Section 3

Services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC aims to deliver high quality election services, through the provision of accurate and easy to use information to stakeholders and participants.
Information services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC aims to deliver high quality election services, through the provision of accurate and easy-to-use information to stakeholders and participants. Prior to the commencement of the State election, the VEC conducted a number of briefing sessions for registered political parties on the election process. The sessions provided information on:

- the VEC’s preparations for the election;
- changes to legislation;
- the role of Election Managers;
- postal voting arrangements;
- nomination procedures;
- the registration of how-to-vote cards and group voting tickets;
- the VEC’s voter information campaign;
- complaints procedures; and
- public funding of election expenses.

Those attending were also provided with maps showing the location of election offices, early voting centres and election day voting centres.

Representatives from all 12 registered political parties attended these sessions.

A State Election Information Kit was subsequently provided to all members of Parliament and registered political parties.

An information session was held for independent candidates on Sunday, 5 November, and covered key timelines and procedures relevant to independent candidates. Approximately 50 prospective candidates attended this session.

During the election period, the VEC published regular circulars for registered political parties and Legislative Assembly Election Managers kept their candidates informed of specific election activities and timelines.

Postal voting protocol

The VEC met with all registered political parties in the lead-up to the State election. One of the major items discussed was the production and distribution of postal vote applications by registered political parties. Section 101 of the Electoral Act 2002 allows for a person other than the Commission to reproduce a postal vote application form and include it with other written material issued by that person or organisation. Historically, the three major registered political parties have produced and distributed postal vote applications during State elections.

A VEC protocol was introduced and communicated to parties regarding the production and distribution of postal vote applications, in order to minimise any elector confusion regarding the origin of the application i.e. whether it was from the VEC or a party.

It was considered necessary that a number of principles be observed in relation to the distribution of postal vote applications. They were that the applications:

- must contain the information detailed in Form K of the Electoral Regulations 2002;
- must not contain any political comment;
- must clearly identify the party or candidate distributing the application but must not contain a Victorian Electoral Commission logo;
- may be distributed with other political information;
- must not contain any information that could be considered to be misleading; and
- must be sent to the Victorian Electoral Commission promptly upon completion.

To assist parties with the production of their postal vote applications, the VEC provided each registered political party with a copy of an application template to be used during the State election.

Parties and candidates were encouraged to discuss their proposed templates, including the envelopes, with the VEC prior to printing and distribution. All applications distributed by parties clearly indicated to electors that the mailing address for the completed application was back to the particular party.

Although the introduction of the protocol resulted in some reduction of elector confusion regarding the postal vote application source, the VEC still received a number of complaints. Moreover, the VEC did experience some delays in the receipt of completed applications from parties leading to delays in the despatch of ballot material. In some instances, this also resulted in electors submitting multiple applications to vote by post. Legislative amendments to be considered are included in Section 10 of this report.
Information to candidates

Handbooks were produced for candidates and scrutineers. The handbooks were available from the VEC, election offices, at the information session for independent candidates and on the VEC’s website. All material provided to candidates and scrutineers incorporated feedback received following the 2002 State election, and reflected changes to legislation and electoral boundaries.

The VEC provided candidate handbooks to political parties to distribute to their endorsed candidates.

Support for the nominations process

The VEC prominently advertised for nominations in all daily newspapers throughout Victoria on the day after the writ was issued. Election Managers provided prospective candidates with a Candidate’s Information kit that included:

- the appropriate district or region nomination form;
- an appointment of a scrutineer form;
- an electoral roll confidentiality agreement;
- a Candidate’s Handbook;
- a how-to-vote card declaration form;
- a list of voting centres for the relevant district or region;
- details on the number of issuing points at each voting centre in the district or region and an estimate of the number of votes expected to be cast;
- a district or region fact sheet;
- a map of the electorate;
- additional forms related to group registration and lodgement of group voting tickets for region candidates; and
- the Election Manager’s contact details.

Election Managers offered to meet with each candidate as soon as possible after the acceptance of the candidate’s nomination, in order to outline the election process and clarify any other matters.

