



**NORTHERN  
TERRITORY  
ELECTORAL  
COMMISSION**

**EVERY** vote counts!

# **Annual Report 2007 - 2008**

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

Madam Speaker

I am pleased to provide the fifth Annual Report of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

The report details the performance, key achievements and outlook for the Commission for the year ending 30 June 2008. 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 the tabling of the report in the Legislative Assembly within three sitting days after its receipt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Shephard".

Bill Shephard  
Electoral Commissioner

30 October 2008





## Electoral Commissioner's Foreword

During the 2007-08 reporting year Northern Territory Electoral Commission activities included:

- A Legislative Assembly by-election for the division of Greateorex;
- Four Municipal Council general elections;
- Support for the redistribution of Legislative Assembly electoral boundaries;
- Two community government elections;
- Eight fee-for-service elections;
- Three Enterprise Bargaining Agreements ballots;
- Enrolment and public awareness activities in partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission in Darwin, regional centres and remote communities; and,
- A review of the procedure manual and forms for use at community and fee-for-service elections.

At a strategic level, the Commission reviewed its corporate branding and structure as it moved towards the cycle of local government and parliamentary elections expected in the 2008 – 2009 reporting year.

The Commission also continued to foster its strong partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission and acknowledges their assistance during the year. Also, links with other State and Territory Commissions were maintained and enhanced.

The Commission has a current complement of one statutory and seven permanent positions. During the reporting year, significant numbers of temporary employees supplemented its small core workforce in the delivery of the agency's election, education, enrolment and corporate services. The Commission thanks all of these staff for the high commitment they have displayed and the contribution they have made over a very busy year.

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

Bill Shephard  
Electoral Commissioner



## Statement of Accountable Officer

As the Accountable Officer, I hereby advise that to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (a) Proper records of all transactions affecting the Agency are kept and that employees under my control observe the provisions of the *Financial Management Act*, the Financial Management Regulations, and Treasurer's Directions;
- (b) Procedures within the Electoral Commission afford proper internal control and a current description of such procedures is recorded in the accounting and property manual which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act*;
- (c) No indication of fraud, malpractice, major breach of legislation or delegation, major error in or omission from accounts and records exists;
- (d) In accordance with section 15 of the *Financial Management Act*, the internal audit capacity available to the Agency is adequate and results of internal audits have been reported to me;
- (e) The financial statements included in the annual report have been prepared from proper accounts and records and are in accordance with Treasurer's Directions; and
- (f) All Employment Instructions issued by the Commissioner for Public Employment have been satisfied.



BILL SHEPHEARD  
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER'S FORWARD</b> .....	V
<b>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER</b> .....	VII
<b>1. THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION</b> .....	1
1.1 PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS.....	1
1.2 VISION, MISSION AND VALUES.....	1
1.3 CHALLENGES FOR THE COMMISSION .....	1
1.4 LEGISLATIVE BASE.....	2
1.5 STRATEGIC PLANNING .....	2
1.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	3
1.7 NATIONAL REPRESENTATION .....	4
1.8 PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION (AEC).....	4
1.9 PROGRESS ON MAJOR TASKS IDENTIFIED IN 2006-07 ANNUAL REPORT .....	5
<b>2. KEY RESULT AREA – ENROLMENT</b> .....	7
2.1 JOINT ROLLS ARRANGEMENT .....	7
2.2 SUPPLY OF ROLL DATA.....	7
2.3 ROLL REVIEW.....	8
2.4 ENROLMENT PROGRAMS .....	8
2.5 ENROLMENT TRANSACTIONS.....	9
2.6 THE IMPACT OF COMMONWEALTH AMENDMENTS ON THE NT ROLL.....	12
2.7 TARGET 2008-09 .....	13
<b>3. KEY RESULT AREA - EDUCATION &amp; INFORMATION</b> .....	14
3.1 SCHOOL VISITS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS .....	14
3.2 RESEARCH.....	15
3.3 REPORTS .....	15
3.4 POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION.....	15
3.5 DISCLOSURE .....	15
3.6 STATEHOOD DEBATE .....	16
3.7 TARGET 2008-09 .....	16
<b>4. KEY RESULT AREA – ELECTIONS</b> .....	17
4.1 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY-ELECTION FOR DIVISION OF GREATORIX.....	17
4.2 MUNICIPAL COUNCIL GENERAL ELECTIONS .....	18
4.3 COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS .....	19
4.4 FEE-FOR-SERVICE ELECTIONS.....	19
4.5 ASSISTANCE WITH INTER-JURISDICTIONAL ELECTIONS .....	20
4.6 TARGET 2008-09 .....	20
<b>5. KEY RESULT AREA – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</b> .....	21
5.1 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT .....	21
5.2 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT .....	23
5.3 IT DIRECTIONS .....	24
5.4 ALICE SPRINGS OFFICE .....	25
5.5 TARGET 2008-09 .....	25
<b>6. REDISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES</b> .....	26
6.1 LEGISLATIVE BASE AND TIMETABLE .....	26
6.2 NTEC SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE REDISTRIBUTION COMMITTEES .....	26
6.3 TARGET 2008-09.....	27
<b>7. FINANCIAL REPORT</b> .....	29



# 1. THE NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) commenced operations on 15 March 2004, following assent to the *Electoral Act 2004* (the Act).

The NTEC provides an independent, professional and accessible electoral service to the people of the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and various client groups, including municipal councils, local government shires and other organisations.

The functions of the Commission are prescribed under section 309 of the Act. The Commission is required to maintain electoral rolls, conduct elections and promote public awareness of election matters. It also provides information and advice on election matters to the Legislative Assembly and Members, the Executive Council, Cabinet, political parties, candidates and Territory authorities. The Commission conducts research and publishes material relating to elections and other related functions and conducts ballots for persons and organisations.

The Electoral Commissioner sits on both the Redistribution and the Augmented Redistribution Committees, which review and determine electoral boundaries for the Legislative Assembly.

## 1.2 VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

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

To achieve this vision, its mission is to provide high quality and accessible electoral services that are fair and impartial, effective, efficient and in accordance with the law.

The following corporate values are considered vital to our success:

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

## 1.3 CHALLENGES FOR THE COMMISSION

The Commission's ongoing challenges are to:

- Provide an appropriate level of service to a small, culturally diverse, dispersed and mobile population;
- Work impartially in a politically sensitive environment;

- Implement a broad charter and complementary governance structure for the Commission;
- Manage and support a small permanent staff resource to meet the demands of major electoral events with heavy operational requirements and uncertain timing;
- Work productively with the AEC, interstate electoral authorities and other organisations; and
- Meet the increasing requirements of local government elections consequent on changes to legislation.

## **1.4 LEGISLATIVE BASE**

The following Acts and Regulations are administered by the NTEC:

- *Electoral Act 2004*;
- Electoral Regulations 2004;
- *Referendums Act 2001*; and
- Referendums Regulations 2003.

Shortly before the end of this financial year, the Electoral Commissioner was advised that he would be appointed as the Returning Officer for local government elections in October 2008.

## **1.5 STRATEGIC PLANNING**

During 2006-07 the Commission undertook extensive consultation on its future direction and managed a number of strategic planning and team building workshops. In 2007-08 the outcomes of the workshops and consultations were used to develop the NTEC Corporate Plan 2007-2011.

Whilst the Plan is to apply to future years, the Commission has worked in this reporting period to meet the Objectives/Outcomes for each of its Key Result Areas (KRAs). Outcomes for 2007-08 are reported against the new KRAs but with the full application of Strategies and Performance Measures to be applied in future years.

