



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY
ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**

Annual Report 2010 - 2011

EVERY vote counts!

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The Hon. Jane Aagaard MLA
Speaker
Northern Territory Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Darwin NT 0800

Madam Speaker

I am pleased to provide the Annual Report of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission for the 2010-11 reporting year.

The report details the performance, key achievements and outlook for the Commission for the year ending 30 June 2011. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993* and the *Financial Management Act 2003*.

Additional copies have been provided for tabling the report in the Legislative Assembly within three sitting days after its receipt.

Bill Shephard
Electoral Commissioner

31 October 2011

ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) was required to meet heavy workloads during 2010-11 in each of its core service delivery areas.

On the enrolment front, the NT electoral roll continued to reflect a national trend towards a lower elector participation rate, especially in the younger age cohorts and remote areas. Although the task of roll maintenance remains primarily the responsibility of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) under a Joint Roll Arrangement, the NTEC has found itself becoming increasingly involved in roll stimulation and cleansing activities to try to offset the decline in roll quality. These activities have been undertaken both collaboratively with the AEC and on its own as part of its ongoing involvement in the conduct of frequent local government and Legislative Assembly elections. In fact, NTEC involvement has now been widely recognised as making a significant contribution to the level of annual enrolment transactions in this jurisdiction.



Elections also occurred with unrelenting regularity throughout the year. Thirteen local government by-elections were held this year and a Legislative Assembly by-election for the division of Araluen was also conducted in October 2010. Four enterprise agreements were also managed and early preparations were commenced for the 2012 general elections.

It is pleasing to note that the electoral education program also managed to repeat its stunning results from last year. New customised materials were produced and education sessions were further honed and widely delivered this year. In all, nearly 3000 eager participants attended 85 sessions delivered across the NT, mostly as part of a collaborative service delivery model this agency has developed with the Parliamentary Relations Education Unit.

In terms of corporate governance, the Commission has met all its obligations as a stand-alone agency. In addition, the organisational structure of the agency has been under constant review to meet the significant increases in workload and responsibilities. The establishment of the Alice Springs office and its operating model was developed further this year and the Darwin office also commenced relocation to new premises shortly before financial year's end.

In closing, I would take this opportunity to congratulate the dedicated staff of the Commission on another particularly productive year across all programs. Permanent staff numbers are small but staff commitment has not waned, allowing considerable progress to be made in working towards the long term goals of the Commission, despite the various challenges, distractions and disruption to plans caused by the sudden emergence of so many elections and developments in the wider electoral world that demanded an immediate response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Shephard', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Shephard
Electoral Commissioner

31 October 2011

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1 THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION

1.1 Purpose and functions

The purpose of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) is to provide independent, impartial and accessible electoral services to people in the Northern Territory. This purpose was strongly affirmed during the year when the NTEC revisited its corporate direction.

The NT Electoral Commissioner, the Chief Executive Officer of the agency, is an independent officer. An appointment to the position is by the Administrator following consultation by the responsible Minister with the leader of each political party represented in the Legislative Assembly (LA) and all MLAs who are not affiliated with a political party. The Commissioner sits on both the Redistribution and the Augmented Redistribution Committees that review and determine electoral boundaries for the Legislative Assembly.

The Commission's functions are prescribed under the *Electoral Act 2004* (the Act), section 309. It is required to maintain electoral rolls, conduct elections and promote public awareness of election matters. It provides information and advice on election matters to the Legislative Assembly (LA) and Members (MLAs), the Executive Council, Cabinet, political parties, candidates and Territory authorities. The NTEC also conducts research and publishes material relating to elections and other related functions and conducts ballots for persons and organisations. It has various client groups, including municipal and shire councils.

1.2 Vision, mission and values

The vision of the NTEC is to be widely recognised for expertise and excellent performance in electoral administration.

Its mission is to provide impartial, high quality and accessible electoral services that are effective, efficient and delivered in accordance with the law.

The following values are considered fundamental to its achievements:

- Integrity
- Impartiality
- Transparency and accountability
- Commitment to high standards of service delivery
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Respect for the law.

1.3 The operating environment for the NTEC

The NTEC's operating environment encompasses:

- A small, culturally diverse, dispersed and mobile population
- A politically charged and sensitive context
- A broad and diversified range of agency governance and specialised electoral responsibilities
- A small permanent staff structure
- Requirements to remain progressive and implement best practice
- High operational demands at short notice
- Close working relationships with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), interstate electoral authorities and other organisations.

1.4 Legislative base

The following Acts and Regulations are administered by the NTEC:

- *Electoral Act 2004* and Electoral Regulations under that Act
- *Referendums Act 2001* and Regulations under that Act.

The *Local Government Act (LGA) 2008* requires the NTEC to prepare an electoral roll for any council election or poll of council members, make it available to the returning officer appointed to conduct a council election or poll and make the roll available for public inspection at its offices. Under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations (LGER), the NTEC approves selected forms for use in council elections and may be appointed as returning officer. It may also, by Gazette notice, give directions to returning officers about any aspect of the local government electoral process. The NTEC must also be consulted when a council carries out its representation review once each council term.

1.5 Strategic issues

The Key Result Areas (KRAs) as set out in the NTEC Corporate Plan 2011-2015 are:

- Enrolment
- Elections
- Education and Information
- Corporate Support.

Noteworthy events in the 2010-11 reporting year included:

- The NTEC responded to commitments to boundary determinations for the Legislative Assembly and was consulted on representation reviews for local councils
- The agency obtained funding to support roll activities aimed at a quality roll for the set term whole of Territory council and Legislative Assembly elections in 2012 – Quality Roll 2012 Project (QR 12)
- Discussions took place over the implications of harmonisation for both parliamentary and local government electoral legislation, with the objective of updating current provisions in the interests of best practice and industry developments
- The management of one Legislative Assembly and 13 council by-elections, four enterprise agreement ballots, support for the AEC in August 2010 for the federal election and for two general elections and four by-elections for interstate jurisdictions
- The development of education materials for the youth sector and production of a 48 page comic book 'Have Your Say' in the Territory genre
- The corporate plan was revisited, taking into account the increased service levels for the local government sector since 2008: the focus on the four key areas for election service delivery was again reinforced with an emphasis on corporate functions underpinning enrolment, elections and education activities
- The recruitment of permanent staff to a number of positions was finalised and identification of project personnel to facilitate the 2012 election planning processes commenced
- After 30 years at its Smith Street location, the Darwin office was relocated; refurbished premises are expected to be completed by October 2011.

1.6 Progress on major tasks identified in 2009-10 Annual Report

Task	Progress during 2010-11
Contribute to any legislative reforms in respect to the Electoral Act and council electoral legislation.	The NTEC held ongoing discussions with the Chief Minister's Department and Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services regarding electoral reform to the NT Electoral Act, LG (Electoral) Regulations and LG Act. Legislative amendments are expected to be effected in 2011-12.
Coordination with the AEC over the roll-out of a targeted enrolment program for 2011-2012.	The NTEC was granted funding of \$150 000 towards enrolment stimulation and roll cleansing activities in the lead up to the 2012 elections.
Make arrangements for the redistribution committees to commence their review of LA division boundaries.	A draft report was released 31 May 2011. A final report was expected early in the next reporting year.
Continue the dialogue with councils on their review of representation arrangements.	The NTEC forwarded data, responded to queries and provided confirmation of consultation on the extent and nature of consultation to DHLGRS where appropriate.
Provide input to a review of the voting system for council elections.	The NTEC prepared a response to the discussion paper circulated by the DHLGRS on 'What is the best voting system for Local Government in the NT' (available on the NTEC website).
Develop the five year operational plan to reflect program and service delivery requirements for the set term municipal and shire council elections and Legislative Assembly election scheduled for 2012.	Discussions over an election of delegates to a constitutional convention, initially proposed for mid 2011, continues to delay sign-off to 2012 election program planning.
Involvement with other Commissions on a project to develop on-line training modules for polling staff.	NTEC officers were nominated to participate in a national working party; however, resourcing issues prevented pursuit of this project during the reporting year.
Progress development work on the website.	A new contract was awarded and work commenced to allow the NTEC website to be developed on a SharePoint Platform, adopted for all government websites.
Further development work on text based materials, posters and distance delivery materials for public awareness.	Electoral fact sheets were released and artwork for public awareness materials created, particularly for students in remote areas. A comic book was developed for release at the show circuits and school presentations.
Revisit the corporate plan, taking into account increased service levels for the local government sector.	Completed. Details in this report.
Commence the recruitment of permanent and project personnel for office and event planning activities.	Some permanent recruitment has taken place, with negotiations for the release of staff set for finalisation in the next reporting year, once more clarity exists regarding the Constitutional Convention poll.

1.7 National representation

The Electoral Council of Australia (ECA) is a consultative council of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Electoral Commissioners and other senior electoral officials from the Commonwealth. The NT Electoral Commissioner was present at its three meetings during the reporting period including prior to the general elections held in Victoria in November 2010 and New South Wales in March 2011. Issues discussed included the enrolment program, roll integrity and other electoral management development issues.

The Electoral Commissioner also attended forums of the separate association of State and Territory Electoral Commissioners (STEC). Its members generally meet prior to ECA meetings to discuss State and Territory specific agendas, the progress of co-operative activities and research projects at the State/Territory level.

1.8 Partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)

A close working relationship is required with the NT office of the AEC in order to effect productive enrolment and public awareness activities in the Territory. Senior officers of both Commissions meet regularly to plan and report on electoral program delivery.

The NTEC provided a high level of support to the AEC for enrolment, public awareness and election operations during the conduct of the August 2010 Federal Election, both in terms of staff resources and the use of facilities.

1.9 Organisational structure and staffing at 30 June 2011

At the year end the NTEC had 13.5 full-time employees including the Electoral Commissioner. The number of permanent and contract staff fluctuates according to the demands of the electoral cycle, election preparation and evaluation of electoral events. See the next page for the organisation structure as at 30 June 2011.

1.10 Looking to the future 2011-12

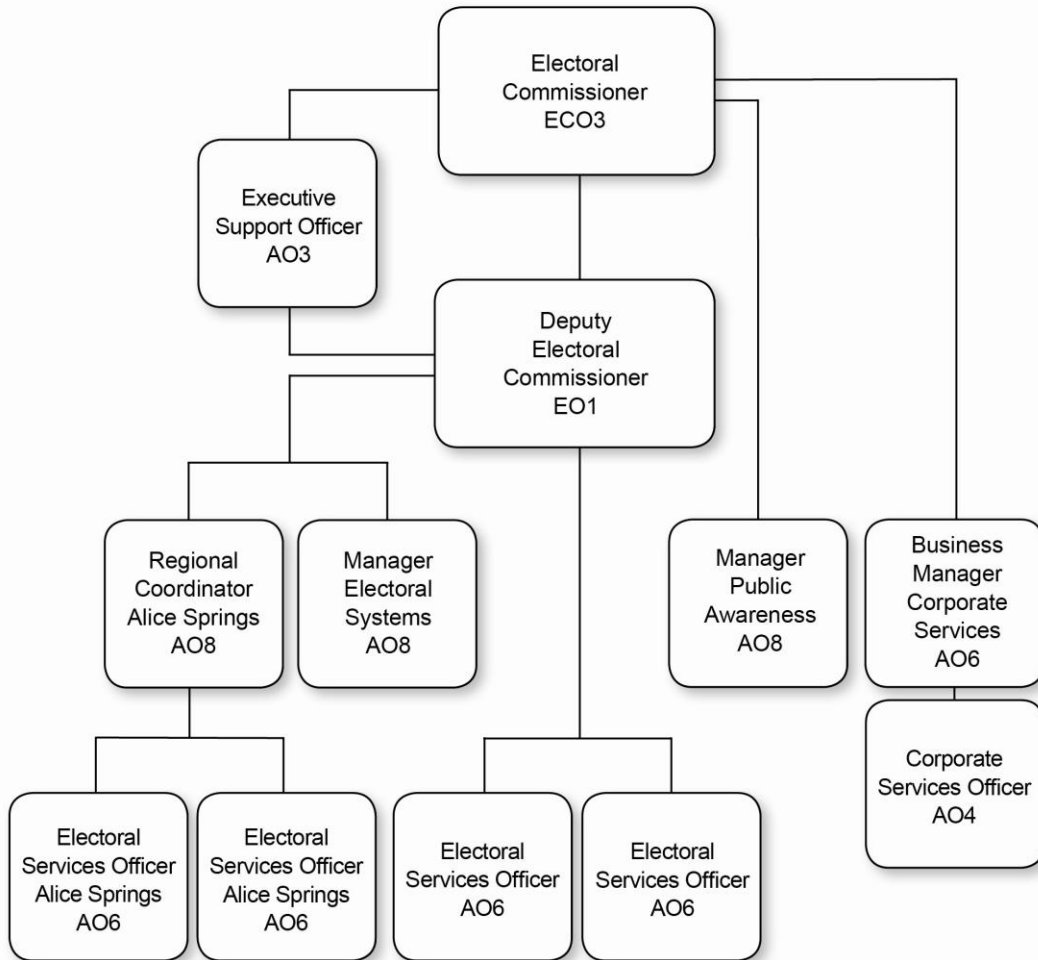
By the 2010-11 reporting year end, the NTEC had been appointed, in the role of Returning Officer, to play a significant role in the local government elections scheduled for 24 March 2012. It had also been advised that elections for delegates to a constitutional convention would be held the same day.

- The project entitled Quality Roll 2012 (QR12), preparatory work for which commenced in late 2010-11, was commenced in early 2011 and will continue into 2012. The emphasis will be on enrolment compulsion and enhancing the accuracy of the roll for the 2012 general elections. Features of the campaign will include phone/mail/contact with un-enrolled eligible people (as identified from AEC data), targeted fieldwork, a community presence (show circuit, festivals etc) and collaboration with the AEC's remote areas program. Special focus will be placed on the close of rolls period for both general elections.
- The NTEC will finalise operational plans for the fixed date municipal and shire council elections in March 2012; processes and procedures for any conjoint election of delegates for a constitutional convention will be developed as prescribed by any enabling legislation.
- Advertising and publicity for the March elections will focus on enrolling to have your say, how to vote and when. Concepts for election advertising will be developed and implemented.
- Operational needs will be assessed across all four strategic areas; our staff, ITC resources and deployment of those resources will underpin election conduct.

