



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
Electoral Commission

Ref: A622302

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By email: lacdjsc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Katsambanis

With reference to your letter of 18 September 2017 I have set out answers below to the 24 additional questions from the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee's Inquiry into the Administration and Management of the 2017 State General Election.

Yours sincerely

David Kerslake
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

20 October 2017

Enc.

Answers to additional questions for the 2017 Community Development and Justice Standing Committee Inquiry into the Administration and Management of the 2017 State General Election

Ballot security

1. What instructions or training were early voting centre managers given about the security of ballot papers (i.e. what procedures did they have to follow each night and weekend to ensure the security of ballots)?

Answer: Instructions and security procedures necessarily took account of the facilities available at different venues. Secure lockable rooms were used for overnight storage where available, if not, ballot papers were locked in heavy duty metal cages overnight or ballot papers were removed offsite at the end of each day (as was the case at airport terminals).

2. What measures were used to ensure the security of ballot papers as they were transported from returning officers to the Perth Count Centre?

Answer: For the most part returning officers were directly responsible for transporting ballot papers from their district to the Perth Count Centre. Most rented small trucks which were fully enclosed and lockable. In the case of more remote locations, some ballot papers were transported by a contracted courier. In all cases, the ballot paper tracking system required 'person to person' hand-over and sign-off at each point of transfer.

3. Prior to this inquiry, were you aware of the security concerns relating to paper ballots that have since been raised by some political parties (i.e. transcript of evidence, Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (WA), p2; transcript of evidence, WA Labor, pp6, 8)?

Answer: It is not uncommon for candidates to report hearsay remarks that on closer examination are not supported by evidence, or which reveal an isolated instance of human error as opposed to a systemic or procedural deficiency. A party official stating that they were not actually aware of what security arrangements were in place at a particular location is by no means evidence of the absence of such arrangements.

The Commission's commitment to ballot paper security is demonstrated by the fact that teams of experienced electoral officials from interstate, overseen by a highly experienced retired electoral administrator, were deployed on election day and in the preceding week to conduct independent, random checks of polling places and early voting centres. No concerns about ballot paper security were reported.

Remote polling services

4. The returning officer manual states (p69):

Remote mobile polling teams are encouraged to employ a suitable local community member as a Community Voting Assistant...at locations where a lack of local knowledge and language can hinder the effectiveness of visit.

How many Community Voting Assistants were employed, and in which locations, during the 2017 State General Election?

Answer: The appointment of local polling staff (including those involved in remote polling) is managed by each returning officer. The Commission has not captured the information necessary to answer this question in any detail and staff are now employed as remote polling officers as opposed to community voting assistants. Given the transitory nature of remote polling, the number of community based employees is very low, with the greatest opportunity being at the larger venues that operated on polling day itself for longer durations.

5. Returning officers with remote polling in their districts are also able to appoint an interpreter or utilise a telephone interpreter service.

a. How many interpreters were appointed during the 2017 State General Election?

Answer: While interpreter and support arrangements may be facilitated by polling officials on an informal basis, the Commission has no record of interpreters being formally contracted to work at particular remote polling locations.

b. How many times was a telephone interpreter service utilised by polling place officials?

Answer: 19 times.

6. Section 100B of the *Electoral Act 1907* requires that the Commission inform candidates at least 48 hours before remote polling begins within their districts. Does the Commission have a similar obligation to inform electors in remote communities of when a remote poll will visit?

Answer: The Electoral Act does not specify a time period by which electors at a polling venue within a declared remote area must be advised of the date and time of a scheduled visit. Nevertheless, returning officers published this information via notices with in each community (as well as on the Commission website) many days in advance of the visits and certainly before the 48 hours prescribed in respect of candidates. In some isolated instances, where localised flooding or weather conditions necessitated a change to arrangements, less than 48 hours' notice may have been provided of the change. This is accommodated by section 100B(3).

7. Could the Commission please provide information relating to the 72 remote communities that it visited in the 2017 election, including the:

- a. number of electors predicted to utilise remote polling services;**
- b. turnout rates of each community in 2017 and 2013;**
- c. informality rates of each community in 2017 and 2013.**

Answer: (a)-(c) Votes taken at remote polling venues within each of the four Mining and Pastoral districts declared as remote areas are amalgamated (along with votes taken at any Gazetted special institution mobiles) and counted at the district level, hence it is not possible to provide turnout and formality rates for each community.

In respect of the 2017 general election, the following information is readily available at the district level:

District	No. of Remote Polling Venues	Predicted Number of Electors (pre-election estimate)	Total Formal Votes (incl. special institutions)	Total Informal Votes (incl. special institutions)
Kalgoorlie	6	136	195	7
Kimberley	44	3,328	1,619	78
NW Central	13	1,320	195	17
Pilbara	9	847	352	23

Historically, reliable estimates of elector numbers have proven difficult in some areas because of population movements.

Participation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities

8. Could the Commission please provide any strategy documents for engaging specific groups of electors (i.e. CaLD or Aboriginal electors)?

Answer: See Appendix A and Appendix B.

9. Will the Commission continue the Ambassador Program and/or appoint Electoral Information Officers for the 2021 election?

Answer: Yes

10. With regard to Electoral Information Officers:

a. How many were appointed?

Answer. As a trial initiative, 22 CaLD Electoral Information Officers were employed on election day. These people had all completed the CaLD Electoral Ambassador training program. These staff were in addition to the 535 Queue Controllers/Information Officers who were provided with a tablet containing multi-lingual information, and the 786 polling place managers and 360 assistant polling place managers who also typically provide information support to electors.

b. What were their genders?

Answer: For the 22 CaLD Electoral Information Officers, 10 were female and 12 male.

c. In which polling places were they located?

Answer: The 22 polling places allocated a CaLD Electoral Information Officer over and above their normal complement of staff were: Boyare PS, Balga PS, Westminster PS, Dryandra PS, Koondoola PS, Rawlinson PS, Marangaroo Family Centre, Landsdale PS, Roseworth PS, Hudson Park PS, East Victoria Park PS, Wilson PS, Waikiki PS, Addie Mills Centre, Fremantle Town Hall, Makybe PS, Coogee PS, Brookman PS, Parkwood PS, Dianella Secondary College, Phoenix PS, Balcatta SHS.

d. What feedback did the Commission receive about participants' experiences as ambassadors and Electoral Information Officers?

Answer: Overwhelmingly positive feedback from program participants; enjoyed the opportunity to directly participate in the electoral process (some for the first time); received positive feedback from electors they assisted; also appreciated the opportunity for paid casual employment.

e. How was this feedback provided?

Answer: Follow-up phone calls by the WAEC project officer, plus some unsolicited emails.

11. With regard to multi-lingual polling place officials:

a. How many multi-lingual officials were employed during the 2017 election?

b. What languages did they speak?

c. In which district(s) were they located?

Answer: (a)-(c) When individuals apply online to work as a polling official they are able to specify any foreign languages that they speak. Returning officers consider this information (along with experience, skills, past performance, etc.) when making offers of appointment.

The Commission does not produce centralised reports at a district or state-wide level on the number of the 7,013 polling officials employed who are multi-lingual; nor the various languages spoken. Polling place managers are issued with "I Speak" apparel stickers to allocate to staff who speak one or more foreign language.

Commission advertising

12. How did the Commission measure the effectiveness of its 'Dark Lord' advertising campaign?

Answer: The effectiveness of the campaign was measured during and afterwards by the advertising agency using industry standard analytics and measures. These agency produced reports have been posted to the Commission's website. The Commission also included questions regarding its advertising in the post-election survey of 1,200 electors (this report is also available at www.elections.wa.gov.au).

