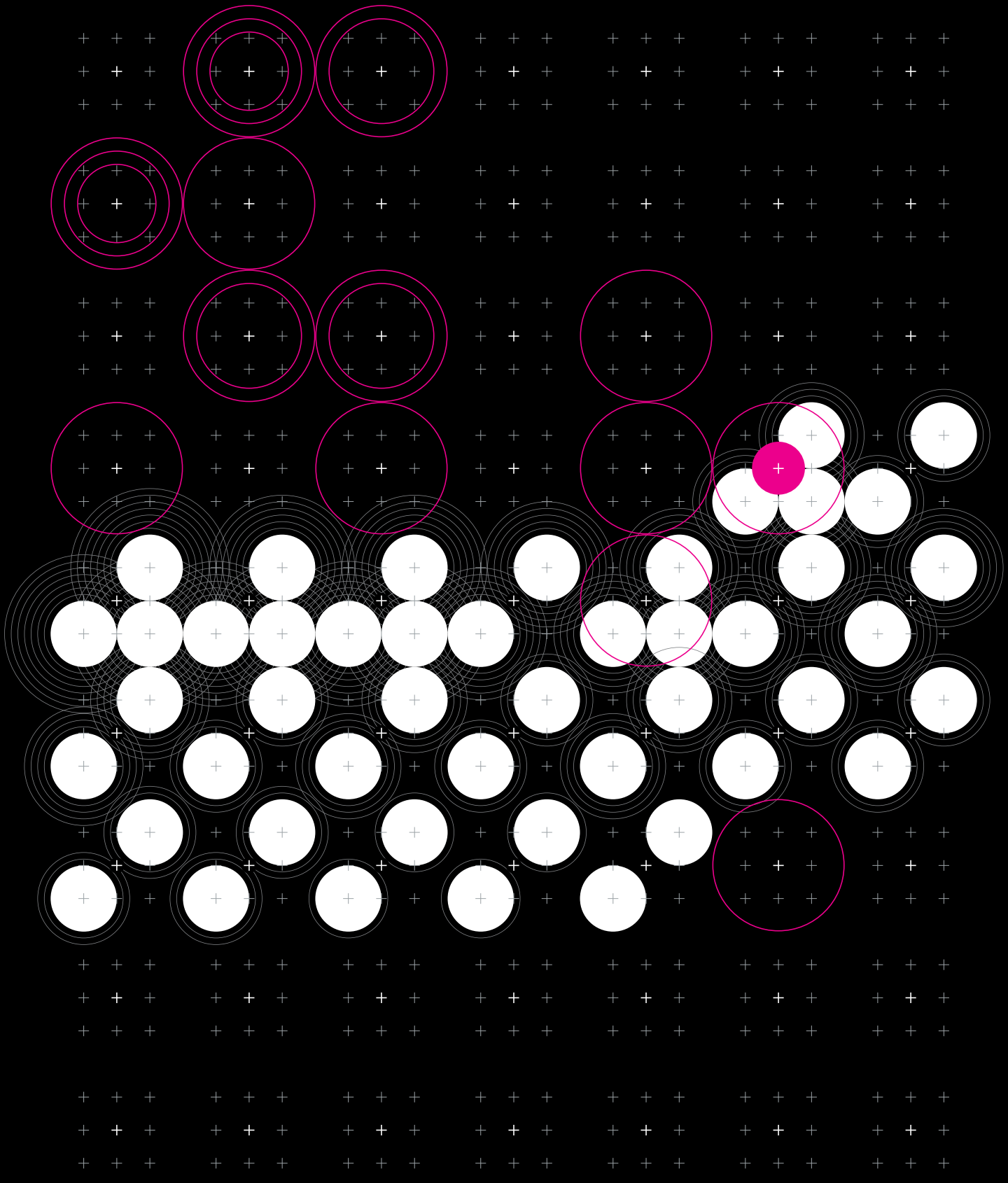
Final service plan

2026 state election

September 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this nation, as the traditional custodians of the lands on which the VEC works and where we conduct our business.

We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. The VEC is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Version history

A draft version of the 2026 state election service plan was published in November 2025.

This final version of this 2026 state election service plan was prepared for publication in August 2026.

Final election service plan

2026 state election

Key election activities (Front cover)

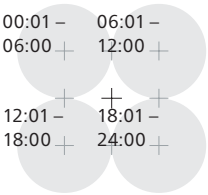
The cover is a graphic representation of the key election activities for the 2026 state election, spotlighting the ballot paper counting activities. Three visual elements are used to distinguish these:

1. *Magenta circles:* Election timeline activities.

2. *Solid white circles:* Counting activities.
   Count activities include: Primary count, computer count, recheck, recheck 2-candidate-preferred (2CP), amalgamation, declaration, 2-party-preferred (2PP) count and calculation of results.

3. *Concentric rings:* Activities occuring concurrently.

Solid white circles correspond to a 6-hour operational period within the day; as shown by the unit logic below.



DD/MM
Election timeline activity
Number of count activities

03/11
Issue of writs.
Election offices open to public.
Close of roll.

04/11
Nominations open.
First day of submission of postal vote applications.

09/11
Close of nominations.
Close of group registration.
Ballot draw.

10/11
HTVC registration opens.

17/11
Mobile voting commences.
Low sensory voting (mobile voting) open.

18/11
Early voting commences.
TAV commences.

20/11
Close of submission of HTVCs for registration.

23/11
Close of HTVC correction period.

25/11
Close of submission of postal vote applications.

27/11
Close of early voting.

28/11
Election day.
Count: 4

29/11
Count: 3

30/11
Count: 8

01/12
Count: 7

02/12
Count: 7

03/12
Count: 6

04/12
Last day postal votes can be admitted to the count.
Count: 5

05/12
Count: 5

06/12
Count: 5

07/12
Count: 5

08/12
Count: 3

09/12
Count: 4

10/12
Count: 3

11/12
Count: 4

12/12
Count: 3

13/12
Count: 3

14/12
Count: 3

15/12
Count: 3

16/12
Count: 2

17/12
Count: 2

18/12
Count: 1

19/12
Return of writs.
(writs returned on or before this day)

Foreword

The 2026 Victorian state election is taking place in an era of rapid change. For years, all of us have benefited from an election delivery model that has served the state well. But the environment in which we operate has changed, and the way we conduct elections today cannot look the same as it did 10 or 20 years ago.

This service plan sets out the significant changes already underway, and those still to come. But while the way we deliver elections must evolve, our purpose remains unchanged, as does our commitment to deliver elections that are fair, accessible, transparent and trusted.

The publication of the *Strategic service plan* in May 2025, followed by a draft of this *2026 state election service plan* in November 2025, opened a deliberate conversation about how elections are delivered in Victoria. The insights gained have helped shape a renewed delivery model, reflected throughout this plan. How we implement this model will affect the way elections are experienced, which is precisely why the changes are detailed here: to ensure everyone understands what is changing, and why, well before election day.

Delivering this election means navigating higher costs, complex supply chains, stronger competition for resources and pressures such as mis- and disinformation. Legislative reform—including the removal of group voting tickets for Legislative Council elections—will also change how Victorians participate in and experience the 2026 election. As election delivery becomes more resource-intensive and difficult to scale, fiscal sustainability is an increasingly important part of our planning. This service plan sets out how we will deliver the election in this environment.

Central to our response are significant changes to election venues, result reporting and the management of Legislative Council region elections. Venues are being reshaped to better serve communities and ease pressure on staff and voters. Changes to result reporting and Legislative Council processes aim to improve timeliness while always maintaining accuracy, transparency and trust. These innovations reflect lessons from past elections and respond to critical pressure points. Together, they form a renewed delivery model designed to meet the demands of today while strengthening our capacity to adapt for the future.

This service model is a direct response to community expectations, the growing demand for change, and the recommendations put forward by the Electoral Matters Committee of the Parliament. It sets the foundation for how we meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, while staying true to our core purpose of enabling all Victorians to actively participate in their democracy.

I encourage you to read this plan in full, to understand the changes ahead, and to recognise the care with which we will deliver them. Above all, I want to reaffirm my confidence in the process and in our ability to deliver an election in which Victorians can continue to place their trust.





Sven Bluemmel
Electoral Commissioner

Consultation on the draft plan

Feedback on the *2026 state election draft election service plan* closed at 5 pm on Friday 27 February 2026.

Feedback submissions have been considered as part of the review process for production of this *Final election service plan*.

This page is intentionally left blank.

Contents

1. Introduction 19

1.1 About us 19
1.2 About this election service plan 19
1.3 Guiding principles 19
1.4 Statement of intent 20
1.5 Legal frameworks 21
1.6 Privacy 22
1.7 Occupational Health & Safety 22
1.8 Election timeline 22

2. Initiatives – what is changing? 24

2.1 Reduced early voting period 24
2.2 Expansion of electronic roll mark-off 24
2.3 Enhanced venue and resource management 25
2.4 Visitor registration 25

3. Election service agreement and management 26

3.1 Cost management 26
3.2 External service providers 26
3.3 Arrangements with other organisations 26
3.4 Environmental resource management 27
3.5 Operational command centre 27
3.6 Evaluation of election services 28
3.7 Post-election reporting 28

4. Communication and engagement 29

4.1 Communication campaign 29
4.2 Media 29
4.3 VoterAlert 30
4.4 Social media 30
4.5 Website 30
4.6 Public enquiry service 32
4.7 Customer feedback and complaints 32
4.8 Public engagement 32

5. Venues and resources 35

5.1 Voting venues 35
5.2 Hubs 36
5.3 Centralised activities site 37
5.4 Transport and logistics 37

6. Workforce 38

6.1 Recruitment and sourcing 38
6.2 Hub management teams 40
6.3 Election management teams 40
6.4 Support for field teams 40
6.5 Election staff 41
6.6 VEC core staff 42
6.7 Training and instructions 42

7. Enrolment activities 43

7.1 Pre-election roll products 43
7.2 Enrolment eligibility checks 43
7.3 Close of roll 43
7.4 Electoral roll products 43

8. Candidates and parties 44

8.1 Political party registration 44
8.2 Candidate engagement and support 45

8.3 Nominations 45
8.4 Group registration 46
8.5 How-to-vote cards 47
8.6 Campaigner support 47
8.7 Political funding 47
8.8 Political donations 48

9. Voting period 50

9.1 Ballot material 50
9.2 Voting channels 51

10. Counting and results 54

10.1 Counting 54
10.2 Scrutineers 61
10.3 Declaration of results 61

11. Compliance and integrity 62

11.1 Election integrity activities 62
11.2 Regulatory compliance 63
11.3 Legal matters 63
11.4 Storage and disposal of ballot papers 63
11.5 Compulsory voting enforcement 64
11.6 System security 65

Appendices 66

Appendix 1: Amendments to the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) 66
Appendix 2: Key milestones and activities in election preparation 71
Appendix 3: VEC responses to Electoral Matters Committee recommendations 72
Appendix 4: Summary of responses to recommendations from the *2022 Report to Parliament* 99
Appendix 5: Progress on operational commitments from Report to Parliament on 2022 state election and *Strategic service plan* 107
Appendix 6: Evaluation framework 130
Appendix 7: Community languages 136
Appendix 8: List of districts and regions 138
Appendix 9: Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timeline 141
Appendix 10: Legislative Council region election high-level count timeline 145

Glossary

List of definitions

Term	Definition
2-candidate-preferred (2CP)	An indicative count involving the distribution of preferences to the 2 candidates considered most likely to have the highest number of votes after a preference distribution.
2-party-preferred (2PP)	A statistical count that shows how the vote is divided between the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party/The Nationals in each Legislative Assembly district, taking into account the preferences of voters who gave higher preferences to other registered political parties or independent candidates.
Above-the-line (ATL)	Voting above the line is when a voter puts at least 5 numbers in order of preference in boxes above the line on a Legislative Council region election ballot paper.
Absent vote	A vote cast by an elector on election day at a voting centre that is located outside the electoral district for which they are enrolled.
Ballot draw	A randomised process conducted by election managers to determine the order candidates and groups will appear on ballot papers.
Ballot material	Official election materials, including ballot papers and declaration and postal envelopes.
Ballot paper	The official paper listing the names of all the candidates contesting the election on which the voter records their preferences for each candidate in the election.
Below-the-line (BTL)	Voting below the line is when a voter puts at least 5 numbers in order of preference in boxes below the line on a Legislative Council region election ballot paper.
Campaigner	A person who canvasses for votes, including on behalf of a candidate, political party or organisation.
Candidate	A person who is nominated under section 69 of *the Electoral Act* 2002 (Vic) (Electoral Act) to contest the election. For political donation disclosures and reporting under Part 12 of the Electoral Act, a candidate is: › person who has been selected by a registered political party to be a candidate in an election; or › person who is not endorsed by a registered political party and has publicly announced an intention to be a candidate in an election.
Candidate Helper	A digital tool available to independent candidates to pre-complete nomination forms.

Term	Definition
Centralised activity site (CAS)	A central location where we conduct multiple election activities, including postal vote processing, telephone assisted voting, extraction and counting.
Close of roll	The deadline for eligible electors to enrol to vote or update their enrolled details prior to an election.
Close seat	A Legislative Assembly district election in which the margin between the leading candidates is small, and an indicative result cannot be identified until most or all votes are counted and verified.
Core staff	Our workforce of ongoing, fixed-term and casual staff based at our centrally located offices and warehouse sites.
Court of Disputed Returns	A jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Victoria that hears challenges to state election results. It has the authority to declare an election candidate as not elected, declare a candidate that did not win as elected, or declare any district or region election void.
Data integrity framework	A structured set of processes that ensure data we use and publish is accurate, consistent, complete, and reliable across all reporting activities.
Declaration vote	A vote that requires a written declaration by the voter. There are several types of declaration vote, including postal votes, absent votes, provisional votes and marked-as-voted votes.
Democracy ambassador	A community member we employ to deliver electoral information and enrolment services to priority communities.
Deputy Electoral Commissioner	A statutory officer of the Victorian Electoral Commission who assists the Electoral Commissioner in the performance of their functions and may exercise delegated powers under the Electoral Act.
Directly enrolled voter	A person who is added to the register of electors by the Australian Electoral Commission based on government data that identifies that person as being eligible for enrolment.
Dis-information	False or inaccurate information that is intended to mislead or deceive.
District	One of 88 electorates represented by a member of the Legislative Assembly.
Early voting	Electors can vote before election day at an early voting centre.
Early voting centre (EVC)	Electors can vote before election day at an early voting centre (EVC). This includes joint EVCs which will service multiple districts, for example where the EVC is situated near a district border.
EasyVote guide	A tailored guide sent to households before an election, providing key election information.
Election day	The day named as the election day on the writ for an election. Election day for the 2026 state election is Saturday 28 November 2026.

Term	Definition
Election day voting centre	A designated venue open on election day where voters can attend to cast their votes in person.
Election Infrastructure Location Strategy	A framework guiding the location and use of election offices, VCs and hubs to support efficient and centralised election delivery.
Election casual database	A database of individuals who have expressed interest in casual temporary election roles, used to fill staffing positions as required during election periods.
Election liaison officer	An election official responsible for visiting VCs to monitor operations, identify and report resource needs to election managers, deliver materials where required, and ensure consistent application of election procedures across voting centres.
Election Management System	Our computerised election management system used by election managers to capture election data. Results data is also entered directly into the Election Management System.
Election management team (EMT)	The team responsible for managing election operations within a district, comprising an election manager and one or more assistant election managers.
Election manager	A senior election official appointed by the VEC to be responsible for the administration of an election for an electorate.
Election office	The location where the election manager conducts the election. There is one election office for each district, which may be co-located in a hub servicing multiple districts.
Election official	A person appointed by the VEC to work at an election.
Election staff	Individuals employed by the VEC to deliver election activities.
Election support officer	An experienced senior election official that is responsible for supporting EMTs.
Election venue locator	An online tool that allows voters to search for and view the locations of election venues including voting centres and hubs.
Elector	A person whose name appears on the Victorian register of electors.
Electoral Commissioner	A person appointed by the Governor-in-Council to be responsible for the administration of electoral law in Victoria.
Electoral Matters Committee (EMC)	A joint investigatory committee of the Victorian Parliament to conduct inquiries into the conduct of state and local government elections, referendums, and other matters relating to electoral law in Victoria.
Electoral Registrar	A VEC staff member responsible for managing enrolment services and maintaining the accuracy of the electoral roll.
Electoral roll	The list of people entitled to vote in a particular election.

Term	Definition
Electorate	An electoral district or region represented by one or more members of Parliament.
Electronic roll mark-off	The process of marking a voter's name electronically off the electoral roll when they are issued ballot papers.
Endorsed nominations tool	A secure online system that enables registered political parties to pre-complete their paperwork and manage multiple candidate nominations simultaneously for an election.
Failed election	Under section 72 of the Electoral Act, an election fails if: › a candidate for a Legislative Assembly district election dies after noon on the final nomination day and before 6 pm on election day; or › the successful candidate for a Legislative Assembly district election dies after 6 pm on election day and before being declared elected; or › no candidate is nominated or declared elected.
First preference count	The initial count of votes in which each ballot paper is allocated to the candidate or group marked as the voter's first preference, or to informal.
General postal voter	A person who is automatically mailed a postal ballot pack for all elections in their area for reasons such as illness, age, remote location or being a registered overseas elector.
How-to-vote card (HTVC)	A card, handbill, pamphlet or notice that: › includes a representation of a ballot paper, including partial or purported partial representations of a ballot paper; or › lists the names of any or all of the candidates for an election with a number indicating an order of voting preference against the names of any or all of those candidates.
Hub	A single venue combining 1–4 election offices for nearby districts, allowing for streamlined and coordinated election delivery.
Hub liaison officer	An election official responsible for supporting hub management teams to resolve issues relating to enabling functions and overall hub operations.
Hub management team (HMT)	The team responsible for hub operations, consisting of the EMTs for each serviced district, a hub manager, a site coordinator, a logistics and resourcing lead, and a staffing lead.
Independent candidate	A candidate at an election who is not endorsed by a registered political party.
Informal vote	A ballot paper that is cast but cannot be included in the count because the voter's intention is not clear or the ballot paper has been completed incorrectly.
Joint early voting centre	An EVC that issues in-district early votes for 2 or more districts.

Term	Definition
Joint voting centre	A VC that issues in-district votes for 2 or more districts on election day.
Legislative Assembly (district)	The Lower House of the Victorian Parliament.
Legislative Council (region)	The Upper House of the Victorian Parliament.
Labour hire staff	Workers engaged through an external labour hire agency to perform temporary election roles during election periods.
Low sensory voting	A mobile voting option where the voting centre environment is adjusted for voters who are neurodivergent or have sensory needs.
Marked-as-voted vote	A vote issued to a person who claims not to have voted at the election despite their name being marked off the electoral roll as having already voted.
Mis-information	False or inaccurate information that is spread regardless of intent to mislead or deceive.
Mobile voting	A voting centre temporarily set up at a site to assist electors to vote who may experience barriers to accessing other voting methods.
Operational command centre	A centralised location established to oversee statewide election operations.
Ordinary vote	A vote cast on election day at a voting centre that is located in the voter's enrolled district, excluding provisional and marked-as-voted votes.
Participation	The number of voters marked off the roll as a proportion of the number of people on the electoral roll for the election. Not to be confused with turnout.
Personnel helpline	A phone and email support channel to assist election staff with using personnel systems.
Postal voting	Electors can apply to have their ballot papers mailed to them. Electors are provided with an envelope to securely return their ballot papers to be included in the count.

Term	Definition
Preference distribution	The process used to determine the successful candidate(s) in an election when no candidate(s) has received enough first preference votes to be elected or there are still vacancies to be filled. In a Legislative Assembly district election, the candidate with fewest votes is excluded and their votes are passed on to other candidates according to voters' preferences. This process is repeated until there are only 2 candidates remaining. When a candidate achieves an absolute majority, they are successfully elected. In a Legislative Council region election, the votes in surplus of the quota from the candidate or candidates successfully elected are distributed or the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded and their votes are passed on to other candidates according to voters' preferences. This process is repeated until 5 candidates achieve the quota.
Preliminary scrutiny	The process of assessing postal and declaration vote envelopes to determine whether the contents can be accepted and extracted, prior to being counted, or rejected.
Priority community	A community that is underrepresented in elections in terms of enrolment or turnout or overrepresented in terms of informality.
Provisional vote	A vote issued to a person who claims to be entitled to vote at an election and the name of that person is not on, or cannot be found on, the electoral roll.
Psephologist	An expert in the statistical study of elections and voting trends.
Recheck	A routine step of all election counts, in which ballot papers that have been counted are checked again for formality, correct sorting to first preference, and correct reconciliation of totals.
Recount	A re-examination and count of one or more parcels of ballot papers by an election manager before the declaration of the result, conducted under section 120 of the Electoral Act.
Region	One of 8 electorates represented by 5 members of the Legislative Council. There are 11 districts in each region.
Registered political party (RPP)	A political party that is on the VEC's register of political parties. Registration entitles a political party to have the registered party details, including a registered logo, placed next to its endorsed candidates' names on Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers or above the group name above the line on Legislative Council region election ballot papers.
Report to Parliament	A formal report tabled in the Victorian Parliament outlining the conduct and outcomes of an election.
Restricted area	The area established under section 110J(6) of the Electoral Act that allows early and postal vote extraction and sorting to take place prior to the close of voting to ensure the security and secrecy of the process.

Term	Definition
Scrutineer	A person appointed by a candidate to represent the candidate during electoral activities and make sure the election is conducted according to the law.
Senior election official (SEO)	An election official with advanced training to manage electoral operations.
Silent elector	A person who has been granted silent elector status by the VEC (or by the Australian Electoral Commission on behalf of Victoria) having satisfactorily shown that printing their address on an electoral roll would place their or their family's personal safety at risk.
Strategic service plan	A document summarising the major pieces of work the VEC plans to deliver over a 3- and 5-year planning cycle.
Telephone assisted voting (TAV)	A secure voting facility provided by the VEC for electors prescribed by the regulations to use this service. Use of this service involves casting a secret vote over a telephone service.
Turnout	The number of votes counted in an election as a proportion of the number of people on the electoral roll for the election. Not to be confused with participation.
Venue footprint	The planned number, type and distribution of election venues used to deliver an election across all districts and regions.
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)	The body empowered to hear appeals against administrative decisions made by certain agencies, including the VEC.
Vote exchange	A process that involves all votes that were cast outside of their district being sorted, reconciled and packaged for dispatch to the CAS for counting.
VoterAlert	An opt-in service that sends enrolment and voting reminders to enrolled voters via email and SMS.
Voting centre (VC)	A venue appointed by the VEC for voting at an election, such as an EVC, a mobile voting centre, or an election day VC.
Voting centre manager	An election official responsible for overseeing the operation of a VC on election day.
Writ	An order by the Governor or Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to the Electoral Commissioner that an election be held. The writ specifies key election dates.

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Long version
2CP	2-candidate-preferred
2PP	2-party-preferred
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
AEM	Assistant election manager
AFTVN	Apparent failure to vote notice
ATL	Above-the-line
BTL	Below-the-line
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CAS	Centralised Activity Site
Electoral Act	*Electoral Act 2002* (Vic)
EMC	Electoral Matters Committee
EMT	Election management team
eSafety	Office of the eSafety Commissioner
EVC	Early voting centre
HLO	Hub liaison officer
HMT	Hub management team
HTVC	How-to-vote card
OHS	Occupational health and safety
PES	Public enquiry service
RPP	Registered political party
SEO	Senior election official
TAV	Telephone assisted voting
VC	Voting centre
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
VEC	Victorian Electoral Commission
VPS	Victorian Public Service

1. Introduction

1.1 About us

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is an independent and impartial statutory authority established under the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (Electoral Act). We conduct fair, efficient and impartial elections in accordance with the law.

Building a stronger future for Victorian democracy is our purpose, and we are committed to delivering a trusted democratic process through excellence and impartiality. Our vision of all Victorians actively participating in their democracy drives everything we do.

Our responsibilities include:

- conducting parliamentary elections, by-elections and referendums
- conducting local government elections, by-elections, countbacks and conducting certain statutory elections and polls
- considering and reporting to the Minister responsible on issues affecting the conduct of parliamentary elections, including administrative issues requiring legislative remedy
- regulating obligations under the Electoral Act
- preparing electoral rolls for parliamentary elections, voters' rolls for local government elections, jury lists, and providing enrolment information to members of Parliament and registered political parties
- ensuring the enrolment of eligible voters
- administering and regulating Victoria's political funding and donation laws
- contributing to public understanding and awareness of elections and electoral matters through information and education programs
- conducting and promoting research into electoral matters that are in the public interest
- providing administrative and technical support to state electoral boundary reviews and local government electoral structure reviews, and leading local government ward boundary reviews
- reporting to Parliament on our activities.

The VEC is led by the Electoral Commissioner, who is appointed by the Governor-in-Council for a 10-year term. The Electoral Commissioner is independent of the government of the day, reporting directly to Parliament. Sven Bluemmel is the appointed Electoral Commissioner and Dana Fleming is the appointed Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

1.2 About this election service plan

An event the size of a state election requires significant planning, thorough preparation and coordinated delivery. The voting experience of each voter must be positive, while the role we play in providing that opportunity should remain largely unseen.

This election service plan is a keystone document that outlines the planning and preparation for the 2026 state election. It informs all stakeholders of the measures in place to achieve a successful outcome and a high standard of service for voters.

The plan also provides guidance to election participants on how the 2026 state election will be delivered and highlights key changes to our regulatory and electoral operations they can expect from the 2022 state election. This includes information relevant to employees, appointees, candidates, registered political parties (RPPs), contractors, and service providers on whom we rely. Their understanding of the election, and their role within it, is essential to delivering a successful event and a positive voting experience for every voter.

We published a draft election service plan in November 2025 and invited stakeholders to share feedback through a formal consultation process. Stakeholder feedback informed the refinement of our proposed delivery model and helped shape the election services outlined in this plan.

1.3 Guiding principles

We will conduct the 2026 state election based on established and accepted principles.

We will:

- follow state electoral law, and apply it impartially and equitably with all participants in the process treated fairly and justly
- perform all tasks in a non-partisan and politically neutral manner to the highest standard of accuracy
- work to provide every voter with a quality and convenient service in which to exercise their democratic rights.

1.4 Statement of intent

Victorians who are eligible to vote will do so at an election that is:

- fully compliant with the law
- transparent
- fair and accurate
- delivered with efficiency, enthusiasm and to the highest standards.

This statement of intent aligns with our commitment to delivering a trusted democratic process through excellence and impartiality. It provides the foundation for all election plans and projects and guides our decision-making, actions and allocation of resources.

Our longer-term direction is outlined in our *Strategic service plan*, that we commit to publishing before every major event. The strategic commitments in that plan ensure our services continue to evolve to meet the needs of all voters across Victoria. These commitments are guided by strategic pillars, established by our *Strategy 2027*, which form the foundation of our long-term election delivery strategy. Our pillars enable us to prioritise our activities and shape our actions and deliverables.

To operationalise these commitments, we will:

- complete all election preparation projects by 30 September 2026
- ensure that as many eligible Victorians as possible are correctly enrolled by the close of roll date
- increase public awareness and understanding of the election process and ensure the various participation methods are:
  - safe, convenient, and easy to access
  - timely to their requirements
  - easy to understand
  - respectful and courteous
  - confidential
- assist candidates, RPPs and other participants to meet nomination requirements and participate compliantly and effectively in the election
- provide electoral information to all stakeholders in a format that is easy to find, use, and understand, and is deliverable through a variety of media in a timely manner
- ensure all votes cast are reconciled and counted accurately and efficiently, with results available in a timely manner
- maintain stakeholder confidence and trust in the VEC's capacity to deliver impartial, transparent, accurate and efficient election results.

Our strategic pillars



Reinforcing public trust

We are trusted to deliver electoral services with integrity and high quality



Improving the voter experience

We deliver a great voter experience



Responding to a complex environment

Our processes and systems respond to a complex environment



Prioritising staff safety and wellbeing

Our people are capable, engaged and satisfied

Our strategic objectives

Accessing election information in real time

We will provide trusted electoral information for Victorians

Voting options for all electors and situations

We will provide service excellence enabling voters to select from a broader range of voting options

Intuitive experiences for all candidates

We will ensure easy, fair, convenient and accessible processes for candidates

Safe, empowered employees

We will offer a safe and equitable workplace every day

1.5 Legal frameworks

Victoria has 2 Houses of Parliament.

The Legislative Assembly, or 'Lower House', comprises 88 seats, with each of the 88 electoral districts represented by one member for a 4-year term.

The Legislative Council, or 'Upper House', comprises 40 seats, with 8 regions represented by 5 members each for a 4-year term. Each of the 8 regions comprises 11 districts.

The 2026 state election will be held on Saturday 28 November 2026.

We are responsible for the conduct of all Victorian state general elections, supplementary elections and by-elections. Our state election operations are governed by the following Acts, regulations and frameworks, which shape our work programs, policies, procedures and processes:

- *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (Electoral Act)
- Electoral Regulations 2022 (Vic) (Electoral Regulations)
- *Constitution Act 1975* (Vic)
- *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act 1982* (Vic)
- *Infringements Act 2006* (Vic)
- *Fines Reform Act 2014* (Vic)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
- Australian Signals Directorate 'Essential Eight' (ASD8) cybersecurity framework

All procedures and processes we implement during a state election consider each piece of legislation and implement prescribed rules accordingly.

The Electoral Act has been amended by the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic), *Electoral Further Amendment Act 2026* (Vic), and *Electoral Amendment (Miscellaneous Matters) Act 2026* (Vic) passed in Parliament in April 2026, June 2026 and August 2026, respectively. There were also consequential amendments to the Electoral Regulations.

We have updated our processes and procedures, operating model, informational products and election planning activities to reflect these legislative changes and ensure the 2026 state election is delivered compliantly within new requirements.

See **Appendix 1** for more information on what has changed, and see **Appendix 4** for a summary of how our past recommendations for legislative change have been addressed within the recent amendments.

1.6 Privacy

We are bound by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic), as well as other laws that impose obligations on how we handle personal, sensitive and health information.

Our privacy policy explains how we collect, use, and disclose personal information. It enables us to collect the information necessary for our services and functions, while upholding each individual's right to privacy.

All privacy enquiries and concerns should be directed to our privacy officer by email at privacy@vec.vic.gov.au. For more information on how we manage privacy, visit vec.vic.gov.au/privacy.

1.7 Occupational Health & Safety

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic), we have a duty to protect the health and safety of electoral participants while they are attending VEC-managed sites and their immediate surroundings.

So far as is reasonably practicable, we must provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. We must also ensure that activities conducted at our venues do not expose electoral participants to unnecessary risk.

As a result, some sites and their surrounds where we establish election venues may have additional risk controls in place beyond the standard operational measures required under the Electoral Act. Where additional controls are in place, we will communicate these clearly to electoral participants.

1.8 Election timeline

The timeline for a state election is set out in the Electoral Act. Unless exceptional circumstances apply, state elections are held every 4 years on the last Saturday in November.

A state election commences with the issue of the writs 25 days before election day. The writs for a state election must be returned no later than 21 days after election day. The total timeframe to conduct a state election is therefore 46 days.

Given this short period to conduct the election, planning and preparation must commence well in advance. Planning for the 2026 state election commenced approximately 18 months before election day, with all major preparation projects scheduled for completion by 30 September 2026, ahead of the issue of the writs.

The timeline for the 2026 state election, based on the writs being issued on Tuesday 3 November 2026, is provided on the following page.
A summary of key milestones during our election preparation is included in **Appendix 2**.