The KRAs used as a framework for this Annual Report are:

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

**1.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE (AS AT 30 JUNE 2008)**

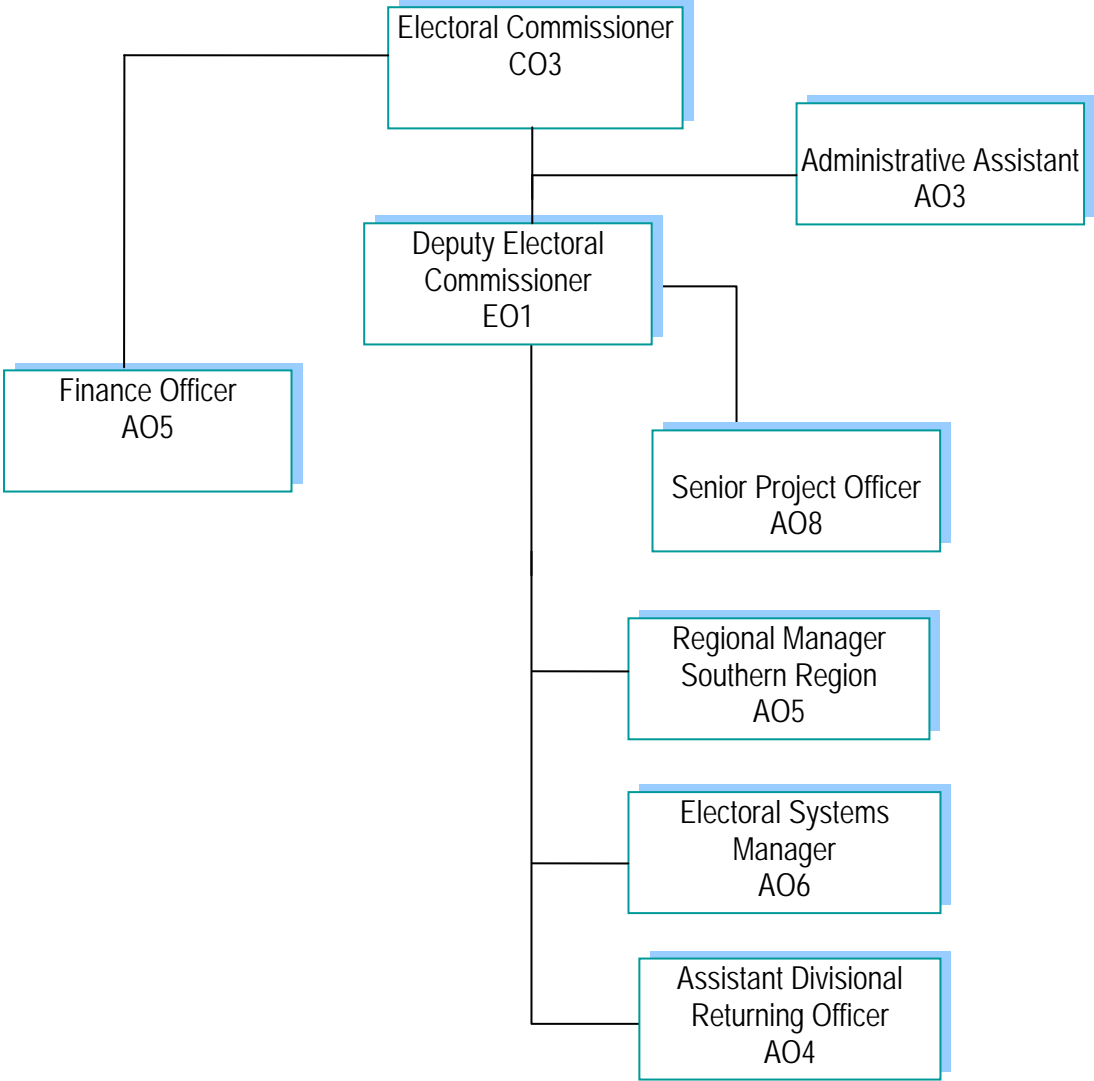


Table 1: NTEC Staffing Profile as at 30 June 2007 and 2008

Designation	Number of Staff (Including Contract)	
	30 June 2008	30 June 2007
Executive Officer 1	1	1
Administrative Officer 8	2	2
Administrative Officer 7 (secondment from DCIS)	1	0
Administrative Officer 6	1	3
Administrative Officer 5	1	3
Administrative Officer 4	1	1
Administrative Officer 3 (full time)	2	1
Administrative Officer 3 (0.5 part time)	1	0
Administrative Officer 2	0	1
Administrative Officer 1 (0.2 part time)	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 (9.7 FTE)</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1.7 NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

The Commissioner is a member of the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA), a consultative council of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Electoral Commissioners and other senior electoral officials from the Commonwealth. It meets quarterly where possible and at the time of federal or State and Territory general elections.

The ECA is a forum to share information and progress matters of common interest such as the maintenance of the joint roll, the implementation of new legislation and best practice in the management of elections. During the year meetings were held in Hobart, Canberra (twice) and Sydney.

The Commission also participated in a separate association of State and Territory Commissioners that met prior to ECA meetings in Hobart (July 2007) and Sydney (February 2008) to discuss matters of immediate State and Territory concern and to formalise existing cooperative activities at the State/Territory level.

## 1.8 PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION (AEC)

Historically, a strong partnership has been maintained between the NT Electoral Commission and the NT office of the AEC regarding enrolment and public awareness activities in both urban and remote parts of the Territory.

A joint working party, the Joint Electoral Services Program (JESP), meets regularly to plan and report on electoral program delivery in the Territory. During the reporting period, five meetings were held to co-ordinate joint enrolment stimulation activities.

In the period July to November 2007, the NTEC provided support to the AEC for enrolment and other public awareness activities for the 2007 federal election.

## 1.9 PROGRESS ON MAJOR TASKS IDENTIFIED IN 2006-07 ANNUAL REPORT

TASK	PROGRESS
Support for the AEC in enrolment stimulation prior to the 2007 federal election	The NTEC participated in joint enrolment programs from July to October 2007
Renegotiation of the Joint Roll Arrangement with the Commonwealth.	The NTEC and AEC agreed that a renegotiation of the Arrangement is not needed at this time
Development of programs and support materials to raise public awareness on electoral matters	All election specific maps, signage and publicity brochures were updated for use at the Greaterex by-election and municipal elections and new public awareness and promotional materials were developed where needed
Preparations for local government municipal elections in March 2008 and expected Shire elections in October 2008	Tendering for municipal elections took place in September/October 2007, with intensive program planning over the following 3 months. A report on the March 2008 elections was submitted to councils. Discussions took place on shire election activities with Dept of Local Govt (DLG)
Provision of advice for a review of the <i>Electoral and Referendums Acts</i> and advice for a review of the local government electoral provisions	Meetings were held with officers of the DLG on the possible nature and timing of amendments to local government legislative provisions
Review the management of industrial elections	Implemented new procedures with supporting documentation, materials and business processes for undertaking industrial ballots
Publication of a Strategic Plan for the NT Electoral Commission	The strategic outcomes for the Commission were determined and a business plan was completed
Review of the NTEC's organisational structure	Medium term funding was granted enabling the consolidation of the office structure consistent with current office workload. Finalisation of the structure is expected in 2008-09
Development of the NTEC website	Funding was approved and the refresh of the website will be undertaken in 2008-09
Alice Springs Office	Retention of the office was confirmed and funding for staff and re-location to a new site approved
Assistance to the Redistribution Committees	The NTEC provided a high level of staffing, IT and administrative support to the Redistribution Committees from December 2007 to June 2008

### **Noteworthy events and activities that took place in the 2007-08 financial year:**

- Greatorex by-election (July 2007);
- Federal election support (July – November 2007);
- Municipal council general elections (February – April 2008);
- Preliminary planning for the 2008-09 Legislative Assembly election;
- Enterprise ballots for NT public sector; and
- Support for the redistribution of Legislative Assembly boundaries (Dec 2007 – June 2008).

The NTEC also conducted two elections for community government councils in remote areas and eleven fee-for-service elections.

### **Looking to the future**

The following tasks are expected to feature heavily on the Commission's agenda during 2008-09:

- Contribute to on-going roll review and enrolment stimulation activities;
- Research electoral ballot paper informality, non-voting and enrolment and contribute to a 30 year electoral history of the NT;
- Review electoral education/awareness activities including materials and website content and assess the effectiveness of dedicating an officer to the education/awareness function as part of the staffing restructure;
- Provide advice on any review of the Electoral and Referendums Acts;
- Prepare and implement programs for local government elections on 25 October 2008;
- Contribute to a review of local government elections and legislation;
- Develop a cost efficient model for managing local government by-elections in the event that the Electoral Commissioner is appointed Returning Officer;
- Plan, implement and review programs for the conduct of Legislative Assembly general elections;
- Provide comprehensive reports and recommendations arising from major electoral events taking place in 2008-09;
- Re-locate the Alice Springs office to a new site and develop work programs to be managed from the office;
- Investigate new management systems, including finance systems and procedures and materials to support Legislative Assembly and local government elections beyond 2008;
- Consolidate the NTEC's organisational structure; and
- Redevelop the NTEC's website.



## 2. KEY RESULT AREA – ENROLMENT

### *Objective/Outcome*

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

### 2.1 JOINT ROLLS ARRANGEMENT

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission and the AEC jointly manage the electoral roll for the Northern Territory under a Joint Roll Arrangement between the Governor General and the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

The Arrangement provides for a single joint form for Territory and Commonwealth enrolment, the maintenance of the Territory roll on the AEC's national roll management system (RMANS) and the entry of enrolment data by AEC staff.

The NTEC has on-line access to the national roll database and provides the AEC with relevant geographic and elector information useful for the maintenance of the joint roll. The AEC is responsible for the review of the roll including the removal of electors from the roll. The NTEC undertakes complementary enrolment stimulation activities by collecting enrolment forms directly from the public at community settings and elections for transmission to the AEC for data entry.

