Foreword

The 56th election of Victoria’s Parliament heralded a number of ‘firsts’ for the Victorian Electoral Commission and the State of Victoria. For the first time, the date of the election was prescribed in legislation and commenced with the issue of the writ on 31 October 2006. For the first time, all members of both houses were to be elected simultaneously. In the Legislative Council (Upper House), those members would be determined by the proportional representation method of vote counting, with electors able to vote either above or below the line for the first time. Electors with a vision-impairment had the opportunity to cast their first secret vote. These changes comprised the largest reforms to Parliament in its 150 years.

Naturally, a great deal of planning and preparation was required to not only deliver, but also communicate these changes to some 3.4 million eligible electors. An EasyVote card (containing elector and electorate details) was mailed to every elector on the electoral register a month prior to the issue of the writ, along with information on the changes to the Legislative Council. Advance enrolment reminder advertising in August 2006 targeted roll integrity prior to the EasyVote card mail-out.

The introduction of electronic voting for those with a vision-impairment was a major initiative. While limited numbers utilised the electronic kiosks, success was evident in the reliability, accuracy and security of the system. A précis covering all aspects of electronic voting is included within this report, including recommendations for legislative change to extend the initiative to those with low proficiency in English and electors with poor motor skills – an initiative that I believe could reduce the level of informal voting, particularly in areas with high numbers of electors who speak a language other than English.

Another initiative was a training DVD for all staff to assist their understanding of requirements on election day and model the standard of customer service performance expected. This DVD was distributed to some 14,000 staff.

Access to voting services was a key objective – both literally and figuratively. Key information was available in a variety of formats, including audio, Easy English, and other languages. Extensive work was undertaken to identify and assess more than 1,600 voting centres for physical accessibility. A more stringent audit tool to assess all venues was used in order to provide public confidence in the accessibility ratings. Disappointingly, only 10% of voting centres available for lease were rated against the audit tool as fully wheelchair accessible, a figure that surely contributed to several justified complaints.

Outside complaints about political parties and candidates, queues at voting centres were the next largest cause for complaint. Whilst it is acknowledged that some locations experienced lengthy queues (an issue we will address), media coverage may have magnified the perception of the size of the problem. Overall, 35 voting centres (3%) had an underestimation of votes expected by at least 600 votes, which equates to at least one extra staff member. Independent research conducted on the day states that although 67% of respondents said they queued on the day, almost two-thirds of them queued for less than five minutes and 86% were satisfied with their experience at the centre. In context, there are more critical measures of the success of an election and 165 of these Key Election Indicators are on pages 4-9.
Election results precipitated a total of four recounts - three regions and one district. Two of the three regional recounts were conducted where the margin was around 100 votes at a critical distribution. In the case of the Northern Metropolitan Region, a transcription error was identified. An initial margin of 17 votes prompted the conduct of the district recount. All recounts were conducted in a timely manner prior to the return of the writ, with no resulting applications for appeal lodged with the Court of Disputed Returns.

Although staffing numbers increase dramatically at election time and an increased work schedule is only to be expected, the punishing number of hours required to be worked by staff in order to meet legislative deadlines caused me concern. This has been identified as a significant OH&S issue for the organisation. Future staffing rosters will be amended to address this issue. All staff should be commended for their dedication and contribution to a challenging, but ultimately successful, State election.

The following report outlines in detail the VEC’s conduct of the 2006 State election, including the service provided to electors, registered political parties, candidates and the media. The VEC accepts that participation rates are a good guide to the health of a democracy and it works hard to make administrative processes for electors simple and accessible. The VEC also accepts that it administers the law as passed by Parliament and must remain neutral on policy matters such as compulsory voting and methods of voting. In accordance with this principle, this report makes suggestions in regard to administrative matters that do not impact on policy, and provides information on the impact of current laws on participation for consideration.

Laws that impact on enrolment and formality of voting, which have the potential to impact on participation rates, are clearly matters for the Parliament.

Steve Tully
Electoral Commissioner
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Introduction

The Governor issued writs for the 2006 Victorian State election at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 31 October 2006. The issue of the writ is a legal requirement and sets out the timetable of the election. One writ is issued for the election of the Legislative Council and one for the election of the Legislative Assembly.
Introduction

The Governor issued writs for the 2006 Victorian State election at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 31 October 2006. The issue of the writ is a legal requirement and sets out the timetable of the election. One writ is issued for the election of the Legislative Council and one for the election of the Legislative Assembly.

At the issue of the writs, there were 12 registered political parties. At close of nominations there were 707 candidates. All registered political parties contested at least one electorate.

The ALP (ALP) was returned with a reduced majority in the Legislative Assembly. The ALP won 55 seats, the Liberal Party 23 seats, the National Party nine seats, and one independent candidate was elected. The ALP received 43.06% of first-preference votes. The Liberal Party received 34.44% of first-preference votes. The National Party received 5.17%.

On a Labor/non-Labor party preferred basis, the vote was 54.38% and 45.62%

The Greens received 10.04% of first-preference votes for the Legislative Assembly. This was the highest ever result for the Greens at a Victorian State election, and the highest Legislative Assembly vote for a minor party since the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) scored 13.3% in 1970.

All of the members of the Legislative Council were up for re-election at this election, as rotating terms were abolished. In addition, legislative amendments meant that the Legislative Council would consist of 40 seats rather than the previous 44 seats. The ALP lost its majority, returning 19 seats from the 25 it held after the 2002 election. The Liberal Party won 15 seats, and the Nationals won two seats. The Greens won three seats, and the Democratic Labor Party won one seat for the first time since 1955.

Election timetable

The Victorian State election timeline is set in legislation. Previously, Victorian State elections were held every three to four years. However the Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003 provided that barring exceptional circumstances, the next State election was to be held on the last Saturday in November 2006, and then every four years subsequently.

Voting system

The Victorian Parliament is made up of two Houses - the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) and the Legislative Council (Upper House). Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected from 88 single-member electoral districts, each with approximately 38,000 electors. A party or coalition with majority support in the Legislative Assembly forms the Government.

The voting system for the Legislative Assembly is full preferential voting. Voters must number all the squares on the ballot paper in order of their choice. In a preferential voting system, a candidate must gain more than 50% of all formal votes to be elected. If none of the candidates receives over 50% of the first-preference votes, voters’ preferences are distributed until one candidate gains an absolute majority.

Members of the Legislative Council are elected from eight electoral regions, each with approximately 418,000 electors. Each region returns five elected members.

A new method of vote counting - proportional representation - was utilised for the Legislative Council in 2006. The principle of proportional representation is that candidates and parties are elected in proportion to their level of support among voters. Under this system, voters can either:

- vote 1 ‘above-the-line’ for their preferred party or group of candidates (the voter’s preferences will follow the group voting tickets lodged by the party or group); or
- vote ‘below-the-line’ for individual candidates. Voters have to vote at least 1 to 5 for their vote to count, and can continue numbering other squares if they wish. This is known as optional preferential voting.

\(^1\) Two were independents at the time of the 2006 State election.
Under the proportional representation vote counting system, a candidate must gain a ‘quota’ (one-sixth plus 1) of the formal votes to be elected. First, candidates who have gained more than a quota of first-preference votes are elected. Then, elected candidates’ surplus votes (the number of votes more than the quota) are transferred to other candidates according to the preferences on the ballot papers. Any candidate who reaches a quota through these transfers is elected. If there are still vacancies to fill once the surplus votes have been transferred, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded and that candidate’s votes are distributed to the remaining candidates according to the preferences on the ballot papers. The process of transferring surpluses from elected candidates and distributing preferences from excluded candidates continues until all positions have been filled.

Voting is compulsory at Victorian State elections.

The Victorian Electoral Commission

The Victorian Electoral Commission’s (VEC’s) responsibility is to conduct fair and impartial elections, efficiently and according to the law.

The Electoral Commissioner is appointed by the Governor-in-Council for a ten-year term. Under the Electoral Act 2002 (the Act), the Electoral Commissioner is independent of the government of the day and reports directly to Parliament.