The NTEC will also, during the 2011-12 year, be forward planning for the Legislative Assembly general election scheduled for 25 August 2012.

Organisation Chart

as at 30 June 2011



2 ENROLMENT

Objective

A complete, accurate and securely maintained roll of Northern Territory electors that meets the requirements of stakeholders.

2.1 Roll maintenance

Joint Rolls Arrangement

The *Northern Territory (Self Government) Act 1978* s14 provides for the NT roll to be managed in accordance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. The roll is maintained by the AEC and provided to the NTEC on request and at election time in accordance with the 1994 Joint Roll Arrangement (JRA) between the Administrator and the Governor General. A separate Memorandum of Understanding between the NTEC and the AEC's NT office covers the operating framework for the joint electoral office in Alice Springs, MyVote Central.

The JRA provides for a single enrolment form for Territory and Commonwealth purposes. The AEC is responsible for processing enrolments, the review of the roll and the removal from the roll by objection of those electors who have apparently left their enrolled address. Enrolment stimulation and roll review activities are undertaken by both agencies in accordance with provisions of the JRA. During the year, an AEC review of enrolment forms prompted those approved for use by NT electors to also incorporate reference to local government elections, relevant since the incorporation of the greater part of the Territory under local government authorities since mid-2008.

The NTEC has on-line access to the national roll database (RMANS) and provides the AEC with geographic and elector information useful for roll maintenance. The NTEC undertakes an enrolment stimulation program and collects enrolment forms from the public in community settings, at elections and as part of its on-going roll review mailing and fieldwork activities. All enrolment forms collected are passed to the AEC for processing.

On 14 July 2010 the following amendments to the Commonwealth Electoral Act gained assent:

- Electoral and Referendum Amendment (How to Vote Cards and Other Measures) Bill 2010
- Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Modernisation and Other Measures) Bill 2010
- Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Pre-poll Voting and Other Measures) Bill 2010.

Whilst the provisions specifically related to enrolment and voting at federal elections, they allow for on-line update of enrolment details for Territory purposes of those electors whose names are already on the roll. However, first time enrolees and previous electors not currently on the roll are still required to submit a signed hard copy enrolment form. The new provisions also allow the provisional enrolment of 16 year olds.

Online enrolment

Commencing in late 2010, electors who are currently enrolled are able to update their details on line, therefore removing the necessity to print and forward a signed form. A new enrolee or a person previously enrolled but subsequently removed by objection, must still submit a signed hard copy form. Since implementation, 10% of enrolment transactions in the NT have been completed online. This compares to slightly below 20% nationally.

Enrolment 'Evidence of Identity' (EOI)

The requirement for applicants for enrolment to provide proof of identity (POI) details was in operation from 2006. It did not impose any additional requirement for those applicants who had a current drivers' licence; however, applicants who did not have a licence were required to present an approved form of identity to a person from a category on a prescribed list or, if they did not have an approved form of identity, obtain the signature of two current electors confirming their identity.

The 2010 legislative change now requires 'evidence of identity' (EOI) to be in the form of either a driver's licence number, a passport number or the signature of a person currently on the electoral roll confirming the applicant's identity. The requirement to produce an approved form to a prescribed person was removed.

Further discussion at the federal level has taken place on the introduction of legislation to allow for 'direct enrolment' i.e. a change of details on an official database such as MV Licence or Centrelink, would be applied automatically to the electoral roll. This provision now applies for enrolment for state purposes in NSW and Victoria but is yet to be implemented operationally. The federal government is considering similar provisions and, if eventually implemented, they would apply to the NT roll as a matter of course.

2.2 Roll status

The NT roll increased by 3496 electors over the reporting period to 120 950 electors enrolled at 30 June 2011. The main drivers of enrolment activity over the year were the 2010 federal election, targeted enrolment activities by MLAs in early 2011 and NTEC enrolment stimulation activities. The AEC estimate that at 30 June 2011, an estimated 78.4% of eligible persons were enrolled compared to the national average of 90.9% (see the table below).

Table 1: Estimated eligible participation on the roll - 2004, 2008, 2011

Participation rates for 30 June 2004, 2008 and 2011 ¹			
Year	Area	Total Enrolment	18-25 enrolment
2004	NT	82.2%	61.9%
	National	92.5%	80.9%
2008	NT	83.3%	68.3%
	National	92.2%	82.0%
2011*	NT	78.4%	57.0%
	National	90.9%	78.0%

***Note:** ABS has recently modified a longstanding participation rate formula used to estimate eligible population, resulting in the lowering of estimates of eligible electors. This causes current and previously reported figures to show a change in the participation rate across the board and will also have an impact on trend analysis.

The Northern Territory has the lowest participation of all jurisdictions in relation to enrolment and voting, being consistently 10 – 15% below that for interstate jurisdictions and nationally. This is due in part to the younger average age of the eligible population, the high level of mobility in the community including interstate moves and the special difficulties of maintaining the roll in remote areas where enrolment and voting rates are significantly lower than in the urban areas of the Territory.

2.3 Roll stimulation activities and initiatives

In accordance with the JRA, the NTEC contributes to the joint roll by:

- Undertaking regular electoral roll awareness and enrolment programs
- Maintaining an office in Alice Springs as a base for enrolment activities in the Centre and as a jointly branded public shop front with the AEC for the public
- Providing the AEC with information collected at electoral events.

The NTEC collected an estimated 3000 enrolment forms from the public during 2010-11, approximately 15% of all enrolments processed for the Territory. Other information provided to the AEC during the reporting period for roll integrity purposes included data collected at roll reviews and elections and official elector mail returned unclaimed. This included information collected at LA and council by-elections and subsequent non-voter action and constituent mail returned unclaimed from mailing by MLAs.

¹ Electoral Management Information System 2004 and 2008 Key Performance Measure data, Australian Electoral Commission

Features of the NTEC program to June 2011 were:

- The provision of public awareness and enrolment campaigns at the NT show circuit early in the reporting year
- Election and enrolment awareness campaigns undertaken in support of on-going shire council by-elections. This included the circulation of tailored public awareness materials, the notation of rolls by shire service centre staff and the collection of enrolments and other roll information at the close of rolls and at polling places
- A major enrolment stimulation and election awareness campaign including a household mail out prior to the division of Araluen and Palmerston City Council by-elections in 2010 and personalised mailing to electors in support of the Alice Springs and Katherine Town Council by-elections in February 2011
- The maintenance of a fully staffed office in Alice Springs as a public shopfront for enrolment and other electoral enquiries. The office is also a base for regular enrolment activities undertaken at public venues, schools and communities within the town and the Centre generally, including assistance with enrolment at citizenship ceremonies in Alice Springs
- School based campaigns to raise electoral awareness amongst young people and to collect enrolments from senior students
- Planning for the NTEC's Quality Roll 12 (QR12). This is a program to improve the accuracy of the rolls for the 2012 council and LA general elections. A budget of \$150 000 was approved for the program for the 2011-12 financial year to conduct enrolment stimulation and improve accuracy of the roll. The 2010-11 activities included project planning and costing, the development of procedure manuals, training packages and forms and the commencement of fieldwork and roll review activities in Alice Springs.

Roll review

In accordance with the JRA, a Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program is undertaken by the AEC to maintain the integrity of the roll. The CRU program is made up of community based enrolment stimulation activities, most notably the mailing of enrolment reminder and roll review letters and, depending on circumstances, the checking of the roll at individual addresses by field officers. Data for roll review purposes is provided by federal agencies and the NT's Department of Education and Training, the Power and Water Corporation and the Motor Vehicle Registry. Name and address data supplied by the NT agencies is provided under the demand powers of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918. Separate demand powers allow on-line access by the AEC to NT motor licence data held on NEVDIS (the national driver's licence data base) to make enrolment Evidence of Identity (EOI) checks.

During the reporting period, the AEC's CRU program was curtailed by the 2010 federal election. The main activity that took place was the mailing of 60 000 enrolment reminder letters to NT addresses using RMANS data and external change of address information provided by government agencies, with 50% of the mailing taking place at the end of June 2011. In addition, a total of 1326 electors were removed from the roll on the ground that they were apparently no longer resident at their enrolled address.

The NTEC commenced a separate roll review program in June 2011 by contacting recurring non-voters in Alice Springs based on the electors' responses to non-voter mailing following the Araluen and Alice Springs Town Council by-elections.

Indigenous Electoral Participation Program (IEPP)

The IEPP program is funded by a federal budget allocation of \$13 million over 4 years and managed by the AEC. It is designed to increase enrolment and electoral participation of Indigenous people Australia wide. The program commenced in the Territory in June 2010. As part of the program field officers visit remote communities and regional centres and make temporary use of the NTEC's Alice Springs office for activities in Central Australia. IEPP officers were advised of shire by-elections that took place in 2010-11 and, wherever possible, tailored their work programs to accommodate these events.

Table 2: Enrolment transactions – additions, deletions and transfers for the NT roll since 2006-2007

Enrolment at Start of Financial Year	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
		110 330		112 313		118 958		119 608		117 454
Plus additions to the roll										
New enrolments	3 266		4 358		2 203		2447		3949	
Re-enrolments	2 923		4 698		1 010		1753		2414	
Re-instatements	176		83		11		47		54	
Interstate transfers to NT	6 020		6 792		4 724		5170		6067	
Total Additions		+12 385		+15 931		+7 948		+9417		12 484
No change to total Transfers within NT										
Transfer between divisions	5 907		8 388		5 184		4655		5884	
Changes within division	3 148		4421		2284		1912		3948	
Amends to elector details	1175		2938		1086		1675		2104	
Less - Deletions to the roll										
Removal by objection	3 135		2 321		940		5543		1326	
Deaths	795		837		745		738		680	
Duplications	115		149		54		84		90	
Interstate transfers from NT	6 359		5 981		5 558		5205		6891	
Total Deletions		-10 404		-9 288		-7 297		-11 570		8 987
Net adjustments		+2		+2		-1		-1		-1
Enrolment at Close of Financial Year		112 313		118 958		119 608		117 454		120 950

Notes:

- **New enrolments** – all electors who enrolled for the first time
- **Re-enrolments** - re-enrolling electors who previously had been enrolled
- **Re-instatements** – the re-instatement of electors removed previously from the roll based on the receipt of new information that they still reside at their earlier enrolled address
- **Interstate transfers to NT** - interstate transfers of enrolment to an NT address
- **Interstate transfers from NT** - electors previously enrolled in the NT who transfer their enrolment to another jurisdiction
- **Transfers within NT** – electors notifying a change of address to another NT LA division or within same division. Transfers within NT do not alter total enrolment
- **Amendment** – changes to enrolment details to correct processing errors or amendment to mail delivery address and council re-numbering of street addresses
- **Removed by objection** - electors removed from the roll generally on the ground that they are apparently no longer resident at their enrolled address
- **Duplication** – removal of a duplicate entry on the roll e.g. a transfer of enrolment not matched to an existing enrolment
- **Provisional enrolment** - includes electors who enrol when they are 16 (the latter applies since July 2010) or 17 and obtain full enrolment and voting rights on their 18th birthday
- **Adjustments** – variations to statistics arising from the processing of amendments.

2.4 Supply of roll data

In accordance with the JRA, roll data was extracted from RMANS to meet a range of NTEC requirements during the year. These extracts included:

- Rolls for one Legislative Assembly by-election and 12 council by-elections held between July 2010 and June 2011. Note that the same roll was used for a supplementary election when the original election failed
- Jury rolls
- Monthly updates of roll changes for supply to Members of the Legislative Assembly and registered parties
- Data extracts for the Redistribution Committees and for council representation reviews
- The supply of roll data to approved entities for health screening programs.

In agreement with the AEC and under strict confidentiality provisions, council service centres in the remote shires were requested to notate by-election reference rolls prior to the roll close with information about the continued eligibility of electors. The information was forwarded to the AEC for enrolment follow-up.

The AEC met the performance standards set out in the JRA for the management of the close of rolls for the elections and was responsive to NTEC requests for ad-hoc data extracts.

The procedures implemented in the previous reporting year for the download of roll data and products from the AEC mainframe computer on to the NTEC server allowed for the timely supply of LG by-election rolls. Discussions are continuing to improve NTEC access to the roll.

2.5 Support for redistributions and council representation reviews

Periodic redistributions of electorate boundaries are undertaken in all Australian jurisdictions in accordance with the relevant legislation and are carried out by independent commissions or local government boundary adjustment panels and boards.

2011 Redistribution of Legislative Assembly boundaries

Under section 138 of the *Electoral Act*, a redistribution of LA divisions is required to commence two years and six months after polling day for the last election.

The Redistribution Committee commenced proceedings on 11 February 2011 and released its proposal on 31 May. The closing date for the receipt of objections was 30 June after which the Augmented Committee was required to decide on the redistribution of boundaries for the 2012 general election.

During 2010 and early 2011 the NTEC undertook the following tasks to ensure that the Redistribution Committee was appropriately resourced and able to commence its deliberations on time:

- Investigated the use of a GIS package for the mapping of proposed boundaries in relation to enrolment data. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) provided its in-house system at no cost, but it was not used as testing disclosed hardware and software constraints that made it unwieldy for NT electoral circumstances
- Undertook research into new division names and compiled a list for consideration by the Committees if an existing name was regarded as no longer appropriate
- Extracted roll data and prepared reports of enrolment trends by division and region for use by the Committees and for supply to interested parties for the preparation of their suggestions
- Identified NTEC office resources to assist the Committees, including accommodation, staff, website hosting and IT services generally
- Prepared estimates for the funding of the Committees.

