

# **INQUIRY REPORT – A REVIEW OF THE CONDUCT OF THE 2016 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS, THE REFERENDUM AND THE TOOWOOMBA SOUTH BY-ELECTION**

## **QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

---

### **Preamble**

Various sources reported a number of voter concerns following the holding of the referendum on four-year fixed parliamentary terms (referendum) in conjunction with local government elections (elections) on 19 March 2016.

It is the Queensland Government's belief that it is vital to our democracy that our electoral processes are sound and maximise voter participation; the Queensland public has confidence in these processes; and criticisms of these processes are rigorously investigated and transparently reported on and addressed.

Accordingly, the Queensland Government decided that it was desirable for an independent review to be undertaken into the conduct of the elections and referendum, as well as the Toowoomba South by-election (held on 16 July 2016).

The terms of reference for the independent review can be found at page 4 of the *'Inquiry Report – A review of the conduct of the 2016 local government elections, the referendum and the Toowoomba South by-election'* (the Report).

On 15 October 2016, the panel members were announced as former Brisbane Lord Mayor Jim Soorley (as Chair); former South Burnett Mayor, Wayne Kratzmann; and former Logan Mayor, Pam Parker.

### **The Panel Report**

The Panel commenced work on 7 November 2016, conducted stakeholder consultation interviews and research between November 2016 and January 2017 and provided the Report to the Attorney-General in March 2017. The Report can be accessed at tabled papers on the Queensland Parliament website.

The Queensland Government thanks the Panel for undertaking its review and the resulting Report.

The Government notes that the report identifies problems in the conduct of both the elections and referendum related to technology, communication, the postal voting system, the roles and management of returning officers (ROs) and other staff, staffing numbers, training of staff and the organisation of the ballot process on the ground.

The Report, whilst recommending the Electoral Commission Queensland (ECQ) retains responsibility for running local government elections, makes 74 recommendations. The Report urges the ECQ and other stakeholders to act urgently on the recommendations to improve outcomes for the upcoming state election.

## **Queensland Government response**

The Queensland Government's responses to the 74 recommendations is in the table attached.

The Queensland Government notes that a majority of the recommendations are operational matters for the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ), an independent statutory authority charged with the vital task of impartially conducting Queensland elections. The Queensland Government thanks the Commissioner for his response to the Report and his co-operation during the conduct of the review. The Commissioner's response can be accessed at tabled papers on the Queensland Parliament website.

The Queensland Government welcomes the Commissioner's indication that the ECQ has already implemented or begun implementing some of the Report's recommendations. The Commissioner's response indicates that the ECQ supports, or has agreed to consider ahead of the 2020 local government elections, most of the recommendations contained in the Report. This includes recommendations in relation to: management and culture of the ECQ; recruitment, appointment and training of electoral staff and polling booth staff; how to vote cards; pre-polling and polling booths; postal voting information, ballot papers and confidentiality; electronic voting and electronically assisted voting; and budget administration and technology. The Commissioner's response also indicates that for certain recommendations relating to the training of polling booth staff, action has already been taken for the upcoming State election.

The Queensland Government will monitor the ECQ's consideration and implementation of the recommendations relating to its operations with interest.

The Report also makes a number of recommendations which are of a policy and legislative nature, including recommendations regarding early voting processes and pre-poll voting. Most of these are equally relevant to both local government and state electoral processes. Despite this, none of these recommendations are considered critical for the impartial and effective conduct of the upcoming State election. The Queensland Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling voting as well as consider the other recommendations directed to Government that are of a policy and legislative nature (together with the ECQ's proposed legislative amendments referred to in the Report); engage with key stakeholders; and progress any amendments which are considered necessary and desirable in accordance with usual processes and timeframes in advance of the next ordinary general state election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) <sup>1</sup> and the next local government elections.

---

<sup>1</sup> This will be the election that is after the upcoming State election.

