration Branch resulting in 2 new positions being created and 2 positions being deleted.

In addition to its permanent staff the NSWEC relies heavily on temporary and casual officer support during an election year.

The NSWEC staff profile is available at Appendix 9 and the organisation chart is available at Appendix 10.

Election Officials

The Electoral Commissioner appointed election officials and set remuneration under the provisions of the Act.

Returning officers are recruited through open competition, selected on merit and appointed for each electoral district. They are the frontline managers at the time of a State election responsible for the impartial administration of electoral laws, policies and procedures to ensure the integrity of election results. They are supported by a large number of election officials recruited through open application via an online recruitment database.

Below is a break down of election officials appointed for the 2007 State election:

STATE ELECTION	2007
Returning officers	93
Returning officer support officers	10
Clerical assistants and election officials	18,962

Internal Audit Committee

The NSWEC's Internal Audit Committee advises on matters of accountability and internal control affecting the NSWEC's operations. The Committee consists of:

- Jim Mitchell, Chairman
- Vacant position - nominee of the Secretary of the Treasury
- Kathleen Haddock, returning officer

The following are members of the Committee by invitation:

- Colin Barry, Electoral Commissioner
- Trevor Follett, Director Finance and Administration
- Don Walter, nominee of contracted Internal Auditor Walter Turnbull.

The Committee held 4 meetings during the reporting period. It has adopted an Audit Plan and contracted Walter Turnbull to conduct specific projects for the Committee.

Walter Turnbull delivered reports to the Internal Audit Committee on the following areas:

- virus protection;
- Legislative Council election procedures;
- media policy and procedures;
- corporate governance; and
- post election payroll review.

In all cases there were no major issues identified. A number of business improvement strategies were suggested and the NSWEC management team is working through a plan to deliver on the recommendations during the next reporting year.

Corporate Plan

During the reporting year the NSWEC was working under a Corporate Plan for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2007. The Corporate Plan sets out our vision of providing high quality election services that are effective, efficient and in accordance with the law. It also sets out our key corporate objectives, strategies and outcomes.

Unlike other government agencies, the NSWEC's work demands fluctuate according to election cycles. A State election occurs every 4 years (the fourth Saturday in March) and as such the NSWEC's workload reaches a peak in the period 12 months before the election and is sustained for the period up to 6 months after the election.

Local Government elections are now held on a 4 year cycle occurring in September in the year following the State election. The next Local Government election will be in September 2008.

The NSWEC's business cycle is heavily structured around these 2 main events (State and Local Government elections).

The Corporate Plan identifies 5 key result areas with strategies and performance measures. These are:

- high quality election services;
- effective NSW electoral roll management;
- provision of election services that promote equal access;
- effective management of election funding and disclosure; and
- organisational effectiveness.

The Corporate Plan is available on the NSWEC's website www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Human Resources Management

Our staff members are the key to achieving our vision to be recognised as providers of excellent, reliable and impartial election services. We recognise the need to assess the current skill base and update our recruitment practices to reflect new competencies and changing skill needs. Throughout this process the NSWEC continues to support all staff with appropriate training and development, including opportunities to observe the conduct of elections in other jurisdictions, to enable efficient and effective delivery of services.

The focus in 2006-07 was the delivery of a completely new returning officer programme with extensive training and development for the election.

Learning and Development

The opportunity to foster a learning culture within the NSWEC to support the promotion and maintenance of professional and committed staff is an essential pre-requisite to delivering our services effectively.

The conduct of the election was supported by a programme management framework, in which officers were responsible for or participated in a range of election projects of varying complexity. The programme management framework provided an opportunity for personal development in areas such as communications, information technology, logistics, resourcing, event management and electoral administration.

Each electoral event provides the catalyst to focus on staff capability, identifying skills and knowledge gaps and strategies to fill such gaps. Following the election a series of debriefs and surveys involving election officials, electors and permanent staff, provided an avenue to learn from and build on our experiences during the election.

Targeted training was provided to officers with opportunities to enhance their electoral knowledge through networking opportunities with colleagues in other electoral administrations. Key NSWEC staff attended the Victorian and Queensland State elections which presented valuable opportunities to observe and learn from other jurisdictions. On these occasions emphasis was given to the use of iRoll by polling place staff. Through these visits NSWEC staff have developed relations with their interstate counterparts.

It is anticipated that in the next reporting year the NSWEC will develop a training programme for the 2008 Local Government returning officers as well as identify training needs for head office staff.

Flexible Work Practices

A variety of flexible work arrangements were utilised in the lead up to the election, in order to balance personal commitments with the necessity to meet deadlines associated with election projects. Arrangements included working from home, part-time work, part-time leave without pay, and the variation of working hours.

Past experience has shown that the demands of an election places stress on maintaining our flexible working hours system. The temporary suspension of this system, and the staged introduction of standard operational hours with some flexibility with regard to starting and finishing times, acknowledged the unique circumstances in which staff were required to work, and alleviated the forfeiture of considerable flexitime hours.

Occupational Health and Safety

During the reporting period 7 permanent staff reported safety incidents. Of these 7 incidents 1 resulted in a claim for medical expenses and there was 1 claim for time lost from work.

It is difficult with a small permanent staff number to measure improvements with regard to OH&S initiatives. Improvement targets with respect to injury management were considered in the revision of our Return to Work Programme, but a more qualitative assessment of the programme is necessary given the NSWEC's size. OH&S programme emphasis will be placed on maintaining a safe workplace culture and focusing on the increased risks associated with electoral events.

Sick Leave Management

The NSWEC monitors individual sick leave to allow for early intervention and assistance to officers. In a small agency the performance measures used to measure the success of strategies to manage work absences can be skewed by a small number of staff taking bona fide lengthy periods of sick leave.

Details of sick leave averages are available at Appendix 12.

Equal Employment Opportunity Achievements

The application of EEO and anti-discrimination principles in our head office and election recruitment activities supports the reputation of the NSWEC in the community. To this end all returning officer and election official positions were advertised in a range of media, and participants selected on identified competencies and merit principles.

The representation of women permanently employed in the NSWEC is 55%.

EEO group statistics are detailed in Appendix 13.

Disability Action Plan

The NSWEC's Disability Action Plan was developed in accordance with section 9 of the *NSW Disability Services Act* 1993. The plan outlines the NSWEC's commitment to:

- ensure people with disabilities have full access to services;
- ensure people with disabilities have maximum opportunities to use their skills and abilities; and
- provide appropriate adjustments for employees with disabilities.

The NSWEC has established an Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee to assist with identifying issues and to provide comment on the NSWEC's plan.

The Plan is scheduled for review in 2007-08. Key result areas of the plan will focus on access, employment and services.

Access

It is standard practice to provide access to the NSWEC's work locations and to electoral events.

Access for people with disabilities is addressed in the following ways:

- ongoing assessment of the accessibility associated with the numerous premises used for elections; and
- use of electronic-mail broadcasts as the primary mode of distributing information to staff. This mode of communication is preferable from an access perspective, as it is readily available to staff who are deaf or hearing impaired.

Employment

The NSWEC attempts to address employment issues for people with disabilities with programs enacted both inside and beyond the NSWEC itself.

Internally, the NSWEC has an ongoing commitment to equality of employment opportunities. This includes:

- an adjustment policy for employees with disabilities included in the NSWEC's manual and on the intranet;
- appropriate workplace adjustments made for individual employees with a disability, including special equipment, job design, access, training and development; and
- flexible work arrangements for people with disabilities available through the Flexible Work Hours Agreement.

Services

The NSWEC is committed to improving service provision for people with disabilities through its Equal Access to Democracy Plan available at www.elections.nsw.gov.au. For more information see page 37. The NSWEC's website is undergoing development to improve usability and accessibility.

Overseas Visits

There were no overseas visits undertaken by any staff members.

Consultation with Unions

There was appropriate consultation with the Public Service Association regarding the changes to positions within the Finance area. No significant industrial issues were raised.

Code of Conduct

The integrity and reputation of the NSWEC is supported by a clear statement of expected behaviour detailed in our Code of Conduct.

There has been no change to our Code. A Business Ethics Statement has been drafted which aims to build and support ethical business relationships with the private sector.

Committees and Special Offices

A list of NSWEC Committees and Special Offices is available at Appendix 14.