A Joint Roll Management Committee made up of senior officers from both Commissions meets regularly to establish, monitor and report on local service delivery, planning, performance and any emerging roll maintenance issues in the Territory. The Committee also oversees the management of the Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program as set out in a Memorandum of Understanding between the NTEC and the NT office of the AEC.

### 2.2 SUPPLY OF ROLL DATA

In accordance with the Joint Roll Arrangement, the AEC extracted roll data from RMANS during the reporting period to meet a range of NTEC requirements including:

- Greatorex by-election roll (July 2007);
- Municipal council general election rolls (March 2008);
- Jury rolls;
- Monthly updates of roll changes for supply to MLAs and registered parties; and
- Statistics to support the redistribution of Legislative Assembly boundaries and NTEC reporting.

The delivery of roll data to the NTEC met the performance standards set out in the Joint Roll Arrangement. The NTEC directly extracted rolls for use in Community Council elections undertaken in the reporting period and for the processing of non-voter data arising from municipal elections. The AEC

was involved in the latter part of the reporting year in managing the first stage of encoding the shire data for the new NT local government structure. It was anticipated the full application and checking of shire boundaries would be completed by the end of August 2008.

## **2.3 ROLL REVIEW**

The electoral roll is maintained in accordance with the joint Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program. The program includes community based enrolment stimulation activities, the mailing of enrolment reminder and other roll review letters and the checking of enrolments at individual addresses by field officers.

During the reporting period CRU activities included the following:

- Mailing of 31 000 enrolment reminder and roll review letters to NT addresses where change of address information provided by other government agencies or from data-mining of the roll indicated that persons need to enrol or update their enrolment details. This mailing was based on data matching with certain federal government departments, Australia Post and the NT's Department of Education, Employment and Training and the Motor Vehicle Registry.
- Mailing of 2700 enrolment reminder letters to school leavers with their Year 12 results and 'birthday card' enrolment letters to students and apprentices on their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday;
- Mail-outs to habitations where there were apparently no electors enrolled or where there were indications that the roll was not up to date; and
- Objection processing that resulted in the removal from the roll of 2321 electors where there were indications that they were no longer living at their enrolled address e.g. official mail returned unclaimed.

An extension of federal demand powers over state and territory data sources resulted in access by the AEC in late 2007 to name and change of address information held by the NT Power and Water Corporation and the Department of Education for roll review purposes. Separate demand powers were obtained that applied to the Motor Vehicle Registry for on-line access to NT licence data held on NEVDIS (the national licence data base) to undertake Proof of Identity (POI) checks on applicants for citizenship.

## **2.4 ENROLMENT PROGRAMS**

The NTEC undertakes direct enrolment stimulation programs in partnership with the AEC to complement CRU mailing activities. During the reporting period the NTEC undertook or assisted in the following activities:

- Presentations to primary and secondary school students;
- Regular shopping centre/market enrolment drives;
- Public awareness and enrolment activities at major community events including Bass in the Dust, the V8 Supercars, Nightcliff Sea Breeze festival and at the NT show circuit;

- Attendance at Australian Citizenship ceremonies to collect enrolments;
- Specific public awareness and enrolment stimulation activities conducted prior to the Greater Darwin by-election, the federal election and municipal council general elections in Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and Palmerston;
- Electoral awareness and enrolment programs in remote areas of the Northern Territory; and
- Collection of statistics for evaluating and reporting on enrolment programs.

The NTEC contribution to the joint program was focussed on direct enrolment stimulation activities in community settings and at public events. NTEC staff undertook 105 separate attendances at shopping centres, markets, shows and other venues during 2007-08, with an estimated 1500 enrolments collected with additional forms distributed for subsequent return by mail. Staff also provided information materials on electoral matters on request from the public.

The NTEC direct enrolment program was undertaken from July to October 2007, in February 2008 prior to the municipal elections and recommencing in June 2008. During the lead up to the federal election, the AEC undertook targeted fieldwork and mailing at approximately 3000 addresses. Aboriginal communities within town boundaries were also visited as part of the enrolment checking and stimulation activities.

## **2.5 ENROLMENT TRANSACTIONS**

On 30 June 2008 there were 118 958 electors on the Northern Territory roll, representing an increase of 6645 (or 5.6%) during 2007-08.

During 2007-08 a total of 31 678 enrolment forms were received and processed by the AEC. Of these, 50% were from electors to add their name to the roll (first time enrolments, re-enrolments and transfers from interstate) and the balance from electors changing their address or other details on the roll. A total of 9,288 deletions to the roll were made, mainly arising from interstate transfers but also for removal from the roll due to death or where it was apparent that an elector was no longer resident at their enrolled address.

The increase of 6645 in roll numbers over the reporting period is due partly to the stimulus of the joint enrolment programs undertaken prior to the 2007 federal and 2008 municipal council general elections, but also to the continued increase in the eligible population in the NT, particularly in the Darwin region.

Table 2: Enrolment transactions – Additions and deletions to the roll since 2005-06

Enrolment at 30 June	2007-08		2006-07		2005-06	
		112 313		110 330		112 095
<i>Plus</i> Additions to the Roll						
New Enrolments	4 358		3 266		2 135	
Re-enrolments	4 698		2 923		1 746	
Re-instatements	83		176		18	
Interstate transfers to NT	6 792		6 020		3 986	
<b>Total Additions</b>		<b>+ 15 931</b>		<b>+12 385</b>		<b>+7 885</b>
<i>Less</i> Deletions to the Roll						
Removal by objection	2 321		3 135		3 533	
Deaths	837		795		743	
Duplications(142) / Removals(7)	149		115		88	
Interstate Transfers from NT	5 981		6 359		5 282	
<b>Total Deletions</b>		<b>- 9 288</b>		<b>-10 404</b>		<b>-9 646</b>
<b>Administrative adjustments</b>		<b>+2</b>		<b>+2</b>		<b>-4</b>
<b>Enrolment at Close of Financial Year</b>		<b>118 958</b>		<b>112 313</b>		<b>110 330</b>

Notes:

- **New enrolments** - includes electors who have not been previously enrolled and provisional electors yet to turn 18 years of age;
- **Re-enrolments** - includes electors enrolling who have been previously removed from a State/Territory roll by objection;
- **Re-instatements** - includes electors removed from the roll, but whose enrolment for their address is reinstated following receipt of further information;
- **Interstate transfers** - transfers to an NT address by electors who move from an enrolled address interstate, and interstate transfers from the NT;
- **Removed by objection** - electors removed from the roll on the ground that it is apparent that they are no longer resident at their enrolled address;
- **Duplications** - an entry on the roll is removed as it is found that an enrolment is duplicated due to an elector or official error;
- **Provisional enrolment** - includes electors who enrol when they are 17 and obtain full enrolment and voting rights on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; and
- **Adjustments** - includes administrative changes to adjust electors' enrolment details.

Enrolment transactions are not limited to those where an elector is added to or deleted from the roll. Enrolment forms are also received from electors who notify a change of address within their current NT Division or to another NT Division, or submit an enrolment form to change other details.

**Table 3: Transfers of enrolment between NT addresses**

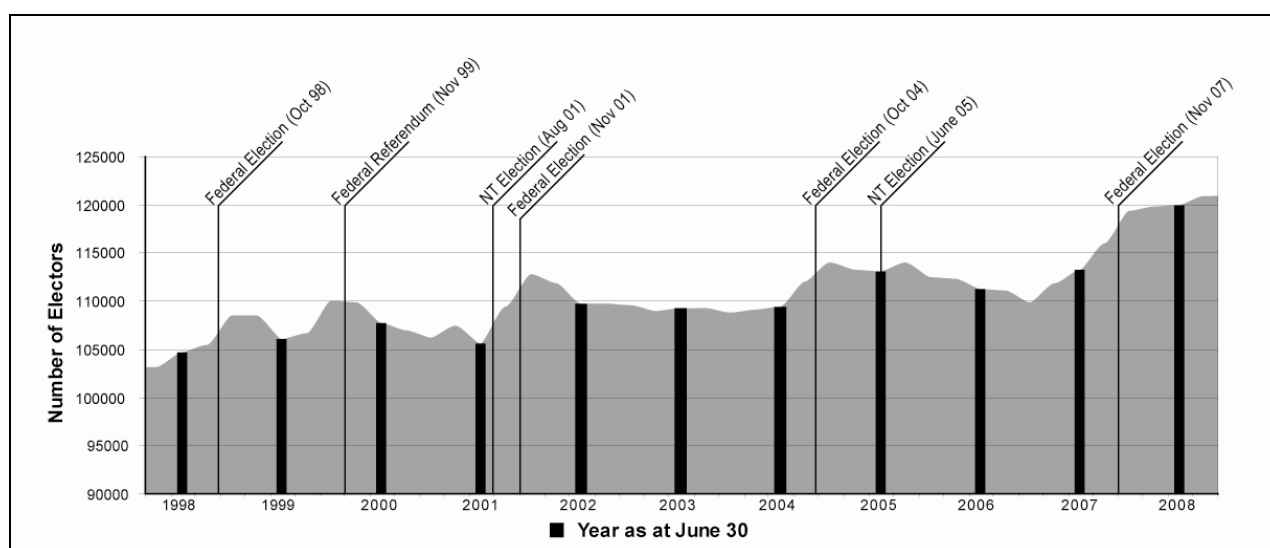
Enrolment Transactions	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06
Transfers between Divisions	8 388	5 907	4 550
Changes within Divisions	4 421	3 148	2 751
No change/Amendments	2 938	1 175	909
<b>Total Transactions</b>	<b>15 747</b>	<b>10 230</b>	<b>8 210</b>

An estimated 83.4% of eligible persons in the NT were enrolled as at 30 June 2008, compared to a national average of 92.2%, with an estimated 68.3% of eligible persons aged 18 – 25 enrolled (82.0% nationally). The overall participation rate increased slightly compared to the previous reporting period, a continuation of a trend that has seen the NT participation rate increase steadily from a low of 78.9% in June 2004. In addition, there was a significant increase of 5 percentage points in participation by persons aged 18 – 25 over the 2007-08 reporting period.