**Government response to recommendations in the Independent panel  
Inquiry report – A review of the conduct of the 2016 local government elections,  
the referendum and the Toowoomba South by-election**

No	Recommendation	Government Response
<b>Management and culture of ECQ</b>		
1	that ECQ secure a consultant in change management and organisational culture to work on management issues	The Government notes the advice of the Electoral Commission Queensland (ECQ) that this recommendation has been implemented.
<b>Returning Officers – Appointment and role</b>		
2	that the ECQ review its structure so that recruitment, training and management of all election staff is its core business. The ECQ therefore needs to have a more integrated approach to recruitment and training, involving both Events Planning & Human Resources	The Government notes that the ECQ's advice that it has amended its structure since the local government elections and undertakes comprehensive recruitment and training of electoral staff for every electoral event.  The Government urges the ECQ to continue to review on an ongoing basis the adequacy and effectiveness of its approach to recruitment and training of all election staff.
3	that a more transparent process for the recruitment, selection and appointment of ROs needs be adopted	The Government notes that the ECQ is preparing a recruitment strategy for both state and local electoral events.
4	that the current practice of the Governor in Council appointing ROs for State elections should be abolished, all ROs should be appointed by the ECQ	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term).
5	that there should be a comprehensive review of RO position descriptions, including the scope of their roles and responsibilities	The Government notes that the ECQ is developing a recruitment strategy for state and local electoral events which will include Returning Officer (RO) position descriptions that will outline their responsibilities.
6	that the RO job description should clearly state that all available ballots must be counted on election day, without exception	The Government notes that the ECQ supports this recommendation in principle but that, compliance with this recommendation must take account of the Workplace Health & Safety (WH&S) considerations.
7	that the RO operational manual be reviewed by ECQ to ensure procedures are clear and not open to interpretation	The Government notes that the ECQ reviews the RO operational manual prior to every electoral event.
8	that the ECQ undertake a formal review of RO performance after each election, along with a process to document lessons learned	The Government notes that the ECQ will consider this recommendation during the development of an RO recruitment strategy.
<b>Returning officers – Remuneration</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
9	that the RO remuneration structure be reviewed, taking into consideration the size of the electorate, the type of voting, the RO responsibilities and their workload	The Government notes that the ECQ reviews the RO remuneration prior to any electoral event.
<b>Returning officers - Training</b>		
10	that core RO training should be completed six weeks prior to the election. The panel acknowledges there will be weekly updates up to election day. Compulsory training should include online modules, face-to-face Q&A forum(s), and weekly online updates (webinars)	The Government notes that the ECQ makes available to every polling official a range of training materials including online materials, handbooks and face to face training with the RO.  The Government urges the ECQ to review the adequacy and effectiveness of its training program and materials in the lead up to the upcoming State election and the next local government election.
11	that ROs must competently complete training on the Declaration of Votes process and the How-to-Vote cards approval process and subsequently ensure face-to-face training by the ROs with polling booth staff on these and all election processes	The Government notes that the ECQ will consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
12	that candidates must meet and engage with the ROs regarding their obligations as a candidate at least two weeks before the election to ensure they have clear understanding of the rules, guidelines and their responsibilities, both during pre-polling and on election day	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: it is the candidate's responsibility to meet with their RO; the ECQ has candidate information available online; and the ECQ ensures every RO is fully aware of candidates' obligations.  The Government urges the ECQ to review the adequacy of these arrangements/ communications with a view to optimizing effective RO/candidate engagement on the rules and guidelines affecting candidates and candidates' responsibilities.
<b>How to Vote Cards (HTV) - Approval</b>		
13	that the RO job description should include approval of the How-to- vote cards. If there is any dispute on How-to-vote cards they should be referred to the ECQ for final approval	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: the approval of HTV cards can be included in the recruitment, selection and appointment strategy; and that it is standard practice that ROs can request approval or assistance from ECQ in relation to HTV cards.
14	that the ECQ provides a pro forma template for candidates to use for their How-to-Vote card communication	The Government notes that the ECQ agrees to provide a pro forma template for candidates to use for their HTV card communication.
15	that an ECQ contact be provided to candidates in their election kit should they need to escalate contentious election day rulings by ROs	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election; and that candidates are already able to contact ECQ at any time.
<b>How to Vote Cards (HTV) - Approval</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
16	that the ECQ sends a representative to the DILGP's Intending Candidates training to explain guidelines around how-to-vote cards & other election matters for those who are considering running for office.	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that it can attend this training and can provide advice in relation to HTV cards and any other matters that candidates would like.
<b>How to Vote Cards – Political Material by Non-Candidates</b>		
17	that the ECQ should review the policy and legal framework around political material distributed by people who are not running in an election. Options should include removal of signage, confiscation of material, penalty notices and where necessary, injunctions.	The Queensland Government believes that elections are the fundamental expression of our democratic system. As such, participation should not be limited to only those who are candidates on election day. Therefore, the Government agrees to consider this recommendation in the context of ensuring that materials distributed at booths on election day are authorised and political information is factually correct and not misleading.
<b>How to Vote Cards – Conduct of Volunteers</b>		