Administrative Services

Waste Reduction Plan

Under the current legislative arrangements the conduct of elections is predominantly a paper-based activity. However we have developed waste mitigation and minimisation strategies in the key areas of paper products and office equipment and consumables.

Improvements were made in the reporting year as listed below.

Online Recruitment

The State election online recruitment process attracted some 20,000 applications, which by any other means would have been submitted and/or printed out in hard copy for review. The recruitment database allowed for the electronic submission of an application and the subsequent online consideration of that application by each of the returning officers for the 93 electoral districts across the State.

Intranet for Returning Officers

The implementation of a returning officers' intranet, enabled electronic copies of forms and manuals to be provided.

Paper wastage through over supply was mitigated.

Website Redevelopment

Our website was redeveloped during the reporting year. This new site provides a range of information to the public including election information, results and publications in electronic formats.

Use of Recycled Material

Contracts for the purchase of ballot boxes and voting screens made of recycled content continue to be implemented.

Resource Recovery – Waste Re-use and Recycling

Re-use of election material in the local community is our first priority. Material that cannot be re-used (including ballot papers) is recycled.

Recycling of Computers

Through the NSW Department of Commerce Reconnect Program 30 NSWEC computers were provided to Technical Aid for the Disabled.

Energy Management Plan

The NSWEC supports energy management as a key mechanism for pursuing both environmental and financial benefits. The level of electoral activity in any given period of time has a direct relationship to energy consumption.

This aspect and the fact that the NSWEC has increased its staffing and resource levels significantly over the past year mean that performance measures against baseline data will be misleading.

Thus the NSWEC aims to mitigate consumption rather than make comparisons against baseline data.

Premier's Memorandum 2004-4 sets out new requirements to improve the greenhouse performance of NSW Government office buildings and tenancies using the Australian Building Greenhouse Rating scheme. The NSWEC's current accommodation complies with these requirements.

Risk Management and Insurance Activities

The NSWEC maintains insurance under the risk management system of the Treasury Managed Fund, namely, public liability, workers compensation, motor vehicle, property and miscellaneous insurances.

Public liability coverage is met by the NSWEC on behalf of lessors of polling place premises for elections. Risks are at their peak at the time of major electoral events. Incidents relating to the activities of election officials and the attendance of electors at polling places are mitigated via training programmes for election officials that emphasise risk management initiatives.

Information Management

Privacy and Data Protection

Personal information is not collected, used, disclosed or accessed for purposes other than as provided for in privacy legislation, electoral legislation or purposes directly related to the electoral process.

As prescribed in section 31B of the Act the printed NSW electoral roll is available for public inspection at the NSWEC. The roll is no longer available for sale.

The roll is currently provided to registered political parties, Members of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly and candidates for elections pursuant to section 31C of the Act. The roll is also provided to certain NSW Government departments for law enforcement and revenue protection purposes. Enrolment information can also be provided for medical research purposes. Safeguard agreements are in place with all recipients of the roll to ensure appropriate use of the roll.

Under section 31D of the Act the NSWEC must report all other requests for copies of the NSW electoral roll. During the reporting year the NSWEC received 1 request for a list of electors and their particulars. In this instance the Electoral Commissioner concluded that the protection of personal information outweighed the public interest in providing the information and the request was not approved.

Provision of Electoral Information: Telephone, Media and Inquiry Services

The NSWEC continued to provide its clients with a range of electoral information through a variety of channels including telephone, website, email, facsimile, media, telephone typewriter and interpreting services. Information in alternative formats is made available through the National Information Library Service.

PRIMARY INFORMATION SERVICES	2006-07
Telephone enquiries	273,716
Email enquiries	1,779
Telephone interpreting	1,922
Website visits per month	59,064

Protected Disclosures Act 1999

No officer made a protected disclosure.

Corruption Prevention Policy

There were no reports of suspected corrupt conduct lodged via the internal reporting system.

Guarantee of Service

The NSWEC's Guarantee of Service can be found on the website www.elections.nsw.gov.au

Freedom of Information (FOI)

In the reporting year the NSWEC did not receive any FOI applications. The NSWEC has both a Statement of Affairs and a Summary of Affairs which are available upon request.

Pursuant to section 14 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*, the NSWEC published a Summary of Affairs in the Government Gazette on 30 June 2007.

The NSWEC Statement of Affairs is published within this report – see Appendix 15.

Website

As recommended by the CCQG review, the NSWEC website was redeveloped and a new site was launched in January 2007. The site will be continually reviewed and updated to meet the needs of a modern election services provider. For more information see page 36.

Publications

In the reporting year the NSWEC published reports on the Local Government by-elections that were contested as well as its Annual Report 2005-06. The NSWEC also published handbooks to assist participants in the 2007 State election.

Most of these publications are available in hard copy or download on the website www.elections.nsw.gov.au.

Financial Performance

Financial Position and Performance

The NSWEC carries out its functions in accordance with the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the Treasurer's Directions. Audited Financial Statements accompany this report.

The net cost of services for the year ending 30 June 2007 was \$51.6 million. This was under budget by \$6.6 million. The budget variance was mainly due to the provision of \$8.5 million in the budget for payments on behalf of the Election Funding Authority. Supplementary funding of \$2.0 million was received to support the delivery of the State election.

Increased employee related costs and other operating expenses were the result of additional services provided and charged to commercial clients.

Other expenses of \$44.7 million relate to the payments made under the Joint Roll Agreement with the Commonwealth and delivery of the State Election.

Revenue of \$1.5 million is comprised primarily of earnings from conducting Local Government by-elections, statutory and industrial ballots and interest earnings.

Transfers amounting to \$4.4 million to the Election Funding Authority were made to meet that Authority's obligations under the *Election Funding Act 1981*. For further details on the EFA see the EFA Annual Report.

Assets at year end totalled \$8.6 million comprised of mainly cash \$1.2 million, receivables \$1.1 million, and plant and equipment \$6.2 million.

Liabilities totalled \$3.1 million, the major component being payment due to creditors.

Payment Performance Indicators

The payment performance indicators reflect a continued high performance of an average of 92% of all accounts being paid on time.

Generally the performance indicators reflect a small number of instances of invoices being in dispute and discrepancies in billings. An analysis of payment performance indicators is available at Appendix 16.

Major Works

There were no major works undertaken by the NSWEC in 2006/07.

Consultancies

The NSWEC spent \$138,000 on consultants in 2006/07. \$85,000 was spent in relation to development of the Information Communication Technology Strategic Plan. The balance of \$53,000 has been spent on various other consulting projects throughout the year.

