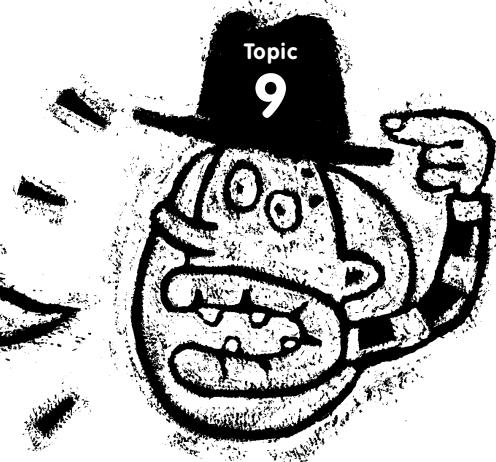


# CONDUCTING VICTORIAN STATE ELECTIONS



In Victoria, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is responsible for conducting elections.

The VEC is an independent body answerable to Parliament. This independence is an important factor that helps ensure the impartial conduct of elections. Functions of the VEC include:

- conducting parliamentary elections;
- conducting local government elections;
- conducting non-government elections and polls for organisations such as superannuation boards and professional associations; and
- maintaining the electoral enrolment register.

## Election managers and election officials

Victorian State elections are comprised of a large number of 'mini-elections' in each of the 88 Districts and the 8 Regions. Election Managers are the individuals responsible for conducting elections for each District and Region. In the period prior to an election, they:

- issue postal votes;
- take candidates' nominations;
- organise the draw for the order of the candidates' names on the ballot papers;
- register how-to-vote cards;
- organise staff; and
- arrange voting centres for election day.

On election day, some 14,000 temporary officials are employed to service about 1,650 voting centres across Victoria. Compact city electorates can have as few as 10 voting centres, some of which may be required to accommodate up to 7000 voters on election day. Remote and geographically large rural districts can have about 50 voting centres, some of which may see as few as 150 voters on election day.

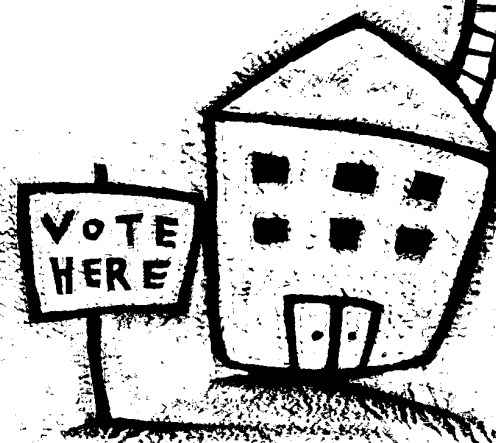
## Issuing the writ

State elections must be on the last Saturday in November every four years. The election begins when Parliament's term ends and the Governor issues 'the writ'. The writ is the instruction to hold an election.

The writ is handed to the VEC, which is then responsible for organising the election.

## Closing the roll

The roll closes seven days after the writ is issued.



## Calling for nominations

The VEC calls for nominations for candidates to stand in all Lower House and Upper House seats.

Nominations close on nomination day, which occurs on a date specified in the writ 10 days after the writ is issued.

## Postal voting

Electors can vote by post or in person before election day if they:

- will be unable to attend a voting centre.

## Registration of how-to-vote cards

Candidates and political parties can advise electors how to vote by using how-to-vote cards. How-to-vote cards have to be registered by the VEC to guard against the cards being misleading, deceptive or obscene. They can then be distributed on election day.

## Election day

The election day occurs 15 days after nomination day on a Saturday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. The ordinary voter is then able to vote in any voting centre in their electorate. An absentee voter is able to vote in any voting centre outside their electorate. After answering questions and being marked off the roll, voters receive their ballot paper. Voters fill them out and put them into the ballot boxes, which are sealed until the close of voting.

## Election night

Ballot papers are sorted and informal votes are put aside. Election officials count all votes with scrutineers present. Scrutineers are party workers and supporters of candidates appointed

to monitor the vote count to ensure that it is free and fair. The VEC organises a tally room on election night, where election results are posted for all to see.

## Counting after election day

In most electorates the result will be clear on election night. However, in close contests it may take up to ten days for the result to become known. By law, postal votes can be received into the count until nine days after election day.

## Declaration of the result

In the period following election night, when there can be no doubt about the outcome, each Election Manager formally announces the result in a public ceremony called the declaration of the result.

## Writ returned

Once the election results are finalised, the VEC returns the writ to the Governor, containing the names of the candidates elected.

## Elected candidates take their seats

After the election, the new Parliament is opened by the Governor and the returned and new members take their seats. The party or parties with majority support in the Lower House forms the Government. The second largest party usually forms the Opposition.



Draw a timeline for the 2006 State election campaign from issue of the writs to election day.

Mark and annotate the key events that need to occur at various stages.