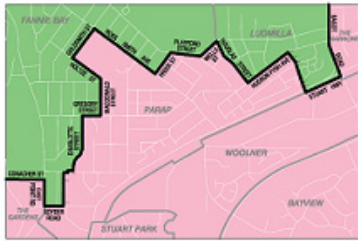


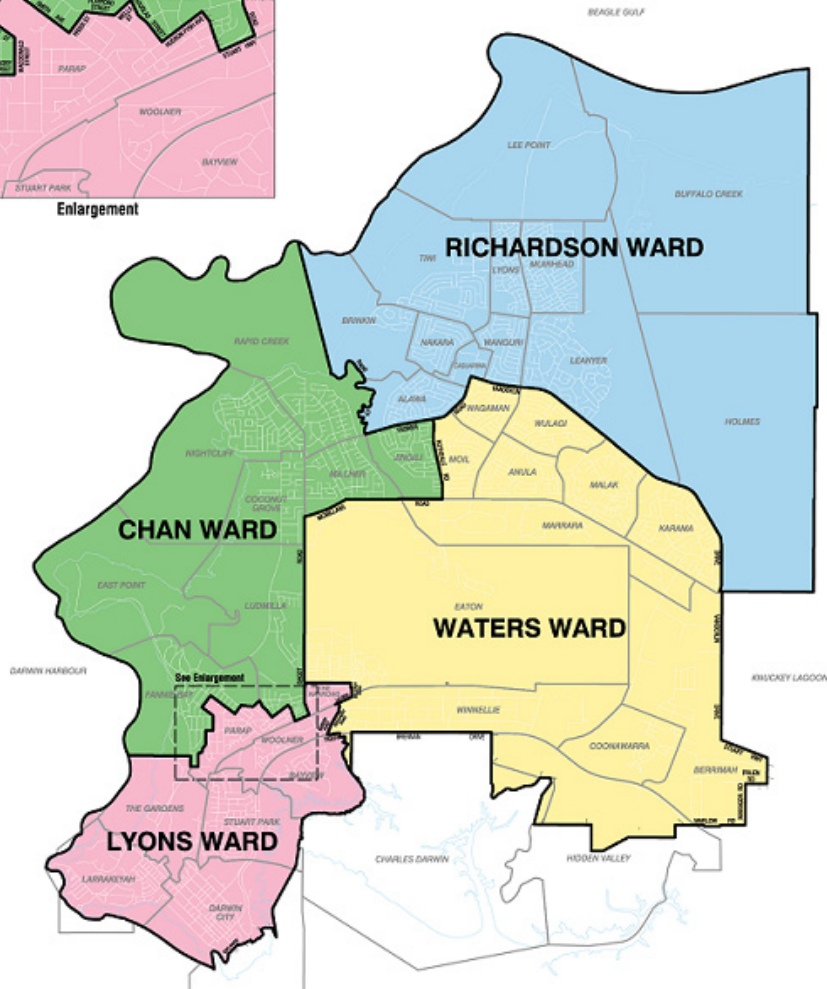
2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



City of Darwin Election Report



Enlargement



Document version control

Version	Description	Date
1.0	Draft	23/12/2025
1.1	Final version: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- added information to election outcomes section- added Appendix A- minor edits and formatting changes	25/02/2026

Disclaimer

Copyright © 2025. This document may not be reproduced without permission. This document is controlled and has been released electronically. The version the NTEC website is the up to date document. Hard copies are uncontrolled and may not be up to date. Users of hard copies should confirm the revision by comparing it with the electronically controlled version

The latest version is accessible via the NTEC website at ntec.nt.gov.au.

2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

City of Darwin

ELECTION SUMMARY

The 2025 Local Government Elections were the periodic general elections for the Northern Territory's local government councils, held every 4 years. The general elections included:

- 51 elections
- 138 elected positions
- 15 local government councils

The general elections for **CITY OF DARWIN** included the following elections:

- **Election of mayor – 1 position**
- **Election of Chan Ward councillors – 3 positions**
- **Election of Lyons Ward councillors – 3 positions**
- **Election of Richardson Ward councillors – 3 positions**
- **Election of Waters Ward councillors – 3 positions**

KEY DATES

Event	Date
Nominations open	Friday 11 July
Close of electoral roll	Tuesday 22 July
Nominations close	Thursday 31 July, 12 noon
Declaration of nominations	Friday 1 August
Postal mail out commences	Monday 4 August
Early and mobile voting commences	Monday 11 August
Election day	Saturday 23 August
Deadline for receipt of postal votes	Friday 5 September
Distribution of preferences (final count)	
Declaration of election results	Monday 8 September
Campaign donation returns due	Saturday 1 November

ENROLMENT

There were 51,716 City of Darwin electors eligible to vote in the 2025 Local Government Elections.