Major Assets

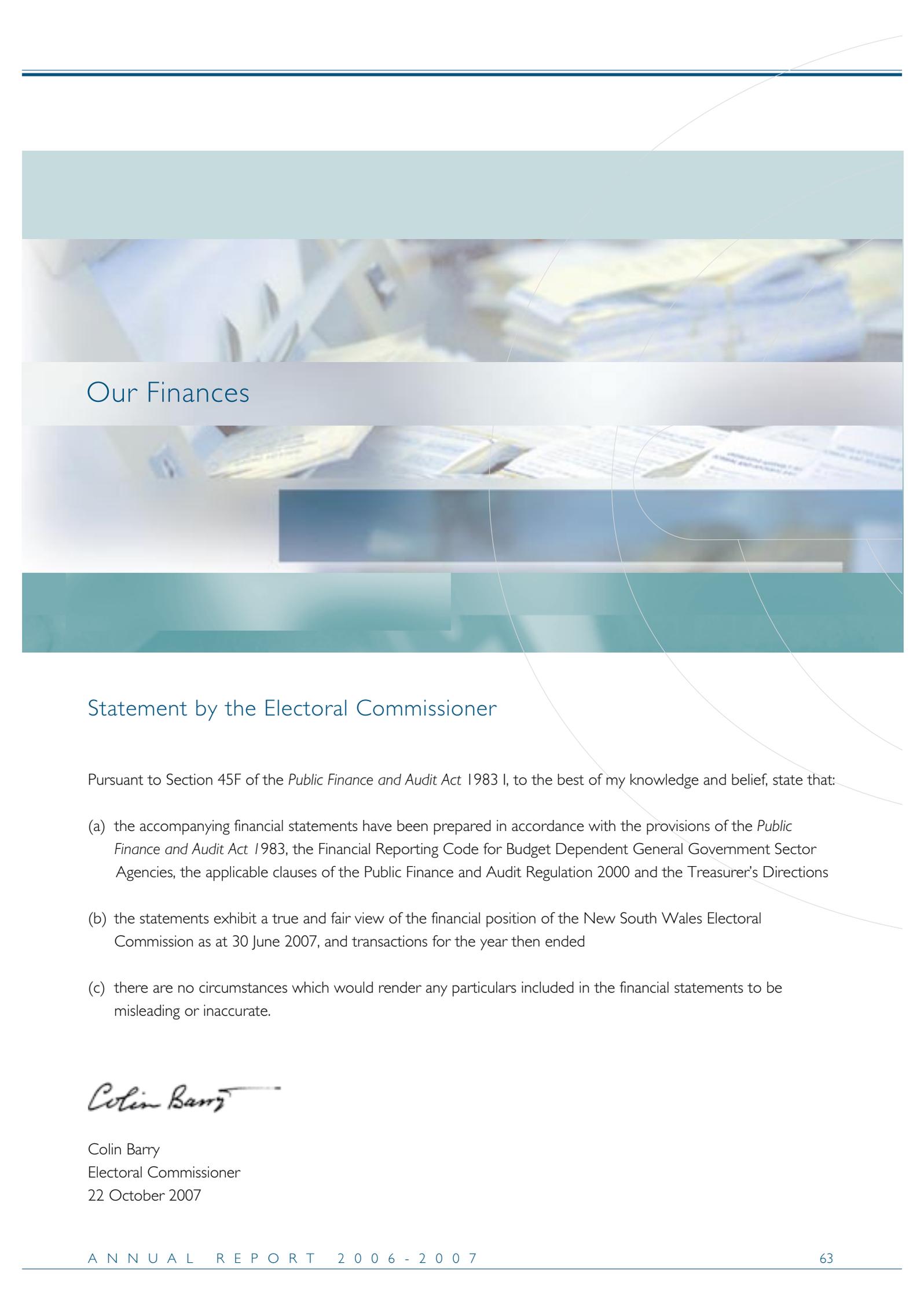
The NSWEC has \$8.6 million of assets. \$2.4 million of these assets are held in cash and receivables. The majority of the rest of the assets are plant and equipment (\$2.7 million) and intangible assets (\$3.5 million). A list of the NSWEC's major assets is available at Appendix 17.

Leave Entitlements

It is recognized that recreation leave accruals for some officers are in excess of the maximum accrual. The NSWEC is working to an agreed plan to reduce leave balances and ensure all employees' leave is in line with the Public Service Conditions of Employment Award.

Consistent with the Award, the NSWEC aims to reduce leave balances for officers with balances over 30 days to between 20 to 30 days on an ongoing basis, and for all officers to take at least 2 consecutive weeks leave every 12 months.

Our liabilities in respect of leave entitlements are available at Appendix 18.



Our Finances

Statement by the Electoral Commissioner

Pursuant to Section 45F of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* I, to the best of my knowledge and belief, state that:

- (a) the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent General Government Sector Agencies, the applicable clauses of the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2000 and the Treasurer's Directions
- (b) the statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position of the New South Wales Electoral Commission as at 30 June 2007, and transactions for the year then ended
- (c) there are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.



Colin Barry
Electoral Commissioner
22 October 2007



GPO BOX 12
Sydney NSW 2001

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
NEW SOUTH WALES ELECTORAL COMMISSION

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the New South Wales Electoral Commission (the Commission), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2007, and the operating statement, statement of recognised income and expense, cash flow statement, program statement - expenses and revenues, and summary of compliance with financial directives for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report:

- presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Commission as of 30 June 2007, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations)
- is in accordance with section 45E of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (the PF&A Act) and the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2005.

Electoral Commissioner's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Electoral Commissioner is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the PF&A Act. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Commission's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Commission's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Electoral Commissioner, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- about the future viability of the Commission,
- that it has carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically,
- about the effectiveness of its internal controls, or
- on the assumptions used in formulating the budget figures disclosed in the financial report.

Independence

In conducting this audit, the Audit Office has complied with the independence requirements of the Australian Auditing Standards and other relevant ethical requirements. The PF&A Act further promotes independence by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General, and
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies but precluding the provision of non-audit services, thus ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office are not compromised in their role by the possibility of losing clients or income.



Peter Barnes
Acting Director, Financial Audit Services

22 October 2007
SYDNEY

Operating Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2007

	Notes	Actual 2007 \$'000	Budget 2007 \$'000	Actual 2006 \$'000
Expenses excluding losses				
Operating expenses				
Employee related	2(a)	5,216	4,481	4,889
Other operating expenses	2(b)	2,106	1,903	3,610
Depreciation and amortisation	2(c)	1,154	1,456	870
Other expenses	2(d)	44,695	50,884	3,402
Total Expenses excluding losses		53,171	58,724	12,771
Less :				
Revenue				
Sale of goods and services	3(a)	1,209	462	740
Investment income	3(b)	200	57	109
Other revenue	3(c)	114	-	32
Total Revenue		1,523	519	881
Net Cost of Services	19	51,648	58,205	11,890
Government Contributions				
Recurrent appropriation	4	49,935	55,915	10,166
Capital appropriation	4	3,350	3,350	3,308
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits and other liabilities	5	374	226	337
Total Government Contributions		53,659	59,491	13,811
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		2,011	1,286	1,921

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

Statement of Recognised Income and Expense for the Year Ended 30 June 2007

	Notes	Actual 2007 \$'000	Budget 2007 \$'000	Actual 2006 \$'000
TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENSE RECOGNISED DIRECTLY IN EQUITY		-	-	-
Surplus for the Year	15	2,011	1,286	1,921
TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENSE RECOGNISED FOR THE YEAR		2,011	1,286	1,921

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2007

	Notes	Actual 2007 \$'000	Budget 2007 \$'000	Actual 2006 \$'000
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,168	975	1,585
Receivables	9	1,149	3,279	448
Other	10	132	55	55
Total Current Assets		2,449	4,309	2,088
Non-Current Assets				
Property, Plant and Equipment				
-Plant and Equipment	11	2,690	2,707	1,884
Intangible assets	12	3,463	3,014	1,941
Total Non-Current Assets		6,153	5,721	3,825
Total Assets		8,602	10,030	5,913
LIABILITIES				
Current Liabilities				
Payables	13	2,005	4,237	1,406
Provisions	14	747	555	555
Total Current Liabilities		2,752	4,792	1,961
Non-Current Liabilities				
Provisions	14	315	428	428
Total Non-Current Liabilities		315	428	428
Total Liabilities		3,067	5,220	2,389
Net Assets		5,535	4,810	3,524
EQUITY				
Accumulated funds	15	5,535	4,810	3,524
Total Equity		5,535	4,810	3,524

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2007

	Notes	Actual 2007 \$'000	Budget 2007 \$'000	Actual 2006 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Payments				
Employee related		(4,595)	(4,257)	(4,170)
Other		(50,259)	(53,195)	(7,680)
Total Payments		(54,854)	(57,452)	(11,850)
Receipts				
Sale of goods and services		1,055	462	1,085
Interest received		123	57	96
Other		3,456	408	917
Total Receipts		4,634	927	2,098
Cash Flows from Government				
Recurrent appropriation		49,935	55,915	10,166
Capital appropriation		3,350	3,350	3,308
Cash transfers to the Consolidated Fund		-	-	(167)
Net Cash Flows from Government		53,285	59,265	13,307
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	19	3,065	2,740	3,555
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Purchases of Plant and Equipment & Intangibles		(3,482)	(3,350)	(3,479)
NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(3,482)	(3,350)	(3,479)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Repayment of borrowings and advances		-	-	-
NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		-	-	-
NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH		(417)	(610)	76
Opening cash and cash equivalents		1,585	1,585	1,509
CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	8	1,168	975	1,585

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

Summary of Compliance with Financial Directives

	2007				2006			
	Recurrent Appropriation	Expenditure / Net Claim On Consolidated Fund	Capital Appropriation	Expenditure / Net Claim On Consolidated Fund	Recurrent Appropriation	Expenditure / Net Claim On Consolidated Fund	Capital Appropriation	Expenditure / Net Claim On Consolidated Fund
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
ORIGINAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION / EXPENDITURE								
Appropriation Act	55,915	52,050	3,350	3,350	10,667	8,114	1,500	1,500
	55,915	52,050	3,350	3,350	10,667	8,114	1,500	1,500
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS / EXPENDITURE								
Treasurer's Advance	2,074	2,255	-	-	1,499	4,052	1,808	1,808
	2,074	2,255	-	-	1,499	4,052	1,808	1,808
Total Appropriations Expenditure/Net Claim on Consolidated Fund (includes transfer payments)	57,989	54,305	3,350	3,350	12,166	12,166	3,308	3,308
Amount drawn down against Appropriation		54,305		3,350		12,166		3,308
Liability to Consolidated Fund		-		-		-		-

The Summary of Compliance is based on the assumption that Consolidated Fund moneys are spent first (except where otherwise identified or prescribed).

