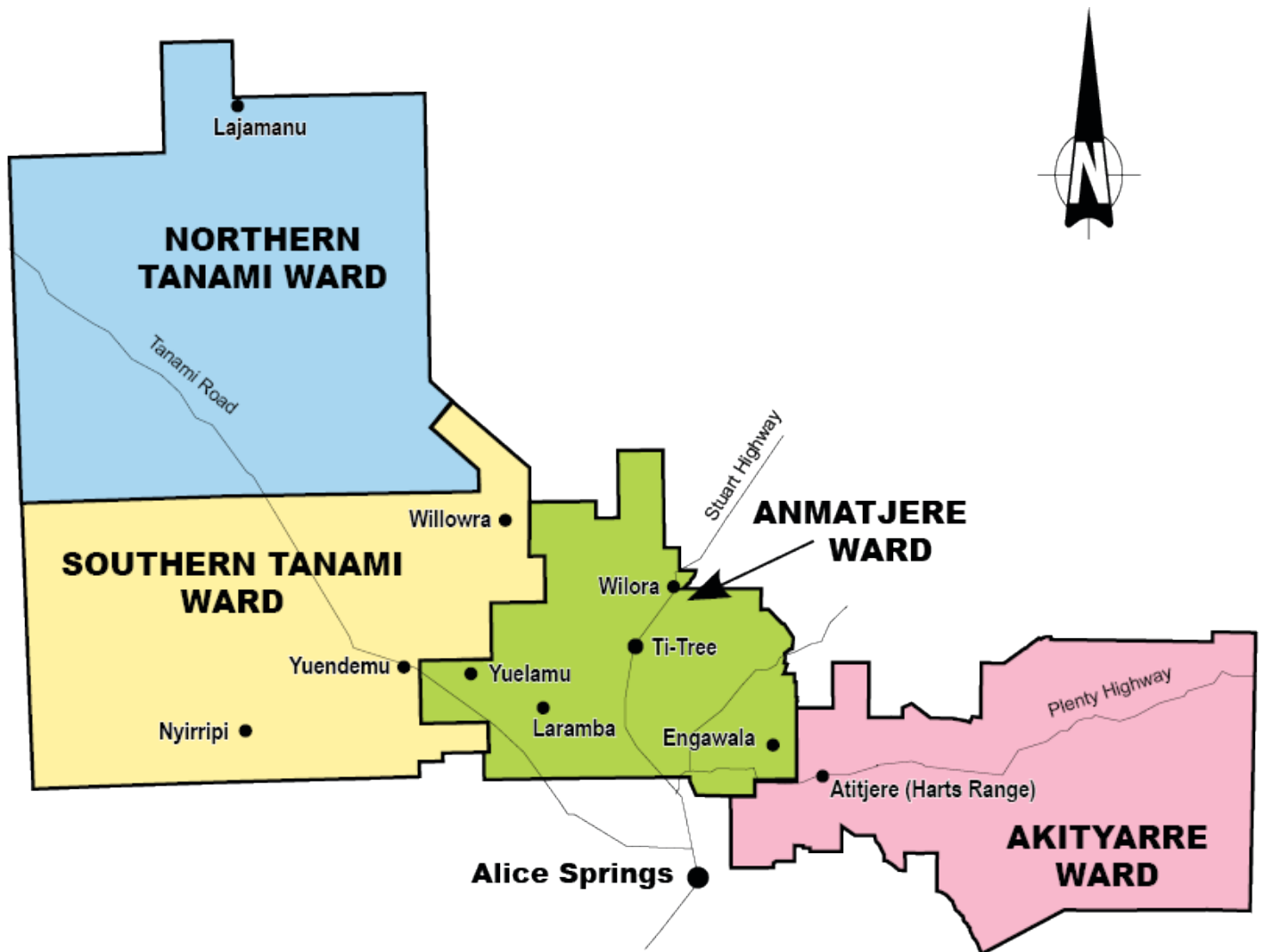




2017 NT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

CENTRAL DESERT REGIONAL COUNCIL ELECTION REPORT





TIMETABLE

2017 NT Council elections

Saturday, 26 August 2017

Date	Time	
Friday 14 July		Nominations open
Tuesday 25 July	5:00 pm	Close of electoral roll
Thursday 3 August	12:00 noon	Close of nominations
Friday 4 August	12:00 noon	Declaration of nominations, draw for position on ballot papers
Monday 7 August		Postal vote mail-out commences
Monday 14 August	8:00 am	Early voting commences
	9:00 am	Mobile voting commences
Tuesday 22 August	6:00 pm	Overseas postal voting despatches cease
Thursday 24 August	6:00 pm	All postal voting despatches cease
Friday 25 August	6:00 pm	Early voting ceases
Saturday 26 August		Election day
	8:00 am	Election day voting commences
	6:00 pm	Election day voting ceases
		Mobile voting ceases
		Primary counts of ordinary, postal and early votes commence
		Primary counts of postal, mobile and early votes commence
Monday 28 August	9:00 am	Declaration vote verification checks, commence recheck of all counts
Thursday 31 August	9:00 am	Primary counts of accepted declaration votes, further postal counts
Friday 1 September	12:00 noon	Deadline for receipt of postal votes
		Final counts of postal votes commence
		Distribution of preferences
Monday 4 September	10:00 am	Declaration of the election result

INDEX

BACKGROUND	1
Election	1
Council	1
Boundary changes.....	1
ENROLMENT	2
PUBLIC AWARENESS	2
Campaign	2
Website	2
Newsletter	2
Advertising – print, radio, television.....	2
Call centre	3
Email and SMS	3
VOTING SERVICES.....	4
Nominations	4
Electronic voter mark-off	4
Early voting centres (EVCs).....	4
Postal voting	5
Remote voting	5
Election day voting centre.....	5
ELECTION	5
Voting	5
Vote counting – election night.....	5
Post-election night scrutines.....	6
Election outcomes for Central Desert Regional Council.....	6
Election of two Councillors – Akityarre Ward	6
Election of four Councillors – Anmatjere Ward.....	6
Election of two Councillors – Northern Tanami Ward	7
Election of four Councillors – Southern Tanami Ward	7
Declaration of election results	8
Election costs.....	8
ISSUES OF NOTE.....	8
Informality.....	8
Non-voters.....	8

BACKGROUND

Election

- This is the second Local Government (LG) general election under section 85 of the *Local Government Act* (LGA). Amendments to the LGA deferred the election from March 2016 to August 2017. LG general elections are held 12 months after Legislative Assembly (LA) elections.