Following the commencement of the redistribution in February 2011, the Redistribution Committee completed the following:

- Invited suggestions and comments. A total of 10 submissions were received. After the publication of the suggestions, four comments were received
- Considered all suggestions and comments and, using projected enrolment data, prepared proposed divisions and names in accordance with s143 of the Act
- Gazetted and advertised the proposal on 31 May 2011 and circulated maps and the associated report. Objections to the proposal were invited with a closing date of 30 June 2011.

The NTEC expected to continue to provide administrative and support staff to the Augmented Committee until release of the final report and the Gazettal of the boundaries to apply at the next LA general election.

2010-11 Representation reviews by councils

Local government in the NT comprises five municipal and 10 shire councils (excluding one under administration). Two municipal and nine shire councils have wards, leaving three municipal and one shire council with a no-ward structure. Residents of the three towns of Alyangula, Nhulunbuy and Yulara, which are privately incorporated bodies, persons resident in the Darwin Waterfront area and in the unincorporated land in the Top End are not represented by local government.

Amongst other things, imbalances in elector numbers between wards develop over time and representation models need to be reviewed so that appropriate representation is provided by the democratic system. Under the 2008 *Local Government Act* (LGA) and Local Government (Electoral) Regulations (LGER), a council must:

- Review its structure and representation once in every four year term [LGA s23(2)] and [LGER r63]
- Prepare a plan for the council's composition, taking into account population change, geography and community interests; community feedback may be sought before finalising the plan
- Consult with the NT Electoral Commission (NTEC) during the process [LGER r63 (4)]
- Complete the review by 31 March 2011, 12 months before the next general election [LGER r63 (5)].

Though the NTEC must be consulted in relation to the reviews, no detail as to the form of that consultation has been included in the legislation. No specific review regime is prescribed in the legislation and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services (DHLGRS) issued guidelines for the purposes of the current reviews.

The NTEC tried to be as proactive as possible in its liaison with councils. Between June 2010 and March 2011, the NTEC supplied all councils with enrolment data by locality and ward (where appropriate) as baseline information to support their reviews and followed up with support in the interpretation of that data and responded to enquiries of a general nature. Enrolment updates were provided at quarterly intervals. Detailed enrolment information down to the street /locality level was supplied on request to three councils and advice on roll and boundary information for specific areas was provided to a number of the remote shire councils.

The NTEC also provided councils with general information about the review process and timetable. A number of councils provided draft review reports as part of their on-going consultation with the NTEC and comments were provided in accordance with the EC's limited role as prescribed in the legislation.

At the conclusion of the reviews the NTEC was provided with the final council reports with the exception of one council. Three other councils did not submit reports. The NTEC checked the reports for the accuracy of the enrolment information contained and a 'certificate' was provided to the council that confirmed the accuracy of data and detailed the extent and nature of consultation undertaken with the NTEC. The certificate was provided for inclusion by council in their return to DHLGRS and, if required, to the Minister.

By the end of March 2011, eight councils had provided completed reports to the NTEC with a further two reports received by May. The status of the review in one council was not available as the NTEC commented on the draft report but this was altered when determined by council and no final report was supplied to the NTEC for further comment.

The outcomes of reviews as advised in the reports provided by councils to the NTEC were:

- No change to existing representation arrangements – six councils
- Change to existing ward boundaries – two councils
- Additional wards created – two councils (plus an additional council member in one case)
- Additional council member created for one ward (one case only).

Subject to Ministerial approval, any changes to council ward boundaries arising from the reviews will be applied to the national roll (in co-operation with the AEC). All councils will be circulated with a list of localities in each ward (if appropriate), regardless of whether there are changes to be made to boundaries. This is required to ensure that the accuracy of boundary information held on the roll is confirmed by councils in preparation for the 2012 local government general elections.

2.6 Targets 2011-12

- Continue to undertake enrolment activities and collect information regarding the accuracy of elector details as part of the NTEC's planning for the 2012 council and subsequent LA elections
- Undertake Quality Roll 12 (QR12) activities, a project designed to not only stimulate enrolment but also cleanse the electoral roll in preparation for the elections in 2012. The project will include a range of initiatives, including:
 - Phone and mail contact
 - Targeted doorknocking of residences
 - Stalls at Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin shows
 - Advertising roll activities in the print and electronic media
 - Continue the wide range of enrolment activities: staff attendance at civic events, providing information on the NTEC website, selected attendances at shopping centres and markets, enrolment activities in Alice Springs and surrounding communities and provide shop front enrolment services to electors in Central Australia.
- Contribute, as required, to the AEC's enrolment and education program, especially the program to improve indigenous participation.

3 ELECTIONS

Objective

Efficient and effective conduct of elections.

3.1 Legislation

The Electoral Commissioner in reports on the 2005² and 2008³ Legislative Assembly general elections made a number of recommendations to enhance electoral legislation in this jurisdiction. In his view, many of the recommendations were of a technical nature and non-contentious.

The NTEC also provided a number of recommendations to the Minister for Local Government in its report on the 2008 shire and rural council elections⁴, including to the legislative provisions. The recommendations covered the following issues:

- Making the Electoral Commissioner the mandated returning officer (RO) to bring certainty and uniformity to the electoral processes and allow economies of scale in service delivery
- A suggested review of electoral system fundamentals, including by-election timetabling, the voting system, informality, representation reviews
- Revisiting provisions for nomination deposits, the issuing of ordinary ballot papers within a region, recounts and ties during counts
- Reassessment of the relevant agency for carriage of local government electoral provisions
- Determining stakeholder involvement in election promotional activities and appropriate roles for stakeholders
- Resourcing elections and local government electoral activities.

Currently, carriage of local government electoral legislation rests with DHLGRS. The Commission liaised with the department over local government electoral legislation and regulations and continued to emphasise the necessity for harmonisation with the NTEA and also addressing the issues raised in the 2008 shire and rural council elections report. .

The NTEC looked beyond the NT to investigate recent developments, including the federal amendments of 2010 and those endorsed or recommended in other jurisdictions, to better inform it of current considerations being applied to electoral legislation.

Should legislative amendments be tabled and assented to during the 2011-12 reporting year, the NTEC will implement any changes required under the assent provisions.

The NTEC is aware that no changes to the Commonwealth funding and disclosure provisions were made and it will monitor progress of enabling legislation. In the absence of new federal legislation, the NTEC continues to recommend and operate a reporting regime with lower thresholds and stricter reporting requirements than applies under the Commonwealth Act.

² 2005 Legislative Assembly Election Report

³ Legislative Assembly General Election Report 9 August 2008

⁴ Shire and Rural Council Elections 2008 Election Report

3.2 Electoral services

The NTEC managed one Legislative Assembly and 13 council by-elections, four enterprise agreement ballots and provided support for the AEC in August 2010 for the federal election and for two general elections and four by-elections for interstate jurisdictions.

3.2.1 Legislative Assembly (LA) by-election

The division of Araluen by-election was held 9 October 2010 as a result of the resignation of the sitting member, Ms Jodeen Carney, who had held the seat since 2001. The division consists of the Alice Springs suburbs of Gillen, The Gap, Flynn, Araluen (part) and Alice Springs (part) and the rural area south of The Gap.

The writ for the by-election was issued on 20 September 2010. The by-election attracted two candidates, Adam Findlay (Australian Labor Party) and Robyn Lambley (Country Liberals).

Electors were given the range of voting options provided for in the Act:

- Postal and pre-poll voting at the Commission's offices in Darwin and Alice Springs
- Mobile polling – a team visited four locations - Alice Springs Correctional Centre, Alice Springs Hospital, Old Timers Aged Care Facility and Yarrenyty-Arltere Town Camp
- Static polling – polling places were appointed at Gillen Primary School and Yirara College which were open from 8am to 6pm on polling day.

Robyn Lambley (Country Liberals) was the successful candidate and was declared elected on 13 October 2010. A report on the by-election was drafted and is scheduled to be forwarded to the Speaker in the next reporting year for tabling in the Parliament.

Table 3: Election snapshot

Araluen by-election	No.	%
Electors on roll	5024	
Voter turnout	2975	59.2
Informality	131	4.4
No. candidates	2	
Ordinary votes	2226	74.8
Declaration votes	2	0.1
Pre poll votes	641	21.5
Postal votes	106	3.6

Two Party Preferred: ALP 32% CLP 68%

3.2.2 Council by-elections

The NTEC has conducted 32 council by-elections and supplementary elections since October 2008. This represents all by-elections so occurring, except for two by-elections in Barkly Shire conducted by the then CEO as RO. Two councils were known to have made standing appointments for the EC to be RO (East Arnhem and Roper Gulf).

During the year, the NTEC managed 12 council by-elections and one supplementary election of which nine proceeded to poll and one failed. See the table below for details.

Commonwealth elections took place during August 2010 leading to the temporary suspension of by-election activity from July 2010 until early October when three by-elections were scheduled. In conjunction with council, the by-elections had been re-scheduled so as not to conflict with the federal timetable.

Three by-elections for municipalities took place in the reporting year, all without a ward structure: Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs.

The NTEC has conducted 29 council by-elections and three supplementary elections since the roll out of the new Shires in 2008, including the 12 by-elections and one supplementary election conducted during 2010-2011.

Table 4: Summary of NTEC conducted council elections 2008-2011

Reporting year	No. By-elections		No. Supplementary Elections		Total elections	No. Elections Contested	
	Municipal	Shire	Municipal	Shire		No.	%
2008-09		4	-	1	5	3	60.0
2009-10	2	11	-	1	14	5	36.0
2010-11	3	9	-	1	13	9	69.0
Total	5	24	0	3	32	17	53.0

Tiwi Shire is the only council not to have had a by-election since 2008.

In the twelve months prior to general council elections in March 2012, the NTEC expected, as RO, to manage few or no by-elections as councils, after 31 March 2011, have an option to adopt a policy to fill a vacancy by appointment rather than at a by-election.

The holding of by-elections after 24 March 2011, 12 months before the gazetted date for the general elections becomes increasingly less desirable. Under previous legislation the time limit was prescribed as 12 months prior to the next general election. Preparations must be made for the 2012 general elections, the outcomes of elector representation reviews will be known and possibly advertised, though will not be implemented until 2012. Any by-election would also need to be held on current boundaries/representation arrangements and may cause voter confusion in the run-up to the 2012 elections.

Table 5: Local government election details 2010-11, conducted by NTEC

COUNCIL	ELECTION DESCRIPTORS										BALLOT PAPERS					Turnout %		
	D/AS Managed	Scheduled polling day	Election Type	Ward	No. on Roll	No. Vacancies	Nominations Received			Members Elected		Formal			Informal		Total	
							M	F	Total	No	C/U	No	%	No	%			
Central Desert	AS	6.10.10	Sh By	Anmatjere	958	1	1	0	1	1	U							
Victoria Daly	D	7.10.10	Sh By	Daguragu	390	1	1	1	2	1	C	90	95.7	4	4.3	94	24.1	
Victoria Daly	D	7.10.10	Sh By	Thamarrum/Pindi Pindi	1321	1	2	0	2	1	C	439	97.8	10	2.2	449	34.0	
Palmerston	D	30.10.10	Mu By	NA	15138	1	1	1	2	1	C	7372	93.2	534	6.8	7906	52.2	
Alice Springs	AS	26.2.2011	Mu By	NA	14488	1	5	2	7	1	C	9100	94	576	6	9676	66.8	
Katherine	D	26.2.2011	Mu By	NA	4965	1	2	0	2	1	C	2753	91.6	251	8.4	3004	60.5	
Victoria Daly	D	26.2.2011	Sh By	Thamarrum/Pindi Pindi	1350	2	3		3	2	C	417	94.1	26	5.9	443	32.8	
Central Desert	AS	26.2.2011	Sh By	Akityarre	277	1	0	0	0	0	FL							
West Arnhem	D	26.2.2011	Sh By	Gunbalanya	754	1	2	0	2	1	C	354	94.1	22	5.9	376	49.9	
Roper Gulf	D	26.2.2011	Sh By	Nyirrangulung	965	1	1	1	2	1	C	450	95.9	19	4.1	469	48.6	
Central Desert	AS	13.4.2011	Sh Supp	Akityarre	277	1		1	1	1	U							
Victoria Daly	D	12.5.2011	Sh By	Daguragu	421	1		1	1	1	U							
Central Desert	AS	12.5.2011	Sh By	Southern Tanami	885	1	1	1	2	1	C	232	97.5	6	2.5	238	26.9	

Legend

D	Darwin	AS	Alice Springs	Mu	Municipal	Sh	Shire
By	By-election	M	Male	C	Contested election	FL	Failed election
Supp	Supplementary Election	F	Female	U	Uncontested election		

Table 6: Age range of candidates and elected members 2010-11

Council	Ward	By-election Candidates by Age range							By-election Elected Members by Age Range								
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Not given	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Not given	Total
Central Desert	Anmatjere		1						1		1						1
Victoria Daly	Daguragu			1	1				2			1					1
Victoria Daly	Thamarrurr/Pindi Pindi					1		1	2							1	1
Palmerston	NA				1	1			2					1			1
Alice Springs	NA		1	2	1	3			7			1					1
Katherine	NA					2			2				1				1
Victoria Daly	Thamarrurr/Pindi Pindi		1	1	1				3			1	1				2
Central Desert	Akityarre (Supp)			1					1			1					1
West Arnhem	Gunbalanya			1		1			2		1						1
Roper Gulf	Nyirranggulong			1	1				2			1					1
Victoria Daly	Daguragu				1				1				1				1
Central Desert	Southern Tanami			1		1	1	1	2			1					1
Total		0	3	8	6	9	1	2	27	0	2	6	3	1	0	1	13

Advertising and public awareness materials circulated by the NTEC before each government election stress the need for enrolment and that voting is compulsory. Prior to the Palmerston by-election in October 2010, a voting reminder was sent to all households. For the Alice Springs and Katherine Town Council by-elections, the NTEC set up enrolment stands at local shopping centres and mailed to all electors to advise that enrolment and voting was compulsory.

The following voter participation rates were recorded as a percentage of those on the roll who voted in the three municipal elections:

- City of Palmerston – 52.2%
- Alice Springs Town Council – 66.8%
- Katherine Town Council – 60.5%.