Registered political parties were required to submit their nominations directly to the VEC, in either hard copy or electronic form. Registered political parties were provided with an electronic application for recording of nominations for each district and region. This enabled parties to enter the nominations onto a USB Flashdrive, which was directly loaded onto the VEC Election Management System by VEC staff. The information was then checked against the hard copy.

The close of nominations was midday on 9 November 2006, for candidates endorsed by registered political parties, and midday on 10 November for other candidates.

Nomination information for all candidates was stored in the Election Management System.

Register of political parties

The Electoral Act 2002 requires the VEC to establish and maintain a register of political parties.

In order to qualify for registration, a political party must have a written constitution and at least 500 members who are Victorian electors and party members in accordance with the party’s rules, and not members of another registered political party or of a party applying for registration.

It is not compulsory for political parties to be registered to contest an election, but registration gives a party a number of important entitlements. These include:

- the right to have the party’s name on ballot papers;
- a requirement to nominate candidates and register how-to-vote cards centrally with the VEC;
- access to enrolment and voter information on a periodic basis; and
- public funding for parties obtaining enough votes.

There are 12 registered political parties in Victoria, all of which contested the 2006 election.
Candidates

The VEC received a record 707 nominations for the 2006 Victorian State election, compared to the previous record of 477 candidates in 2002.

There were 459 candidates for the 88 Legislative Assembly (Lower House) districts compared with 372 in 2002, and 248 candidates stood in the eight Legislative Council (Upper House) regions.

There was an increase in the number of candidates nominated by registered political parties at this election. The ALP (128), the Liberal Party (125), the Australian Greens (124) and Family First (123) stood candidates in all 96 electorates. The Nationals nominated 32 candidates, People Power nominated 44 and the Democratic Labor Party nominated 23 candidates.

Sixty-three candidates stood as independents, compared with 65 at the 2002 election.

Group registration and group voting tickets – Legislative Council

The new Legislative Council arrangements provided that two or more candidates nominating for a region could request that their names be grouped on the ballot paper and in a specified order. Group registration closed at midday on Thursday, 9 November 2006. This was the same time as close of nominations for registered political parties. A total of 69 groups were registered across the eight regions. Eastern and Western Metropolitan regions had the least with seven groups registered in each region. Northern Victoria region had 11 groups registered - the highest number of groups for a region.

Registered political parties registered 63 groups, and six groups were registered by independent candidates. Three independent candidates remained ungrouped.

All registered groups lodged group voting tickets with the VEC by midday on Sunday, 12 November, in accordance with the legislation. Six of the groups chose to lodge two group voting tickets.

Currently, the Electoral Act 2002 provides that any group or registered political party whose candidates are grouped may lodge a group voting ticket. In order to print ballot papers in time for the commencement of early voting on the Monday following close of nominations, ballot papers were prepared at the conclusion of the ballot draw on Friday, 10 November, and subsequently sent to print. The VEC made the assumption that all groups and parties would lodge a group voting ticket. In the event that a group or party did not lodge a ticket, the VEC would be required to reprint those ballot papers. The VEC therefore recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 12 Candidates at recent Victorian State elections*</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male candidates</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female candidates</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party candidates</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent candidates</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest number of candidates contesting an electorate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayswater District (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Victoria and Northern Victoria Regions (38 each).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne District (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankston East supplementary election (16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least number of candidates contesting an electorate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four candidates in each of 23 districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three candidates in each of 25 districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two candidates in each of 29 districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Metropolitan Region (26)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes simultaneous Upper House by-elections
The registration of how-to-vote cards

Registered how-to-vote (HTV) cards are the only form of printed electoral material that can be lawfully handed out, distributed or otherwise made available within 400 metres of a voting centre on election day. Any candidate, person or organisation can register a how-to-vote (HTV) card. HTV cards carried by mobile early voting teams must also be registered.

A change to the Electoral Act 2002 required all HTV cards to be registered by the Electoral Commissioner. Cards could be lodged with an Election Manager, but were then forwarded to the Electoral Commissioner for registration.

Information about the registration of HTV cards was provided to:

• registered political parties at briefings held prior to the State election;
• independent candidates attending the information session on 5 November; and
• candidates by Election Managers directly and in the Candidate’s Information Kit.