The key responsibilities of the VEC are to:

- conduct parliamentary elections and by-elections;
- conduct parliamentary referendums and polls;
- conduct local government elections and by-elections (upon appointment by councils, following a competitive tendering process);
- conduct certain statutory elections;
- provide advice to the Attorney-General and Parliament on issues affecting the conduct of parliamentary elections, including administrative issues requiring legislative remedy;
- ensure the enrolment of eligible electors;
- prepare electoral rolls for parliamentary elections, voters’ lists for local government elections, jury lists, and provide enrolment information to members of Parliament and registered political parties;
- contribute to public understanding and awareness of elections and electoral matters through information and education programs;
- provide administrative and technical support to the Electoral Boundaries Commission during the review and drawing of new State electoral boundaries; and
- report to Parliament on the VEC’s activities.

The VEC may also be appointed by local councils to conduct electoral representation reviews.

Governing legislation

Much of the work of the VEC is governed by legislation. The Electoral Act 2002 is Victoria’s principal electoral Act, providing for the enrolment system and the conduct of parliamentary elections.

The Constitution Act 1975 sets out who is entitled to enrol as an elector, who is entitled to be elected to Parliament, and the size and term of Parliament.

The Electoral Boundaries Commission Act 1982 governs the determination of State electoral boundaries.
Legislative changes affecting the 2006 Victorian State election

Since the 2002 State election, the following Acts have made substantial amendments to the Electoral Act 2002:
- Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003;
- Electoral (Amendment) Act 2003;
- Monetary Units Act 2004;
- Electoral Legislation (Amendment) Act 2004;
- Electoral Legislation (Further Amendment) Act 2004;
- Infringements (Consequential and Other Amendments) Act 2006; and the

The Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003 made the most significant changes to Victoria’s electoral system. Victoria now has fixed-date State elections, with elections taking place on the last Saturday in November every four years. The Act also changed the size and structure of the Legislative Council (Upper House). The number of members has been reduced from 44 to 40. The number of electorates has been reduced from 22 electoral provinces, each with two members (who had rotating terms, with one of the two members up for election at each State election) to eight electoral regions, each with five members (who are all elected at each State election). The vote counting system for the Legislative Council has changed from preferential voting (the same as the Legislative Assembly) to proportional representation. The term for members of the Legislative Council has been reduced from eight years to four.

Table 1: Election timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>2006 election dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expiry of the Legislative Assembly</td>
<td>Tuesday, 31 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament is dissolved 25 days before the last Saturday in November.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of writs</td>
<td>Tuesday, 31 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The issue of the writs starts the election process. An election writ commands the VEC to hold an election and contains the dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, election day and the return of the writ. At a State election, writs are issued for the election of all the members of the Legislative Assembly (Lower House) and for all members of the Legislative Council (Upper House).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close of rolls</td>
<td>Tuesday, 7 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electors have until 8.00pm, seven days after the writs are issued to enrol, or to update their enrolment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close of nominations</td>
<td>Thursday, 9 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The deadline for receipt of nominations by candidates is midday on the date specified on the writ as the close of nominations. The close of nomination date differs for registered political parties and independent candidates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election day</td>
<td>Saturday, 25 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election day is the day nominated for the election to be held and is the day on which most electors cast their vote.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of writs</td>
<td>Friday, 15 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the results are declared for all Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council seats, the Victorian Electoral Commissioner returns the writs, endorsed with the names of the successful candidates, to the Governor. Writs must be returned within 21 days of the date of the election.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other significant changes to the Electoral Act 2002 that applied to the 2006 election included:

**Enrolment**
- Rolls close seven days after the issue of the writs (instead of three days).
- Electors who were 70 years of age or over can apply to become general postal voters. General postal voters automatically receive postal voting material for each State election.
- The eligibility of homeless persons to enrol as itinerant electors has been clarified.
- When the VEC objects to an elector’s enrolment, it can make further enquiries after receiving an answer from the relevant elector.

**Registration of political parties**
- Registered political parties must apply for re-registration in the middle of each term of Parliament. The re-registration process is very similar to that for initial applications for registration.

