



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY
ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
EVERY vote counts!

A large, circular, semi-transparent image showing a group of people in a meeting or office setting. In the foreground, a woman with her hair in a ponytail is looking at a tablet. To her right, a man in a yellow high-visibility shirt and a dark cap with sunglasses is leaning over a table, looking at a document. In the background, other people are visible, some looking at a whiteboard. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor office environment.

2016-2017 Annual Report

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GLOSSARY

1TP	1 Territory Party
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
ALP	Australian Labor Party (NT)
CDR	Court of Disputed Returns
CDU	Charles Darwin University
CEC	Citizens Electoral Council (NT division)
CLP	Country Liberals
COMMISSION	Northern Territory Electoral Commission
COMMISSIONER	NT Electoral Commissioner
CRU	Continuous roll update
DCIS	Department of Corporate and Information Services
DoE	Department of Education
DHS	Department of Human Services
DISCLOSURE	The disclosure of information to increase transparency and inform the public about the financial dealings of candidates, registered political parties, local branches/sub-party units and their associated entities, donors and other participants in the electoral process
DHCD	Department of Housing and Community Development
ECQ	Electoral Commission Queensland
EDRM	Electronic document records management
eLAPPS	electronic Legislative Assembly Polling Place System
ELECTIONS ACT	ACT Electoral Commission
EMS	Election Management System
ESL	English as a second language
EVC	Early voting centre
FDEU	Federal direct enrolment update
GPV	General postal voter
GRN	NT Greens
HTV	How to vote
ICT	Information and communication technology
IEPP	Indigenous electoral participation program
IND	Independent
IVOTE	Internet voting system
JOINT ROLL	The electoral roll or list of electors eligible to vote for Commonwealth, NT and local government elections
JRA	Joint roll arrangement

LA	Legislative Assembly
LAGE	Legislative Assembly general election
LG	Local Government
LGA	<i>Local Government Act</i>
LGANT	Local Government Association of the Northern Territory
LGGE	Local Government General Elections
LGER	Local Government (Electoral) Regulations
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MyVOTE CENTRAL	The NTEC office in Alice Springs
NT	Northern Territory
NTEC	Northern Territory Electoral Commission
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTLA	NT Legislative Assembly
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Service
OIC	Officer in charge
OCPE	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
OPV	Optional preferential voting
PARTY	A political party registered under the provisions of the NT <i>Electoral Act</i>
PR	Proportional representation
PVA	Postal vote application
PVC	Postal vote certificate
REDISTRIBUTION	A redistribution of NT Legislative Assembly boundaries
REPRESENTATION REVIEWS	A council must review its structure and representation once in every term so imbalances in elector numbers that develop over time between council wards, can be reviewed in order that all electors and communities have a fair say in council decision making
RMANS	National Roll Management System
RPV	Registered postal voter
RTS	Return to sender
SFP	Shooters and Fishers Party
SLA	Service level agreement
TIGER	The Information Gateway to Electoral Resources (NTEC Election Management System)
TVC	Television commercial
VTR	Virtual tally room
WHS	Work, Health and Safety

LETTER TO SPEAKER



The Hon K Purick MLA
Speaker
Northern Territory Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Darwin NT 0800

Madam Speaker

I am pleased to provide the Annual Report of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission for the 2016-17 reporting year.

The report details the Commission's performance, key achievements and outlook for the year ending 30 June 2017. It was prepared in accordance with the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, the *Financial Management Act* and the *Information Act*.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iain Loganathan', is positioned above the printed name.

Iain Loganathan
Electoral Commissioner

31 October 2017

FOREWORD

The 2016-2017 financial year included the conduct of the 2016 Territory election followed by a comprehensive post-election review and the preparation of the election report, which was tabled in May 2017. The report makes a number of recommendations to modernise electoral practices including an online nomination process and exploring the feasibility of an electronic postal voting or internet voting system.

Changes to the *Electoral Act*, removed the eligibility criteria for early and postal voting, which enabled 37 per cent of electors the convenience of voting early in the 2016 Territory election.

The informal voting rate for this election was reduced across the Northern Territory (including remote divisions) to an average of 2 per cent, a reduction from 3.2 per cent in 2012. The change to optional preferential voting for Territory elections reduced the number of unintentional informal votes, with electors now having the option to number one, some or all of the boxes on their ballot paper.

Following the election, due to small margins in some divisions, there were five recounts initiated by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission, with the Nhulunbuy result referred to the Court of Disputed Returns, but later withdrawn by consent.