The NTEC trialled the use of netbook computers at two polling places for the Katherine Town Council by-election on 26 February 2011. The netbook software enabled the NTEC to amalgamate the voter names from:

- hard copy rolls used at one static polling place and the early voting centres
- NTEC's automated postal voting database and
- netbook records.

A list of non voters was prepared from the amalgamated file.

The Tasmanian Electoral Commission authorised the use of their specialised software, provided the netbooks and uploaded the roll data. Polling officials and voters appreciated the quicker processing of voters at issuing tables.

The trial showed that the use of netbooks will produce savings in printing, scanning and polling official wages. However, the software will need to be customised for Territory purposes and include a backend non-voter program.

The decision to commence action against non-voters rests with the relevant council and Katherine Town Council was the only authority to take follow-up action. It authorised the NTEC in April 2011 to carry out infringement follow-up against apparent non-voters, the first council to approve such action under the new 2008 local government legislative provisions. A total of 1894 infringement notices were issued on 1 June 2011. The notice gave the recipients the opportunity to either provide a valid and sufficient reason for not voting or expiate the offence. Responses from the non-voter program in Katherine (return date for responses 29 June 2011) will be assessed in conjunction with council and return to sender (RTS) mail will be forwarded to the AEC. Any further action required of the NTEC will be discussed with council.

The NTEC will assess with councils any follow-up required after the general elections and, if required, determine the logistics of a non-voter program, including the resources and data required and a timetable.

3.2.3 Council general elections 2012

By the end of June 2011, 14 councils had appointed the Electoral Commissioner as returning officer for the March 2012 elections. Though the cost implications were a major consideration for councils, a later factor in their deliberations was the announcement of the holding of an election for delegates to a constitutional convention in conjunction with the council elections. One council considering an alternative appointment was aware that council would need to offer the full range of voting services, including absent voting, for all councils going to poll at the general election.

Preliminary discussion took place with DHLGRS concerning the general elections scheduled for 2012. The election date of 24 March 2012 was gazetted on Friday 18 March 2011 by the Minister for Local Government. It is expected that more detailed discussions will take place in the 2011-12 reporting year. The EC also addressed the shire CEOs and principal members on two occasions outlining the NTEC's approach to the elections.

3.2.4 Fixed elections 2012

Two Territory wide electoral events are timetabled five months apart in March and August 2012.

Planning for the elections progressed:

- Scoping wet and dry season mobile polling programs based on the growth towns, new shire service centres in remote areas and established networks in the remote areas
- Organisation of the polling on preferred polling days and routes
- Early discussion of the identification of appropriate regional centres and the deployment of experienced electoral staff to the offices
- Discussions were held with Australian Defence Forces Canberra to address defence personnel voting needs
- Advice was given to the AEC of the election timetable so that it is aware of key dates.

Visits will be made to remote councils to consolidate working relationships with local stakeholders and improve community support for election activities. Those relationships will be a strong determinant in achieving successful participation outcomes.

3.2.5 Fee-for-service elections

The *Electoral Act* s309 (h) allows the NTEC to negotiate a fee and provide electoral goods and services to persons or organisations, using information or material in its possession or expertise acquired in the exercise of its functions.

The Commission conducts such 'fee for service' elections for organisations requiring endorsement of enterprise agreements, the election of office holders, the holding of plebiscites etc, both in the government and non-government sectors.

The NTEC undertook four enterprise agreement (EA) ballots in 2010-11. Total revenue earned was \$24 564.

Table 7: Enterprise agreement ballots conducted 2010-11

Organisation	Poll Date	Ballot		Voting Method	No. Electors
		Type	No. Positions		
Remote Nurses*	13 August 2010	P/Email	NA	Yes/No	195
NTPS General	16 November 2010	P	NA	Yes/No	10 671
NTPS Educators/Teachers	6 December 2010	P	NA	Yes/No	3 302
Power and Water	18 April 2011	P	NA	Yes/No	956

* Members voted against package in previous (2010) election.

P Postal Ballot NA Not applicable

A database program was developed to assist with the conduct of fee-for-service postal ballots and manages:

- Issuing of ballot papers to voters added as new starters
- Recording ballot paper/s re-issued to voters who had not received the initial despatch
- Receipt of returned ballot paper envelopes and recording the determination of the initial scrutiny
- Compilation of statistics on the issue and return of ballots.

The NTEC was expecting to conduct one EA ballot in the next reporting year.

3.2.6 Assistance for inter-jurisdiction elections

The NTEC offices in both Darwin and Alice Springs provide a polling service on request, mostly early voting facilities, for interstate and New Zealand electors visiting the NT during election periods in their own jurisdictions. The table below sets out details of support provided to other jurisdictions during the year.

Table 8: Inter-jurisdictional support 2010-11

Jurisdiction	Poll date	Election type	Chamber	District/Division	Electors Voting		
					Darwin	A/S	Total
Victoria	27/11/2010	General	LA & LC	All	431	162	593
New South Wales	26/3/2011	General	LA & LC	All	150	79	229
Western Australia	2/10/2010	By	LA	Armadale	Service provided, no votes issued		
New Zealand	20/11/2010	By	HoR	Mana			
Victoria	19/02/2011	By	LA	Broadmeadows			
Tasmania	07/05/2011	By	LC	Derwent, Launceston, Rumney			

A/S Alice Springs Office

By By-election LC Legislative Council

HoR House of Representatives LA Legislative Assembly

Support for the Victorian general election included liaison with the Darwin Port Authority to offload and forward postal votes from a large number of Victorian electors on a visiting cruise liner.

The NTEC also supported the AEC during the August 2010 federal election. Four Darwin and three Alice Springs NTEC staff were seconded to work in key roles during the election. The NTEC also made available its premises for various purposes, including the use of its video link facilities in Darwin and Alice Springs.

The NTEC will extend support to electors for the following expected parliamentary elections:

- New Zealand general election and referendum on the voting system scheduled for 26 November 2011
- Queensland general election (must be held before April 2012).

3.2.7 Northern Territory Statehood and election for delegates to a Constitutional Convention

The Statehood Steering Committee concluded its work of conducting a series of public forums on statehood for the NT in urban and remote centres throughout the Territory and released a report in late 2010 to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee (LCAC) of the NT Parliament. The latter appointed a new advisory committee, the NT Constitutional Convention Committee (NTCCC), to plan for a convention and advise the LCAC on resources and other requirements. Originally, a Constitutional Convention was envisaged for November 2011 preceded by an election for delegates to be conducted by the NTEC. It was later announced that an election be held in conjunction with local government elections in March 2012.

The Commission opened preliminary discussions with the Statehood Steering Committee Executive Officer, prior to its conclusion, regarding the potential role of the Commission in any election of delegates and the practical pre-requisites and logistics for that to occur.

A continuing dialogue will be required with the Convention Committee regarding the role of the NTEC in any election for convention delegates. The NTEC will also contribute, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of legislation for any convention election. The NTEC is mindful that if a conjoint election is held, there will be a requirement to poll in unincorporated areas and localities that might otherwise be uncontested at the LG polls.

The NTEC is also mindful of the budgetary implications of any election related activities.

3.2.8 Party registration

The NT now has four registered parties following the gazettal of *The First Nations Political Party* on 23 May 2011.

3.2.9 Disclosure

NT electoral legislation does not provide for election funding. The NT *Electoral Act* Part 10 ss176 to 224 require annual disclosure by registered parties and their associated entities and election specific disclosure returns from candidates, publishers and broadcasters.

Originally Commonwealth and Territory disclosure requirements were aligned. However, when the previous Commonwealth Government significantly increased the threshold limits for disclosure in 2006, this alignment ceased. The Commonwealth Government indicated on taking office in November 2007 that it intended to lower the threshold limits for disclosure to below that of the Territory. To date no new Commonwealth provisions have been effected, meaning that NT parties cannot submit a Commonwealth return for NT purposes. Amendments to the provisions of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* (CEA) regarding disclosure thresholds were passed by the House of Representatives and introduced in the Senate on 17 November 2010. The second reading speech was adjourned that same day.

There are no funding or disclosure requirements for local government elections.

During the reporting year, all three NT registered parties submitted their annual disclosure returns. Parties were reminded of their obligation [NTEA s196 (2)] to prompt associated entities contributing to them to comply with NT disclosure provisions and the threshold of \$1500. Returns are due within 16 weeks of the financial year end and are to be posted by 1 March of the following year. During the year one party's return was followed up in respect to some of the detail it provided. This is not an unusual occurrence and a response is expected in due course.

Disclosure returns for the Araluen by-election were submitted and were placed on the NTEC website on Monday 4 April 2011.

The last annual review under the CEA legislation increased the threshold for 2010-11 to \$11 500.

3.3 Election policies, processes and procedures

The harnessing of technology for election processing activities in recent years has led to innovative practices, increasingly upheld by enabling legislation. Updates to software are required with cyclical frequency. Constant challenges are to document both the programming structure to more easily accommodate modifications and also instructions for the end user who has to apply the software. These issues were raised during the year with contractors working on software and the NTEC website.

Training manuals, workbooks and hands-on tasks during training sessions provide polling officials with contextual information to carry out their roles. These will be reviewed when discussions on legislation are finalised.

Of increasing difficulty is the capturing and documentation of customary election management practices as well as evolving techniques brought about through technological advances. The NTEC is aware that resources have restricted procedural documentation.

3.4 Recruitment, training and tools

A component of the new Election Management System (EMS) is a staffing module. The current data will be uploaded to the new system after an extensive review of the information. Contact will be made in the second quarter of the 2011-12 reporting year, election dates for 2012 advised and confirmation sought concerning employment availability at those elections. Interstate contacts will be approached to provide regional and mobile polling support.

The training programs for all staff will be modelled around the set dates, and content finalised when election parameters outside the NTEC control in relation to proposed conjoint elections have been finalised.

Equipment schedules and purchases of consumables will be modified for conjoint elections.

3.5 Targets 2011-12

- If required, implement any changes to electoral legislation procedures and forms
- Consolidate the development, testing and implementation of a new Election Management System (EMS)
- Implement project plans for the 2012 elections, capturing details in the EMS and determine staff requirements and sources prior to the end of the 2011 calendar year
- Liaise with councils and DHLGRS to determine:
 - appropriate levels of public awareness for the elections
 - how to coordinate messages from differing stakeholders
 - the brokering of cost-effective election services for both municipal and shire councils across the three Local Government regions of Northern, Big Rivers and Central Australian
 - council support where feasible.
- On request, provide electoral services to the New Zealand and Queensland electoral authorities for their elections in 2011-12
- Pursue the alternatives to the scanning of hard copy certified lists to capture non-voter data
- Initiate arrangements for remote area mobile polling. In the lead up to the elections, this will include planning and liaison with all councils and shire service centres in the central Australian region, meetings, and election preparation
- Monitor developments related to the holding of an election for delegates to a constitutional convention in 2012 and any subsequent referendum.

4 EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Objective

A community that is well informed about its electoral rights, responsibilities, processes and available services.

The NTEC promotes public awareness of matters relating to governance structures, enrolment, nominations and voting services by conducting education and information programs in accordance with s309 of the Act.

4.1 Public advertising and publicity campaigns

Public awareness activities were undertaken in support of the Araluen LA by-election, 12 NT council by-elections, and a supplementary election. Activities focussed on electors included:

- Development of communication strategies to inform the community of the elections
- Enrolment stimulation programs using newspaper, radio, targeted mail and posters
- Radio advertisements in English and language (Central Desert Shire) inviting nominations
- Local and regional newspaper advertising inviting nominations and promoting voting and the extensive distribution of customised election posters to service/community centres
- Dedicated election web pages, electorate maps and web links for each election
- A free call centre **1800 MYVOTE** for electors and stakeholders.

The election program included liaising with relevant local government authorities, providing briefing sessions for candidates regarding nominations, managing the declaration of nominations and the poll and issuing media releases and election bulletins. In the lead up to the elections, enrolment and information stalls were organised at shopping centres in Alice Springs and Katherine and direct mail campaigns were undertaken in Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs.

4.2 Education and information services

Education activities were continuous throughout the reporting period. To June 2011 a total of 2 925 school students attended 87 NTEC electoral education sessions undertaken in Darwin and Alice Springs in conjunction with the Parliamentary Relations Education Unit (PREU). The PREU program provides a link into an existing education service focusing on government and how it functions in a democracy.

During 2010-11, there was a change in emphases from large combined classes to presenting programs to smaller class groups, resulting in a doubling of the number of sessions with a similar number of students compared to the previous year. This change had a positive impact on participation and outcomes and partly accounted for an increase in the number of middle and high school age students participating. The increased program was supported by an NTEC contribution towards the provision of bus services for schools as organised by PREU on Parliamentary sitting days. The number of participants in NTEC programs also includes presentations to Territory schools, community organisations and adult migrant English second language classes outside the PREU framework. Details of the NTEC education programs are reported in the tables below.

Table 9: Electoral education sessions undertaken by NTEC staff to school groups by region during 2010-11

School Group (by Region)	No. Sessions	No. Participants
Darwin	67	2022
Katherine	0	0
Tennant Creek	0	0
Alice Springs Region	12	616
Nhulunbuy	5	216
English as Second Language (ESL)	3	71
Total	87	2925

Table 10: Electoral education sessions undertaken by NTEC by school year level and number of participants during 2010-11

School Year Level	No. Sessions	No. Participants
Year 4	3	74
Year 5/6	47	1518
Year 7/8/9	19	618
Year 10/11	11	565
Year 12	0	0
Indigenous (Remote School)	4	79
English as Second Language (ESL)	3	71
Total	87	2925

Features of the NTEC education program included the development and presentation of joint sessions in a school setting with the PREU of 'Step Up, Be Heard', a program aimed at Year 11 political studies students that takes participants through the roles of the three levels of government, the election process and the workings of parliament. A separate program was established with the Department of Justice and PREU entitled 'Democracy at Work', a joint program for new citizens and adult migrants that covers representative democracy including the functions and processes of government in a parliamentary, electoral and court setting.