The "Liability to Consolidated Fund" represents the difference between the "Amount drawn down against Appropriation" and the "Total Expenditure/Net Claim on Consolidated Fund".

Notes to the Financial Statements

I. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Reporting Entity

The NSW Electoral Commission includes the commercial activities of conducting Statutory and Industrial Ballots and Local Government Elections.

The NSW Electoral Commission is a NSW government department. It is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective) and it has no cash generating units. The reporting entity is consolidated as part of the NSW Total State Sector Accounts.

Legislation passed by the New South Wales Parliament on 27 September 2006 changed the name of the State Electoral Office to the New South Wales Electoral Commission. The change is not just in name only but the NSWEC is now a body corporate being a legal entity which has status in its own right. The Electoral Commissioner is the single member of the NSWEC.

This financial report for the year ended 30 June 2007 has been authorised for issue by the Electoral Commissioner on 22 October 2007.

(b) Basis of Preparation

The agency's financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared on in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards (which include Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS));
- the requirements of the Public Finance and Audit Act and Regulation 2005; and
- the Financial Reporting Directions published in the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent General Government Sector Agencies or issued by the Treasurer under section 9(2) of the Act.

Plant and equipment are measured at fair value. Other financial report items are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Judgements, key assumptions and estimations management has made are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial report.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(c) Administered Activities

The agency administers, but does not control, certain activities on behalf of the Crown Entity. It is accountable for the transactions relating to those administered activities but does not have the discretion, for example, to deploy the resources for the achievement of the agency's own objectives.

Transactions and balances relating to the administered activities are not recognised as the agency's revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities.

Administered revenue is regarded as being able to be measured reliably when the funds are received.

(d) Income Recognition

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration or contribution received or receivable. Additional comments regarding the accounting policies for the recognition of income are discussed below.

(i) Parliamentary Appropriations and Contributions

Parliamentary appropriations and contributions are generally recognised as income when the agency obtains control over the assets comprising the appropriations / contributions. Control over appropriations and contributions is normally obtained upon the receipt of cash.

An exception to the above is when appropriations are unspent at year end. In this case, the authority to spend the money lapses and generally the unspent amount must be repaid to the Consolidated Fund in the following financial year. As a result, unspent appropriations are accounted for as liabilities rather than revenue.

Any liability is disclosed as part of "Current Liabilities - Other". The liability is extinguished when it is repaid in the next financial year. Any liability in respect of transfer payments is disclosed in Note 20 "Administered Liabilities."

(ii) Sale of Goods

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised as revenue when the agency transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the assets.

(iii) Rendering of Services

Revenue is recognised when the service is provided or by reference to the stage of completion (based on labour hours incurred to date).

(iv) Investment Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues using the effective interest method as set out in AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement.

(e) Employee Benefits and Other Provisions

(i) Salaries and Wages, Annual Leave, Sick Leave and On-Costs

Liabilities for salaries and wages (including non-monetary benefits), annual leave and paid sick leave that fall due wholly within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised and measured in respect of employee's services up to the reporting date at undiscounted amounts based on the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Long-term annual leave that is not expected to be taken within twelve months is measured at present value in accordance with AASB 119 Employee Benefits. Market yields on government bonds of 6.25% are used to

discount long-term annual leave.

Unused non-vesting sick leave does not give rise to a liability as it is not considered probable that sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the entitlements accrued in the future.

The outstanding amounts of payroll tax, workers' compensation insurance premiums and fringe benefits tax, which are consequential to employment, are recognised as liabilities and expenses where the employee entitlements to which they relate have been recognised.

(ii) Long Service Leave and Superannuation

The agency's liabilities for long service leave and defined benefit superannuation are assumed by the Crown Entity. The agency accounts for the liability as having been extinguished resulting in the amount assumed being shown as part of the non-monetary revenue item described as "Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits and other liabilities". Prior to 2005/06 the Crown Entity also assumed the defined contribution superannuation liability.

Long service leave is measured at present value in accordance with AASB 119 Employee Benefits. This is based on the application of certain factors (specified in NSW TC 07/04) to employees with five or more years of service, using current rates of pay. These factors were determined on an actuarial review to approximate present value.

The superannuation expense for the financial year is determined by using the formulae specified in the Treasurer's Directions. The expense for certain superannuation schemes (i.e. Basic Benefit and First State Super) is calculated as a percentage of the employees' salary. For other superannuation schemes (i.e. State Superannuation Scheme and State Authorities Superannuation Scheme), the expense is calculated as a multiple of the employees' superannuation contributions.

(iii) Other Provisions

Other provisions exist when: the agency has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Any provisions for restructuring are recognised only when the agency has a detailed formal plan and has raised a valid expectation in those affected by the restructuring that it will carry out the restructuring by starting to implement the plan or announcing its main features to those affected.

If the effect of the time value of money is material, provisions are discounted at 6.25%, which is a pre-tax rate that reflects the current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability.

(f) Insurance

The agency's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund Scheme of self insurance for Government agencies. The expense (premium) is determined by the Fund Manager based on past claim experience.

(g) Accounting for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST, except where:

- the GST incurred by the agency as a purchaser that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of an item of expense.
- receivables and payables are stated with GST included.

(h) Acquisition of Assets

The cost method of accounting is used for the initial recording of all acquisitions of assets controlled by the agency. Cost is the amount of cash or cash equivalents paid or the fair value of the other consideration given to acquire the asset at the time of its acquisition or construction or, where applicable, the amount attributed to that asset when initially recognised in accordance with the specific requirements of other Australian Accounting Standards.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets at their fair value at the date of acquisition.

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

Where payment for an item is deferred beyond normal credit terms, its cost is the cash price equivalent, i.e. the deferred payment amount is effectively discounted at an asset-specific rate.

(i) Capitalisation Thresholds

Plant and equipment and intangible assets costing \$5,000 and above individually (or forming part of a network costing more than \$5,000) are capitalised.

(j) Revaluation of Plant and Equipment

Physical non-current assets are valued in accordance with the "Valuation of Physical Non-Current assets at Fair Value" Policy and Guidelines Paper (TPP 07-1). This policy adopts a fair value in accordance with the AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment.

Plant and equipment is measured on an existing use basis, where there are no feasible alternative uses in the existing natural, legal, financial and socio-political environment. However, in the limited circumstances where there are feasible alternative uses, assets are valued at their highest and best use.

Fair value of plant and equipment is determined based on the best available market evidence, including current market selling prices for the same or similar assets. Where there is no available market evidence, the asset's fair value is measured at its market buying price, the best indicator of which is depreciated replacement cost.

The agency's non-current assets are comprised wholly of plant and equipment, which are valued at fair value.

(k) Impairment of Plant and Equipment

As a not-for-profit entity with no cash generating units, the agency is effectively exempted from AASB 136 Impairment of Assets and impairment testing. This is because AASB 136 modifies the recoverable amount test to the higher of fair value less costs to sell and depreciated replacement cost. This means that, for an asset already measured at fair value, impairment can only arise if selling costs are material. Selling costs are regarded as immaterial.

(l) Depreciation of Plant and Equipment

Depreciation is provided for on a straight-line basis for all depreciable assets so as to write off the depreciable amount of each asset as it is consumed over its useful life to the agency.

All material separately identifiable components of assets are depreciated over their useful lives.

Asset Type	Useful Life
Computer Equipment	4 Years
Plant and Equipment	7 Years
Furniture and Fixtures	8 Years
Leasehold Improvements	7 Years

(m) Restoration Costs

The estimated cost of dismantling and removing an asset and restoring the site is included in the cost of an asset, to the extent it is recognised as a liability.