The 2016 Territory election also saw the modernisation of electoral processes that included online postal vote applications, electronic certified lists, online training for casual election staff and enhancements to the election management system, which included a virtual tally room on the website. Social media was also extensively utilised as an elector communication tool.

The 2016 Territory election-specific website proved successful and received positive feedback from stakeholders. A 2017 NT Council elections website was subsequently launched in May 2017, in conjunction with an enrolment promotion program.

There were a number of valuable partnerships that assisted in the delivery and communication of the 2016 Territory election: the Commonwealth Department of Human Services – remote voting; Electoral Commission Queensland – election call centre; ACT Electoral Commission – electronic certified list and election management system; and Music NT - youth enrolment and engagement.

For the 2017 NT Council elections, service level agreements were negotiated with all councils, and arrangements made with regional councils to assist in updating and verifying the accuracy of the electoral roll in remote communities prior to the close of the electoral roll.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all staff for their hard work and dedication throughout a very busy year, and commend their ongoing commitment to utilising technology to modernise electoral practices.



Iain Loganathan
Electoral Commissioner
31 October 2017



AGENCY OVERVIEW

Purpose, vision, mission and values

The purpose of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) is to:

- provide quality electoral services to clients throughout the Northern Territory
- ensure the electoral system, especially the right to vote and to vote in secret, is fully accessible to all electors.

The NTEC's vision is to be widely recognised for its expertise and excellence in electoral administration.

The NTEC's mission is to provide independent, impartial, high quality and accessible electoral services that are effective, efficient and delivered in accordance with the law.

The NTEC's values are fundamental to achieving its goals. These are:

- integrity
- impartiality
- transparency and accountability
- commitment to high standards of service delivery
- commitment to continuous improvement
- respect for the law.

Operating environment

The Commission operates in an environment that includes:

- a small, culturally diverse, dispersed and mobile population
- a broad charter of electoral operations and corporate governance responsibilities
- a small permanent staff structure
- a requirement to modernise and implement best practice
- close working relationships with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), interstate electoral authorities and other organisations.

Strategic issues

Key Result Areas (KRAs) set out in the Corporate Plan 2015-2019 are:

- Enrolment
- Elections
- Public Awareness
- Corporate

Legislative base

The following Acts and Regulations are administered by the Commission:

- The *NT Electoral Act* and Regulations under that Act.
- The *Referendums Act* and Regulations under that Act.
- Electoral provisions contained in the *Local Government Act* and the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations.

From 23 April 2015, amended legislation gave councils the option to determine their service provider for the conduct of by-elections. General elections remain the responsibility of the Electoral Commissioner.

Under the *Constitutional Convention (Election) Act*, assented to on 9 September 2014, the NTEC is charged with conducting any election for delegates to a constitutional convention to discuss statehood for the Northern Territory.

General and financial management of the Act remains with the Department of the Legislative Assembly.

AGENCY PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

The NTEC provides independent, impartial, high quality and accessible electoral services to the people of the Northern Territory, the NT Legislative Assembly, local government municipal, regional and shire councils and other organisations.

The Commission's functions are prescribed under section 309 of the NT *Electoral Act* (the Act).

Key responsibilities include:

- maintaining the joint electoral roll for both the Legislative Assembly and local government in partnership with the AEC
- managing parliamentary and non-parliamentary elections including local government and, on request, fee-for-service elections
- delivering electoral awareness and education programs to the public
- providing advice and reports relating to electoral matters to the Legislative Assembly
- conducting electoral research
- providing support to redistribution committees reviewing Legislative Assembly electoral boundaries and to representation review processes for local councils.

NTEC activities include:

- development and implementation of electoral roll register reviews and enrolment stimulation strategies to improve roll quality and increase elector participation for Legislative Assembly (LA) and Local Government (LG) elections
- planning and implementation of programs to conduct fixed term LA and LG general elections and periodic by-elections in the required timeframe and according to best practice principles
- development and management of electoral awareness programs for the general public and school students, including minority groups, so they are aware of their electoral rights and responsibilities
- provision of support for parliamentary electoral redistribution and council representation reviews and then, in conjunction with the AEC, coordinating and verifying changes on the electoral roll following gazettal of changes
- development of structures and nurturing of inter-agency relationships to support the NTEC's core business of election management in an environment that demands specialist knowledge and impartiality in service delivery.

Since 23 May 2015, a local government council has the option of appointing its own service provider to conduct by-elections or conduct a by-election itself. The NT Electoral Commission remains the prescribed provider for electoral services for LG general elections.

The Commission may conduct ballots for persons, government and non-government organisations, on a fee-for-service basis.