- This is the first LG general election that all electors had the option to vote by post or vote early. This was due to legislative change that removed the criteria to lodge an early or postal vote.
- The Commissioner of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) is the returning officer for local government general elections.
- Tyrone Daniels was appointed Deputy Returning Officer for the Central Desert Regional Council, 2017 NT Council elections.
- Electronic mark-off system (eLAPPS) was used at all voting centres.
- An election charter detailing the NTEC's service commitments was finalised on 16 May 2017 and sent to the council. The document was also available on the website
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Central Desert Regional Council and the NTEC was entered into on 19 April 2017. This outlined both organisations' roles, responsibilities, election services and costs.

Council

Central Desert Regional Council (CDRC) consists of four wards: Akityarre Ward, Anmatjere Ward, Northern Tanami Ward and Southern Tanami Ward. The council consists of 12 elected council members. This includes two elected council members from Akityarre Ward, four elected council members from Anmatjere Ward, two elected council members from Northern Tanami Ward and four elected council members from Southern Tanami Ward.

As per the SLA, Central Desert Regional Council provided/undertook the following for the 2017 NT Council elections:

- One staff member to act as a remote mobile team member.
- Two to three staff members to act as community local assistants during remote mobile voting.
- Providing council owned accommodation and premises free-of-charge.
- Promote the election through social media and council sites.
- Act as an agent to facilitate the nominations process.
- An electoral roll cleansing exercise.
- Providing a council vehicle for remote mobile voting.

Boundary changes

There were no gazetted changes to the boundaries resulting from the 2015 review of electoral representation.

ENROLMENT

Enrolment initiatives specific to Central Desert Regional Council included an electoral roll cleansing project that commenced in March and concluded in June. The project identified a number of deceased and duplicated electors that were removed from the electoral roll.