This is an increase of 656 electors (or 1.3%) from the previous general elections held in 2021.

Elector numbers by ward:

- Chan Ward: 12,684 (up 1.2% from 2017)
- Lyons Ward: 12,757 (down 3.5% from 2017)
- Richardson Ward: 12,813 (up 2.3% from 2017)
- Waters Ward: 13,462 (up 4.9% from 2017)

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Campaign overview

The 2025 Local Government Elections public awareness campaign unfolded in 3 phases: encouraging enrolment, promoting voter education and empowerment, and issuing a final call to action for Territorians to vote.

Running from 1 July until the declaration of results on 8 September, the campaign used TV, radio, digital and social media, signage, letterbox drops and print to raise election awareness.

The campaign aimed to equip all eligible voters with the knowledge and confidence to participate, while placing special emphasis on disengaged groups and those facing barriers including:

- seniors
- electors with English as an additional language
- electors living in remote communities.

Website

The NTEC launched the election event webpage in June as the central hub for election information. During the campaign, the site recorded 883,018 views (71.3% from mobile devices and over 10,000 referrals from Meta platforms).

Radio

The local radio campaign reached a total of 216,900 listeners across all phases, on a high rotation during peak listening times and delivered excellent cost efficiency.

Print

Newspaper advertising for the 2025 Local Government Elections was largely restricted to statutory advertising requirements as prescribed under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021 due to the current prominence of digital news media production and consumption. These advertisements ran in the NT News and the Centralian Today.

Further publications with a digital presence such were also engaged for location targeted aspects of the campaign.

Council engagement pack

Acknowledging the key role councils play in supporting elections, the NTEC developed a council resource pack to support voter, candidate and council staff information sharing and engagement. Councils were consulted on the draft resource pack and encouraged to provide images unique to each council area to be incorporated in the final version of the engagement pack. The council engagement pack included electronic resources such as social media content, videos, posters, flyers, email templates, forms and handbooks.

Letterbox drop

A total of 67,807 election information flyers were distributed across the Northern Territory through targeted letterbox drops.

Digital

The digital campaign reached 1.21million people with 288,000 views and 8,073 clicks. "Vote" advertisements had the biggest reach and lowest cost, while "Educate" and "Enrol" advertisements got the highest click rates.

Facebook in-stream videos generated the most clicks, while YouTube engagement was also strong with a 55% view-through rate.

Social media

From 1 July to 23 August, the NTEC drove a Territory-wide social media campaign.

Paid ads delivered key messages with over 2 million impressions, while organic posts on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook tackled misinformation and built community engagement.

Councils were also encouraged to share ready-made content on nominations, enrolment and voting, ensuring consistent local messaging. All activity lead back to the NTEC website as the single source of trusted election information.

Emails/SMS

Direct messaging was a key communication tool during the elections, targeting electors who had provided email or mobile details through enrolment.

Messages were delivered via email and SMS on enrolment, early voting, remote mobile voting, and election day reminders.

A total of 179,146 SMS and 104,254 emails were sent to electors across the Territory.

Large banners

Large-format banners promoted enrolment, early voting and election day across major council sites, with placements rotated to match key messages.

Corflute signs

NTEC branded corflute signs were distributed to councils to install to raise community awareness.

Posters

Electronic posters tailored and culturally appropriate were distributed to councils and community organisations to distribute aiming to engage diverse groups, including people with disabilities, older voters and English as an additional language speakers, ensuring consistent communication across all audiences.

Call centre

The NTEC call centre operated from 7 July to 23 August 2025, staffed by 3 officers who assisted electors with a wide range of enquiries. Most calls related to voting, enrolment, or lodging excuses for not voting.

In addition, the NTEC received significant volumes of enquiries via email, Facebook, and in person at its Darwin and Alice Springs offices.

NOMINATIONS

A candidate information session was held at 4:30pm on Tuesday 15 July 2025 at the council chambers.

