

## Reviews

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Following the conduct of each federal election the AEC conducts various internal reviews and external surveys of its administration of the election. The AEC also participates in any parliamentary inquiries established by the Federal Government.

For the 2001 federal election, the AEC is providing a submission to a federal parliamentary committee inquiring into electoral matters; is conducting a number of internal reviews and audits on operational arrangements, public information activities; and undertook post-election surveys among electors and polling staff. These post-election reviews and surveys form the basis for planning future elections and referendums.

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## Reviews

### Federal Parliamentary Inquiry

When a new Parliament meets it establishes parliamentary committees to investigate various matters. In 1987 the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) was established to scrutinise electoral issues. Its first inquiry was into the conduct of the 1998 federal election and related matters. During the 39th Parliament, the JSCEM also received a reference to inquire into the integrity of the electoral roll, and a reference to inquire into the 1996 and 1998 Funding and Disclosure Reports previously published by the AEC.

The 40th Parliament has again established the JSCEM, which has convened an inquiry into the conduct of the 2001 federal election. The AEC will make a substantial submission to this inquiry. This submission will assess the conduct of the 2001 federal election, discuss issues raised during the election period, and make various recommendations for amendments to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and electoral procedures to ensure the efficient and effective administration of electoral matters.

### Operational Reviews

The AEC undertook a number of internal reviews to evaluate its performance on various operational processes and arrangements of the 2001 federal election. These reviews were conducted on a State and Territory basis and also on a national basis.

The findings of these reviews will be used in the planning of policies, procedures and services for the conduct of future electoral events.

## Reviews

### Public Information Campaign Reviews

#### Advertising and post election research

An evaluation project based on a national telephone survey was conducted to measure the awareness and impact of the AEC's election advertising campaign on the voting public. The surveys were undertaken after each phase of the advertising campaign (enrolment, voting services and formality).

A post - election survey was also conducted to measure the levels of satisfaction with the election process and AEC services.

The research showed that all three phases of the AEC advertising campaign succeeded in reaching the majority of Australian voters. Among other findings, the research indicated that among those surveyed:

- advertising reach was higher in 2001 in all phases than in 1998
- electors regard enrolment forms as more accessible than in the past
- in 2001, electors were significantly more aware of who may vote before polling day
- the public perception of AEC staff and services has improved from that in 1998, and
- AEC staff were considered honest (99%), efficient (97%), friendly (96%) and helpful (94%)

## Reviews

### **Election 2001 Information Inquiry Service - Evaluation**

An evaluation of the operations of the outsourced Election 2001 Information Inquiry Service commenced in December 2001. Recommendations have been developed and the Information Section at Central Office section will continue to investigate options for the next event.

### **Review of the Training of Polling Staff Program**

A review of the Training of Polling Staff (TOPS) program is being undertaken to gauge the effectiveness of the program among those who participated in it in 2001. A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 1,500 polling officials and AEC divisional staff who were involved in the training. Their responses and suggestions will be used to refine the training program for future electoral events.

### **Internal Audit**

The AEC conducts an internal audit program that provides an independent assessment of operational performance on AEC programs and procedures.

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Three post election audits were completed following the 2001 federal election. The audits were aimed at making sure that procedures in place worked efficiently and contributed towards providing the Australian people with an independent electoral service.

### **Declaration vote scrutiny**

An assessment of the processes in place for the issue and scrutiny of declaration votes was undertaken and a report provided on the efficiency of the current arrangements.

### **Casual and polling staff expenditure**

An audit was conducted to examine and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the payment system for polling officials and election casuals.

### **Resource management**

An audit was undertaken to examine and report on the effectiveness and reliability of resource management forecasts against identified workload information and against actual usage of staff.