At the close of the electoral roll on Tuesday 25 July 2017 at 5:00 pm, there were a total of 2,657 electors enrolled for CDRC. This was a three per cent increase on the enrolment of 2,583 at the 2012 General elections.

Enrolment numbers by ward

COUNCIL	WARD	ENROLMENT
CENTRAL DESERT Regional Council	Akityarre	272
	Anmatjere	1,002
	Northern Tanami	419
	Southern Tanami	964

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Campaign

The public awareness campaign for the 2017 NT Council elections included enrolment and voting information (early, postal, remote and election day) disseminated across social media, television, radio, councils, LGANT, the Department of Housing and Community Development, as well as print and digital platforms. The public awareness campaign began in May and intensified in July until election day on Saturday 26 August.

Website

The 2017 NT Council elections website was launched in early June and this provided comprehensive information for candidates and voters. It also hosted dedicated election results pages, included details on vote counting, and showed all remote, early and election day voting centre information. The website remains live for a number of months following the election.

Newsletter

An election newsletter was emailed regularly to stakeholders including councils and candidates, from 5 May with the final newsletter emailed on 27 August. A total of 12 newsletters and five supplementary emails were sent during this period. The newsletters were also available on the NTEC website with links shared on Facebook and Twitter.

Advertising – print, radio, television

Three advertisements were developed for airing on television, radio, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter: enrol and close of roll (15 secs); early, election day and formal voting (15 secs and 30 secs). The audio versions of these advertisements were interpreted into nine Aboriginal languages and aired across the Northern Territory through the radio stations appropriate to the language group. These advertisements were also available on the NTEC website, NTEC's YouTube channel and were heavily promoted through social media.

Print advertising promoting enrolment and providing election information appeared in the Rural Weekly, Centralian Advocate, NT News and Off the Leash magazine.

Online promotion of these ads also took place with the Rural Weekly, Alice Springs News and Off the Leash. There was also an extensive digital marketing campaign about enrolment, postal and early voting, election day and formal voting that ran from 7 June through to election day, 26 August.

Posters promoting enrolment, nominations and voting were made available to Central Desert Regional Council to assist in informing electors about the 2017 NT Council elections.

Statutory print advertising providing specific voting information was published in the Centralian Advocate.

The Electoral Commissioner also promoted enrolment and the election participation through 12 interviews with Northern Territory media including ABC Alice Springs, MIX104.9, Aboriginal Broadcasting Network, CAAMA radio and the Centralian Advocate.

Call centre

A call centre was established on Wednesday 2 August and ran until Monday 28 August. Staff assisted electors with a variety of election enquiries during this period.

Call centre enquiries

ENQUIRY TYPE	ENQUIRY NUMBERS
Total phone calls	3,254
Emails to ntec@nt.gov.au	1,379
Non-voter excuses lodged	615
Enrolment	694
Postal voting	462

Candidate information sessions

The NTEC did not provide candidate information sessions within the council. The Central Desert Regional Council choose to undertake this task along with Regional staff from the Department of Housing and Community Services.

The NTEC provided the council with candidate packs that included nomination forms, candidate handbook, scrutineer appointment forms and various other election related forms to distribute throughout the council area.

Email and SMS

Email was used to contact over 200 electors in the Central Desert Regional Council area who provided these details on their enrolment form. Across the Northern Territory, 30,000 emails were sent advising electors about early and election-day voting centres. A further 164 SMS' were sent to Central Desert Regional Council electors reminding them to vote on election day.

VOTING SERVICES

Nominations

Nominations opened Friday 14 July and closed on Thursday 3 August at 12:00 noon. There were a total of 21 accepted nominations for councillor.

The declaration of nominations took place at the Alice Springs office on Friday 4 August. This event was attended by the general public, nominees, council representatives and the media. A random number generator selected the ballot paper position for each candidate.