Nominations for City of Darwin elections included:

- 45 accepted nominations across all elections
- 11 dual candidates (who nominated for both mayor and councillor elections)
- no rejected nominations
- 2 withdrawn nominations (for one dual candidate).

Election	Accepted nominations (candidates)
MAYOR (one vacancy)	Kon VATSKALIS
	Peter STYLES
	Andrew John ARTHUR
	Vicki BONSON
	Leah POTTER
	Sylvia KLONARIS
	Robin LAWRENCE
	Sam WESTON
	Nicole BROWN
	Julie FRASER
	Amye UN
	Scarlet D'ARC
	Edwin JOSEPH

CHAN WARD COUNCILLOR (3 vacancies)	Ed SMELT
	Julie FRASER
	Ellyane WALL
	Clarence CJ McCARTHY-GROGAN
	Peter PANGQUEE
	Manik GOWDA
	LENNY
	Gary STRACHAN
LYONS WARD COUNCILLOR (3 vacancies)	Mick PALMER
	Brett HAGAN
	Vicki BONSON
	Andrew LEE
	Mark BARNES
	Sam WESTON
	Scarlet D'ARC
	Amye UN
	Nicole BROWN
	Nick O'LOUGHLIN
RICHARDSON WARD COUNCILLOR (3 vacancies)	Edwin JOSEPH
	Jimmy BOUHORIS
	Peter STYLES
	Andrew John ARTHUR
	Yulita VILLANUEVA
	Shani CARSON
WATERS WARD COUNCILLOR (3 vacancies)	Mirella FEJO
	Robin LAWRENCE
	Sylvia KLONARIS
	Tekinder SINGH
	Manoli PAPATHOMAS
	Kim FARRAR
	Otto KAINULAINEN
Patrik RALPH	

Age and gender of candidates:

GENDER	Male	Female	Unspecified
Mayor	5	7	1
Councillor	19	11	2

AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Mayor	-	-	2	2	4	5
Councillor	1	2	6	7	9	7

Note: Other demographic questions are not asked for on nomination forms

VOTING SERVICES

Postal voting

• Postal vote applications received	3,436
• Postal votes issued	3,285
• Postal vote applications rejected	151
• Postal votes returned	2,729
• Postal votes admitted to the count	2,227
• Postal votes rejected	502

Note: the number of votes admitted does not always equate to the number of votes recorded as postal votes in results webpage, as returned envelopes may be missing ballot paper or may include missorted ballot papers.

The reasons for rejecting postal vote applications were:

- Multiple applications received from same elector (73)
- Insufficient/undeliverable postal address (47)
- Cancelled by elector (18)
- Application received too late (6)
- Not enrolled (4)
- Ordinary vote issued (3)

The reasons for rejecting (returned) postal votes were:

- Ordinary vote issued (188)
- Postal vote certificate dated after election day (95)
- Postal vote received after deadline (91)
- Postal vote certificate not signed (85)
- Returned to sender (42)
- Not correctly enrolled (1)

Early voting

Early voting centre	Votes issued				Total
	Chan Ward	Lyons Ward	Richardson Ward	Waters Ward	
Alice Springs	12	10	9	6	37
Casuarina	2,318	490	4,436	3,462	10,706
Coolalinga	94	85	83	112	374
Darwin	1,350	3,410	460	545	5,765
Katherine	16	22	19	15	72

Palmerston	112	107	95	139	453
TOTAL	3,902	4,124	5,102	4,279	17,407

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

Urban mobile voting

- Number of votes issued by the Darwin urban mobile team 514
- Number of votes issued by the Alice Springs urban mobile team 5
- Number of votes issued by the Katherine urban mobile team 1

Election day voting

Election day voting centre	Votes issued				Total
	Chan Ward	Lyons Ward	Richardson Ward	Waters Ward	
Alice Springs	3	6	3	4	16
Casuarina*	432	126	1,917	804	3,279
Coolalinga	24	45	27	43	139
Darwin*	518	2,307	109	129	3,063
Katherine	4	5	6	6	21
Malak*	120	84	536	2,062	2,802
Nightcliff*	2,200	327	244	177	2,948
Palmerston	36	43	52	62	193
TOTAL	3,337	2,943	2,894	3,287	12,461

Note the number of votes issued does not always equate to the number of votes counted