13. Did the Commission establish an over-arching media strategy, which included multiple mediums, prior to the election?

Answer: Yes

14. Did the Commission measure the impact of the discontinuation of the Easy Vote Card during the 2017 election?

Answer: This is impossible to measure in any meaningful way. The Commission notes that even if the letter had been continued, the massive increase in early voting would have meant that many electors would have already voted before their letter could be despatched to them. This has been an influential factor in the decision by some other electoral bodies to discontinue their letters.

Postal votes

15. How many postal votes did the Commission receive after the deadline for receipt (9pm (sic) Thursday following election day) in 2017, 2013 and 2008?

Answer: *Please note that 9 00 pm is incorrect and should read 9.00 am (Section 92 (4C)).

2013 – 1 288

2008 – 3 926

16. Has the Commission received any feedback from political parties or other stakeholders about the introduction of the conjoined, perforated ballot papers, particularly in relation to its impact on postal voters?

Answer: The introduction of the conjoined ballot papers and the six different region colours was strongly supported in feedback obtained from returning officers and polling officials. They identified benefits such as reduced opportunity for polling official error; more efficient packaging and handling; easier training; and easier vote issuing. Anecdotal feedback from candidates and scrutineers was also strongly positive.

One political party formally indicated they were not happy the Commission would not supply the printers colour codes for the six colours as opposed to a sample swatch and a description of each colour. The Commission's decision was consistent with its overall approach to ballot paper security.

Review

17. Of the informal ballot categories recorded in the informal ballot survey (2017 State General Election: Results and Statistics, pp24–25), which does the Commission consider are the result of deliberate action and which does the Commission consider result in unintentional informality?

Answer: The Commission applies the following rule of thumb (recognising that there will always be exceptions):

- Deliberately informal = blank; scribble
- Unintentionally informal = number 1 only marked; ticks or crosses; no first preference at all; more than one box left blank; elector adds self-identifying information.

For the 2017 Legislative Assembly election approximately 45% appear to have been deliberate.

18. The 2017 State General Election: Election Report (p31) states that the Commission

employed the services of a retired senior electoral official to review various aspects of performance, obtain feedback on a confidential basis from individual staff and conduct Election Day polling place visits. The information obtained from all sources will be used to inform future election planning.

If a report of this review was produced, could the Commission please provide a copy? If not, could the Commission please provide the findings of the review and corresponding changes that the Commission will implement at the next election.

Answer: See Appendix C

19. In the 2017 election *Funding and Disclosure in Western Australia: Guidelines* (p6), it states that when calculating the sum of a gift for the purpose of an annual return,

The sum of the respective amounts or values of two or more gifts made to a political party or associated entity by the same person shall be taken to be one gift. However, in calculating the sum of that gift, an individual amount or value that is less than one-third of the specified amount need not be counted in that sum.

This amount must still be included in the overall amount of gifts disclosed.

Given that donations equal to or more than \$2500 have to be disclosed, is it the Commission's understanding that if a person made several gifts of \$830 (less than one-third of \$2500) that the name and address of that individual donor would not be disclosed and the donations simply included in the total amount of gifts in the annual return?

Answer: Yes, in accordance with section 175N (4) of the Act.

20. Have you taken, or are you planning to take, any punitive action against any person or group that failed to lodge a return of election expenditure on time? Please explain the reason for your decision.

Answer: No. The Commission's approach is educative in the first instance, also taking account of the low maximum penalties that apply and the cost of any necessary court action. The Commission has in the past suggested that the Electoral Act should allow the imposition of administrative penalties in such cases to avoid the disproportionate costs associated with court action.

Early voting centres

21. At the inquiry scoping hearing on 21 June 2017, the Deputy Electoral Commissioner said:

We made a policy decision at this election that if party workers were not able to attend a particular site, we would make a table available where how-to-vote material could be placed. We have discussed this already, and have come to the view that at the next election we will make that table available at every early voting site. That is our current position. It has not been locked in, but that is the way we are heading.

For the 2021 election, will the Commission discourage party volunteers handing out campaign materials at early voting centres?

Answer: No. The proposal to make a table available at every early voting centre on which how to vote material can be placed is seen as an adjunct to, not a replacement for, the activities of party and candidate campaign workers. At the 2017 election a table was only made available at early voting locations where it was not possible for campaign workers to assemble outside (e.g. airport terminals).

iVote

22. According to the WAEC's *Procedures for Technology Assisted Voting* document, political parties and candidates were to be advised how technology-assisted voting could be scrutinised. Can you please explain the process used to advise political parties and candidates and provide the Committee with any material used to assist this process?

a. The Committee has received evidence indicating concerns with the process for scrutiny of iVote ballots (i.e. transcript of evidence, WA Labor, pp3, 4; transcript of

evidence, Greens (WA), p2). Would you like to provide any response to these concerns?

Answer: Political parties and candidates were advised how technology-assisted voting could be scrutinised by the following channels:

- Briefing sessions with every political party conducted by the Electoral Commissioner and Deputy Electoral Commissioner.
- A bulletin sent on 9th March 2017 via email to political parties and all independent candidates who had provided email addresses. This bulletin was also published on the Commission website on the same day (<https://www.elections.wa.gov.au/candidates-and-parties/9-march-election-bulletin>). The bulletin detailed the iVote Decryption Ceremony and requested interested parties to nominate a scrutineer.

Whilst these invitations were offered, unfortunately the Commission received very little interest during the period apart from The Greens (WA). In the pursuit of making the process more transparent, the Commission was prepared to answer questions and spend more time with party scrutineers where requested.

Any computer based voting system will, by its nature, be complex. For this reason for the 2017 State General Election the Commission used the services of a qualified independent auditor and technically skilled comparator to scrutinise activities and data. The offline and online computers were set up under the scrutiny of the auditor, who also witnessed the lock down of the servers, the Logic and Accuracy test and some of the daily ballot box comparisons. For future elections we would encourage political parties to employ suitably skilled scrutineers to work alongside the auditor and comparator from set up to tear down of the internet voting system.

Responses to other concerns raised in the transcript of evidence:

- **Marketing material provided to both WAEC officials and others present.**

Scytl, the company who developed the core voting component did provide pens to those who attended the decryption ceremony. This was not condoned by the Commission, nevertheless we do not believe this caused any concern or disruption to the electoral process.

- **Not all the computing equipment used to conduct the iVote scrutiny belonged to the WAEC.**

This is correct. The following factors should be borne in mind.

The Commission did not receive any budget appropriation for developing an internet voting system and had to allocate what funds it could from its internal budget.

The Commission requested the earliest possible passage of the necessary legislation, to allow adequate lead time for systems development. As it turned out, the legislation was not proclaimed until August 2016, leaving barely 6 months to implement the project. In the time available the only practicable options were to use an existing system developed elsewhere, or not to provide the service.

The Commission opted to use the registration, credential management and voting server infrastructure available through the NSW Electoral Commission, bearing in

mind that its system had been used successfully by approximately 300,000 electors at the previous NSW State election. (The online and offline computers used during the election were the property of the WAEC.)

The internet voting service deployed in the 2017 Western Australian State election has been widely praised by disability advocacy groups.

- **Use of Incapsula**

Answered in the last paragraph of Question 23.

23. Further concerns regarding iVote have been raised, particularly around the integrity of the secret ballot (i.e. Greens (WA) submission, p7; Dr Culnane and Dr Teague submission). Would you like to provide any response to these concerns?

Answer: The iVote system has three key security features: duplication of each vote on different servers stored at different locations; the capacity for individual electors to verify their vote; and advanced encryption methodology.

Prior to votes being admitted to the count, the votes stored on the separate servers were compared to ensure that they were an exact match, which provided a high level of assurance that they had not been tampered with in any way. Further assurance was provided by the verification service, with no concerns raised by electors who used the service that the stored votes relating to their unique identifying number did not match the vote they had cast. The final decryption and comparison process was executed by the independent comparator under the supervision of the independent external auditor and able to be witnessed by party scrutineers.