The registration period for HTV cards was from Monday, 13 November, to midday on Friday, 17 November. This time period applied for all applications. Previously, different timelines applied for registered political parties and other candidates, persons or organisations.

A total of 679 HTV cards were registered for this election, and all registered HTV cards were on public display at the VEC head office in Little Collins Street, Melbourne. Legislative amendments also allowed for candidates and registered political parties to correct errors. Two errors were corrected.

The registration process for HTV cards is considered in Section 10 of this report.

Provision of electoral rolls to candidates

Each candidate in the 2006 State election was provided with the opportunity to obtain an electronic copy of the electoral roll for their relevant electorate. Additional instructions and software were also provided to make the file suitable for use in a mail-merge.

The extended close of roll date reduced the time available for production of rolls for candidates. In conjunction with the task of processing the large number of enrolments received, the VEC was not able to provide rolls for candidates and political parties until 10 November. Requests for this information had been received by this time, for the purpose of campaigning.

The rolls were printed at the earliest possible time, which was during the weekend after the roll closed. The printing took 48 hours of non-stop production and the rolls were then distributed around the State.

In order to produce the rolls earlier, legislative amendments would be required to move the close of roll date. The VEC recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

Public funding of election expenditure

The Electoral Act 2002 provides for the public funding of election expenses incurred by registered political parties and candidates contesting Victorian State elections.

For the Legislative Assembly (Lower House), registered political parties and independent candidates that receive four per cent or more of first-preference votes are entitled to $1.31607 for each first-preference vote received. For the Legislative Council (Upper House), in each region, any candidate in a group or as an independent who receives four per cent or more of first-preference votes is also entitled to public funding. The number of first-preference votes obtained by the first-named candidate in a group is determined by adding the above-the-line votes for that group to the number of first-preferences recorded below the line for the first-named candidate to calculate the entitlement.

In the case of a candidate endorsed by a registered political party, payment is made to the registered officer of the relevant political party. In the case of a candidate not endorsed by a registered political party, payment is made to the candidate.

Payment is dependent upon the VEC receiving an audited Statement of Expenditure (SOE), and an audit certificate that states that the auditor received full access to information and has no reason to believe that any matter in the SOE is incorrect.

Where the audited SOE shows that not less than the entitlement has been spent, payment is calculated at $1.31607 for each first-preference vote received. Where the SOE reveals that an amount less than the entitlement has been spent, payment is for the amount specified in the SOE. A summary of the returns is presented below.

The deadline for applications for the funding of election expenses was 13 April 2007. The VEC made payments of the entitlement within three working days of receipt of an audited SOE.
Table 13 Funding of election expenditure at the 2006 Victorian State election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party or Independent candidate</th>
<th>Total party candidates</th>
<th>Total party candidates eligible for funding</th>
<th>Entitlement paid ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3,282,127.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Democratic Party</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Electoral Council</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,817.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Alliance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Labor Party</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24,095.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family First Party</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>180,797.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Party</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2,684,173.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Power</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Alliance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian Greens</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>788,662.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nationals</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>367,761.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianne Hadden (Ballarat East)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,894.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Ashley (Bayswater)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,862.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clifford Hayes (Brighton)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,839.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Goonan (Doncaster)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,142.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Cumming (Footscray)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6,152.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig Ingram (Gippsland East)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17,561.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo McCubbin* (Gippsland South)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,114.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Mulholland (Ivanhoe)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,193.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Barry* (Macedon)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,018.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Medcraft* (Macedon)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,025.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Savage (Mildura)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14,242.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Proctor (Morwell)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,866.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Jolly (Richmond)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,375.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Gibbons* (Tarneit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>105.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,394,830.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Jo McCubbin, Dave Barry, Steve Medcraft and John Gibbons spent less than their entitlement.
It is appropriate at this point to put Victoria’s public funding system in an Australia-wide context in Table 14 below.