*Voting centre located within council area

Declaration voting

- Total number of declaration votes issued 117
- Declaration votes admitted to the count 106
- Declaration votes rejected from the count 11

The reasons for rejecting declaration votes were:

- Enrolled in a different council area (7)
- Could not be enrolled (3)
- Not signed (1)

ELECTION OUTCOMES

Results: Election of mayor

Candidate	First preference votes
Kon VATSKALIS	6,226
Peter STYLES	6,786
Andrew John ARTHUR	1,061
Vicki BONSON	516
Leah POTTER	909
Sylvia KLONARIS	3,209
Robin LAWRENCE	196
Sam WESTON	2,908
Nicole BROWN	1,440
Julie FRASER	3,181
Amye UN	1,012
Scarlet D'ARC	457
Edwin JOSEPH	2,140
TOTAL	30,041

- Quota required to be elected: 15,021
- Peter STYLES elected as mayor at count 12 (15,999 votes)
- A full distribution of preferences table is provided at Appendix A

Results: Election of councillors – Chan Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Ed SMELT	2095
Julie FRASER	1866
Ellyane WALL	780
Clarence CJ McCARTHY-GROGAN	552
Peter PANGQUEE	1019
Manik GOWDA	120
LENNY	333
Gary STRACHAN	720
TOTAL	7,485

- Quota required to be elected: 1,872
- Elected councillors:
Ed SMELT elected at count 1
Julie FRASER elected at count 2
Peter PANGQUEE elected at count 24

- The full distribution of preferences for the Chan Ward election is available on the NTEC website.

Results: Election of councillors – Lyons Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Mick PALMER	1350
Brett HAGAN	863
Vicki BONSON	398
Andrew LEE	257
Mark BARNES	331
Sam WESTON	1675
Scarlet D'ARC	352
Amye UN	656
Nicole BROWN	796
Nick O'LOUGHLIN	508
TOTAL	7,186

- Quota required to be elected: 1,797
- Elected councillors:
Sam WESTON elected at count 3
Mick PALMER elected at count 39
Nicole BROWN elected at count 45
- The full distribution of preferences for the Lyons Ward election is available on the NTEC website.

Results: Election of councillors – Richardson Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Edwin JOSEPH	1,769
Jimmy BOUHORIS	3,195
Peter STYLES	Elected as mayor
Andrew John ARTHUR	766
Yulita VILLANUEVA	238
Shani CARSON	2,390
TOTAL	8,358

- Quota required to be elected: 2,090
- Elected councillors:
Jimmy BOUHORIS elected at count 1
Shani CARSON elected at count 1
Edwin JOSEPH elected at count 2

- The full distribution of preferences for the Richardson Ward election is available on the NTEC website.

Results: Election of councillors – Waters Ward

Candidate	First preference votes
Mirella FEJO	962
Robin LAWRENCE	347
Sylvia KLONARIS	2,159
Tekinder SINGH	607
Manoli PAPATHOMAS	300
Kim FARRAR	1,248
Otto KAINULAINEN	137
Patrik RALPH	1,954
TOTAL	7,714

- Quota required to be elected: 1,929
- Elected councillors:
Sylvia KLONARIS elected at count 1
Patrik RALPH elected at count 1
Kim FARRAR elected at count 25
- The full distribution of preferences for the Waters Ward election is available on the NTEC website.

Voter turnout

Based on the number of votes counted, the voter turnout for each election was:

- Mayor: 63.2% (compared to 66.5% at previous general elections in 2021)
- Chan Ward: 62.6% (compared to 65.9% in 2021)
- Lyons Ward: 60.9% (compared to 61.5% in 2021)
- Richardson Ward: 68.3% (compared to 73.0% in 2021)
- Waters Ward: 61.2% (compared to 65.8% in 2021)

Informality

Election	No. of candidates	Total votes	Informal votes	%
Mayor	13	32,704	2,663	8.1%
Chan Ward	8	7,935	450	5.7%
Lyons Ward	10	7,770	584	7.5%
Richardson Ward	6	8,752	394	4.5%
Waters Ward	8	8,243	529	6.4%

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

All candidates in local government elections are required to submit a campaign donation return if they receive:

- donations of \$200 or more
- loans of \$1,500 or more
- during the disclosure period of 1 July 2024 to 22 September 2025
- with no nil return required if these thresholds are not met.