Ongoing monitoring of IT systems, firewalls and network traffic was also carried out by a number of internal and external parties to check for anomalous system access.

This combination of security measures rendered the likelihood of an attacker successfully altering even a single ballot paper without detection extremely low, let alone attempting a mass attack.

The use of Incapsula took account of the theoretical but most unlikely risk of voter secrecy being compromised, balanced against the importance of guarding against a Denial of Service attack, and with the integrity of the system further supported by the security monitoring features referred to above.

24. Some have suggested the need for an external expert review of the iVote system and the consideration of alternative internet voting systems before internet voting is expanded. Would you like to provide comment on this matter?

Answer: The Committee may be interested in a recent decision by Electoral Commissioners throughout Australia to commit resources and expertise to the development of the most advanced possible national internet voting capacity. In principle support for this approach has been provided by different governments. Future technology used by the Commission will take account of these developments.

Appendix A



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
Electoral Commission

CaLD Electors – Strategies & Initiatives

Some of the key learnings or findings from the 5 May 2015 CaLD Electors Consultative Forum include:

- The Australian democratic system can be confusing, including the role of political parties and the complicated voting system with its variations between the three levels of government. Hence language usage is critical. Need to avoid jargon and use easy language along with symbols and graphics.
- Engaging with CaLD community groups needs to be an on-going thing with building trusting relationships being vital. Connections between people and establishing relationships at the community level are fundamental to achieving effective learning and change. Hence need for a face to face presence, not just mass media messaging.
- Not all CaLD electors may be literate in their own language, hence need to look at using technological solutions and trusted ambassadors and advocates who can speak the language and are familiar with cultural elements.
- The WAEC needs to tap into existing networks, community groups and service providers to maximise engagement effectiveness and relationship building. Building partnerships has proved to be effective in other areas such as local government service provision.
- Getting the message across that participation in voting is an important citizenship obligation can be difficult and is often exacerbated by a range of barriers (eg. distrust, confusion, embarrassment, low priority amongst competing priorities, historical experiences elsewhere). Need to address the 'What's in it for me?' question and effectively demonstrate the importance of voting and civil participation and how voting can make a difference.

- As with younger electors from other sections of the community, most young CaLD electors are big users of social media and telecommunications technologies and find these more accessible than other media, especially print.

Recommended Actions

The following recommendations are made by the WAEC's CaLD Working Group and stem from its work in consulting with various CaLD community groups and related agencies, plus from the feedback and ideas gathered at the CaLD Electors Consultative Forum held on 5 May 2015.

It is recommended that the WAEC implement each of these recommendations in the lead-up to the March 2017 State general election or during its conduct.

1. Staff from the Electoral Education Centre (EEC) to actively work in partnership with staff from relevant State and local government bodies and representatives from various community organisations to deliver joint and tailored electoral education presentations. The EEC to tap into existing networks to promote this service in conjunction with the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI).
2. That the tablets proposed to be deployed in polling places for roll lookup and elector guidance purposes, be loaded with an updated version of the multi-lingual guide and the capacity to include verbal recordings or video imagery aimed at CaLD electors also be investigated.
3. The 2017 State general election public awareness and advertising campaign to include specific components targeting CaLD electors which aim to demystify and humanise the enrolment and voting processes for CaLD electors. This requirement be specifically included in the brief to be provided to the advertising agency.
4. Use social media channels such as YouTube and Facebook to target CaLD electors (especially younger voters) and to make presentations/instructional videos readily available online.
5. Use existing networks and databases to be more proactive in encouraging CaLD electors to register for work as polling officials and reemphasise with Returning Officers at their training, the need to endeavour to employ casual staff with cultural backgrounds and language skills that align to the demographic profile of their district.

6. Tap into existing networks and programs to identify potential community advocates/ambassadors from particular CaLD communities who could be trained to disseminate and clarify electoral information within their community and be employed as casual community liaison officers during the next State general election. To be conducted as a trial or pilot program and paid training to be provided.
7. Develop a suite of Easy English resources or guideline material that can be used by the above community advocates/ambassadors when working in their community. May also have application to other segments of the electorate and can be published online for widespread access.
8. Produce a brochure targeting CaLD electors that is written in Easy English and uses graphic devices/symbols, for issue at citizenship ceremonies and community presentations, plus for distribution to CaLD community groups.
9. Review existing polling place signage and develop graphics/symbols rich Easy English how to vote correctly signs for placement in every voting screen and at the entrance to polling places.
10. Investigate and pursue opportunities for the Electoral Commissioner and other WAEC staff to speak or be interviewed on CaLD focused radio programs – particularly in the lead up to the next general election.
11. Continue with the initiatives and resources that have been deployed to date to assist CaLD electors, such as the Multi-Lingual Guide and the “I Speak” stickers that are worn by relevant polling staff.

Appendix B

CaLD elector Services project overview

This document provides an overview of the services to be provided for CaLD electors at the 2017 State election for consideration. I am seeking support for:

- The Community Ambassadors and Electoral Information Officers trial program, as described.
- Translation of educational fact sheets into 25 languages
- Printing of translated 'About voting' fact sheets for use as multi lingual guide
- Printing of fact sheets for distribution and use as promotional materials
- Translation of CaLD elector brochure into 25 languages
- Printing of CaLD elector brochure
- Printing and distribution of 1 Speak stickers
- Infographic polling place posters
- CaLD elector information video and polling booth signage as part of separate projects

Community Ambassadors and Electoral Information Officers Trial Program

A trial of community ambassadors is proposed in districts within the Perth metropolitan area to target voter participation and formality in CaLD communities. This trial will be extended to included additional electoral information officers at key polling place locations on election day, providing specialised assistance to electors and additional support to other key polling place staff.

Recruitment

- Recruitment through the Fremantle Migrant Resource Centre and the Edmund Rice Centre in Mirrabooka
- Targeted recruitment through OMI
- Up to 20 members of various WA communities who are in a role that will enable them to access community networks, for the purpose of sharing electoral information to increase participation and decrease unintentional informality.
- Successful participants will be recruited as CaLD Electoral Information Officers to work in specific polling places in Perth on election day.

Training

- Training will be conducted with participants for a period equivalent to two days during October/November, depending on the most suitable approach for and availability of participants.

- Training will consist of a number of modules presenting an overview of the WA system of government, electoral systems, the importance of enrolment and voting, how to enrol and vote correctly, what happens in a polling place, services available for electors and some of the key roles of polling place staff.
- The training may include visits to the Electoral Education Centre and Constitution Centre of WA.

Materials

- Training material will be provided, including a range of fact sheets summarising the information provided in the training.
- Polling place staff manuals (queue controller and ordinary issuing officer) will be provided to trainees selected for employment as electoral information officers. Simpler or summary versions may be required.
- Additional materials (see educational materials below) will be made available for participants for the purposes of distributing to community members.

Support

The project leader will provide support for participants as required.

Employment

- Training will be remunerated.
- Participants who complete the training will be assessed for their suitability to work as an electoral information officer on election day.
- In conjunction with a demographic assessment of the Perth metropolitan communities, successful participants will be allocated to polling places within key districts identified as having a large CaLD community and/or high informality or non-participation.

Resources

Translations

Translating of educational materials and the CaLD brochure into a number of key languages will be costed under those projects.

Salaries

- Remuneration for participants will be paid hourly at Declaration Issuing Officer rates.
- Salaries for ambassadors and electoral information officers may account for up to 600 hours salary at DIO rates (15 hours of training, plus polling place work for 20 ambassadors).

Training

- Training will require the development of a program in conjunction with the Project Officer Training and may also include special presenters and EEC staff. Training will also require:
- Returning Officers for these identified districts will need to be briefed on the Community Ambassador Program.
- Training may be conducted at the FMRC, WAEC or the EEC. If another venue is required, there may be additional costs associated with hiring a suitable meeting space.
- If the training venue is located at some distance to participants or involves travel to different sites, providing prepaid transport options should be considered, particularly if there is poor access to public transport or if courses are conducted out of hours.
- Training events should be catered at the WAEC's cost for participants. This would be at most, morning, afternoon tea and lunch for up to 24 people for two days.