(n) Maintenance

The costs of day-to-day servicing or maintenance are charged as expenses as incurred, except where they relate to the replacement of a part or component of an asset, in which case the costs are capitalised and depreciated.

(o) Leased Assets

Operating lease payments are charged to the Operating Statement in the periods in which they are incurred.

No assets have been acquired under finance lease arrangements.

(p) Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. These financial assets are recognised initially at fair value, usually based on the transaction cost or face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for any impairment of receivables. Any changes are accounted for in the Operating Statement when impaired, derecognised or through the amortisation process.

Short-term receivables with no stated interest rate are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

(q) Intangible Assets

The agency recognises intangible assets only if it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the agency and the cost of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Where an asset is acquired at no or nominal cost, the cost is its fair value as at the date of acquisition.

The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed to be finite.

Intangible assets are subsequently measured at fair value only if there is an active market. As there is no active market for the agency's intangible assets, the assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation.

The agency's intangible assets are amortised using the straight line method over a period of between 4 and 6 years. Currently, the agency's intangible assets solely comprise software.

In general, intangible assets are tested for impairment where an indicator of impairment exists. However, as a not-for-profit entity with no cash generating units, the agency is effectively exempted from impairment testing (refer para (k)).

(r) Other Assets

Other assets are recognised on a cost basis.

(s) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the agency and other amounts.

Other payables predominantly relate to the agency's Sydney accommodation lease, which provides for a lease incentive in the form of rent free period. The lease incentive has been accounted for as a liability, which reduces over the lease term as it is repaid through a component of the periodic rental payments.

(t) Budgeted Amounts

The budgeted amounts are drawn from the budgets as formulated at the beginning of the financial year and with any adjustments for the effects of additional appropriations, s 21A, s 24 and/or s 26 of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983.

The budgeted amounts in the Operating Statement and the Cash Flow Statement are generally based on the amounts disclosed in the NSW Budget Papers (as adjusted above). However, in the Balance Sheet, the amounts vary from the Budget Papers, as the opening balances of the budgeted amounts are based on carried forward actual amounts i.e. per the audited financial report (rather than the carried forward estimates).

(u) New Australian Accounting Standards Issued but Not Yet Effective

In accordance with NSW Treasury Mandates, the following new Accounting Standards have not been applied and are not yet effective:

- AASB 7 & AASB 2005-10 regarding financial instrument disclosures;
- AASB 8 & AASB 2007-3 regarding operating segments;
- AASB 101 (Oct 2006) regarding presentation of financial statements;
- AASB 123 (June 2007) and AASB 2007-6 regarding borrowing costs;
- AASB 1049 regarding the general government sector and GFS/GAAP convergence;
- ASB 2007-4 regarding Australian additions to and deletions from IFRSs;
- ASB 2007-5 regarding inventories held for distribution by not-for-profit entities;
- Interpretation 4 (Feb 2007-6) regarding determining whether an arrangement contains a lease;
- Interpretation 10 regarding interim financial reporting;
- Interpretation 11 & AASB 2007-1 regarding group and treasury share transactions;
- Interpretation 12 & AASB 2007-2 regarding service concession arrangements;
- Interpretation 129 (Feb 2007) regarding service concession disclosures.

It is not anticipated that there will be any material impact for the NSW Electoral Commission during the period of initial application of these standards.

2. Expenses Excluding Losses

(a) Employee Related Expenses

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Salaries and wages (including recreation leave)	4,309	3,994
Superannuation		
- defined benefit plan	129	89
- defined contribution plan	214	277
Long service leave	261	261
Workers' compensation insurance	27	19
Payroll tax and fringe benefits tax	276	249
	5,216	4,889

* No employee related costs have been capitalised.

(b) Other Operating Expenses Include the Following:

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Auditor's remuneration		
- audit or review of the financial report	102	68
Operating lease rental expense		
- minimum lease payments	553	997
Storage	97	399
Printing	171	288
Postage	126	272
Consulting	138	224
Software maintenance and licences	198	167
Advertising	100	288
Legal fees	8	100
Restoration costs	95	171
Insurance	61	66
Telephone	96	80
Plant and equipment and intangible assets written off	-	119
Travel	52	55
Maintenance *	2	5
Other	307	311
	2,106	3,610

*Reconciliation – Total Maintenance

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Maintenance expense – contracted labour and others (non-employee related), as above	2	5
Employee related maintenance expense included in Note 2(a)	-	-
Total maintenance expense included in Note 2(a) and 2(b)	2	5

(c) Depreciation and Amortisation

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Depreciation	563	241
Amortisation	591	629
	1,154	870

(d) Other Expenses

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
General Election	38,589	-
Joint Roll Agreement (payment to the Commonwealth)	3,531	3,402
Redistribution of Electoral Boundaries	2,575	-
	44,695	3,402

3. Revenue

(a) Sale of Goods and Services

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Sale of goods	7	17
Rendering of services	1,202	723
	1,209	740

(b) Investment Revenue

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Interest	200	109

(c) Other Revenue

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Other	114	32

4. Appropriations

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Recurrent appropriations		
Total recurrent draw-downs from NSW Treasury (per Summary of Compliance)	54,305	12,166
Less: Liability to Consolidated Fund (per Summary of Compliance)	-	-
	54,305	12,166
Comprising:		
Recurrent appropriations (per Operating Statement)	49,935	10,166
Transfer payments	4,370	2,000
	54,305	12,166

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Appropriations		
Total capital draw-downs from NSW		
Treasury (per Summary of Compliance)	3,350	3,308
Less: Liability to Consolidated Fund (per Summary of Compliance)	-	-
	3,350	3,308
Comprising:		
Capital appropriations (per Operating Statement)	3,350	3,308

5. Acceptance by the Crown Entity of Employee Benefits and Other Liabilities

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Superannuation	129	89
Long service leave	237	243
Payroll tax	8	5
	374	337

6. Transfer Payments

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Election Funding Authority	4,370	2,000

7. Programs / Activities of the Agency

(a) Program 7.1.1: Management and Administration of Parliamentary Elections

Objectives:

To independently conduct elections, referendums and ballots for State and Local Government and other organisations. Transferred \$4,370,000 in transfer payments to program 7.1.2 in 2006-07.

(b) Program 7.1.2: Funding of Parliamentary Election Campaigns

Objectives:

To provide an independent source of funding of Parliamentary election campaigns and to require the disclosure by candidates and political parties of political contributions and expenditures. Received \$4,370,000 of transfer payments from Program 7.1.1 in 2006-07.

(c) **Program 7.1.3:** Management and Administration of Statutory and Industrial Ballots

Objectives:

To provide an independent ballot and elections service for certain organisations as required by legislation.

(d) **Program 7.1.4:** Management and Administration of Local Government Elections

Objectives:

To provide an independent ballot and elections service with respect to elections and polls under the Local Government Act.

Programs 3 and 4 are commercial programs and are therefore not included in the NSW Treasury budget.

8. Current Assets – Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash at bank and on hand	1,168	1,585

For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and cash at bank.

Cash and cash equivalents assets recognised in the Balance Sheet are reconciled at the end of the financial year to the Cash Flow Statement as follows:

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash and cash equivalents (per Balance Sheet)	1,168	1,585
Closing cash and cash equivalents (per Cash Flow Statement)	1,168	1,585

9. Current Assets – Receivables

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Sale of goods and services	653	56
GST recoverable from the taxation authority	487	333
Prepayments	9	59
	1,149	448

As all amounts owing are considered collectable, receivables have not been impaired for doubtful debts.

