

A Submission addressing the fourth consideration in the Inquiry into the introduction of four year terms in Queensland Parliament: the possible starting date of any new arrangements, if adopted.

To begin with I wish to state my support for four year terms, especially if they are fixed terms.

My main concern is, however, that a date to implement any new arrangement should be suitable for voters in all parts of the state. This would cover holding a referendum, implementing any new arrangements and holding subsequent elections.

In making decisions the committee should consider the weather in our state as a dominant factor in setting relevant dates. Queensland sometimes has a wet season that extends well into April with resulting problems caused by cyclonic activity and flooding. Movement is often difficult and sometimes dangerous. It seems, therefore, that the inquiry should ensure that all voters can travel to polling booths safely and that they should not have to make special arrangements on account of the hazardous conditions.

On 24th March, 1990, Cyclone Ivor created problems for voters, especially in Ingham which experienced severe flooding. Many towns in Queensland are built on the coastal plain and even those far from the coast can endure heavy flooding during the wet season.

To prevent the re-occurrence of difficulties suffered by voters in the past, the inquiry should consider May or June as a suitable month for Queenslanders to cast their votes.

In addition, the inquiry should also take into account school holidays. No voter wishes to be inconvenienced while caring for the needs of the family.

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