2026 Victorian state election timeline

Activity	Date	Days until election day
Election offices open to public. **ISSUE OF WRITS 6 pm.** Election offices open until 8 pm. Close of roll at 8 pm.	Tuesday 3 November Melbourne Cup Day Public Holiday	25
Nominations open. First day for submission of postal vote applications.	Wednesday 4 November	24
Close of nominations at 12 noon. Close of group registration at 12 noon. Ballot draw at 4 pm (district followed by region).	Monday 9 November	19
HTVC registration opens 9 am.	Tuesday 10 November	18
Mobile voting commences from 9 am. Low sensory voting (mobile voting) open 10 am to 4 pm.	Tuesday 17 November	11
Early voting commences 9 am to 6 pm. TAV commences 9 am to 6 pm.	Wednesday 18 November	10
Close of submission of HTVCs for registration at 12 noon.	Friday 20 November	8
	Saturday 21 November	7
Early voting centres and TAV closed.	Sunday 22 November	6
Close of HTVC correction period at 12 noon.	Monday 23 November	5
	Tuesday 24 November	4
Close of submission of postal vote applications at 6 pm.	Wednesday 25 November	3
	Thursday 26 November	2
Close of early voting at 6 pm.	Friday 27 November	1
ELECTION DAY. Election day voting open 8 am to 6 pm. TAV open 8 am to 6 pm.	Saturday 28 November	0
Last day postal votes can be admitted to count (6 pm).	Friday 4 December	+6
RETURN OF WRITS. (Writs returned on or before this day)	Saturday 19 December	+21

2. Initiatives – what is changing?

We are committed to continuous improvement and regularly refine our operating model and supporting frameworks. This ensures our operational needs remain legislatively compliant and aligned with our strategic outcomes and stakeholder expectations.

This work incorporates recommendations made by Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee (EMC) in its report on the conduct of the 2022 state election, findings from our own performance evaluation and post-election reviews, and legislative changes arising from recommendations for reform we made in our Report to Parliament on the 2022 state election. We outline progress against the EMC recommendations in **Appendix 3**, while **Appendix 4** summarises responses to our recommendations for legislative change.

Since the 2022 state election, we have delivered 5 successful state by-elections. These by-elections have provided valuable opportunities to further refine our operating model through controlled, small-scale initiatives before implementing them at a statewide scale.

We have identified 4 key initiatives for implementation at the 2026 state election.

In addition to these initiatives, we have introduced a range of operational improvements across the election delivery model. **Appendix 5** provides an update on the operational commitments we have incorporated into this election.

2.1 Reduced early voting period

The *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) amended the legislation so that early voting cannot commence until the Wednesday that is 10 days before election day.

At the 4 state district by-elections held since the 2022 state election, we trialled a reduced length of early voting centre (EVC) operations, commencing from the Wednesday 10 days before election day. This reduced the early voting period by 2 days and addressed a key operational risk and critical pressure point in the election timeline by extending the time available to print, produce and deliver ballot papers to all voting locations. This increased the time available for ballot paper production and distribution from 67 hours (including only 5 business hours) to 115 hours.

Our evaluation found that the delay to early voting centre (EVC) opening had no significant impact on voter turnout during the early voting period. However, the extra preparation time ahead of EVC operations substantially eased logistical pressures and helped to ensure more reliable delivery of services.

We also trialled extending EVC opening hours to 8 pm. We observed that voting numbers were markedly lower in the period between 6 pm and 8 pm compared to standard operating hours, and that this extension significantly increased staffing costs and added a level of operational complexity to support up to 13 hours of operation each day.

Based on these learnings and legislative changes, early voting for the 2026 state election will commence from Wednesday 18 November and run until Friday 27 November 2026. All EVCs will have static opening hours of 9 am to 6 pm each day, except Sunday 22 November when EVCs are closed.

2.2 Expansion of electronic roll mark-off

In February 2025, we produced a supplementary report on lessons learned from ballot paper shortages at the 2022 state election. A key lesson highlighted in that report was the importance of real-time, centralised oversight of ballot paper consumption at early and election day voting centres. Reliance on staff communication, best estimate forecasts and maintaining ballot paper stock in surplus of the total number of votes taken at the 2022 state election proved insufficient. Real-time monitoring, supported by agile print responses, is our preferred approach to minimising the risk of future ballot paper shortages.

Accordingly, for the 2026 state election we are deploying electronic roll mark-off across more venues than ever before. All early voting centres will be equipped to use electronic roll mark-off, with all these venues also operating as election day voting centres (VCs). Additional electronic roll mark-off devices will be deployed to all medium and large VCs, leading to an estimated 70% of voters who cast votes in person being marked off the roll electronically.

2.3 Enhanced venue and resource management

Since the 2022 state election, we have refined our Election Infrastructure Location Strategy which underpins the strategic direction for our venue footprint required to deliver the state election. The revised principles are:

1. Election offices are the centres of administrative oversight of the delivery of the election. These will be contained in operational hubs servicing 1–4 districts, providing efficiency of operations and additional peer support for election management teams.
2. EVCs are expected to take the majority of votes in the election and should be located in areas of high vote traffic to maximise accessibility for voters. There will be approximately 200 EVCs to respond to a continued growth in demand for early voting. Many EVCs will operate as joint EVCs that issue in-district early votes for 2 or more districts, enabling voters from multiple districts to cast ordinary votes and reducing the complexity of vote exchange after election day.
3. The number of election day VCs will be reduced where practical to do so, reflecting an overall reduction in election day voting due to the growing popularity of postal and early voting. Small VCs will continue to be utilised in regional Victoria to service communities that are located more than 20km away from other VCs.
4. A centralised activity site will support our centralised delivery model, including postal vote processing, telephone assisted voting, vote exchange and large-scale counting activities.

2.4 Visitor registration

At the 2025 Prahran District and Werribee District by-elections, we trialled campaigner registration in response to our duty of care obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) to provide a safe environment at election venues.

Our occupational health and safety obligations apply to all venues we control or manage and the immediate surrounding area. Our obligations to protect health and safety extend to all persons attending a venue for a purpose connected to election activities. These obligations occur regardless of our role regulating activities outside voting centres or reports of poor behaviour by campaigners at some locations at recent elections.

At the 2025 by-elections, registered political parties and candidates were advised that campaigners outside voting centres would be asked to complete a paper registration form, including their name and emergency contact details.

Following the evaluation of the 2025 by-election campaigner registration trial and recommendations from Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee, we expanded the process of campaigner registration to a registration trial for all visitors to EVCs and election day VCs at the 2026 Nepean District by-election.

The 2026 Nepean District by-election tested a paper-based version of the voluntary visitor registration approach that will be utilised for the 2026 state election operating model. Individuals attending a voting centre for purposes other than voting or working for the VEC were invited to provide their contact and emergency contact details through a paper-based registration process.

For the 2026 state election, our voluntary visitor registration will move to a digital process. All visitors will be able to use an online form accessed via a QR code displayed at all election venues. The form will collect visitor details, the contact details of their nominated emergency person, along with the dates, times and venues they are visiting.

3. Election service agreement and management

What's new?

We have published a *Strategic service plan* which summarises the major pieces of work that we plan to deliver, including targeted commitments.

We are implementing a data integrity framework to improve the consistency of reports we publish.

We have established an operational command centre to centrally coordinate election operations, enabling streamlined issue management and real-time operational support across all venues.

3.1 Cost management

Our cost management strategy for the 2026 state election enables timely and accurate forecasting across the election program, embedding probity, accountability and transparency in all costs incurred in delivering the election. We will include details of these costs in our Report to Parliament following the election.

3.2 External service providers

The delivery of a State election requires the engagement of a range of specialist external service providers. These partnerships allow our staff to focus on core election responsibilities, while ensuring Victorians receive high-quality election services supported by modern technology and systems.

For the 2026 state election, we will have service agreements and contracts in place for a range of specialist services, including:

- postal services
- ballot paper printing services
- call centre services
- cardboard furniture and voting centre equipment
- cartage and courier services
- communications services
- election advertising
- election staff online training
- election staffing
- labour hire
- envelope production
- information technology
- language services (translation and interpreting)
- mail house services
- network security testing and cyber security augmentation
- site security assessment.

3.3 Arrangements with other organisations

We will ensure that arrangements are in place to respond to any legal or regulatory issues during the election as set out below.

Office of the eSafety Commissioner

We will work with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) before the election to share information on concerns, emerging risks, relevant trends, intelligence, and legislative changes. We refer matters to eSafety for assistance in removing seriously harmful online material in the election context. This may include cyber abuse targeting Australian adults, or content that promotes, incites, or instructs in matters of crime or violence through online channels.

A joint referral protocol is in place between Australian members of the Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ) and eSafety to streamline the referral process.

Legal services

We will engage external legal services as required, and we will brief legal counsel to be available throughout the election timeline to ensure that legal matters are addressed promptly.

Victoria Police

We work closely with Victoria Police before and throughout the election timeline and note that any involvement of Victoria Police is limited to public safety, criminal matters and maintaining public order.

We train our election officials to understand the appropriate escalation protocols when dealing with a person who may need to be removed following obstructive or disturbing behaviour that may impact voting, along with responding to any incidents involving aggression or violence.

We support Victoria Police to prepare for the election and provide information and resources to enable them to appropriately respond when called to attend a VEC location.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

We will work with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) to support the timely determination of applications to review VEC decisions on political party registration and how-to-vote card registration.

Supreme Court of Victoria

Under section 176 of the Electoral Act, the VEC or a candidate may seek an injunction to prevent a person from engaging in conduct that breaches a law relating to elections. Given the time-sensitive nature of election matters, applications made during the election period may require urgent consideration. We will work with the Supreme Court of Victoria to ensure any injunction applications are heard without delay.

The Court of Disputed Returns is also established in the Supreme Court of Victoria (see **11.3 Legal matters**).

3.4 Environmental resource management

We are committed to managing resources responsibly across all operations to reduce our environmental impact and continuously improve our methods to achieve this.

Our sustainable practices across the delivery of the elections included:

- redesigning ballot materials to reduce production waste
- using Forest Stewardship Council-certified paper stock for ballot papers, with most printed on 100% recycled paper stock made from post consumer waste pulp
- collecting and recycling all cardboard furniture to reduce landfill waste and support the circular economy
- optimising delivery routes and vehicle loads to minimise fuel consumption and unnecessary travel
- separating paper, plastics and cardboard at warehouse locations
- donating suitable surplus items to community organisations rather than disposing of them
- reusing election equipment and stationery across multiple electoral events.

3.5 Operational command centre

The operational command centre will provide a centralised oversight function for election service delivery, supporting situational awareness across all election operations and venues throughout the writ-to-writ period. As a new model for 2026, the operational command centre replaces previous election service management arrangements, bringing operational and compliance oversight together within a single governance framework. The operational command centre operating model is aligned to the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS), incorporating established command, control, coordination and information management principles to support consistent and effective management of election delivery incidents and risks.

The operational command centre will be co-located at the Centralised Activity Site (CAS) and will:

- maintain a whole-of-program view of election delivery
- monitor key milestones and activities
- undertake intelligence-led monitoring and assessment
- identify emerging risks that may affect election outcomes.

Meeting daily throughout the election period, and twice daily during critical phases of delivery, the operational command centre will coordinate the management of escalated election delivery and compliance incidents that cannot be resolved within individual work programs. Through established escalation and reporting processes, the operational command centre will assess impacts across the broader election program, facilitate informed decision-making, and ensure timely actions are implemented. This integrated approach will support service continuity, strengthen operational resilience, and provide leadership with a clear and current view of election readiness and performance. This will enable us to respond quickly and consistently to changing election delivery needs.

3.6 Evaluation of election services

After the 2026 state election, we will conduct an in-depth evaluation to assess performance against established objectives, capture lessons learned and identify opportunities for improvement through our continuous improvement framework. This process will be guided by our evaluation framework, summarised in **Appendix 6**.

The framework is intended to become the standard approach for post-election evaluation, enabling consistent measurement, benchmarking and continuous improvement across future state elections.

As part of the evaluation, we will collect and analyse a broad range of data during and after the election. This will include program and project data, as well as feedback from internal and external stakeholders, election participants and advisory groups. The evaluation will also assess the effectiveness and impact of the strategic initiatives introduced for the 2026 state election.

We will engage an independent research company to assess stakeholder satisfaction with the delivery of election services. This research will include a sample of voters, candidates and RPPs, and will measure satisfaction with the services delivered throughout the election including evaluation of the changes specific to this event.

Key performance indicators

To measure the overall success of the election and to determine whether our election delivery objectives have been met, a range of key performance indicators have been developed. We will collect data and evidence throughout the election period, with results summarised in our Report to Parliament after the election.

See **Appendix 6** for performance measures that have been aligned to our election delivery strategy (2023–2027) and evaluation framework.

Informal ballot paper analysis

We will analyse all informal ballot papers following the election and report on the findings of this analysis in our Report to Parliament. This analysis will identify and measure the incidence of various types of informal voting and contribute to ongoing research into voter behaviour and ballot paper informality.

3.7 Post-election reporting

Under section 8(2)(b) of the Electoral Act, we must report to Parliament on the administration of each election within 12 months of its conduct. For the 2026 state election, we will table our report no later than November 2027.

The report will provide information about each area of electoral administration outlined in this service plan. It will also include:

- detailed election statistics
- recommendations for legislative change
- acquittal of, and progress against, past recommendations and commitments from our Reports to Parliament and *Strategic service plan*
- progress against recommendations made by Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee
- analysis of voting trends, participation, informality, stakeholder satisfaction and customer feedback
- evaluation and analysis of our election services, including reporting against key performance indicators
- information about key issues and events that occur during the election.

The report will provide an assessment of election delivery and identify opportunities to strengthen future electoral events.

4. Communication and engagement

What's new?

We are rolling out a new advertising campaign along with targeted campaigns to under-represented voter cohorts.

We are mailing an EasyVote guide to every household in Victoria.

We are improving our website's accessibility and usability.

4.1 Communication campaign

Advertising campaign

Our state election advertising campaign will drive broad public awareness about participating in the 2026 state election. The campaign will focus on communicating accessible enrolment and voting options for all Victorian voters as well as election staff recruitment and navigating mis-information about the electoral process. We will also run targeted campaigns for:

- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- young people
- first time, directly enrolled voters
- interstate and overseas voters.

We will develop the campaign to:

- meet statutory requirements
- increase voter awareness of their rights and obligations
- improve accurate voter enrolment
- maximise voter turnout and participation.

We will send all households an EasyVote guide by post, outlining key election information including varied methods of voting, how to find out where to vote, how to fill out a ballot paper and how to contact the VEC with any queries about the election.

Mis-information

To combat electoral mis-information, we will encourage all voters to 'stop and consider' when engaging with electoral information and third-party information about the electoral process. This will involve:

- a statewide mis-information advertising campaign
- maintaining our existing mis-information register and updating it as needed during the election period
- addressing electoral mis-information on social media in accordance with social media protocols
- reviewing and refreshing our electoral mis-information webpages to ensure information, advice, tips and resources remain clear, accessible and relevant
- promoting our electoral mis-information webpage to help people access trusted advice and resources for evaluating information critically
- incorporating awareness of mis-information about the electoral process in community outreach education sessions.

These initiatives are designed to address mis-information relating to electoral processes only. They do not extend to political discourse or claims made as part of campaigning.

4.2 Media

Media briefing

We will invite media representatives to attend a media briefing before November. The session will provide an overview of the election timeline and key activities, as well as information on our advertising, awareness campaigns and outreach activities.

Prior to the election timeline, we will provide media guidance and election resources on the media section of our website.

We will also invite leading psephologists to attend a briefing that provides an overview of the counting period.

Media centre

We are creating a dedicated media centre on our website for journalists covering the election. This will compile useful resources, links, images, B-roll footage and information for the media.

Media releases

Our proactive media campaign will provide journalists and media outlets across Victoria, including CALD media, with key election information. This will include:

- enrolment, nomination and voting information
- key dates, facts and figures
- VEC initiatives
- results publication timelines.

We will also promote election day filming opportunities, the calculation of Legislative Council region election results and other attendance opportunities through media advisories.

Spokespeople

The Electoral Commissioner is the VEC's key spokesperson. Where required, other VEC subject matter experts may also take part in media interviews and briefings to help share information with the public. The role of our spokespeople is to ensure the public receives clear, consistent and factual information from a trusted and authoritative source.

4.3 VoterAlert

We offer an electronic notification service, VoterAlert, by email and SMS. Enrolled voters who subscribe to VoterAlert receive enrolment and voting reminders. We will use VoterAlert subscriber numbers by district to target our statewide advertising campaign to areas with lower than average VoterAlert subscription rates. Currently, around 66% of enrolled voters are registered for VoterAlert.

VoterAlert allows us to send all subscribed voters timely reminders about key election milestones, such as the close of roll deadline, along with essential information on when, where and how to vote correctly. Where possible, we will also send targeted campaigns to voter cohorts with information relevant to their specific circumstances. This includes voters who enrol or update their enrolment after the close of roll date, registered overseas voters and directly enrolled voters.

As in 2022, we aim to improve low participation rates in directly enrolled voters by contacting them through a targeted VoterAlert campaign.

Since July 2025, we have sent VoterAlerts to voters 70 years and older inviting them to register as a general postal voter ahead of the election. Since we began this campaign, we have contacted more than 82,000 voters to encourage them to register for general postal voter status.

4.4 Social media

We will use social media platforms to convey key electoral information and reinforce our role as an authoritative and trusted source of truth for election-related enquiries. This will include proactively promoting key messages about the election. We will ensure content is accessible and inclusive, focusing on plain English and providing alternative text on images and captioning on videos.

We will respond in a timely and accurate way to queries received from the public. For more information, see **4.6 Public enquiry service**.

4.5 Website

The VEC website is the source of truth for all election information. We will update the website with comprehensive election information at each phase of the election. Information will include:

- enrolment options and instructions
- how to apply to work at the election
- how to nominate and submit how-to-vote cards
- early, postal, low-sensory, braille and telephone-assisted voting options
- details of how, when, and where to vote on election day
- lists of candidates and their contact information
- registered how-to-vote cards
- voting options for voters who are away from their address (such as interstate or overseas)
- how the votes will be counted

- a mis-information register to collate and debunk any incorrect or misleading election information
- election results
- translated election content (specific languages to be confirmed).

The first phase of the 2026 state election content was published on Friday 17 July.

We will also publish a series of explanatory videos to help users with common election questions.

We will progressively publish election results on our website from the close of voting on Saturday 28 November 2026 until all counting and declarations are complete. These results will include:

- latest first preference results, including by voting centre and early voting centre
- latest 2-candidate-preferred (2CP) results, including by voting centre and early voting centre
- full preference distribution results for all Legislative Assembly district election counts
- distribution results for all Legislative Council region election counts
- recount results (if any recounts are conducted)
- the names of elected candidates.

From 6 pm on election day, the website will enter live results mode. On election weekend we will regularly publish primary first preference vote totals, including first preference results by voting centre and early voting centre. Each Legislative Assembly district results summary page will have an indicative 2CP count total when the selected 2CP candidates are considered to be accurate. If the 2CP candidates chosen ahead of time do not appear to be accurate, we will not publish a 2CP count total.

We will continue to update results after election day as:

- absent and other-district early votes are processed
- postal votes arrive before the cut-off to admit postal votes into the count
- declaration votes complete preliminary scrutiny
- we complete rechecks, recheck 2CP counts and preference distributions.

We have made improvements to the results data that will be available on the VEC website during the count period. This includes:

- publishing early votes by EVC
- publishing amalgamated totals for mobile early votes in each district
- publishing the most recent results for each parcel of votes (a voting centre or amalgamated total line) instead of only primary or recheck results for each district or region at a time
- publishing 2CP results from rechecked figures
- publishing full preference distributions (to the final 2 candidates) for all districts
- publishing region recheck data from our computer count application after changing our region count model.

More information about the count period, as well as Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timelines, are available in **Chapter 10**, **Appendix 9** and **Appendix 10.**

Election venue locator

Our election venue locator is an interactive map that lets voters search an address or locality. The map will show:

- election day voting centres
- early voting centres
- interstate and overseas voting locations
- election offices.

The map will display key details, including:

- the venue address
- opening dates and hours
- wheelchair accessibility rating (for EVC and voting centre venues only).

Users will be able to access the election venue locator from the VEC website from Wednesday 4 November. The election venue locator is compatible with most mobile phones and internet browsers.

Information for overseas electors

We provide information about the election to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for publication on the Smartraveller website. This will include a link to information about voting options while overseas.

4.6 Public enquiry service

We will operate a centralised contact centre known as the public enquiry service from Monday 14 September 2026 to respond to public enquiries. The public enquiry service will introduce 2 interactive tools to improve service and accessibility:

- A **webchat** that allows members of the public to engage in real-time text-based conversations with trained customer service officers on our website. This channel will provide a convenient and immediate way for users to get assistance.
- A **chatbot** that is rule-based, not AI-driven. We have designed the chatbot to provide answers to simple queries, with escalation points to customer service operators for more complex queries.

The public enquiry service will operate from Monday 14 September to Friday 11 December 2026, with the chatbot operating 24/7. The public enquiry service operating hours will be from 8:30 am to 5 pm, except on the following dates:

Date	Operating hours
Tuesday 3 November (close of roll)	8:30 am to 8 pm
Monday 9 November to Friday 27 November	8:30 am to 8 pm
Saturday 28 November (election day)	8 am to 6 pm

Outside the public enquiry service hours of operation, an interactive voice response (IVR) service will be available to provide helpful information on common queries about enrolment and voting.

From Monday 14 December 2026, the public enquiry service will be engaged to support compulsory voting enforcement activities. During this period, the service will operate in accordance with standard operating hours, from 9 am to 5 pm.

Multi-language telephone interpreting service

We will provide an interpreter service throughout the election and the compulsory voting enforcement services period. We have identified 29 priority languages that each have a dedicated phone line. These numbers will be promoted on the website and callers can also be triaged to interpreter support when they contact the general public enquiry service line.

Mailboxes

Individuals who prefer to engage with us online will have access to a range of information through our website, chatbot and webchat service. If this does not resolve their enquiry, they can email info@vec.vic.gov.au for a response.

4.7 Customer feedback and complaints

Complaints management is an important service we provide to Victorians. A dedicated team will manage feedback and complaints received via the following channels:

- online submission form
- email
- post
- recorded by the public enquiry service.

Complaints alleging a breach of the law should include any available evidence. We will forward complaints lodged at hubs to our head office for review and appropriate action.

Customer confidentiality is protected.
Our customer feedback policy and customer service charter are available on our website at vec.vic.gov.au/complaints.

4.8 Public engagement

We provide education and engagement services year-round to support enrolment and voting to the Victorian community. Our education and engagement programs also form part of our priority community engagement plans, which include election-specific activities.

We continue to work closely with a broad range of community stakeholders to ensure programs are relevant, appropriate and informed by community needs and expectations. We distribute our *Be Heard* newsletter to more than 2,000 stakeholders and liaise with members of the following advisory groups:

- Electoral Access Advisory Group, representing disability support agencies and individuals with lived experience
- Prisons and Without a Home Advisory Group, representing people experiencing homelessness or incarceration
- Aboriginal Advisory Group
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Group
- Young People Advisory Group.

These groups are directly involved in the design of our electoral education and engagement initiatives. Our education and engagement plans are published on our website.

Youth enrolment and voting

A key focus of our advertising campaign for the election is the enrolment and participation of young voters. Our campaign will use digital and social media platforms to reach first-time voters and those directly enrolled.

We will deliver outreach sessions to year 11 and 12 students to support enrolment and provide information for first-time voters. We will also offer sessions at universities, TAFE institutes and youth events.

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities

We will create in-language video products with important election information alongside other translated resources. We will publish these resources on our website, distribute via social media, and promote through our community partners.

We will deliver outreach sessions to multicultural communities across Victoria to support enrolment and increased understanding of how to vote correctly.

Services for those experiencing homelessness

We will provide face-to-face outreach enrolment sessions prior to the close of roll to homelessness and accommodation services. We will also offer education sessions to staff in partner organisations to support their clients.

We will create and distribute promotional and educational resources, including easy-read material and sector-specific resources, through community partnerships. Mobile voting teams will attend partner organisations during the early voting period.

Engagement of people in prison

We will deliver a prison education program in the months leading up to the election, supported by resources such as prison-specific information and easy-read guides. We will provide face-to-face enrolment sessions prior to the close of roll, and mobile voting teams will attend prisons during the early voting period.

Engaging Aboriginal communities

We will deliver face-to-face outreach sessions to provide electoral information and enrolment support for Aboriginal communities. We will develop culturally appropriate promotional resources and distribute these online and through our community partners. We will also offer mobile voting at community organisations during the early voting period.

Inclusion of people with disabilities

We will deliver tailored electoral education sessions to people living with disability, their families and carers. Our services and activities aim to further enhance the support provided to people with disabilities to enrol and vote. We will work with peak bodies and community partners to provide targeted resources and ensure that appropriate information is distributed across their networks.

We will offer education sessions to sector staff in strategic organisations to facilitate the distribution of information to clients and participants.

We will create video and print resources to support community members to enrol and vote. This will include supporting resources such as access guides and social stories available on our website. Access guides will also be produced for an EVC in each district to support people with disability and their carers to support the voting experience.

Electoral education sessions are serviced by two programs. These are the established Democracy Ambassador program, delivered by peer educators, and a new pilot initiative of Victorian Community Information Sessions delivered by election management staff.

Democracy ambassador program

Following the success of our 2024 local government election democracy ambassador program, which reached more than 10,000 participants, we will again focus the program on under-represented communities. A team of peer educators will be trained and supported to deliver electoral information and enrolment outreach in areas identified as having lower levels of participation and higher rates of informal voting.

Statewide electoral information sessions

For the first time, election management staff will trial the delivery of electoral information sessions to community groups across Victoria. This service will provide information on why voting matters, how to participate, and what supports are available. It will be delivered alongside our democracy ambassador program which is tailored to priority communities.

5. Venues and resources

What's new?

We will establish 32 hubs that will consolidate the operations of the 88 previous standalone district election offices from the 2022 state election.

Each hub will service between 1–4 local district election offices.

We will increase the number of early voting centres (EVCs) from 155 at the 2022 state election to approximately 200, of which up to 100 will be set up as joint EVCs.

All EVCs will be converted to election day voting centres (VCs) to provide a consistent voter experience and support an extended roll-out of electronic roll mark-off.

We have leased a long-term centralised activity site (CAS) in Port Melbourne that has been developed with accessibility for all stakeholders and operational efficiency in mind.

5.1 Voting venues

Our planning for this election has been informed by a comprehensive program of historical, numerical and spatial research to guide our estimates and the placement of voting centres.

From late 2025 we have been reviewing all available venues to use as VCs and EVCs. Where possible, we have prioritised venues used at previous state and federal elections that were geographically well located within each district. We are working closely with the Department of Education and other government agencies to secure these sites.

We have also worked extensively with community organisations, such as sports clubs and Scouts Victoria, to identify suitable sites available for use as EVCs. These sites are typically well located and offer parking and amenities, making them well suited to accommodating high visitor numbers at elections.

We audit all election venues for accessibility. We are committed to ensuring that each district has at least one fully accessible election day VC or EVC to provide maximum access for voters. Accessibility ratings for all venues will be publicly available via our online election venue locator.

We complete voting estimates based on our voting footprint to assess whether each venue can safely and efficiently accommodate its expected voter turnout. Venues with higher forecast voting volumes can require bespoke traffic management and staffing solutions and have flow-on impacts on count timelines on election night.

For the 2026 state election, we are aiming no more than 20,000 votes to be cast in each EVC, and no more than 2,500 votes to be cast in each election day VC. Some venues have forecasted vote totals that exceed these targets due to no other suitable venues being available nearby. Where this occurs, we will put in place extra measures to improve each venue's operational feasibility and limit any impacts on neighbouring properties and businesses.

Joint voting centres

Some EVCs and election day VCs will operate as joint voting centres due to their proximity to electoral boundaries, their location within major employment centres, or accessibility via major transport routes. Joint voting centres allow voters from multiple districts to cast in-district votes at the same location, reducing the need for declaration voting. This provides a better experience for voters and reduces the additional processing and counting after election day required for declaration votes. We will publish information about joint voting centre locations as part of our voting centre information.

Voting equipment

EVCs will be set up during the 2-week period prior to the commencement of early voting. This will include the delivery of all required resources and IT installation activities to ensure that venue managers have systems access and that electronic roll mark-off functionality is available from the first day of operation.

We will deliver furniture and equipment to each election day VC during the 3 weeks before election day. This will include customised cardboard equipment such as voting screens, directional signage, ballot boxes and recycling bins.

Medium and large-sized VCs will also be provided with one or more devices to allow voters' names to be marked directly off the electronic roll. The number of devices allocated to each venue will be based on the projected number of votes, informed by historic figures and local knowledge. All VCs will have at least one device to manage out-of-district and declaration voting.

5.2 Hubs

For the 2026 state election, we are expanding the role of hubs as the next stage of our Election Infrastructure Location Strategy. This will create efficiencies in our operations and how we use our resources by centralising functions that were previously managed through stand-alone election offices. Hubs will be responsible for staffing, training, resource distribution and counting activities. This will enable greater coordination, consistency and efficiency across the election operations.

We will utilise 32 hubs, each servicing between 1–4 districts. Hubs will be equipped with facilities for election managers to meet with candidates and their representatives, and will offer a counter service for members of the public. These facilities will be known as election offices. In addition to providing election office facilities for local electorates, hubs will host:

- counting of Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers on election night (from EVCs and mobile voting teams)
- re-checks and supplementary counts from VCs in the week following election day
- full preference distributions for all districts in the following week.

In determining hub locations, we have balanced venue availability and cost considerations with the need to provide geographically appropriate locations for the districts they service. This approach helps ensure hubs are accessible to candidates, voters and staff, while also helping to attract and recruit local election staff.

Where it was not possible to establish a hub within one of its serviced districts due to property availability, we have located it nearby to maintain accessibility. Wherever possible, hubs have been located within their region boundaries.

We applied a rigorous process to determine the suitability of each venue. Properties have been selected to meet accessibility, safety and security standards. To ensure appropriate venues can be secured and fitted out, it has been necessary to negotiate some leases up to 18 months. This timeframe will allow IT systems, telecommunications and utilities to be established well in advance of the election.

Hubs will be clearly identified with signage to support candidate, staff and scrutineer access. Security measures such as lock changes will be implemented where required.

Each hub will be equipped with the furniture, technology, stationery and materials required to conduct the election. CCTV will be used at all hubs with very specific purposes, including physical security, monitoring of operational activity and supporting electoral integrity.

Election offices will use our Election Management System, a purpose-built application that supports end-to-end delivery of elections. The Election Management System contains details of each district and region, and is used to manage key election activities, including nominations and results reporting. The system also provides access to the electoral roll and allows us to record voters marked off the roll in real time. In addition, the Election Management System supports the production of ballot paper artwork and other election products and supplies nomination, how-to-vote card and results data for publication on the VEC website.

Election office public opening hours

Hubs will commence operations on Monday 19 October 2026. Election office functions will open to the public from Tuesday 3 November until Saturday 28 November 2026.

Election office opening hours will be standardised across the state, operating from 9 am to 5 pm on weekdays. Extended hours will apply on:

- Tuesday 3 November (close of roll), when offices will remain open until 8 pm
- Saturday 28 November (election day), when offices open from 8 am to 6 pm.

Standardised opening hours will ensure consistent messaging to voters through our advertising and communication campaign.