By the due date of 1 November 2025, 6 City of Darwin candidates submitted a campaign donation return, with a further 3 candidates submitting a return after the due date.

All returns have been published on the NT Electoral Commission website.

ELECTION COSTS

Expense category	Estimate \$	Actual \$
Advertising	46,053.04	57,897.96
Corporate	2,609.40	1,224.79
Destruction/rubbish removal	2,288.33	372.92
Information technology	36,605.21	32,685.38
Materials	45,112.15	46,492.41
Postage	27,914.90	23,831.57
Premises	12,804.96	4,239.80
Staff travel/accommodation/reimbursements	42,954.81	28,304.22
Staff wages	436,784.67	424,016.33
Vehicle hire/charter	14,094.49	6,602.49
Sub-total	667,221.94	625,736.19
GST (10%)	66,722.19	62,573.62
Total	\$ 733,944.13	\$ 688,309.81

ELECTION REVIEW MEETING

A post-election review meeting was held Monday 8 December 2025 at the City of Darwin.

Appendix A

Distribution of preferences - Election of mayor

Count	Comments	Kon VATSKALIS	Peter STYLES	Andrew John ARTHUR	Vicki BONSON	Leah POTTER	Sylvia KLONARIS	Robin LAWRENCE	Sam WESTON	Nicole BROWN	Julie FRASER	Amye UN	Scarlet D'ARC	Edwin JOSEPH	Total
1	First preferences	6,226	6,786	1,061	516	909	3,209	196	2,908	1,440	3,181	1,012	457	2,140	30,041
2	Robin LAWRENCE excluded	21	30	12	6	9	22	-196	43	8	13	8	8	16	0
	Progressive	6,247	6,816	1,073	522	918	3,231	0	2,951	1,448	3,194	1,020	465	2,156	30,041
3	Scarlet D'ARC excluded	24	12	21	28	52	28	0	42	53	88	49	-465	68	0
	Progressive	6,271	6,828	1,094	550	970	3,259	0	2,993	1,501	3,282	1,069	0	2,224	30,041
4	Vicki BONSON excluded	52	36	46	-550	117	71	0	24	98	63	24	0	19	0
	Progressive	6,323	6,864	1,140	0	1,087	3,330	0	3,017	1,599	3,345	1,093	0	2,243	30,041
5	Leah POTTER excluded	69	99	127	0	-1,087	245	0	95	148	157	96	0	51	0
	Progressive	6,392	6,963	1,267	0	0	3,575	0	3,112	1,747	3,502	1,189	0	2,294	30,041
6	Amye UN excluded	111	144	82	0	0	135	0	121	144	240	-1,189	0	212	0
	Progressive	6,503	7,107	1,349	0	0	3,710	0	3,233	1,891	3,742	0	0	2,506	30,041
7	Andrew John ARTHUR excluded	141	300	-1,349	0	0	226	0	210	121	221	0	0	130	0
	Progressive	6,644	7,407	0	0	0	3,936	0	3,443	2,012	3,963	0	0	2,636	30,041
8	Nicole BROWN excluded	219	148	0	0	0	416	0	329	-2,012	702	0	0	198	0
	Progressive	6,863	7,555	0	0	0	4,352	0	3,772	0	4,665	0	0	2,834	30,041
9	Edwin JOSEPH excluded	482	489	0	0	0	410	0	425	0	1,028	0	0	-2,834	0
	Progressive	7,345	8,044	0	0	0	4,762	0	4,197	0	5,693	0	0	0	30,041
10	Sam WESTON excluded	667	971	0	0	0	1,214	0	-4,198	0	1,346	0	0	0	0
	Progressive	8,012	9,015	0	0	0	5,976	0	-1	0	7,039	0	0	0	30,041
11	Sylvia KLONARIS excluded	1,162	1,336	0	0	0	-5,976	0	0	0	3,478	0	0	0	0
	Progressive	9,174	10,351	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	10,517	0	0	0	30,041
12	Kon VATSKALIS excluded	-9,174	5,648	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,526	0	0	0	0
	Progressive	0	15,999	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	14,043	0	0	0	30,041

Quota to be elected: 15,021
Peter STYLES elected at count 12





Northern Territory Electoral Commission

EVERY vote counts

ntec@nt.gov.au

1800 698 683

ntec.gov.au