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

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

ENROLMENT

The enrolment phase of the public awareness campaign for the 2016 Territory election commenced in April 2016. This built a sense of awareness and encouraged new enrolments and enrolment updates prior to the close of the electoral roll.

Advertising was undertaken through social media, television, radio and print. The message, *'Got an opinion? Make it count. Enrol to vote'*, was designed to encourage voters to have their opinion heard at the election. Online enrolment was also promoted as a quick and easy way for eligible electors to enrol or update their enrolment details.

Enrolment stimulation activities leading into the August 2016 Territory election included:

- an online enrolment promotion competition
- voter information letters sent to over 54,000 households in urban areas
- emails sent to all NT public servants
- stalls at the NT show circuit
- attendance at Defence expos in Darwin and Katherine
- communication with target groups such as the NT Cattlemen's Association, the Multicultural Council of the NT, disability groups and mine sites
- enrolment forms and enrolment promotion posters sent to over 70 remote based organisations including regional councils and shires, homelands, outstation resource centres and other organisations
- the Department of Local Government conducting enrolment awareness sessions on behalf of the NTEC during 20 local authority meetings prior to the close of the electoral roll. Members were asked to promote enrolment within their community and were provided with hard copy enrolment forms.

The 2016 Territory election service charter aimed for an enrolment participation rate of 85 per cent; however, despite the federal election taking place eight weeks prior to the Territory election and the NTEC's enrolment initiatives, the target was not met, with an estimated 82.6 per cent of eligible Territorians on the electoral roll.

Youth enrolment participation was 67.8 per cent at 30 September 2016 compared with the national average of 87.1 per cent. Whilst falling short of the service charter target of 70 per cent, youth enrolment did increase by 7.8 per cent from June 2015.

A total of 1,501 enrolment transactions were processed from the issue of the Writ on Monday 8 August, to the close of roll at 8:00 pm on Wednesday 10 August, a decrease of 1,182 compared to the close of roll period in 2012. Voters updating their enrolment before the July federal election contributed to the reduction. Of the total transactions processed:

- 567 were additions to the roll, including 109 new enrolments
- 81 re-enrolments
- 82 reinstatements
- 295 transfers to the NT from interstate
- 528 changed their enrolled address within the NT
- 183 amendments to elector details
- 223 deletions, the majority for transfer of enrolment out of the NT.

ELECTIONS

There were two key strategies for the delivery of the 2016 Territory election: firstly, the modernisation of electoral processes in response to legislative amendments and the use of new technology and, secondly, the implementation of a contemporary voter information campaign.

The modernisation agenda included the movement of election services to online platforms and the use of electronic certified lists at all voting centres. The advertising campaign actively promoted early, postal and mobile voting services using social media, email and SMS messaging.

ELECTION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Territory elections are invariably conducted in a politically charged environment. Small divisions, high profile candidates, a short election period and comprehensive media coverage all add to the intensity of the event. Other factors creating specific challenges and opportunities in 2016, included amendments to the *Electoral Act* and conjecture about the possibility of an extraordinary LA election.

Speculation about the timing of the federal election was also rife in the first part of the year. It was eventually called and took place eight weeks before the 2016 Territory election, and encompassed an eight week campaign period. While this provided the potential for improved roll quality, it may also have created a degree of voter fatigue and confusion, affecting turnout at the Territory election.

The change to optional preferential voting (OPV) and implementation of a 100-metre no canvassing rule near voting centres, presented unique challenges for the NTEC. A comprehensive voter information campaign was conducted to inform electors about the change to OPV, and practical measures were put in place to implement the 100-metre prohibition of political campaigning at voting centres.

Following election day, recounts were conducted for five close seats with the Nhulunbuy result referred to the Court of Disputed Returns, though later withdrawn by consent.

ELECTION CHARTER

As part of the commitment to accountability and transparency, an election service charter detailing key performance indicators and service standards was developed for the 2016 Territory election and the 2017 NT Council elections. Election outcomes, measured against specific targets, are contained in the election report, including enrolment and voter participation, informality rates and the provision of election information.

VOTER SERVICES

Improving elector services and making voting convenient and accessible to the Territory's diverse community, required a multi-faceted approach through:

- the use of electronic certified lists to speed up the voting process and improve the integrity of the ballot
- online enrolment and postal vote applications
- locating early voting centres in convenient, accessible locations
- a partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to improve remote mobile voting services.

The voter enrolment and information campaign broadened the way in which election messages were delivered. For the first time, traditional advertising formats were supplemented with social media, SMS messaging and targeted emails. New partnerships were formed with key influencers to encourage engagement with young and Indigenous Territorians.