18	that regulations around the minimum distance from the entrance of the pre-polling and polling booths (including corridors) by volunteers and candidates be enforced by polling booth officers.	<p>The Government notes that the Panel Report states that a number of submissions raised concerns about the conduct of volunteers handing out HTV cards at pre-poll and polling booths and many people described volunteers as being aggressive and in breach of the six-metre rule for polling booths.</p> <p>The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: these regulations are enforced by polling officials; and justifying additional expenditure as proposed would require evidence and consultation with individual councils.</p> <p>The Government urges the ECQ to work with polling officials and candidates on strategies for optimizing compliance with the six-metre rule and appropriate behaviours of volunteers.</p>
19	that volunteers handing out how-to-vote cards on behalf of candidates be controlled, particularly at large or contentious polls	<p>The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: the behavior of campaign staff is managed by polling officials; and campaign staff are the responsibility of the candidates.</p> <p>The Government urges the ECQ to work with polling officials and candidates on strategies for optimizing compliance with the six-metre rule and appropriate behaviours of volunteers.</p>
<b>How to Vote Cards – Conduct of Volunteers</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
20	that in larger polling booths and/or hotly contested elections, the ECQ should consider the employment of a security officer to monitor activity which might be construed as canvassing for the elector's vote. Police intervention may need to be considered where warranted	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: the behaviour of campaign staff is managed by polling officials; and campaign staff are the responsibility of the candidates.  Whether additional security arrangements are required at any booth would be a matter for the ECQ. Government urges the ECQ to work with polling officials and candidates on strategies for optimizing compliance with the six-metre rule and appropriate behaviours of volunteers.
<b>Preferential Voting</b>		
21	that Queensland should retain the current optional preferential voting system for local government elections at least until after the next election	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in consultation with the Local Government Association of Queensland.
<b>Polling Booth Staff</b>		
22	that ROs continue to have the responsibility for the recruitment of polling booth staff	The Government notes the ECQ agrees with this recommendation.
23	that job descriptions and responsibilities for polling booth staff be reviewed to ensure that there is clarity of roles and responsibilities for activities on the day and during counting	The Government notes the ECQ agrees with this recommendation and that the ECQ reviews this material prior to every local government election.
24	that the ECQ should use all possible media channels, such as local newspapers, radio, ECQ website, council websites and online advertising, for the recruitment of polling booth staff	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
25	That the ECQ should bring together some experienced ROs after each election for a total review of polling staff activity	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's analysis and debrief after the next local government election.
<b>Polling Booth Staff – Family and Friends</b>		
26	that there should be a merit-based recruitment process that includes pre-qualification criterion for mandatory skills (i.e. local knowledge, ICT competency and managerial experience)	The Government notes that the ECQ agrees with this recommendation and will develop a recruitment strategy for ROs and Assistant ROs in line with government recruitment and selection standards.
27	that ROs should not automatically appoint family members and friends as polling booth staff. The ECQ can only approve these appointments under special circumstances	The Government notes that the ECQ agrees with this recommendation and is preparing a recruitment strategy for state and local electoral events.
<b>Polling booth Staff – Returning Officer Staffing System (ROSS)</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
28	that the ECQ ensures its new SEMS includes the functionality to allow polling staff to lodge job applications online and also nominate their preferred booth location(s)	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that the ECQ current online recruitment portal already has the functionality to lodge their application online and that nominations of preferred polling booths will be taken under consideration during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
<b>Polling booth staff – Training</b>		
29	that training be compulsory for all polling booth staff	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that training is compulsory for all polling booth staff.
<b>Polling booth staff – Training</b>		
30	that training includes staged modules, each of which must be completed in sequence, with all modules needing to be successfully completed before the election	<p>The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation is already in place for the upcoming State election but will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.</p> <p>The Government urges the ECQ to review the adequacy and effectiveness of its training program and materials in the lead up to the upcoming State election and the next local government election.</p>
31	that ROs meet all polling booth staff prior to election day. In some cases this may involve training or simply discussing the operation of the day	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election but that circumstances will arise where the RO will be unable to meet polling booth staff prior to an event, for example, where staff are located in isolated areas.
32	that ECQ reviews the effectiveness and usability of the platform used for online training with the external provider.	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation has been implemented as part of ECQ's planning for the upcoming State election and the next local government election.
<b>Pre-polling and polling booths</b>		
33	that all electorates that offer pre-poll voting must take steps to ensure that voters can cast their ballots in the two weeks leading up to the election. In remote and indigenous communities, this may not apply	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that the decision to offer pre-poll facilities is up to the individual council and that, due to the costs involved, some councils will only offer one week of pre-poll.
<b>Pre-polling and polling booths - Location</b>		
34	that ROs should select pre-polling booth locations in consultation with local councils, real estate agents, businesses and community groups. Final numbers and location of pre-polling booths to be signed off by ECQ	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that ROs already provide assistance for sourcing appropriate locations in consultation with ECQ.