Summary of accepted nominations/candidates for Central Desert Regional Council

POSITION	CANDIDATES IN BALLOT PAPER ORDER
Akityarre Ward Councillor (2 positions)	William LIDDLE Renita WEBB
Anmatjere Ward Councillor (4 positions)	Audrey INKAMALA Benedy BIRD Adrian DIXON Marlene TILMOUTH Janet CHISHOLM Harry MOORE James GLENN David MCCORMACK
Northern Tanami Ward Councillor (2 positions)	Robert GEORGE William JOHNSON Norbert Jampijinpa PATRICK
Southern Tanami Ward Councillor (4 positions)	Warren WILLIAMS Cecilia ALFONSO Henry WILSON JNR Freddy WILLIAMS Trish LECHLEITNER April MARTIN Jacob SPENCER Georgina WILSON

Electronic voter mark-off

An electronic voter mark-off system is now used in all voting centres across the Northern Territory. The system records when someone has voted anywhere in the NT in real time. The voter mark-off system also alleviates the necessity to have paper certified lists therefore improving efficiencies in voting centres when finding voters on the electoral roll.

Early voting centres (EVCs)

Legislative changes in 2015 allows all electors the option to vote early without the need to meet any eligibility criteria. Overall there is a trend towards voting early across the Northern Territory. Early voting services were provided in Alice Springs and five other locations. Voting in Central Desert Regional Council was facilitated by mobile/remote voting teams. There was no election for Akityarre Ward.

Votes issued at NT early voting centres for Central Desert Regional Council

LOCATION	VOTES
Alice Springs Council	36
Tennant Creek Civic Hall	5
Katherine Central Shopping Centre	5
Coolalinga Shopping Centre	0
Casuarina Library	0
Darwin CBD	1

Postal voting

Legislative changes in 2015 allows all electors the option to apply for a postal vote without meeting any eligibility criteria.

There were 119 postal votes applied for within the Central Desert Regional Council area, and 67 (56 per cent) admitted to the count.

Remote voting

Remote voting teams visited the following locations in the lead-up to election day. The teams issued votes for Central Desert Regional Council only.

Number of votes issued by remote voting teams

LOCATION	VOTES ISSUED
Aileron	2
Alyuen	8
Engawala	39
Lajamanu	40
Laramba	116
Mulga Bore	12
Nturiya	21
Nyirripi	38
Pmara Jutunta	68
Ti Tree	48
Willowra	60
Wilora	36
Yuelamu	40
Yuendumu	43

Election day voting centre

Election day was Saturday 26 August. There was no election day voting centre for Central Desert Regional Council area.

ELECTION

Voting

The voting system for local government elections is Proportional Representation (PR):

- Electors must number all the boxes on their ballot paper sequentially starting with the number one for their first choice.
- First preference votes for each candidate on formal ballot papers are counted, then a quota is calculated.
- The quota is the total number of formal ballot papers plus one, divided by the number of vacancies.
- The candidates with votes equal to or greater than the quota are elected. If all vacancies are filled, the election is complete.
- If not, preferences are distributed to the other candidates until all vacancies have been filled.

To learn more about the PR system, go to the [vote counting](#) page on the NTEC website.

Vote counting – election night

Immediately after the close of voting at 6:00pm on election day, there was:

- a count of the first preference votes at each voting centre
- a count of the first preference votes for early/mobile and postal votes.

Post-election night scrutinies

A recheck of votes from voting centres was undertaken during the week after election day, followed by a count of declaration, absent and further postal votes.

All votes received for the Central Desert Regional Councillor positions were entered into an electronic count system (Easy count) and then re-entered for verification purposes.

Voters that applied for a postal vote were expected to complete their ballot papers by 6:00 pm on election day, Saturday 26 August 2017. Postal ballot papers then had to be received by 12:00 noon, Friday 1 September to be included in the count.

Determination of the quota and the distribution of preferences took place after the cut-off for the return of postal vote ballot papers. Election results were made available on the results pages of the website on Friday, 1 September 2017.

Election outcomes for Central Desert Regional Council

There were 21 candidates contesting 12 councillor positions across four wards. The successful candidates and first preference votes received are detailed in tables below.

Of the 2,385 people on the electoral roll in the Central Desert Regional Council area across the three wards of Anmatjere, Northern Tanami and Southern Tanami a total of 724 (30 per cent) voted. Akityarre Ward (enrolment of 272) did not go to election.