Materials

- Educational and training materials will be required.
- Manuals, training materials and educational materials will need to be printed and/or bound for participants.
- Educational materials will be produced as part of a separate activity (below).

Educational materials

Easy to read A4 online print friendly brochures on a range of enrolment and voting topics including:

- Why is voting important?
- I can't get to a polling place on polling day
- About voting (State elections)
- About enrolling to vote
- At the polling place
- Local Government elections (value add on)

These brochures are for use by a wide range of audiences, including CaLD electors and electors with disability and made available on the website or printed and distributed at enrolment drives and other events. They will also serve as an alternative to the multilingual guide.

These materials will also be used for the Community Ambassador and Electoral Information Officer trial program.

Resources

- Communications Officer will be required to design fact sheet templates for both CaLD and ATSI audiences.
- Some of these information sheets will be translated into a range of key languages for dissemination through the stakeholder networks, as handouts at enrolment drives and as an alternative to the multilingual guide.
- Additional formatting of translated material will be required (due to language direction and font sizing).
- Printing of brochures for use with the Community Ambassador trial program, enrolment activities and use as multilingual guide in polling places (no tablet).

Promotion of EEC activities

Ongoing work with OMI to increase CaLD community group participation in EEC programs to continue. This will continue to be led by the EEC, but will be supported through ongoing liaison with OMI and the elections communications strategy.

CaLD elector brochure

A brochure in easy to read English giving brief overview of enrolment and voting that will be made available at community centres and at key events, e.g. citizenship ceremonies.

Resources

- The CaLD brochure will be produced as part of ongoing Commission activities.
- The Communications Officer will be required to design the brochure.
- The brochure will be translated into key languages. Additional formatting of translated versions will be required (due to language direction and font sizing).
- Cost will include printing, reprinting and those associated with distributing brochures, e.g. to community centres or attending events, such as stall hire and staff resources.

CaLD polling place recruitment

- Using OMI networks to encourage and recruit CaLD electors to apply for work in polling places on polling day and at the Count Centre.
- In conjunction with a demographic assessment of the Perth metropolitan communities, successful applicants should be

allocated to polling places within key districts identified as having a large CaLD community and/or high informality or non participation.

- This will require training of ROs to encourage hiring new staff, particularly in identified districts.

Polling Place materials

- 1 Speak stickers
- Stickers and markers made available to multilingual polling place staff to identify the languages they can provide assistance in.

Resources

- Design and printing of stickers
- Marker required to be supplied with stickers to every polling place
- *Multilingual guide/video for tablets*
- Translated educational materials will be repurposed as multilingual guides in polling places. These will be on tablets as online documents and/or printed a hard copy polling place reference materials.
- A video, developed as a part of the training video suite, will depict the process of voting at a polling place from the elector's point of view, including easy to read English captioning. Information in key languages could also be provided. Video would be published on the website and polling place tablets for use by polling place staff when dealing with CaLD electors.

Resources

- Video to be produced as part of the development of the training videos.
- Adding translated caption or audio options will require additional translations and video editing.
- Manuals will require updating to include education regarding the availability of the video and/or multilingual guide, along with the training of relevant officers.

Polling booth signage

Key visual messages to reinforce formal voting messages to be hung in the back of voting screens:

- Use numbers only
- You can ask for help

Resources

The Communications Officer will be required to create final design for posters.

Posters will need to be printed and distributed to each polling place along with fixative. Alternatively, images can be printed directly onto voting screens.

Banners/posters

As an extension of the use of infographic banners at the 2013 State election for electors with disability, banners or posters (for reduced cost and ease of display) for all polling places explaining the voting process-(what happens in a polling place/infographic banners) and promoting assistance for electors could be used.

Resources

The Communications Officer will be required to create final design for posters.

Posters will need to be printed and distributed to each polling place along with fixative.

Appendix C

SGE2017 - WAEC ELECTION REVIEW REPORT

In the report which follows I have listed matters that I consider significant (both positive and negative) and my suggestions for the future.

During an election, staff of an electoral commission work under the spotlight of media attention as well as the scrutiny of parties, candidates and the voting population. It is a stressful time, with long hours worked over a sustained period; staff are under constant pressure to make quick decisions and to provide a high level of output.

With this in mind, it's easy in a more relaxed post-election environment to become a little complacent, particularly (as is the case with WA SGE2017) when the result of the election became clear quite soon after the close of the polls. To their credit, most of the staff I spoke to mentioned this and pointed out that a closer election result would have brought with it a great deal more scrutiny from the voting public, candidates and the media – and the certainty that many reports of error would have arisen. In such an environment, even minor matters can take on a significance out of proportion to the actual error.

Before I move to discuss areas where I believe some improvement is needed, I think it's important to list some matters which show WAEC in a positive light:

The positives:

- As I mentioned earlier, in a macro sense the election was a successful event and credit is due to the staff of WAEC.
- Current indications are that the election was conducted within budget.
- In general, corporate expectations on timeliness and levels of customer service were met.
- The introduction of the iVote facility was a success.
- The election Call Centre operated efficiently, with only minor delays experienced at peak times.
- The Count Centre (a huge undertaking) was very well planned and managed.
- Polling staff provided a high level of customer service throughout election day (I covered this in my report on Polling Place Checks in mid-March).
- Quite a few election projects ran smoothly with a minimum of fuss (the complaints project and the payment of casual staff are just two examples).
- There are many highly professional and committed staff in WAEC who derive considerable pride from playing a role in the management of a successful election.

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The not-so-positives:

- Ballot paper shortages. During the early voting period and again on polling day some polling stations experienced shortages of ballot papers. Although the 2015 redistribution was mentioned as a contributing factor, the effect was known well before the election. In any case there were shortages of ballot papers in areas not affected to any great extent by the redistribution. The cause was bad planning.
- The Legislative Council count. Due to ballot papers not being passed for processing, a day was lost at the beginning of the count process. In addition there was a delay in reconciling a bundle of ballot papers just as the count was being finalized for one Region. Both events were embarrassing and both are attributable to bad planning.
- Recruitment of Returning Officers. For this election many of the Returning Officers were "first timers". For a variety of reasons some ROs dropped out and the pool of reserves was exhausted before polling day. This was unfortunate and possibly more attention could be given to a more detailed briefing for prospective new ROs at the next election.
- The election planning process:
 1. WAEC's election planning process is cumbersome, overly complex, process-focused (rather than outcome-focused) and is characterized by a variety of individual interpretations on how to utilize the process.
 2. Despite being a requirement, it appears that some Project Managers were not arranging to meet regularly with their Project Leaders (to the extent that one Team Leader was unaware of the name of the Project Manager). Whilst a certain lack of interest shown by some Project Managers is of concern, it is also important that showing a keen interest in a project (by other Project Managers) is not perceived as micro-management by Team Leaders and other team members.
 3. Many staff mentioned that they were frustrated by delays with other projects (or were frustrated by unexpected developments in other projects). They also conceded that the same could apply in the case of delays/developments in the own project.

Looking to the future

- WAEC's election planning and project management processes needs to be reinvigorated. The following needs to be considered:
 1. Election project planning should commence as soon as possible and should be completed at least one year before the fixed date for the next election.
 2. The process needs to be simplified.
 3. There needs to be more (much more) liaison between various projects. This would be facilitated if there were fewer projects (one

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staffer suggested that the number of election projects could be reduced from 70+ to 19 and I don't think this is unreasonable). Larger projects mean larger project teams (see below).