**Nominations**
Changes to nomination procedures reflect the new system for the Legislative Council.
- The number of nominators required for Legislative Council candidates not endorsed by a registered political party has increased from six to 50.
- Two or more candidates for a Legislative Council region can apply to the VEC to be treated as a group on the ballot paper. If a group lodges a group voting ticket with the VEC, the group has a square printed ‘above-the-line’ on the ballot paper. All ‘above-the-line’ votes for that group are deemed to follow the group voting ticket.
- The nomination deposit for Legislative Council candidates has been reduced from $700 to $350. If a group receives 4% or more of the total first-preference votes combined, all the candidates in the group have their deposits refunded, even if individual members of the group obtain less than 4%.

**How-to-vote cards**
- The timeframe for submission of how-to-vote cards for registration has been aligned for all participants in an election. Previously, parties had a longer period to submit how-to-vote cards.
- All how-to-vote cards to be handed out on election day are registered by the VEC, but can be lodged with any Election Manager.
- The criteria for acceptable how-to-vote cards for a Legislative Council election reflect the new voting system.
- If an error is detected in a registered how-to-vote card, the person who lodged the card can apply to correct the error. The application is treated in the same way as an initial submission.
- Once a how-to-vote card is registered, the applicant has to supply the VEC with only two copies of the card (instead of 10 more copies than the number of voting centres in the electorate, as previously).

**Voting**
- The ballot paper for a Legislative Council election resembles that for a Senate election. Electors can either vote for a party or group ‘above-the-line’ (in which case their preferences flow according to the group voting ticket lodged by the party or group), or vote for individual candidates ‘below-the-line’. Those voting ‘below-the-line’ have to vote for at least five candidates, and can continue numbering further preferences if they wish. The ballot paper shows the localities where candidates were enrolled. There is provision for more than one row of groups and candidates on the ballot paper in a region if there are twenty or more groups.
- An amendment to the Act enabled a trial of electronic voting at the 2006 State election. Voters with a vision-impairment, who would not otherwise have been able to vote without assistance, could access electronic voting. Kiosks were equipped with a touch-screen PC, keypad and headphones to ‘read’ the options for the vision-impaired voter.
- The criteria for applying for an early or postal vote have been simplified. Any elector unable to attend a voting centre on election day is able to apply for an early or postal vote.
- The start of early voting has been shifted from 2.00pm on the final nomination day to 4.00pm, to allow for checking of eligibility of the increased number of nominators required for Legislative Council elections.
- If an elector is physically unable to sign an application or declaration, a witness can make a note on the form to this effect and the application or declaration is accepted.
- Absent voters do not have to complete a declaration form in those voting centres that have an electronic copy of the electoral roll for the whole State (E-Centres and airport voting centres).
- There is provision for temporary suspension of voting at a voting centre on election day, to allow for events such as a power failure.
Election results
- The vote counting system for the Legislative Council (proportional representation) is now similar to that for the Commonwealth Senate. To be elected, a candidate must receive a quota of $1/6$th (based on five vacancies) of the formal votes plus 1.

Enforcement and offences
- Penalties and fees in the Electoral Act 2002 have been changed from dollar amounts to penalty units and fee units, which are indexed annually.
- The most serious electoral offences, such as bribery and multiple voting, have been made indictable. This affects the way such offences can be investigated and prosecuted.
- Provisions covering the penalty stages of compulsory voting have been amended to follow the Infringements Act 2006. The amendments change procedures, timelines and reporting requirements.

Election expenditure
- The Act provides that certain gaming companies cannot donate more than $50,000 to a registered political party in any financial year. The Act has been amended to ensure that the $50,000 cap covers Tabcorp, and that shareholders in companies related to the gaming companies are not covered by the cap.

Referendums
- There is now provision for referendums in Victorian law. Certain provisions of the Constitution Act 1975 are now entrenched, which means that they can only be changed through a referendum of all Victorian electors. Referendums are organised in much the same way as State elections. The VEC must distribute the official ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ cases to all electors at least two weeks before polling day. Voters vote ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the proposed amendment to the Constitution Act 1975. There has been no referendum to date under these provisions.