No	Recommendation	Government Response
<b>Pre-polling and polling booths - Location</b>		
35	that the pre-polling locations must be advertised in advance of the commencement of pre-poll voting in traditional and online state and local media, as well as on local council websites	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: it endeavours to ensure that pre-poll locations are advertised in advance; this is an increasingly expensive exercise and would be included in the costs required to be recovered from councils: and it will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
<b>Pre-polling and polling booths - Location</b>		
36	that the ECQ review the criteria around the selection of pre-polling booth locations and use the lessons learned from the 2016 local government elections to inform future location of pre-polling booths. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that all pre-poll and polling booths must be accessible to people with disabilities. Disabled parking must also be available as well as parking that is close to the venue for elderly voters.</li> <li>• that locations with dense traffic should be avoided to ensure that people going about their daily business are not inconvenienced.</li> </ul>	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: it has rigorous standards (ease of access, parking WH&S and access for people with a disability) in relation to the selection of pre-poll locations; but that in some instances lack of appropriate accommodation can be a factor in a less desirable location being used.
37	that pre-polling booth must be separate from, or a designated distance away from, current sitting councillor electorate offices	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that: this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election; but that, due to lack of appropriate accommodation, sometimes ECQ will be required to use accommodation close to a sitting councillor's office.
<b>Pre-polling and polling booths - Staffing</b>		
38	that larger polling booths recruit an adequate number of staff to cater for an increased number and an expected ever-increasing number of pre-poll voters	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that the ECQ uses a range of data from previous local government elections when planning the staffing requirements for polling booths.
39	that if an RO is unable to perform their duties at a pre-polling booth they may delegate to another officer such as an assistant RO for those times	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
<b>Postal voting – Timing and Distribution</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
40	that ECQ undertakes a comprehensive review of timelines for postal voting to expedite the election counting process.	The Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
<b>Postal voting – Timing and Distribution</b>		
41	that applications for postal votes be submitted to ECQ as soon as possible and no later than 10 working days prior to the election	The Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
42	that ECQ must send out postal vote forms within 24 hours of receiving a request	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this is the current ECQ service standard and reflected in current supply contracts.
43	that the cut off point for postal vote distribution be six working days before the election	The Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
<b>Postal voting – Timing and Distribution</b>		
44	that postal-only voting be restricted to councils in remote and regional areas where the total number of electors is less than 5000. All other councils should only have pre-poll, absentee and election day polling booth voting	As indicated previously, the Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election, however it is noted that postal-only voting is currently restricted to the local government context.
45	that postal votes should only be counted if they are received within five working days after the election	The Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
46	that if the number of outstanding postal votes cannot change the electoral outcome then the poll should be declared	The Government notes the ECQ's supports this recommendation.
47	that ballot papers be distributed in a single envelope that folds out with a perforated edge. The ballot itself should be enclosed in another plain envelope	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation has already been implemented and is current practice.
<b>Postal voting – communications</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
48	that the ECQ voter information letter be tailored to individual electorates and the type of voting offered in the electorate	<p>The Government notes the ECQ's support for this recommendation and advice that the voter information letter for the upcoming State general election has been refined and will include tailored information (for example, the location of polling booths).</p> <p>The Government notes that this recommendation will be considered during ECQ's planning for the next local government election, in consultation with councils.</p>
49	that in the lead up to an election, ECQ needs to engage several experienced election participants to attend board meetings to provide an external perspective	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that this recommendation is not supported as it could bring into question the independence and impartiality of the Electoral Commissioner and the ECQ.
<b>Postal voting – Damaged and non-compliant (informal votes) ballot papers</b>		
50	that a planned program to manage postal voting be developed to address issues of timing, security, accuracy and convenience, especially in remote areas	The Government notes the ECQ's support for this recommendation and advice that project plans for all components of an electoral event are prepared and submitted to the Election Planning Committee for review and, after review, to the Senior Management Team for approval.
<b>Postal voting – Confidentiality</b>		
51	that ECQ postal vote packages need to include an additional separate envelope for returning the ballot paper, which does not disclose the ballot to the person registering the envelope's return against the electoral roll	<p>The Panel Report states that concerns were raised over the lack of confidentiality for postal voters with full names and addresses of voters printed on declaration envelopes.</p> <p>The Government notes that the ECQ notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The Government asks the ECQ to consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the upcoming State election and the next local government election.</p>
<b>Electronically assisted voting</b>		
52	that electronically assisted voting for the vision-impaired and people with a disability should continue to be supported	The Government supports this recommendation.
<b>Electronic voting</b>		
53	that due to high setup costs, as a first step the ECQ introduces e-voting by the 2020 election at some pre-polling and polling booths	The Government notes ECQ supports this recommendation and that the ECQ will consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
54	that the ECQ investigate options for internet voting in the longer term and begins to prepare for full online voting at the first appropriate election	The Government notes the wider implementation of internet voting would be subject to the development of appropriate technology including rigorous security for safeguarding the integrity of the voting process.

