



Department of Local Government  
NORTHERN TERRITORY

Your Ref :  
Our Ref : 1156/99

Submission No 6



Spec 33.4

The Research Director  
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir

#### INQUIRY INTO PREVENTING ELECTORAL FRAUD

Thank you for the papers dated 13 September 2000 relating to the inquiry into preventing electoral fraud.

The papers have been reviewed in relation to experience in the Northern Territory. The views of the Chief Electoral Officer of the Northern Territory will be forwarded to you in due course.

I will comment on the inquiry as far as local government elections in the Territory are concerned. The Commonwealth electoral roll, as in Queensland, provides the basis of the rolls used for all three tiers of government in the Territory. The Territory's Electoral Office conducts almost all local government elections (some by-elections being the exception).

The rolls are examined following elections to check for multiple voting. Very few cases have been discovered and almost all are attributed to administrative error.

There have been virtually no disputes referred to the courts in the Territory where electoral fraud has been suspected. This is not surprising given the relatively small number of voters in all electorates. The fact that council elections are apolitical, and also that planning and building regulation are central government responsibilities in the Territory – they have not been delegated to local government – may help minimise the risks of electoral fraud.

There are substantial penalties provided in the *Northern Territory Electoral Act*, the *Local Government Act* and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, and the Criminal Code for offences involving elections.

There are no current proposals for amendments to the legislation relating to elections in the Territory.

Yours sincerely

HUGH RICHARDSON  
for Secretary

25 September 2000



Northern Territory Government

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