10. Current Assets - Other

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Accrued interest income	132	55

11. Non-Current Assets – Plant and Equipment

	30 June 2007	1 July 2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Gross carrying amount	3,440	2,422
Accumulated depreciation	(750)	(538)
Net carrying amount (fair value)	2,690	1,884

	30 June 2006	1 July 2005
	\$'000	\$'000
Gross carrying amount	2,422	949
Accumulated depreciation	(538)	(723)
Net carrying amount (fair value)	1,884	226

Reconciliation

A reconciliation of the carrying amounts of plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the current reporting period is set out below:

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Net carrying amount at start of the year	1,884	226
Additions	1,369	1,973
Write offs of assets	-	(74)
Depreciation expense	(563)	(241)
Net carrying amount as at end of the year	2,690	1,884

12. Intangible Assets – Softwares

	30 June 2007	1 July 2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Gross carrying amount	6,807	4,694
Accumulated amortisation	(3,344)	(2,753)
Net carrying amount (fair value)	3,463	1,941

	30 June 2006	1 July 2005
	\$'000	\$'000
Gross carrying amount	4,694	3,619
Accumulated amortisation	(2,753)	(2,510)
Net carrying amount (fair value)	1,941	1,109

Reconciliation

A reconciliation of the carrying amounts of softwares at the beginning and end of the current reporting period is set out below:

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Net carrying amount at start of the year	1,941	1,109
Additions	2,113	1,506
Write offs of assets	-	(45)
Amortisation expense	(591)	(629)
Net carrying amount as at end of the year	3,463	1,941

13. Current Liabilities - Payables

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs	124	68
Creditors	1,881	1,338
	2,005	1,406

14. Current / Non-Current Liabilities – Provisions

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT		
Employee benefits and related on-costs		
Recreation leave (a)	570	403
Long service leave on-costs (a)	87	64
	657	467
Other provisions		
Lease incentive on rental	90	88
TOTAL CURRENT PROVISIONS	747	555
NON-CURRENT		
Employee benefits and related on-costs		
Long service leave on-costs (a)	4	3
Other provisions		
Lease incentive on rental	131	255
Restoration costs (b)	180	170
	311	425
TOTAL NON-CURRENT PROVISIONS	315	428
	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Aggregate employee benefits and related on-costs		
Provision – current	657	467
Provision – non-current	4	3
Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs (Note 13)	124	68
	785	538

(a) The value of leave and on-costs expected to be taken within twelve months and after twelve months is as follows:

	2007
	\$'000
Short term – less than twelve months	
Recreation leave	233
Long service leave on-costs	9
	242
Long term - after 12 months	
Recreation leave	337
Long service leave on-costs	82
	419

(b) A provision has been recognised for the estimated costs to be incurred for the make good clause on the Kent Street Office fit out once the lease term expires in seven years. A discount rate based on market yield on Commonwealth government bonds has been applied to reflect the present value of the estimated costs to be incurred.

Movements in other provisions

Movements in provisions during the financial year, other than employee benefits, are set out below:

	Lease incentive on rental	Restoration costs	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carrying amount at the beginning of financial year	343	170	513
Additional provisions recognised	-	10	10
Amounts used	(122)	-	(122)
Carrying amount at end of financial year	221	180	401

15. Changes In Equity

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Accumulated Funds		
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	3,524	1,603
<i>Changes in equity – other than transactions with owners as owners</i>		
Surplus for the year	2,011	1,921
	5,535	3,524

16. Commitments for Expenditure

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Lease Commitments		
Future non-cancellable operating lease rentals not provided for and payable		
Not later than one year	1,284	1,277
Later than one year and not later than five years	3,211	3,838
Later than five years	290	975
Total (including GST)	4,785	6,090

These operating lease commitments are not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities. GST has been calculated at the rate of 10% and has been assumed to remain constant for the five years.

17. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

- a) Contingent liabilities totalling approximately \$10,000 (nil as at 30 June 2006) exist due to claims against the NSW Electoral Commission which are disputed and will need to be resolved by the Courts. The financial effect of such claims has not been brought to account in these statements.
- b) The NSW Electoral Commission has no contingent assets.

18. Budget Review

Net cost of services

The net cost of services was under budget by \$6,557,000. This was mainly due to the provision of \$8,506,000 in the budget for payments on behalf of the Election Funding Authority. Supplementary funding of \$2,002,000 was received to support the delivery of the General Election.

Assets and liabilities

Expenditure on assets during the year exceeded budget by \$132,000 mainly due to software development costs incurred on the Election Management Application (EMA).

Cash Flows

The net cash flow increase was negligible.

19. Reconciliation of Cash Flows from Operating Activities to Net Cost of Services

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Net cash flows from operating activities	3,065	3,555
Cash Flows from government/ Appropriations	(53,285)	(13,307)
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits and other liabilities	(374)	(337)
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,154)	(870)
Increase/(decrease) in receivables and other assets	778	(38)
Increase in provisions	(79)	(443)
Increase in payables and other liabilities	(599)	(332)
Plant and equipment & intangible assets written off	-	(118)
Net cost of services	(51,648)	(11,890)

20. Administered Liabilities

There are no administered liabilities relating to the Election Funding Authority.

21. Administered Expenses - Debts Written Off

There were no debts written off which related to Administered Revenue.

22. Administered Revenue

	2007	2006
	\$'000	\$'000
Fines for failure to vote	510	198

23. Administered Assets - Schedule of Uncollected Amounts

There were no uncollected amounts which related to Administered Revenue.

24. Financial Instruments

The agency's principal financial instruments are outlined below. These financial instruments arise directly from the agency's operations or are required to finance the agency's operations. The agency does not enter into or trade financial instruments for speculative purposes. The agency does not use financial derivatives.

Cash

Cash comprises cash on hand and bank balances within the Treasury Banking System. Interest is earned on daily bank balances at the monthly average NSW Treasury Corporation (Tcorp) 11am unofficial cash rate, adjusted for management fees to Treasury.

This rate was at 5.25% p.a. as at 30 June 2007 and 4.75% p.a. as at 30 June 2006.

Receivables

All trade debtors are recognised as amounts receivable at balance sheet date. Collectability of trade debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts which are known to be uncollectable are written off. An allowance for impairment is raised when there is objective evidence that the entity will not be able to collect all amounts due. The credit risk is the carrying amount (net of any allowance for impairment). No interest is earned on trade debtors. The carrying amount approximates net fair value. Sales are made on 21 day terms.

Bank Overdraft

The NSW Electoral Commission does not have any bank overdraft facility.

Trade Creditors and Accruals

These liabilities are recognised at the amounts due to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not invoiced. Amounts owing to suppliers (which are unsecured) are settled in accordance with the policy set out in Treasurer's Direction 219.01. If trade terms are not specified, payment is made no later than the end of the month following the month in which an invoice or a statement is received. No interest was applied during the year.

Fair Value

Financial instruments are carried at cost, with the exception of TCorp Hour Glass facilities, which are carried at fair value.

However, the fair value of the other classes of financial instruments approximates their carrying value.

End of audited financial statements



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Appendix I

Local government by-elections

Saturday 1 July 2006
Griffith City Council

Saturday 5 August 2006
Bathurst Regional Council

Saturday 19 August 2006
Dubbo City Council

Saturday 26 August 2006
Clarence Valley Council

Saturday 23 September 2006
Ashfield Municipal Council – South Ward
Murray Shire Council

Saturday 4 November 2006
Tenterfield Shire Council – D Ward

Saturday 16 December 2006
Hornsby Shire Council – C Ward
Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Saturday 10 February 2007
Narromine Shire Council

Saturday 17 February 2007
Hornsby Shire Council – C Ward
Dungog Shire Council – C Ward

Saturday 19 May 2007
Waverley Council – Waverley Ward
Wentworth Shire Council

Appendix 2

Election for Clubs, and Statutory Boards and Industrial Ballots

Date	Ballot
July 2006	NSW Teachers Federation-Casual Vacancies-Election of Administrative Officer: Assistant General Secretary (Schools)
August 2006	Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union Newcastle & Northern Branch Casual Vacancies - President Australian Commercial Dental Laboratories Association (NSW) NSW Dental Assistants Association Executive Committee (9) - president, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Members (4) NSW Fisheries - MAC NSW Fisheries - MERMACS Registered Clubs Association of NSW - 2006 Election of State Councillors
September 2006	NSW Credit Union Employers' Association NSW Teachers Federation - Administrative Officer -Triennium Period Silverton Village Committee TAB Agents' Association of NSW Zone Representatives
October 2006	Architects Registration Board of NSW Clubs NSW Board of Directors - 2006 Election of Directors Local Government Association Textile Rental & Laundry Association of NSW
November 2006	APESMA - 2006 Election Committee APESMA - 2006 Election Executive NSW Teachers Federation - 2006 Election of Councillors for 2007-2008 Biennium Physiotherapists Registration Board Real Estate Employers' Federation of NSW
December 2006	Banana Industry - Tweed - Nambucca Regions Bus & Coach Association of NSW Nurses & Midwives Board of NSW

Appendix 2 Continued - Election for Clubs, and Statutory Boards and Industrial Ballots