No	Recommendation	Government Response
55	that the ECQ should trial technology that will allow polling staff to register and print ballot papers for absentee voters	The Government notes the ECQ will consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
<b>Electoral rolls</b>		
56	that the ECQ introduce clear performance management criteria with the AEC for the management of the electoral rolls	The Government notes that the ECQ has a memorandum of understanding with the AEC about the electoral roll. ECQ will consider this recommendation during the ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
57	that the technology be upgraded to ensure the bar code system automatically marks voters off the roll	The Government will consider this recommendation, in conjunction with the other Panel recommendations the Government has undertaken to consider, in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
<b>Electoral rolls – Declaration voting</b>		
58	that once the roll has formally closed, there should be no further changes to the roll permitted for the current election	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation, in conjunction with the other Panel recommendations the Government has undertaken to consider in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
59	that the declaration voting process should be reviewed to maximise efficiency	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.
<b>Counting</b>		
60	that to ensure the count is completed on the night, ROs be empowered to roster staff who have not worked during the day to commence the count. If staff wish to work throughout voting and counting, ROs should arrange a roster for refreshments, lunch breaks and dinner. In smaller remote communities, polling booth staff would obviously also complete the count	The Government notes the ECQ's advice that the count on the night can only include pre-poll, polling day and some postal votes; and the ECQ's support in principle for the recommendation.
<b>Counting</b>		
61	that legislation be amended to allow all pre-poll and postal vote counting to commence at 4pm on election day in a secure area. This will place an added demand on scrutineers but will allow staff to focus on the close of the count and report results in a more timely manner	The Government will undertake a comprehensive review of early voting processes including postal and pre-polling in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.