4. Before the commencement of the election planning process, I recommend that a detailed set of project parameters be developed for each project. Details such as project milestones/deadlines, liaison with other projects, project inter-dependencies and a detailed description of project outcomes need to be established at the outset. This should be the responsibility of an Election Planning Committee.
 5. The functionality, content and scope of the current Project Management tool (including PPDs in their current format) requires an overhaul.
 6. Each project team should be required to circulate a regular status report and list of future developments (and timeline) to all WAEC staff.
 7. Local Government and (to a lesser extent, possibly) Non-Parliamentary elections should be included in the same election planning process as SGEs.
- I recommend that WAEC arrange for all staff to be given training in operational matters. As well as giving non-operational staff the opportunity to learn new skills, this also gives operational staff experience in talking about what they do - and sharing their knowledge. With my recommendation for larger project teams (see above), this could allow some non-operational staff to feel comfortable about getting involved in operational planning.
 - I support the suggestion made by a WAEC staff member that WAEC consider scheduling a trial election about 1 year prior to the fixed date of the next election.

One additional matter of concern was raised with us. WAEC received complaints from some electors about delays in receiving their postal vote. Whilst WAEC's policy was to process all postal vote applications on the day of receipt, this proved impossible on some occasions due to large numbers of postal vote applications being processed initially by a political party. Large numbers of electors used postal vote applications provided by a political party (with a return envelope addressed to the party). Processing time by the party seemed to vary and although the party usually passed on a large quantity of applications each day, this was not always the case. The significant numbers involved (particularly if daily deliveries were not maintained by the party) caused processing delays at WAEC's postal vote centre. There is currently no requirement in the relevant legislation that requires completed postal vote applications to be delivered directly to WAEC and I see this as a necessary legislative change for WAEC to pursue.

Finally – whatever direction is taken with the WAECs election planning process, there needs to be consideration of the possibility of a parliamentary by election during the term of the current parliament.

Thank you for arranging for Lincoln Campbell to work with me on this project. His support and advice were greatly appreciated. I'm also grateful for the assistance provided by Cathy Breakwell and Lena Hall throughout this project.

Ross Mackay
10 May 2017

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Appendix D

2017 State General Election – External Communications Strategy

Purpose (Why)

The fundamental purpose of the Commission's external communications in the lead up to and during the March 2017 State general election is to ensure eligible electors have sufficient information to be able to readily access relevant electoral services and to be able to execute their vote effectively in an informed manner.

In terms of more specific performance indicators, communications activities need to directly contribute towards achieving an acceptable rate of enrolment participation, high voter turnout and low informality. Eligible electors therefore need to be informed of the mandatory nature of enrolment and maintaining the currency of their enrolment; of the voting options and timeframes that best meet their requirements; and how to vote correctly so that their vote will contribute to the end result.

The *Electoral Act 1907* also specifies certain statutory advertising requirements and refers to the promotion of public awareness of electoral and parliamentary matters as being one of the functions of the Electoral Commissioner. For example, having received a writ for an election, the Commissioner is required to advertise the day of issue and the writ's particulars (ie. last day for nominations, the day for polling and the last day for the return of the writ) "in a newspaper circulating in the region or district, or by placards or otherwise".

Unlike at a by-election, at a general election there is plenty of political advertising, campaigning activity and media coverage to alert the electorate that the election is on. Thus with respect to awareness raising, Commission advertising and other communications activity should attempt to facilitate and encourage engagement; provide details regarding times and availability of the different components of the election process; and educate electors and prospective candidates about how to execute their enrolment and voting or candidacy requirements effectively.

Communication Channels (How)

The heterogeneous and diverse geographic, social and accessibility demographics of the Commission's target audience or customer base at

a general election, necessitates the use of a wide variety of communication channels to ensure our messages get to as many electors and stakeholders as possible. However, while a multi-channel communications strategy is necessary, decisions need to be made as to what strategies and tools will deliver the best value for money outcomes and be most effective in reaching priority target audiences.

The following table lists the common communication methods that are likely to be in the mix for consideration at a State general election.

Communication Vehicles & Channels

- **Contracted Campaign Advertising**
 - Television – free to air; pay tv
 - Radio – commercial; special interest; regional; community
 - Print – mainstream newspapers; magazine; special interest publications (e.g. targeting CaLD groups)
 - Online – banner ads
 - Social media – various
 - Fixed/out of home – cinema; buses; adshel; billboards
 - Direct mail
- **Non-Campaign Advertising**
 - Statutory press adverts
 - Government Gazette
- **WAEC controlled websites**
- **WAEC social media sites & other posts**
- **WAEC Signage – polling place, EVC, voting screens, etc**
- **WAEC generated letters/direct mail to particular groups**
- **WAEC publications – Multilingual Guide, Scrutineers Manual, Candidates Guide, Carers brochure, etc**
- **WAEC unsolicited emails, registered sms reminders**
- **In-person promotions & events – Royal Show stand, National Youth Week, mall tents, EEC presentations,**

enrolment drive activities

- **Media releases, alerts, interviews, published articles**
- **Participation on blogs, public forums**
- **Call Centre, telephone recorded messages**
- **Possible creation of an elector information app**

Clearly the precise mix of these various communication channels and their relative emphasis during the community awareness and education campaign will be determined by such matters as budget, internal resourcing availability and expertise, suitability for particular target audiences, timing within the election cycle, relevant Government and Commission policies, advice from the Commission's advertising agency and other communication experts, past practices and the relative effectiveness and performance of the different measures.

The Commission supports an integrated multi-faceted communications strategy, hence all of the above may be used to some degree. It is accepted however that the electorate is not a homogeneous audience and that some communication channels are more appropriate for particular target groups than others.

Developments over recent electoral events have seen the emergence of trends such as those listed below.

- A reduction in the use of print advertising in state-wide, community and regional newspapers
- Increased use of paid advertising targeting particular groups of electors – eg. people who have recently moved house; first time voters; CaLD electors
- Increased use of paid advertising across targeted online and social media platforms
- Increased reliance upon the WAEC website and social media sites as primary communications vehicles
- The adoption of new communication vehicles tied to emerging technologies – eg. SMS reminder service; creation of election aps in some jurisdictions

- Increased use of special interest media to target particular groups – eg. adverts targeting Chinese electors in Epoch Times or radio ads targeting Aboriginal electors on Noongar Radio.

Due to the increase cost and declining delivery standards of postal services it has been decided not to mail a personalised/addressed letter and Easy Vote card to every elector on the roll as was introduced at the 2013 general election (for the first time at a general election).

Target Audiences (Who)

As indicated earlier, the Commission's customer base is very broad and heterogeneous in character. In addition to around 1.5 million eligible electors, it includes political parties and candidates, sitting members of parliament, the media, a swag of venue operators, contractors and service providers, other government agencies and thousands of prospective casual staff.

The primary target audience of the Commission's commercial advertising campaign and external communications activity is of course eligible electors, however the electorate is incredibly diverse and different groups often have different communication requirements.

The purpose and content of Commission communications may be broadly the same, but the method of delivery may need to vary. For some groups however, the actual content of communications may also need to be adapted to suit (eg. details of remote polling services for regional based indigenous communities).

At a general election, the Commission will typically identify some priority elector groups that may require the massaging of the core messages and/or the use of specific channels in order to increase the likelihood of the message getting through and being understood.

For the 2017 general election these priority groups will include:

- Electors from CaLD backgrounds, particularly in districts that recorded high levels of informality in 2013
- First time voters and electors in the 18 -25 age group
- Electors whose district has changed as a results of the distribution of electoral boundaries
- Electors with a disability that precludes them from casting a secret ballot need to be informed of the new internet vote option; may be extended to other elector groups
- Electors in the remote Mining & Pastoral Region districts, that have traditionally recorded the lowest voter turnout rates across

the State; this includes electors in remote indigenous communities

- Possibly, electors who have been added to the roll via direct enrolment
- Candidates and prospective candidates.
- Possibly, electors who have been added to the roll via direct enrolment
- Candidates and prospective candidates.