The lower levels of participation in the NT compared to the rest of Australia are a consequence of the difficulties of maintaining the roll in remote areas, the younger average age of the eligible population and the high level of mobility in the community.

The graph below shows movement in enrolment between June 1998 and June 2008. The main stimuli to enrolment have been electoral events (and the preceding awareness activities) including federal elections in 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007, a federal referendum in 1999 and Territory elections in 2001 and 2005. Each election has boosted enrolment but has been followed by a relative decline, partly a result of post-election deletions from the roll and the curtailment of enrolment programs.

**Table 4: Dates of NT elections and enrolment peaks for period 30 June 1998 to 30 June 2008**



## 2.6 THE IMPACT OF COMMONWEALTH AMENDMENTS ON THE NT ROLL

In mid 2006, changes to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (CEA) were passed by federal Parliament. In accordance with section 14 of the *Northern Territory (Self Government) Act 1978*, the federal provisions apply to enrolment in the NT. The changes included the requirement for proof of identity (POI) with enrolment, the removal of voting rights from prisoners and the introduction of demand powers on Territory agencies for the supply of data for POI and roll review purposes.

The POI enrolment provisions came into effect nationally on 16 April 2007.

### Proof of Identity (POI)

Since 16 April 2007, applicants have been required to provide POI at time of enrolment by:

- Quoting their driver's licence number, or if they do not have a licence;
- Proving their identity by showing another prescribed ID document to a witness from a prescribed group; or
- If no prescribed form of ID, then their enrolment can be witnessed by two enrolled persons who have known the applicant for one month.

The new enrolment form was widely distributed by the AEC and the NTEC in the lead up to the change as the existing form was no longer valid.

A preliminary assessment since the introduction of the new enrolment procedures is that enrolment activity has been maintained, but this was likely due to the additional roll review and public awareness activities undertaken prior to the 2007 federal election, the subsequent NT municipal council general elections and other enrolment stimulation activities.

It is apparent that the POI requirements make it harder for applicants who do not hold a drivers licence (estimated at 25% in the NT), particularly for those in remote communities. The POI procedures can prevent forms being completed at time of contact with electoral staff if the applicant does not have their ID with them. For all applicants, the new form is more complicated and can take extra time to fill in due to the need to include lists of POI documents and prescribed witnesses. The complexity of the form can act as a disincentive to the completion of enrolments at stalls and civic events and on receipt of mailings, even when the applicant has a drivers licence to hand.

Advice from the AEC after 12 months of operation of the POI requirements is that most applicants are able to provide a licence number or other prescribed form of ID in support of their application. There are relatively few claims based on the third tier (two witnesses) and these are mainly from applicants in remote areas.

### Voting Rights of Prisoners

The changes to the CEA enrolment provisions in mid 2006 removed the franchise from prisoners for federal and NT purposes. In August 2007 the High Court ruled that the denial of the franchise to prisoners was unconstitutional if they were serving a sentence of less than three years and that the

changes to the CEA were invalid. As a result of the ruling, enrolment activities were undertaken by NTEC and AEC staff at NT gaols in September 2007 to re-enrol prisoners, with 125 forms completed by applicants. Enrolled prisoners were eligible to vote at the March 2008 municipal council general elections.

The AEC continues to obtain data from the NT government under federal demand powers covering prisoners serving sentences of three years or greater so that they can be removed from the joint roll.

## **2.7 TARGET 2008-09**

- In partnership with the AEC, complete the encoding of boundaries for the new shires onto RMANS and undertake data integrity checks including the supply of draft data to local government staff for approval and sign-off;
- Complete the timely processing of close of rolls enrolments and supply of roll products based on the new boundaries for use at the local government elections scheduled for October 2008;
- Undertake enrolment stimulation activities to complement the joint CRU program; and
- Complete the timely processing of close of rolls enrolments and supply of roll products for the Legislative Assembly election scheduled for the 2008-09 reporting year.

### 3. KEY RESULT AREA - EDUCATION & INFORMATION

#### *Objective/Outcome*

*A community that is well informed about its voting rights, obligations, electoral processes and services available to electors.*

#### 3.1 SCHOOL VISITS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The NTEC and AEC work collaboratively to deliver electoral education sessions to school students and community groups. Due to the timing of the federal election in late 2007 and the municipal council general elections in March 2008, the education programs during the reporting period had an emphasis on enrolment to ensure that those eligible, particularly young persons, were able to vote.

Individual presentations are tailored to meet the target group and specific requests of schools and organisers, but generally the topics discussed include the three levels of government, enrolment and the electoral roll, voting systems, voting obligations, marking a ballot paper correctly and the electoral services provided by the NTEC and the AEC.

During the reporting period electoral education and awareness sessions were carried out by AEC and NTEC staff at 86 remote communities and at 27 schools and other venues in Darwin and regional centres. The sessions reached an estimated 2450 participants, a significant increase on the previous year. Most of the 2007-08 program was carried out by the AEC, particularly in Darwin, but the NTEC provided resources and seconded staff to the AEC to support their program in remote areas. In Alice Springs NTEC staff directly undertook the education and awareness program, with visits at a number of schools and Charles Darwin University in the town and at surrounding communities.

The election awareness visits to remote communities from July to October 2007 were a continuation of a comprehensive AEC program to visit major communities before the federal election. It was focussed on adults and whilst the main purpose was to raise election awareness and voting, 650 enrolment forms were collected.

Opportunities to visit schools and community groups were limited after the federal election, but election education activities were recommenced late in the reporting period. In May – June 2008 NTEC staff undertook education programs at Casuarina High and at Nightcliff and Dripstone Middle Schools, with approximately 100 students participating.

**Table 5: Election awareness sessions undertaken by NTEC staff during 2007-08**

Location	Number of Sessions	Number of Participants
Urban/Regional Centres	17	301
Remote	3	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>341</b>



## **3.2 RESEARCH**

A survey was undertaken of informality at the Greatorex by-election and 2008 municipal council general elections, with the Greatorex findings published as part of the report on that by-election. Other projects completed and posted to the website included the consolidation of information on Legislative Assembly by-elections from 1974 to 2007 and a review of the legislative and other background material concerning the redistribution process. A survey was also undertaken of voting systems used at local government elections in other jurisdictions.

The NTEC has assessed projects to be undertaken in 2008-09 including research into new division names in response to a recommendation of the 2008 Augmented Redistribution Committee.

## **3.3 REPORTS**

The Commission presented its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report (2006-07) to the Speaker in October 2007. This report and financial disclosure returns were published on the Commission's website. A separate report on the Greatorex by-election was tabled and a short report on the March 2008 municipal council general elections was made available to councils.

At quarterly intervals throughout the year, the AEC and NTEC jointly published the *Ballot Box Banter* for stakeholders, focusing on electoral news of topical interest.

## **3.4 POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION**

The de-registration of the Socialist Alliance Party took place at the end of the 2006-07 reporting year as it no longer complied with the membership provisions of the Act. During the financial year, no new political parties were registered and no previously registered political party was deregistered. Changes with respect to party 'Registered Officer' details were made to the public records.

## **3.5 DISCLOSURE**

All registered political parties are required to lodge disclosure returns with the Commission within sixteen weeks of the end of the financial year. The return requires parties to disclose their donations above \$1500 and expenditure during the past year.

Donors to political parties are also required to furnish the Commission with a return within 20 weeks of the end of the financial year. It is the responsibility of political parties to advise their donors of the requirement to furnish a return to the Commission. Further requirements to lodge disclosure returns with the Commission occur whenever a Legislative Assembly election or by-election is held.

