

Submission 130

From: webmaster@parliament.qld.gov.au
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To: Law, Justice and Safety Committee
Subject: ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into a new Local Government Electoral Act
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Divisions (Question 1 to 5):

1) Yes, Local governments know the needs and requirements of local areas.

2) Yes, it should be based on population of areas

3) yes

4) Yes, Local Governments have a greater understanding of the needs of local areas. This should not be a decision made by State Government public service or State Government politicians who would not fully understand local districts. The more centralised and urbanised areas of Queensland need to have set divisions within local government to ensure that local politicians are accountable for certain areas. If all areas were one electorate and you have councillors being elected for all areas it would be too confusing for residents, business and could mean little is accomplished by local government in the delivery of services due to in fighting in some instances. The division of boundaries for Councils is very necessary to allow residents to know "who" is their local representative. Councillors are respected members of the community and it could cause confusion for community groups on who they should go to for assistance, should they invite the entire council to an event, should all councillors attend every P&C meeting in the entire city/LG area, should all councillors attend every community group meeting. Who would represent the individual groups or would they end up with some favouring others or some Councillors who are more helpful/kinder etc by nature or that are new to role would become overburdened with constituent enquiries.

5) Local Government Divisions are an essential component to delivery of infrastructure in local areas, as the Councillor who represents the Division should know best what are the emerging, growing, and highest priorities for the Division to assist in better budget delivery.

Conduct of elections (Question 6 and 7):

6) Yes, however from the previous election the ECQ needs to better improve the delivery of the election at the 2012 elections.

7) No

Conduct of elections (Question 8 and 9):

8) No, this should be shortened to approximately 4 weeks prior as many people move interstate or between areas at this time of year including Defence Force personnel and the timing is a little short when trying to settle into a new area. Eight weeks is excessive.

9) Consideration should be given to changing the date to endeavour for it not to fall in with another either State or Federal election to avoid confusion for residents.

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 10 to 15):

10) Yes, this ensures that a person running for a Division is not running as Mayor as the Mayor should represent the entire city/lg area and the Councillor a specific Division. The Deputy Mayor is elected by his/her peers and assists the Mayor with civic duties as required.

11) Yes

12) Yes

13) Yes

14) No

15) No, this could be corrupted. The election of Councillors and Mayors is the right of Australians and Queenslanders.

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 16 to 19):

16) Yes

17) After an election period. The rules on this should be universal for all levels of government in Australia.

18) Yes

19) No, however candidates should be aware of potential risk for conflicts of interest when accepting donations. Although public funding of elections should be considered as this would remove all the potential for any person either intentionally or unintentionally receiving funding through fundraising that could be later perceived as a conflict of interest or a bribe.

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 20 to 24):

20) No unless this is going to be uniform for all levels of government. Local Government elections are just as important to the constituency as any other level. This would be discrimination.

21) No, the design of how-to-vote cards are individual to reflect individual people or parties.

22) All should be allowed.

23) No, those that do the work should be rewarded. If you have campaign workers there early then you catch the worm - so to speak.

24) No, is this again should be uniform from a Federal Level.

Voting (Question 25):

25) Yes

Voting (Questions 26 to 30):

26) No, people in cities should be able to come out and vote unless they are working all day.

27) This should be done in consultation with individual Local Governments that due to being in outback, remote areas postal is a better option.

28) No

29) Yes, many people have to travel some distance for work and may not be able to attend a booth where they live. This should not have a large impact to change.

30) Yes, to both questions. As cross boundary i.e. Brisbane to Ipswich would be difficult to manage.

Voting (Questions 31 to 35):

31) Absolutely not, voting is a right of citizenship of this country. If you are not a citizen you can not decide who runs the State or the Country therefore why should this be different just because it is a local election.

32) Absolutely Not - people live in a particular area and should vote there for people to represent them. Business can make representations to local governments without voting for it - where do you draw the line for how many people from a business get to vote. Does BHP vote and how many if they how a business. This could essentially lead to corruption.

33) No refer to question 31 - if you are not a citizen you don't vote period in Australia. If you want to vote you become a citizen this is one of the most sacred rights in Australia. If this is the case locally then it should be uniform across the Federal and State government elections.

34) NO, one person, one vote. I could own 2000 properties and therefore ensure that I get my candidate up - this could become corrupt.

35) There should not be a need for this as non-residents should not be allowed to vote. Just because someone does not vote doesn't mean they are not represented as a rate payer. The assumption that because people don't vote you are not

represented means that all levels of government don't represent non-citizens - this of course is not the case.

Voting systems (Questions 36 to 38):

36) Optional preferential voting - this means voters can choose if they wish to preference or vote 1.

37) No optional preferential is best.

38) No, proportional representation could result in fracturing of local government areas and limit the overall representation of the needs of the electorate by selected individuals or parties.

Other (Question 39):

Other) The Committee should seriously consider the funding of local government elections as per State and Federal Government funding for election candidates as this would remove the opportunity by business and or individuals for corruption via donations.