5.3 Centralised activities site

We will operate a centralised activity site (CAS) in Port Melbourne. The site houses multiple key features, including:

- the operational command centre
- the centralised computer count centre
- the centralised processing centre
- a telephone-assisted voting (TAV) centre – one of 2 call centres, this call centre will capture and record TAV votes only
- the centralised vote exchange.

The CAS will be the largest site in use during the election period, and at its peak, may employ up to 3,000 workers a day, handling more than 4.5 million ballot papers.

The CAS footprint will span 3 buildings with a total area of more than 16,000 m^2. To support operations, we will partner with 5 labour hire agencies and engage more than 6,500 staff throughout the election period.

During peak operations, the CAS may operate 24 hours a day across multiple shifts. A dedicated site management team will coordinate logistics, resources, staff wellbeing and traffic management and other centralised support services. We will also manage site access for visitors including scrutineers.

We will centrally coordinate network access and install and maintain more than 600 computers and 50 printers across the site to support the full range of election activities.

Technology enhancements will improve accessibility, streamline reconciliation, embed training environments and provide integrated reporting tools while ensuring a seamless experience for both field and core staff. These improvements allow CAS to host the IT help desk surge service that will provide real-time support throughout the voting period. Together, these measures will strengthen operational integrity and support the broader rollout of electronic roll mark-off across voting centres for the election.

5.4 Transport and logistics

We will ensure the secure, timely, and efficient movement of election materials and resources across our network of sites for the election. Transport schedules have been designed to meet operational requirements, comply with our Chain of Responsibility policy and provide confidence that all deliveries are completed safely and effectively.

A key focus of this work will be the traceability, location, and custody of ballot materials. From printing through to delivery at hubs, EVCs and election day VCs, we will maintain oversight of ballot paper movements, with clearly documented procedures for who is responsible for them and how they are being transported and stored. This commitment to safe custody and secure handling is fundamental to protecting electoral integrity and upholding public trust in the electoral process.

To deliver on these commitments, we will:

- establish a transport network that provides adequate resourcing to meet the demands of all election venues over the election cycle, taking into account the wider venue footprint
- implement transport schedules that are efficient, reliable and aligned with operational timelines, ensuring venues can commence and continue operations without disruption
- build contingency transport capacity into all planning, enabling us to respond quickly to unplanned delivery needs and urgent requests from venues
- strengthen our collaboration with internal stakeholders and external suppliers to ensure services are delivered to the highest standards of safety, accountability and efficiency.

Through this approach, we will provide end-to-end assurance over the custody and movement of election materials, while maintaining the flexibility required to respond to the dynamic needs of a statewide electoral event.

6. Workforce

What's new?

We have expanded and diversified our senior election official (SEO) pool and refreshed our election casual database to ensure only active expressions of interest are retained.

6.1 Recruitment and sourcing

We source our election workforce through a combination of our database of SEOs and prospective election casual staff, VEC core staff and labour hire providers.

Together, these staffing groups provide the capability and capacity required to deliver election services across the state.

Recruiting senior election officials

Each hub management team (HMT) comprises election management team (EMT) members from its serviced districts, together with enabling function leads responsible for staffing, logistics, resourcing and site coordination. These roles are critical to the successful implementation of the hub operating model and require strong leadership, workforce management, stakeholder engagement and operational delivery capabilities.

To fill HMT roles, including election managers and assistant election managers, we maintain a senior election official (SEO) pool. SEOs are recruited through a rigorous process to ensure they have the skills and experience required. Our recruitment processes have been designed to identify individuals with the skills and experience required to lead election operations and support key enabling functions. Recruitment activities draw from existing election staffing pools and targeted recruitment campaigns to build capability across hub management, staffing, logistics and resourcing functions.

To support the expanded hub operating model and strengthen leadership capacity across the state, we have significantly increased the size of the SEO pool. Recruitment for these roles has historically been challenging due to their short-term nature, geographic distribution and the timing of recruitment close to the event itself. Additional recruitment challenges include the evolving scope of newly established roles and attracting suitable applicants within reasonable proximity of the new hub venue locations.

In response, we have conducted a full review of our process for recruiting SEOs to improve efficiency and ensure we can meet pool targets. SEO recruitment campaigns were undertaken in stages, with the first 2 SEO recruitment campaigns having commenced in March and September 2025. This staged approach allows us to continually refine our recruitment strategies and apply lessons learned from each campaign. The final campaign in 2026 focuses on districts with a shortfall of SEOs to fill required EMT and reserve positions.

Our recruitment campaigns are designed to attract a diverse workforce, including people from CALD communities and young people. The campaigns are developed using insights provided by our Research and Community Engagement teams to ensure that our messaging is culturally relevant and resonates with target communities. These insights guide both the creative development and media strategy for each campaign.

Media placements are strategically targeted in multilingual print and radio outlets, as well as digital platforms widely used by CALD communities and younger audiences. English-language ads are used for these channels to reflect the level of English proficiency required for SEO roles.

Research is also used to identify priority language groups and geographic areas for outreach. Language targeting on Meta platforms (Facebook and Instagram) plays a key role in our paid social media approach, helping to ensure our messaging reaches the right audiences in the right places.

To further strengthen workforce resilience, we have explored secondment and talent-sharing arrangements with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to help address workforce gaps where required.

Recruiting temporary election staff

Temporary election staff can register via a simple process on our website and become part of the election casual database. This database is used to recruit staff for a wide range of roles across VCs, EVCs, mobile voting teams, hubs and some key roles within the CAS and our head office locations.

To support more effective recruitment and workforce planning for the 2026 state election, we undertook a casual pool uplift project to refresh and validate this information. This has enabled a more strategic and targeted recruitment approach, allowing us to focus this year's registration campaign on locations and workforce cohorts where additional staffing is required. The election casual database now contains approximately 49,000 confirmed available election staff, and we expect this number to increase significantly as our statewide registration campaign, launched in July 2026, continues through to the election.

Labour hire staff

Labour hire staff are primarily engaged to support high-volume activities at the CAS, including counting and telephone-assisted voting. Leadership roles for these functions will generally be filled from the election casual database to maintain consistency, experience and operational oversight.

Labour hire agencies may also be engaged as a contingency to support field positions.

All labour hire staff are subject to the same pre-employment screening as other temporary staff, including criminal history checks and disclosure of political activities.

Pre-employment screening

Impartiality

We require prospective staff to disclose prior political activities as part of the recruitment process. Under the Electoral Act, we can lawfully refuse to offer employment based on political activity. Applicants are required to answer 6 mandatory questions covering past political campaigns, political party membership and other general public activities supporting or opposing policy positions.

All staff must complete a disclosure of political activities. All disclosures will be assessed, with some disclosed activities being grounds for automatic exclusion, and others being assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Skills suitability

HMT applicants undergo a rigorous selection process to confirm they have the required skills for these complex roles.

We also conduct basic screening checks when considering people from our election casual database for appointment to election staff roles. This includes reviewing ratings or prior performance in election roles as well as phone screening.

To further strengthen workforce selection, we conducted psychometric testing for EMT and HMT candidates using the Work-related Risk and Integrity Scale (WRISc). The assessment provided an evidence-based view of workforce integrity risk profiles and was designed to identify behavioural risk themes across the cohort. Findings from the initiative have informed training and workforce planning for the election and will continue to guide future workforce development activities, strengthening the capability, integrity and effectiveness of election leadership teams.

Security

Staff appointed to HMT roles must complete:

- a conflict of interest statement regarding foreign interference and security
- a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC).

Certain HMT roles, including election managers, assistant election managers, hub managers and assistant hub managers, must also hold a Working with Children Check (WWCC).

We also require NCCHCs for staff supplied by labour hire agencies and other specific categories of staff.

Pre-existing illness or injury

We ask all prospective election staff to disclose any pre-existing injuries, illnesses or conditions that may affect their ability to safely perform the duties of the role. We will assess all disclosures to determine whether reasonable adjustments can be made. If a safe working arrangement cannot be established, the person may not be appointed to that role. However, they may still be considered for other suitable roles.

All prospective staff we directly appoint are required to disclose any serious criminal convictions as part of the appointment process. We assess all positive disclosures to determine if the person is suitable to work with us.

6.2 Hub management teams

Each hub will bring together between 1–4 district election offices in a single location. To support this model, we have developed a new staffing structure that includes dedicated enabling function roles responsible for coordinating staffing, logistics and resourcing across all districts within the hub.

Each HMT comprises:

- the EMTs for each district serviced by the hub
- a hub manager, supported by a site coordinator in hubs with 3–4 districts
- a logistics and resourcing lead
- a staffing lead.

6.3 Election management teams

We will appoint an election manager for each of the 88 districts. Election managers are responsible for all activities within their district, including the operation of the election office and voting centres. Their responsibilities include:

- managing staff
- liaising with election support officers and head office teams where required
- handling in-person enquiries
- processing independent candidate nominations and applications to register a how-to-vote card
- overseeing counting activities
- declaring election results
- overseeing the pack-up of election offices.

We will appoint one or more assistant election managers to support each election manager. Together the election manager and assistant election managers will form the EMT for that district.

We will appoint and train an optimal number of staff to support the efficient delivery of the election across hubs, mobile voting teams, EVCs and election day VCs.

The number of EMTs and the size of the enabling function teams will vary according to the number of districts supported by each hub. The hub manager is responsible for the overall management and operations of the hub. HMT members work collaboratively to deliver election activities, with enabling function roles supporting both hub-wide activities and district-level election delivery.

6.4 Support for field teams

To support election delivery across the state, we will provide election managers and hub managers with a dedicated network of field and centralised support functions. Together, election support officers (ESOs), hub liaison officers, election liaison officers and the Help Desk will provide operational guidance, issue resolution, logistical support and technical assistance throughout the election period.

Election support officers

We will appoint a specialist team of election support officers (ESOs) to provide dedicated support to election managers throughout the election period. ESOs are the link between election managers, the operational command centre, and head office teams.

ESOs provide election delivery support by:

- ensuring election procedures are applied consistently and correctly across districts
- providing guidance and coaching on planning and preparation throughout each phase of the election
- monitoring compliance with legislative and operational requirements through integrity checks
- assisting election managers to resolve operational issues involving RPPs, candidates and members of the public.

Support will be provided primarily through remote engagement from head office, complemented by in-person visits at key stages of the election period to provide targeted guidance and assistance.

Hub liaison officers

Hub liaison officers are a new operational role for the 2026 state election. Each hub manager will have a dedicated hub liaison officer to provide support on staffing, logistics, resourcing and hub operations. This dedicated support model enables ESOs to focus on election delivery and the needs of EMTs.

Election liaison officers

For each district we will appoint at least one election liaison officer to visit EVCs during the early voting period, and at least 2 liaison officers to visit VCs on election day.

Election liaison officers provide on-the-ground support to voting centres during key phases of the election. They help maintain consistent election delivery across venues by responding to local issues, coordinating additional resources and monitoring operational performance.

Help Desk

We will establish a Help Desk to provide frontline support to election managers and hub managers, in support of the wider field teams. The Help Desk will triage enquiries to ensure issues are resolved efficiently or referred to the appropriate specialist team.

The Help Desk will serve as the central point for operational and technical support, ensuring enquiries are resolved quickly or directed to the appropriate specialist team.

A dedicated Help Desk team will also support the use of electronic roll mark-off in the field. This team will scale capacity to meet the anticipated increase in call demand during early voting and on election day.

6.5 Election staff

Hub staffing teams will appoint and manage temporary election staff to support the efficient delivery of the election. Temporary election staff will work in hubs, the election offices that will be established within hubs, and in voting centres.

Staffing teams will be provided with instructions and tools to support the recruitment of a diverse workforce, including:

- people across the adult age range
- people who speak a range of languages
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will also appoint temporary staff to conduct election activities at the CAS and our head office locations. This will include personnel supplied through labour hire agencies engaged under contracts with us.

We expect to fill approximately 27,500 roles for the election, and this will be comprised of field-based and central roles.

Field-based staff will work across voting centres, hubs, election offices, EVCs, mobile voting teams and low sensory voting sites. Approximately 90% of central roles will be engaged through agency labour hire arrangements, while election casuals from our election casual database will continue to fill the remaining field-based roles.

Staffing teams will appoint the optimum number of staff for each election venue to support efficient operations, provide a positive voting experience, and ensure all election-related tasks are completed.

Personnel helpline

We will establish a personnel helpline to provide phone and email support to election staff using our personnel systems. The helpline will assist staff to:

- register their interest to work at the election (for prospective staff)
- access and use the self-service portal to update contact details, enter banking, tax and superannuation details, access pay advice and accept offers of appointment
- complete timesheets
- resolve pay-related enquiries.

The personnel helpline will also assess political activity disclosures made by election staff and labour hire staff to determine whether they are suitable for employment.

The service will operate during standard office hours and extend its hours where necessary to provide adequate support. Technical support relating to the performance of election roles will continue to be provided through supervisors.

6.6 VEC core staff

Our core workforce of ongoing, fixed term and casual staff based at our head office locations plays a critical role in delivering elections. This includes staff working directly within the election program structure to deliver key outcomes, as well as corporate staff who support organisational resilience and enable successful election delivery.

Our headcount increases significantly during election periods as we recruit additional fixed-term delivery staff. In preparation for the 2026 state election we introduced structural changes to establish a dedicated surge recruitment team within our election program. This will ensure we can respond quickly to recruitment demands and maintain a capable and skilled workforce throughout the election period.

Core staff appointed to election roles will complete role-specific training pathways that combine online and face-to-face learning where appropriate. This approach will continue to build electoral capability and deepen expertise across our core workforce.

6.7 Training and instructions

The training and work instructions provided to election staff are tailored to the requirements of each role. The level of training delivered is determined by the skills and knowledge required, as well as the duration and complexity of the role.

We will base all training on detailed instructional products developed to support each election role.

All staff must complete compliance training, either delivered through our online learning portal or verbally at the start of the employee's first shift where online training is not available or there is insufficient time to complete it. This training covers core expectations of election staff relating to:

- maintaining impartiality throughout the election
- contributing to a safe, secure and inclusive workplace
- protecting electoral integrity
- susceptibility to foreign interference.

Election management teams and hub management teams

Election managers, assistant election managers, hub managers and functional leads will complete a blended learning program that combines online learning and face-to-face training, supported by detailed work instructions and just-in-time reference materials.

Online training will provide foundational knowledge of the election processes and operational procedures relevant to each role. This is complemented by role-specific face-to-face sessions, which will give participants hands-on experience practicing key tasks and completing decision-making exercises in a simulated election office or hub environment.

Written instructional materials for each role will include manuals, guides and task sheets tailored to specific responsibilities.

Election staff

We have developed role-specific training pathways for election staff. Staff in short-term or less complex roles will receive a briefing at the start of their first shift and be provided with task sheets and instructions as required. Staff in supervisory roles such as EVC managers, mobile voting team leaders and election day VC managers will complete a blended program of online and face-to-face training.

Online training support

To support election staff with any issues accessing or completing online training, we will establish an online training helpline. The service will provide phone and email support and commenced operation in August 2026.

7. Enrolment activities

What's new?

We have updated our practices regarding our legislated roll data release obligations to candidates and parties.

The Victorian register of electors contains the names and addresses of all Victorians enrolled to vote. Electoral rolls are then generated to provide a point-in-time list of eligible voters for a specific election.

The VEC and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) share responsibility for maintaining enrolment in Victoria under a joint roll management arrangement. Both the VEC and the AEC have programs in place to assist people to enrol and update their enrolment details. Additionally, enrolment applications processed by the AEC are provided to us regularly, to ensure the Victorian register of electors is up to date.

7.1 Pre-election roll products

Under the Electoral Act, we provide RPPs and members of Parliament with lists of electors on a scheduled basis. We will produce the final monthly list based on enrolments received up to the end of September 2026. We will distribute the final monthly roll products in early October 2026. This will support RPPs to check that endorsed candidates are correctly enrolled.

7.2 Enrolment eligibility checks

Nominations open from 9 am on Wednesday 4 November 2026, the day following the issue of the writs. We will check that nominating candidates are enrolled on the Victorian register of electors and that their nominators (where applicable) are enrolled in the electorate in which the candidate is nominating.

We will also conduct enrolment eligibility checks on provisional votes cast at the election, where individuals who cannot be found on the electoral roll can submit an enrolment application with their vote. Provisional votes are only admitted to the count if the enrolment application is determined to be valid.

7.3 Close of roll

The *Electoral Amendment Act* 2026 (Vic) updated the legislated requirements for the close of roll. The roll for the 2026 state election will now close at 8 pm on Tuesday 3 November 2026, the same day as the issue of the writs. All election offices will remain open until 8 pm on Tuesday 3 November to support enrolment update activities.

We work closely with the AEC to ensure that enrolment data received by the close of roll is processed within 24 hours. Once this processing is completed we will conduct quality assurance on the data received from the AEC. The electoral roll for the 2026 state election will then be generated from the register of electors as at the close of roll, and the Electoral Registrar will certify that the roll is ready for the generation of electoral roll products.

Voters enrolling or updating their details in the weeks following the close of roll will be contacted where possible and advised of any voting options relevant to their circumstances.

7.4 Electoral roll products

Roll product generation for the election will commence after the electoral roll is certified. This process supports the production of scannable and reference rolls, as well as other roll products required for the election.

Copies of the electoral roll will be generated and provided to RPPs and candidates upon request from the week commencing Monday 9 November. Candidates are only eligible to receive the electoral roll for the electorate in which they have nominated.

The use of electoral roll data is restricted by legislation. We will remind candidates and RPPs of their legislative obligations and the significant penalties that apply to the misuse of roll data. Telephone numbers and email details are not provided to any person as part of election roll products.

We will contact candidates directly to remind them of their obligations to dispose of roll data in accordance with legislative requirements following the election.

8. Candidates and parties

What's new?

We are updating our endorsed nominations application for registered political parties (RPPs).

We are providing additional campaigner support, through a dedicated campaigner handbook and a visitor registration initiative that reflects our ongoing commitment to OHS and positive voting experiences.

We are implementing a suite of new and updated resources for candidates, political parties and other political participants to support their understanding of critical timelines and responsibilities.

We will provide candidate bulletins and RPP circulars in an upgraded and more consistent format.

Positive engagement with candidates and RPPs is critical for the successful delivery of the 2026 state election.

We will support election participants by providing timely information, guidance and assistance throughout the election preparation period and election timeline. This includes information sessions for prospective candidates, clearer contact points, defined escalation pathways and service standards for the management of enquiries and issues.

8.1 Political party registration

Registration as an RPP provides access to a range of entitlements including eligibility for political funding, access to enrolment information and the ability to include the party's registered name and logo next to the names of their endorsed candidates on ballot papers.

Political parties applying for registration submitted their application using the suite of documents provided in the appendices of the *Registration of political parties handbook* available on our website. The final date to lodge an application for registration before the election was brought forward to 1 June 2026 under the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic).

We undertook extensive environmental scanning and engagement to educate interested groups about the revised deadline and the requirements associated with registering a political party. This included inviting interested parties to attend an information session.

We anticipated a surge in applications for registration by new political parties and several changes to existing information on the register of political parties. We received a total of 17 applications to register political parties and 4 applications to change the registered name or logo of registered political parties by the 1 June closing date. Processing of these applications is underway, and this means that the final number of political parties registered in time for the election will not be fixed until closer to the date the writs are issued.

To be successfully registered, a political party must demonstrate to our satisfaction, and in accordance with established processes, that it has 500 members who are:

- on the register of electors
- members of the political party in line with the party's rules
- not members of another party which is already registered or applying for registration.

We test this eligibility independently by directly contacting individuals on the member list submitted by the party as part of its application. We provide clear instructions to these individuals to ensure they understand their obligations in the registration process.

We must also assess whether the proposed party name or logo can be registered under the Electoral Act. Reasons for refusing a name include that the proposed name is obscene or substantially the same as another party that has been registered in the past 10 years.

To maintain transparency, we will continue to communicate milestones and provide updates during the registration process through:

- publishing notices in the *Victoria Government Gazette*
- providing the public with an opportunity to make submissions on why a party should not be registered

- publishing media releases and dedicated political party registration information on our website
- corresponding directly with applicants throughout the process.

In addition to existing email channels, we maintain a phone line to assist applicants and members of the public with registration-related enquiries.

Decisions to grant or refuse applications for registration are reviewable under the Electoral Act. Where an application for review is lodged, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) will independently consider the matter and determine the outcome. We will participate in the review process and provide VCAT with any information required to assist its consideration of the Electoral Commissioner's decision. VCAT cannot review a decision or make an order during the period between the issue and return of the writs for an election.

We will communicate with political parties that are registered to ensure that they understand their ongoing obligations and to provide information on election processes including nominating candidates and registering how-to-vote cards.

8.2 Candidate engagement and support

We have produced a suite of online information videos for candidates. The videos explain the nomination process and outline the procedures and rules relevant to candidates during an election.

We will also publish updated candidate and scrutineer handbooks, as well as a new campaigner handbook. These resources will provide important information for candidates and RPPs, and their campaigners and scrutineers.

Candidate information and election resources, including all forms required to participate in the election, will be available on our website and from election managers by request.

We will continue to provide regular updates to candidates and RPPs during key points in the election timeline, including information about voting centres and election offices. We will make data relating to postal voting, including general postal voters, available upon request from the week commencing Monday 9 November.

Election information sessions

We are regularly conducting online election information sessions in the lead up to the election. These information sessions commenced in March 2026 and cover key timelines and procedures relevant to candidates, RPPs, and their supporters. Content is repeated across multiple sessions, giving participants flexibility to attend and the opportunity to ask questions.

Candidate enquiries and support

We will operate a candidate help desk from our head office in the lead-up to the election so that prospective candidates can direct enquiries and receive assistance with their nominations before election offices open. The help desk will support candidates using Candidate Helper, our online tool that assists independent candidates to prepare nomination forms, and the endorsed nominations tool used by RPPs to nominate their endorsed candidates.

Once election offices open on Tuesday 3 November, election managers will become the primary point of contact for candidate enquiries within their district.

Candidate handbooks will be available online and from election offices. We strongly encourage prospective candidates to use Candidate Helper and the information available on our website to prepare for the nomination process and understand election requirements.

8.3 Nominations

Nominations will open on Wednesday 4 November and close at 12 noon on Monday 9 November 2026 for all candidates. These revised nomination deadlines reflect amendments to the Electoral Act, which aligned nomination timeframes for endorsed and independent candidates and provided additional time for ballot paper production before the commencement of early voting.

Nominations for candidates endorsed by RPPs must be lodged at our 530 Collins Street head office and must be accompanied by a nomination deposit of $350 per candidate. We will provide a computer application, known as the endorsed nominations tool, for RPPs to prepare pre-formatted nomination forms. RPPs can distribute the forms to endorsed candidates for signature before lodging the completed hard copy forms at our 530 Collins Street head office.

Election managers will receive and process nominations from independent candidates, including the $350 nomination deposit. Independent candidates nominating for a Legislative Council region election may lodge their nomination with the election manager for any district within that region. Independent candidates will be able to prepare their nomination form online using Candidate Helper, available through our website. Candidates must lodge a signed hard-copy nomination form and the required nomination deposit in person with the election manager.

Information entered through Candidate Helper and the endorsed nominations tool will be uploaded to the Election Management System and verified against the signed hard-copy nomination forms. We strongly encourage independent candidates to use Candidate Helper as it guides users through each part of the nomination process. This streamlines the nomination appointment process, as election managers can retrieve data via a unique identifier on the nomination form rather than entering the nomination form data manually.

We strongly encourage prospective candidates to confirm their eligibility to nominate before the close of the roll. As part of the nomination process, we will check each candidate's enrolment against the certified electoral roll.

Each day during the nomination period, election managers will publish a list of nominations received for their electorate in a prominent position in the election office. Details of candidates that have completed the full nomination and quality assurance process, including their public contact details, will be published on our website twice daily.

Ballot draws

Each district election manager will conduct a ballot draw to determine the order of candidates' names on the Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers as soon as practicable after the close of nominations on Monday 9 November 2026. Ballot draws are expected to commence from 4 pm on Monday 9 November.

The timing of ballot draws reflects amendments introduced by the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) which aligned the close of nominations for endorsed and independent candidates and provided additional time for ballot paper production before the commencement of early voting.

Within each region, one district election manager will be responsible for conducting the ballot draw for the Legislative Council region election. See **Appendix 8** for the list of districts responsible for these ballot draws.

We will conduct ballot draws electronically, with the order of names on each ballot paper determined by a single random draw. For each Legislative Council region election, 2 separate ballot draws will be conducted:

1. to determine the order of groups on the ballot paper
2. to determine the order of any ungrouped candidates.

Our electronic ballot draw application has been independently audited to ensure the results are random. We have published the software component that generates the random ballot order and the audit report for the ballot draw software on our website. The use of an electronic draw provides significant efficiencies by reducing the risk and time associated with manual data entry of ballot draw results. This minimises delays between conducting the draws and dispatching ballot paper files to the printer. The electronic process also enables us to publish the final list of candidates in ballot paper order on our website after the draw is completed.

8.4 Group registration

In each Legislative Council region election, the following groups may submit a request that their names be grouped together on the ballot paper with a box above the line:

- 2 or more independent candidates
- an RPP who has endorsed 2 or more candidates in that region election, or
- 2 or more RPPs who have endorsed candidates in that region election and wish to form a composite group.

Candidates are required to submit all applications for group registration to our 530 Collins Street head office, not to a local election manager. Staff will be available at our 530 Collins Street head office to accept and process these applications.

Group registration will close at 12 noon on Monday 9 November, the same time as the close of nominations.

8.5 How-to-vote cards

For a how-to-vote card (HTVC) to be distributed within 400 metres of a voting centre on election day, or to be carried by mobile voting teams, it must be registered by the VEC.

RPPs must lodge their HTVC applications directly with our 530 Collins Street head office. Independent candidates and other applicants must lodge their HTVC applications with the relevant election managers, who will forward them to our head office for registration.

The *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) changed the timeframe for HTVC registration. The submission period for HTVC registration will open on Tuesday 10 November and close at 12 noon on Friday 20 November 2026. Applicants will be required to submit an electronic copy of each card, as well as 2 hard copies. Providing electronic copies will enable us to publish all registered cards on our website promptly.

Detailed information on HTVC registration requirements will be included in the candidate handbooks. The registration requirements have been updated to reflect decisions by VCAT during the 2022 state election.

8.6 Campaigner support

We will increase the support we provide for campaigners for this election. This will include:

- providing more information on our website about campaigning at voting centres
- publishing a campaigner handbook
- introducing a voluntary visitor registration process at voting centres.

Any person campaigning outside a voting centre, including EVCs and election day VCs, will be asked to register their emergency contact details through the visitor registration process. This forms part of our approach to managing health and safety risks and supporting the wellbeing of voters, campaigners and our staff safe at VEC-managed venues. It also helps us meet our occupational health and safety obligations.

The new campaigner handbook will complement our existing suite of handbooks, and will provide practical guidance for campaigners on:

- campaigning outside voting centres
- expected standards of behaviour
- identifying and reporting concerns or issues.

In developing the handbook, we facilitated a two-day workshop with representatives from RPPs to explore how campaigner behaviour outside voting centres can better align with community expectations. Participants developed and agreed on a set of recommendations to guide campaigner conduct, which will be incorporated into a dedicated chapter of the handbook.

The campaigner handbook will also direct readers to the scrutineer handbook for specific information to campaigners who will also perform scrutineer duties at the close of voting on election day.

8.7 Political funding

We administer 3 funding streams in accordance with the Electoral Act:

- administrative expenditure funding
- policy development funding
- public funding.

Administrative expenditure funding may be claimed by independent elected members and RPPs that have representation in Parliament. For RPPs, administrative expenditure funding is a tiered system, paid based on the number of members a party has (with funding capped at up to 45 members of Parliament). Administrative expenditure funding is re-calculated based on the scheduled general election period, and adjustments to payments will be made to eligible recipients based on election results. Administrative expenditure funding can be used to cover the costs of operating an office but cannot be used for political expenditure or electoral expenditure.

Policy development funding is available to RPPs that are not eligible for administrative expenditure funding and did not receive public funding within the previous calendar year. Policy development funding is calculated based on the number of first preference votes an eligible RPP received at the previous general election, and an RPP may claim the greater of $1.28 per first preference vote or $32,030. Policy development funding is intended to be used by recipients to develop their campaign policies for future elections.

Public funding may be claimed by independent candidates and eligible RPPs to reimburse political expenditure and electoral expenditure they incur in relation to an election.

To be eligible for public funding, independent candidates and RPPs with endorsed candidates must achieve at least 4% of first preference votes in the elections they contest or be elected. Eligible candidates and RPPs must apply for public funding by lodging a statement of expenditure and audit certificate detailing claimable costs for the election within 20 weeks of election day.

After we declare the election results, we will calculate the maximum entitlement amount of public funding based on the number of first preference votes received by eligible independent candidates and RPPs with endorsed candidates. We will reconcile this amount against the audited statement of expenditure to determine the actual public funding to be paid. If the audited statement of expenditure identifies less claimable expenditure than the maximum entitlement, we will only pay the amount specified in the statement of expenditure. The timing of payments will depend on when we receive the audited statement.

We adjust public funding amounts for inflation on 1 July each year. For the 2026 state election, the maximum funding entitlement is:

- $7.70 for each first preference vote received by an eligible Legislative Assembly district election candidate
- $3.84 for each first preference vote received by an eligible Legislative Council region election candidate.

We will communicate funding entitlements, obligations and payment amounts to eligible candidates and RPPs after the election.

RPPs and independent candidates who receive public funding as a result of the 2026 state election, and intend to nominate for the 2030 state election, are eligible to claim advance public funding.

8.8 Political donations

Donation disclosure

The Electoral Act requires donors and recipients to disclose political donations that meet or exceed the disclosure threshold ($1,290 for the 2026–27 financial year). This includes where multiple donations from the same donor are made that total $1,290 or more.

Donors and recipients must lodge their disclosures via the VEC Disclosures portal within 21 days of receiving or making the donation. Recipients also have a legal obligation to notify donors of their requirement to disclose donations.

Failure to properly disclose a political donation is an offence under the Electoral Act.

Prohibited donations

Anonymous political donations of $1,290 or more are prohibited.

Political donations may only be made by Australian citizens, Australian residents, or companies with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Foreign donations are prohibited.

There is a general cap for political donations of $5,190. A single donor cannot donate more than the general cap to a single recipient between 15 April and 28 November 2026. This includes when a donor makes multiple donations to the same recipient that add up to more than the general cap. An RPP, its endorsed candidates and elected members are the same recipient for the purposes of the general cap.

Any political donations that exceed the general cap, including aggregated donations, are prohibited. While contributions of $100 or less do not count towards the general cap, donors and recipients cannot use small contributions to avoid donation disclosure and reporting obligations.

New entrants

Registered political parties and independent candidates may apply to register as a new entrant if they are eligible. Registered new entrants may receive donations from a single donor of up to twice the general cap amount. For the 2026 state election, this amount is $10,380.

A registered political party is eligible to register as a new entrant if it has:

- never received public funding for any previous state election, including by-elections
- not been eligible to receive administrative expenditure funding during the calendar year in which it applies
- not been eligible to receive policy development funding during the calendar year in which it applies.

An independent candidate is eligible to register as a new entrant if they have not received public funding for any previous state elections, including by-elections.

Financial year annual returns

An annual return is a summary of money received and costs incurred in a financial year.

RPPs and associated entities must submit an annual return each year and the annual return must be accompanied by an audit certificate. Independent candidates, groups of independent Legislative Council region election candidates, independent elected members of Parliament, and third-party campaigners may be required to submit annual returns if they meet certain criteria. Annual returns for the 2025–26 financial year are due on 20 October 2026.