A comic book 'Have Your Say' in the Territory genre was developed in-house as a background to elections and democracy. The comic is targeted at children and young adults and complements NTEC face to face education services, especially for distance delivery. Four caricatures in the shape of a pencil, electoral roll, ballot paper and ballot box and an election jingle were developed for future use in advertising and resource materials, primarily for election campaigning.

During the year, nine fact sheets on electoral topics were developed and used with school groups, distributed at shows and made available on the NTEC website for download. In May 2011, NTEC staff participated at the Electoral Education Network meeting held in Adelaide in May 2011. This forum provided the NTEC with a national perspective on electoral education and allowed for the exchange of materials and information. As part of its review of the website, the content was rewritten in 'plain English' and in April 2011, the NTEC awarded the redevelopment of the website to Captovate Pty Ltd.

4.3 Information activities to support the 2012 Local Government and Legislative Assembly elections

During the latter half of the reporting period discussions took place between the NTEC and the AEC regarding appropriate public awareness and enrolment activities to be undertaken in the lead up to the Local Government and Legislative Assembly general elections to be held in March and August 2012 respectively.

In mid 2011, the NTEC commenced a review of its strategic communication and enrolment plan for the 2012 elections, timed to coincide with the election stages. The main features of the plan already identified are:

- Mounting an enrolment campaign under the NTEC banner based on TV and newspaper advertising
- Using the NTEC and AEC website as a major tool to provide information and online enrolment
- Mailing personally addressed letters to all Territorians with enrolment and electoral boundary information that include forms to allow addressees to update their details
- Attending at community centres and specific events to stimulate enrolment
- Establishing a dedicated call centre for general enquiries relevant to enrolment activities and
- Providing information for the training of field officers and for distribution to council staff in advance of the general elections.

4.4 Research and electoral developments

The NTEC prepared a considered response to a discussion paper by the DHLGRS entitled 'What is the best voting system for local government in the NT', published on the NTEC website.

Informal ballot papers were examined following all by-elections to make an assessment on informality. Remote council by-elections reveal ongoing apparent non-intentional informality reflective of lower literacy and numeracy rates in remote areas. Research also shows that the unintentional informality rate is also noticeably higher when only two candidates contest a poll, due mainly from electors using methods other than numbers to indicate their preferences. A total of 74% of the Araluen informal ballot papers appeared to be intentionally informal (refer Appendix A), approximately the same as in the Alice Springs and Palmerston municipal by-elections (refer Appendix B).

The document providing a compilation of all NT historical election results was formatted. Following a recommendation from the 2008 Augmented Redistribution Committee, the NTEC allocated resources to research potential divisional names for use at future redistributions. The research was provided to the 2011 Redistribution Committee.

As reported elsewhere, the NTEC noted developments and ascertained the impact of recent amendments on legislative provisions in other jurisdictions.

In the light of the NTEC's growing involvement in local government electoral matters, the agency initiated the preparation by STEC of a matrix showing the mandated involvement of electoral jurisdictions in local government electoral governance provisions and, with specific relevance to councils' structures and composition, the criteria for reviews of local government representation.

The NTEC also participated in discussions on key performance indicators for all electoral jurisdictions to facilitate the adoption of common measures.

4.5 Public reporting

The 2009-10 Annual Report was tabled on 23 November 2010. A report on the Araluen by-election is expected to be finalised in the next reporting year.

4.6 Targets 2011-12

- Consider the use of offline and on-line social networks for this jurisdiction's election advertising
- Establish the new NTEC website
- Review and finalise a detailed communications plan for the 2012 municipal and shire general elections, including incorporating messages for the election of delegates to a constitutional convention if required
- Roll out new television and radio advertising promoting enrolment and voting services for the QR12 project and set term 2012 elections
- Promote inclusiveness in advertising and the identification of groups that are less likely to participate in the electoral process - young people, persons with English as a second language and indigenous Territorians.

5 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Objective

Staff, infrastructure and business systems that meet governance and operational requirements.

5.1 The organisation

The NTEC has a small complement of full and part-time staff and has access to specialized support and input from other NT government agencies, namely:

- Financial matters – Treasury
- ITC, payroll, procurement, property, recruitment matters – the Department of Business and Employment (DBE)
- Human resource issues - the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE).

Table 11: NTEC staffing profile as at 30 June 2010 and 2011

Designation	Number of Staff (Including Contract)	
	30 June 2010	30 June 2011
Executive Contract Officer 3	1	1
Executive Officer 1 (2010)/ Sr Administrative Officer 2 (2011)	1	1
Administrative Officer 8 (2010)/ Sr Administrative Officer 1 (2011)	3	3
Administrative Officer 7	0	0
Administrative Officer 6	3	5
Administrative Officer 5	0	1
Administrative Officer 4	0	0
Administrative Officer 3	1	1
Administrative Officer 2	2	1.5
Administrative Officer 1	0	0
TOTAL	11FTE	13.5FTE

A staffing cap of 11 positions is in place, imposed by the government. The NTEC regularly exceeds that cap from time to time due to fluctuations generated by event management requirements.

Permanent recruitment took place for five vacant positions - one manager public awareness position operating from the Darwin office and two electoral officer positions in both the Darwin and Alice Springs offices. The Commission is monitoring the effectiveness of the organisation structure which may need to be revisited to cater for the increasing operational workload of the agency in respect to the local government sector.

Darwin office

At the end of the reporting period the NTEC office in Darwin had seven permanent staff. It also funded the CEO (longer term contract), one contract officer, one supernumerary in the public awareness and education area and one business support officer.

Alice Springs office

There were two permanent staff in the Alice Springs office at the end of the financial year. The office will be further redefining the work objectives to give a southern region focus to enrolment, voter awareness and conduct of elections.

Occasional casual support was required for administrative purposes in both locations.

Election staff

Casual election staff were employed for polling and administrative duties for the nine council elections that went to poll. The Araluen and municipal council by-elections that occurred during the year afforded employment opportunities for staff in static polling places. Wherever possible, the NTEC uses its own and AEC electoral staff for remote and urban polling to minimise costs to councils.

There is now clarity in timing for general elections, with LA elections having fixed terms and council elections scheduled for March every four years. More than 1 000 staff on the election database were contacted in December 2010 to ascertain their willingness to work at future electoral events; more than 500 responses were annotated on file. Further contact is anticipated towards the end of 2011, confirming the 2012 election dates and seeking expressions of interest.

Employee expenses

Employee expenditure varies, caused by fluctuations in the number of LA and local government general and by-elections and the need to recruit more staff in the lead up to general elections for planning and program implementation.

Ongoing employee expenses are normally funded from the appropriation budget, with separate arrangements made for staff employed for elections, election project work and for secondments. In 2010-11, employee expenses came to approximately \$1 608 000, around 54% of total expenditure for the year.

NTEC office premises

Darwin: as part of a whole of government strategic plan for office accommodation, the NTEC was allocated an amount of \$710 000 to relocate to alternative premises.

In March 2011 the NTEC's relocation was accelerated when its tenancy of 30 years in the AANT building was brought to an end. In early May 2011 the NTEC moved to the TCG Centre on Mitchell Street. A refit is scheduled to take place over some four months (June to October 2011). Apart from one day, business continued as usual with the redistribution and an election in train.

Access to sizeable storage space at the former premises ended and the NTEC has been required to source a small amount of additional off-site storage space within its ongoing annual operational budget.

Alice Springs: under a joint arrangement between the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), MyVote Central is the only joint branded Commonwealth and State/Territory electoral office in Australia. The partnership enables a broader range of services to be provided to the central Australian region; the office also acts as a service hub for remote communities in other parts of central Australia, including the provision of voting facilities for interstate jurisdictions at their various state general and by-elections.

A number of electoral services and educational programs were provided, including:

- Full assistance for the Commonwealth election in August 2010 when some 6544 electors used the premises for early voting including 3400 interstate voters
- The conduct of the federal election polling night count in Alice Springs
- Use as a logistics centre for eight remote mobile polling teams travelling around central Australia during the Commonwealth election.

Five local government by-elections and voting services to Victorian and New South Wales electors for their State elections were also managed from the premises.

5.2 Management and reporting

Report under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act s18*

The NTEC reported to the Commissioner for Public Employment in relation to the Commission's compliance with the prescribed principles of human resource (HR) management during the reporting year. No grievance disputes arose.

The NTEC regularly seeks advice from DBE regarding NT public sector wide HR legislation, instructions and guidelines and the implementation of the relevant HR policies, practices, terms and conditions.

Equal opportunity

Staff selection is on the basis of merit based employment criteria. Polling official appointments are also made according to the merit criteria, subject to the demands of the election timetable. Electoral employees are required to sign an undertaking that they are not a member of a political party or active in political affairs and that they will retain this status during the period of their employment.

The Commission promotes gender balance in the employment of staff, to ensure appropriate dialogue with electors for enrolment, electoral awareness and election activities in all sectors of the community throughout its widespread jurisdiction.

Equity and diversity

The NTEC supports the selection of staff able to communicate and interact with NT communities, regardless of any perceived barriers presented by gender, language, ethnicity, disadvantage or any physical or other impairment.

Flexible work practices

Flex-time was able to be taken during the year outside operational commitments for the election events that occurred. Where overtime is not applicable, time-in-lieu arrangements are negotiated.

Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

Risks can occur in both office and field situations. The Commission has explored the use of GPS technology for use by mobile teams in remote areas. However it is difficult to identify a package that meets requirements for remote situations. Ideally a combination of GPS/roll data software could be utilised on the same equipment carried by mobile teams.

The agency's OH&S instructions, guides and checklists incorporate information and procedures that are relevant to operational requirements. The NTEC provides training on OH&S issues for all field officers and senior polling officials and advice concerning safe working practices with application to both staff and electors.

Mobile polling schedules are limited to eight hour shifts, where possible, and mobile polling teams are issued with appropriate safety equipment which includes EPIRBs and mobile satellite phones. Two staff members from the Darwin office completed a 4WD driver training courses.

No reportable safety issues were recorded during the year.

Report under section 7 of the Carers Recognition Act

Since 1995, carers of people unable to attend a polling place on polling day are eligible to apply for a postal vote under provisions of the Act. A carer may apply for a single election or on an ongoing basis as a registered postal voter. At 30 June 2011, 39 carers were registered as postal voters.

Two NTEC staff were granted carers' leave during the reporting year.

Insurance Reporting

Over the course of 2010-11, the NTEC made no self insurance or commercial insurance claims in any insurable risk category and paid no insurance premiums.

The NTEC has in place a number of mitigation strategies to help reduce the insurable risk arising from its operations. The agency maintains an 'Accounting and Property Manual', which contains specific reference to insurance and litigation matters. These include detailed instructions for drivers of Commission vehicles with reference to the NT Fleet handbook.

Records Management

Pursuant to section 131 of the *Information Act*, the agency has implemented processes to achieve compliance with the archives and records management provisions prescribed in Part 9 of the Information Act.

Corporate Review

A consultant was employed to work with staff on:

- Revising the corporate plan and
- Revisiting the performance development framework for the agency.

The approach employed for both tasks was consensus seeking and included MyVote Central personnel who were included in discussions by video link.

The updated corporate plan (refer Appendix C) takes into account the increased service levels for the local government sector since 2008.

The focus on four key areas for electoral service delivery was again reinforced with an emphasis on corporate activities underpinning enrolment, elections and education activities, in that revised order.

Documentation for managing personnel development (PD) was finalised, including:

- Guidelines for PD planning
- A policy for PD planning and
- Agreements for recording personal objectives and personal development.

The first sessions were held by the reporting year end.

The review of policy matters and delegations to underpin the structure were deferred, ie, HR, procurement and financial delegations in draft form, including:

- Resolution of grievances
- Equal employment opportunity management and
- Political neutrality.

5.3 ITC operational support

The NTEC continued to supplement its own skills base: postal vote processes, education materials and election software were enhanced using expertise sourced from outside the organisation.

Provision of services by DBE and external ITC provider/s

Officers from DBE and government contracted providers supplied ITC support throughout the year. To better manage risks and the project management lead-time involved, the NTEC gives prior advice of high operational requirements and timeframes to ensure support in the event of hardware/ software deficiencies and/or failure. Regular meetings are held to monitor ITC needs. The assignment of liaison officers by DBE facilitates quicker response times and provides a level of expertise not present in the agency.

DBE provided timely logistical and ITC support during the office relocation, including the provision of NTG cabling into the building. ITC support for the local government elections will be discussed and implemented with DBE. Assistance for the LA elections, including the establishment of a tally room, will be further explored.

A new contract was awarded for the redevelopment of the NTEC website and incorporated the requirement to operate under the SharePoint platform preferred for government websites. Work with the chosen providers on the redevelopment and acquisition of in-house software for election support in 2012 is expected to be finalised in the 2011-12 reporting year.

ITC hardware

NTEC desktop hardware is refreshed on a rotational basis. Discussions have indicated that the next refresh will be undertaken prior to the 2012 election year and, at the time of writing, an indicative date of October 2011 has been advised.

Software

The agency moved to Internet Explorer (IE) 8 after confirming with major stakeholders (councils and LA members) their capacity for the 2012 election year. Microsoft Office has been upgraded agency wide and all users are now operating with Office 2007. A move to Office 2010 has not yet been approved due to lingering compatibility issues with some essential third party software.

Vote counting software

The AEC has been approached to use *EasyCount* vote counting software for local government election complex counts in 2012. Formalities will be negotiated relating to its acquisition and implementation.

Election management system (EMS)

An independent contractor was engaged to support the EMS. Amendments and additions are scheduled for the system with completion of the project expected by the end of October 2011.

Netbook rolls

Netbook rolls were used successfully at the Katherine Town Council by-election in February 2011. The data captured, along with information culled from manual records, were used successfully for a non-voter program.

Postal voting software

A postal vote module was used for all EA ballots during the reporting year.