No	Recommendation	Government Response
<b>Budget administration</b>		
62	that the ECQ and LGAQ negotiate an agreed budget and required resourcing prior to the election. This is of added significance due to the discounted costs of including the referendum in the 2016 election	The Government notes that the ECQ supports consultation with LGAQ and the continuation of the current system of negotiation with individual councils.
<b>Budget administration</b>		
63	that the ECQ must establish thorough consultation processes with the LGAQ.	The Government notes the ECQ's support for this recommendation.
64	that the ECQ should continue to provide costing to councils for elections and by-elections	The Government notes the ECQ's support for this recommendation.
<b>Budget administration – Returning local government elections to councils</b>		
65	that in the interests of transparency the panel supports the ECQ running all local government elections	The Government support's the Panel's recommendation.
<b>Relocation of election day to October/November</b>		
66	that the timing of elections be reviewed and consideration given to holding the election during October or November in non-State election years, when weather conditions and festive dates are less likely to impact on administration, logistics and community involvement	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in preparation for the next local government election in consultation with the Local Government Association of Queensland.
<b>Technology – ECQ Personnel and systems</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
67	that the state CIO be asked to review all aspects of ECQ ICT, including technology processes, systems, personnel and contracts, this may include the recruitment of a permanent CIO	<p>The Government notes that ECQ has established an information Management and Information Communication and Technology Committee with external membership.</p> <p>The Government has an expectation that the Electoral Commission of Queensland adopt and maintain compliance with the ICT policies and standards of the Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture (QGEA), with particular emphasis on the <i>ICT Program and Project Assurance Framework</i>. This sets out a requirement for all high and extreme risk ICT enabled programs and projects to implement assurance reviews at specified times in the life cycle of their implementation. The effectiveness of these reviews is further enhanced by the requirement for them to be independently reviewed by Queensland Government Chief Information Office.</p>
68	that ECQ should make ICT a priority, ensuring use of the best of breed technology available	The Government notes the ECQ's support for this recommendation and will consider proposals for improvements in the area through the established budgetary processes.
<b>Technology – ECQ Personnel and systems</b>		
69	that the LGEA be amended to only allow electronic payment methods, including online credit card transactions	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in preparation for the next local government election.
<b>Technology – Call centre</b>		
70	that ROs need to have designated specialist call centre resources to support their function	<p>The Panel Report noted understaffing and inexperience in call centre staff as an issue for the local government election.</p> <p>The Government notes that the ECQ supports this recommendation and will continue to provide these resources.</p>
<b>Technology – Call centre</b>		
71	that call centre staffing levels, training and scripting should be reviewed for each election and FAQs booklet provided to all election staff	<p>The Government notes that the ECQ undertakes a review of the call centre staffing, training and scripting prior to every electoral event.</p> <p>The Government urges the ECQ to ensure the adequacy of call centre staff scheduling and training for future electoral events</p>
<b>Technology – Ballot papers</b>		

No	Recommendation	Government Response
72	the way ballot papers are produced, formatted, structured, and distributed needs to be reviewed	The Government notes that the ECQ will consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
73	that ballot papers be simplified for scanning purposes	The Government notes that the ECQ will consider this recommendation during ECQ's planning for the next local government election.
74	that ECQ's proposed legislation amendments be investigated and implemented as appropriate.	The Government agrees to consider this recommendation in preparation for the next ordinary general State election (for the inaugural four year fixed parliamentary term) and the next local government election.