Compliance and enforcement

Our Electoral Compliance and Regulatory Services teams use a range of intelligence-gathering and investigation techniques to monitor and enforce compliance in line with Victoria's donation disclosure and reporting laws. This includes analysing and reconciling annual returns provided by reporting entities, assessing complaints and tip-offs, and ongoing monitoring of donation activity within the VEC Disclosures portal.
We work closely with a range of integrity and law enforcement agencies and actively partner with other agencies to exchange intelligence and share information.

9. Voting period

What's new?

The Legislative Assembly district election ballot paper and Legislative Council region election ballot paper will be printed as 2 separate ballot papers.

Ballot materials, including postal vote declaration envelopes and the forms and envelopes used for provisional, absent and early postal voting have been redesigned and now incorporate enhanced security features.

EVCs will open from Wednesday 18 November 2026 and be available every day before election day (except the Sunday before election day), with consistent opening hours from 9 am to 6 pm each day.

We will return to providing in-person voting services at interstate and overseas locations.

We will expand the use of electronic roll mark-off on election day across Victoria, which will contribute to reaching our target of marking approximately 70% of voters off the electoral roll electronically.

Low sensory voting will be provided at one site in each district across Victoria from 10 am to 4 pm on Tuesday 17 November 2026.

9.1 Ballot material

The preparation and printing of ballot material for a state election is a large and complex task. Our staff will supervise all stages of the preparation and printing of ballot material and roll products. Significant effort will be invested in recruiting and training quality assurance staff to oversee the process to ensure integrity, compliance and accuracy.

We will generate artwork for ballot papers using our automation tool. The tool applies pre-defined artwork templates and populates them with the relevant candidate information drawn directly from our Election Management System database.

Once an extensive quality assure process has been completed, print-ready artwork files will be securely transmitted to our ballot material print providers for production.

Ballot paper types

A range of ballot paper formats and sets are provided to support the specific needs of different voting methods.

For the 2026 state election, Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers and Legislative Council region election ballot papers will be printed as 2 separate ballot papers. Issuing officers will provide both ballot papers to voters when issuing a vote.

In accordance with the Electoral Act, ballot papers will include RPP logos where registered. Logos will appear next to the names of endorsed candidates on Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers and above the line for groups of endorsed candidates on Legislative Council region election ballot papers. Each district and region election ballot paper pair will be colour coded to assist with sorting and processing.

Following their introduction for the 2024 local government elections, postal ballot pack items will now incorporate generic barcodes that identify the product type and district election for quality assurance purposes during the mail insertion process, helping to ensure that each ballot pack is complete and accurate.

To prepare postal ballot packs for general postal voters and voters who have applied for a postal vote, our mail house will print the voters' mailing and entitlement addresses and barcodes directly onto ballot paper declaration envelopes and assemble ballot packs in readiness for lodgement.

Braille ballot papers

We work closely with Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia to identify and contact voters who use their services and require election information in accessible formats. Election information will be available in email, audio, DAISY, and braille formats. We cannot provide large-print ballot material for the election due to production timeline constraints.

In the lead up to the election, voters who are blind or have low vision can register to receive braille ballot material. Vision Australia and Blind Citizens Australia will conduct an initial mail-out to assist eligible Victorian voters (those who are blind or have low vision) to access election information and services.

Ballot material tracking and security

The physical security and integrity of ballot materials are critical aspects of our election design. We strictly control election materials at all stages. Interfering with ballot material is a serious offence under the Electoral Act.

Our guide to managing ballot papers policy has been updated to strengthen ballot paper tracking, security and accountability measures. These changes will further improve transparency in the management of ballot materials throughout the election.

We will monitor a range of indicators to provide visibility and enable timely responses to operational issues, including:

- the anticipated versus actual consumption rate of printed ballot papers
- the movement and reconciliation activities associated with the distribution of ballot papers
- the counting and return of ballot papers relevant to each activity.

Third-party printing suppliers will also report against agreed production and quality measures throughout the election period, enabling potential operational issues to be identified and addressed promptly.

9.2 Voting channels

Preparing our voting services to meet changing voter behaviour has been a major focus ahead of the 2026 state election. Optimising the availability and accessibility of voting options continues to be central to our service delivery approach.

Early voting

Voters can vote before election day at any EVC across the state. With the continued rise in popularity of early voting, we will ensure EVCs are well located across the state and accessible to the public. We have increased the number of EVCs for the 2026 state election compared with 2022 by approximately 30% to around 200 EVCs.

We aim to establish at least one EVC in every district for the election, with most districts having 2 or more EVCs. Up to 100 EVCs will operate as joint voting centres, allowing eligible voters from neighbouring districts to cast ordinary votes at the same location. This will improve convenience for voters and reduce the operational complexity associated with declaration voting and vote exchange processes.

All EVCs will also operate as voting centres on election day to provide a consistent voter experience through the election period.

Early voting will commence from Wednesday 18 November 2026 and be available daily until Friday 27 November, excluding Sunday 22 November. Voting hours will be 9 am to 6 pm to provide consistent voting options.

All EVCs will be equipped with electronic roll mark-off facilities, enabling election officials to access the electoral roll and record voter attendance electronically when issuing ballot papers.

Election day voting

Election day voting centres (VCs) will operate between 8 am and 6 pm on Saturday 28 November 2026.

Staff at many election day VCs will use electronic roll mark-off facilities to access the electoral roll. This represents a significant expansion of electronic roll mark-off compared with previous elections, where it was limited to early and specialist voting services. In smaller VCs, staff will continue to use scannable roll products where the allocation of electronic devices is not operationally feasible.

Mobile voting

We will appoint selected hospitals, aged care facilities, homelessness support locations, Aboriginal community locations, and other specialist institutions including prisons as mobile voting centres for the election.

Our mobile voting teams will visit these pre-determined locations between Tuesday 17 November to Friday 27 November 2026 to enable voters who cannot attend an EVC or election day VC to cast their vote.

We have contacted eligible venues and confirmed their desire for the VEC to provide in-person mobile voting. Given many mobile voting venues have vulnerable populations, we encourage electors at these venues to apply for a postal vote or to use telephone-assisted voting if eligible (for electors who are blind, have low vision, or have a motor impairment) to reduce health and safety risks.

Election managers will contact confirmed facilities in their district during late October 2026 to establish a visitation schedule. A centralised team may also contact other eligible facilities including Corrections Victoria to establish the visitation schedule for specialised venues. We will advise RPPs and candidates of mobile voting itineraries for each district.

Low sensory voting

We have been progressively trialling low sensory voting at state by-elections since the last state election to provide a more inclusive environment for neurodivergent voters and voters responsible for caring for people that are neurodivergent or have sensory needs. This initiative aligns with our strategic outcome of improving the voter experience and responds to recommendations we made in our Report to Parliament on the 2022 state election.

For the 2026 state election, one low sensory voting site will be established in every district. These sites will operate on Tuesday 17 November 2026 from 10 am to 4 pm and will be staffed by mobile voting teams. We have developed guidelines and operating requirements for venues to cater to this community as best as possible, selecting venues where possible with a strong focus on accessibility and maintaining a low-stimulus environment.

Additional voting centre services

We will provide the following services at each EVC and election day VC and, where practicable, also at mobile voting venues.

Queue management

We will manage queues inside and outside voting venues to ensure voters can move quickly through the process and that voters who require assistance receive appropriate support.

At busy venues, we will assign staff as queue controllers with the primary responsibility of managing queues during peak periods.

Queue controllers will also act as a point of contact for questions and assistance and will direct voters to the correct district issuing point or to the declaration issuing point if they are voting outside their district.

Queue controllers will ensure that any voter in the queue at the close of voting is able to cast their vote, and that no further voters join the queue after 6 pm.

Multi-language instructions

Voting instructions in English will be displayed in voting compartments at voting centres. A QR code will be included for voters to access instructions on our website in 29 languages. A list of the languages included in this initiative is available in **Appendix 7**.

Accessibility aids and tools

Numerous tools and aids will be provided to assist voters. These include:

- large magnifying sheets at each voting centre
- maxi pencils to allow some voters (e.g. those with arthritis) to more easily grip the pencil
- assisted hearing devices at EVCs
- wheelchair or desktop voting compartments.

These measures form part of our broader commitment to providing an accessible voting experience and enabling all voters to cast their vote independently wherever possible.

On-demand Auslan services

We have partnered with Convo to provide on-demand Auslan interpreting services. QR codes displayed at all voting centres will allow voters to access video interpreting support on their own mobile devices, helping to improve accessibility for Deaf and hard of hearing voters.

Postal voting

Voters may apply for a postal vote after the issue of the writs from 9 am Wednesday 4 November until 6 pm on Wednesday 25 November 2026. We encourage voters to apply online. Online applicants are not required to sign their application or have it witnessed, but must successfully complete an identity verification process.

Voters can also apply using physical application forms. These will be available from Australia Post offices, our 530 Collins Street head office, and election offices from Wednesday 4 November 2026. We will also distribute postal vote application forms to mobile voting venues that have requested these. We can also mail postal vote applications to voters on request through our public enquiry service.

Voters registered as general postal voters for state elections will automatically have their ballot material posted to them as soon as it becomes available after the close of nominations.

For voters unable to access postal voting facilities (for example, those travelling interstate or overseas or in remote locations without a fixed postal address) we will continue to provide an email ballot material solution. Eligible voters may apply online for a postal vote and, after indicating they cannot reliably receive mail, select the email option. We will send ballot material to their nominated email address using a secure email dispatch service. Completed ballot papers must be printed and returned by post, as we are unable to accept electronically returned ballot papers.

Central processing centre

We will establish a central processing centre at our centralised activity site. It will be responsible for processing postal vote applications, coordinating the dispatch of postal ballot material to voters, and processing returned postal votes.

It is an offence for RPPs, or any other person, to distribute postal vote applications to voters. Only the VEC is authorised to provide postal vote applications, including at Australia Post outlets.

We can accept postal votes received in the mail post-marked on or before 6 pm on Friday 4 December 2026.

Interstate, overseas and Antarctic voting

We will establish early voting facilities at numerous interstate and overseas locations. We work with interstate electoral commissions and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to deliver in-person early voting and/or postal vote drop-off facilities. At the time of publication, this profile covers 30 cities in 21 countries, alongside 7 interstate locations, subject to confirmation of venue availability and DFAT arrangements.

We will publish the details of all finalised appointed locations for the election on the election venue locator via our website from Wednesday 4 November 2026. This will include specific opening hours which may be unique to each location due to local availability.

We have engaged with the Australian Antarctic Program to ensure that Victorian electors employed in, or travelling to or from, the Australian Antarctic Territory during the election are able to vote.

Telephone-assisted voting

We will provide telephone-assisted voting (TAV) services to electors who are unable to vote without assistance because they are blind, have low vision, or have a motor impairment.

Should a declared emergency occur during the voting period, we will be able to expand eligibility to include electors subject to such emergency by a determination from the Electoral Commissioner.

TAV uses two separate call centres. The first call centre, located at our head office, confirms a voter's eligibility and provides a unique identifier to protect the secrecy of their vote. The voter then contacts our second call centre, located at our CAS, where an operator records the voter's instructions on a physical ballot paper. As electors utilise a code received during registration, they will not disclose their identity, which preserves the secrecy of each elector's vote. To provide further integrity to the service, an observer is present during the second call to verify that the vote is recorded in accordance with the voter's instructions.

The service will operate from 9 am to 6 pm on Wednesday 18 November to Friday 27 November 2026, with the exception of Sunday 22 November when all early voting is closed. The service will also operate from 8 am until 6 pm on election day. Voters who are still in the phone queue at 6 pm on election day will be allowed to complete their vote, as if they were physically at a voting centre.

10. Counting and results

What's new?

We will conduct a 2-candidate-preferred (2CP) count following the recheck of each Legislative Assembly parcel of votes, in addition to 2CP counts conducted on election weekend after the completion of primary counts.

We will complete full preference distributions for all Legislative Assembly district elections during the election timeline.

We are updating our results publication systems, including reporting results against early voting centres and publishing an amalgamated mobile voting result for each district.

All Legislative Council region election ballot papers will be transported to our centralised activity site (CAS) for counting, where they will be data entered twice following a manual primary count.

This section provides an overview of the counting period for the election. High-level count timelines for Legislative Assembly district elections and Legislative Council region elections are available in **Appendix 9** and **Appendix 10**.

10.1 Counting

Counting methods

In state elections, we use different methods to determine results in Legislative Assembly district elections and Legislative Council region elections.

Preferential counting (Legislative Assembly district elections)

We use preferential counting in each district election, where one member is elected to the Legislative Assembly. To be elected, a candidate must receive more than 50% of all formal votes, known as an absolute majority.

In all district elections, ballot papers will undergo the following manual counts:

- primary first preference count
- primary 2CP count (election weekend counts only)
- recheck first preference count
- recheck 2CP count (all counts)
- full preference distribution.

All Legislative Assembly district election counts will be conducted manually.

2-candidate-preferred (2CP) counting (Legislative Assembly district elections)

The 2CP count is an indicative count in which ballot papers are sorted to the 2 candidates considered most likely to have the highest number of votes after the full preference distribution.

The purpose of the 2CP count is to provide indicative preference data to election analysts, candidates, RPPs and the media. The 2CP results, along with candidate first preference totals and historical trends, allow them to predict the likely outcome in each district, even though official results will not be known for several weeks. This provides an early indication of who is likely to form government in the Legislative Assembly and is how election analysts can 'call' the election once enough district outcomes can be predicted.

We will determine the 2CP pairing for each district before election day. 2CP predictions have become more challenging as voter support patterns shifts in Victoria. Our 2CP predictions are made using the best available data informed by electoral knowledge, political science and statistical modelling techniques. The 2CP selections remain confidential until voting closes at 6 pm on election night.

The 2CP count is an indicative count only and has no bearing on the actual outcome of the election. The 2CP results only allow outcomes to be predicted or, alternatively, help identify districts where the result is in doubt until further results become available. Importantly, the 2CP result does not replace the formal full preference distribution that will provide the final margin between the two candidates with the highest number of votes. In some complex or very close counts, the result may not be known until the full preference distribution has been completed.

Proportional representation counts (Legislative Council region elections)

We use proportional representation counting in each region election, where 5 members are elected to the Legislative Council. To be elected, a candidate must receive a proportion of formal votes known as a quota.

We calculate the quota by dividing the total number of formal ballot papers by one more than the number of vacancies to be filled at the election and then adding one to the result.

$$\left(\frac{\text{Number of formal votes}}{\text{Number of vacancies} + 1}\right) + 1 = \text{Quota}$$

Ballot papers in region elections will undergo the following counts:

- primary first preference count (manual count)
- recheck via data entry: 2 rounds of data entry for both above-the-line (ATL) and below-the-line (BTL) votes.

We will calculate the result in each region election after both rounds of ATL and BTL data entry are completed, and after BTL preferences have been loaded according to ATL preferences for each group.

All Legislative Council region election counting activities will be conducted centrally at the CAS, except for the region primary counts undertaken in most election day VCs.

Early vote processing and postal extraction

The Electoral Act allows us to sort early votes and extract postal votes on election day between 8 am and 6 pm. These activities must occur in restricted areas under strict security and access controls.

We will establish restricted areas at each hub for the processing of early votes. During the voting period and after the close of voting, ballot boxes from EVCs will be progressively transferred to their local hub. Early vote processing will commence from 8 am on election day.

At the CAS, we will establish a restricted area for the extraction of postal votes from all 88 districts, starting from 8 am on election day. Before postal votes can be extracted, they must undergo preliminary scrutiny to determine whether they can be admitted or must be rejected. Preliminary scrutiny of postal votes will occur daily at the CAS from Tuesday 17 November 2026. This date has been brought earlier following changes to the Electoral Regulations.

Postal votes that are received and accepted through preliminary scrutiny by close of business on Thursday 26 November 2026 will be admitted to early extraction.

Scrutineers and staff will not be permitted to bring recording devices into restricted areas at any election venue. Each venue will provide check-in facilities to store prohibited devices. We will provide information about these processes to candidates and registered political parties before these activities begin.

Counting on election day

After the close of voting at 6 pm on election day, counting will commence in election day VCs, hubs and at the CAS.

Election day voting centres

Ordinary votes issued in election day VCs will be counted in those VCs. Counting will commence as soon as voting has completed (including all voters who were in the queue at 6 pm), issuing points have been reconciled, and count areas have been set up. As a result, counting will commence as soon as possible after 6 pm.

Most VCs will conduct 3 counts in the following order:

1. First preference (primary) count – district
2. 2-candidate-preferred (2CP) count – district
3. First preference (primary) count – region.

The first preference count for Legislative Assembly district elections involves sorting ballot papers by first preference for each candidate, or as informal, and then tallying the number of votes per candidate and the total number of informal votes.

To conduct a 2CP count, election officials sort all formal ballot papers from the candidates not selected to sorting cards for the 2 selected candidates according to who has the higher preference on the ballot paper. The higher preference is indicated by the lowest number against the selected candidates (the number closest to 1).

For the first preference (primary) count for Legislative Council region elections, election day VC staff will record first preference votes for the region by group (above-the-line and below-the-line) or by ungrouped candidate (below-the-line only). The total number of informal ballot papers will also be tallied. This primary count will provide early indicative results on election night in VCs where time allows. Election day VC staff will reconcile Legislative Council region election ballot papers after the primary count and transfer them to hubs to dispatch to the CAS for data entry.

In VCs where count planning shows that the primary count of Legislative Council region votes cannot be completed by 11 pm, election day VC staff will reconcile their region election votes and transfer them to hubs without conducting the primary count. The ballot papers will then be transferred to the CAS where the first preference (primary) counts will be conducted at the CAS in the week after election day before these parcels are data entered. We will provide information about updated count schedules to candidates and registered political parties as soon as practicable.

Counting at the CAS

Counting of Legislative Assembly district postal votes that were extracted in the restricted area from 8 am on election day will commence at 6 pm on election night at the CAS. This will include both the primary first preference count and the 2CP count.

Counting at hubs

Primary first preference and 2CP counting of Legislative Assembly own-district early votes will commence in hubs after 6 pm on election night. This will include early votes taken in EVCs, mobile voting centres and joint EVCs. The introduction of joint EVCs will increase the number of district votes to be counted within their home district, improving the efficiency of the count. Over 200,000 Legislative Assembly district election votes are expected to be counted sooner as a result of this change. Where high volumes of early votes mean that all EVC counting cannot reasonably be completed on election night, affected districts will be identified during count planning and some EVC counts will be scheduled for Sunday 29 November 2026.

Vote exchange

Early votes taken for other districts in EVCs and mobile voting centres, as well as any declaration votes such as provisional or marked-as-voted votes, will be processed through the early vote exchange, which will operate from Saturday 28 November to Tuesday 1 December 2026.

The early vote exchange occurs in 2 stages. During election weekend, hubs will sort, reconcile and package votes for transfer. On Monday 30 November 2026, these votes will be transferred to CAS where they will be receipted and processed on Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December 2026. Additional transfers may occur later in the week if required.

Legislative Assembly other-district early votes from the early vote exchange will be counted at the CAS on Wednesday 2 December 2026. Votes received from additional transfers are expected to be counted on Monday 7 December. See '**Further counting**' in the **Counting after election day (Legislative Assembly district elections)** section of this chapter for more information. Legislative Council votes from the early exchange will be counted at CAS on Tuesday 8 December and Wednesday 9 December.

An exception from this process applies to early votes taken for districts serviced by the same hub as the dispatching district that were marked off in real time using our electronic roll mark-off application. These votes will be exchanged locally on Sunday 29 November 2026.

Legislative Assembly district votes exchanged locally will be counted in hubs from Monday 30 November. See '**Further counting**' in the **Counting after election day (Legislative Assembly district elections)** section of this chapter for more information. Legislative Council region votes that are locally exchanged will be reconciled in hubs on Sunday 29 November and transferred to the CAS on Monday 30 November as part of the early vote exchange.

Absent votes taken in VCs on election day, as well as any declaration votes such as provisional or marked-as-voted votes, will be processed through the absent vote exchange, which will operate from Monday 30 November to Wednesday 2 December 2026.

Like the early vote exchange, the absent vote exchange also occurs in 2 stages. Votes will be sorted, reconciled and packaged in the hub on Monday 30 November for transfer. On Tuesday 1 December, these votes will be transferred to the CAS where they will be receipted and processed on Tuesday 1 December and Wednesday 2 December 2026. Additional transfers may occur over the remaining week if required.

Legislative Assembly district absent votes received through the absent vote exchange will be counted at CAS on Thursday 3 December 2026. Votes received from further transfers are expected to be counted on Monday 7 December. See '**Further counting**' in the **Counting after election day (Legislative Assembly district elections)** section for more information. Legislative Council votes from the absent vote exchange will be counted at CAS on Wednesday 9 December.

Provisional vote checking

Provisional votes will undergo enrolment eligibility checks during the week following election day. Before a provisional vote can be admitted to extraction and counting, we must confirm that the voter was entitled to enrol.

Applications from provisional votes taken in mobile venues, EVCs and election day VCs will be transferred to the CAS via the vote exchange. Applications submitted at interstate or overseas venues will also be returned to the CAS for assessment. Provisional votes for Legislative Assembly district elections we identify as close seats under our close seat management protocol will be prioritised.

We will conduct a thorough enrolment entitlement check for each provisional vote. This will include:

- searching the enrolment register to confirm the voter has not previously been removed on the grounds of ineligibility
- confirming citizenship or British subject status, where applicable
- verifying that the address for which enrolment is claimed is valid for enrolment purposes.

As a result of these checks, each vote will either be admitted to preliminary scrutiny or excluded, and the enrolment register will be updated from provisional votes where required.

Counting after election day (Legislative Assembly district elections)

District election rechecks of votes counted on election weekend

All Legislative Assembly district election votes that undergo primary and 2CP counts on election weekend will be rechecked after election day. For the 2026 state election, we will complete another 2CP count of these votes following the recheck, ensuring that final 2CP figures reflect the recheck count instead of the primary count.

Ordinary and own-district early votes primary counted on election weekend will undergo a recheck count and recheck 2CP absent vote exchange in hubs from Monday 30 November.

Postal votes primary counted at CAS on election weekend will undergo a recheck and recheck 2CP at CAS on Monday 30 November.

Preliminary scrutiny of declaration votes

Postal votes received on Friday 27 November will undergo preliminary scrutiny on election day, with admitted votes extracted and counted on Sunday 29 November.

Preliminary scrutiny activities will continue daily at the CAS from Monday 30 November 2026 with admitted votes prepared for extraction and counting.

Preliminary scrutiny will be conducted for:

- all postal votes received from election day until the legislated cut-off for us to receive postal votes (6 pm on Friday 4 December 2026)
- any early, absent or marked-as-voted declaration votes sent to CAS in the vote exchange
- any early or marked-as-voted declaration votes returned to CAS from interstate and overseas venues
- all eligible provisional votes from EVCs, mobile voting, election day VCs, interstate and overseas venues.

Further counting

Legislative Assembly district election votes that were not counted on election weekend will be counted to first preference over an 8-day period commencing on Monday 30 November 2026. Counts will be conducted in the following order:

- primary first preference count
- recheck first preference count
- recheck 2CP count.

This includes counts for:

- telephone-assisted voting (TAV) votes, counted at the CAS on Monday 30 November
- admitted postal votes received prior to the legislated deadline for receiving postal votes (6 pm on Friday 4 December 2026), counted daily at the CAS from Tuesday 1 December
- other-district early and absent votes processed through the vote exchange, including admitted early and absent declaration votes, counted at the CAS on Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 December and, if required, Monday 7 December. The exception is other-district early votes exchanged locally within hubs, which will be counted in their local hub from Monday 30 November
- admitted early votes received from interstate and overseas venues, counted at the CAS on Monday 7 December
- admitted provisional and marked-as-voted votes from EVCs, mobile voting, election day VCs and interstate and overseas venues, counted at the CAS on Monday 7 December.

Corrected district 2-candidate-preferred counts

We will monitor the results of the 2CP counts throughout election weekend. Where the selected 2CP candidates in a district election appear incorrect, we may decide to correct the 2CP pairing at the commencement of the recheck process if a more accurate selection can be determined at that point in time. If the contest is between 3 candidates, this may involve conducting a 3-candidate-preferred count in certain circumstances.

The decision to make a correction to 2CP selections is at the discretion of the VEC, and any correction remains a prediction that may not reflect the official result once known, especially as it is sometimes not possible to identify who will be the final 2 candidates until the preference distribution is completed. Even when the 2 selected candidates are correct, minor variations may still be observed between the 2CP results, which are determined for each parcel of votes counted to first preference, and the preference distribution results, which is conducted following the amalgamation of all vote parcels. We will not adjust any apparently incorrect 2CP counts on election weekend.

District election close seats

We will monitor results on election night and throughout the counting period to identify any district elections that may be considered close. We consider a count to be a close seat where no successful candidate can be clearly identified from first preference or 2CP counts, or where the final margin is particularly small. Counting activities for close seats will be actively managed and supported by head office teams. We always prioritise accuracy and integrity over speed. Candidates and registered political parties will be advised of any changes to counting schedules or count plans affecting close contests.

District election preference distributions

Prior to the counting period commencing, the Electoral Commissioner will issue a direction that a full preference distribution must be conducted for every district election.

A preference distribution involves excluding the candidate with the fewest votes and transferring each of their ballot papers to the remaining candidates in the order of the voters' next highest preferences. The process continues until only 2 candidates remain. This will provide the final margin between the 2 remaining candidates after the distribution has occurred.

Where a candidate has already received an absolute majority of first preference votes, the full preference distribution will be conducted for statistical purposes only. If there is no winner based on first preference votes, the full preference distribution will be completed to determine the result.

Preference distributions will commence once the election manager amalgamates all rechecked first preference votes for each candidate and all informal votes for the district. Amalgamations will occur on Tuesday 8 December and Wednesday 9 December, following the transfer of all district votes counted at CAS to each hub. Preference distributions will commence on Thursday 10 December and are expected to be completed on Friday 11 December.

We will publish the results of preference distributions as they are completed.

Counting after election day (Legislative Council region elections)

Region election counts

All Legislative Council region election votes cast in election day VCs, EVCs and mobile voting centres will be securely transferred to the CAS.

Votes cast in EVCs and mobile voting centres, as well as election day VCs where region election primary counts were not completed on election night, will then undergo a manual primary count at the CAS from Monday 30 November until Wednesday 9 December.

The primary count of the following Legislative Council region election votes will also be completed at the CAS during these same dates:

- all postal votes
- votes transferred through the vote exchange
- votes from interstate and overseas venues
- votes cast through telephone-assisted voting.

Following the completion of each primary count, all Legislative Council region election votes will be batched and prepared for data entry. Above-the-line (ATL) and below-the-line (BTL) preferences will be data entered into our computer count application twice as a quality assurance measure. The total number of informal votes for each parcel of votes will also be entered into our computer count application. Data entry will commence on Monday 30 November and is expected to conclude by Tuesday 15 December.

Following the completion of data entry of all ATL and BTL votes, BTL preferences will be loaded into the computer count application for ATL votes, according to the preferences recorded ATL.

Calculation of region election results

Legislative Council region election results will be calculated at the CAS. The date and time will be advised to candidates and RPPs. Legislative Council region election results are expected to be calculated on Wednesday 16 December 2026.

Recounts

Once a provisional result has been obtained but before the successful candidate or candidates have been declared in a district or region election, the election manager may conduct a recount of some or all ballot papers. A recount may occur:

- at the VEC and/or election manager's discretion
- at the written request of a candidate, specifying reasons, and the VEC agrees to the request.

We will monitor the outcome of each election and work with election managers to determine if a recount should take place. If a recount is required, we will provide at least 4 hours' written notice to candidates and their specified contact person relevant to that recount.

Legislative Assembly district election 2-party-preferred counts

We intend to continue producing 2-party-preferred (2PP) statistics. The purpose of the 2PP count is to show how the vote is divided between the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party/ The Nationals in each district, and for the state as a whole, considering the preferences of voters who gave higher preferences to other RPPs and independent candidates.

We conduct a 2PP count if the selected candidates for the 2CP count or the results of the full preference distribution do not reflect how preferences in the district are divided between these parties.

Any 2PP counts will be conducted in the relevant hub after the preference distribution has been completed.

Count communications

High-level count timelines for Legislative Assembly district elections and Legislative Council region elections are available in **Appendix 9** and **Appendix 10**. We will also publish an updated version of the high-level count timeline at the commencement of the election.

Following the close of nominations, and once count planning is finalised, we will provide candidates and RPPs with the following count plans in the week before election day:

- a statewide election day VC count plan
- a hub count plan for sorting and counting activities occurring in each district hub
- a CAS count plan for all vote exchange, preliminary scrutiny, extraction, manual counting and data entry activities occurring at the CAS.

These plans will list activity dates, start times and, where appropriate, the indicative number of election officials involved in the activity.

Any changes to count plans will be communicated to candidates and RPPs as required.

Publication of election results

We will publish progressive results for each district and region election on our website as they become available. On election night, district first preference results from smaller VCs are expected to be available from approximately 6:30 pm, with many VCs expected to report first preference results by 9 pm.

Published results will include candidate details, political party endorsement (where applicable) and voting location or vote type. Each set of results will be displayed in ballot paper position order and will show:

- the total number of first preference votes received by each candidate for Legislative Assembly district elections
- the total number of first preference votes for groups in Legislative Council region elections (above-the-line and first preference below-the-line)
- the total number of first preference votes for ungrouped candidates for Legislative Council region elections.

Results will also be aggregated to show progressive statewide results for the Legislative Assembly district elections and Legislative Council region elections.

We will publish the names of elected candidates once results have been formally declared.

Results data feed

We will provide a machine-readable results data feed for use by media and electoral analysts who agree to our terms of use. The feed provides the same information that is available on the VEC website but in downloadable XML format, designed for software used by broadcast and digital publication systems.

The results data available in the feed and on the VEC website has been enhanced since previous elections to provide reporting by early voting centre and an amalgamated mobile voting result for each district. Other improvements include being able to publish:

- the most recent result for each parcel of votes (a voting location or amalgamated total by vote type) instead of only primary or recheck results for each electorate at a time
- recheck 2CP results for district elections
- full preference distributions for district elections (website only)
- region election recheck data from our computer count application.

Election night trial

We will conduct an election night trial on the evening of Wednesday 25 November 2026 where authorised consumers of the feed can test their consumption of the data into their own software and publication systems.

All election managers will enter test data into our Election Management System to ensure communication and technology systems are performing correctly for the transmission of results to our website and the feed. The test data will be entered against the actual candidates for the election. All test data will be deleted from the database and website at the completion of the trial.

10.2 Scrutineers

Candidates are not permitted to attend the exchange, preliminary scrutiny, extraction or counting of votes. Instead, they may appoint scrutineers to attend these and other observable activities and represent their interests.

Candidates must complete an *Appointment and declaration of scrutineer* form for each scrutineer at each election venue the scrutineer intends to visit. If a scrutineer acts on behalf of multiple candidates at a single venue, they must hold an appointment form for each candidate at that venue.

The number of scrutineers that can observe and scrutinise an election activity on behalf of each candidate is limited. This is known as the scrutineer quota. The quota varies depending on the activity and is usually based on the number of election officials that are engaged in the activity that is taking place.

We will publish a scrutineer handbook outlining the roles and responsibilities of scrutineers, as well as detailed information about counting activities. We will provide this handbook to candidates and RPPs and it will also be available on our website.

It is the responsibility of candidates and RPPs to ensure their scrutineers are appropriately briefed before undertaking any duties, including being informed of scheduled dates, times and locations of observable activities.