**Table 14 Australian financial disclosure and public funding provisions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Financial disclosure</th>
<th>Public funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Commonwealth          | Annual returns by registered political parties and associated entities of total receipts (including details above threshold), expenditure and debts (including details above threshold).  
Election returns of gifts and electoral expenditure by candidates and third parties.  
Threshold for details of amounts received recently raised from $1,500 to $10,000. | Automatic indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.  
No details of expenditure required.  
No requirement that payment not to exceed election expenditure. |
| New South Wales       | Parties, candidates and political donors must lodge returns of contributions received and electoral expenditure to Election Funding Authority, including details above $1,500 threshold. | Indexed political fund divided into:  
• Constituency Fund (1/3) to Legislative Assembly candidates, divided roughly in proportion to votes  
• Central Fund (2/3) to parties on basis of Legislative Council votes.  
Payment cannot be more than expenditure.  
Also Political Education Fund to parties. |
| Victoria              | Federally registered parties must provide VEC with copy of annual return to AEC, to enable checking of $50,000 cap on political donations by certain gaming companies. | Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.  
Audited Statement of Expenditure must be submitted, but no details of expenditure required.  
Payment not to exceed election expenditure. |
| Queensland            | Annual returns by parties and associated entities and election returns by candidates and third parties.  
Based on Commonwealth model, but retaining $1,500 threshold and requiring details of expenditure. | Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.  
Payment not to exceed election expenditure. |
| Western Australia     | Parties and associated entities must submit annual returns of all gifts and other income.  
Parties, candidates and third parties must disclose election-related gifts and expenditure. | Indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.  
Reimbursement of election expenditure up to limit.  
Legislation passed late 2006. |
| South Australia       | No legislation.                                                                      | No legislation.                                                                 |
| Tasmania              | For Legislative Council, spending limit of $11,000 per candidate. Candidates must lodge return of expenditure. | No legislation.                                                                 |
| Australian Capital Territory | Annual returns of receipts, expenditure and debts by parties, MLAs, associated entities and donors, and election returns by parties, candidates, donors, broadcasters and publishers and political participants. Based on Commonwealth model – can lodge AEC return. Creates problem with different thresholds. | Automatic indexed entitlement to parties and independent candidates gaining more than 4% of vote.  
No details of expenditure required.  
No requirement that payment not to exceed election expenditure. |
| Northern Territory     | Annual returns of receipts, expenditure and debts by parties and associated entities and donors, and election returns by candidates and broadcasters. Based on Commonwealth model – can lodge AEC return. Creates problem with different thresholds. | No legislation.                                                                |
It is worth noting that Victoria is the only jurisdiction that has public funding of parties and candidates, but effectively has no disclosure of donations received by parties and candidates. This puts Victoria in a somewhat anomalous position, as it means that parties receive public funding without having to account for it. The position is also inconsistent within Victoria, since candidates for municipal elections now have to disclose election donations received.

When public funding was introduced in Victoria, it was argued that financial disclosure provisions were an unnecessary duplication, given that federally registered parties (which included the Victorian branches of those parties) had to disclose their financial details to the Australian Electoral Commission. This argument presents two issues. The first is that the Commonwealth provisions do not cover independent candidates for State elections or parties that are not registered at a Federal level. The second is that Commonwealth legislation may reduce the level of disclosure, as in fact has happened with the increase of the threshold to $10,000.

The Parliament may wish to consider if the Victorian public funding system requires adjustment - see Section 10.

The VEC’s performance in providing services to registered political parties and candidates

The VEC engaged Colmar Brunton Social Research to conduct computer-assisted telephone interviews with 66 candidates between 2 January and 19 February 2007.

Services to candidates

Candidates were asked to rate their satisfaction with voting services provided to voters in their electorate.

More than half were satisfied with:

- the efforts of the Victorian Electoral Commission in managing the election on election day (89%);
- the operation of the voting centres (77%);
- the services to voters at the early voting centre prior to election day (75%);
- the usefulness of the website (69%);
- the processes involved in counting the votes (68%);
- the service to voters for processing postal votes (62%); and
- mobile voting service (59%).

They were least satisfied with the usefulness of the enquiry line (30%).
A summary of other significant findings include:

- at least seven in ten candidates mentioning that they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the performance of Election Managers; and
- the majority (88%) received a copy of the Candidate’s Information Kit prepared by the VEC. Among those who had received it, 86% considered it to be effective, whilst 5% considered it to be neither effective nor ineffective.