The above list of priority targets may well be expanded over time.

Key Messages & Content (What)

Certain core messages are universal in that they apply to all electors, while other communications content may be applicable to a particular group of electors based on their method of voting, geographic location, age profile, social or demographic traits, use of communications technology and so on.

Thus, while the content and style of mainstream advertising and information delivery needs to be suitable for as wide an audience as possible, the language, style and emphasis of messages targeting particular groups may need to be adapted to suit and require prior consultation or testing with representatives of that group. Having said that, where possible, the Commission is keen to 'road test' proposed advertising themes and critical communications content with appropriate focus groups and individuals.

The following are representative of the typical core messages at a State general election (note: the following are listed to convey the core message or theme and should not be seen as the prescribed or required wording).

Common Core Election Messages

- **You can't vote if you're not on the electoral roll**
- **Every vote is important ... your vote can make a difference**
(At the last election the seat of Midland was decided by just 26 votes)
- **Enrolment and voting is compulsory at State elections**

- **Check your enrolment is up to date before the rolls close**
- **New electoral boundaries have now come into effect ... your district may have changed since the last election**
- **Make your vote count ... follow the voting instructions otherwise your vote might be wasted (informality message)**
- **Number all boxes on the ballot paper ... don't use ticks or crosses
(informality message re Legislative Assembly ballot paper);
Use numbers when voting ...not ticks or crosses**
- **Voting is easy different voting options are available to suit your circumstances**
- **Deadline messages – rolls will close 6.00pm 9 February 2017; nominations will close; in person early voting opens ...; etc**
- **On election day voting happens between 8.00am and 6.00pm; doors will close at 6.00pm sharp**
- **Voting is both a right and a responsibility. The people elected represent you and make decisions that impact on your everyday life**
- **A healthy vibrant democracy requires the active participation of its citizens**
- **The introduction of direct enrolment may mean you are now on the electoral roll ... you may be fined if you don't vote**

Communications Planning & Management (Who & When)

Internally, the key personnel with respect to communications related activities are:

- **Communications Officer – advertising coordination and primary contact for advertising agency; production of statutory non-**

campaign advertising; branding and design of publications, signage etc

- Public Affairs Officer – coordination, content generation and monitoring of WAEC website and social media sites; public relations; media liaison and writing
- Webmaster – website design, navigation and hosting
- Director Elections Operations – oversight the provision of election operational content (ie. for website, polling places, publications, etc)
- Manager Enrolment & Education – oversight the provision of enrolment related content and messaging; education centre activities
- Deputy Electoral Commissioner – communications strategy and planning; media liaison; quality control and monitoring
- Electoral Commissioner – communications strategy, media liaison and approvals

The timing of much of the communications activities is tied to the various election phases and the associated milestones such as roll close or the commencement of early voting.

With respect to contracted campaign advertising, it is envisaged that research, planning and development work would commence during the second quarter of 2016 so that agreement on matters such as core messaging and central themes, branding, the proposed media spend and channel mix can be determined by August/September.

2017 SGE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

ELECTION PHASES/MILESTONE EVENTS	PRIMARY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS								SPECIFIC TARGET AUDIENCE
	KEY MESSAGES/ CONTENT	WAEC WEBSITE	WAEC SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS	GAZETTE & STAT. ADVERTIS.	CAMPGN. ADVERTIS.	WAEC SIGNAGE, PUBLICAT IONS.	MEDIA RELEASE AND ALERTS	OTHER	
Core message 1 & target	Engagement + Anti apathy/disengagement message - voting matters + every vote counts + voting is convenient		✓		✓		✓		The disengaged & first time voters - esp 18 - 35 yr olds
Core message 2 & target	Awareness of voting options, times, venues & how + can't vote if not enrolled + boundaries have changed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		All electors
Core message 3 & target	Awareness + Enrolment & voting options; GEV service; mobile dates/times; compulsory despite challenges	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		CME; DAA; IEEP (AEC)	Regional & remote - incl. indigenous communities
Core message 4 & target	Supportive - Voting is easy, non threatening & help is available + rights & responsibilities, incl. compulsory	✓	✓		✓	✓		Ambassador prog & info officers; OMI	CatD electors & new citizens
ENROLMENT DRIVE ACTIVITIES	Online enrolment check; it's easy to enrol; compulsory for eligible persons; you can't vote if you're not on the roll	✓	✓		✓		✓	Royal Show; mall stands; Ratson	Unenrolled; disengaged - esp 18 - 35 yr olds
ROLL CLOSE 09/02 - lead up	Last chance to get on the roll; how and by when; you can't vote if you're not on the roll	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		All electors / unenrolled
NOMINATIONS OPEN & CLOSE 10/02	Eligibility and compliance requirements for a valid nomination; options & closing time	✓	✓	✓			✓		Parties and potential candidates
EARLY VOTING OPTIONS	Anyone can vote early (legislative change); types of early votes	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		All electors - esp FIFO, remote country, travellers
EARLY VOTING VENUES	Venue locations; opening hours; accessibility & services to electors with particular requirements	✓		✓		✓			All electors
EARLY VOTING OPENS 20/02	Options, venues and times; no reason required	✓	✓	✓	✓ press only		✓		All electors - esp FIFO, remote country, travellers
INTERNET VOTING AVAILABILITY	Eligibility; accessibility; process and how	✓				✓	✓	Liaison with target groups	Eligible electors; representative organisations
REMOTE MOBILE POLLING	Encourage GEV option; dates and times of mobile visits; casting a valid vote	✓	✓	✓		✓			Indigenous communities, minesites, remote townships + parties & candidates
SPECIAL INSTIT. & MOBILE POLLING	Dates & times per venue; casting a valid vote	✓		✓		✓			Hospitals, rehab centres, retirement villages etc
POLLING PLACES	Venue locations; opening hours; accessibility & special services	✓	✓	✓		✓			All electors
POLLING PLACE CLOSURES	Early notification at venues no longer being used	✓				✓		Venue signs; LGs	Specific venues + local government offices
HOW TO VOTE	Numbers not ticks & crosses; follow instructions to lodge a formal vote; changes to format & design	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		All electors
POLLING DAY 11/3	Voting times; polling place locations; follow voting instructions to make your vote count	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		All electors
RESULTS	Indicative results; final results	✓	✓	✓			✓		All electors



Appendix E

Social Media Strategy

Introduction

This strategy establishes guidelines, procedures and protocol for accessing and using social media in all its forms within the Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC).

In an electoral setting, social media can provide new opportunities for engaging with citizens regarding the democratic process. Whereas traditional media primarily involves one way communication from the top down, social media can provide two way communication which is interactive and participative in nature. From the WAEC's perspective social media are used to:

- encourage community awareness of electoral events
- encourage community participation in electoral events
- encourage community involvement in electoral education programs
- to grow the WAEC's following and engagement on social media.

This strategy will discuss the use of various social media's platforms, how best to engage the community, how staff should use social media appropriately, the rules and etiquette around the use of social media and offer a conclusion about how the WAEC should use social media in the upcoming years.

Social Media Platforms

Currently, social media at the WAEC is confined to Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. For social media, Facebook and YouTube have the largest global audiences. Though declining in popularity for certain audiences, Twitter is recognised for its usefulness for key audiences, such as media outlets. In the electoral context, the WAEC also needs to recognise the role of blogs.

As social media is a rapidly changing space, the WAEC should regularly review and consider transition to new and emerging social media based on its ongoing social media needs.

As Facebook has the largest audience reach, it will provide the cornerstone of the WAEC's social media strategy.

Facebook

Facebook is well suited to providing information and customer service opportunities for the general public. Thus, it can be a useful medium for raising electoral awareness and promoting Commission activities.