Our staff will also brief scrutineers on their rights and responsibilities when they arrive at an election venue. Before an activity begins, or when a scrutineer arrives during an activity, staff will also provide an activity briefing.

We will establish a centralised scrutineer sign-in area at each hub, as well as a scrutineer centre at the CAS with breakout spaces and amenities. Further information about scrutineer access arrangements will be provided to candidates and RPPs before activities commence at each election venue.

10.3 Declaration of results

Election managers are required to publicly declare the election results as soon as practicable after election day and announce the names of the successful candidates. Candidates and RPPs will be advised of the date, time and location of declarations so that they may attend.

Once we determine that no outstanding votes will change the result of a Legislative Assembly district election, the election manager will schedule the formal declaration of the result. This may occur even if there are a small number of counting activities still to be completed. All declarations for Legislative Assembly district elections will take place at hubs and are expected to occur between Wednesday 9 December and Tuesday 15 December 2026.

All Legislative Council region election results will be declared by a specified region election manager at the CAS and are expected to occur between Wednesday 16 December and Friday 18 December 2026.

All elections must be declared before the return of the writs, on or before Saturday 19 December 2026. The latest possible date for a declaration is Friday 18 December 2026.

Refund of nomination deposits

Candidates who receive 4% or more of the formal first preference votes in their electorate, or who are elected, will have their nomination deposit refunded within 6 to 8 weeks after the declaration of the election. This includes all candidates in a group that receives more than 4% of formal first preference votes in a Legislative Council region election.

We will refund nomination deposits for independent candidates directly to the candidate. Deposits for candidates endorsed by a RPP will be refunded directly to the RPP. Refunds will be made by direct credit into a nominated bank account.

We will also refund nomination deposits if a candidate retires or dies before the close of nominations, or if they are a candidate in a failed election.

Nomination deposits that are not eligible for refund will be forfeited to the Treasury (consolidated revenue).

11. Compliance and integrity

What's new?

We will have field compliance officers in multiple locations to support regulatory responses during voting and counting.

We are communicating regulatory priorities and providing education, guidance and support to candidates and RPPs about electoral laws earlier and more frequently in the lead up to the election timeline.

Online submission forms will be available to non-voters at the apparent failure to vote notice stage.

It is critical for compliance and integrity principles to be embedded throughout our election operations and election service delivery. Since the 2022 state election, we have established regulatory objectives to more clearly articulate our regulatory role under the Electoral Act:

1. **Active participation:** we administer electoral enrolment, candidate nominations, party registration and compulsory voting to enable active participation in elections.
2. **Transparent political finance:** we administer political finance obligations to promote accountability, equity and transparency in Victorian state elections.
3. **Trust in elections:** we enforce the rules that apply to electoral advertising, campaigning and voting to deliver free, fair and safe elections.

To help us deliver on these objectives, we have identified and communicated regulatory priorities for the 2026 calendar year, including specific priorities for the 2026 state election. Our regulatory programs are underpinned by our constructive compliance approach of promoting compliance with electoral laws and acting on non-compliance in proportion to the level of harm.

Our regulatory objectives sit alongside our *Electoral Integrity Framework* to provide a cohesive approach to our internal compliance, external compliance and integrity assurance activities. More information about our regulatory objectives and Electoral Integrity Framework is available on our website at vec.vic.gov.au/about-us/how-we-regulate.

11.1 Election integrity activities

The planning, delivery and evaluation of the election program focuses on robust integrity and decision-making frameworks at all levels of our organisation. These measures focus on compliance at election offices, hubs and centralised activity, as well as specific activities that are critical for election result integrity.

Electoral integrity support

We will again deploy our regulatory advice and incidents desk model, first implemented at the 2022 state election. This service provides election staff with timely and reliable advice on regulatory or legislative queries, and coordinates access to specialist integrity and compliance support where required.

We will integrate our digital integrity checklist into broader operational and integrity monitoring tools. These checklists provide real-time oversight of compliance with key legislative requirements, support staff understanding of critical integrity controls and assist in monitoring compliance within hubs throughout the election period.

Determinations and directions

Section 9(3) of the Electoral Act allows for the Electoral Commissioner to make determinations regarding the performance of our responsibilities and exercise of our powers. Directions may also be issued under section 9(2) of the Electoral Act on enrolment processes, elections and election procedures.

Ahead of the 2026 state election, we reviewed all existing determinations and issued new determinations reflecting legislative changes arising from the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) and *Electoral Further Amendment Act 2026* (Vic). All determinations in effect are available on the VEC website.

At the 2022 state election, we issued directions to regulate behaviour outside 2 early voting centres, after interventions by VEC staff and Victoria Police were unable to resolve concerns about voter access. In the absence of legislative changes addressing

campaigner activity at voting centres, we may again issue directions at the 2026 state election in response to access, safety or operational concerns.

Count integrity

We will establish a team to conduct numerical integrity checks on the following Legislative Assembly district election counts:

- primary first preference
- recheck first preference
- preference distributions.

We will also conduct a number of checks on the Legislative Council region elections to support the accuracy and integrity of election results.

11.2 Regulatory compliance

We are responsible for investigating offences under the Electoral Act, including offences committed at a voting centre or in connection with an election.

We adopt a constructive compliance approach, providing participants with resources to understand and meet their obligations while taking enforcement action where necessary. We may use enforcement tools under the Electoral Act to ensure compliance and may refer matters to other agencies, including Victoria Police.

For the 2026 state election, we will deploy compliance officers from hubs to monitor behaviour outside voting centres during the hours of voting. Officers may attend in response to reports of potential non-compliance or to remind participants of their legal obligations. Our focus will be on generating cooperation consistent with our constructive compliance approach and facilitating prompt escalation and referral for more complex matters that cannot be resolved locally. Voters have the right to:

- vote free of interference or intimidation
- see campaign material that is authorised and not misleading or deceptive
- know that campaigner conduct at voting centres is regulated
- cast a vote that is secret and secure.

We may institute legal proceedings against any person committing an offence under the Electoral Act.

11.3 Legal matters

Court of Disputed Returns

Election results or the validity of an election can only be challenged by petitioning the Court of Disputed Returns. For Victorian state elections, the Supreme Court is the Court of Disputed Returns.

A petition must be filed with the Prothonotary of the Supreme Court within 40 days after the return of the writs. The writs must be returned by Saturday 19 December 2026. Following the return of the writs, we will calculate and publish the final date a petition must be filed.

An election can be disputed by a candidate, a person who was entitled to vote at the election, or the VEC.

Where the election manager has declared that an election is tied, the VEC or a candidate who has the same number of votes as another candidate at the election may petition the Court of Disputed Returns within 14 days of the declared tied result.

11.4 Storage and disposal of ballot papers

We manage the security and storage of ballot material in accordance with section 122 of the Electoral Act and associated regulations. All parcels are to be kept safely, including until any proceedings in the Court of Disputed Returns are complete.

After the declaration of election results, hub staff will package all ballot papers and other materials used in the election in sealed security boxes. Each box will be clearly labelled with its contents, the district or region (if applicable) and the election date. Staff will register the material in our electronic document and records management system before returning it to our warehouse for secure storage.

The disposal of ballot material is governed by retention and disposal authorities issued by the Public Record Office Victoria and standards issued by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner.

A certified copy of the electoral roll is kept permanently. It is initially held by us before being transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria as a state archive.

11.5 Compulsory voting enforcement

Within 6 months of election day, we are required by section 163 of the Electoral Act to send a notice by post to each voter who appears not to have voted, asking why they did not vote. The non-voter enforcement process will commence in January 2027.

The compulsory voting enforcement process has 4 stages managed by the VEC, and a final stage administered by Fines Victoria.

During the enforcement stage we will provide information on:

- the number of apparent failure-to-vote notices issued
- the number of apparent non-voters who replied, paid the fine, were excused, were not excused, or failed to reply
- the number of infringement referrals made to Fines Victoria.

The Electoral Act also permits the prosecution of non-voters who fail to respond satisfactorily during the process.

We have systems in place to manage compulsory voting enforcement through to prosecution. Voting is compulsory for all enrolled electors unless they meet certain criteria for why they could not vote or have a valid and sufficient excuse.

Pre-enforcement

Stage 1 – pre-excuse

We will commence the formation of a non-voter notice for the 2026 state election in early 2027. Voting centre information reports detailing reasons for non-voting and excuses recorded by our public enquiry service will be investigated to qualify individuals as pre-excused from voting.

Roll scanning

Stage 2 – compilation of the non-voter list

We will prepare the list of non-voters in accordance with the Electoral Regulations. This includes the exclusion of any non-voters who are automatically exempt from compulsory voting or have been pre-excused.

Enforcement

Stage 3 – Apparent failure to vote notice

We will issue an apparent failure to vote notice (AFTVN) to electors who appear to have failed to vote in the election and are not automatically exempt. We intend to dispatch these notices in early February 2027.

Stage 4 – Infringement notice

Under the *Infringements Act 2006* (Vic), we will send infringement notices to apparent non-voters whose excuse is not accepted, or who did not respond to the AFTVN. A penalty applies.

Recipients of infringement notices may:

- pay the penalty by the due date
- enter into a payment plan
- request an internal review
- elect to have the matter heard in the Magistrates' Court.

Where an internal review is successful, the infringement notice will be withdrawn and the recipient will be notified.

Stage 5 – Penalty reminder notice

We will issue a penalty reminder notice to apparent non-voters who have not resolved their infringement by the due date of the infringement notice. The original penalty plus a penalty reminder notice fee applies to the notice. Non-voters continue to have the same options available as at the infringement notice stage.

Lodgement with Magistrates' Court and Fines Victoria

We will commence proceedings against any non-voter who elected to have their matter heard in the Magistrates' Court. We will also collate outstanding infringements and prepare a final court file for lodgement with Fines Victoria.

Prosecution of non-voters through the Court and Fines Victoria requires significant time and resources. Matters may extend into subsequent years.

Receipt of penalties

We will receive and record all payments made during compulsory voting enforcement. At the conclusion of the program, all penalty payments collected for the election will be transferred to consolidated revenue.

11.6 System security

We continue to strengthen our cyber security posture by aligning with the Australian Signals Directorate Essential Eight (ASD8) maturity model and implementing industry-leading security technologies, including protection against Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) attacks and real-time vulnerability scanning and mitigation.

Ongoing and significant investment in cyber and information security has placed us in a strong position to safeguard electoral information and systems. This program has spanned multiple phases and included extensive in-house and external testing and assurance activities.

Key advancements include the implementation of modern identity and access management solutions, supported by specialist engineering expertise to enhance network security.

Our security approach is designed to deliver leading cyber and information security measures, underpinned by a high base level of assurance that is further elevated during critical periods.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Amendments to the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic)

On 25 May 2026, part of the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) commenced, changing some of the timelines and processes for Victorian state elections under the *Electoral Act 2002* (Vic) (Electoral Act).

What has changed:	
Close of roll	› The electoral roll will now close at 8 pm on the day the writ for an election is issued. The writ is the legal document that officially starts the election process. › For the 2026 state election, voters must enrol or update their enrolment details by 8 pm on Tuesday 3 November (Melbourne Cup Day).
Counting processes	› We will complete a full preference distribution in all 88 Legislative Assembly districts to ensure the final 2-candidate-preferred margin is accurate.
Candidate nomination deadline	› The close of all types of candidate nominations is now 6 days after the issue of writs. › For the 2026 state election, the close of all types of candidate nominations is 9 November 2026. Ballot draws are expected to commence from 4 pm after the close of nominations.
Dis-endorsement of candidates	› A registered political party (RPP) can now withdraw the nomination of a candidate before nominations close. › To do this, the RPP must lodge a notice with the VEC, provide written notice to the candidate, and confirm the candidate is aware the party intends to withdraw their endorsement.
Early voting period	› Early voting cannot start earlier than 10 days before election day. › For the 2026 state election, early voting cannot start earlier than 18 November 2026.
Electoral material	› There are new rules to regulate which kinds of electoral material need to be authorised. › The requirement to include printer details has been removed for electoral material but remains for how-to-vote cards (both registered and unregistered, and both printed and electronic).

What has changed:	
Party registration	› The deadline to register a political party and for an existing RPP to change its name and/or logo was brought forward by 60 days. The updated deadline was Monday 1 June 2026. If a party missed the deadline, they cannot apply until after the state election. › We cannot consider an application during the period between the writ for an election being issued and the writ being returned. This also applies to by-elections. › Party applications that do not meet Victoria's registration requirements may be refused. › We must refuse certain names and logos. For example, to reduce the risk of confusion or misleading voters, we must refuse names that closely resemble the name of a political party registered in the last 10 years.
Silent elector details	› Where previously published or issued roll documents are within the VEC's control, the address of silent electors will be removed if practicable. › If a supplementary election is held following a failed election, the electoral roll will not be updated. However, if a person becomes a silent elector after the close of the roll of the failed election and before the day the writ is issued for the supplementary election, their address will be removed from the roll for the supplementary election.

The *Electoral Further Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) was passed by Parliament in June 2026. This reintroduces Part 12 of the Electoral Act which was declared invalid by the High Court of Australia.

These new laws address:

- political donation caps and banned donations
- political donation disclosure requirements
- political funding, auditing and reporting
- relevant compliance tools and offences.

The new legislation largely maintains Part 12 of the Electoral Act. It also introduces some changes to the political donation and political funding frameworks in Victoria.

These new laws are also retrospective, meaning many of the obligations, functions and powers apply from when the High Court published its decision on 15 April 2026.

What has changed:	
Transitional arrangements	Special rules apply to donations made and received between 15 April and 9 June 2026: › where the donation was $1,250 or more, the donation was to be disclosed by 9 July 2026. This included where multiple donations are made to the same recipient that total $1,250 or more. This obligation also applies to nominated entities › where the donation was above the $5,030 general cap, the full donation amount was to be returned to the donor and disclosed by 9 July 2026 › foreign donations and anonymous donations of $1,250 or higher must be forfeited to the state.
New entrants	RPPs and independent candidates can apply to register as a new entrant if they are eligible. Registered new entrants can receive donations from a single donor up to twice the general cap amount. For the 2026 state election, this is $10,380. A registered political party is eligible to register as a new entrant if they have: › never received public funding for any previous state election, including by-elections › not been eligible to receive administrative expenditure funding during the calendar year they are applying › not been eligible to receive policy development funding during the calendar year they are applying. An independent candidate is eligible to register if they have not received public funding for any previous state elections, including by-elections.
Disclosure thresholds and caps for political donations	There are new thresholds and caps for political donations, including: › a $1,290 disclosure threshold › a $5,190 general cap on political donations from a donor to a recipient between 15 April and 28 November 2026. This cap will increase to $7,740 after the 2026 state election › a $5,190 threshold for the amount of political donations received or political expenditure incurred for a person or entity to be considered a third-party campaigner › a $100 limit on small contributions, which do not count towards the general cap or the disclosure threshold. Small contributions cannot be used to circumvent the disclosure threshold or general cap › a ban on anonymous donations of $1,290 or more › a ban on foreign donations. The disclosure threshold and general cap are indexed on 1 July each year.

What has changed:	
Funding entitlements	The new laws increased the amount payable to eligible funding recipients for administrative expenditure funding. They also maintained eligibility for the other 2 streams of political funding: policy development funding and public funding. All funding streams are subject to indexation. Groups of Legislative Council candidates can ask for their public funding entitlement to be apportioned among them. This includes composite groups formed by more than one RPP. There are also new provisions to prevent funding recipients from claiming any credit, rebate, refund, reimbursement or other kind of reduction in tax liability under any law.
Funding recovery	The new laws provide a way for us to recover funding from recipients in certain circumstances. This includes from de-registered political parties and independent elected members who were receiving funding and resign, die or join a RPP. There is also greater discretion for the VEC to manage debts and enter into repayment agreements with advance public funding recipients. This includes situations such as when overpayments are identified following a funding recipient's statement of expenditure.
Political and electoral expenditure	The new laws allow us to determine what is considered electoral expenditure and political expenditure. This will provide clear rules for auditors to follow.
Nominated entities	Provisions related to nominated entities have been removed. In addition to the requirements applying for all political donations, RPPs and former nominated entities must disclose gifts of more than $5,030 exchanged between each other between 15 April and 9 June 2026. Donation amounts over the general cap were to be repaid by 9 July 2026. RPPs must repay any amounts to former nominated entities by 28 November 2026, if the amounts: › were given by the former nominated entity between 25 November 2018 and 14 April 2026 › were over $5,030 and › remained in the party's state campaign account on 15 April 2026.

The *Electoral Amendment (Miscellaneous Matters) Act 2026* (Vic) was passed by Parliament in August 2026, removing group voting tickets from Legislative Council region elections and making some technical amendments.

What has changed:

Removal of group voting tickets	Group voting tickets have been removed from Legislative Council region elections. To vote above the line (ATL), voters can place the numbers 1 to at least 5 in boxes for groups above the line on the ballot paper in order of their preferences. Groups will be required to submit an order for their candidates to appear on ballot papers when making their request for group registration. These changes are supported by new savings provisions for ballot paper formality, updated registration requirements for Legislative Council HTVCs, and modified wording to be printed on ballot papers.
Clarification to political finance reforms	Several technical amendments provide clarification for reforms to political finance from the *Electoral Further Amendment Act 2026* (Vic). Changes include: › auditors must apply the VEC's determination on what is or is not claimable administrative expenditure › the VEC must publish the register of new entrants containing a list of details › relevant RPPs are required to report on the repayments made to their former nominated entities.

Appendix 2: Key milestones and activities in election preparation

The below table summarises key milestones and activities in our election delivery.

Milestone/activity	Start date	End date
First round SEO recruitment campaign	1 March 2025	5 September 2025
EMT appointments provisionally mapped to electorates and verbally accepted	8 September 2025	28 November 2025
Second round SEO recruitment campaign	8 September 2025	3 April 2026
Candidate information sessions	23 April 2026	22 October 2026
'Register for election work' campaign	30 July 2026	25 November 2026
Hub lease period	1 July 2025	31 March 2027
EMT and HMT online training	19 August 2026	16 October 2026
Hub resource delivery and election office set-up	27 April 2026	25 September 2026
Final election service plan published		31 August 2026
EMT and HMT face-to-face training	14 September 2026	16 October 2026
Public enquiry service operational for the election period	14 September 2026	11 December 2026
Enrolment advertising	1 October 2026	2 November 2026
Election managers in election offices	19 October 2026	11 December 2026
Commercial EVC lease period	31 October 2026	31 December 2026
CAS operational	19 October 2026	19 December 2026
Community EVC lease period	31 October 2026	6 December 2026

Appendix 3: VEC responses to Electoral Matters Committee recommendations

In November 2024, we published our response to Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee's report on its inquiry into the conduct of the 2022 state election. In that response, we indicated which of the Electoral Matters Committee's recommendations that we:

- support
- support in part
- support in principle
- note
- do not support
- consider not applicable to us.

We also indicated the budget impact of each recommendation and noted that we would need to carefully consider committing funding to new activities as they will require increasing our appropriation or reprioritising existing budgeted activities.

This appendix provides a summary of the response to each of these recommendations to date.

Volume 1: Key reforms

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.1	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to adjust the timeline for fixed-term, general elections so that: › parties may not submit applications to register as a party less than 180 days before the election › the VEC is required to decide on applications to register political parties no later than 100 days before the election › the close of rolls happens at 8 pm on the day that the writs are issued › the close of nominations for independent candidates happens 16 days before the election › the writs must be returned by 23 days after the election.	The government **has partly actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended so that: › the party registration application deadline is 180 days before a general election › the close of roll occurs at 8pm on the day the writs are issued › the close of nominations for independent candidates aligns with the close of nominations for party-endorsed candidates. An extension to the deadline for returning the writs has not been actioned.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.2	That the Government consult with the VEC about the practicality of further shortening the nomination period so that nominations close seven days after the issue of the writs.	The government **has actioned** this recommendation. We supported this proposal, and the Electoral Act was amended so that the close of nominations for a general election is 6 days after the issue of the writs.
1.3	That the Government note the VEC's concerns about the tightness of the election timeline and monitor the issue at future elections. Consideration should be given to additional changes to the timeline if required, including possibly a referendum to change the date of fixed-term elections.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation. We will monitor the effectiveness of the changes to the election timeline during the 2026 state election and report on findings after the election.
1.4	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act so that early and mobile voting cannot begin until the Saturday seven days before election day.	We **did not support** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended so that early voting cannot begin until 10 days before election day. For the 2026 state election, mobile voting will commence Tuesday 17 November, and early voting will commence Wednesday 18 November.
1.5	That, if Recommendation 4 is implemented, the VEC provide for early voting on the Sunday before election day and provide extended hours on Tuesday and Thursday evenings during the early voting period (except in locations where there is unlikely to be significant demand).	Recommendation 1.4 has not been implemented so this recommendation **does not apply**. Consideration was given to opening early voting centres on the Sunday before election day, and it was found that it would not be feasible within our staffing model. We have reviewed the operating hours for early voting centres to ensure we meet community demand.
1.6	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to specify that the VEC should send ballot packs to people who have successfully applied to vote by post at just one specific election 'as soon as practicable after the final nomination day' (for those applications received before the close on [sic] nominations). The legislation should explicitly state that postal vote ballot packs can be mailed before early and mobile voting commence.	The government **has actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended to provide for postal ballot packs to be sent as soon as practicable after the application is received or the final nomination day (whichever is later), and this is expressly permitted before early and mobile voting commence.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.7	That the VEC engage an independent expert to evaluate the effectiveness of its training procedures. This evaluation should include: › a thorough review of training products and procedures before the 2026 state election › observing the behaviour of election officials in early voting centres, election-day voting centres and count centres during the 2026 state election to assess the effectiveness of the training products and procedures, and to identify potential improvements.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. In preparing our instructional products and training materials for the 2026 state election, we have built upon the findings of an external audit into our 2024 local government election materials. We have scaled this training model to accommodate the needs of new roles in our election hub operating model. We have engaged an external auditor to review our 2026 state election training products. The terms of reference for the auditor are being finalised and may include behavioural observation.
1.8	That the VEC review and improve its processes for managing disagreements between election officials and candidates/campaigners. For the 2026 election, there should be a clear escalation process, which all candidates and campaigners can easily access, which can quickly resolve any disagreements in accordance with the law and communicate any rulings to VEC staff at voting centres or count centres.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have developed a dedicated handbook for campaigners outside voting centres, which includes a chapter about escalating and reporting issues. We have also reflected these escalation processes in instructional products for election staff. We have also updated our training program for election staff to include escalation flowcharts and de-escalation strategies for potential conflict.
1.9	That the Parliament refer to the Electoral Matters Committee an inquiry into whether bodies other than the VEC should be given responsibility for investigating and prosecuting breaches of the Electoral Act and for hosting non-partisan information about candidates, parties and their policies. This inquiry should include consideration of the experience in jurisdictions where similar arrangements have operated.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation. No legislative change has been flagged to provide us with greater enforcement and investigative tools in time for the 2026 state election.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.10	That the Government work with the VEC, political parties and other stakeholders to develop a legally enforceable election-period code of conduct for candidates and campaigners.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation. We have not been consulted on an enforceable code of conduct for candidates and campaigners, and no legislative change has been flagged to support this. Separately, we have facilitated a 2-day workshop with representatives from registered political parties. The focus was how to ensure campaigner behaviour outside voting centres is in keeping with community expectations. RPP participants developed and agreed upon a set of recommendations to frame campaigner conduct. This will be set out in a chapter of our new *Campaigner handbook*.
1.11	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to provide the VEC or an alternative body with the power to enforce appropriate behaviour at voting centres through: › empowering the VEC or another suitable body to penalise breaches of the code of conduct recommended in Recommendation 10 › introducing a range of graduated responses to manage less serious breaches of electoral rules, including infringement notices, cautions, warnings and enforceable undertakings › making it an offence for a person removed from a voting centre to return to the voting centre › providing the VEC or another suitable body with investigative tools to enable the investigation of serious breaches of electoral laws.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation. No legislative change has been flagged to provide us with greater enforcement and investigative tools in time for the 2026 state election.

EMC recommendation	VEC response
1.12 That plans for the 2026 state election include a system for actively monitoring the behaviour of candidates and campaigners to identify breaches of electoral rules, rather than relying on reports from campaigners.	We **have partly actioned** this recommendation. While our operating model cannot accommodate a dedicated electoral compliance role for every early and election day voting centre, we have established a field compliance model which will see field compliance officers based out of local election hubs. We are also continuing to build regulatory capability and capacity within our workforce to support behavioural monitoring. Any future compliance action will continue to be undertaken in line with our constructive compliance approach, with an educative approach prioritised where possible.
1.13 That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to require all people who wish to campaign at a voting centre to register their details with the VEC or an alternative body involved with enforcing electoral law. The legislation should give the appropriate body the power to revoke a person's registration if they behave inappropriately or if they refuse to provide evidence of their identity. The registration system should: › be quick, easy and centralised › allow campaigners to register before or during the election period, including on election day › not require campaigners to indicate whom they are campaigning on behalf of › allow election officials to add notes about any actions taken in relation to the individual which can be viewed by other election officials › delete people's details within 30 days after the election unless the person is part of an ongoing investigation.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation. Separately, in support of our enduring duty of care obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic), at recent state by-elections we have trialled and refined a voluntary visitor registration process. We will again deploy visitor registration at the 2026 state election, noting this is not mandatory for visitors to complete.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.14	That the VEC inform all stakeholders that there is a general expectation that no more than three campaigners for each party and independent candidate will be actively campaigning at any voting centre entrance at any time (excluding candidates and members of any parliament). If the number of campaigners at a voting centre is hindering people from voting or is contributing to disorderly conduct (reaching a threshold established in legislation or regulation), the limit should be established as a firm rule for that voting centre and should be actively monitored and enforced until the matter is resolved.	We **have not actioned** this recommendation. There has been no legislative reform to codify a limit on campaigners outside of voting centres.
1.15	That the Government introduce legislation amending section 84 of the Electoral Act so that its provisions apply for two months prior to election day for general elections occurring according to fixed terms.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
1.16	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to introduce truth in political advertising laws, as recommended by the previous Electoral Matters Committee in its *Inquiry into the impact of social media on Victorian elections and Victoria's electoral administration*. When implementing systems of this nature, it is best for a consistent approach to be adopted with the Commonwealth. If Commonwealth legislation is introduced regarding truth in political advertising, then the Victorian Government should seek to align Victorian laws with the Commonwealth laws. However, if changes are not introduced at the Commonwealth level in a timely manner, the Victorian Government should seek to introduce its own legislation.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.17	That the Government reform the Upper House voting system by introducing legislation amending the Electoral Act to: › eliminate group voting tickets › allow voters to indicate multiple preferences for parties/groups above the line, where a preference above the line is interpreted as a preference for all of the candidates of that party/group, in the order listed on the ballot paper › have ballot papers direct voters to select at least five preferences above the line › include savings provisions similar to those in the Commonwealth Electoral Act that a vote is still valid if fewer than five preferences above the line are indicated. The current system for voting below the line should be retained.	The Government **has actioned** this recommendation. The *Electoral Amendment (Miscellaneous Matters) Act 2026* (Vic) removed group voting tickets from Legislative Council region elections.
1.18	That, if Recommendation 17 is implemented, the Government provide the VEC with additional funding to develop and conduct an education campaign about the new voting system for the Upper House before the first election with the new system.	The Government **has not actioned** this recommendation. We have not been provided additional funding for these purposes.
1.19	That the Parliament refer an inquiry into possible reforms of the Upper House electoral system and their impacts to the Electoral Matters Committee.	The Parliament **has actioned** this recommendation. We responded to the Electoral Matters Committee's report on its inquiry into Victoria's Upper House electoral system in March 2026.
1.20	That Robson Rotation not be adopted for ballot papers in Victoria.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation. We supported this recommendation, and recent legislative reforms have not introduced Robson Rotation.
1.21	That the Government consider undertaking a holistic review of the Electoral Act to bring it up to date and to incorporate the recommendations of this report, other reports by the Electoral Matters Committee and appropriate recommendations by the VEC.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
1.22	That the Government consult with the Electoral Matters Committee whenever it is considering changes to the Electoral Regulations, giving the Committee an opportunity to provide input based on its work.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation.

Volume 2: Detailed analysis

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.1	That the VEC publish data and establish performance targets relating to the proportion of people in different age brackets who are enrolled across the following age brackets: › under 18 › 18 to 19 › 20 to 24 › 25 to 29 › 30 to 34 › 35 to 39 › 40 to 44 › 45 to 49 › 50 to 54 › 55 to 59 › 60 to 64 › 65 to 69 › 70 and over.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. Beginning with our 2024–25 Annual Report, we have reported on enrolment by age range using the suggested age groups. We have also updated our enrolment performance targets to use these age groups, except for those under 18. This is because under-18s that are provisionally enrolled are not subject to compulsory enrolment requirements.
2.2	That the VEC consider a communication campaign at the next election directed towards older voters encouraging them to participate and informing them about different ways that they can vote. The campaign should be delivered in media that are appropriate for that demographic.	We **did not support** this recommendation. Existing data shows that electors within the age ranges of 40–69 and over 70s have a higher turnout rate than the overall turnout rate. We continue to work to improve turnout for all demographics in the lead up to the 2026 state election. Our statewide advertising campaign will be conducted across a variety of media.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.3	That, in addition to working to increase VoterAlert subscription rates to engage with directly enrolled electors, the VEC should use other communication means (such as post) to encourage increased turnout among directly enrolled electors who are not subscribed to VoterAlert.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. While not targeted specifically to directly enrolled electors, we will distribute 3 million hard copy EasyVote guides to Victorian households.
2.4	That the VEC work with the Australian Electoral Commission to receive details of which electors were enrolled through the Australian Electoral Commission's direct enrolment program.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) provides sufficient data to show whether an enrolment transaction was by direct enrolment or self-initiated by the elector. We continue to work with the AEC to improve information sharing regarding direct enrolment data, supporting improved reporting and analysis on this cohort of electors.
2.5	That, in future reports to Parliament on elections, the VEC improve its reporting on turnout, including by: › reporting and discussing turnout by age cohort as a proportion of eligible electors › reporting turnout for 18-to-19-year-olds and 20-to-24-year-olds separately › reporting and analysing data on the reasons electors were excused from voting › increasing the analysis of trends across elections › increasing clarity around direct enrolment figures and quantifying the impact on turnout.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We incorporated these suggestions into our Report to Parliament on the 2025 Prahran District and Werribee District by-elections. We will again report on these data points and expand on existing analysis in our Report to Parliament on the 2026 state election. A standalone report on voter participation and turnout at the 2026 state election will also be published.
2.6	That the VEC provide details of the actions it intends to take to improve turnout at the 2026 election, both generally and among specific communities, in its 2026 state election service plan. In doing this, the VEC should indicate how its planned actions respond to its analysis of turnout data from the previous election and other research on turnout.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. VEC research activities, including analysis of 2022 voting patterns, non-voting data, informal voting and demographic factors have informed specific aspects of VEC communication and engagement activities, including the identification of priority communities and target areas. See **4. Communication and engagement** in the 2026 state election service plan.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.7	That the VEC continue to target younger voters and directly enrolled voters and implement engagement programs aimed specifically at increasing turnout among these voters.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. Planning for our statewide advertising campaign has included consultation with our Young People Advisory Group on the direction for our statewide advertising campaign and on the use of TikTok for increasing engagement with young people. We are also continuing to undertake research to ascertain greater insights for declining participation among younger and directly enrolled electors.
2.8	That the VEC identify 30-to-44-year-old electors as a target group for its inclusion and participation efforts and implement engagement programs aimed specifically at increasing turnout among these voters.	We **have not yet actioned** this recommendation. Targeted engagement for 30-to-44-year-old electors is subject to additional resourcing and more analysis needed to understand the reasons for declining turnout in this cohort. This analysis has not been completed and additional resourcing has not been provided for this purpose. However, as part of the statewide advertising campaign media planning, key channels have been identified for the 30-to-44-year-old electors.
2.9	That the VEC publish apparently accidental and apparently intentional informal vote figures as percentage of all votes as part of its regular post-election informality reporting and incorporate those figures into its analysis and discussion of trends across elections.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We already publish apparently accidental and apparently intentional informal vote figures, and will continue to report on this data, including analysis of relevant trends, in our Report to Parliament on the 2026 state election.
2.10	That the VEC continue its efforts to better understand the drivers of informality, including through work with academics. The VEC's research and reporting at future elections should include considering the effects of candidate numbers, the increase in the number of districts with high informality, continued high informality in certain geographic areas and the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The VEC should use the results of this research to improve its engagement efforts around formal voting.	We **have actioned** this recommendation We have completed longitudinal studies regarding informal voting in partnership with researchers. We will continue to research informal voting to the same degree, including analysis of all relevant factors and identification of appropriate targeted engagement solutions.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.11	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to: › increase the minimum number of members required for party registration from 500 to 750 › increase the number of people required to support someone to run as an independent candidate for the Lower House from six to 50 people.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.12	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to include an appropriate mechanism to require suitable publicly funded venues, such as community facilities owned and operated by local councils, to be available for use as early voting centres.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.13	That, in future election plans, the VEC include two new performance indicators with targets that relate to the suitability of venues used as a) early voting centres and b) election-day voting centres. These should provide assessments of the overall suitability of voting centres across multiple criteria, including access to parking and public transport, shelter from the weather, accessibility for people with disability and appropriate space for campaigning. Results for these indicators should be included in future reports on state elections.	We **did not support** this recommendation. We continue to apply a rigorous selection process for all voting centres. While we consider numerous factors when identifying and booking venues, our influence over each individual factor is limited. In practice, we often must account for practical constraints and choose venues that satisfy most, not all, operational and accessibility criteria.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.14	That the VEC investigate and implement processes to reduce queueing times at election-day voting centres. As part of this, the VEC should include two new performance indicators in future election plans with targets that relate to the proportion of electors who queue for more than 10 minutes at a) early voting centres and b) election-day voting centres. Results for these indicators should be included in future reports on state elections.	We **have partly actioned** this recommendation. We did not support introducing the suggested performance indicators. However, several changes for the 2026 state election support the reduction of queueing times at voting centres. Our research and vote estimates are informing the number and location of early and election day voting centres to be established. We are significantly expanding electronic roll mark-off on election day. This will make the voting process quicker at the majority of locations. We have also expanded the number of early voting centres (EVCs) in response to the growing demand for early voting and will convert all early voting centres to also operate as election day voting centres. These will include joint voting centres for neighbouring districts, reducing bottlenecks for out-of-district voting both during early voting and on election day. In addition, we will monitor queue times during voting, and where possible make adjustments to our operations to improve voter flow.
2.15	That, in future reports to Parliament on elections, the VEC more clearly account for the number of votes cast by Victorians who are interstate and overseas during an election. This reporting should include a clear account of how many votes were cast by interstate and overseas voters through each voting option available to these voters.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We have undertaken development work and operational refinements to set up a dedicated vote exchange area to record the votes received from interstate and overseas venues, and to record more data on these votes within our Election Management System, allowing us to generate more specific reports. This will allow us to more clearly account for the votes cast by interstate and overseas voters in our post-election reporting.
2.16	That the VEC review how it makes postal vote applications available to identify changes that would improve access, especially for Victorians that are less mobile or less computer literate.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have reviewed other potential outlets and the existing service level will be retained for the 2026 state election.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.17	That the VEC ensure that an adequate supply of postal vote applications is available at venues where they are offered at future elections and that its communication to voters clearly states the different ways that voters can access online and paper-based postal vote applications.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. For the 2026 state election, the number of postal vote applications available at Australia Post outlets will be increased and, in partnership with Australia Post, we have put measures in place to ensure there is a timely fulfilment for venues that run out of postal vote applications.
2.18	That the VEC provide data in future reports to Parliament on elections regarding: › postal votes returned by the statutory deadline but not able to be counted, categorised by the reason the vote could not be counted › electors who were sent postal ballots but failed to return them.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We included these figures in our Report to Parliament on the 2025 Prahran District and Werribee District by-elections. This data will again be provided in our Report to Parliament on the 2026 state election.
2.19	That, in redesigning the voter declaration on postal vote packs, the VEC seek to understand why so many voters did not correctly complete the declaration in 2022. The VEC should test and publicly report before the 2026 election on the effectiveness of its redesigned postal ballot packs at reducing elector errors. If the opportunity arises, the VEC should test the new design at a by-election.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We trialled a redesigned postal vote declaration envelope at the 2023 Warrandyte District and Mulgrave District by-elections and the 2025 Prahran District and Werribee District by-elections. While failure to provide a verification answer remained the main reason for rejection, the by-elections saw a significant reduction in rejection rates compared with the 2022 state election. Following additional research with a focus on continuing to reduce rates of rejection, involving testing different design options, re-analysis of postal voting data and consultation with electoral commissions in other jurisdictions, we made further refinements to the postal envelope for testing at the 2026 Nepean District by-election. The by-election saw even further reduced rejection rates and we will deploy the refined redesign again for the 2026 state election.
2.20	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to prohibit any person or organisation other than an electoral commission from distributing general postal voter applications.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.21	That the VEC provide targeted information to telephone-assisted voters about how and when to vote, and how to fill out ballot papers correctly.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We are engaging with sector stakeholders and networks to help us identify appropriate channels for distributing targeted information to cohorts with higher usage rates of telephone assisted voting.
2.22	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to allow Australian Antarctic Territory electors to vote using electronic assisted voting (telephone-assisted voting).	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.23	That the VEC perform more investigation into the implications of expanding access to telephone-assisted voting as recommended in its report to Parliament on the 2022 election. This investigation should include an exploration of the risks, costs, challenges and impacts on campaigning posed by expanding access to such a large degree and a comparison of expanding telephone-assisted voting with other options for providing greater voting access for the identified cohorts.	We **have not yet actioned** this recommendation. This research is in development and is expected to be published post the event this year.
2.24	That the VEC explore the possibility of data from the National Disability Insurance Agency being shared with the VEC to enable direct enrolment. The VEC could also use the data to determine the electoral participation rate for people with disability.	We **did not support** this recommendation.

EMC recommendation	VEC response
2.25 That the Government fund an appropriately qualified organisation with the relevant expertise to develop a framework for improving the inclusion of Victorians with intellectual and cognitive disability in Victorian elections. This project should include, but not be limited to, investigating: › the scale of people with disability currently not participating in elections in Victoria › ways to remove barriers to electoral inclusion, including the need to learn about politics and decision-making › whether the Register of Electors should be used to link people with intellectual and cognitive disability with appropriate support to vote › whether and how information held by the National Disability Insurance Agency can be used to target support for people with intellectual and cognitive disability › what role the National Disability Insurance Agency should play in supporting people to vote › what role the VEC should play in supporting people with intellectual and cognitive disability to vote › how best to reform or remove the 'unsound mind' provision of Victoria's Constitution and any consequent changes that are needed, such as exempting some people with intellectual and cognitive disability from compulsory voting.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation. We continue to explore ways to improve electoral access and inclusion for Victorians living with a disability, and their carers, through our *Disability education and engagement plan 2025–27*.
2.26 That the VEC take measures to improve the support it provides to people who have difficulty standing in lines and while completing ballot papers. This may include improved staff awareness of this issue, processes at voting centres for identifying and supporting these voters while they are queueing and improved signage informing people how they can access support.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. Our instructional products and training materials have been reviewed to enhance staff awareness and support to people who need assistance. This includes specific instructions for common ways electors might need assistance, as well as a focus on responsive customer service. We will also provide dedicated signage at voting centres informing voters how to request assistance from election staff.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.27	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to provide the VEC with the ability to apply an extended campaigning exclusion zone at specified voting centres and for specified times, so that the VEC can provide dedicated periods of low-sensory voting. This should include an obligation for the VEC to adequately inform election stakeholders, with a defined notice period, when an extended exclusion zone will apply.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation. Following successful trials at recent state by-elections, we are deploying our low-sensory mobile voting program statewide for the first time at the 2026 state election. While legislation has not been amended to provide an extended campaigning exclusion zone at these sites, election officials will actively monitor and enforce the 6-metre campaigning exclusion zone for campaigners and signage. This will include monitoring the conduct of campaigners to prevent sensory overload for voters.
2.28	That the VEC consider the suggestions from the Committee's survey of Victorians with disability as part of developing future plans for supporting Victorians with disability to participate in elections.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We considered the suggestions provided alongside all other relevant information when preparing our *Disability education and engagement plan 2025–27*.
2.29	That the VEC cease its requirement for people to fill out a form to make a complaint and instead accept complaints through other avenues, such as social media.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.30	That the VEC ensure all electors are provided with an EasyVote guide at future elections. This should be achieved by mailing one to every household or through a combination of VoterAlert and physical mail distribution (with the VEC using VoterAlert and supplementing this with physical mail for all households with an elector not subscribed to VoterAlert).	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We will distribute a printed EasyVote guide to every Victorian household, containing information about when, where and how to vote.
2.31	That the VEC consider the suggestions from the Committee's culturally and linguistically diverse community roundtable as part of developing future plans for communicating with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We considered the suggestions provided alongside all other relevant information when preparing our *Multicultural education and engagement plan 2025–27.*
2.32	That parties establish codes of conduct for their members in relation to their behaviour on social media, as previously recommended by the Electoral Matters Committee. These codes of conduct should include not spreading inaccurate information about electoral issues and not undermining confidence in electoral processes and the VEC without clear evidence.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.33	That the VEC include more information in future communication campaigns about its role and its legislated powers.	We **will action** this recommendation at the 2026 state election. As part of our ongoing communication and engagement activities, we regular communication our role and legislated powers through a number of key channels, including media releases, publications, *Be Heard* newsletter, website content and through our education outreach programs with community and key stakeholders.
2.34	That the Government consider whether legislative action is needed in response to social media companies ignoring or not acceding to legitimate requests from the VEC to remove inaccurate material or other problematic content from their platforms.	There is **no update available** for this recommendation. In its response to this recommendation, the Victorian Government noted that it would await the Australian Government's approach to engaging with social media companies before forming a position.
2.35	That the VEC review its internal communication processes and protocols for responding to claims on social media to ensure that it does not post inaccurate information in the future. This should involve particular consideration of how to respond to claims from other users when they are telling the Commission that something occurred.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have implemented processes and protocols for escalating incidents and issues via our operational command centre. This model is aimed at improving visibility and cross-functional coordination of matters arising during the election.
2.36	That, in future reports to Parliament on elections, the VEC account for and report on all instances of apparent multiple voting, including: › reporting on all apparent cases, regardless of the age of the elector › indicating the number of cases attributed to administrative errors › reporting on the voting method/s involved in each instance › indicating how many cases were not explained to the VEC's satisfaction but not further pursued and why they were not further pursued › reporting how many votes are believed to have been cast by these electors, broken down by district.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. This information will be included in our Report to Parliament on the election.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.37	That, in future post-election reports to Parliament, the VEC provide details about what measures it has established to ensure that ballot boxes and ballot papers are not tampered with or lost and the effectiveness of these measures. This should include explaining significant discrepancies between the total number of people marked off the electoral roll and the total number of ballot papers included in the count.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We will consider opportunities to more clearly explain discrepancies and variations, including our integrity measures and numerical tolerances, in our Report to Parliament on the election.
2.38	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to remove the requirement that ballot papers be initialled by election officials.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.39	That the VEC mark postal ballot papers in a way that makes them easily distinguishable from ballot papers issued in voting centres.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.40	That the Government introduce legislation amending section 74(1) of the Electoral Act to require the order of candidates and groups on ballot papers to be determined manually and not by computer.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.41	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to require the VEC to conduct audits of the data used in computer counts. The new provisions should include requirements that: › the batches of votes that are audited are selected randomly › the number of batches audited should be enough to estimate the overall error rate using a rigorous statistical methodology › the Commission publicly report the results of these audits.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.42	That the VEC conduct a thorough review of its processes for communicating with candidates, parties and scrutineers about vote-counting processes. This should include consulting with parties and candidates to understand the weaknesses in communication at the 2022 election and how these could be addressed at future elections.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. This review is in progress as we develop count plans for the 2026 state election and finalise processes for communicating with candidates, parties and scrutineers during counting. See **10.1 Counting**.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.43	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to include: › a broad statement that all vote-counting processes and documents should be open to scrutineers › a minimum notification period for the recommencement of vote counting.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.44	That the VEC reconsider its response to the previous Electoral Matters Committee's recommendation that it should provide specific explanations on the results pages of its website for any significant adjustment to figures (e.g. more than 200 votes) made between the primary count or two-candidate-preferred count and the final results (recheck or recount results).	We **have partly actioned** this recommendation. Our response to the EMC's recommendation noted that it was unlikely that this reporting would be available for the 2026 state election. We will provide a summary with accompanying explanations of any significant adjustments in our Report to Parliament on the election.
2.45	That the VEC review the election results data it publishes and identify opportunities to publish more data and to improve the way that it publishes data, giving consideration to the suggestions set out in this section. The VEC should provide data in the same format as the Australian Electoral Commission where possible and appropriate, and should make all data available in Excel spreadsheets (as well as HTML for some data).	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We will conduct a recheck 2-candidate-preferred count and a full preference distribution in every district. We are finalising changes to our results publication systems (VEC website and results data feed) to include this information, reporting by early voting centre, and amalgamated mobile voting results for each district. Improvements will also allow us to publish most recent results at vote parcel level, as well as region recheck data from our computer count application. A review of the data that is released on our website in Excel spreadsheet format is in progress.
2.46	That the VEC reinstate performance measures relating to enrolment, turnout and formality in future election planning.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.47	That, in developing performance indicators for the 2026 state election, the VEC consider the suggestions set out in this section about what makes for better indicators.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have published our new evaluation framework for the 2026 state election. We considered the suggestions provided when preparing the performance indicators included in the evaluation framework.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.48	That the VEC adjust its performance indicator regarding processing postal vote applications to reflect the changes to processes recommended in this report and by setting a target of processing 100% of relevant applications within 24 hours of receipt.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have updated the relevant performance measure in our new evaluation framework to reflect this target.
2.49	That the VEC reconsider its performance indicator regarding Lower House first-preference votes counted and entered into the Election Management System on election night with the aim of establishing a target that is consistent across multiple elections.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.50	That, in developing future plans and strategies, the VEC include concrete actions, measures and quantified targets in the original plan at the time of release, so that stakeholders have a better understanding of what the VEC intends to do and the VEC can more transparently report against those plans and strategies.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. See **Appendix 5: Progress on operational commitments from Report to Parliament on 2022 state election and *Strategic service plan***.
2.51	That the VEC include election participation outcomes in the monitoring and evaluation of all of its access and inclusion plans.	We **did not support** this recommendation. We have updated the scope statement in our *Young People Inclusion Plan* to better clarify that it refers to assessing outcomes rather than causality.
2.52	That, in preparing future reports to Parliament on elections, the VEC incorporate the Committee's suggested improvements set out throughout the Committee's report and summarised in Section 8.4 of Volume 2.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. We have considered the suggested improvements in preparing recent reports to Parliament on state by-elections, including reporting on specific data points recommended by the Electoral Matters Committee. We will again consider these suggestions when preparing our Report to Parliament on the 2026 state election.

EMC recommendation	VEC response
2.53 That the Government introduce legislation amending the provisions in the Electoral Act relating to the authorisation of electoral matter to: › remove the requirement to include details of the printer › harmonise other provisions with the Commonwealth Electoral Act where appropriate › incorporate the recommendations of the previous Electoral Matters Committee about the authorisation of electoral matter and related issues.	The Government **has partly actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended to broadly align the laws for authorisation of electoral matter with the Commonwealth provisions. Outstanding matters include: › the requirement to include printer details on printed electoral matter was removed, however it has been retained for how-to-vote cards › the requirements for the publication of the authoriser's address have not been simplified › the definition of 'electoral matter' has not been limited to matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election.
2.54 That the Government introduce legislation revising the provisions in the Electoral Act relating to misleading and deceptive matter to provide clarity about what is permitted on a how-to-vote card. This should include specific guidance on matters which have caused contention between the VEC and candidates, such as the depiction of blank boxes.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.55 That the Government introduce legislation amending section 104A of the Electoral Act to remove the requirement for the VEC to wait until it has issued ballot packs to postal voters to provide postal voter data to candidates and political parties. The Act should instead allow the VEC to provide such data as soon as it has accepted an application under Section 104(1) or 104(1A).	The Government **has actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended to remove the requirement to wait until postal votes had been issued before we must share this data with candidates and registered political parties. We will provide this data through our secure document exchange server from late evening on Monday 9 November and will continue to provide daily updates.
2.56 That, contingent on the Electoral Act being amended to allow it, the VEC process applications to vote at one specific election and provide these voters' data to political parties and candidates as it receives applications during the time between the issue of the writs and the close of nominations. The VEC should provide such data within 24 hours of a successful application being entered into the VEC's system.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. Noting there is a lag between the close of roll and having electoral roll products readily accessible, we will share this data, upon request, with candidates and registered political parties as soon as practicable after the close of roll or a candidate's nomination, whichever is later. Once the backlog is processed, we will aim to provide this data within 24 hours.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.57	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to require the VEC to provide parties and candidates with a complete list of general postal voters within 48 hours of the close of rolls or within 24 hours of a candidate's nomination, whichever is earlier.	The Government **has actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended so that we must provide candidates and registered political parties with a list of general postal voters as soon as practicable after the close of roll or a candidate's nomination, whichever is later.
2.58	That the VEC explore ways to provide for out-of-district early votes to be counted on election night in voting centres where there is a large number of out-of-district early votes (such as those near the boundary of a district and those that service multiple districts in regional areas).	We **have actioned** this recommendation. For the 2026 state election, we will reduce the number of out-of-district early votes overall by establishing joint early voting centres for neighbouring districts. This will allow for a higher proportion of early votes overall to be counted on election night and the following day. Local vote exchanges between districts co-located within hubs will also reduce the volume of out-of-district early votes needing to be exchanged centrally, bringing forward the earliest they can be counted and ensuring they are counted locally.
2.59	That the VEC ensure that the total number of ballot papers it produces for future elections does not contribute to ballot paper shortages.	We **will action** this recommendation at the 2026 state election. We have significantly invested in expanding electronic roll mark-off for a greater number of issuing points across the state at election day voting centres. This will provide real-time visibility of ballot papers issued, allowing us to deploy additional stock before existing stock is depleted. We have also established an in-house print workshop, allowing us to self-serve for smaller, on-demand ballot paper print runs.

EMC recommendation	VEC response
2.60 That the VEC thoroughly investigate the extent and causes of ballot paper shortages and the closure of voting centres on election day at the 2022 election and produce a report on these matters to supplement the VEC's report on the 2022 election. This report should be provided to the Electoral Matters Committee, which will then table it in Parliament so that it is available to all members of Parliament and the public. This report should include a complete and accurate account of: › ballot paper management plans for the 2022 election and why they failed to allocate ballot papers as needed › all voting centres which closed during voting hours on election day › all voting centres which ran out of ballot papers on election day › the factors that led to voting centres running out of ballot papers and/or closing on election day › the internal communication processes that resulted in VEC senior officials not knowing about voting centres running out of ballot papers and/or closing on election day in the days and months following the election › the deficiencies in the VEC's processes that led to the VEC posting inaccurate information about what occurred on social media › actions that the VEC will be taking at future elections as a result of these incidents.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We provided a supplementary report on lessons learned from ballot paper shortages to the Electoral Matters Committee in February 2025. The Committee published a special report on the implementation of this recommendation in May 2025.
2.61 That, following future elections, the VEC include information in its reports to Parliament about voting centres running out of ballot papers (including temporarily). This should include reporting, for each voting centre which runs out of ballot papers: › how many people filled out 'voter information reports' › how many handwritten ballot papers were used › when ballot paper stock was replenished, and by how much › for how long ballot papers were not available.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. The expansion of electronic roll mark-off will provide greater visibility of ballot paper consumption and availability, providing opportunities for more detailed reporting. In addition, detailed instructions have been included in our instructional products and training to record all situations where additional ballot papers were requested and any instances where ballot materials were not available. We will be able to report against all of these circumstances using these data sources.

EMC recommendation	VEC response
2.62 That the VEC implement electronic roll mark-off across Victoria at the 2026 state election.	We **will action** this recommendation for the 2026 state election. Electronic roll mark-off will be used at more issuing points in the 2026 state election than in previous elections. This has been accompanied by a redevelopment of our electronic roll mark-off application. Electronic roll mark-off devices will be used at: › all early voting centres (all issuing points) › all mobile voting teams › all election day declaration vote issuing points › election day ordinary issuing points in selected voting centres (generally medium to large voting centres, but may also include smaller venues where we need greater visibility of ballot paper usage)
2.63 That the VEC review its systems for monitoring what is occurring at voting centres and its internal communication processes to ensure that there are appropriate systems to alert senior staff about significant incidents that occur at voting centres.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have established procedures and protocols for our operational command centre, which will allow greater visibility of, and coordinated responses to, incidents which occur at election venues. These protocols are supported by changes to instructional products and training materials for election staff, and have been tested through practice scenarios including our election dress rehearsal, as well as at the 2026 Nepean District by-election.
2.64 That the Government introduce legislation amending sections 47 and 47A of the Electoral Act to add additional restrictions requiring the VEC to refuse to register a political party's name, abbreviation or logo if they too closely resemble another party that is currently registered, or has already submitted an application for registration or change of registered name, abbreviation or logo. In drafting the legislation, the Government should consider the VEC's technical recommendation 6 in its report to Parliament on the 2022 election and sections 129 and 129A of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918. The fact that a name, abbreviation or logo had previously been registered should not mean that it can be used again if it breaches the rules.	The Government **has actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended to prohibit the registration of party names, abbreviations, acronyms or logos which: › are the same or very similar as a 'recognised political party', which is a party that has been registered at any time in the previous 10 years › use an acronym that suggests a parliamentary office (e.g. MP, MLA, MLC) › a reasonable person would think suggests a connection or relationship with a registered political party, if that relationship does not exist.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.65	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to allow political parties to register a colour logo in the Register of Political Parties, which must then be printed in colour on ballot papers.	We **did not support** this recommendation.
2.66	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to allow the Registered Officer of a party to withdraw the nomination of any candidate nominated as a member of that party prior to the close of nominations.	The Government **has actioned** this recommendation. The Electoral Act was amended to provide a formal mechanism for endorsed candidates to be disendorsed before the close of nominations, in which case their nomination is withdrawn.
2.67	That the Government introduce legislation establishing a right for people to display political signage on private property during an election period which cannot be overridden by local laws.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.68	That the VEC review and improve its information products and communication processes for candidates and parties prior to the next election. This should include incorporating feedback from candidates and parties.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have developed a bulk nominations tool for registered political parties to submit multiple candidate nominations. We have reviewed our suite of handbooks and forms ahead of the 2026 state election, with a focus on making them easier to understand and use. We are also improving the way we communicate with candidates and registered political parties about the election.
2.69	That the Government introduce legislation removing the requirement in the Electoral Act that how-to-vote cards must be registered to be distributed at election-day voting centres.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.70	That the Government introduce legislation making it illegal to publish material falsely purporting to be from a political party or election candidate. The legislation should specify examples of elements that may constitute a breach of the legislation (such as names, logos and images).	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.71	That the VEC review its communications and public engagement strategy for future elections to ensure it avoids unnecessary commentary that may lead to a perception of bias or interference with the electoral process.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have published our approach to public comment on our regulatory activities on our website. We have also launched our first regulatory strategy, building on our identified regulatory objectives and shaping our approach to delivering our regulatory functions.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.72	That the VEC ensure its training highlights the need for candidates and campaigners to be treated appropriately by election officials and that candidates and campaigners should not be seen as adversaries.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. Our instructional products and training materials for election staff, as well as our new *Campaigner handbook*, emphasise a collaborative and positive culture between campaigners, candidates and staff.
2.73	That the Government introduce legislation amending the Electoral Act to specify that transfer values for surplus votes under proportional representation should be calculated using the weighted inclusive Gregory method.	The Government **has not yet actioned** this recommendation.
2.74	That the VEC further improve its approach to providing updates on Electoral Matters Committee recommendations by: › establishing a system of language that clearly and consistently represents the status of its work or intentions › ensuring that its updates reflect the VEC's actual intentions and actions (and include clear statements if the VEC has altered its view on whether or not it supports a recommendation).	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We have uplifted consistency and continuity across our reporting, including better long-term progress monitoring of our commitments, recommendations and broader advocacy priorities. We have adopted an internal style template for responding to and reporting on the Electoral Matters Committee's recommendations.
2.75	That the VEC establish outcomes-based (election participation) or external evaluation measures for its advisory groups.	We **did not support** this recommendation.

EMC recommendation		VEC response
2.76	That the VEC include performance indicators that measure the accuracy of vote counting in future election plans, and report against these indicators in its reports to Parliament following elections.	We **have actioned** this recommendation. We currently have multiple processes in place to monitor and address issues related to vote counting accuracy as necessary. All relevant count quality assurance measures were reviewed in the lead up to the 2026 state election and key measures were updated as part of this review. However, the review also suggested broad performance indicators do not provide a comprehensive and meaningful measure to capture the complexities of vote counting and the related details of quality assurance methods. Instead, and in line with the approaches for reporting count accuracy measures amongst other electoral commissions, we will report on the measures and processes deployed to ensure accuracy of vote-counting at the 2026 state election as part of future reports to Parliament. This reporting will include both the relevant data and detailed explanations addressing the concerns raised in previous inquiries, including those mentioned in recommendations 2.37 and 2.44.

Appendix 4: Summary of responses to recommendations from the *2022 Report to Parliament*

In our Report to Parliament on the 2022 state election, we made 12 key recommendations and 18 technical recommendations for legislative change.

Of these recommendations:

- 6 have been fully actioned (2 key and 4 technical)
- 4 have been partly actioned (3 key and 1 technical)
- 20 have not been actioned (7 key and 13 technical).

This appendix provides a summary of the legislative response to each of these recommendations to date.

Key recommendations

VEC recommendation		Legislative response
1	The VEC recommends that a holistic review of the Electoral Act is undertaken, to address the unsustainability of the election timeline and respond to the complexities of the modern electoral landscape. Acknowledging a comprehensive review may take time, recommendations to alleviate immediate risks to the successful delivery of future elections at specific points in the timeline have been provided.	This recommendation **has been partly actioned** by the *Electoral Amendment Act 2026* (Vic) (Electoral Amendment Act). The close of roll was moved earlier in the election timeline, to 8 pm on the day the writs are issued. The deadline for party registration applications was extended to 180 days before a general election. All nominations were aligned to close on the same day, 6 days after the issue of the writ, allowing more time for printing ballot papers prior to the opening of mobile and early voting. While the Electoral Commissioner can now delegate the power to decide on a challenged ballot paper in a recount to the Deputy Electoral Commissioner, this does not fully resolve the pressure point. An extension to the timeline for returning the writs **has not been actioned**. A holistic review of the Electoral Act to address the unsustainability of the election timeline or to mitigate the risks associated with social media, mis- and dis-information **has not been actioned**.

VEC recommendation		Legislative response
2	The VEC recommends that section 67 of the Electoral Act is amended to include an appropriate mechanism to require suitable publicly-funded venues to be available for use as early voting centres, such as community facilities owned and operated by local councils.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
3	The VEC recommends that an offence is inserted into the Electoral Act to proscribe a person from, by violence or intimidation or harassment, interfering with the conduct of a person employed or appointed by the VEC with the intent to harass the person or disrupt the conduct of the election.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
4	The VEC recommends that Division 5 of Part 5 of the Electoral Act is repealed to remove the process for registering how-to-vote cards, and that section 156 of the Electoral Act is repealed to remove the offence of distributing unregistered how-to-vote cards near voting centres on election day.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**. The alternative recommendations provided in the event that how-to-vote card registration was not repealed **have not been actioned**.
5	The VEC recommends that legislative reforms to the Electoral Act are introduced to place reasonable limitations on the ways in which campaigners at voting centres may interact with voters, including strengthening the existing tools lawfully available to election staff by introducing an offence for a person removed from a voting centre under section 174 of the Electoral Act to return to the voting centre.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
6	The VEC recommends that the classes of electors eligible to access electronic assisted voting are expanded to include those voters who experience the greatest barriers to participation, and that the eligible classes of electors for electronic voting and electronic assisted voting are maintained in alignment with each other to allow for any future technological development.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.

VEC recommendation		Legislative response
7	The VEC recommends that the Electoral Act is amended to remove the need for voting to be suspended or adjourned under sections 97 and 97A of the Electoral Act, respectively, for emergency situations. A provision should be inserted to allow the Electoral Commissioner to make alternative arrangements to ensure the proper administration of an election in the event of an emergency situation. The Electoral Regulations should also be amended to provide a process mirroring temporary regulation 51A to extend eligibility for electronic assisted voting to victims of localised, but still severe, emergencies, as determined by the Electoral Commissioner in consultation with the Emergency Management Commissioner.	This recommendation **has been partly actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. The need for voting to be resumed at an election day voting centre if suspended or adjourned due to an emergency situation has been removed, and we may close, or decide not to open, an election day voting centre or appoint an alternative voting centre. Allowing electronic assisted voting to be extended to victims of localised, but still severe, emergencies has not been actioned.
8	The VEC recommends that the Electoral Act replaces references to an election manager or election official with references to 'the election manager or the Commission' or 'an election official or the Commission', thereby allowing the VEC to centralise election processes where it is appropriate or necessary to do so.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act.
9	The VEC recommends that the laws relating to electoral campaign material are reviewed to modernise authorisation requirements, provide a more appropriate definition of 'electoral matter', and establish clear principles for what is likely to mislead or deceive an elector in relation to the casting of their vote.	This recommendation **has been partly actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. The laws for authorisation of electoral matter were amended to broadly align with the Commonwealth provisions. The requirement to include printer details on printed electoral matter was removed, however it has been retained for how-to-vote cards. Simplifying the requirements for the publication of the authoriser's address **has not been actioned**. Defining 'electoral matter' to limit it to matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election **has not been actioned**. Clarifying the principles for misleading or deceptive matter **has not been actioned**.

VEC recommendation		Legislative response
10	The VEC recommends that provisions are inserted into the Electoral Act to allow the VEC and election managers to issue infringement notices, cautions, warnings and enforceable undertakings for breaches of less serious electoral offences, and to provide investigative tools to VEC compliance officers for electoral offences equivalent to those provided to the Local Government Inspectorate for electoral offences under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
11	The VEC recommends that sections 33 and 104A of the Electoral Act are amended to require that recipients of enrolment information must provide an undertaking to the VEC that they will use the information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and will return or destroy the information within a given timeframe. An offence should also be introduced to prohibit the distribution of applications to become a General Postal Voter by a person other than an electoral commission.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
12	The VEC recommends that provisions relating to supplementary elections are codified in the Electoral Act, and that section 72(4)(a) is amended to provide that the VEC must suppress the address of any electors who have become silent electors since the close of roll for the election that failed on the roll for a supplementary election.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. Supplementary election and re-election timelines and processes have been codified to align with the requirements for by-election timelines and processes. While the amendments specify that the electoral roll for a supplementary election or re-election must be the electoral roll that was prepared for the original election which failed or was voided, it is provided that we must remove the address of any person who became a silent elector since the close of roll for the original election.

Technical recommendations

VEC technical recommendation		Legislative response
1	Amend section 3 of the Electoral Act to capture electronic means for wherever the law requires the VEC to 'deliver' material, and review references to giving or receiving material in accordance with this definition.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. Amendments have clarified that: › an application to become a general postal voter may be made by electronic communication › a request to be a silent elector may be made by electronic communication › we may provide enrolment information to RPPs, members and candidates by electronic communication › we may give certain written notices to a political party electronically during its registration process › a notice in regard to a party's application may be advertised by electronic means › a person's objection to a party's registration can be delivered by electronic communication.
2	Amend section 23A of the Electoral Act to insert a provision that the VEC may initiate an update to an elector's enrolled address based on available information.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
3	Repeal section 24(4) of the Electoral Act and amend section 101 to include a provision that despite subsections (2) and (2A), a general postal voter application received in the period that commences after the close of roll and ends at the deadline for postal vote applications for an election is taken to be an application to vote by post in the election under subsection (1), as well as a general postal voter application for future elections.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
4	Amend section 44 of the Electoral Act to insert a requirement that a registered political party must nominate a person to be the registered officer within 14 days of the party ceasing to have a registered officer. This will ensure that the VEC has an authorised contact point with whom it can address party obligations, and avoid the need for the VEC to make contact with former staff of a registered political party.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.

	VEC technical recommendation	Legislative response
5	Amend sections 45(2)(f) and 58B(f) of the Electoral Act to replace 'names and addresses' with 'names, addresses, dates of birth and contact details' for party membership verification. Amend section 45 of the Electoral Act to include a provision defining 'contact details' as a person's phone number or e-mail address.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
6	Amend sections 47 and 47A of the Electoral Act to insert provisions compelling the VEC to refuse an application for the registration of a political party, or to refuse an application for a registered political party to change its registered name, abbreviation or logo if, in the opinion of the VEC, the name, abbreviation or logo of the political party: › is or resembles the name, abbreviation or logo of another political party which has a pending application for registration, where the other political party submitted its application first › is or resembles the name, abbreviation or logo to which a registered political party has submitted an application to change its registered name, abbreviation or logo, where that registered political party submitted its application first › is or resembles the registered name, abbreviation or logo of a political party which was at one point registered within the past 10 years › contains 'MP', 'MLA' or 'MLC' › is likely to lead an elector to mistakenly believe that the political party has a connection or relationship with a registered political party or parties.	This recommendation **has been partly actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. The registration requirements for a party name, abbreviation or logo have been amended to prohibit a name, abbreviation or logo which: › is very similar to that of a 'recognised political party', being a party that was registered in the previous 10 years › suggest a parliamentary office, such as MP, MLA or MLC › a reasonable person would think suggests a connection or relationship exists between the applicant party and an RPP if that connection or relationship does not exist. A requirement to refuse an application due to a party using the same or a similar name, abbreviation or logo of another party which submitted their application first **has not been actioned**.
7	Amend section 53(2) of the Electoral Act to replace 'registered officer' with 'registered officer and the secretary'.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act.
8	Amend section 69(4) of the Electoral Act to include that the sum of $350 required to be delivered with a nomination form can be paid by an electronic method of payment determined by the VEC.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act. The amendment provides that a nomination fee must be paid in a prescribed form. The Electoral Regulations were subsequently amended so that from 1 January 2027 the prescribed form is by electronic funds transfer or cash.

VEC technical recommendation		Legislative response
9	Amend section 76 of the Electoral Act to insert a provision that the VEC may, from time to time, determine a reasonable limitation on the number of scrutineers allowed in a voting centre under section 76(3) of the Electoral Act in order to maintain fair access for scrutineers, to meet health and safety requirements, or other lawful obligations.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
10	Amend section 94 of the Electoral Act to include a provision that an elector may not appoint a person to assist the elector to vote if the person is a scrutineer appointed under section 76.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
11	Amend section 110J(1) of the Electoral Act to include ballot papers deposited in ballot boxes at a voting centre designated as a mobile voting centre under section 65(2)(a)(ii).	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
12	Amend section 113(2) of the Electoral Act to replace the word 'Immediately' with the term 'As soon as practicable'.	This recommendation **has been actioned** by the Electoral Amendment Act.
13	Amend section 123(2)(b) of the Electoral Act to replace the words 'member's electorate' with 'district or region for which the member was elected'.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
14	Amend section 158A(1) of the Electoral Act to replace 'but excluding any prescribed exempted premises, any premises used as a private residence that is located within 100 metres of any designated entrance to the voting centre or any designated entrance to the grounds in which the voting centre is situated' with 'but excluding any prescribed exempted premises OR any premises used as a private residence that is located within 100 metres of any designated entrance to the voting centre or any designated entrance to the grounds in which the voting centre is situated'.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.

	VEC technical recommendation	Legislative response
15	Amend section 158A(3) of the Electoral Act to specify that it applies to 'a candidate for the district or region for which the Commission has appointed the voting centre'. Amend section 158A(3A) of the Electoral Act to specify that it applies when 'a registered political party has endorsed 2 or more candidates for the Council in an election for the region for which the Commission has appointed the voting centre'. Amend section 158A(3B) of the Electoral Act to specify that it applies despite a candidate endorsed by that political party displaying signs under subsection (3). To give effect to these amendments, amend section 65(1) of the Electoral Act to include a provision that the VEC must appoint each voting centre as a voting centre appointed for one or more districts and regions.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
16	Insert a provision into the Electoral Act to provide that any document that is ballot material is an exempt document under section 38 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic).	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
17	Amend Form A of the Electoral Regulations to allow a Medicare card or citizenship certificate as evidence of identity for enrolment, aligning with Commonwealth requirements and all other Australian jurisdictions. The prescribed forms of identification under regulation 29 of the Electoral Regulations should not be changed.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.
18	Amend section 48(2)(d) of the *Constitution Act 1975* (Vic) to replace 'being of unsound mind' with 'having a lack of cognitive capability, having been diagnosed by a qualified medical professional as such'.	This recommendation **has not been actioned**.

Appendix 5: Progress on operational commitments from Report to Parliament on 2022 state election and *Strategic service plan*

In our Report to Parliament on the 2022 state election, we made 16 commitments for immediate areas to improve operations at future elections.

We also made a number of targeted commitments in our *Strategic service plan* to deliver at the 2026 state election.

This appendix provides a summary of the progress of each of these operational commitments, including how they will be implemented at the 2026 state election.

Operational commitments from VEC Report to Parliament on the 2022 state election (October 2023)

Actioned

Operational commitment	Progress update
The VEC will continue to identify emerging trends in intensified scrutiny and electoral mis- and dis-information campaigns, and responding as required to ensure that critical election activities are not undermined.	This operational commitment was successfully deployed in recent state by-elections. We pre-bunked mis-information regarding the election writ by adding an item to our mis-information register linking to the scanned writ for each by-election. We have now adopted this approach into our operating model for future elections, including the 2026 state election, and this commitment is completed. See **4.1 Communication campaign**.

Operational commitment	Progress update
The VEC will increase the number of early voting centres at future elections to respond to the increasing demand amongst Victorian voters to vote early.	This operational commitment was successfully deployed in recent state by-elections. As part of our commitment to ensuring the OHS risk profile of the site and its surrounds are understood and treatments and controls are appropriately deployed, we committed to broadening our site assessments to extend beyond the leased site to the surrounding environment to ensure the safety of electoral participants. As a direct result, a campaigner registration trial was deployed for the 2025 Prahran District and Werribee District by-elections, as an extension of the risk management approach deployed in previous events. Following evaluation of the trial, a refined visitor registration model was trialled at the 2026 Nepean District by-election and will be deployed for the 2026 state election. We have now adopted the increase in EVCs into our operating model for future elections, including the 2026 state election, and this commitment is completed. See **2.4 Visitor registration, 1.7 Occupational Health & Safety** and **5. Venues and resources**.
The VEC intends to consolidate the number of election day voting centres to be able to more efficiently allocate resources to early voting.	This operational commitment was successfully deployed in recent state by-elections. We have now adopted this approach into our operating model for future elections, including the 2026 state election, and this commitment is completed. See **5. Venues and resources**.
The VEC will maintain its focus on the enrolment phase of its election advertising on the close-of-roll date, so that the number of electors enrolling 'on the day' is manageable at voting centres, and to reduce the number of rejected provisional votes.	This operational commitment was successfully deployed in recent state by-elections. We conducted radio, print and social media advertising in the week between the issue of the writ and the close of roll for each by-election, to encourage electors to enrol or update their enrolment prior to the close of roll. This was complemented by a media release and website content with the same key messaging. We have now adopted this approach into our operating model for future elections, including the 2026 state election, and this commitment is completed. See **4.1 Communication campaign**.

Operational commitment	Progress update
The VEC intends to expand the capacity of its electoral compliance team to triage and manage serious incidents, poor behaviour and other possible electoral offences that occur during elections and assist election staff and scrutineer management, including in regional areas.	This operational commitment was successfully deployed in recent state by-elections. Our intelligence function produced timely assessments, informing resourcing and rostering decisions, and establishing crucial structures and communication channels for future electoral events. Our electoral compliance team actively engaged with election management teams through training, defining clear lines of reporting, and escalation channels which streamlined constructive compliance, ensuring effective assessment and resolution of matters in both the field and at our head office locations. To support a timely response to any serious incidents and poor behaviour at voting locations during the events, the electoral compliance team maintained an increased presence throughout the voting periods. During early voting, the team attended the sites regularly and as needed. We have now adopted this approach into our operating model for future elections, including the 2026 state election, and this commitment is completed. See **11.2 Regulatory compliance**.
The VEC intends to further develop its partnership with the Victorian Public Service Commission, which provided a talent platform that could be leveraged for future events.	This operational commitment has been actioned for the 2026 state election and is completed. Through an established working relationship with the Victorian Public Service Commission we will engage with government departments to provide secondment opportunities where required to support roles during the election. See **6.1 Recruitment and sourcing**.

Operational commitment	Progress update
The VEC will conduct a website content review to ensure that all website content is up-to-date and accurate, remains accessible, and meets the needs of its audiences.	This operational commitment has been actioned for the 2026 state election and is completed. We completed a full audit of the VEC website in early 2026. This audit scraped information about all pages on the VEC website and rated them based on: › reading level › user traffic › intended audience › engagement rates. We created a schedule of page updates based on traffic and state election visibility. As at July 2026 we have improved the accessibility and usability of 140 existing pages on the VEC website, as well as reviewed the content for accuracy. We have also made multiple technical improvements to the VEC website to increase accessibility for users. As at 30 June 2026 our website was 95% compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Other technical improvements to page design and on-page navigation will be completed in time for the 2026 state election. We have created a schedule of future updates and will continue to improve the usability and accessibility of our website wherever possible.

In progress

Operational commitment	2026 state election update
The VEC will increase the focus in election management training on common areas of difficulty for election managers, including managing conflict and maintaining oversight over a greater number of tasks.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. A comprehensive suite of instructional products and training has been developed for election managers, providing clear guidance and expectations. The blended training program includes online and in-person opportunities to apply these instructions in real-life scenarios and build operational competence. See **6.7 Training and instructions**.

Operational commitment	2026 state election update
The VEC intends to expand Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks and Working with Children Checks to additional election roles at future election events.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. Through the updated Election Staff Pre-Employment Screening Guidelines, we have significantly expanded the application of Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks (NCCHCs) across a broader range of election positions. This includes a range of hub-based roles, with Hub Managers now also required to hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC). These changes strengthen workforce integrity controls and support the continued professionalisation of the election workforce.
The VEC intends to invest in deploying electronic roll mark-off to more issuing points on election day. This will provide real-time visibility of ballot paper consumption and an additional safeguard against accidental or intentional multiple voting as election officials will be recording voter turnout through a secure online list of electors.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. For the 2026 state election we are deploying electronic roll mark-off across all EVCs, with all these venues also operating as election day voting centres (VCs). Additional electronic roll mark-off devices will be deployed to all medium and large VCs, leading to an estimated 70% of voters who cast votes in person being marked off the roll electronically. See **2.2 Expansion of electronic roll mark-off**.
The VEC intends to further refine labour hire agency service levels for future election events, in line with the changing nature of the labour market.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. To strengthen labour hire readiness and responsiveness to labour market pressures, we have negotiated bespoke agreements with our panel of labour hire providers. These agreements include defined service levels and delivery expectations designed to support timely workforce mobilisation, improve candidate supply, and provide greater assurance that staffing requirements can be met during peak election delivery.
The VEC will continue to examine ways to relieve pressures on election day voting centre staff, including greater centralisation of some count activities.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. Where count planning indicates that election day voting centres cannot complete the primary count of their Legislative Council region votes before 11 pm, staff will only reconcile these votes and return them to the hub, where they will be prepared and dispatched to CAS for counting.
The VEC will uplift its count planning to improve the timeliness of count information and increase the period of notice given in relation to count activities.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. This review is in progress as we develop count plans for the 2026 state election and finalise processes for communicating with candidates, parties and scrutineers during counting. See **10.1 Counting**.

Operational commitment	2026 state election update
The VEC will investigate options to better utilise the available counting timeline for Legislative Assembly election counts, while still trying to ensure that outcomes are known for as many districts as possible in a timely manner.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. The majority of first preference counts are expected to complete within 9 days of election day, with preference distributions expected to complete within 13 days of election day. The centralisation of the Legislative Council region election counts has allowed Legislative Assembly counting timelines to stay largely consistent with the last election despite the introduction of the recheck 2-candidate-preferred count and full preference distributions in every district election.
The VEC will consider better promotion opportunities for Auslan interpreting services with the aim to boost access and usage.	This operational commitment will be actioned for the 2026 state election. We will promote Auslan interpreting services via stakeholder communication, our Electoral Access Advisory Group, social media channels, *Be Heard* newsletter and other media.

Not actioned

Operational commitment	2026 state election update
The VEC will investigate options to implement computerised counting more broadly for Legislative Assembly elections.	This operational commitment was not actioned. It was not possible to introduce the required changes to our district computer count system for this election to expand the use of computerised counting more broadly. This commitment has been deferred for consideration in the future.

Targeted commitments from VEC *Strategic service plan* (May 2025)

Strategic objective 1:
Voting options for all voters and situations

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Redefine our voting footprint	Increase the number of early voting centres located across Victoria from 150 to over 250 sites and ensure new early voting centre locations can accommodate accessible, in-person voting wherever possible.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will increase the number of early voting centres (EVCs) from 155 at the 2022 state election to approximately 200 venues, including approximately 100 joint EVCs. While joint early voting centres are co-located within the same physical venue, each operates as an additional early voting location serving a separate electoral district. On this basis, the commitment to provide more than 250 in-district early voting sites across Victoria has been actioned. We are committed to ensuring that each district has at least one fully accessible election day VC or EVC to provide maximum access for voters. See **5.1 Voting venues**.
	Offer extended voting hours throughout the early voting period to meet community expectations.	This commitment **has not been progressed** for the 2026 state election. We trialled extended hours (6 pm to 8 pm) during State by-elections, and voting numbers were markedly lower in this period. The extended hours caused significant additional staffing costs and an added level of operational complexity to support up to 13 hours of operation each day. At the 2026 state election, all EVCs will have static opening hours of 9 am to 6 pm each day, except Sunday 22 November when EVCs are closed. See **2.1 Reduced early voting period**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Expand operations at early voting centres to include candidate nominations (during the nomination period) and election day voting.	This commitment **has been partly actioned** for the 2026 state election. EVCs will not be accepting candidate nominations. This activity will continue to be delivered by election managers in the election offices located in hubs. However, for the first time all EVCs will become election day voting centres (VCs) to provide a consistent voter experience for the entire voting period. See **8.3 Nominations** and **5.1 Voting venues**.
	Transition stand-alone election offices into centralised hubs responsible for multiple voting centres.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will establish 32 hubs that will consolidate the operations of the 88 previous standalone election offices for the 2022 state election. Hubs will be equipped with facilities for election managers to meet with candidates and their representatives and will offer a counter service for members of the public. See **5.2 Hubs**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Establish a centralised activity site for use as a multi-purpose venue at each stage of the election – from induction of new staff to counting of ballots and declaration of results.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will operate a centralised activity site (CAS) close to the Melbourne CBD. The site houses multiple key features, including: › the centralised computer count centre › the centralised processing centre › a telephone-assisted voting (TAV) centre – one of 2 call centres, this call centre will capture and record TAV votes only › the vote exchange › a flexible operational space that can be configured to support large-scale manual counting and other election activities as required. With up to 1,800 workers located at the CAS each day, the dedicated site management team will oversee site access and inductions for staff, candidates and scrutineers attending the site. The CAS will also host other critical projects such as the operational command centre, centralised ballot material collation to support EVC and election day VC ballot material deliveries to hubs and the IT help desk surge service that will provide real-time support throughout the voting period, including support for the broader rollout of electronic roll mark-off across voting centres for the election.
	Trial new processes to track and reduce queuing times.	This commitment **has been partly actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will manage queues inside and outside EVCs and election day VCs to ensure voters can move quickly through the process and that voters who require assistance receive appropriate support. At busy venues, we will assign staff as queue controllers with the primary responsibility of managing queues during peak periods. We will monitor queue times and respond to improve voter flow where possible. See **9.3 Voting channels**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Review of mobile voting	Review our mobile voting policy to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose, reflects changes to the operating environment and aligns with both the AEC's policy and community expectations.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. The delivery plans that set out our operational approach have been updated to reflect current operating conditions, community expectations and consideration of the AEC's approach to mobile voting services.
Conduct research to identify barriers to entry	Appoint Democracy Ambassadors to deliver education and information sessions to increase electoral literacy and enrolment for priority community groups.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. A team of peer educators will be trained and supported to deliver electoral information and enrolment outreach in areas identified as having lower levels of participation and higher rates of informal voting. See **4.8 Public engagement**.
	Conduct further research on the barriers preventing voter participation.	This commitment **will be actioned** for the 2026 state election. Research on barriers to voter participation has been an ongoing focus of our research on voter turnout and participation more broadly. To date, this includes: › detailed analysis of non-voting data by area and cohort › direct surveying of voters on voting behaviours and motivation › research on voter experience at voting centres › more detailed analysis of direct enrolment data. Findings of the above, with updated 2026 state election data and additional analysis, will be published as a standalone voter turnout and participation report. The report will include a separate section on barriers to voter participation.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Implement new activities based on research findings to reduce the barriers to entry. For example, trialling low-sensory voting during the early voting period to support neurodiverse communities.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. New activities that we are implementing for the 2026 state election include: › rolling out a new advertising campaign along with targeted campaigns to under-represented voter cohorts › providing an EasyVote guide to every household in Victoria › improving our website's accessibility and useability › providing one low sensory voting site in each district across Victoria › deploying a redesigned postal ballot back based on research to provide an improved postal voting experience › targeting our education and outreach activities based on research into voting and non-voting trends and behaviours.
Redesign of ballot material	Redesign the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council ballot papers into distinct, separate products to increase legibility for the voter and improve our printing, handling and throughput.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Unlike previous state elections, for the 2026 state election Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers and Legislative Council region election ballot papers will be printed as 2 separate ballot papers. We are also undertaking further ballot material redesign including redesigning the postal declaration envelope, redesigning the provisional, absent and early postal vote forms and envelopes, and applying enhanced security features to ballot papers. Redesigning ballot materials will also help reduce production waste. See **9.1 Ballot material**.
	Expand the number of print suppliers we work with and develop an in-house print capability to increase our range of printing options.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have established an in-house print and mail house workshop to reduce outsourcing and provide additional contingency to meet print demands.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Refined counting locations and practices	Publish a full count plan at the commencement of the election and clearly communicate any changes to candidates, registered political parties and other interested parties.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Following the close of nominations, and once count planning is finalised, we will provide candidates and RPPs with the following count plans in the week before election day: › election day VC count plan (statewide) › count plan for activities in each district hub › count plan for all vote exchange, preliminary scrutiny, extraction, manual counting and data entry activities occurring at the CAS. In these plans, we will list activity dates, start times and, for most activities, the number of election officials involved in the activity. We will communicate any changes to these plans to candidates and RPPs as and when required. See **10.1 Counting**.
	Conduct full preference distributions in all Legislative Assembly elections.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. In all district elections, a full preference distribution will be conducted. See **10.1 Counting**.
	Introduce joint early voting centres to reduce the amount of 'out-of-district' early votes that need to move through the centralised vote exchange for counting (Legislative Assembly) and centralise Legislative Council counting activities.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will reduce the number of out-of-district early votes overall by establishing up to 100 joint early voting centres for neighbouring districts. This will allow for a higher proportion of early votes overall to be counted on election night and the following day. Local vote exchanges between districts co-located within hubs will also reduce the volume of out-of-district early votes needing to be exchanged centrally, bringing forward the earliest they can be counted and ensuring they are counted locally. See **5.2 Hubs**. Legislative Council counting activities have been centralised. See **10.1 Counting**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Publish improved key performance metrics.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We undertook a comprehensive review of the performance measures in place at the 2022 state election. The review considered recent Electoral Matters Committee findings and recommendations related to measuring election performance, whilst also accounting for: › the need for consistency with indicators and measures used at previous events › new election services and initiatives › changes in the electoral environment, including legislative change › specific VEC commitments in response to Electoral Matters Committee recommendations. See **Appendix 6: Evaluation framework**
Enhanced print capability	Identify options to streamline ballot printing and mail insertion production. Initially, focused on the design of election products (to maximise output), followed with the diversification of suppliers to reduce the overall risks associated with limited suppliers.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We will print Legislative Assembly district election ballot papers and Legislative Council region election ballot papers as 2 separate ballot papers. Reducing the production complexity enables them to be produced with a larger variety of print suppliers and maximise production throughput using the VEC's own print capability. We have completed a ballot material redesign including redesigning the postal declaration envelope, redesigning the provisional, absent and early postal vote forms and envelopes, and applying enhanced security features to ballot papers. A ballot material production plan has been established that ensures all sites printing ballot material have sufficient capacity to contingency print should there be any delay in the printing schedule. See **9.1 Ballot material**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Deploy initiatives that provide greater visibility of the management, movement and handling of ballot material during the election cycle.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Our ballot material management policy has been updated and includes improvements to our systems, procedures and to ballot paper tracking and security. This will further improve transparency in the management of ballot materials throughout the election. We will monitor select indicators to provide visibility and enable timely responses to operational issues. These indicators include: › the anticipated versus actual consumption rate of printed ballot papers › the movement and reconciliation activities associated with the distribution of ballot papers › the counting and return of ballot papers relevant to each activity. A core focus of this work will be the traceability, location, and custody of ballot materials. We will provide end-to-end assurance over the custody and movement of election materials, while maintaining the flexibility required to respond to the dynamic needs of a statewide electoral event. See **5.4 Transport and logistics** and **9.1 Ballot material**.
Venue and resource management	Invest significantly in ensuring the better allocation and management of resources.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Election offices will be co-located across 32 hubs (between 1–4 districts per hub) to improve access to resources and shared operational and support services. We have also leased a long-term centralised activity site (CAS) close to the Melbourne CBD which has been developed with accessibility for all stakeholders and operational efficiency in mind. See **5. Venues and resources**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
	Identify opportunities to reduce the overall transportation effort required to support election events.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Improvements include: › establishment of a transport network that provides adequate resourcing to meet the demands of all election venues over the election cycle, and takes into account the wider venue footprint › implementation of transport schedules that are efficient, reliable and aligned with operational timelines, ensuring venues can commence and continue operations without disruption › use of OptimoRoute by our transport provider to improve route planning, vehicle utilisation and delivery scheduling, reducing unnecessary travel and supporting more efficient and responsive transport operations › establishment of 32 hubs that will improve access to resources and shared operational and support services › hub sites will each have access to 2 transport vans to allow for movements between each hub and its supported locations. The vans may be used for unplanned transfers as part of our contingency planning. › hub-based vote exchange that allows early votes taken for districts within the same hub as the dispatching district, and that were marked off in real time using our electronic roll mark-off application, to be exchanged locally. See **5.2 Hubs**, **5.4 Transport and logistics** and **10.1 Counting**.

Strategic objective 2:
Accessing electoral information in real time

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Evergreen instructional products	Produce a standardised library of instructional products, training material and guidelines for state and local government elections.	This commitment **has been partly actioned** for the 2026 state election. A comprehensive suite of instructional products and training have been developed for election staff across both state and local government elections. Written work instructions provided to each role include manuals, guides and task sheets tailored to specific responsibilities. The training program developed from these instructional products combined online and face-to-face training, together with just-in-time reminder materials. Work continues to standardise these resources to produce a library of evergreen products for use between state and local government elections, including by-elections. See **6.7 Training and instructions**.
Ballot material management	Implement a VEC-specific materials tracking system to monitor movement between defined locations and integrate with our existing systems.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Our ballot material management policy has been updated and includes improvements to our systems, including procedures that enhance our visibility of ballot material tracking and security. See **9.2 Ballot material tracking and security**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Roll management uplift	Align the AEC and VEC rolls to ensure consistency between the 2 rolls, and transfer some of our administrative functions to the AEC.	This commitment **has been significantly progressed** for the 2026 state election. The most recent statistics show the rolls are 99.79% aligned. The VEC and the AEC share responsibility for maintaining enrolment in Victoria under a joint roll management arrangement. Both agencies have aligned practices to the extent allowable under existing legislation to remove processes contributing to roll divergence. Significant reduction in historical divergence has also been achieved through targeted roll integrity initiatives. We work closely with the AEC to ensure that enrolment data received by the close of roll is processed by the AEC within 24 hours. See **7. Enrolment activities**.
	Upgrade technology supporting our roll management system through a structured improvement program.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have upgraded the technology supporting our Roll Management System which will deliver increased security and enable a range of improved roll management and communication functions.
	Review our legislated data release obligations to ensure our practices remain compliant and aligned with requirements.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have improved our practices regarding our legislated roll data release obligations to candidates and parties. See **7. Enrolment activities**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Electronic roll mark-off	Redevelop our electronic roll mark-off system to enable large-scale deployment at the 2026 state election for both early and election day voting.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Redevelopment of our electronic roll mark-off system supports a significant expansion of electronic roll mark-off, which at previous elections was limited to early and specialist voting services only. We are planning for 70% of electors voting in-person in the 2026 state election to be marked off the roll using electronic roll mark-off. An added feature of our redeveloped application is that voting can continue in an offline mode if internet connectivity is lost. The devices will sync when connectivity is re-established. This feature will reduce the need to use scannable rolls if electronic roll mark-off devices go offline. See **9.3 Voting channels**.
Geographic Information System uplift	Invest in our GIS software to produce higher quality maps for internal and external stakeholders and integrate geospatial capability and access to geospatial data more effectively across our operations.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Our GIS software has been updated and upgraded to allow us to provide better maps and analysis for a wider range of election planning and tracking activities, as well as being incorporated in multiple reporting dashboards and applications supporting location and data-driven decision making. Improvements to our election venue locator map include an interstate and overseas button for electors searching for voting locations outside Victoria and links to accessibility guides (PDF) for early voting centres (where available).
Election Management System uplift	Adopt and implement a modern Identity and Access Management security framework to streamline and automate user identity and access management.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. The transition from Active Directory to Microsoft's modern Identity and Access Management platform has been completed and provides the foundation for secure, reliable and scalable services supporting the 2026 state election.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Centralised command centre	Establish an operational command centre based on the National Incident Emergency Management System to coordinate responses to incidents during the delivery phase of an election.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. An operational command centre will be co-located at the CAS for maintaining a centralised overview in proximity to election activities. The operational command centre supports the situational awareness required to manage our election delivery and venues and covers both operations and compliance oversight. See **3.5 Operational Command Centre**.
Management of mis-information	In collaboration with other EMBs, academic and communication experts, we will continue to test strategies to counter mis- and disinformation campaigns.	This commitment **will be actioned** for the 2026 state election. To combat electoral mis-information campaigns, we will promote digital literacy and encourage a critical approach to the consumption of election information and third-party advertising via a statewide advertising campaign – Stop and consider. See **4.1 Communication campaign**.

Strategic objective 3:
Intuitive experiences for all candidates

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Analysis and review of the candidate journey	Map the customer journey for candidates and identify opportunities for improvement. We will ensure clear and consistent messaging is a priority, along with ample training opportunities for all candidates.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We are implementing a suite of new and updated resources for candidates, political parties and other political participants to support their understanding of critical timelines and responsibilities. We will continue to provide updated information and support to political parties applying for registration, currently registered political parties, and prospective independent candidates throughout the months leading into the election timeline. This includes early and more regular information sessions for prospective candidates, as well as clearer contact points, escalation pathways and service levels for raising and addressing concerns or issues. See **8. Candidates and parties**.
Bulk candidate nominations redevelopment	Identify and deploy improvements to the bulk candidate nominations process and application by reducing manual processes and other administrative burdens.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We are updating our endorsed nominations application for registered political parties. See **8.3 Nominations**.
Results and computer count enhancements	Complete enhancements to our computer count system.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have completed enhancements to our results and computer count systems, including introducing: › a recheck 2-candidate-preferred count › full preference distributions › enhancements to the results data feed › the ability to data-enter above-the-line votes (twice) and complete a computerised recheck of the Legislative Council region elections. See **10. Counting and results**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Managing relationships between election officials and candidates, campaigners and scrutineers	Upgrade training materials for election managers and officials to foster collaboration and strengthen their relationship with electoral participants. This will reflect a clear process for escalating complaints involving election officials, candidates, campaigners and scrutineers.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Messaging and instructions have been updated across instructional products and training to ensure clarity regarding the roles, rights and responsibilities of electoral participants and the key part they play in elections. Instructions and procedures have been emphasised to improve understanding of requirements when interacting with candidates, campaigners and scrutineers, including regular communication, responsiveness, and issue escalation. See **6.7 Training and instructions**.
	Refine the campaigner and scrutineer registration process to meet our occupational health and safety obligations while providing an easy and trusted process for campaigners.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We are providing additional campaigner support, through a dedicated campaigner handbook and a visitor registration initiative that reflects our ongoing commitment to OHS and positive voting experiences. See **8. Candidates and parties**.
How-to-vote card publication and management	Enhance our website's capability to publish how-to-vote cards more efficiently.	This recommendation **will be actioned** for the 2026 state election. We are making significant improvements to the way we publish how-to-vote cards to the VEC website. This includes: › improving the data source file structure for how-to-vote card uploads, so that it is faster and easier to publish them to the website during the registration period › improving the design of the how-to-vote card pages › improving the design of the tables on the how-to-vote card pages, so that it is easier for voters to find the information they are looking for. These improvements will be fully delivered in October 2026.

Strategic objective 4:
Safe and empowered employees

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Equipping our staff with the skills they require	Implement the findings and recommendations from the external audit of election manager training.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have built on the findings of the external audit into our 2024 local government election manager training and scaled this training model to accommodate the needs of the new roles in the election hub operating model.
	Conduct a skills gap analysis, using psychometric testing and embed integrity measures to professionalise the election workforce.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. Election management team (EMT) and hub management team (HMT) applicants undergo a rigorous selection process to confirm they have the required skills for these complex roles. We conducted psychometric testing for our EMT and HMT candidates using Work-related Risk and Integrity Scale (WRISc). The assessment provided an evidence-based view of workforce integrity risk profiles and was designed to identify behavioural risk themes across the cohort. Findings from the program will inform training and future workforce development activities. See **6.1 Recruitment and sourcing**.
	Develop a continuing professional development program for our core staff to strengthen internal capability.	This commitment **has been partly actioned** for the 2026 state election. Core staff appointed to election roles will complete a dedicated training pathway for their role. Training will combine online and in-person sessions depending on role complexity. This approach will continue to deepen electoral expertise within our core workforce. See **6.6 VEC core staff**.

Activity	2026 state election targeted commitment	Progress update
Growing our senior election official pool	Analyse workforce trends to shape future recruitment strategies and explore alternative resourcing models.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have conducted a full review of our process for recruiting senior election officials to improve efficiency and ensure we can meet pool targets. Our recruitment campaigns are designed to diversify our workforce with members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities and younger voters. See **6.1 Recruitment and sourcing**.
	Review the senior election official pool strategy and consider a tiered system to support the expanding scope of our work in both state and local council elections.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We have expanded and diversified our senior election official pool from 300 people to over 500 people and our election casual database has been refreshed to ensure only active expressions of interest are retained. See **6. Workforce**.
Supporting staff safety	Following the successful deployment at the 2024 local council elections, roll out staff training of our Safe@Work psychological health and safety program, along with electronic reporting for occupational health and safety incidents and near misses.	This commitment **has been actioned** for the 2026 state election. We are enhancing our OHS reporting through system and process improvements. We have implemented a new incident management system to support our care and response strategy. Collateral has been developed to let any staff report incidents, hazards and near misses by scanning a QR code. The Safe@Work psychological health and safety program is progressing through psychosocial workshops and risk register reviews. This will be used to inform training to staff. Compliance training module developed for election staff includes identifying and reporting psychosocial hazards and harm.

Appendix 6: Evaluation framework

For the 2026 state election we will adopt a new framework for the evaluation of elections. We developed this framework to:

- provide an overarching architecture to inform evaluative activity in election delivery at the VEC
- ensure objectivity and accuracy in how we conduct evaluation
- ensure consistency and common understanding about what and how to evaluate, and the types of data required.

The framework comprises key evaluation questions (KEQs) and a program logic. The strategic initiatives adopted for the 2026 state election and performance measures will also be incorporated as part of the evaluation framework.

Key evaluation questions (KEQs)

The KEQs cover key priorities or areas of interest for the VEC and guide data collection to ensure evidence is generated in support of service improvements. Each KEQ is broken into more focused or specific questions (lines of enquiry) to aid in this process. The following KEQs guide the evaluation of the state election services.

- **KEQ 1 'Efficiency':** To what extent has the VEC demonstrated efficiency in the delivery of the 2026 state election?
- **KEQ 2 'Effectiveness':** To what extent have planned objectives and outcomes of the 2026 state election been achieved?
- **KEQ 3 'Future Considerations':** To what extent are the VEC's operations able to deliver the intended outcomes into the future?

Program Logic

The program logic provides a structured approach to the monitoring and assessment of success and impact across a range of service deliverables. The intended outcomes of particular election services are mapped back to activities and outputs, detailing the logical steps involved in planning and delivery. Various indicators have been identified as part of the logic to allow progress towards specific outcomes to be measured over the immediate-, medium- and long-term.

The program logic is structured around 4 key strategic areas: staff (wellbeing), voters, processes and systems, and trust.

Strategic initiatives

We will evaluate the strategic initiatives adopted for the 2026 state election as part of the evaluation framework.

Performance measures

In preparation for the 2026 state election, we undertook a comprehensive review of the performance measures in place at the 2022 state election. The review considered recent Electoral Matters Committee (EMC) findings and recommendations related to measuring election performance, while also accounting for:

- the need for consistency with indicators and measures used at previous events
- new election services and initiatives
- changes in the electoral environment, including legislative change
- specific VEC commitments in response to EMC recommendations.

As part of the review the VEC drew on performance monitoring best practice and standardisation to assist in uplifting the indicators and measures in place for the 2026 state election. All performance indicators were developed in alignment with our *Strategy 2027*.

For the 2026 state election, performance measures will be organised around the following key election services:

- Legislation and regulation
- Candidate and registered political party (RPP) services
- Communications and education
- Public enquiries and complaints
- Voting services and venues, including accessibility
- Election staffing
- Counting and results

The organising framework for presenting our performance measures has also been clarified. Each performance measure has an indicator, a measurement, and a target. For consistency, our performance indicators, measurements and targets are defined as follows:

- **Indicator:** what aspect of our election service performance is being measured
- **Measurement:** how we measure our performance for the specific indicator, including the data used to assess performance against any measure.
- **Target:** the targeted result of measurement that meets our performance goals

1. Legislation and regulation

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Compliance with legislated dates	Proportion of legislated dates met, including: › Close of roll › Close of nominations › Start of early voting period › Close of how-to-vote card registration › Start of election day voting	100%
Return of writ	Writ returned by date specified	19/12/2026
Cyber security vulnerabilities in critical systems remediated	Proportion of identified Critical- and High-rated vulnerabilities remediated	100%

2. Candidate and RPP services

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Increased communications with candidates and RPPs	Number of election information sessions for the 2026 state election delivered before close of nominations	18 sessions delivered
Impactful communications with candidates and RPPs	Number of election information session phases delivered before close of nominations	3 session phases delivered
Use of the VEC's bulk nominations tool	Proportion of RPP endorsed nominations prepared using bulk nomination tool	80%
Candidate satisfaction with the VEC's delivery of the election	Percentage of candidates who report they are satisfied with how the election was conducted	70%

3. Communications and education

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Voter awareness of the VEC's election advertising campaign	The rate of overall recall in independent research with voters	88%
Voter subscription to VoterAlert	Proportion of total voters enrolled subscribed to VoterAlert	55% or above
Visitors to the VEC website	Number of unique visits to the VEC website between 30 September and 31 December 2026	5% increase (compared to the equivalent period at the 2022 state election)
Provision of the EasyVote guide to Victorian households	Percentage of electors who recall receiving the EasyVote guide	55% or above
Impact of social media posts	Reach (number of impressions for paid and earned social media) Engagement (measured variously depending on the channel or social media platform, including completed views, likes/shares and click through rate (CTR))	Total impressions for paid and earned social media Engagement measures and rates reported in other parts of the report to Parliament
Response to social media queries	Proportion of queries responded to within agreed timeframes of: › within 2 hours for simple queries › within 5 hours for complex queries	80%
Impact of the VEC's democracy ambassador program	Number of democracy ambassador sessions held (Number of localities and total number of attendees will be reported separately)	>300 democracy ambassador sessions
Impact of the VEC's community information sessions	Number of sessions held (Number of localities and total number of attendees will be reported separately)	>150 community information sessions

4. Public enquiries and complaints

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Number of public enquiry service (PES) communication channels	Increased number of PES communication channels from 2 to 4	4
Grade of Service for PES	› Proportion of calls answered within 120 seconds	90%
	› Proportion of accurate first-time email response provided within 8 hours	90%
	› Proportion of webchat first responses provided within 60 seconds	90%
Satisfaction with complaint process	› Proportion of complaints seeking a re-assessment of the outcome of their complaint	1% or less (of total complaints)
	› Proportion of complaints' outcomes overturned following a request for re-assessment.	1% or less (of total complainants requesting a re-assessment)
Response to complaints or election enquiries	Proportion of total complaints or election enquiries responded to or acknowledged within 5 working days	100%

5. Voting services and venues

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Number of assisted wheelchair accessible (AWA) venues*	Proportion of total early voting centres (EVCs) and election day voting centres (VCs)	80% (EVC) 40% (Election day VC)
Number of independent wheelchair accessible (IWA) venues	Proportion of total	25%
Accessibility of low sensory voting within districts	Proportion of districts with at least one IWA and AWA rated low sensory voting venue	100% (AWA or higher) 40% (IWA)
Implementation of electronic roll mark-off	Proportion of attendance voters statewide serviced by electronic roll mark-off	70% of all voters (attending a voting centre in person) marked off the roll
Efficiency of postal voting process	Proportion of postal vote applications processed within 24 hours of being received (from 5 days following the close of roll)	100%
Quality of postal voting process	Proportion of postal ballot pack envelopes rejected of all postal ballot packs returned	10% or less
Voter satisfaction with VEC voting services	Overall satisfaction rating of voters surveyed	88% (Satisfaction ratings by vote type and/or vote channel will be reported separately)

*AWA venue results include independent wheelchair access venues = AWA or better

6. Election staffing

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Online training completion rate	% of election staff completing required online training	95%
Attendance at face-to-face training	% of election staff required to attend face-to-face training	95%
Election staff sentiment about working for the VEC	% of election staff that would re-engage with the VEC	80%
Management of safe working activities	% of identified election operational risks with controls implemented and monitored	100%

7. Counting and results

Indicator	Measurement	Target
Percentage of Legislative Assembly first preference vote counts received from voting centres within 3 hours of close of voting (i.e. by 9 pm)	The number of voting centres that had their Legislative Assembly ordinary votes counted and entered into the election management system by 9 pm on election night	85%
Count of Legislative Assembly votes to first preference on election weekend	Proportion of total Legislative Assembly votes counted to first preferences on election weekend	75%

Appendix 7: Community languages

We will provide interpreter assistance telephone services for the languages listed below (plus one for 'all other languages').

Language	Telephone
Amharic	(03) 9209 0190
Arabic (MSA)	(03) 9209 0100
Assyrian Neo-Aramaic	(03) 9209 0160
Bosnian	(03) 9209 0191
Burmese	(03) 9209 0161
Cantonese	(03) 9209 0101
Croatian	(03) 9209 0102
Dari	(03) 9209 0193
Dinka	(03) 9209 0119
Farsi	(03) 9209 0195
Greek	(03) 9209 0103
Hazaragi	(03) 9209 0162
Italian	(03) 9209 0104
Karen	(03) 9209 0166
Khmer	(03) 9209 0192
Korean	(03) 9209 0194
Macedonian	(03) 9209 0105
Mandarin	(03) 9209 0106
Nepali	(03) 9209 0163
Pashto	(03) 9209 0167
Russian	(03) 9209 0196
Serbian	(03) 9209 0107
Somali	(03) 9209 0108

Language	Telephone
Spanish	(03) 9209 0109
Tamil	(03) 9209 0168
Thai	(03) 9209 0164
Turkish	(03) 9209 0110
Urdu	(03) 9209 0165
Vietnamese	(03) 9209 0111
All other non-English languages	(03) 9209 0112

Appendix 8: List of districts and regions

* Indicates district responsible for the ballot draw for that region

Region	District	
Eastern Victoria	› Bass	› Mornington
	› Evelyn	› Morwell*
	› Gippsland East	› Narracan
	› Gippsland South	› Nepean
	› Hastings	› Pakenham
	› Monbulk	
North-Eastern Metropolitan	› Bayswater	› Glen Waverley
	› Box Hill	› Ivanhoe
	› Bulleen	› Mill Park
	› Bundoora	› Ringwood*
	› Croydon	› Warrandyte
	› Eltham	
Northern Metropolitan	› Broadmeadows	› Northcote
	› Brunswick	› Pascoe Vale
	› Essendon	› Preston
	› Greenvale	› Richmond
	› Kalkallo	› Thomastown
	› Melbourne*	
Northern Victoria	› Benambra	› Mildura
	› Bendigo East	› Murray Plains
	› Bendigo West	› Ovens Valley
	› Eildon	› Shepparton*
	› Euroa	› Yan Yean
	› Macedon	

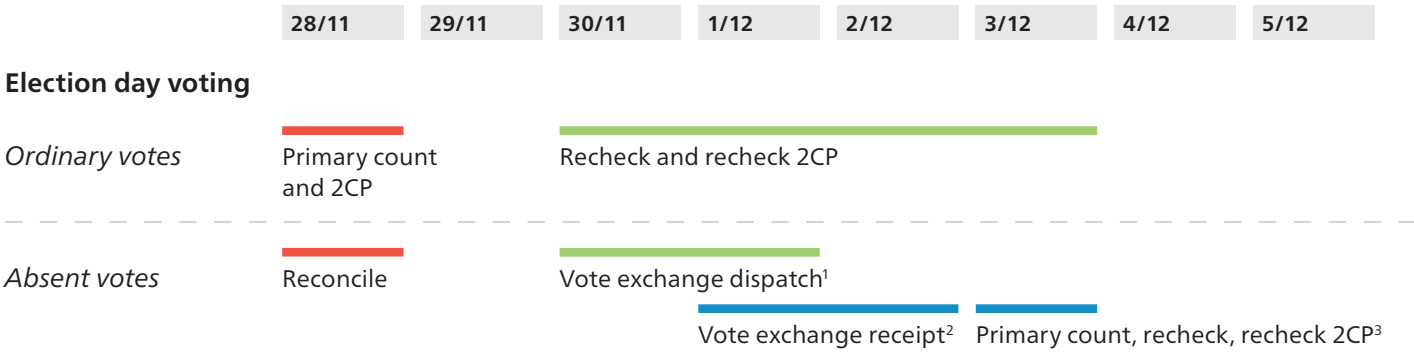
Region	District	
South-Eastern Metropolitan	› Berwick	› Mordialloc
	› Carrum	› Mulgrave
	› Clarinda	› Narre Warren North
	› Cranbourne	› Narre Warren South
	› Dandenong*	› Rowville
	› Frankston	
Southern Metropolitan	› Albert Park	› Kew
	› Ashwood	› Malvern
	› Bentleigh	› Oakleigh
	› Brighton	› Prahran
	› Caulfield	› Sandringham
	› Hawthorn*	
Western Metropolitan	› Footscray	› Sunbury
	› Kororoit	› Sydenham
	› Laverton	› Tarneit
	› Niddrie	› Werribee
	› Point Cook	› Williamstown
	› St Albans*	
Western Victoria	› Bellarine	› Polwarth
	› Eureka	› Ripon
	› Geelong*	› South Barwon
	› Lara	› South-West Coast
	› Lowan	› Wendouree
	› Melton	

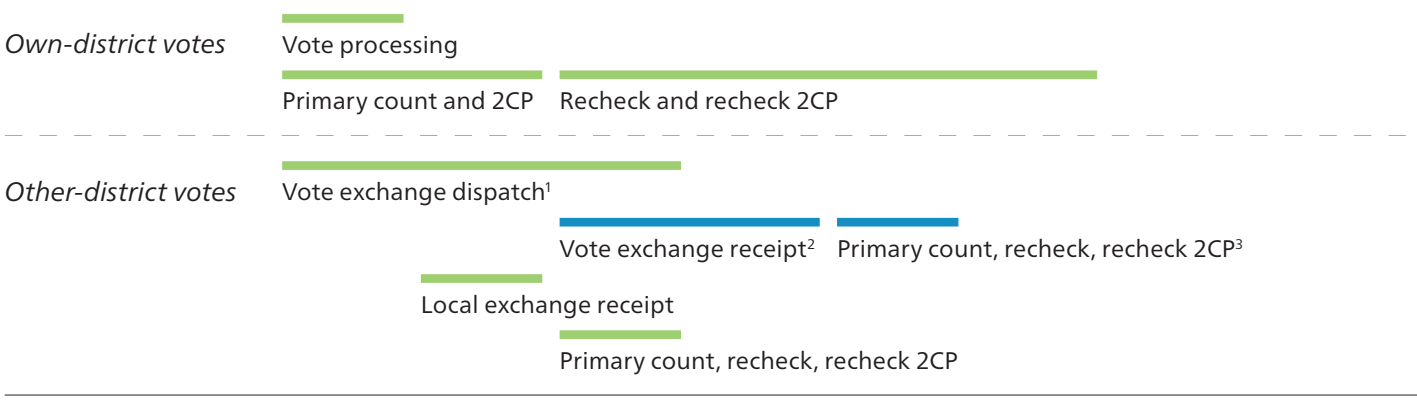
This page is intentionally left blank.

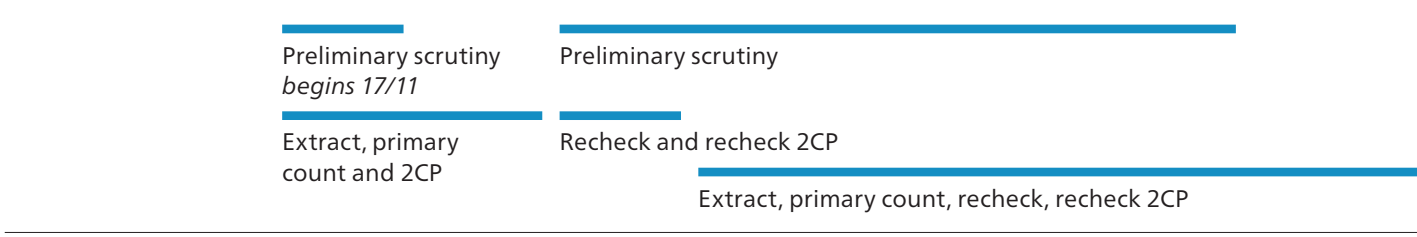
Appendix 9: Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timeline

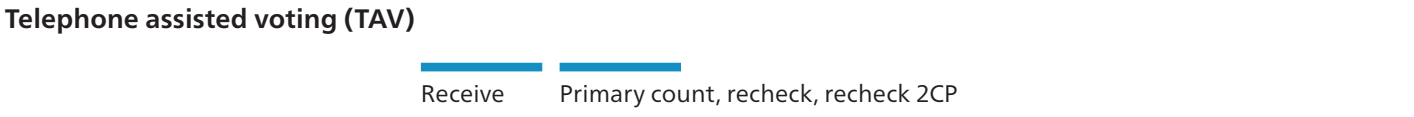
This high-level count timeline summarises the Legislative Assembly district election count process, including key counting, scrutiny and recheck activities, and the major milestones leading to the declaration of results.

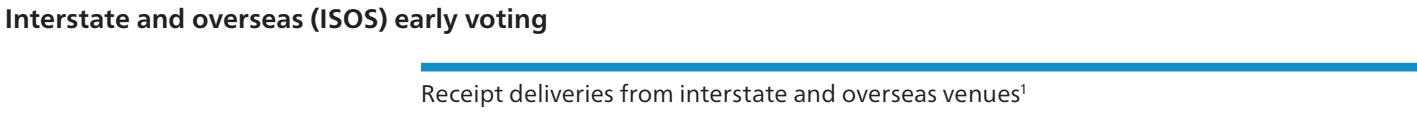
Legislative Assembly district election high-level count timeline

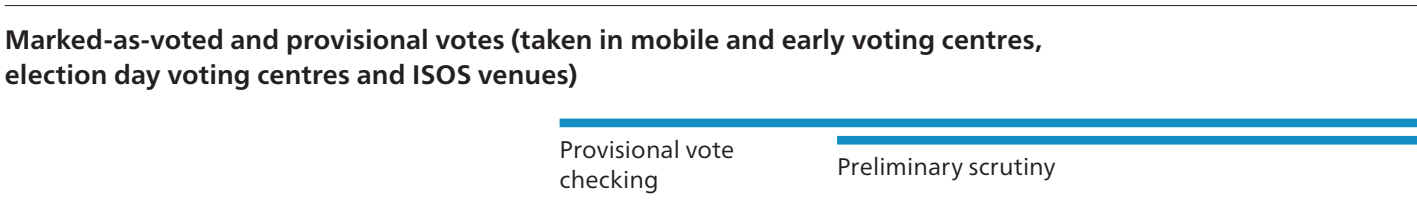










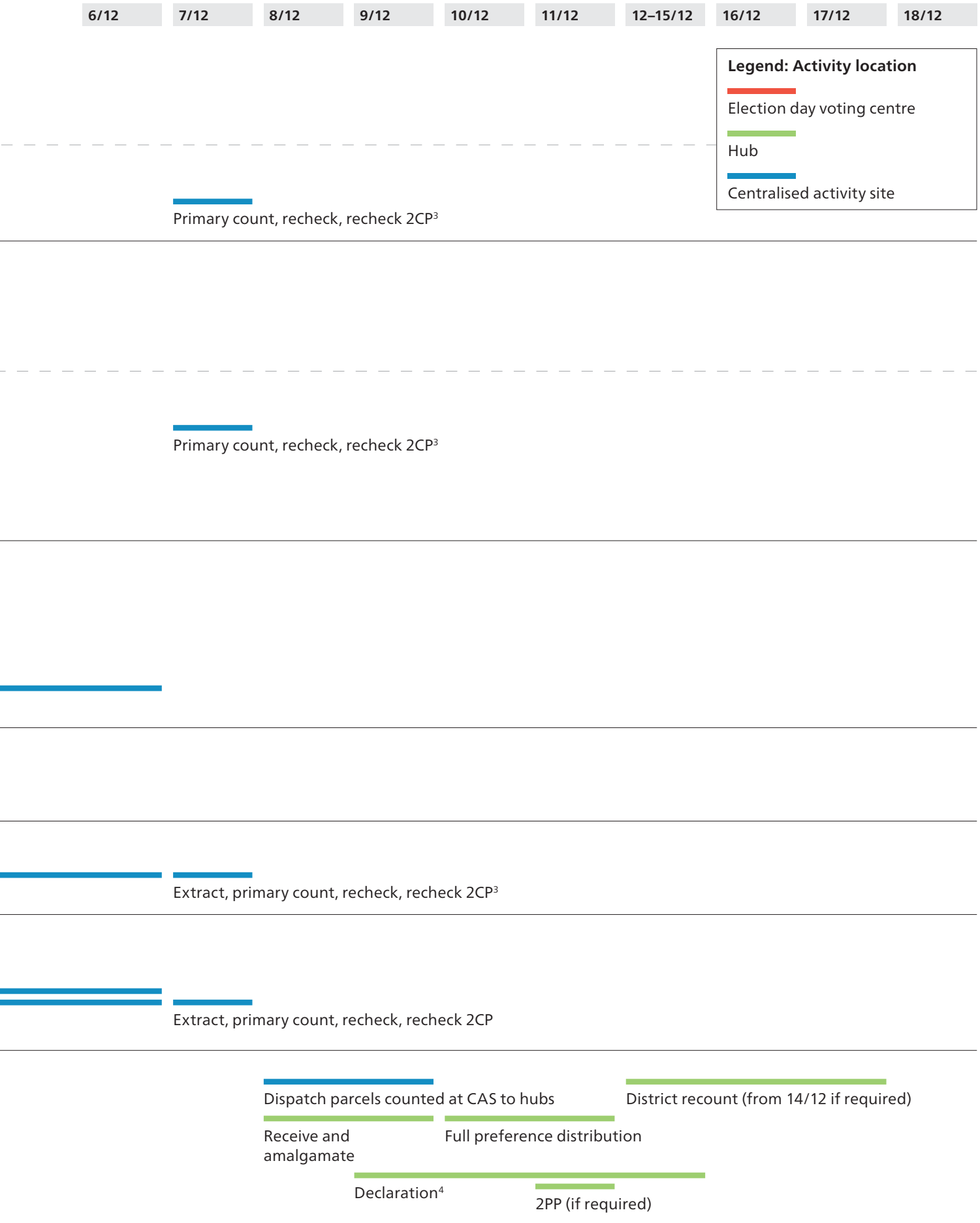




Primary and 2CP counts on election day commence from 6 pm

[1] *Includes any issued marked-as-voted or provisional votes*

[2] *Additional transfers may occur later in week if required*



[3] *Votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction*

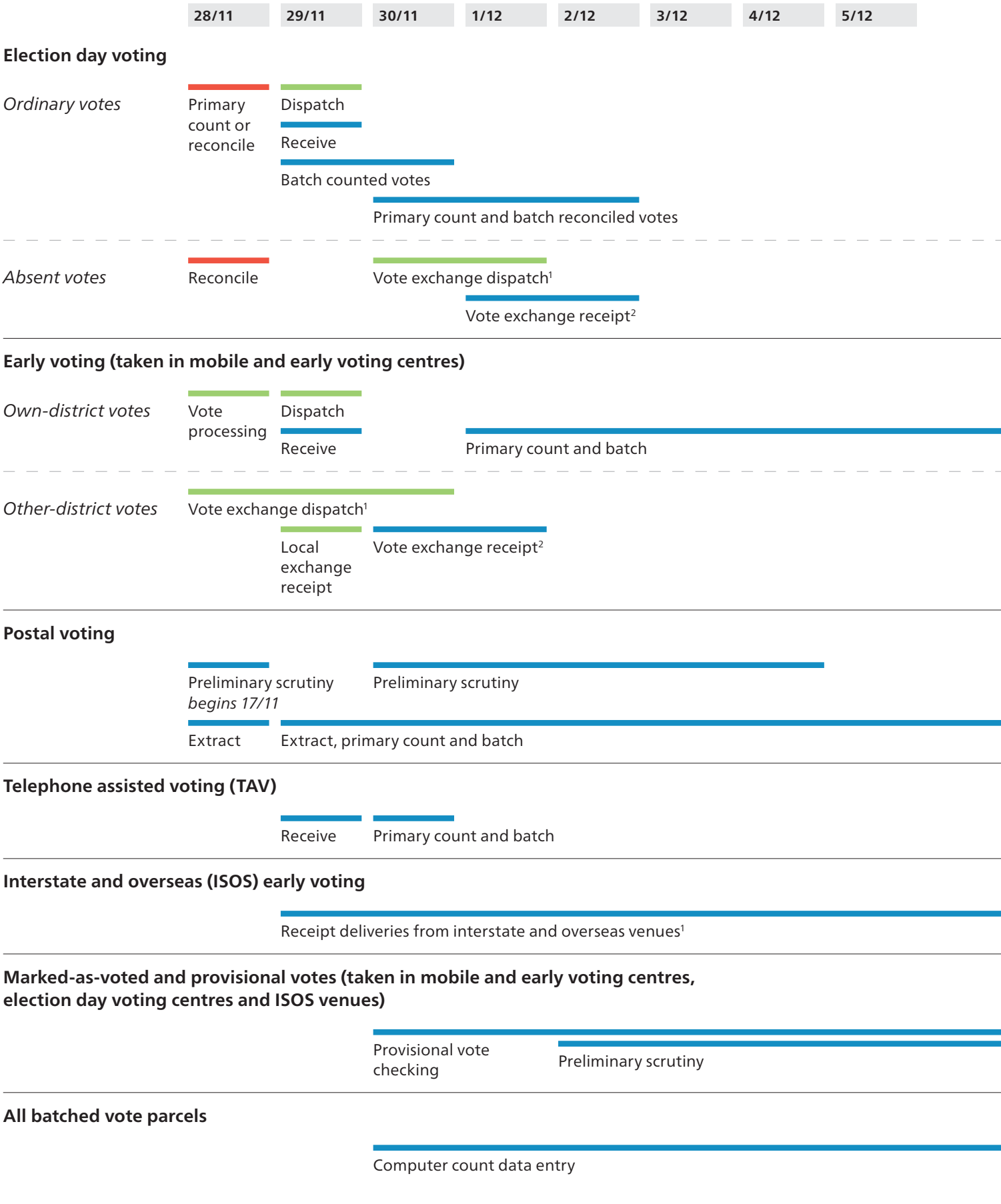
[4] *Any district election that has a recount will be declared once the recount is complete*

This page is intentionally left blank.

Appendix 10: Legislative Council region election high-level count timeline

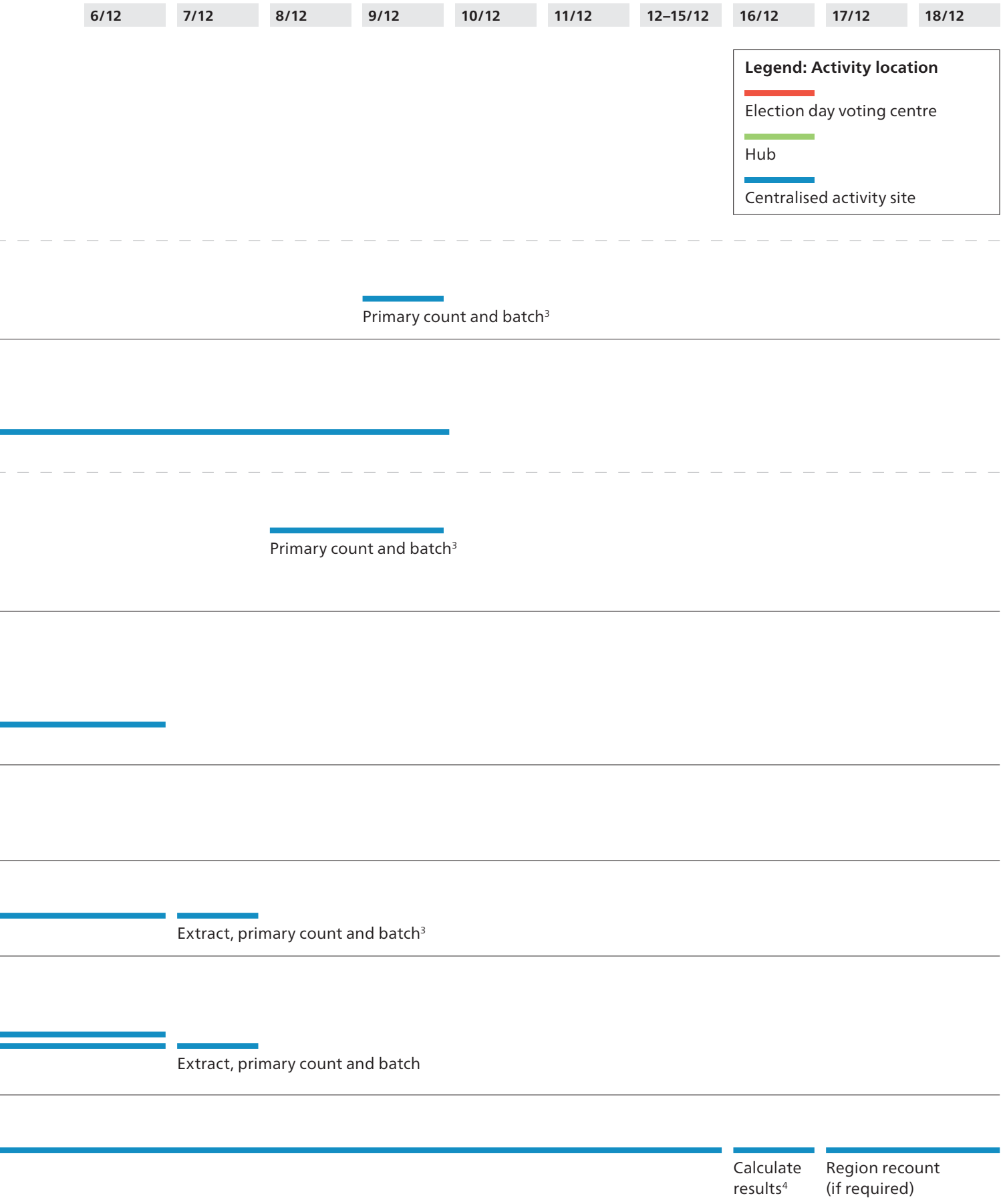
This high-level count timeline summarises the Legislative Council region election count process, showing the key counting, scrutiny and recheck activities, and the major milestones leading to the calculation and declaration of results.

Legislative Council region election high-level count timeline



[1] *Includes any issued marked-as-voted or provisional votes*

[2] *Additional transfers may occur later in week if required*



[3] *Votes in declaration envelopes will also undergo preliminary scrutiny and extraction*

[4] *Results will be declared a minimum 4 hours after calculation, unless a recount is required*

This page is intentionally left blank.

© **State of Victoria**
(Victorian Electoral Commission)
September 2026

This work, *Final service plan 2026 state election*, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/]. You are free to share this work under that licence, on the condition that you do not change any content and you credit the State of Victoria (Victorian Electoral Commission) as author and comply with the other licence terms. The licence does not apply to any branding, including Government logos.



Level 11, 530 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
T 131 832
info@vec.vic.gov.au
vec.vic.gov.au

Victorian Electoral Commission