Financial disclosure returns for the 2006-07 reporting period were lodged by the ALP, CLP and the Greens in 2007-08 and details were published on the NTEC website. Returns for candidates and donors at the Greatorex by-election in July 2007 were also published on the NTEC's website.

### **3.6 STATEHOOD DEBATE**

The NTEC continues to monitor debate on statehood issues. The NTEC has not contributed to that debate, although it has identified that the *Referendums Act 2001* would need to be amended to bring it into line with the *Electoral Act 2004* to accommodate any future referendum on the subject.

### **3.7 TARGET 2008-09**

- Participate with the Department of Local Government and Housing and rural shire councils in planning for the rural shire elections in October 2008;
- Undertake promotion of the Legislative Assembly elections scheduled for the 2008-09 reporting year;
- Undertake dialogue with the contracted provider for the update of the NTEC website to incorporate educational materials and visual content to meet the needs of residents in remote areas; and
- Determine education/information targets in conjunction with strategic and business plans for the next part of the election cycle.

## 4. KEY RESULT AREA – ELECTIONS

### *Objective/Outcome*

*Efficient and effective conduct of elections.*

During 2007-08 the Commission undertook the Greatorex by-election (July 2007), municipal council general elections in Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs (March 2008), two community council general elections and eleven fee-for-service elections. In addition, voting facilities were made available for four interstate parliamentary elections and staff and facilities were made available to the AEC for the 2007 federal election. The elections were managed from the Commission's offices in Darwin and Alice Springs, plus temporary premises in Katherine for the municipal council election.

### 4.1 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY-ELECTION FOR DIVISION OF GREATOREX

A writ for a by-election for the Division of Greatorex was issued on 10 July for an election on 24 July 2007. The by-election was caused by the retirement of Dr Richard Lim, the sitting Member.

The election was undertaken from the Alice Springs office. An extensive locally based enrolment and election awareness program was undertaken including a full letter box drop of material prior to the close of rolls. Static polling took place at Sadadeen (Charles Darwin University) and south of the Gap (Windmill Centre), plus a full range of postal, pre-poll and mobile polling services were provided.

Comparisons between the 2005 general election and the 2007 by-election show that compared to the 2005 election the number of candidates increased from three to four, the roll increased by 35 electors, informality decreased by 0.3% and voter turnout decreased by 9.3%. The overall drop in turnout is attributed to there being no absent or interstate polling at Legislative Assembly by-elections.

**Table 6: Enrolment and voting - Greatorex by-election July 2007**

Participation	2005 General Election		2007 By-election		Change
	No.	%	No.	%	
Electors on roll	4529		4564		+35
Formal votes	3811	97.5	3291	97.8	-520
Informal votes	97	2.5	75	2.2	-22
Total votes admitted	3908	84.1	3366	73.8	-542
<b>Type of vote cast</b>					
Ordinary votes	2952	75.5	2893	85.9	-59
Absent votes	403	10.3	nil	0.0	N/A
Postal votes	113	2.9	111	3.3	-2
Pre-poll votes	402	10.3	361	10.7	-41
Declaration votes	38	1.0	1	0.1	-37

## 4.2 MUNICIPAL COUNCIL GENERAL ELECTIONS

The Commission conducted general elections for the municipalities of Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs on 29 March 2008. The election was preceded by a lengthy tendering process in September/October 2007 followed by the appointment of the Electoral Commissioner as Returning Officer by each council by December 2007. Enrolment and voting statistics are detailed below.

**Table 7: Enrolment and voting at the March 2008 municipal council elections**

Municipality/Ward	Electors			% Variation from 2004	Informal Ballot Papers	
	Enrolled	Voting	% Voting		No.	%
Alice Springs	14564	10312	70.8	-2.2	470	4.6
Darwin – Chan Ward	10088	7161	71.0	-2.8	753	10.5
Darwin – Lyons Ward	13127	8454	64.4	-7.0	793	9.4
Darwin – Richardson Ward	10475	7955	75.9	-2.4	532	6.7
Darwin – Waters Ward	9476	7040	74.3	-5.6	506	7.2
Katherine	4825	3291	68.2	-3.1	134	4.1
Palmerston	14059	9893	70.4	-5.0	820	8.3

**Table 8: Nominations for the March 2008 municipal council elections**

Nomination Category (36 Vacant Positions)	Total
Mayoral	27
Aldermanic	63
<b>Total nominations</b>	<b>90</b>
Candidates nominating for both Mayor and Alderman	13
Candidates nominating for Mayor only	14
Candidates nominating for Alderman only	50
<b>Total candidates standing</b>	<b>77</b>

Sixty per cent of the nominations came from male candidates, 40% from females. Two thirds of the candidates were aged 45 to 64 (39% were aged 45-54, 27% aged 55-64).

**Table 9: Outcomes by vote type for 2004 and 2008 municipal council elections**

Vote type	2004		2008		% Variation
	No.	%	No.	%	
Ordinary at polling place	46156	87.6	44592	82.4	-3.4
Mobile	111	0.2	201	0.4	+81.1
Postal	629	1.2	816	1.5	+29.7
Pre-poll	3213	6.1	5519	10.2	+71.8
Reg 46(1)(2) – roll check	450	0.8	78	0.1	-82.7
Reg 46(3) - absent	2155	4.1	2890	5.3	+34.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>52714</b>		<b>54096</b>		

Pre-poll or early voting continued to gain favour in the community and staffing allocations at pre-poll centres will be revised to take account of the trend. Support and cooperation in roll management issues and staffing in relation to the council elections was provided by the AEC.

### 4.3 COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

During the year, Commission staff undertook two general elections for community government councils, a significant drop in the number undertaken in previous reporting years. These were the last elections to take place under Community Government Schemes in the lead up to the replacement of community government councils by shire councils effective from July 2008.

### 4.4 FEE-FOR-SERVICE ELECTIONS

In accordance with section 309(h) of the Act, the NTEC is allowed to negotiate a fee to provide electoral services to persons or organisations. Under this provision the Commission conducts fee-for-service elections for organisations requiring endorsement of enterprise agreements, the election of office holders and the holding of plebiscites and the like.

During 2007-08 all materials and documents for fee for service elections were reviewed and the NTEC's participation and support activities re-assessed. Roll matters were raised with a number of client agencies to enable the NTEC to more effectively manage these elections.

**Table 10: Fee-for-service elections undertaken in 2007-08**

Organisation	Poll Date	Type	No. Positions	Voting Method	No. Electors
*Central Australia Aboriginal Alcohol Programmes Unit (CAAAPU)	26.08.07	Election	7	FPP (A)	35
*Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting	12.09.07	Election	9	FPP (A)	58
Alawa Aboriginal Corporation	26.09.07	Election	10	FPP (A)	596
Multicultural Assoc of the NT	28.09.07	Election	11	FPP (A)	80
Medical Officers (NTPS) EBA	05.11.07	Ballot	-	Y/N (P)	425
NT Water Ski Association	11.11.07	Election	8	FPP (A)	1547
Power Water EBA	12.11.07	Ballot	-	Y/N (P)	698
Nguiu Ullintjinni Association Inc	27.11.07	Election	8	FPP (A)	945
Institute of Aboriginal Development	01.12.07	Election	5	FPP (A)	32
NT Prison Officers Association	24.01.08	Election	12	FPP (P)	288
NT Public Servants EBA	27.02.08	Ballot	-	Y/N (P)	8954
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>13 658</b>

Key: \* Uncontested  
(P) = Postal ballot

FPP = First Past the Post  
(A) = Attendance ballot

Y/N = Yes/No

## 4.5 ASSISTANCE WITH INTER-JURISDICTIONAL ELECTIONS

Under reciprocal arrangements between State and Territory electoral authorities, the Commission provides interstate voting services for other jurisdictions at its Darwin and Alice Springs offices.

Table 11: Election assistance provided to other jurisdictions.

Jurisdiction	Poll Date	Election Type	Chamber	District/ Division	Votes Issued		
					Darwin	Alice Springs	Total
Victoria	15/09/07	By	LA	Albert Park, Williamstown	1 2	1	4
Western Australia	23/02/08	By	LA	Murdoch	2		2
Tasmania	03/05/08	By	LC	Huon, Rosevears	1	1	2
Victoria	28/06/08	By	LA	Kororoit	1		1

Key: GE = General Election

LA = Legislative Assembly

LC = Legislative Council

For the federal election on 24 November 2007, the NTEC supported the AEC's public awareness and enrolment program by providing administrative and field staff for enrolment and polling (including mobile polling) activities in Darwin and Alice Springs, access to NTEC vehicles and premises for training and post-polling day counting.

## 4.6 TARGET 2008-09

- Develop, resource and implement election plans for the inaugural shire elections in October 2008;
- Review and execute election programs for the Legislative Assembly elections expected in 2008-09;
- Provide reciprocal voting facilities to interstate electoral authorities for their scheduled and ad-hoc events (including the ACT set term election in October 2008 and the WA 2008-09 State general election); and
- Continue support for the NT Government enterprise bargaining ballots and elections for other organisations.

