

## PRODUCERS' COMMITTEE ESTABLISHMENT POLLS

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## 4. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Commission and its operating environment.

## 5. POLICY

The regulations<sup>1</sup> require that the Commission undertake a poll of relevant producers before a producers' committee can be established.

There are a number of areas on which neither the Act nor the regulations provide clarity.

### Commission communication leading up to and including poll

The provision of accurate, comprehensive information on the poll proposal, the APC legislation and the APC producers' committee operating environment is vital to enable producers to make an informed decision on the proposal and to encourage producers to exercise their right to choice via the establishment poll.

The Commission, working with the parties requesting the poll and the industry producers will, before any poll is undertaken:

- Provide face-to-face opportunity for consultation, discussion and education via in person meetings in primary locations. Where possible these meetings will also be available via web based meeting conferencing apps. Meetings will be notified via industry bodies' communication channels, local newspapers, relevant websites, Twitter and direct communication with producers.
- Provide comprehensive information on the proposal, which includes the opportunity for feedback, via the APC website, any peak industry body website / newsletter / magazine.
- Nominate contact persons within the APC and the requesting body who producers can contact for discussion.
- Direct communication with producers will include (where details are able to be obtained) email, post and telephone. All methods will be employed – no one method will be relied upon solely.
- That a formal poll will be undertaken and that this provides the opportunity for producers to exercise their right in relation to the proposal will be consistently and repeatedly notified at meetings and in communications.

### Producer turnout (response) to poll

An APC committee establishment poll is a non-compulsory polling process.

The communication, consultation and education methods above are designed to encourage participation to achieve a maximum turnout rate.

The APC average response rate (from all establishment polls held to date, where data is available) for establishment polls at the date of this publication was 42.72%.

Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) average response rate for non-compulsory voting in Local Government Ordinary Elections (in 2015 and 2017) averaged at 34.5%<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Act s10 (7) 'the Commission shall not establish a producer's committee in relation to agricultural produce unless the Commission as after complying with subsections (1) and (2) conducted a poll among the producers of agricultural produce the subject of the notice referred to in subsections (1) and (2) and, if the proposal to establish the producers' committee is in relation to a particular part of the State, in the part of the State in questions, and the poll is in favour of the proposal'.

<sup>2</sup> 2017 Local government Ordinary elections – Election report – March 2017

- The Act<sup>3</sup> allows for producers who are aggrieved in relation to their inclusion or omission from the poll list to apply to the State Administrative Tribunal for a review of the decision.
- Complaints or disputes should be directed to:
  - the Manager in the first instance, and if a resolution is not found
  - to the Commission, and if a resolution is not found
  - to the Minister

## **8. RELATED / SUPPORTING POLICIES**

The following are Commission policies or documents which relate to or support this policy:

- Agricultural Produce Commission Act 1988
- Producers' Committees (Polling) Regulations 1990

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<sup>3</sup> Act Sec 16(2)