Date	Ballot
December 2006	Professional Hairdressers Associations of NSW
	Restaurant & Catering Industry of NSW
	The Master Fish Merchants' Association of Australia
	Transport Workers Union of New South Wales
January 2007	Aged Care Association Australia - NSW
	Wine Grapes Marketing Board of NSW
February 2007	NSW Teachers Federation - 2006 Election of Councillors for 2007-2008 Biennium Remaining Vacancies
	NSW Teachers Federation - Admin Officer 2 Country Organisers
	NSW Teachers Federation - Year 2007 Election of Executive Members
April 2007	NSW Nurses Association
June 2007	NSW Teachers Federation -Election of Additional Annual Conference Delegates 2007-2008
	NSW Teachers Federation - February 2007 Election of Remaining Councillors for 2007-2008 Biennium Remaining Vacancies
	Shires Association of NSW - 2007 Election
July 2006	Collaroy Services Beach Club
September 2006	Albury Sailors, Soldiers & Airmen's Club
	Cabra Vale Ex-Active Servicemen's Club
	Culburra Bowling & Recreation Club
	Earlwood Ex-Servicemen's Club
	Leichhardt Bowling and Recreation Club Ltd
	Merimbula-Imlay Bowling Club
	NSW Gun Club
	St Johns Park Bowling Club
	The Epping Club (Sub-Branch) and Community Club
October 2006	Auburn Tennis & Recreation Club Ltd
	Mt Pritchard and District Community Club Ltd
	Speers Point RSL Club Ltd
	Toronto District Workers' Club Ltd

Appendix 2

Continued - Election for Clubs, and Statutory Boards and Industrial Ballots

Date	Ballot
------	--------

November 2006	Building Workers Club Ltd (Mt Druitt Workers Club) Commercial Club - Albury Marrickville RSL Club Mingara Recreation Club South Sydney Junior Rugby League Club St Marys Leagues Club Ltd
May 2007	Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club North Sydney ANZAC Memorial Club LTD-2006 Board of Directors Election

Appendix 3

Parties Registered Under Part 4A of the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*

Australian Democrats (NSW Division)
Australian Labor Party (NSW Branch)
Australians Against Further Immigration
Christian Democratic Party (Fred Nile Group)
Country Labor Party
Horse Riders Party
Liberal Party of Australia New South Wales Division
National Party of Australia – NSW
Outdoor Recreation Party
Peter Breen – Human Rights Party
Restore the Workers' Rights Party
Save Our Suburbs
Socialist Alliance
The Fishing Party
The Greens
The Shooters Party
Unity Party

Appendix 4

Parties Registered Under Section 320 of the *Local Government Act 1993*

Bob Thompson's Independent Team
Burwood Community Voice
Canada Bay Independents
Central Coast First
Community Before Developers – Stop Over Development
Community Development "Environment" Save Campbelltown Koalas
Community First Alliance
Eurobodalla First
Gosford Community Independents
Holroyd Independents
Kogarah North Ward Progress Association
Leichhardt Council Community Independents
Liverpool Community Independents Team
Living Sydney Team
Lorraine Wearne Independents
No Parking Meters Party
No Politics
Our Community Our Council
Our Sustainable Future
Residents Action Group for Auburn Area
Residents First Woollahra
Russell Matheson Community First Team
Save Tuggerah Lakes
Shire Watch Independents
Shire Wide Action Group
Shoalhaven Independents Group
Totally Locally Committed Party
Yvonne Bellamy Independents

Appendix 5

Parties Deregistered Under Part 4A of the *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*

One Nation NSW Political Party

Parties deregistered under Section 320 of the *Local Government Act 1993*

Community Sports Party

Tweed Shire Residents & Ratepayers Group

Appendix 6

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement

The NSWEC is mindful of overcoming any perceived barriers which prevent culturally and linguistically diverse communities from participating fully in elections.

In this regard our EAPS outcomes are for all Australian Citizens of different linguistic, cultural, racial and religious backgrounds to be aware of their obligation to enrol and vote, and to participate fully in the electoral process.

Actions continued in the last year include the provision of Multilingual Voting Guides, production of a multilingual polling place poster, advertisements placed in foreign language media, and the provision of telephone translating services through the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). During the year 1922 calls were received through TIS.

The advertising campaign for the 2007 State election included a comprehensive campaign for electors from CALD backgrounds. The campaign exceeded the NSW Government target of 10% of campaign press expenditure and 5% of campaign electronic media expenditure.

Appendix 7

Senior Executive Service (SES) profile

There are no SES positions (male or female) in the NSWEC.

Number of CES/SES Positions

The Electoral Commissioner is not appointed under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002* and is therefore not part of the Chief Executive Service. At 30 June 2007 the Electoral Commissioner's remuneration, determined by the Statutory and Other Officers Remuneration Tribunal, was \$292,465

Performance Statements – Level 5 and Above

Colin Barry

Position and level	Electoral Commissioner and Department Head of the New South Wales Electoral Commission.
Remuneration	\$289,629
Period in position	Full period
Comment	The Electoral Commissioner holds an independent statutory position appointed for 10 years. There is no performance agreement with, or annual review by, a Minister.

Appendix 8

Work undertaken for external committees and panels

Appearances before Parliamentary committees

The Electoral Commissioner appeared before the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters on 26 July 2006 for the Inquiry into Voter Enrolment.

Service on Other Committees

The Electoral Commissioner is a member of:

- the Electoral Council of Australia (a consultative Council of Electoral Commissioners from the electoral authorities of the Commonwealth, States and Territories)
- the AEC Business Assurance Committee

Appendix 9

Head Office Staff Profile

STAFF	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Actual permanent staff	19	20	33	33

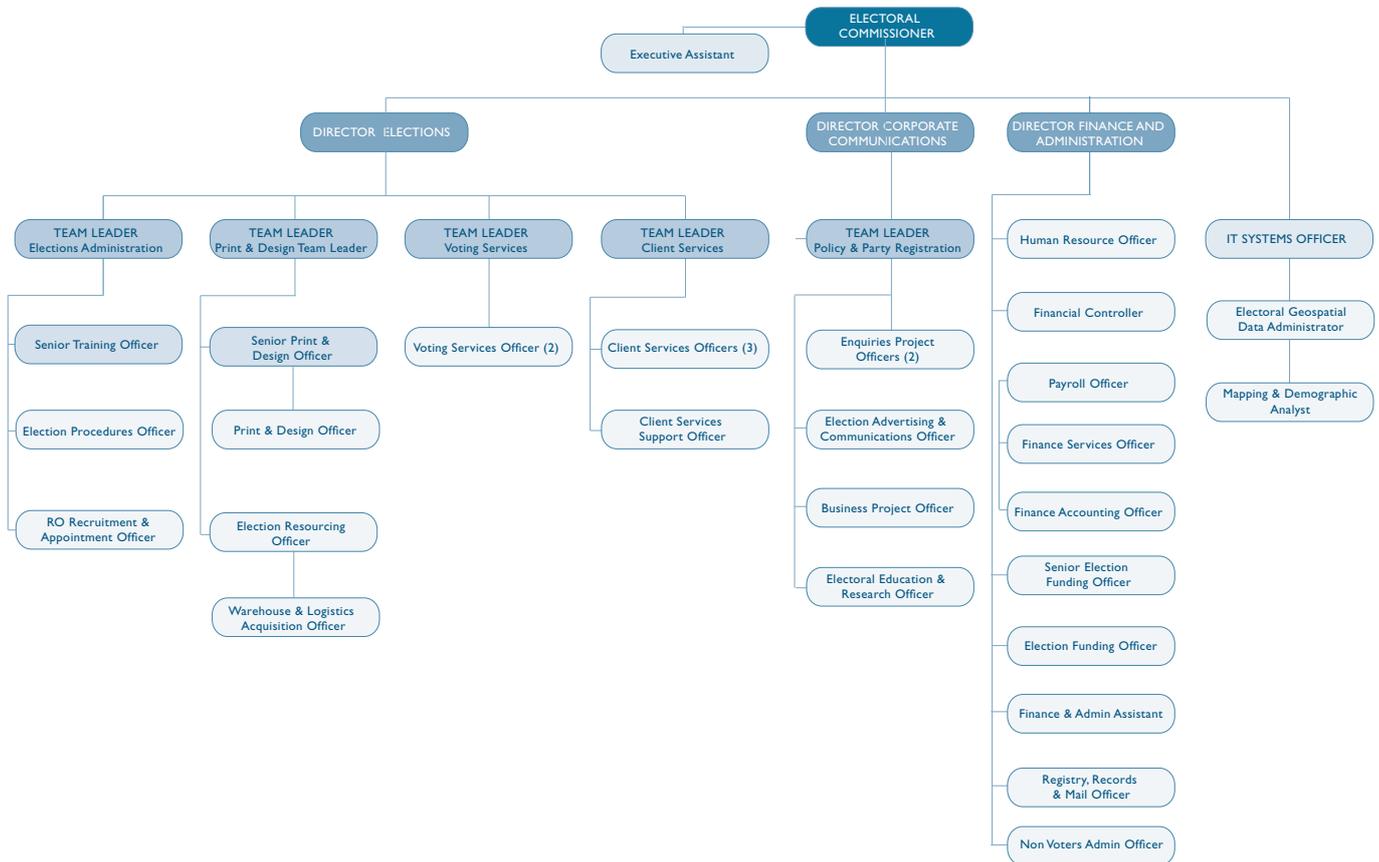
STAFF	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Statutory Appointee	0	1	1	1
Senior Executive Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Senior Officer	1	1	4	4
Clerk	6	7	28	28
Clerical Officer	12	11	0	0
Casual Assistant / Temporary Off.*	21	10	15	12