Redivision of electoral boundaries for the Legislative Council 2005
The Constitution (Parliamentary Reform) Act 2003 provided that there would be eight electoral regions for the Legislative Council. The Act required the Electoral Boundaries Commission (EBC) to conduct a redivision of Victoria between 1 January and 30 November 2005, to establish the eight regions. Accordingly, the EBC met on 21 February 2005, to commence the redivision process. Each region had to comprise eleven contiguous electoral districts (Legislative Assembly electorates). The EBC was charged with ensuring that enrolments for the regions were approximately equal, not varying by more than 10% from the average, and gave due consideration to ‘community of interest’ and related factors.

The EBC received ten written submissions and heard six oral submissions before releasing proposed boundaries on 7 July 2005. A further 13 written suggestions and objections to the proposed boundaries were received. After considering the suggestions and objections, the EBC released the final boundaries (unchanged from the proposed boundaries) on 6 October 2005. All submissions, suggestions and objections were public documents, available on the EBC’s website and at the office of the VEC.

Broadly, the redivision established five metropolitan regions (Eastern, Northern, South Eastern, Southern and Western Metropolitan) and three country regions (Eastern, Northern and Western Victoria). The new boundaries took effect at the issue of the writs for the 2006 State election.
Pre-election preparation by the VEC

The conduct of a State election is the culmination of four years of planning and preparation by the VEC. The VEC operates with a core staff of approximately 40, which is supplemented by temporary and casual staff. At the time of the State election, there were some 70 full-time staff working at the VEC. In addition, contract staff were engaged to provide specialist services such as IT support, or election software development and advice. There were also some 14,000 people engaged by the VEC to conduct the State election in election offices and voting centres, as well as to assist in the postal vote processing centre and central count centre which operated for two weeks after the election.

There are many aspects of a State election that require the expertise of external service providers. The contracting of external service providers allows VEC staff to focus on their election-specific areas of expertise. It also ensures that Victorians are provided with the highest quality election services, using the latest technologies and systems.

In early 2006, the VEC entered into contracts with a range of specialist service providers. Contractors were selected after a competitive tendering process, taking into account the quality of their service and value for money.

Contracted services for the State election included:

- information technology;
- cardboard furniture (existing contract);
- electronic voting kiosks;
- election advertising;
- public relations (request for quote);
- telephone enquiry service;
- printing (existing contract);
- transport (existing contract);
- tally room services (request for quote);
- Australia Post (service level agreement);
- election staffing; and
- mail-house services (existing contract).

Pre-arrangements with other agencies

Victorian Government Solicitor’s Office (VGSO)

The VEC made preliminary arrangements with the Victorian Government Solicitor’s Office (VGSO) to have a senior legal adviser on stand-by 24 hours a day during the election period, to ensure that any matters could be dealt with in a timely fashion. The VEC would like to thank the VGSO and in particular Mr James Ruddle, Deputy Victorian Government Solicitor, for his support and responsiveness during the election.

Victoria Police

The VEC contacted the Chief Commissioner of Police in late September to outline the State election processes, and to request a discreet police presence at all voting centres during the hours of voting on election day. Additional arrangements were made for uniformed officers to patrol the building housing the tally room, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre. The VEC provided a full list of election day voting centres to Victoria Police to assist with this request. The VEC would formally like to record its appreciation for the support it received from the Chief Commissioner.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

The VEC made arrangements with the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to have arrangements in place to deal with any applications for review of the Electoral Commissioner’s decision in relation to the registration of a how-to-vote card.

Section 82A of the Electoral Act 2002 provides that if an application for review of a how-to-vote card decision is received, the Tribunal has until 5.00pm on the next working day after receiving the application to determine the application.
Supreme Court

Under section 176 of the Electoral Act 2002, candidates may seek injunctions in certain circumstances where the conduct of a person may impact on the outcome of an election. The Commission is also able to seek an injunction under the same circumstances. These matters must be heard in the Supreme Court. Therefore, the Victorian Electoral Commission made arrangements with the Department of Justice to ensure any applications for an injunction received on election day could be heard.