The stronger 'community' following Facebook attracts means that this forum should not just be used for information broadcasting and responses to that, but to engage and interact with the audience in meaningful ways, including, for example, conversations and shared information. Currently, the WAEC's Facebook page is entitled WAElections.

The objectives of WAElections are:

1. to promote electoral and Commission activities
2. to engage with 'fans' and stimulate conversation on electoral matters
3. to increase electoral participation by improving awareness of enrolment and voting
4. to assist with reaching audiences who do not regularly access traditional mediums and channels
5. to provide a community support style of customer service regarding enrolment, voting and election information
6. to act as a supplementary broadcast tool for critical electoral announcements for electors and clients.

The WAEC Facebook page was established in 2011 and is managed by the Public Affairs Officer. It has grown to over 2 000 followers, and growth so far has been mainly organic with minimal monetary spend.

Twitter

Twitter is used as a system for broadcasting immediate, breaking news and many subscribers use Twitter to find and respond to information. In the electoral context, many candidates, politicians, engaged citizens, organisations and media will monitor and communicate via Twitter.

Topics can include:

- announcement or reminders of key dates and events
- announcement of key media stories
- promoting election activities.

This does not mean that other audiences, such as electors in general, will not use Twitter to find information and communicate with the WAEC, but this audience is more likely to be seeking general information. Specific requests can be directed to other sources of information or communication methods.

As a broadcast system, outside election periods, Twitter should not be used except in the case of a significant event or incident.

Currently, the WAEC's twitter account is entitled @WAElections.



The objectives of @WAElections are:

1. to be the most immediate and direct means of broadcasting major events and electoral milestones from the WAEC to information seeking audiences
2. to engage in appropriate conversations to increase awareness of the Commission and its activities
3. to provide general information and links on electoral and Commission activities and respond as necessary
4. to assist in reaching audiences who do not regularly access other traditional media channels
5. to enable the WAEC to gain feedback from other users by monitoring external conversations related to our activities.

YouTube

YouTube is a media sharing site that is widely used and compatible with a range of websites and services. It is useful for sharing, searching for and viewing videos posted by users. Currently, the WAEC's YouTube account is entitled WAElections.

The objectives of the WAElections channel are:

1. to enable videos to be shared easily across all of the Commission's online presences, including social media and the website
2. to promote Commission activities through video media to improve electoral awareness
3. to direct viewers to other sources of information
4. to provide a cost effective and easy means of hosting training videos.

For the WAEC, YouTube does not have a specific audience as its purpose is to facilitate the sharing of content through Facebook, Twitter and the WAEC's website.

With the range of social media platforms and the emergence of new tools, technologies and changing user preferences, social media is a rapidly changing environment. It is important that the WAEC continues to monitor social media and evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of the platforms it currently uses, and investigate new and emerging platforms for the benefit of the WAEC.

Blogs

Blogs are individual webpages or websites made up of articles, stories, media, etc., typically maintained by a single person. Blogs can be followed, commented on and shared by others. For the WAEC, there are prominent election blogs which should be monitored and some could provide opportunities to engage in electoral conversations, e.g. Antony Green's election blog and PollBludger.

The WAEC does not currently maintain a blog, but this may be reviewed during major electoral events.



The objectives of a WAEC blog would be:

1. to promote electoral and Commission activities
2. to increase electoral participation by improving awareness of enrolment and voting
3. to assist with reaching audiences who do not regularly access traditional mediums and channels
4. to stimulate conversation on electoral matters
5. to act as a supplementary broadcast tool for critical electoral announcements
6. to provide an avenue to gauge opinion on an electoral issue or proposal.

The audience for an election blog would be interested electors, psephologists, media, candidates and political parties.

Engagement

Whilst the WAEC is committed to having an ongoing presence in social media it does not seek to maintain high levels of content outside election events.

During major election events, social media will be used to engage with the community and provide another medium for disseminating timely election related information in conjunction with the broader election communications strategy. Based on this strategy, additional social media activity may be conducted as part of the advertising campaign.

Research suggests that stagnant social media platforms can have a negative impact on the organisation. Therefore, outside election events, the WAEC must balance the need to maintain particular social media accounts with limited access to meaningful or engaging content.

Identification of Key Stakeholders

- Political parties
- Members of Parliament
- Media – national, community and regional
- Eligible electors who live in WA
- New citizens
- Culturally and linguistically diverse community groups
- Local community
- Employees
- Candidates
- Local businesses
- Community organisations
- Educational institutions (all levels)
- Other government agencies
- Electoral Commissions of other States.



Target Audience

The target audience for the WAEC's social media includes, but is not limited to:

- eligible electors enrolled in Western Australia, 18 years or over
- people between 16–18 years who are eligible to enrol as provisional electors
- people who are seeking electoral or election specific information or services
- people with a general interest in electoral matters
- high frequency social media users, that are difficult to target via other media.

Access to social media

Only authorised staff such as the Electoral Commissioner, Deputy Electoral Commissioner, Director, Election Operations and the Public Affairs Officer will be permitted to communicate on social media on behalf of the WAEC.

The WAEC's social media accounts are managed by the Public Affairs Officer, including:

- sourcing and posting content
- moderating comments and responding to queries
- collecting analytics data.

However, during election events, the increase in activity from the WAEC and the community will require additional resourcing.

Social media is identified as an election project for both State and local government elections, which allows for additional resource planning as part of the election.

The project leader for the social media project will be responsible for the planning and implementation of the project.

The social media project also significantly overlaps with other election projects, such as advertising, website (content) and the election communications strategy.

Extra resources that may be required may include, but is not limited to:

- artwork and campaign materials, from the Communications Officer, advertising project leader or advertising agency
- assistance for moderating and responding to posts and comments
- assistance sourcing and generating content.

Rules and Etiquette

For those staff who are permitted to communicate on social media on behalf of the WAEC there are certain rules and etiquette they should apply.



The rules the WAEC applies are as follows:

- we do not comment on candidates, political parties or politics
- whilst we respect and consider all points of view, we will not accept content that is offensive, defamatory or obscene
- we will not publish personal information
- we may keep posts relevant to WAEC information.

The WAEC social accounts will be monitored to ensure comments and queries are responded to. However, while the WAEC supports lively and open discussion we reserve the right to amend and delete inappropriate comments. Lastly, the WAEC will block any users who repeatedly breach our rules on etiquette.

Staff use of social media

As the WAEC has decided that social media is an important part of its communication strategy it clearly has to establish rules on how staff use social media, particularly during a high profile election period.

WAEC staff need to be aware of their responsibility when using social media. The speed and reach of online communication means comments posted online are available immediately to a wide audience. Further, staff need to be aware that material posted online effectively can last for years and the material posted can be replicated endlessly and sent to recipients who were never intended to receive the material.

Work use of social media

Social media sites should only be accessed for work purposes.

Work purposes may include, but are not limited to:

- information about organisations and events
- monitoring relevant social media pages or blogs
- monitoring emergent issues and media stories.

Personal use of social media sites during working hours must comply the WAEC's Use of IT Infrastructure policy.

All staff have access to YouTube on their work PCs. Unless staff are involved in managing WAEC social media accounts, staff generally do not need to access any other social media sites.

If a staff member does require access to any other social media site(s), they should seek the permission of a member of CorpEx.

If staff believe that there is cause for liking, following or commenting on a social media site as WAElections on behalf of the WAEC, they should, with consideration of the rules and etiquette above, approach the Public Affairs Officer or the Deputy Electoral Commissioner.



Personal use of social media

Whilst the WAEC does not wish to interfere with the personal business of staff, when working for the WAEC, staff should remember certain important principles regarding their use of social media. For example, staff should always consider the potential impact their activities online may have on the reputation and public confidence of the WAEC. Employees are also expected to uphold the WAEC's and the public sector's *Code of Conduct*. Further, staff should remember that political neutrality is a requisite of employment at the WAEC and it is inappropriate to comment on political matters at work or at home.