* Indicates casual clerical assistants employed directly by NSWEC during the 2004 Local Government election and 2007 State election support activities.

Note: There were no exceptional movements in employee wages, salaries or allowances in the reporting year.

Appendix 10

NSWEC Organisational Chart



Appendix 11

Occupational Health and Safety*

INJURIES AND CLAIMS	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
No. of work related injuries	4	4	5	7
No. of claims	1	1	2	1

* For permanent NSWEC employees

Appendix 12

Sick Leave

SICK LEAVE	2004-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Average Occasions	3.95	3.80	3.93	4.70
Average Absences (days)	5.20	4.87	8.19	6.83

Appendix 13

Equal Employment Opportunity Statistics

Table A: Trends in the Representation of EEO Groups

% of Total Staff

EEO GROUP	Benchmark or target	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Women	50%	48%	42%	35%	55%	55%
Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
People whose first language is not English	20%	12%	12%	5%	0%	0%
People with a disability	12%	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%
People with a disability requiring work-related adjustment	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table B: Trends in the Distribution of EEO Groups

* Distribution Index

EEO GROUP	Benchmark or target	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Women	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
People whose first language was not English	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
People with a disability	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
People with a disability requiring work-related adjustment	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The Distribution Index is not calculated where EEO group or non-EEO group numbers are less than 20.

Appendix I4

Committees and Special Offices

New South Wales Electoral Commission and Australian Electoral Commission Liaison Committee

A forum established between the State and Commonwealth to discuss electoral policies and procedures.

Electoral Commissioner

Colin Barry

Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee

Deals with EEO matters and monitors implementation of the NSWEC's Plan.

Electoral Commissioner

Colin Barry

Human Resources Officer

Greg Brandtman

Spokeswoman

Hanaan Marroun

Appendix I4 Continued - Committees and Special Offices

A forum for consultation and negotiation between management and unions on structural efficiency strategies and their implementation.

Electoral Commissioner

Colin Barry

Director Finance and Administration

Trevor Follett

Workplace Delegate PSA

Phil Binns

Occupational Health Consultation

A staff consultation process dealing with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* obligations.

Electoral Procedures Committee – 2006/07

To review operational forms, materials and procedures used in the conduct of elections.

Director Elections

Brian DeCelis

Voting Services Team Leader

Terry Jessop

Election Administration Team Leader

Greg Copson

Logistics, Print and Design Team Leader

Lorraine Nurney

Client Services Team Leader

Michael Nevin

Election Procedures Officer

Brooke Holmes

Senior Training Officer

Pieter van Keppel

Training Officer

Sarah Butler

Special Offices

Director Corporate Communications

Disability Services Co-ordinator

Ethnic Affairs Co-ordinator

Freedom of Information Co-ordinator

Womens' Liaison Co-ordinator

Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator

Nicholle Nobel

Grievance Officers

Director Finance and Administration

Director of Employment Equity

Energy Management Co-ordinator

Protected Disclosures Co-ordinator

Trevor Follett

Human Resources Officer

Greg Brandtman

Spokeswoman

Accounts Payable and Payroll Officer

Hanaan Marroun

Appendix 15

Freedom of Information - NSWEC Statement of Affairs

Under the *Freedom of Information Act* 1989 each NSW Government department and agency is required to publish an annual Statement of Affairs. The statement in this report describes the structure and functions of the NSWEC, how these functions affect the public and how the public can participate in the NSWEC's development. Additionally, the Statement of Affairs includes the NSWEC's categories of documents and how these can be accessed or amended by members of the public.

Structure and Functions

The purpose of the NSWEC is to support the Electoral Commissioner in the administration of electoral duties. The Electoral Commissioner is responsible for the registration of political parties, enrolment of electors, preparation of lists and rolls of electors and the conduct of elections. The Electoral Commissioner is the returning officer for the periodic Legislative Council elections and is also one of three Electoral Districts Commissioners appointed by the Governor to carry out electoral district redistributions according to law. The structure of the NSWEC is detailed elsewhere in this Report.

Effect of Functions on Members of the Public

The functions of the NSWEC have an effect on members of the public through the provision of services. These services primarily relate to the conduct of elections, enrolment of electors, registration of political parties and election funding. The functions of the office affect all enrolled electors, candidates, scrutineers and registered political parties.

Public Participation in Policy Development

The views of individual members of the public and community groups are monitored and submitted to the Government with comments for consideration in its electoral reform.

The NSWEC welcomes the comments of members of the public submitted with a view to improving the electoral process.

Categories of Documents Held by the NSWEC

The categories of documents held by the NSWEC can be described as follows:

- policy documents and correspondence, including to and from Members of Parliament;
- documents on internal administration of the NSWEC;
- documents on the administration of elections including State elections and referendums, Local Government elections, statutory and industrial ballots and registered club elections;
- manuals documenting the policies and procedures of the NSWEC;

Appendix I5 Continued - Freedom of Information - NSWEC Statement of Affairs

- the NSW electoral roll;
- public registers relating to registered political parties and election funding; and
- reports on and plans for the performance of the office.

Accessing and Amending the NSWEC's Documents

Documents may be accessed in several ways; via the NSWEC website, by visiting the NSWEC during business hours, or by contacting the FOI Coordinator.

Applications for access to documents under the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act* 1989 should be in writing - accompanied by the \$30 application fee - and directed to:

The FOI Co-ordinator

New South Wales Electoral Commission

GPO Box 832, Sydney 2001

Phone: (02) 9290 5999

Fax: (02) 9290 5991

Processing fees may also apply. Applications to amend documents relating to a person's own personal affairs may be made to the FOI Co-ordinator.

Appendix I 6

Payment Performance Indicators

Aged analysis at the end of each quarter:

Quarter	Current (i.e. within due date)	Less than 30 days overdue	Between 30 and 60 days overdue	Between 60 and 90 days overdue	More than 90 days overdue
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
September Quarter	1,850,215	165,113	22,044	7,025	-
December Quarter	2,979,808	162,012	150,292	-	-
March Quarter	9,710,785	20,643	4,691	-	-
June Quarter	1,845,960	35,040	-	-	-

Accounts paid on time within each quarter

Quarter	Total Accounts Paid on Time			Total Amount Paid
	Target %	Actual %	\$	\$
September Quarter	100%	95%	4,392,218	4,642,201
December Quarter	100%	96%	6,929,486	7,206,632
March Quarter	100%	89%	10,776,898	12,163,376
June Quarter	100%	91%	19,533,120	21,412,851

Appendix 17

Major Assets

Major non-financial assets of the NSWEC:

Election Management Software Application - \$2.3M

Legislative Council Counting Program - \$0.7M

25/201 Kent Street Office Fit out - \$1.4M

Appendix 18

Leave Entitlements

The monetary value of recreation leave and long service leave owed to persons employed by the NSWEC is as follows:

Recreation leave	\$ 497,000
Long service leave	\$ 1,080,000

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