RMANS – the roll management system

The NTEC entered discussions with the AEC on appropriate levels of access to the system by NTEC users. Requests for further election roll products on an ongoing basis were also lodged.

Redistribution software

ITC tools used to assist in the work of the redistribution committees will be reassessed ie hardware, mapping tools, statistical packages in order that an appropriate operating infrastructure is in place for the 2015 redistribution.

5.4 Staff development and recognition

The NTEC requires staff to be conversant with its core business and have the capacity to work across positions. An outcome of the early round of PD reviews was the identification of a number of training requirements which were to be addressed early in the 2011-12 year.

The NTEC is part of a national group of Electoral Commissions from other states and the ACT developing on-line training for polling officials. This initiative is expected to better cope with the high turnover in polling staff between elections and the difficulties of organising training at central venues for elections that take place across the Territory. Participation in the program was not pursued during the year due to workload reprioritisation.

Set term elections allow a re-appraisal of training and on-the-job support for seconded staff assigned to regional co-ordinator positions. The agency is seeking to reinforce the leadership capacities of certain positions in the Commission's emerging structure and to enhance the skill set of existing employees in the limited windows of opportunity available after meeting ad hoc elections and inter-jurisdictional commitments.

5.5 Targets 2011-12

- Co-operate in the refurbishment of the NTEC's Darwin office by October 2011 and fully utilise the expanded premises for the 2012 election programs; finalise settlements and approvals for the arrangement of the office and all storage space, including off-site facilities
- Resource the Alice Springs office to manage the 2012 election program in the central Australian region, when the premises will be used as a logistics, training, vote issuing and counting centre
- Finalise discussions with preferred providers on count software
- Consolidate further the permanent staff structure
- Contact staff on the database confirming the election dates in 2012 and determine their availability for election duties
- Provide job descriptions for temporary project staff and regional coordinators and also education support staff
- Liaise with OCPE re terms and conditions for election staff
- Source and allocate personnel to all LG election positions
- Consolidate planning and preparation to implement a financial strategy for the local government and Legislative Assembly elections in March and August 2012
- Improve ledger controls and recording for election expenditure during election periods to assist in the preparation of timely cost reports and billing procedures
- Source, allocate, accommodate and train staff as appropriate for the duration of their election work.

6 FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial performance

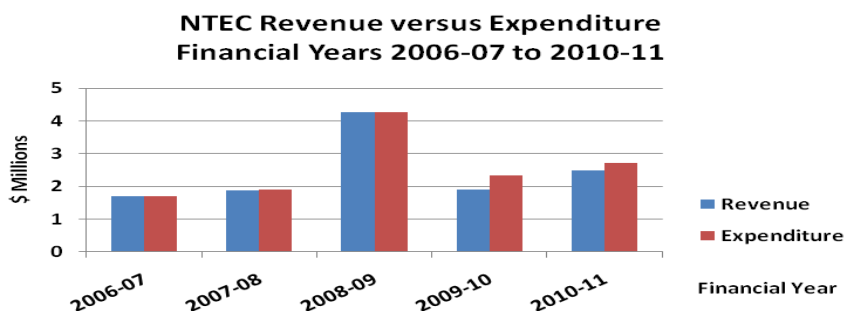
During the year, the agency's expenditure budget moved from \$1.900 million to \$2.721 million as a result of the following major expense increases:

- \$216 000 approved by a carry-over request, representing funds received in previous financial years but not expended due to high operational activity: funds approved for the redevelopment of the NTEC's website, development of an improved election management system (EMS), and associated software training
- \$232 000 adjustment to the 'goods and services received free of charge' to more accurately reflect the reliance on DBE services due to the new electoral climate and increased electoral activity
- \$50 000 increase to 'grants and subsidies' to record Commonwealth funding received from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), representing their contribution to the resources available in the Alice Springs office (MyVote Central), to deliver electoral services to the public in Central Australia and
- \$340 000 increase in 'goods and services income' to accurately account for the increased income (and therefore expenditure), of expected elections that are not funded through Treasury but through external councils and agencies.

Overall income for the year was \$2.656 million and expenses incurred were \$2.978 million. With approval granted to increase expenditure by \$239 000, an operating deficit of \$322 000 was the eventual outcome.

The main events contributing to the budget deficit result were due to a Legislative Assembly by-election for the division of Araluen (>\$40k), the NT Redistribution of electoral boundaries (>\$50k) and a rushed and ongoing Darwin office relocation, none of which were funded for prior to execution. Reimbursement was not sought prior to the financial year end.

The graph below shows the fluctuations in revenue and expenditure over an electoral cycle, with the peak in 2008-09 coinciding with the LA and inaugural shire and rural council elections in 2008.



The appropriation for 2011-12 is \$1.774 million and anticipated expenditure is \$3.899 million. The difference is largely due to \$432k of notional DBE costs, e.g. payroll processing, plus up to \$1.80 million for the conduct of local government elections in March 2012. Any conjoint election will increase that estimated expenditure.

The 2011-12 and 2012-13 years will see the NTEC manage, in successive years, its normal appropriation budgets plus maintain financial accountability for major event related expenditure.

Certification of the financial statements

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Northern Territory Electoral Commission have been prepared from proper accounts and records in accordance with the prescribed format, the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions.

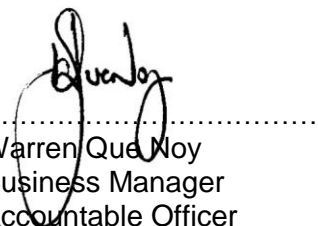
We further state that the information set out in the Comprehensive Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement, and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial performance and cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2011 and the financial position on that date.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render the particulars included in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



.....
Bill Shephard
Electoral Commissioner
Chief Finance Officer

31 August 2011



.....
Warren Que Noy
Business Manager
Accountable Officer

31 August 2011

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT
For the year ended 30 June 2011**

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
INCOME			
Taxation Revenue			
<i>Grants and Subsidies Revenue</i>			
Current		100	0
Capital			
Appropriation			
Output		1 660	1 703
Commonwealth			
Sales of Goods and Services ⁽²⁾		389	34
Interest Revenue			
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	507	432
Gain on Disposal of Assets	5		
Other Income		0	1
TOTAL INCOME	3	<u>2 656</u>	<u>2 170</u>
EXPENSES			
Employee Expenses		1 608	1 215
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>			
Purchases of Goods and Services	6	779	704
Repairs and Maintenance		7	2
Depreciation and Amortisation	10	77	29
Other Administrative Expenses ⁽¹⁾		507	432
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>			
Current			
Capital			
Community Service Obligations			
Interest Expenses	16		
TOTAL EXPENSES	3	<u>2 978</u>	<u>2 382</u>
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		<u>(322)</u>	<u>(212)</u>
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Changes in Accounting Policies			
Correction of Prior Period Errors			
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		<u>(322)</u>	<u>(212)</u>

The Comprehensive Operating Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

¹ Includes DBE service charges.

² Income received from a number of fee for service elections including Shire and Municipal Council elections.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
BALANCE SHEET
As at 30 June 2011

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and Deposits	7	264	511
Receivables	8	127	28
Inventories	9		
Advances and Investments			
Prepayments			
Other Assets			
Total Current Assets		391	539
Non-Current Assets			
Receivables	8		
Advances and Investments			
Property, Plant and Equipment	10	247	331
Intangibles			
Biological Assets			
Heritage and Cultural Assets			
Prepayments			
Other Assets			
Total Non-Current Assets		247	331
TOTAL ASSETS		638	870
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Deposits Held		(3)	0
Payables	11	(90)	(84)
Borrowings and Advances			
Provisions	12	(157)	(110)
Other Liabilities	13		
Total Current Liabilities		(250)	(194)
Non-Current Liabilities			
Borrowings and Advances			
Provisions	12	(53)	(24)
Other Liabilities	13		
Total Non-Current Liabilities		(53)	(24)
TOTAL LIABILITIES		(303)	(218)
NET ASSETS		335	652
EQUITY			
Capital		(264)	(258)
Reserves	14		
Accumulated Funds		(71)	(394)
TOTAL EQUITY		(335)	(652)

The Balance Sheet is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
For the year ended 30 June 2011

	NOTE	Equity at 1 July \$'000	Compre- hensive result \$'000	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners \$'000	Equity at 30 June \$'000
2010-11					
Accumulated Funds		394	(322) ⁽¹⁾	0	72
Changes in Accounting Policy					
Correction of Prior Period Errors					
Transfers from Reserves					
Other Movements Directly to Equity					
		<u>394</u>	<u>(322)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>72</u>
Reserves	14				
Capital - Transactions with Owners		257	0	0	257
Equity Injections					
Capital Appropriation					
Equity Transfers In		0	0	6	6
Other Equity Injections					
Specific Purpose Payments					
National Partnership Payments					
Commonwealth - Capital					
Equity Withdrawals					
Capital Withdrawal					
Equity Transfers Out					
		<u>257</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>263</u>
Total Equity at End of Financial Year		<u>651</u>	<u>(322)</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>335</u>
2009-10					
Accumulated Funds		606	(212)	0	394
Changes in Accounting Policy					
Correction of Prior Period Errors					
Transfers from Reserves					
Other Movements Directly to Equity					
		<u>606</u>	<u>(212)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>394</u>
Reserves	14				
Capital - Transactions with Owners					
Equity Injections					
Capital Appropriation					
Equity Transfers In		0	0	258	258
Other Equity Injections					
Specific Purpose Payments					
National Partnership Payments					
Commonwealth - Capital					
Equity Withdrawals					
Capital Withdrawal					
Equity Transfers Out					
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>258</u>
Total Equity at End of Financial Year		<u>606</u>	<u>(212)</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>652</u>

This Statement of Changes in Equity is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

⁽¹⁾ Net Surplus/(Deficit) from the Comprehensive Operating Statement

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
For the year ended 30 June 2011

	NOTE	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Operating Receipts			
Taxes Received			
<i>Grants and Subsidies Received</i>			
Current		100	0
Capital			
Appropriation			
Output		1 660	1 703
Commonwealth			
Receipts From Sales of Goods And Services		358	98
Interest Received			
Total Operating Receipts		2 118	1 801
Operating Payments			
Payments to Employees		(1 522)	(1 238)
Payments for Goods and Services		(853)	(655)
<i>Grants and Subsidies Paid</i>			
Current			
Capital			
Community Service Obligations			
Interest Paid			
Total Operating Payments		(2 375)	(1 893)
Net Cash From/(Used In) Operating Activities	15	(257)	(92)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Investing Receipts			
Proceeds from Asset Sales	5		
Repayment of Advances			
Sales of Investments			
Total Investing Receipts			
Investing Payments			
Purchases of Assets		7	(61)
Advances and Investing Payments			
Total Investing Payments		7	(61)
Net Cash From/(Used In) Investing Activities		7	(61)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Financing Receipts			
Proceeds of Borrowings			
Deposits Received		3	1
<i>Equity Injections</i>			
Capital Appropriation			
Commonwealth Appropriation			
Other Equity Injections			
Total Financing Receipts		3	1
Financing Payments			
Repayment of Borrowings			
Finance Lease Payments	17		
Equity Withdrawals			
Total Financing Payments			
Net Cash From/(Used In) Financing Activities		3	1
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held		(247)	(152)
Cash at Beginning of Financial Year		511	663
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	7	264	511

The Cash Flow Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2011**

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NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2011

1. OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (the 'Commission') was established in March 2004 to support government by providing a fair, impartial and professional electoral service and ensuring there is an opportunity for the people of the Northern Territory to participate in free and democratic elections. The Commission is responsible for conducting elections for the Legislative Assembly, municipal and shire councils (if appointed), and other organisations in an efficient and cost-effective manner, consistent with legislative requirements.

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act* and related Treasurer's Directions. The *Financial Management Act* requires the Northern Territory Electoral Commission to prepare financial statements for the year ended 30 June based on the form determined by the Treasurer. The form of Agency financial statements is to include:

- (i) a Certification of the Financial Statements
- (ii) a Comprehensive Operating Statement
- (iii) a Balance Sheet
- (iv) a Statement of Changes in Equity
- (v) a Cash Flow Statement and
- (vi) applicable explanatory notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared using the accrual basis of accounting, which recognises the effect of financial transactions and events when they occur, rather than when cash is paid out or received. As part of the preparation of the financial statements, all intra Agency transactions and balances have been eliminated.

Except where stated, the financial statements have also been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

The form of the Agency financial statements is also consistent with the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards. The effects of all relevant new and revised Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are effective for the current annual reporting period have been evaluated.

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b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations Issued but not yet Effective

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, the Standards and Interpretations listed below were in issue but not yet effective.

Standard/Interpretation	Summary	Effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after	Impact on financial statements
AASB 2009-12 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [AASB 5, 8, 108, 110, 112, 119, 133, 137, 139, 1023 & 1031 and Interpretations 2, 4, 16, 1039 & 1052]	Amends AASB 8 <i>Operating Segments</i> to require an entity to exercise judgement in assessing whether a government and entities known to be under the control of that government are considered a single customer for purposes of certain operating segment disclosures. This Standard also makes numerous editorial amendments to other Standards.	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2010-4 Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 1, 7, 101 & 134 and Interpretation 13]	Key amendments include clarification of content of statement of changes in equity (AASB 101) and financial instrument disclosures (AASB 7)	1 Jan 2011	
AASB 2010-5 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards [AASB 1, 3, 4, 5, 101, 107, 112, 118, 119, 121, 132, 133, 134, 137, 139, 140, 1023 & 1038 and Interpretations 112, 115, 127, 132 & 1042]	Makes numerous editorial amendments to a range of Standards and Interpretations	1 Jan 2011	

c) Agency and Territory Items

The financial statements of Northern Territory Electoral Commission include income, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity over which the Northern Territory Electoral Commission has control (Agency items). Certain items, while managed by the Agency, are controlled and recorded by the Territory rather than the Agency (Territory items). Territory items are recognised and recorded in the Central Holding Authority as discussed below.

Central Holding Authority

The Central Holding Authority is the 'parent body' that represents the Government's ownership interest in Government controlled entities.