## 5. KEY RESULT AREA – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

### *Objective/Outcome*

*An agency that provides the necessary staff and infrastructure support to meet corporate and operational obligations.*

### 5.1 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

#### Report under section 18 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*

In accordance with section 18(2) of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, a report was provided to the Commissioner for Public Employment setting out the extent to which the NTEC has observed the prescribed principles of human resource management relating to equal opportunity programs, management training and OH&S programs.

#### Equal Opportunity

The NTEC employs merit based employment criteria for the selection of head office and casual staff and has a central employment strategy for the selection of staff for static polling places and mobile polling.

Staffing for elections and enrolment and election awareness programs in communities require a gender balance to facilitate appropriate dialogue with all electors.

During the reporting period the Commission employed two indigenous staff on longer term contracts in the Alice Springs office. In the Darwin office a trainee was employed for a single full day equivalent per week under a disability work program.

#### Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

The NTEC is aware of its statutory duties of care for employees arising from the *Workplace Health and Safety Act* enacted in December 2007. In accordance with the provision of the legislation, the Commission updated the OH&S guidelines contained in election and training manuals for managers of polling places and remote mobile polling teams. Particular emphasis was placed on updating training and procedure manuals for remote mobile polling in recognition of the particular risks encountered in the field. Schedules for mobile polling were scrutinised to ensure that sufficient time was available for travel between centres. Staffing for enrolment and public awareness activities in remote areas will be reviewed to meet safety standards of staff.

The Commission managed health and safety by consulting with staff to identify possible hazards, assess risks and put in place procedures to control the risks. This has applied to the office workplace as well as polling places and remote sites associated with elections and public awareness activities in the field.

## **Flexible Work Practices**

The flex-time policy was revised during the year with the bandwidth extended to apply from 6 am to 6 pm with provision for the suspension of flex-time during periods of high operational activities, particularly at elections. Commitment by staff in response to tight timeframes and elections called on short notice is recognised by reasonable support of personal needs for time-off in core business hours.

## **Equity and Diversity**

The NTEC goals recognise that it services a diverse community located over a geographically wide area. Personnel are recruited with the capacity to communicate and interact with that community, regardless of gender, language, ethnicity, disadvantage or any physical or other impairment. It seeks to acknowledge and recognise diversity in its training programs and materials and employment practices.

## **Recruitment and Retention**

As local government elections were scheduled for March and October 2008, the NTEC approached a number of interstate agencies to provide staff support. As a consequence, officers from the AEC and the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) were seconded for the March elections in Katherine and Alice Springs.

Short-term casual positions were maintained for enrolment and public awareness work (two staff) and financial support (one). As discussed elsewhere in this report, two senior staff were seconded for six months on redistribution activities. A number of casual short-term community assistants were engaged for field work and to provide support in the Alice Springs office.

Retention rates amongst permanent staff remained high.

## **Human Resource Policies and Practices**

The NTEC is reliant on NT public sector wide legislation, instructions and guidelines and OCPE advice on implementation of HR policies and practices. It has no dedicated HR professional and seeks advice from the Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS) when necessary.

## **Employee Development Activities**

Due to election commitments, employee development activities were concentrated on election specific training. However, NTEC staff skills in Word and Excel were updated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2007 and a member of staff was released on study leave for a certificate course in training and assessment. During the federal election in November 2007 a number of staff took short-term work placements with the AEC.

The key focus areas for training still remain:

- Reinforcement of leadership capacities for certain positions in the Commission's emerging structure;
- The requirement for all employees to be conversant with the agency's business and the promotion of open, positive and regular communication to encourage business understanding and cross/multi-skilling of staff;



- The evaluation of training techniques and materials for parliamentary and local government electoral officials; and
- The proposed streamlining of the composition of mobile polling teams to allow for a team leader backed up with a team member as deputy and a further support officer. This structure will be used for the development of the team member to take over as a future team leader to meet an emerging skill shortage.

Training and development challenges remain:

- Building electoral expertise in the casual election workforce;
- Enhancing the skill set of existing employees in the limited windows of opportunity afforded by ad-hoc elections;
- Recruitment and training of staff for mobile polling programs;
- Providing development opportunities in specialised electoral areas for permanent staff despite the limited availability of inter-jurisdictional secondments;
- Providing training and administrative material in electronic format for regional staff at the time of an election when access to the NTEC server is not possible; and
- Rotating project allocations in election programs to expand staff knowledge base.

The Greatorex by-election and municipal elections were used to update manuals for polling staff and presenters of training sessions. It is planned that all training materials for use at shire and Legislative Assembly elections will be reviewed in the 2008-09 reporting year.

### Report under section 7 of the *Carers Recognition Act*

Members of the Commission requested and were granted carers leave during the reporting year. Since 1995, the *Electoral Act* has provided that carers of people who are unable to attend a polling place on polling day are eligible to apply for a postal vote. The carer may apply for a single election or on an ongoing basis as a registered postal voter.

## 5.2 CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

### Corporate Image

During the reporting period the Commission completed design work on its new corporate branding including a new logo and applied it to a number of publications and materials. It is anticipated that the new corporate branding will be applied in all activities commencing in 2008-09. The new logo is shown on the cover of this Report.

### Corporate Support

Following discussion with Treasury and DCIS, arrangements were put in place to assess the corporate support needs of the NTEC as a model for other NT small agencies. An officer was seconded by the end of the reporting period to give effect to this decision. The secondment was expected to be of six months duration.

It is anticipated that the duties of the seconded officer would include aligning both:

- The Commission's financial and HR policies, delegations and procurement procedures with NT government wide practices; and
- On-line corporate management applications including TRIPS, TRIMS and APRO into NTEC operating systems.

## Records Management

In respect of the Commissioner's responsibilities pursuant to section 131 of the *Information Act*, the agency has implemented processes to achieve compliance with the archives and records management provisions as prescribed in Part 9 of the *Information Act*.

## 5.3 IT DIRECTIONS

The 2005 Legislative Assembly Election Report, identified that the Commission's website and election management system would need upgrading prior to the next Legislative Assembly election.

All PCs were upgraded prior to 30 June 2008 and the NTEC acknowledges the support provided by DCIS in achieving this goal. The NTEC is recommending that the refresh of PC hardware for staff in small agencies occurs at the same time for operational efficiencies and team harmony.

### Website

Options for website redevelopment were reviewed in late 2007 and formed part of a funding submission to Treasury. Funding arrangements were confirmed and it is anticipated that the upgrade will be completed during the 2008-09 reporting year.

### Election Management System (EMS)

Minor upgrades to the existing EMS were factored in to the work program for the 2008 municipal council general elections pending a decision to adopt a new system.

### Vote Counting Software

Compuvote is a DOS based vote counting software package used by the NTEC since the early 1990's for complex multi-member exhaustive preferential counts. Its use at the March 2008 municipal council general elections disclosed some sub-optimal performance issues including problems with report printing and an increasing difficulty in operating in a MS Windows based environment.

The NTEC gained funding support to upgrade count software and a dialogue was commenced with the AEC in June 2008 to lease their count software, *EasyCount*, for use at the local government shire elections scheduled for October 2008. It is expected that a formal arrangement for the supply of *EasyCount* will be explored with the AEC early in the 2008-09 reporting year.

## **5.4 ALICE SPRINGS OFFICE**

The NTEC has supported a full time position in Alice Springs since 2005 to better manage public awareness and community and local government elections in the southern region. The continuous staffing of the joint office by the NTEC is on behalf of both agencies, but AEC staff are located there for federal electoral events or specific roll review activities. The office provides a shop front to the public and stakeholders for enrolment and information services, access to the roll and interstate voting. It is also a base for election, enrolment, roll review and electoral awareness programs undertaken generally in the Centre.

During the reporting year, the Alice Springs office provided an accessible shopfront for the public and was used effectively for the management of election and other activities. Whilst these outcomes support the NTEC's commitment to maintain the office on an on-going basis, difficulties have been experienced in its staffing with experienced electoral officers. Accordingly, the staffing of the office will be subject to a review in the NTEC's staffing restructure and further negotiations will be undertaken with the AEC as joint partners to further define the role of the office.

## **5.5 TARGET 2008-09**

- Review staff development opportunities;
- Review work programs, materials and manuals following the shire and Legislative Assembly elections;
- Roll out of corporate imaging on the website and all products and materials;
- Alignment of work programs around the corporate direction;
- Re-locate the Alice Springs office;
- Undertake contract training program for permanent staff; and
- Respond to recommendations for 'small agency' support.

# 6. REDISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

## 6.1 LEGISLATIVE BASE AND TIMETABLE

In accordance with section 138 of the Act a redistribution of Legislative Assembly boundaries must be held as soon as practicable after two years and six months after the polling day for a general election. As the last general election was held on 18 June 2005, the redistribution commenced in mid-December 2007.

