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Electoral Reform
Strategic Policy
Department of Justice and Attorney-General
GPO Box 149
BRISBANE QLD 4001

electoralreform@justice.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam

Electoral Reform – Discussion Paper

Please find submission in regards to the Electoral Reform.

4.1 ENROLMENT ON POLLING DAY

Whilst the concept has some merit it certainly would put pressure on election officials at the voting centres as well as electoral commission staff immediately after the election. Basically for this reason, voters should not be permitted to enrol on polling day.

It is important however that regular communications and advertising be carried out to encourage citizens to check their enrolment status.

5 ELECTRONIC VOTING

Electronic voting for blind and vision impaired voters on for these voters that require assistance because of disability, impairment or for the literacy reasons.

It is my opinion that electronically assisted voting should be introduced in Queensland. Having electronically assisted voting for this part only is probably not justified for the extra set up and equipment required for a relatively small number of people.

Whether Queensland should introduce electronically assisted voting to voters who will not throughout the hours of polling on polling day be in Queensland and / or who do not reside within 20km by the nearest practical route, of a polling place

Electronically assisted voting for the voters in this category is very worthy of favourable consideration in that it would assist administratively with less paperwork and a timely result.

Whether electronically assisted voting should be introduced for all voters in Queensland

With continuous improvements in current technology and some innovation, electronically assisted voting would be a major improvement for a more timely result and basically should provide some savings in the cost of conducting an election. It is timely that a study be carried out, maybe by a selected University as part of its curriculum. Whilst components such as “a unique identifier” would need careful consideration, innovative university students would undoubtedly be able to find options for a solution.

5 POSTAL VOTING

Whether the grounds upon which a person can apply for a postal vote should be expanded (option a)

Yes, postal voting application options should be enhanced as at the end of the day, it is assisting in achieving a democratic outcome, the right to vote. Expanding options makes sense and provides flexibility.

Whether online postal vote applications should be permitted (option b)

On line applications for postal voting should be encouraged as it reduces red tape, administrative time and provides a more timely result with the counting.

In fact, pre-polling should be promoted and allowed as soon as possible as it is our view that many people apply for a postal vote when a pre-poll vote would cut out the red tape and extra administrative requirements.

A good user friendly outcome will be an enhancement to the current operational requirements and provide a timely result.

Whether the deadline for lodging a postal vote application should be brought forward by one day (option c)

It makes good sense to bring forward the deadline for the receipt of postal vote applications with the deadline being 6pm on the Wednesday, three days before polling date).

This will assist with postal requirements and enhance the chances of the voters receiving their ballot material in time to cast a valid vote

7 COMPULSORY VOTING

Should compulsory voting remain for Queensland State Elections?

Yes, compulsory voting should be maintained in Queensland to complement the Australian way and tradition.

There are reasons “for and against” compulsory voting however, encouraging citizens to have their say (vote) is indirectly saying we want your views on who should govern. If a person does not want to vote, but also not get fined, they can attend the polling station, receive their voting papers and not make a selection (cast an informal vote)

8 VOTING SYSTEM

Should the voting system for Queensland be changed?

Optional preferential voting (OPV) is the preferred method as it allows voters the choice to vote for one candidate or provide a preference in case their candidate does not get the required numbers and their second choice has the possibility of success.

Whilst there are good arguments “for and against” OPV, it gives the voter the choice and it is less likely that an informal vote will be cast. With full preferential voting (FPV), you have to provide the preferences even though you may not favour any of the other candidates to be elected. OPV provides the freedom of choice for the casting of the vote and its possible outcome.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our views.

Yours faithfully



Bryan Ottone
Chief Executive Officer