Election budget

The cost of conducting the 2006 State election was $29.328 million. This compares to the cost of the 2002 State election of $23.7 million

Additional budget was provided to meet inflation, an increase in the number of electors, reformed Upper House election arrangements and the trial of electronic voting.

Actual expenditure occurred over two financial years - $1.614 million in 2005/2006 being spent on ballot paper, recruitment and training of Election Managers and staff, and the purchase of election materials for election offices and polling places.

The balance of the expenditure of $27.715 million occurred in 2006/2007, including an estimate for the completion of compulsory voting.

The following table is a summary of the election expenditure (excluding GST) with a short note explaining each item.

In addition, extensive resourcing and logistical planning includes all of the election support materials (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Advertising / public education</td>
<td>3,020'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Computer hire</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Postage and telephones</td>
<td>2,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Voting centre hire, Election Managers’ offices / early voting centres</td>
<td>2,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Printing and stationery</td>
<td>939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Election and rolls management software development</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Electronic voting trial software</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Transport / freight</td>
<td>638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Election materials / office furniture (incl. voting centres)</td>
<td>3,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tally room / translation services / call centre</td>
<td>819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total expenditure $29,328
Total budget 29,421

Elections on the roll 2006 State election 3,353,845

Cost per elector 2006 State election $8.74

Elections on the roll 2002 State election 3,228,206

Cost per elector 2002 State election $7.34

Note 1 – Advertising in print, radio and electronic media, mailout to all voters explaining voting in general and the changes to the Upper House (does not include postage)

Note 2 – Rental payments for IT and office equipment

Note 3 – Postage for mailout to all voters, postal votes, compulsory voting and general correspondence
Note 4 – Rent, power, lighting, property outgoings and general office maintenance for election offices and voting centres

Note 5 – Includes printing of ballot papers, manuals, election officials instructions

Note 6 – Cost of IT developers to modify and maintain the election and rolls software

Note 7 – Cost of developing software, and set-up in voting centres of the electronic voting trial

Note 8 – Freight cost for transport of all materials and equipment for the set-up of election offices and voting centres, as well as freight for the delivery of ballot papers between election offices and head office

Note 9 – Purchase of all election materials, equipment, cardboard and office furniture for election offices and voting centres and conducting the election

Note 10 – Cost of setting up the tally room, translation services for enquiries received at head office, election offices and the call centre, and the cost of establishment, training of operators, and operating the call centre by the contractor

Note 11 – Other minor costs including accommodation for Election Managers during training, software licences, facilitating interstate and overseas visitors to view the operations, legal fees

Note 12 – Cost for payment of election official staff including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and Workcover premium

Note 13 – Cost for payment of Election Managers and Assistant Election Managers including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and Workcover premium

Note 14 – Cost for payment of election casuals working in the election offices, Helpdesk staff in head office, and fixed term staff employed at head office for the State election, including salaries, superannuation, payroll tax and Workcover premium

Note 15 – Cost of agency staff employed for postal vote processing, and Upper House computer-count centre

Candidates’ deposits

A total of 712 candidates’ deposits, including five deposits for candidates who retired prior to close of nominations, were received for the Upper and Lower Houses, totalling $249,200.

Following the elections, 224 candidates’ deposits were forfeited, totalling $78,400, which was paid to consolidated revenue.

All other candidate deposits were refunded by cheque on 19 December 2006.

Insurance and claims

The Victorian Electoral Commission is insured with the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority and is generally covered under the Department of Justice policy. The VEC has additional coverage in the areas of:

Professional Indemnity A requirement by many organisations in tenders for election services

Public and Products Liability A buy-down of the excess

Group Personal Accident Insurance coverage for election officials

Travel Insurance Insurance for travel by staff

The cost of the insurance with VMIA in 2006/2007 was $66,760 which is not included as part of the State election cost. There were no claims by the VEC on the insurance policies, though a total of $1,827 was paid out for five incidents.

There were twenty-two incident reports from election offices and voting centres reported by the public, which were reported to VMIA. Seven workplace incidents involving staff were reported to WorkCover.

Electoral entitlements

An amount of $7.395 million has also been paid to political parties and independent candidates for election entitlements, and the details of payments are included on page 52.