The Central Holding Authority also records all Territory items, such as income, expenses, assets and liabilities controlled by the Government and managed by Agencies on behalf of the Government. The main Territory item is Territory income, which includes taxation and royalty revenue, Commonwealth general purpose funding (such as GST revenue), fines, and statutory fees and charges.

The Central Holding Authority also holds certain Territory assets not assigned to Agencies as well as certain Territory liabilities that are not practical or effective to assign to individual Agencies such as unfunded superannuation and long service leave.

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The Central Holding Authority recognises and records all Territory items, and as such, these items are not included in the Agency's financial statements.

d) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2009-10 financial year has been reclassified to provide consistency with current year disclosures.

e) Presentation and Rounding of Amounts

Amounts in the financial statements and notes to the financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars, with amounts of \$500 or less being rounded down to zero.

f) Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2010-11 as a result of management decisions.

g) Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of the financial report requires the making of judgements and estimates that affect the recognised amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses and the disclosure of contingent liabilities. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis for making judgements about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgements and estimates that have significant effects on the financial statements are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

h) Goods and Services Tax

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred on a purchase of goods and services is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as part of receivables or payables in the Balance Sheet.

Cash flows are included in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows. Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable or payable unless otherwise specified.

i) Income Recognition

Income encompasses both revenue and gains.

Income is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received, exclusive of the amount of goods and services tax (GST). Exchanges of goods or services of the same nature and value without any cash consideration being exchanged are not recognised as income.

Grants and Other Contributions

Grants, donations, gifts and other non-reciprocal contributions are recognised as revenue when the Agency obtains control over the assets comprising the contributions. Control is normally obtained upon receipt.

Contributions are recognised at their fair value. Contributions of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would be purchased if not donated.

Appropriation

Output Appropriation is the operating payment to each Agency for the outputs they provide and is calculated as the net cost of Agency outputs after taking into account funding from Agency income. It does not include any allowance for major non-cash costs such as depreciation.

Commonwealth appropriation follows from the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations, resulting in Special Purpose Payments and National Partnership payments being made by the Commonwealth

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Treasury to state treasuries, in a manner similar to arrangements for GST payments. These payments are received by Treasury on behalf of the Central Holding Authority and then on-passed to the relevant agencies as Commonwealth Appropriation.

Revenue in respect of Appropriations is recognised in the period in which the Agency gains control of the funds.

Sale of Goods

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised (net of returns, discounts and allowances) when:

- the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer;
- the Agency retains neither continuing managerial involvement to the degree usually associated with ownership nor effective control over the goods sold;
- the amount of revenue can be reliably measured;
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Agency; and
- the costs incurred or to be incurred in respect of the transaction can be measured reliably.

Rendering of Services

Revenue from rendering services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised as it accrues, taking into account the effective yield on the financial asset.

Goods and Services Received Free of Charge

Goods and services received free of charge are recognised as revenue when a fair value can be reliably determined and the resource would have been purchased if it had not been donated. Use of the resource is recognised as an expense.

Disposal of Assets

A gain or loss on disposal of assets is included as a gain or loss on the date control of the asset passes to the buyer, usually when an unconditional contract of sale is signed. The gain or loss on disposal is calculated as the difference between the carrying amount of the asset at the time of disposal and the net proceeds on disposal. Refer also to note 5.

Contributions of Assets

Contributions of assets and contributions to assist in the acquisition of assets, being non-reciprocal transfers, are recognised, unless otherwise determined by Government, as gains when the Agency obtains control of the asset or contribution. Contributions are recognised at the fair value received or receivable.

j) Repairs and Maintenance Expense

Funding is received for repairs and maintenance works associated with Agency assets as part of Output Revenue. Costs associated with repairs and maintenance works on Agency assets are expensed as incurred.

k) Depreciation and Amortisation Expense

Items of property, plant and equipment, including buildings but excluding land, have limited useful lives and are depreciated or amortised using the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives.

Amortisation applies in relation to intangible non-current assets with limited useful lives and is calculated and accounted for in a similar manner to depreciation.

Assets are depreciated or amortised from the date of acquisition or from the time an asset is completed and held ready for use.

l) Interest Expense

Interest expenses include interest and finance lease charges. Interest expenses are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

m) Cash and Deposits

For the purposes of the Balance Sheet and the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash equivalents. Cash equivalents are highly liquid short-term investments that are readily convertible to cash. Cash

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at bank includes monies held in the Accountable Officer's Trust Account (AOTA) that are ultimately payable to the beneficial owner – refer also to note 20.

n) Inventories

Inventories include assets held either for sale (general inventories) or for distribution at no or nominal consideration in the ordinary course of business operations.

Inventory held for distribution are regularly assessed for obsolescence and loss.

o) Receivables

Receivables include accounts receivable and other receivables and are recognised at fair value less any allowance for impairment losses.

The allowance for impairment losses represents the amount of receivables the Agency estimates are likely to be uncollectible and are considered doubtful. Analyses of the age of the receivables that are past due as at the reporting date are disclosed in an aging schedule under credit risk in Note 16 Financial Instruments. Reconciliation of changes in the allowance accounts is also presented.

Accounts receivable are generally settled within 30 days and other receivables within 30 days.

p) Property, Plant and Equipment

Acquisitions

All items of property, plant and equipment with a cost, or other value, equal to or greater than \$10,000 are recognised in the year of acquisition and depreciated as outlined below. Items of property, plant and equipment below the \$10,000 threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition.

The construction cost of property, plant and equipment includes the cost of materials and direct labour, and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

Complex Assets

Major items of plant and equipment comprising a number of components that have different useful lives, are accounted for as separate assets. The components may be replaced during the useful life of the complex asset.

Subsequent Additional Costs

Costs incurred on property, plant and equipment subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits in excess of the originally assessed performance of the asset will flow to the Agency in future years. Where these costs represent separate components of a complex asset, they are accounted for as separate assets and are separately depreciated over their expected useful lives.

Construction (Work in Progress)

As part of the financial management framework, the Department of Construction and Infrastructure is responsible for managing general government capital works projects on a whole of Government basis. Therefore appropriation for Northern Territory Electoral Commission capital works is provided directly to the Department of Construction and Infrastructure and the cost of construction work in progress is recognised as an asset of that Department. Once completed, capital works assets are transferred to the Agency.

q) Biological Assets

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission had no biological assets in 2010-11 and 2009-10.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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r) Revaluations and Impairment

Revaluation of Assets

Subsequent to initial recognition, assets belonging to the following classes of non-current assets are revalued with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount of these assets does not differ materially from their fair value at reporting date:

- Land;
- Buildings;
- Infrastructure Assets;
- Heritage and Cultural Assets;
- Biological Assets; and
- Intangibles.

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged, or liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arms length transaction.

Plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less depreciation, which is deemed to equate to fair value.

Impairment of Assets

An asset is said to be impaired when the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount.

Non-current physical and intangible Agency assets are assessed for indicators of impairment on an annual basis. If an indicator of impairment exists, the Agency determines the asset's recoverable amount. The asset's recoverable amount is determined as the higher of the asset's depreciated replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Impairment losses are recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement. They are disclosed as an expense unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount. Where the asset is measured at a revalued amount, the impairment loss is offset against the Asset Revaluation Surplus for that class of asset to the extent that an available balance exists in the Asset Revaluation Surplus.

In certain situations, an impairment loss may subsequently be reversed. Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment reversal results in an increase in the Asset Revaluation Surplus. Note 16 provides additional information in relation to the Asset Revaluation Surplus.

s) Assets Held for Sale

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission held no assets for sale 2010-11 and 2009-10.

t) Leased Assets

Leases under which the Agency assumes substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset are classified as finance leases. Other leases are classified as operating leases.

Finance Leases

Finance leases are capitalised. A leased asset and a lease liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments are recognised at the inception of the lease.

Lease payments are allocated between the principal component of the lease liability and the interest expense.

Operating Leases

Operating lease payments made at regular intervals throughout the term are expensed when the payments are due, except where an alternative basis is more representative of the pattern of benefits to be derived from the leased property. Lease incentives under an operating lease of a building or office space is recognised as an integral part of the consideration for the use of the leased asset. Lease incentives are to be recognised as a deduction of the lease expenses over the term of the lease.

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u) Payables

Liabilities for accounts payable and other amounts payable are carried at cost which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the Agency. Accounts payable are normally settled within 30 days.

v) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for employee benefits accumulated as a result of employees rendering services up to the reporting date. These benefits include wages and salaries and recreation leave. Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries and recreation leave and other employee benefit liabilities that fall due within twelve months of reporting date are classified as current liabilities and are measured at amounts expected to be paid. Non-current employee benefit liabilities that fall due after twelve months of the reporting date are measured at present value, calculated using the Government long term bond rate.

No provision is made for sick leave, which is non-vesting, as the anticipated pattern of future sick leave to be taken is less than the entitlement accruing in each reporting period.

Employee benefit expenses are recognised on a net basis in respect of the following categories:

- wages and salaries, non-monetary benefits, recreation leave, sick leave and other leave entitlements; and
- other types of employee benefits.

As part of the financial management framework, the Central Holding Authority assumes the long service leave liabilities of Government Agencies, including the Northern Territory Electoral Commission and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in Agency financial statements.

w) Superannuation

Employees' superannuation entitlements are provided through the:

- NT Government and Public Authorities Superannuation Scheme (NTGPASS);
- Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS); or
- non-government employee nominated schemes for those employees commencing on or after 10 August 1999.

The Agency makes superannuation contributions on behalf of its employees to the Central Holding Authority or non-government employee nominated schemes. Superannuation liabilities related to government superannuation schemes are held by the Central Holding Authority and as such are not recognised in Agency financial statements.

x) Contributions by and Distributions to Government

The Agency may receive contributions from Government where the Government is acting as owner of the Agency. Conversely, the Agency may make distributions to Government. In accordance with the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions, certain types of contributions and distributions, including those relating to administrative restructures, have been designated as contributions by, and distributions to, Government. These designated contributions and distributions are treated by the Agency as adjustments to equity.

The Statement of Changes in Equity provides additional information in relation to contributions by, and distributions to, Government.

y) Commitments

Disclosures in relation to capital and other commitments, including lease commitments are shown at note 17 and are consistent with the requirements contained in AASB 101, AASB 116 and AASB 117.

Commitments are those contracted as at 30 June where the amount of the future commitment can be reliably measured.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2011

3. COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT BY OUTPUT GROUP

	Note	NT Electoral Commission		<Output Group Name>		<Output Group Name>		Total	
		2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
INCOME									
Taxation Revenue									
<i>Grants and Subsidies Revenue</i>									
Current		100	0					100	0
Capital									
Appropriation									
Output		1 660	1 703					1 660	1 703
Commonwealth									
Sales of Goods and Services ⁽²⁾		389	34					389	34
Interest Revenue									
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	507	432					507	432
Gain on Disposal of Assets	5								
Other Income		0	1					0	1
TOTAL INCOME		2 656	2 170					2 656	2 170
EXPENSES									
Employee Expenses		1 608	1 215					1 608	1 215
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>									
Purchases of Goods and Services	6	779	704					779	704
Repairs and Maintenance		7	2					7	2
Depreciation and Amortisation	10	77	29					77	29
Other Administrative Expenses ⁽¹⁾		507	432					507	432
<i>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</i>									
Current									
Capital									
Community Service Obligations									
Interest Expenses	16								
TOTAL EXPENSES		2 978	2 382					2 978	2 382
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		(322)	(212)					(322)	(212)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME									
Changes in Accounting Policies									
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		0	0					0	0
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		(322)	(212)					(322)	(212)

This Comprehensive Operating Statement by Output Group is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

¹ Includes DBE service charges.

² Income received from a number of fee for service elections including Shire and Municipal Council elections.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
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	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
4. GOODS AND SERVICES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE		
Corporate and Information Services	507	433
Internal Audits and Reviews		
	507	433
5. GAIN ON DISPOSAL OF ASSETS		
Net proceeds from the disposal of non-current assets		
Less: Carrying value of non-current assets disposed	()	()
Gain on the disposal of non-current assets	0	0
6. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES		
The net surplus/(deficit) has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:		
Goods and Services Expenses:		
Consultants ⁽¹⁾	5	20
Advertising ⁽²⁾	0	2
Marketing and Promotion ⁽³⁾	105	66
Document Production	80	53
Legal Expenses ⁽⁴⁾	0	3
Recruitment ⁽⁵⁾	4	4
Training and Study	1	6
Official Duty Fares	42	31
Travelling Allowance	17	10

(1) Includes marketing, promotion and IT consultants.

(2) Does not include recruitment advertising or marketing and promotion advertising.

(3) Includes advertising for marketing and promotion but excludes marketing and promotion consultants' expenses, which are incorporated in the consultants' category.

(4) Includes legal fees, claim and settlement costs.

(5) Includes recruitment related advertising costs.

7. CASH AND DEPOSITS

Cash on Hand		1
Cash at Bank	26	510
On Call or Short Term Deposits		
	264	511

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
8. RECEIVABLES		
Current		
Accounts Receivable	116	4
Less: Allowance for Impairment Losses	()	()
	116	4
Interest Receivables		
GST Receivables	11	24
Other Receivables		
	11	24
Non-Current		
Other Receivables		
	0	0
Total Receivables	127	28
9. INVENTORIES		
General Inventories		
At cost		
At net realisable value		
	0	0
Inventories Held for Distribution		
At cost		
At current replacement cost		
	0	0
Total Inventories	0	0

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
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	2011	2010
	\$'000	\$'000
10. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Plant and Equipment		
At Fair Value	364	396
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(137)</u>	<u>(65)</u>
	227	331
Computer Hardware		
At Cost	25	0
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(5)</u>	<u>(0)</u>
	20	0
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	<u>247</u>	<u>331</u>

Property, Plant and Equipment Valuations

The fair value of these assets was determined based on existing restrictions on asset use. Where reliable market values were not available, the fair value of Agency assets was based on their depreciated replacement cost.

Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2011. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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10. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (Continued)

2011 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2010-11 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant & Equipment	Computer Hardware	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2010					330	0	330
Additions					(32)	25	(7)
Disposals							
Depreciation					(71)	(5)	(76)
Additions/(Disposals) from Administrative Restructuring							
Additions/(Disposals) from Asset Transfers							
Revaluation Increments/(Decrements)							
Impairment Losses							
Impairment Losses Reversed							
Other Movements							
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2011					227	20	247

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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10. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (Continued)

2010 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2009-10 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant & Equipment	Leased Plant & Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2009					40		40
Additions					61		61
Disposals							
Depreciation					(28)		(28)
Additions/(Disposals) from Administrative Restructuring							
Additions/(Disposals) from Asset Transfers					258 ⁽¹⁾		258
Revaluation Increments/(Decrements)							
Impairment Losses ^(a)							
Impairment Losses Reversed ^(a)							
Other Movements							
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2010					331		331

⁽¹⁾ New Alice Springs office fit-out

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
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	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
11. PAYABLES		
Accounts Payable	(62)	(25)
Accrued Expenses	(28)	(59)
Other Payables		
Total Payables	(90)	(84)
12. PROVISIONS		
Current		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	(112)	(81)
Leave Loading	(13)	(9)
Other Employee Benefits	(4)	(1)
<i>Other Current Provisions</i>		
Other Provisions	(28)	(19)
	(157)	(110)
Non-Current		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	(53)	(24)
Other Employee Benefits		
<i>Other Non-Current Provisions</i>		
Other Provisions	(53)	(24)
Total Provisions	(210)	(134)
<p>The Agency employed 13 employees as at 30 June 2011 (11 employees as at 30 June 2010).</p>		
13. OTHER LIABILITIES		
Current		
Other Liabilities	3	0
	3	0
Non-Current		
Other Liabilities	0	0
	0	0
14. RESERVES		
Asset Revaluation Surplus		
(i) <i>Nature and Purpose of the Asset Revaluation Surplus</i>		
The asset revaluation surplus includes the net revaluation increments and decrements arising from the revaluation of non-current assets. Impairment adjustments may also be recognised in the Asset Revaluation Surplus.		
(ii) <i>Movements in the Asset Revaluation Surplus</i>		
Balance as at 1 July	0	0
Changes In Accounting Policies		
Correction of Prior period Errors		
Increment/(Decrement) - Buildings		
Impairment (Losses)/Reversals - Buildings		
Increment/(Decrement) - Infrastructure		
Impairment (Losses)/Reversals - Infrastructure		
Balance as at 30 June	0	0

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	2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
15. NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT		
Reconciliation of Cash		
The total of Agency Cash and Deposits of \$264 000 recorded in the Balance Sheet is consistent with that recorded as 'cash' in the Cash Flow Statement.		
Reconciliation of Net Surplus/(Deficit) to Net Cash From Operating Activities		
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(416)	(212)
<i>Non-Cash Items:</i>		
Depreciation and Amortisation	76	28
Asset Write-Offs/Write-Downs		
Asset Donations/Gifts		
(Gain)/Loss on Disposal of Assets		
<include other Agency specific non-cash items as required>		
<i>Changes in Assets and Liabilities:</i>		
Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	(100)	2
Decrease/(Increase) in Inventories		
Decrease/(Increase) in Prepayments	0	64
Decrease/(Increase) in Other Assets		
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	7	55
(Decrease)/Increase in Provision for Employee Benefits	67	(27)
(Decrease)/Increase in Other Provisions	9	(1)
(Decrease)/Increase in Other Liabilities		
Net Cash From Operating Activities	(357)	(91)
Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities		

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Financial instruments held by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission include cash and deposits, receivables, payables and finance leases. The Northern Territory Electoral Commission has limited exposure to financial risks as discussed below.

(a) Categorisation of Financial Instruments

The carrying amounts of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission financial assets and liabilities by category are disclosed in the table below.

	2011	2010
	\$000	\$000
Financial Assets		
Cash and deposits	264	511
Fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL):		
Held for trading		
Designated as at FVTPL		
Derivative instruments in designated hedge accounting relationships		
Held-to-maturity investments		
Loans and receivables		
Available-for-sale financial assets		
Financial Liabilities		
Fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL):		
Held for trading		
Designated as at FVTPL		
Derivative instruments in designated hedge accounting relationships		
Amortised cost		

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

(b) Credit Risk

The Agency has limited credit risk exposure (risk of default). In respect of any dealings with organisations external to Government, the Agency has adopted a policy of only dealing with credit worthy organisations and obtaining sufficient collateral or other security where appropriate, as a means of mitigating the risk of financial loss from defaults.

The carrying amount of financial assets recorded in the financial statements, net of any allowances for losses, represents the Agency's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral or other security obtained.

Receivables

Receivable balances are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that exposure to bad debts is not significant. A reconciliation and aging analysis of receivables is presented below.

	Aging of Receivables \$000	Aging of Impaired \$000	Net Receivables \$000
2010-11			
Not Overdue	127		127
Overdue for less than 30 Days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 Days			
Overdue for more than 60 Days			
Total	127		127
Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses			
Opening			
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/(decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total			
2009-10			
Not Overdue	28		28
Overdue for less than 30 Days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 Days			
Overdue for more than 60 Days			
Total	28		28
Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses			
Opening			
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/(decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total			

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2011**

16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

(c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Agency will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The Agency's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure that it will always have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they fall due.

The following tables detail the Agency's remaining contractual maturity for its financial assets and liabilities. It should be noted that these values are undiscounted, and consequently totals may not reconcile to the carrying amounts presented in the Balance Sheet.

2011 Maturity analysis for financial assets & liabilities

	Interest Bearing			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
	Fixed or Variable	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years			
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Assets						
Cash and deposits				264	264	100
Receivables				127	127	100
Advances						
Investment, loans and placements						
Total Financial Assets:				391	391	100
Liabilities						
Deposits Held				(3)	(3)	100
Payables				(90)	(90)	100
Advances				(157)	(157)	100
Borrowings						
Finance Lease Liabilities						
Total Financial Liabilities:				(250)	(250)	100

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
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For the year ended 30 June 2011**

2010 Maturity analysis for financial assets & liabilities

	Fixed or Variable	Interest Bearing			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
		Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		%
Assets							
Cash and deposits					511	511	100
Receivables					28	28	100
Advances							
Investment, loans and placements							
Total					539	539	100
Financial Assets:							
Liabilities							
Deposits Held							
Payables					(84)	(84)	100
Advances					(110)	(110)	100
Borrowings							
Finance Lease Liabilities							
Total					(194)	(194)	100
Financial Liabilities:							

(d) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. It comprises interest rate risk, price risk and currency risk.

i) Interest Rate Risk

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission is not exposed to interest rate risk as Agency financial assets and financial liabilities are non-interest bearing. Finance lease arrangements are established on a fixed interest rate and as such do not expose the Northern Territory Electoral Commission to interest rate risk.

ii) Price Risk

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission is not exposed to price risk as the Northern Territory Electoral Commission does not hold units in unit trusts.

iii) Currency Risk

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission is not exposed to currency risk as the Northern Territory Electoral Commission does not hold borrowings denominated in foreign currencies or transactional currency exposures arising from purchases in a foreign currency.

(e) Net Fair Value

The carrying amount of financial assets and financial liabilities recorded in the financial statements approximates their respective net fair values. Where differences exist, these are not material.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2011**

		2011 \$'000	2010 \$'000
17. COMMITMENTS			
(i) Other Expenditure Commitments			
	Other non-cancellable expenditure commitments not recognised as liabilities are payable as follows:		
	Within one year	241	0
	Later than one year and not later than five years		
	Later than five years		
		241	0

18. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

a) Contingent liabilities

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2011 or 30 June 2010.

b) Contingent assets

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2011 or 30 June 2010.

19. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

No events have arisen between the end of the financial year and the date of this report that require adjustment to, or disclosure in these financial statements.

20. ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER'S TRUST ACCOUNT

In accordance with section 7 of the *Financial Management Act*, an Accountable Officer's Trust Account has been established for the receipt of money to be held in trust. A summary of activity is shown below:

Nature of Trust Money	Opening Balance 1 July 2010	Receipts	Payments	Closing Balance 30 June 2011
Nomination money	700	5 894	3 800	2 794
	700	5 894	3 800	2 794

21. WRITE-OFFS, POSTPONEMENTS, WAIVERS, GIFTS AND EX GRATIA PAYMENTS

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission had no write offs, postponements or waivers in 2010-11 and 2009-10.

APPENDIX A - Summary of informal ballot paper survey - Araluen by-election 9 October 2010

Division	No. Candidates	Apparent Deliberate Informality					Apparent Uninformed Informality											Total
		Totally Blank	Scribble	All the same	Other	Sub-Total	1st preference	✓ or ✕	✓ or ✕ + preferences	Duplicated	Non-Sequential Numbering	Incomplete Numbering	Illegible	Signed	Alpha Used	Incorrect Issue	Sub-Total	
Araluen	2																	
Mobile								1									1	1
Pre-poll		4	7	5		16		13					1				14	30
Postal		4	1			5												5
Gillen		25	26	12	5	68		16			1						17	85
Yirara		1	3	4		8		2									2	10
Total No.	2	34	37	21	5	97	0	32	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	34	131
%		26.0	28.2	16.0	3.8	74.0	0.0	24.4			0.8	0.0	0.8				26.0	

LEGEND

Blank	As described	Duplicated	Preferences repeated eg 1, 2, 2, or 1, 2, 3, 3
Scribble	Slashes or comments dismissive of voting	Non-sequential	Sequential preferences omitted eg 1, 2, 4, 6,
All the same	eg 1, 1, 1, 1 or x, x, x, x	Incomplete	Insufficient preferences recorded eg 1, 2, 3 only for 11 candidates
Other	Insertion of own candidate's name	Illegible	As described
1st preference	Marked with 1 only	Signed	Elector identified
✓ or ✕	Marked with a tick or cross only	Alpha used	Elector used eg A, B, C, D to indicate preferences

APPENDIX B - Summary of informal ballot paper surveys for council by-elections 2010-11

Council /Ward	No. Candidates	Apparent Intentional Informality					Apparent Non-Intentional Informality											Total
		Totally Blank	Scribble	All the same	Other	Sub-Total	1st preference	✓ or ✕	✓ or ✕ + preferences	Duplicated	Non-Sequential Numbering	Incomplete Numbering	Illegible	Signed	Alpha Used	Incorrect Issue	Sub-Total	
Victoria Daly- Daguragu	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	4
Victoria Daly- Thamarrurr/Pindi Pindi	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	10
City of Palmerston	2	155	116	116	19	406	0	102	2	0	20	3	1	0	0	0	128	534
Alice Springs TC	7	138	167	114	21	440	35	17	0	20	33	28	3	0	0	0	136	576
Katherine TC	2	53	30	51	2	136	0	110	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	115	251
Roper Gulf- Nyirranggulung	2	1	0	4	0	5	0	6	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	12	17
Victoria Daly- Thamarrurr/ Pindi Pindi	3	0	0	0	0	0	13	7	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	26	26
West Arnhem- Gunbalanya	2	1	2	5	0	8	0	12	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	14	22
Central Desert - Southern Tanami	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6
Total No.	13	349	315	292	42	998	48	269	4	20	55	46	4	1	1	0	448	1446
%		24.1	21.8	20.2	2.9	69.0	3.3	18.6	0.0	0.0	3.8	3.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.0	

Legend

Blank	As described	Duplicated	Preferences repeated eg 1, 2, 2, or 1, 2, 3, 3
Scribble	Slashes or comments dismissive of voting	Non-sequential	Sequential preferences omitted eg 1, 2, 4, 6,
All the same	eg 1, 1, 1, 1 or x, x, x, x	Incomplete	Insufficient preferences recorded eg 1, 2, 3 only for 11 candidates
Other	Insertion of own candidate's name	Illegible	As described
1st preference	Marked with 1 only	Signed	Elector identified

APPENDIX C - Update of the corporate plan for 2011 to 2015

Enrolment

Objective - A complete, accurate and securely maintained roll of Northern Territory electors that meets the requirements of stakeholders.

Strategies

Maintain rolls for the Legislative Assembly and local government in partnership with the AEC in an efficient and effective manner.
Monitor performance in terms of completeness, accuracy and the timely update of the electoral roll.
Develop and implement enrolment stimulation activities and initiatives including joint programs with the AEC.
Provide roll data in accordance with legislation.
Provide support to Legislative Assembly redistribution committees and local government representation reviews and effect changes following final boundary determinations.

Performance Measure

Percentage of estimated eligible electors enrolled in the Territory compared to previous years.

Elections

Objective - Efficient and effective conduct of elections.

Strategies

Advocate best practice in electoral legislation for government elections and in non-government election rules.
Enhance our knowledge of the needs of our diverse client base to customise electoral services.
Review and document election policies, procedures and processes.
Review recruitment and training programs and tools for effective service delivery.

Performance Measures

Voter participation rate compared to similar electoral events in previous years.
Relative cost of elections, compared to similar electoral events in previous years.

Education and Information

Objective - A community that is well informed about its electoral rights, responsibilities, processes and available services.

Strategies

Conduct targeted public advertising and publicity campaigns.
Develop programs to deliver education and information services across the Territory.
Maintain and improve school based education programs.
Conduct research and monitor external electoral developments.
Expand strategic alliances with organisations providing services to our diverse community.
Review and improve the public reporting program.

Performance Measure

Number of participants at school and community education sessions

Corporate Support

Objective - Staff, infrastructure and business systems that meet governance and operational requirements.

Strategies

Monitor the organisational structure so that it best meets the strategic challenges of the NTEC.
Document, maintain and improve policies and procedures that uphold the business requirements of the NTEC, the Northern Territory Public Service and relevant legislation.
Continuously improve IT operational support systems.
Encourage staff development and recognition.

Performance Measure

Performance in the corporate support area is to be reported on an activity basis in the Annual Report.