Lastly, staff should bear in mind that inappropriate use of social media can result in discipline or termination of employment.

Social Media Tools

There will be a stronger focus on social media during major election events, however, maintaining particular social media accounts outside these critical periods is important. The following frequencies are recommendations only and may change based on the content and resources available.

Facebook – during major election periods, frequent, with a maximum of daily, posts, depending on content availability and the phase of the election. During non-election periods, posts will be made weekly.

Twitter – a maximum of daily tweets and retweets of other likeminded information during major elections, with an increase on polling day/night.

YouTube – as required to host and share videos.

Blogs – the WAEC should monitor key election blogs and consider creating and maintaining a blog during major election periods.

Facebook

Purpose: Increase social engagement and interaction, establish online social network, and provide the community with information about enrolment and electoral system.

Benefits: Community engagement, drive traffic to the website, reputation management, brand awareness and viral marketing.

Metrics for success: Reach, total likes, friends of fans, number of people engaging with page through comments and sharing posts.

Tools to track success: Facebook insights, Google analytics



Twitter

Purpose: Increase community engagement around topical issues, access to voices and information surrounding all that interests WAEC. Provide a timely two-way communication channel to interact with stakeholders during events.

Benefits: Quickly share information with people interested in elections, gather real-time target audience intelligence and feedback, build relationships with the community, key stakeholders and media and a great forum to answer questions from the public.

Metrics for success: Followers, mentions, impressions, re-tweets, direct messages and replies traffic from Twitter to the WAEC website.

Tools for tracking success: Promoted Tweets, Trends and Accounts Dashboard; Timeline Activity Dashboard; Followers Dashboard; Websites Dashboard. Google Alerts.

YouTube

Purpose: A social media platform that allows the user to share information through videos.

Benefits: Allows for sharing of videos on Facebook, website and can be very engaging. Second largest search engine after Google.

Metrics for success: Views of uploaded videos, subscribers to official page. Engagement.

Tools for tracking success: YouTube Analytics

Blogs

Purpose: To monitor election-related commentary, contribute to conversations or start a dialogue with interested stakeholders.

Benefits: A source of information and influence on possible emerging issues and feedback on the election process and opportunity to engage with interested stakeholders.

Metrics for success: Number of followers, comments, visitors/readers

Tools for tracking success: Dependent on platform used.

Key Performance Indicators

The impact of social media for the WAEC needs to be monitored and regularly evaluated for effectiveness, particularly as the social media environment is constantly evolving and is highly sensitive to consumer behaviours.



There are various analytical tools available to measure the efficacy of social media tools. Performance of social media is measured via:

- feedback from users
- continued growth in the number of followers/fans
- increases in reach and engagement for organic and paid content
- higher percentage of visitors continuing through to elections website.

These, along with other measures of user demographics and behaviour can also be used to monitor and improve the quality of content shared.

The WAEC needs to regularly monitor its social media and be willing to consider transitioning or expanding to other social media platforms as the environment changes over time.

A standardised social media report card or dashboard will enable easy, longitudinal data gathering and monitoring of social media during and across multiple election events.

Action Plan

Below is an action plan which describes how WAEC plans to achieve the social media goals and objectives.

Facebook

Action	Action Detail	Frequency	Metric/ Tracking	Tracking tool
Build a content plan	To increase the amount of relevant WAEC information available on the page audit existing content	Immediately and take regular audits	Content easily accessible	Facebook page
Build a historical WAEC timeline	Increase the variety of WAEC events and information available on the page over time	Ongoing	Accurate information about WAEC on the page	Facebook page
Post interesting and engaging content	To grow and maintain our current fan base post more of what they like such as photos, funny quotes, videos, events, and historical facts and events	Weekly	Reach of post Number of people who engaged with the post (like, comment, share, tag, joined an event)	Facebook insights



Like other pages to build community and share their content	Search for relevant pages to like to receive updates and share relevant content. This may include other ECs etc.	Ongoing	Enable viral marketing, i.e. other pages share our content and we share their content	Facebook page
Maintain profile and cover art	Keep the look and feel of WAElections pages up to date by refreshing page and profile artwork as necessary.	Ad hoc	Consistent advertising messaging on page	Facebook page
Invest in Facebook advertising	Increase the number of page 'likes' by investing in targeted advertising. Advertising specific to WAEC campaigns and during elections.	Ad hoc	Number of likes/engagement via advertising	Facebook insights
Pay to promote posts	Promote advocacy / election related posts to a wider audience to increase the pages reach	Ad hoc	Reach of posts	Facebook insights
Community engagement	Like and comment on relevant posts. Post questions to the community and respond to questions from the community	Daily	Likes, shares and reach	Facebook insights
Promote the Facebook page on WAEC materials	Find more printed materials to promote the page and encourage staff to consider promoting the page on their materials - depending on the relevance and type of material	Ongoing	Increased exposure of the Facebook page therefore increase in likes	N/A
Competitions	Engage followers in regular competitions. For example "Caption this" or "Sharing inspirational stories"	Ad hoc	Creates interest from other followers.	Facebook insights

Twitter

Action	Action Details	Frequency (election period only)	Metric/Tracking	Tracking tool
Create Account	Ensure consistency with the information on Facebook	N/A	N/A	N/A
Follow other users of Twitter	Search for and follow relevant users, particularly political journalists.	Weekly	N/A	N/A
Tweet	Tweet timely updates during elections	Ad hoc	Mentions, Follows, Reach	Timeline activity dashboard on Twitter



Community Engagement & Management	Re-tweet other Twitter users' content (if appropriate). Reply to users who engage with tweets. Comment on tweets related to key words, phrases and related content. Use hashtags to start relevant conversations with users. i.e. electionswa# Encourage users to use WAEC hashtags for specific campaigns/events.	Daily	Mentions, Follows, Reach	Followers dashboard on Twitter
Increase reach and follower account	Promoted accounts Promoted tweets	Ongoing	Followers	Followers dashboard on Twitter

You Tube

Action	Action Details	Frequency	Metric/Tracking	Tracking tool
Monitor channel	Make sure content on channel is up to date	Ongoing	N/A	N/A
Subscriptions	Monitor subscribers to WAEC channel.	Ongoing	N/A	You Tube Analytics
Upload videos	Use YouTube to host all WAEC videos created, to make it easier to embed and share.	Ongoing	Views	You Tube Analytics
Create more videos for a range of stakeholders	Create and upload more video content for training, CaLD, new voters, young people, electors with disability etc.to allow easy distribution	Ongoing	Views	YouTube Analytics



Blog

Action	Action Details	Frequency	Metric/Tracking	Tracking tool
Monitor key blogs	Keep aware of commentary and potential issues	Ongoing	N/A	N/A
Followers	Monitor comments and followers of election blogs.	Ongoing	Comments, followers	N/A
Create blog content	Create a WAEC blog site and keep up to date with electoral information and stories.	Ad hoc/TBC	N/A	N/A
Monitor WAEC blog	Make sure content is up to date and monitor/moderate comments	Ongoing	Views	N/A

Integration

In order to integrate our social media accounts and to be efficient it is recommended that WAEC use a social media platform called Hootsuite. It is a tool that will help manage all social media accounts from the one platform. This will also allow WAEC to schedule posts/tweets and provide a full analytics report on each channel. If more staff members need access to Hootsuite there would be a cost involved. A basic single user account trial can be used to review the platform to see if it meets the Commission's needs.

The WAEC's social media accounts need to be included in the WAEC's overarching communications strategy. Core messages need to be consistent with the WAEC's broader messages, in particular through the elections.wa.gov.au website, which is the major ongoing stakeholder communication tool for the WAEC.

WAEC social media accounts are set up to support all teams, projects and campaigns across the organisation. This will help WAEC build a better online community and support stronger and more effective two way stakeholder communication.