

Submission No 9
Spec 33-2



ROSALIE SHIRE COUNCIL

89 Mocatta Street, Goombungee Qld 4354

Please address all communications to:
The Chief Executive Officer
P.O. Box 50, Goombungee Qld 4354

Please Quote: **A18-4**

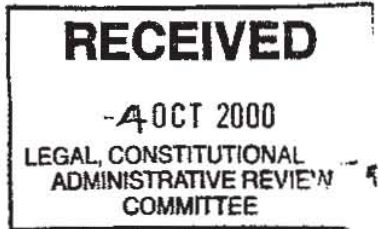
Enquiries to:

Your Ref:

5 October 2000

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

FAXED



Dear Sir

INQUIRY INTO PREVENTING ELECTORAL FRAUD

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the above Inquiry and the invitation to provide a submission.

Council has only one issue to raise and that is in relation to Local Government elections conducted by postal ballot. The area of concern is in the timing for receipt of ballot papers after the election day. At present the *Local Government Act* provides for a period of ten (10) days after the close of the poll when ballot papers can be received by the Returning Officer.

The problem as Council sees it is that preliminary results of the ballots counted on the polling day are released and made public as at the close of counting on that night. However, ballot papers can virtually be cast and forwarded to the Returning Officer once this detail is known, therefore potentially having an affect on the result. The only requirement on the voter is to sign a declaration which is included on the back of the ballot paper returning envelope which states the ballot was cast before 6 p.m. on polling day.

Council feels that by providing this ten day period for receipt of ballot papers, the potential for electoral fraud is introduced into the system.

If this period were shortened to, say, three days after the polling day, the opportunity for fraud would be reduced considerably. Alternatively, if the reply paid envelopes were required to be postmarked prior to polling day or the first business day thereafter, then there would be more certainty that the ballot paper had been completed correctly.

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There have been suggestions that there are occasions, especially in North Queensland where, due to seasonal weather conditions, a period of ten days is required for the ballot papers to be returned. However, it is suggested that these situations occur at sporadic intervals, which could be covered by a separate provision which would allow the relevant Minister to extend the time if necessary.

The above is submitted for your consideration.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C.N. Weber', written in a cursive style.

C.N. Weber
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Copy to: