



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report:

Conduct of the 2022 federal election and other matters – Final Report

MARCH 2025

Introduction

On 27 November 2023, the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) tabled a report titled *Conduct of the 2022 federal election and other matters – Final Report* (Final Report).

The Government's formal response to the recommendations of the Final Report follows below.

**Government Response to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report:
Conduct of the 2022 federal election and other matters – Final Report**

Majority:

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	<p>The Committee recommends the Government consider asking the Committee to inquire into increasing the size of the House of Representatives to reduce malapportionment and improve the ratio of electors to MPs.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The process for electing members of the House of Representatives involves a combination of provisions from the Constitution and the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> (Electoral Act).</p> <p>The Government notes that the membership of the House of Representatives increased from 125 to 148–151 members in 1984, although since then the population of Australia has increased significantly. If Members of Parliament’s (MPs’) divisions are too populous, this may negatively impact democracy and the MPs’ capacity to represent their constituents.</p> <p>Whilst the Government does not propose to increase the membership of the House of Representatives, this important issue requires further inquiry and consideration.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
2	<p>The Committee recommends that the representation of the territories in the Senate be increased from two to four Senators each.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The process for representation of the territories in the Senate involves section 122 of the Constitution and the Electoral Act.</p> <p>The Government notes that the membership of the Senate increased from six to 12 Senators for each State in 1984, bringing the total membership of the Senate to 76, whilst Territory representation has remained at two Senators each since 1974. The population of the two Territories has grown exponentially since 1974 with population of both the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory more than doubling. An increase would need to consider whether Territory Senators do not have the capacity to effectively represent their constituents given the increases in population.</p> <p>Whilst the Government has not proposed to increase the representation for the Territories in the Senate at this time, this important issue requires further inquiry and consideration in conjunction with any inquiry into the membership and size of the House of Representatives.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
3	<p>The Committee recommends that the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> is amended to permit on-the-day enrolment for federal elections and referendums.</p>	<p>Not supported</p> <p>The Government does not support on-the-day enrolment although, supports the Committee’s intention to strengthen opportunities for enfranchisement and participation.</p> <p>Enrolment and voting is compulsory for every Australian citizen aged 18 years or older. As of 4 July 2024, the enrolment rate was approximately 97.9%, which is the most accurate Commonwealth Electoral Roll in the history of Australia. On-the-day enrolment raises operational implications for the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).</p> <p>In February 2023, the Government made the <i>Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Enrolment Enfranchisement) Regulations 2023</i> which expanded the forms of identification a voter is able to produce in order to enrol or update their enrolment to include Medicare cards and Australian citizenship certificates. This has made enrolment more accessible for individuals who have previously faced barriers to enrolment to participate in elections and referendums.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
4	<p>The Committee recommends the Australian Electoral Commission continue to develop close relationships with relevant community organisations in addressing barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander electoral participation, particularly in remote areas, with a focus on the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locally-engaged workforces • community-staffed voting centres • voter education programs • appropriate communication. 	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC’s Indigenous Electoral Participation Program (IEPP) continues work to strengthen the program’s community-enabled model, building relationships and partnering with government agencies, community organisations and service providers to employ locally-engaged staff on an ongoing basis, and at electoral events.</p> <p>These include the program’s Engagement Teams based in each state and territory, the AEC’s Community Electoral Participation Officers (CEPO), Identified Temporary Election Workforce (ITEW) and local assistants. These AEC staff members help foster a culturally appropriate and safe environment for workers and voters. Additionally, the IEPP has furthered the AEC’s cultural capability through the development of In-Language Materials and Story Telling projects.</p> <p>IEPP has facilitated culturally appropriate voter education programs through engagement activities and the delivery of a Deadly Democracy project which focused on youth education. The IEPP intends to enhance its relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by continuing to strengthen its partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.</p> <p>The Government provided \$16.1 million over two years from 2022–23 in its <i>Further Enhancing Indigenous Engagement</i> measure in the October 2022-23 Budget.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
5	<p>The Committee recommends the repeal of subsections 93(8)(a) and 118(4) of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>.</p>	<p>Supported in part</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation in part.</p> <p>The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025</i> amended paragraph 93(8)(a) and subsection 118(4) of the Electoral Act to align it with contemporary understandings of cognitive impairment. The use of the term ‘unsound mind’ in the Electoral Act has been a subject of concern within the disability community and among disability advocacy groups for a significant period of time. The replacement terminology of ‘cognitive impairment’ was recommended by the AEC.</p> <p>This matter has been previously considered by the JSCEM, and the Government welcomes further inquiry on this in the future.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
6	<p>The Committee recommends that the AEC co-design independent, secure and accessible voting options with disability advocacy organisations and people within the disability community.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC has provided services for Electronically Assisted Voting (telephone voting) since 2007 for electors who are blind or have low vision, and since 2021 for electors working in, or in transit to or from, Antarctica. The AEC designed and implemented its telephone voting service in consultation with its Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). The AEC maintains ongoing engagement with its DAC to discuss and consider refinements and improvements to the service. For instance, at the 2023 referendum, the AEC responded to a request that arose from the DAC by changing equipment and procedures to have the witness introduce themselves and explain their purpose for observing the telephone voting call.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
7	<p>The Committee recommends that the AEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expand the accessibility standards for both pre-poll and polling centres • standardise its voting material in accessible formats • ensure staff in polling centres are appropriately trained in options for assisting people with disability to vote. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC works with its DAC and consults with other stakeholders including the National Aged Care Advisory Council. The AEC collects and publishes a range of accessibility information on its website in relation to every polling location to enable people to identify the location most suitable to their needs. For electors who cannot attend a polling place, postal voting is available as well as mobile polling in many locations and telephone voting for particular groups.</p> <p>The AEC produces a range of information in accessible formats for electoral events. This includes information and material in accessible formats for people who are blind or have low vision, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, people with a cognitive or intellectual disability, people with low literacy, and people with a learning disability.</p> <p>The AEC regularly reviews, updates and refines its staff training to ensure it remains contemporary and reflective of available assistive technologies and services for electors with a disability.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
8	<p>The Committee recommends that the Government expand Part XVB of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> to enable more people to vote via telephone, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people with disability (beyond the Electoral Act’s existing provision for blind and low-vision voters) • Australians overseas but otherwise eligible to vote • people in remote communities without access to a remote polling station. 	<p>Not supported</p> <p>The Government does not support this recommendation.</p> <p>Telephone voting is an important and safe part of our elections, enfranchising many Australians. This recommendation requires careful consideration before an expansion can be supported, as it raises a number of legal, financial, and security issues.</p> <p>Australia has a long history of conducting safe and fair elections. A strong democracy depends on citizens being able to participate equally. The Electoral Act provides support for telephone voting only for electors who are blind or have low vision and for electors working in, or in transit to or from, Antarctica.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
9	<p>The Committee recommends the AEC continue to run its mobile polling program for older Australians living in aged care.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC has resumed a full service offering to residential aged care facilities and is committed to continuing this offering. Providing comprehensive mobile polling services to older Australians is important in ensuring all Australians have the opportunity to exercise their franchise, regardless of where they live or are receiving medical care.</p> <p>Section 227 of the Electoral Act outlines the requirements for mobile polling, which includes determining and giving notice of the locations to be visited.</p> <p>For the 2023 referendum, all aged care facilities with 10 or more residential places were offered mobile polling. Nearly 2,200 accepted the offer, which represented the AEC’s largest ever mobile polling service to aged care facilities. A total of 423 mobile polling teams issued over 95,000 votes at residential aged care facilities.</p> <p>Facilities that were unable to receive mobile polling were supported by AEC staff to understand the voting options for residents. Based on feedback following the 2022 federal election and advice from the aged care advisory working group of peak sector organisations, the AEC developed additional resources and implemented additional contact points to provide increased support to facilities.</p> <p>The AEC also provided an enrolment service to all aged care facilities in the lead up to close of rolls for the referendum, increasing the accuracy of the Roll and knowledge of enrolment process in facilities.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
		The AEC will continue to engage with the aged care advisory working group ahead of electoral events.

#	Recommendation	Government Response
10	The Committee recommends that the administrative burden of voting overseas is reduced.	<p>Supported in-principle</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation in-principle.</p> <p>The Electoral Act establishes a framework for postal voting which allows voters to receive their ballots in the mail, both domestically and overseas. Unless they are already registered as a general postal voter, voters who wish to vote by post, and are eligible, must apply for a postal vote via a postal vote application once an electoral event has been formally announced. The postal vote framework is designed to appropriately balance administrative convenience with integrity of the process to promote enfranchisement, both domestically and overseas.</p> <p>At the 2023 referendum the overseas in-person voting footprint expanded to 107 locations, one of the largest footprints ever offered by the AEC. The AEC, in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, will continue to offer a comprehensive overseas voting footprint, noting security and capacity limitations at some locations.</p> <p>An Australian citizen who is temporarily living overseas can register with the AEC as an eligible overseas elector under section 94 of the Electoral Act. Registration is optional, however registering helps ensure they remain enrolled and are eligible to vote in federal elections and referendums while overseas.</p> <p>Eligible overseas electors who are registered as a general postal voter are automatically sent their postal voting papers for each electoral event as soon as ballot papers become available. An eligible overseas elector who is not also registered as a general postal voter can also submit a postal vote application if they wish to receive an overseas postal vote.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
11	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government continue to support people who wish to become Australian citizens and take up their associated voting franchise to do so.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>Section 93 of the Electoral Act prescribes the eligibility for persons entitled to enrol and to vote, which includes Australian citizens and a transitional arrangement for former British subjects enrolled before 26 January 1984. Permanent residents residing in Australia are not entitled to enrol to vote.</p> <p>Sections 99A and 99B of the Electoral Act allow a person to become provisionally enrolled if they have applied to become an Australian citizen. Any vote cast by the person is not counted unless their citizenship is confirmed within six days after election day, and their enrolment ceases if their citizenship application is refused.</p> <p>The AEC also provides additional assistance for new citizens voting for the first time on their website in over 40 languages.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
12	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government consider ways to strengthen civics education programs in Australian schools to better equip and prepare the next generation of voters to cast their first vote.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>On 27 March 2024, the Government asked the JSCEM to inquire into civics education, engagement, and participation in Australia, including the effectiveness of formalised civics education in schools and other institutions across Australia.</p> <p>On 5 February 2025, the JSCEM tabled its report <i>From Classroom to Community: Civics Education and Political Participation in Australia</i> in the Senate. The report includes 23 recommendations for Government that recommend strengthened and standardised civics education for Australian students. The Government welcomes the Committee's report and will consider its response.</p> <p>The AEC runs a school education program including the National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) in Canberra. It attracts over 76,000 visitors a year.</p> <p>The AEC also has electoral education resources available online at the AEC for Schools website for both teachers and students.</p> <p>At a national level, the Australian Curriculum sets the expectations for what all Australian students should be taught in school, regardless of where they live or their background. The Humanities and Social Sciences element of the curriculum introduces students to the discipline of Civics and Citizenship, which includes examining concepts such as democracy and voting, from Year 3. Civics and Citizenship becomes a standalone subject from Years 7 to 10.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
		<p>Version 9.0 of the Australian Curriculum was endorsed by Education Ministers on 1 April 2022. Schools were able to implement the new curriculum from 2023, in accordance with timelines determined by state and territory government and non-government education authorities. While the Australian Government plays an important role in national education policies in schools, it is state and territory governments and non-government education authorities who have responsibility for the management of schools, including implementation of the curriculum.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
13	<p>The Committee recommends that charities registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission be exempt from the donation caps recommended in the Committee’s interim report into the 2022 federal election, but that these caps be applied to political parties and candidates, along with associated entities, other third parties and significant third parties.</p>	<p>Supported in part</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation in part.</p> <p>It is important that all gifts made for purposes related to influencing the outcome of federal electoral events be subject to the gift cap, regardless of entity type.</p> <p>The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025</i> provides that the gift cap will only apply to ‘federal purpose’ gifts made to registered political parties, their state branches (for federal purposes only), members of the House of Representatives, Senators, candidates, associated entities, ‘nominated entities’ (new category), significant third parties and third parties (including registered charities). The gift cap will only apply to gifts for a ‘federal purpose’, being those made for the purpose of incurring electoral expenditure or creating or communicating electoral matter. Gifts made for non-electoral purposes will not be subject to the cap.</p> <p>Specific exemptions will apply to gifts received by, or on behalf of a person or entity registered under the <i>Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012</i>. For the purpose of Part XX of the Electoral Act, including gift caps, an amount will not be a gift if it was not made for a ‘federal purpose’ and was not made for the purpose of reimbursing the person or entity for incurring electoral expenditure or creating or communicating electoral matter. This ensures that such persons or entities are not unduly restricted from collecting contributions for their other, non-electoral functions.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
14	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government amend the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> to provide clarity around the following terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘electoral matter’, which relates to material specifically supporting or opposing one or more parties or candidates in a federal election, and which carries the appropriate authorisation; • ‘electoral expenditure’, to ensure that only expenditure for authorised electoral matter, funded out of a Commonwealth Campaign Account, is captured; • ‘third party’, to clarify that an organisation qualifies as a third party if ‘the amount of electoral expenditure incurred by or with the authority of the person or entity during the financial year is more than \$20,000’, noting the definition of ‘electoral expenditure’ above. 	<p>Supported in part</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation in part.</p> <p>The Government supports a clarification to the definition of ‘electoral matter’. The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Communications) Bill 2024</i> proposes to clarify that the ‘dominant purpose’ test in the definition is to be determined objectively.</p> <p>The Government does not support the proposed amendment to the definition of ‘electoral expenditure’. The proposed changes when considered in the context of the broader reforms presented in the <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025</i> would reduce transparency of electoral expenditure that is not specifically in relation to advertising materials. The object of these reforms is to support increased transparency of electoral expenditure. The adoption of recommendations from the JSCEM Interim Report, including the introduction of a Commonwealth Campaign Account (federal account) will serve the intent of this recommendation which is to provide greater clarity around these terms.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
		<p>The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Bill Act 2025</i> clarifies the definitions of ‘electoral expenditure’ and ‘gift’ to make clear that electoral expenditure is not a gift. This is an important distinction to avoid amounts being inadvertently caught by both the expenditure and gift cap provisions. Additionally, this will result in less duplicative reporting, generating a more accurate account of political financing. The Government supports the recommendation to increase the expenditure threshold for becoming a third party to \$20,000. The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Reform) Act 2025</i>, as passed by the Parliament on 13 February 2025, will insert a new definition of ‘third party threshold’ (set at \$20,000), which will replace existing references to the ‘disclosure threshold’ in the relevant definitions of ‘third party’, and for consistency in the definitions of ‘significant third party’, ‘associated entity’ and ‘referendum entity’ in the <i>Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984</i>.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
15	<p>The Committee recommends that contingent on the Australian Government introducing truth in political advertising laws, that the media blackout, known as the relevant period in the <i>Broadcasting Services Act 1992</i>, be removed.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>The introduction of truth in political advertising laws would ensure that Australian voters can trust the information they receive during elections, strengthening the integrity of electoral processes and reducing the need for the blackout period.</p> <p>The JSCEM report notes there are two main options for addressing this inconsistency: to extend the blackout laws to all media platforms, or to remove the blackout period for all media platforms.</p> <p>In view of findings in the JSCEM Final Report that the current advertising blackout period is inconsistent, not achieving the objective of preventing voters from being unduly influenced, and no longer relevant on account of developments in the media environment and voting patterns, the Governments preferred option is to remove the blackout period for all media platforms.</p> <p>The <i>Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Communications) Bill 2024</i> proposes political advertising laws and the removal of the media blackout.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
16	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government ensure that the Australian Electoral Commission is resourced to employ staff at the appropriate level to facilitate elections to the high standard expected by the Australian community.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>Electoral operations are tremendously complex and the ability to recruit and train a capable agile workforce is critical. Approximately 100,000 citizens are mobilised for each federal electoral event. The short timeframe to source and engage staff and the security arrangements required impact cost and present risk to election integrity. Appropriate resourcing will further enhance the AEC’s workforce strategies and ability to meet community expectations.</p>
17	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government amend section 35 of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> to enable the Australian Electoral Commission to employ senior electoral officers on a more permanent basis.</p>	<p>Not supported</p> <p>The Government does not support this recommendation.</p> <p>Section 35 of the Electoral Act permits the AEC to employ polling staff on a casual basis in the lead up to and during an election. This temporary employment mechanism is separate to the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> and includes such senior executive staff as the AEC thinks necessary to assist the AEC in its functions.</p> <p>It is appropriate for ongoing senior AEC staff to be engaged through the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i>, consistent with the greater protections legislated by the Government in its <i>Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022</i>.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
18	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Electoral Commission expand its recruitment drive to employ staff for selected polling places who can speak the targeted language(s) for those communities.</p>	<p>Supported</p> <p>The Government supports this recommendation.</p> <p>The Government supports the AEC’s commitment to increasing the diversity of the temporary election workforce to reflect and support the community it serves and strengthening the AEC’s inclusive culture and increasing the number of the temporary election workforce with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds promotes cultural safety and inclusion.</p> <p>During the 2023 referendum, strategies to increase the workforce diversity included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted sourcing and attraction strategies to fill the 242 dedicated bilingual polling assistant positions in divisions identified as having low English proficiency. These bilingual staff spoke one or more of the top three languages used in the division; • encouragement of staff to use their language skills to support voters and improve services to voters in a polling place; and • initiated a community language allowance, recognizing the contributions these staff make to the electoral process. <p>These strategies resulted in 11.7 per cent of staff from non-English speaking background and 17.8 per cent who speak a language other than English.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
		<p>The AEC will continue to actively target the recruitment of bilingual staff as part of the wider strategy to increase the diversity of the temporary election workforce, strategies will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further development of outreach and engagement activities with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and • the transformation of systems to manage temporary election workforce, providing greater functionality to allocate staff with target language skills for selected polling places and more broadly.

#	Recommendation	Government Response
19	<p>The Committee recommends that the Australian Government engages with the Australian community to determine contemporary expectations of standards in order to address all matters of qualification and disqualification for Parliament through legislation under sections 34 and 44 of the Constitution.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The minimum qualification requirements provided in section 34 of the Constitution have been displaced by section 163 of the Electoral Act, which was last amended in 1990. Section 163 of the Electoral Act provides that a person is eligible to be elected as a Senator or a member of the House of Representatives if the person is at least 18 years old, an Australian citizen, and entitled to vote or qualified to be so entitled. The Government will continue to listen to the Australian community on the minimum requirements it thinks are appropriate to be qualified to be elected as a Parliamentarian.</p> <p>The disqualification of members of Parliament is prescribed by section 44 and section 45 of the Constitution. Sections 170 and 181A of the Electoral Act require every prospective candidate to answer mandatory questions about potential disqualification in a checklist, which the AEC must then publish for every candidate. This checklist transparency is to ensure that prospective candidates actively consider their eligibility, and that electors are informed about candidates' potential disqualification.</p> <p>As the JSCEM Final Report has identified, a referendum is necessary to amend section 44. Whilst the Government does not intend to propose a referendum to amend section 44 or section 45 of the Constitution, it will continue to listen to the Australian community on the standards it thinks are appropriate for Parliamentarians.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
20	<p>The Committee recommends that section 184AA of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i>, application forms for postal votes, be amended or removed, so that postal vote applications can no longer be included with other material.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>Section 184AA of the Electoral Act permits a postal vote application form to be physically attached to, or form part of, other written material. This provides a mechanism for a postal voter to receive their official form with any other material they may expect to receive in an election, such as the campaign material from an entity of which the voter is a member. The voter remains free to return their completed form directly to the AEC, rather than via the entity that provided the material.</p>
21	<p>The Committee recommends that section 184 of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> be amended to clarify that postal vote applications must be sent directly to the Australian Electoral Commission's nominated addresses.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>See response to Recommendation 20 above.</p>

Dissenting report by Coalition members of the Committee

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	<p>The Coalition members of the Committee recommend that Section 46 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act be amended so that the process for commencing redistributions after the first meeting of the House of a new Parliament be reduced from 12 months to 3 months.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p>
2	<p>The Coalition members of the Committee recommend that the AEC be provided additional resources to expand its standardised civics program in Australian secondary schools to best inform students of their voting rights and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC runs a comprehensive school education program. The education program includes the National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC) in Canberra, which attracts over 76,000 visitors a year. This mainly targets primary school students, and aligns with where the major relevant civics education is delivered within the National School Curriculum.</p> <p>The AEC also offers online resources including <i>Democracy Rules</i> teacher education resources and <i>Get Voting</i> that provides a kit for school elections. These are suitable for both primary and secondary schools.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
3	<p>The Coalition members of the Committee recommend that the AEC provide greater training for staff, specifically returning officers, to ensure that the AEC's rules and regulations are applied homogeneously across polling booths.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The AEC provides a range of formal and on the job training for Divisional Returning Officers (DROs) and other key operational staff including through the Operational Leaders Program (OLP), a modularised learning program completed part-time over several months. The OLP uses a blend of learning approaches including face to face and virtual instructional training, practical activities and eLearning. The OLP targets critical operational and leadership capabilities relevant to election readiness and service delivery including compliance requirements and quality assurance within the AEC's operational environment.</p> <p>Operational training is also available to other AEC staff through the AEC suite of electoral event learning.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
4	<p>The Coalition members of the Committee recommend that the Government establish transparency obligations on large social media platforms.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The Government is committed to keeping Australians safe online, including increasing transparency and holding digital platforms to account for the content on their services.</p> <p>On 12 September 2024, the <i>Communications Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2024</i> was introduced to Parliament to address harmful mis- and disinformation online. The Bill provides the Australian Communications and Media Authority with powers to oversee digital communications platforms with new information gathering, record keeping, code registration and standard making powers. The Bill will introduce new obligations on digital communications platforms to increase their transparency with Australian users about how they handle misinformation and disinformation on their services.</p> <p>The Joint Select Committee on Social Media and Australian Society for the 47th Parliament was appointed by resolution of the Senate on 15 May 2024 and resolution of the House of Representatives on 16 May 2024, to inquire into and report on the influence and impacts of social media on Australian society.</p> <p>The Committee tabled its final report on 18 November 2024.</p>

#	Recommendation	Government Response
5	<p>The Coalition members of the Committee recommend that the Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce table reports to the JSCEM prior to and post federal electoral events.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Government notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The Electoral Integrity Assurance Taskforce (EIAT) is an ongoing inter-agency taskforce, with its purpose to provide consolidated and coordinated information and advice to the Electoral Commissioner on matters that may compromise the real or perceived integrity of a federal electoral event. Following every federal electoral event, EIAT member agencies collectively provide formal advice to the Australian Electoral Commissioner on the integrity of the event, which is published on the AEC website via a media release.</p> <p>Any Parliamentary Committee, including the JSCEM and Senate Estimates committees, may request that an EIAT member agency appear before the Committee at any time.</p>

Additional comments by Senator David Pocock

#	Recommendation	Government Response
1	Legislate that the baseline level of representation for the ACT and NT in the Senate be more than one third, but less than two thirds of the States' Senate allocation. This should start out at half with the ACT and the NT each having 6 Senators. Terms should also increase to six years and commence on 1 July following the election in line with the states. This would mean three senators up for election every three years.	Not supported See response to Recommendation 2 of the Majority report.

Additional comments by the Australian Greens

The Government notes the comments made by the Australian Greens in their additional comments.

Additional comments by Kate Chaney MP

The Government notes the comments made by Ms Kate Chaney MP in her additional comments.