Election of two Councillors – Akityarre Ward

At the close of nominations on Thursday 3 August 2017 the number of candidates was not more than the number of vacancies and William Liddle and Renita Webb were elected.

Election of four Councillors – Anmatjere Ward

At the close of nomination there were eight candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

CANDIDATE	FIRST PREFERENCES
Audrey INKAMALA	51
Benedy BIRD	19
Adrian DIXON	65
Marlene TILMOUTH	5
Janet CHISHOLM	41
Harry MOORE	29
James GLENN	78
David MCCORMACK	54
TOTAL	342

As a consequence, under the proportional representation voting system, the quota of votes required for this election was 69.

Following the distribution of preferences and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations the results were as follows:

- James Glenn received the quota at count number 1
- Adrian Dixon received the quota at count number 5
- Audrey Inkamala received the quota at count number 7
- David McCormack received the quota at count number 11

James Glenn, Adrian Dixon, Audrey Inkamala and David McCormack were duly elected.

Election of two Councillors – Northern Tanami Ward

At the close of nomination there were three candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

CANDIDATE	FIRST PREFERENCES
Robert GEORGE	42
William JOHNSON	19
Norbert Jampijinpa PATRICK	48
TOTAL	109

As a consequence, under the proportional representation voting system, the quota of votes required for this election was 36.

In accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations the results were as follows:

- Norbert Jampijinpa Patrick received the quota at count number 1
- Robert George received the quota at count number 1

Norbert Jampijinpa and Robert George were duly elected.

Election of four Councillors – Southern Tanami Ward

At the close of nomination there were eight candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

CANDIDATE	FIRST PREFERENCES
Warren WILLIAMS	31
Cecilia ALFONSO	17
Henry WILSON JNR	9
Freddy WILLIAMS	30
Trish LECHLEITNER	12
April MARTIN	30
Jacob SPENCER	39
Georgina WILSON	11
TOTAL	179

As a consequence, under the proportional representation voting system, the quota of votes required for this election was 36.

Following the distribution of preferences and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations the results were as follows:

- Jacob Spencer received the quota at count number 1
- Warren Williams and Freddy Williams received the quota at count number 5
- April Martin received the quota at count number 8

Jacob Spencer, Warren Williams, Freddy Williams and April Martin were duly elected.

Declaration of election results

The election results were declared at Central Desert Regional Council in Alice Springs at 12:00 noon on Monday 4 September 2017.

Declared election results for Central Desert Regional Council

Akityarre Ward (2 vacancies)	Anmatjere Ward (4 vacancies)	Northern Tanami Ward (2 vacancies)	Southern Tanami Ward (4 vacancies)
William Liddle Renita Webb	James Glenn Adrian Dixon Audrey Inkamala David McCormack	Norbert Jampijinpa Patrick Robert George	Jacob Spencer Warren Williams Freddy Williams April Martin

A copy of the full distribution of preferences is available on the 2017 NT Council elections [results page](#) of the website.

Election costs

The SLA estimated the cost of the election for Central Desert Regional Council to be \$53,010. Following the election, the costs are \$41,832 with a difference of \$11,178. This was due to the council off-setting various costs along with Akityarre Ward not going to election.

Summary of election costs

ELECTION AREA	COSTS
Public awareness	\$12,715
Staffing	\$14,007
Premises	0.00
Operational costs	\$15,110
TOTAL	\$41,832

ISSUES OF NOTE

Informality

In the post-election phase, once the 21-day period for objections had expired, a survey of informal ballot papers for Central Desert Regional Council was conducted.

- A total of 94 informal votes were received across the Wards of Anmatjere, Northern Tanami and Southern Tanami. During the informality survey it was identified that 97.8 per cent (92) of votes were considered unintentionally informal. The remaining 2.1 per cent (2) were considered intentionally informal.

Non-voters

- A total of 1,661 (70 per cent) electors were identified as failing to vote in the 2017 NT Council elections for the 3 wards that went to poll for Central Desert Regional Council.
- The approximate percentage of non-voters for each ward was: Anmatjere Ward 66 per cent; Northern Tanami Ward 74 per cent and Southern Tanami Ward 80 per cent.

We would like to extend our thanks for the support received from Libby Nuss from Central Desert Regional Council.