**Services to political parties**

Representatives from six political parties took part in a semi-structured interview regarding their satisfaction with services provided by the Victorian Electoral Commission. The six parties involved were:

- The ALP (Victorian Division);
- The Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division);
- Family First Victoria;
- The Australian Greens (Victoria);
- The National Party of Australia (Victoria); and
- The Democratic Labor Party of Australia.

In general, political parties were highly satisfied with services provided by the VEC in managing the 2006 State election. Parties were especially appreciative of the timeliness of VEC staff in addressing questions and assisting parties to complete the necessary steps to nominate candidates and register how-to-vote (HTV) cards.

Some other findings included:

- Parties generally found the process of registering HTV cards to be complicated, labour-intensive and pressured. This was especially the case for smaller parties, or for representatives who were unfamiliar with the process.
- One party felt that the process of registering HTV cards was unnecessary and would prefer that the VEC did not require cards to be registered before the election. Another party was highly positive about the process of registering cards and strongly preferred the practice to continue.
- The majority of parties were satisfied with the speed and accuracy of the count that occurred on election night. However, most were less satisfied with the progress of counting after election night, especially in regard to Legislative Council ballots.
- Parties were generally highly satisfied with the results provided on the VEC website in regards to the count. They found this information extremely quick and accurate, and superior to the information provided at previous elections.
- Party representatives were generally satisfied with the VEC’s service in informing voters about enrolling and updating their enrolment. All felt that the electoral roll used to conduct the election was sufficiently accurate. Some parties were especially satisfied with the EasyVote cards sent out to all voters prior to the election.
Opinions regarding the timeliness of receiving the electoral roll after the ‘Close of Rolls’ were mixed among the parties. For smaller parties, who do not have sufficient staff to use electoral roll information, the timeliness of receiving electoral roll information was irrelevant. Of the parties who do use electoral roll information, some were satisfied with the timeframe in which they received the roll, and felt that ‘it did help us’. Other parties considered the receipt of the information ‘too late’ as they had already submitted candidate nominations before receiving this information.

Parties were generally satisfied with the process of sending out and receiving postal votes for the 2006 election. Smaller parties who were not able to distribute postal vote applications generally felt that the ability to distribute postal vote applications provides an additional method of advertising for these parties, and thus advantages those parties with the resources to undertake this process. Furthermore, some parties felt that postal vote applications distributed by parties closely resemble VEC applications, and can confuse voters for whom they are distributed.

Complaints about candidates or political parties

During the course of the State election, the VEC received a total of 225 written complaints, 103 of which were about political parties or candidates.

Fourteen formal complaints related to the inclusion of postal voting applications in campaign material sent by political parties and candidates.

Under the Electoral Act 2002 (s.101), organisations and individuals other than the VEC are able to reproduce postal voting application forms and include them with campaign materials.

The complaints primarily concerned the appearance and distribution of postal vote applications.

The VEC recommends legislative change on this matter in Section 10.

The majority of the remaining complaints regarding political parties or candidates related to candidates incorrectly authorising electoral material, or alleged that electoral material was misleading.

Where a complaint regarding the authorisation of material was upheld, the relevant candidate was asked to appropriately amend the material and undertake to observe correct authorisation procedures in future.

Two matters concerning misleading material were referred to the Victorian Government Solicitor’s Office (VGSO) for advice. Previous court decisions have determined that electoral advertising is only misleading when it acts to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to the actual casting of their vote. As neither of these matters related to the casting of votes, no further action was taken.

Two complaints were made regarding possible breaches of bribery provisions. Both cases were submitted to the VGSO for advice. Historical precedent indicated that the ‘property or benefit of any kind’ was not of sufficient value to have influenced voting intentions. The VEC seeks further clarification as to the dollar value of ‘property or value of any kind’ – see Section 10.

A complaint received in relation to intimidation was appropriately forwarded to Victoria Police for investigation.

Another serious complaint relating to bogus electoral material was forwarded to Victoria Police.

One complaint was received with regard to potential intimidation at a mobile voting centre by a candidate. The matter was referred to the VGSO, but it found no case to answer.

There were no prosecutions resulting from any of the written complaints lodged.