

‘Electronically assisted voting procedures’ for local government elections

Definitions:

Distance voter: Means an elector, other than a special postal voter, whose address, as shown on the voters roll, is more than 20km by the nearest practicable route from a polling booth; and if the election is a by-election—also means an elector who cannot, for another reason, vote at a polling booth during the voting period for the by-election.

Electronically Assisted Voting (EAV): The system of voting prescribed by Part 4, Division 5, Subdivision 2A of the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*.

Scrutineer: Means a scrutineer appointed in accordance with section 59 of the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*.

Special postal voter: An elector whose name is included on the register of special postal voters kept under section 21A *Local Government Electoral Act 2011* because of a circumstance mentioned in section 68(5A).

Telephone operator: Refers to the member of the Commission’s staff who registers the elector for EAV or takes the elector’s vote using the EAV system.

Voting period: For a by-election, means the period starting on the first day that a pre-poll ordinary vote may be made for the by-election; and ending when ordinary voting hours for the by-election end.

These procedures provide for the following:

(a) the registration of electors who may make an electronically assisted vote for an election under section 68(5B);

- Registration will be available from the commencement of the pre-poll period specified in the notice for the election.
- Registration will close at 12 noon on polling day.
- Registration will be effected by a telephone operator using the Commission’s *Online Application System*. The system is linked to the Queensland electoral roll.
- Electors will register by telephoning the Commission’s EAV voting service number and providing their name, date of birth and residential address for checking against the electoral roll;
 - If the elector cannot be located on the electoral roll they cannot be registered for EAV.
- EAV is available for electors who:
 - i. cannot vote without assistance because the elector has—
 1. an impairment; or
 2. an insufficient level of literacy; or
 - ii. cannot vote at a polling booth because of an impairment; or
 - iii. are special postal voters; or
 - iv. are distance voters.

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- Voters wishing to register for EAV will be required to make a declaration that they are eligible to be registered for EAV.
 - Voters who do not meet the criteria for EAV eligibility or who do not make the declaration cannot be registered for EAV.
- Electors are required to indicate whether they wish to receive their registration and Personal Identification Number (PIN) by return phone call, email or SMS.
 - The registration number and PIN will each be provided in a separate phone call, email or SMS.

(b) the authentication of each electronically assisted vote;

- Vote taking will commence from the start of the pre-polling period through until 6pm on polling day.
- Vote taking will be conducted using the Commission's *Online Application System*. The system is linked to the Queensland electoral roll.
- Electors telephoning the Commission's EAV voting service number will be asked to not disclose their name during the call and to provide their registration number and PIN.
- The elector's identity will be authenticated by the provision of the correct registration number and PIN.
- The telephone operator is to explain the voting process to the elector;
 - During this process the elector is informed that there is a second telephone operator listening to the conversation to ensure that voting preferences are accurately recorded;
 - The telephone operator must also tell the elector if there are any scrutineers present observing the process.
- Prior to taking a vote, the telephone operator must ask the elector if they have already voted in the election;
 - Electors who have already voted in the election may not proceed in the electronic voting process and their vote cannot be taken.
- Once the system authenticates the elector's details, the telephone operator will obtain the relevant ballot paper from a lockable cabinet in the vote taking area.
- The telephone operator is to read out the names of the candidates and any political party affiliations in the order that they appear on the ballot paper and mark the ballot paper in accordance with the elector's preferences.

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- The second telephone operator is to listen to the call and observe the telephone operator marking the ballot paper to ensure that the elector's preference is recorded accurately. If the second telephone operator notices any errors they are to ensure that they are corrected.
- After the ballot paper has been marked, the telephone operator will read to the elector the record on the ballot paper and place it in the call centre's ballot box.
 - The telephone operator is to advise the elector that they have placed the ballot paper in the ballot box and the call may then be ended.

(c) the recording of each elector who uses electronically assisted voting;

- The registration number issued by the *Online Application System* is recorded against the individual elector's enrolled details. Electors who cast their ballot via EAV will be marked off the electoral roll after the ballot paper has been placed in the ballot box.

(d) ensuring the secrecy of each electronically assisted vote;

- The registration and vote taking functions of EAV will be performed by different staff housed in separate locations.
- The telephone operator who registers the elector for EAV must not be the same telephone operator who takes the elector's vote.
- At no time during the election period will any staff member change between the registration and the vote taking work areas.
- Electors who telephone the registration work area will be required to end the call and call again to be put through to the vote taking work area. To maintain secrecy, telephone operators will not be able to transfer calls between the registration work area and the vote taking work area.
- Vote taking staff will advise electors at the beginning of the call not to reveal their name during the call.

(e) the secure transmission of each electronically assisted vote to the electoral commissioner, and secure storage of each electronically assisted vote by the electoral commissioner, until printing;

- The system of EAV currently in use by the Commission uses paper ballots and as such does not require electronically assisted votes to be transmitted to the Commission.
- Ballot papers used to record electronically assisted votes are to be securely stored in sealed ballot boxes in the Commission's offices until counting commences.
- One ballot box is to be used for pre-poll voting and a second for voting on polling day.

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(f) the printing, for scrutiny and counting, of a ballot paper for each electronically assisted vote;

- Scrutineers will be permitted access to the counting room to observe this process;
 - Scrutineers observing the handling of EAV ballots are to obey the lawful directions of Commission staff.
- After 6pm on polling day the EAV ballot boxes are to be securely stored until the commencement of counting.
- EAV votes are then to be scrutinised and counted in accordance with section 92 of the *Local Government Electoral Act 2011*.
- The results of the count are to be entered into the Commission's "*Election Results Information System*".
- Following counting, the ballot papers and all documentation used in the counting process are to be placed into clear plastic bags and securely taped with tamper evident tape.

(g) the secure delivery of each printed ballot paper to the returning officer for the appropriate local government area or to the Commission.

- Once secured, the plastic bags are to be securely dispatched to the returning officer.
- Upon receipt of the plastic bags containing the EAV ballot material, the returning officer is to:
 - inspect the packages and their contents for signs of damage or tampering, and immediately inform the Commission if the same is detected; and
 - perform a check-count of the ballots to ensure that the initial count was accurate and recorded correctly.



Approved by: Walter van der Merwe
Electoral Commissioner

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