The redistribution process is managed by a Redistribution Committee and an Augmented Redistribution Committee. The Redistribution Committee is established in accordance with sections 331-333 of the Act and consists of the Electoral Commissioner who is Chairperson, the Surveyor-General and the Auditor-General.

The Augmented Redistribution Committee is established under sections 334-339 of the Act and is convened once proposed boundaries are published by the Redistribution Committee. It consists of the Redistribution Committee plus an appointed member who has served or is qualified for appointment as a magistrate or Judge or has other appropriate qualifications and experience and is not a member of a political party. The appointed member is the Chairperson.

The timetable followed by the three-member Redistribution Committee was as follows:

Call for Public Suggestions	19 December 2007
Public Suggestions Due	18 January 2008
Comment Invited on the Received Public Submissions	6 February 2008
Comments Closed	20 February 2008
Proposed Boundaries Published and Objections Invited	Noon 24 April 2008

The Augmented Redistribution Committee, with an appointed chairperson, was formed on 23 April 2008 and its program is outlined below:

Consultations with the Augmented Redistribution Committee	9 -16 May 2008
Objections Closed	26 May 2008
Boundaries Gazetted and Final Report Provided to the Minister	16 June 2008

## 6.2 NTEC SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE REDISTRIBUTION COMMITTEES

The NTEC supported the Redistribution Committees by providing two experienced staff for six months to provide administrative assistance, supplying specialised IT reports and maps showing up to date enrolment data based on Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Districts, and dedicating a section of the NTEC’s website for redistribution purposes. The AEC provided assistance by extracting and

supplying roll data in the required formats at key dates and applying the Augmented Committee's boundary determinations to the roll against tight deadlines in June 2008.

Following the Gazettal of boundaries on 16 June 2008, NTEC and AEC staff undertook the application of the changes to the roll. This task and the associated checking was substantially complete as at 30 June 2008. An information program combining press advertising with targeted mailing to advise electors of boundary changes was developed in June for release in July 2008.

The cost of the redistribution in the reporting period was \$178 527, with the residual expenditure to be expended in 2008-09. This expenditure was in line with the budget.

### **6.3 TARGET 2008-09**

- Transfer of the Augmented Committee's determination of changes to boundaries to the electronic roll (RMANS) to be completed by mid July 2008;
- Update of division profiles on the NTEC website to be completed by the end of July 2008;
- Press advertising and targeted notices to households to provide details of the new boundaries to be circulated in late July 2008;
- Investigate IT tools available to assist the work of the Redistribution Committees scheduled to commence in early 2011. The tools could include mapping systems and statistical packages to explore the geographic and demographic consequences of changes to boundaries; and
- Initiate consultation with the community and undertake any necessary research into new division names that may be used at future redistributions.



## 7. FINANCIAL REPORT

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVERVIEW

For the Year Ended 30 June 2008

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission provides an independent service to the people of the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, municipal councils, local government shires and other organisations.

Key responsibilities include:

- Maintaining the Northern Territory electoral roll;
- Managing parliamentary and non-parliamentary elections including local government and fee-for-service elections;
- Delivering public electoral awareness programs;
- Providing advice and reports relating to electoral matters to the Legislative Assembly;
- Conducting electoral research; and
- Providing support to the Redistribution Committees which redistribute electoral boundaries.

#### Financial Performance

During the year the agency's budget moved from \$1.60 million to \$2.33 million as a result of the following increases:

- \$0.45 million provided by a Treasurer's Advance to cover additional costs as a result of the Greatorex by-election in July 2007, redistribution of electoral boundaries and additional employee expenses
- \$0.28 million associated with the March 2008 municipal elections.

This variation is reflected in increased income and expenses. Overall income was \$2.476 million with expenses of \$2.342 million producing an operating surplus of \$0.134 million.

#### Financial Position

The Electoral Commission's assets have increased and liabilities decreased to produce a positive net asset result at the end of 2007-08 of \$0.003 million leading to an improved financial position compared to the negative result at end of June 2007. Primarily the reasons for this change are a larger cash balance and an increase in accounts receivable.

## 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 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 2008 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.



William Shephard  
Electoral Commissioner  
18 September 2008



Irene Moffatt  
Finance Officer  
17 September 2008



**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
OPERATING STATEMENT  
For the year ended 30 June 2008**

	NOTE	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>INCOME</b>			
Output Revenue		1 853	1 487
Sales of Goods and Services		283	24
Interest Revenue			
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	336	261
Gain on Disposal of Assets	5	1	-
Other Income		3	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>2 476</b>	<b>1 772</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employee Expenses		1 297	946
<i>Administrative Expenses</i>			
Purchases of Goods and Services	6	697	570
Repairs and Maintenance		3	2
Depreciation and Amortisation	9	9	4
Goods and Services Received Free of Charge	4	336	261
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>2 342</b>	<b>1 783</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	12	<b>134</b>	<b>(11)</b>

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

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
BALANCE SHEET  
For the year ended 30 June 2008**

	NOTE	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<i>Current Assets</i>			
Cash and Deposits	7	61	2
Receivables	8	64	17
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>125</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Non-Current Assets</i>			
Property, Plant and Equipment	9	30	30
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>155</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<i>Current Liabilities</i>			
Deposits Held		-	6
Payables	10	31	37
Provisions	11	95	137
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>126</b>	<b>180</b>
<i>Non-Current Liabilities</i>			
Provisions	11	26	-
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>(131)</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Capital	12	(281)	(281)
Accumulated Funds		284	150
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>(131)</b>

*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 2008**

	NOTE	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
BALANCE OF EQUITY AT 1 JULY		( 131)	( 120)
<i>Capital</i>	12		
Balance at 1 July		( 281)	( 281)
Equity Injections		-	-
Equity Withdrawals		-	-
Balance at 30 June		( 281)	( 281)
<i>Accumulated Funds</i>	12		
Balance at 1 July		150	161
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Period		134	( 11)
Balance at 30 June		284	150
<b>BALANCE OF EQUITY AT 30 JUNE</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>( 131)</b>

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

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**CASH FLOW STATEMENT**  
For the year ended 30 June 2008

	NOTE	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
	NOTE	2008 \$'000 (Outflows) / Inflows	2007 \$'000 (Outflows) / Inflows
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Operating Receipts</i>			
Output Revenue Received		1 853	1 487
Receipts From Sales of Goods And Services		303	69
<b>Total Operating Receipts</b>		<b>2 156</b>	<b>1 556</b>
<i>Operating Payments</i>			
Payments to Employees		( 1 312)	( 930)
Payments for Goods and Services		( 770)	( 651)
<b>Total Operating Payments</b>		<b>( 2 082)</b>	<b>( 1 581)</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Operating Activities</b>	13	<b>74</b>	<b>( 25)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Investing Payments</i>			
Purchases of Assets	9	( 9)	( 27)
<b>Total Investing Payments</b>		<b>( 9)</b>	<b>( 27)</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Investing Activities</b>		<b>( 9)</b>	<b>( 27)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<i>Financing Receipts</i>			
Deposits Received		( 6)	1
<b>Total Financing Receipts</b>		<b>( 6)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Net Cash From/(Used In) Financing Activities</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>( 51)</b>
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held		2	53
<b>CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	7	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>

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

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

**INDEX OF NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

1. Objectives and Funding
2. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies
3. Operating Statement by Output Group
- INCOME**
4. Goods and Services Received Free of Charge
5. Gain on Disposal of Assets
- EXPENSES**
6. Purchases of Goods and Services
- ASSETS**
7. Cash and Deposits
8. Receivables
9. Property, Plant and Equipment
- LIABILITIES**
10. Payables
11. Provisions
- EQUITY**
12. Equity
- OTHER DISCLOSURES**
13. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
14. Financial Instruments
15. Commitments
16. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
17. Events Subsequent to Balance Date
18. Accountable Officer's Trust Account
19. Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers
20. Variation to the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

**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, local government, community government, 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 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) an 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 form of Agency financial statements is consistent with the accrual budget format and the requirements of Australian Accounting Standards, including AASB 101 and AASB 107. The format also requires additional disclosures specific to Territory Government entities.

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.

**(b) Agency and Territory Items**

The financial statements of the Commission include income, expenses, assets, liabilities and equity over which the 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.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

(c) **Comparatives**

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2006-07 financial year has been reclassified to provide consistency with current year disclosures.

(d) **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.

(e) **Changes in Accounting Policies**

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2007-08 as a result of management decisions.

(f) **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.

(g) **Income Recognition**

Income encompasses both revenue and gains.

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

***Output Revenue***

Output revenue represents Government funding for Agency operations and is calculated as the net cost of Agency outputs after taking into account funding from Agency income. The net cost of Agency outputs for Output Appropriation purposes does not include any allowance for major non-cash costs such as depreciation.

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

***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.

***Sale of Goods***

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised (net of returns, discounts and allowances) when control of the goods passes to the customer and specified conditions associated with the sale have been satisfied.

***Rendering of Services***

Revenue from rendering services is recognised on a stage of completion basis.

***Interest Revenue***

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

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

*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.

*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.

**(h) Repairs and Maintenance Expenses**

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.

**(i) 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 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 18.

**(j) 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 in Note 8. Reconciliation of changes in the allowance accounts is also presented.

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

**(k) Property, Plant and Equipment**

*Acquisitions*

All items of property, plant and equipment with a cost, or other value, equal to or greater than \$5,000 are recognised in the year of acquisition and depreciated as outlined below. Items of property, plant and equipment below the \$5,000 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.



**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

*Construction (Work in Progress)*

As part of the *Financial Management Framework*, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure is responsible for managing general government capital works projects on a whole of Government basis. Therefore appropriation for the Commission's capital works is provided directly to the Department of Planning 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.

*Depreciation and Amortisation*

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.

*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 Operating Statement 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 Reserve for that class of asset to the extent that an available balance exists in the Asset Revaluation Reserve.

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 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 Reserve.

**(l) 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.

**(m) 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.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

**(n) 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 Commission and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in Agency financial statements.

**(o) 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 Commission 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.

**(p) Contributions by and Distributions to Government**

The Commission may receive contributions from Government where the Government is acting as owner of the Agency. Conversely, the Commission 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 and Note 12 provide additional information in relation to contributions by, and distributions to, Government.

**(q) Commitments**

Disclosures in relation to capital and other commitments, including lease commitments are shown at Note 15 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 FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

**3. OPERATING STATEMENT BY OUTPUT GROUP**

As the Commission only has the one Output Group, Electoral Services, reference should be made to the Commission's operating statement.

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>4. GOODS AND SERVICES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE</b>		
Corporate and Information Services	336	261
	336	261

**5. GAIN ON DISPOSAL OF ASSETS**

Net proceeds from the disposal of non-current assets	1	-
Less: Carrying value of non-current assets disposed	-	-
Gain on the disposal of non-current assets	1	-

**6. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES**

The net surplus/(deficit) has been arrived at after charging the following expenses:

**Goods and Services Expenses:**

Consultants <sup>(1)</sup>	6	6
Advertising <sup>(2)</sup>	-	33
Marketing and Promotion <sup>(3)</sup>	82	11
Document Production	100	11
Legal Expenses <sup>(4)</sup>	0	10
Recruitment <sup>(5)</sup>	3	9
Training and Study	5	5
Official Duty Fares	28	39
Travelling Allowance	8	37
Agent Service Arrangements	142	114
Communications	40	14
IT charges	63	41
Insurance Premiums	20	1
Other Equipment Expenses	18	82
Motor Vehicle Expenses	53	85

(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	11	11
Cash at Bank	50	(9)
	61	2

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>8. RECEIVABLES</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts Receivable	50	-
GST Receivables	14	17
<b>Total Receivables</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Aging of Receivables</b>		
Not Overdue	50	-
Overdue for less than 30 Days	-	-
Overdue for 30 to 60 Days	-	-
Overdue for more than 60 Days	-	-
<b>Total Receivables</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>9. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
<b>Plant and Equipment</b>		
At Cost	75	66
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	( 45)	( 36)
<b>Total Property, Plant and Equipment</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

**Impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment**

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2008. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2007-08 is set out below	
	<b>Plant &amp; Equipment</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Carrying Amount at 1 July 2007</b>	<b>30</b>
Additions	9
Disposals	-
Depreciation	( 9)
<b>Carrying Amount at 30 June 2008</b>	<b>30</b>

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2006-07 is set out below	
	<b>Plant &amp; Equipment</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Carrying Amount at 1 July 2006</b>	<b>7</b>
Additions	-
Disposals	27
Depreciation	( 4)
<b>Carrying Amount at 30 June 2007</b>	<b>30</b>

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>10. PAYABLES</b>		
Accounts Payable	24	31
Accrued Expenses	7	6
	31	37
 <b>11. PROVISIONS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	69	108
Leave Loading	10	14
Other Employee Benefits	1	3
<i>Other Current Provisions</i>		
Other Provisions	15	12
	95	137
<b>Non-Current</b>		
<i>Employee Benefits</i>		
Recreation Leave	26	-
	26	-
<b>Total Provisions</b>	121	137
The Agency employed 11 employees as at 30 June 2008 (12 employees as at 30 June 2007).		
 <b>12. EQUITY</b>		
Equity represents the residual interest in the net assets of the Commission. The Government's ownership interest in the Commission is held in the Central Holding Authority as described in Note 2(b).		
<b>Capital</b>		
Balance as at 1 July	(281)	(281)
<i>Equity Injections</i>		
Capital Appropriation		
<i>Equity Withdrawals</i>		
Equity Transfers Out		
Balance as at 30 June	(281)	(281)
 <b>Accumulated Funds</b>		
Balance as at 1 July	150	161
Surplus /(Deficit) for the Period	134	(11)
Balance as at 30 June	284	150
 <b>BALANCE OF EQUITY AT 30 JUNE</b>	3	(131)

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
<b>13. NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT</b>		
<b>Reconciliation of Cash</b>		
The total of Agency Cash and Deposits of \$61,384 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		
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	134	( 11)
<i>Non-Cash Items:</i>		
Depreciation and Amortisation	9	4
<i>Changes in Assets and Liabilities:</i>		
— Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	( 47)	( 9)
(Decrease)/Increase in Payables	( 6)	( 23)
(Decrease)/Increase in Provision for Employee Benefits	( 16)	14
<b>Net Cash From Operating Activities</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>( 25)</b>

**14. 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 Commission include cash and deposits, receivables, payables and finance leases. The Commission has limited exposure to financial risks as discussed below.

**(a) Credit Risk**

The Commission has limited credit risk exposure (risk of default). In respect of any dealings with organisations external to Government, the Commission 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 Commission's maximum exposure to credit risk without taking account of the value of any collateral or other security obtained.

**(b) 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.

**(c) Interest Rate Risk**

The Commission is not exposed to interest rate risk as Commission 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 Commission to interest rate risk

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2008**

14. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)

	Weighted Average interest rate %	Variable Interest \$'000	Fixed Interest Maturity			Non- Interest Bearing \$'000	Total \$'000
			Under 1 year \$'000	1 to 5 years \$'000	Over 5 years \$'000		
<b>2008 Financial Assets</b>							
Cash and Deposits			—			62	62
Receivables						50	50
<b>Total Financial Assets:</b>						<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>							
Deposits Held							
Payables						31	31
<b>Total Financial Liabilities:</b>						<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Net Financial Assets/(Liabilities):</b>						<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>

	Weighted Average interest rate %	Variable Interest \$'000	Fixed Interest Maturity			Non- Interest Bearing \$'000	Total \$'000
			Under 1 year \$'000	1 to 5 years \$'000	Over 5 years \$'000		
<b>2007 Financial Assets</b>							
Cash and Deposits			—			2	2
Receivables						17	17
<b>Total Financial Assets:</b>						<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>							
Deposits Held						6	6
Payables						37	37
<b>Total Financial Liabilities:</b>						<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Net Financial Assets/(Liabilities):</b>						<b>(24)</b>	<b>(24)</b>

**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
For the year ended 30 June 2008**

**15. COMMITMENTS**

As at reporting date the Commission did not have any commitments under the following categories:

- Capital Expenditure
- Non-Cancellable Operating Lease
- Finance Lease
- Other Non-Cancellable Contract

**16. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS**

The Commission had no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2008 or 30 June 2007.

**17. 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.

**18. 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 2007	Receipts	Payments	Closing Balance 30 June 2008
Nomination Money	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$6,000

**19. WRITE-OFFS, POSTPONEMENTS AND WAIVERS**

The Commission had no write-offs, postponements or waivers in 2006-07 or 2007-08.



**NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
For the year ended 30 June 2008**

20. **VARIATION TO THE TREASURER'S ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Agency financial information incorporated into the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement (TAFS differs to that provided in these financial statements as a result of <explanation to be agreed with Treasury prior to disclosure>. A summary of the variation is shown below:

	Agency Financial Statements \$'000	Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement \$'000	Variance \$'000
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***Operating Statement:***

<Agency specific line items>

***Balance Sheet:***

<Agency specific line items>

***Cash Flow Statement:***

<Agency specific line items>

<The above note disclosure is only required to be presented in Agency Annual Reports and only in situations where Agency financial information incorporated into the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement differs to that disclosed in the Agency's financial statements included in the Annual Report. Excludes insignificant variations due to rounding, etc.>

<Descriptions of any variances are to be agreed with Treasury prior to inclusion in the Agency's Annual Report.>