Providing information online is practical and cost-effective, particularly in addressing the challenge of communicating with a diverse and geographically wide spread community. The election website allowed electors to access up-to-date information from anywhere, at any time. The site received 171,879 hits on election night.

Formality information videos were also accessible electronically in all voting centres. The videos were available in 13 Indigenous languages, English and Tagalog.

With the removal of the eligibility criteria for postal and early voting, electors clearly embraced the option of convenience voting. Over a third of voters chose to vote before election day and the number of postal vote packs mailed out increased by 25 per cent compared to the 2012 LA election.

There was an agreement with the DHS to assist in the delivery of remote mobile voting. This included the use of DHS vehicles, infrastructure and local staff who had valuable knowledge and networks within remote communities.

The 100-metre prohibition on canvassing at voting centres was well received overall by electors, ensuring that voting centres were apolitical with voters no longer required to 'run the gauntlet' of campaign workers handing out How-to-Vote (HTV) material. However, enforcement of the rule was difficult, especially in remote communities.

Enhancements to the election management system (EMS) enabled results to be directly posted to the virtual tally room. Results were also posted on social media, including timely updates about the counts in close seats.

The informal voting rate reduced to 2.0 per cent with significant decreases in remote divisions, a reduction primarily due to the change to optional preferential voting.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

A communications strategy was developed for the 2016 Territory election and the 2017 NT Council elections. These included consistent branding across all advertising media including social media, as well as key communication platforms for stakeholders. A dedicated website was also developed for both elections with the launch of the 2017 NT Council elections site on 26 May 2017.

A total of 125 electoral education sessions at Parliament House and within schools were undertaken with 2,648 students and 232 adults participating. A further 388 adults participated in democracy education sessions.

The appointment of an Education and Engagement Officer early in 2017 saw a redesign of all education programs and stronger links forged with the AEC regarding enrolment and education activities in remote areas. In addition, a new program 'Democracy Dash' was piloted as part of National Youth Week 2017 and involved two schools, five teachers and 36 students from years nine to 12. Feedback was very positive from participating schools and an expanded 'Democracy Dash' event is planned for National Youth Week 2018.

CORPORATE

Contractual arrangements were successfully implemented with a number of external providers delivering specific election related services.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

The Electoral Council of Australia and New Zealand (ECANZ) is a consultative council of electoral commissions from the electoral authorities of the Commonwealth, states and territories and New Zealand. The council met four times in 2016-2017 with the NT Electoral Commissioner attending all meetings. Matters discussed included internet voting strategies, opportunity for collaborative research, and delivery of remote electoral services.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION (AEC)

Support was provided to AEC enrolment activities in the lead-up to the 2016 Federal election through promotional information on the website and via social media. The Alice Springs office was used to deliver shopfront services for the division of Lingiari prior to the federal election in July 2016.

The 2017 federal budget initiated a reduction of AEC staff in the NT to three, and the transferral of enrolment functions to the AEC Queensland office. This has ramifications for the joint roll arrangement (JRA) and future enrolment strategies in the NT, especially in remote areas.

MAJOR TASKS IDENTIFIED IN THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL REPORT

Task	Progress
Focus enrolment strategies on online registration and information interfaces on the Commission website and in social media.	2016 Territory election public awareness campaign was developed and implemented to ensure online enrolment was major focus.
Analyse the impact of the 2016 Federal and Territory election enrolment programs on enrolment outcomes, including measuring the success against the performance indicators in the 2016 Territory election Service Charter.	Despite promoting online enrolment, 51.3 per cent of the total transactions from 1 April to 10 August 2016 were lodged online, less than the 90 per cent service charter target.
Process non-voter data from the 2016 Territory election.	Non-voter data duly processed, investigated and finalised.
Undertake an enrolment promotion campaign in the lead-up to the 2017 NT Council elections.	Roll cleansing arrangements undertaken in all regional council areas, along with advertising for the close of electoral roll.
Provide input and advice to the DLGCD on the role of the NTEC in relation to local government representation reviews.	Advice and input undertaken at working party meetings.
Develop recommendations on appropriate enrolment activities to precede future LA boundary redistributions, for inclusion in the 2016 Territory election report.	Recommendations included in the election report.
Conduct the 27 August 2016 Territory election.	Election conducted.
Review and evaluate the conduct of the 2016 Territory election, including innovations, new systems and processes, ballot paper informality and the impact of legislative changes, including the introduction of OPV and the 100 metre campaign exclusion zone.	Election report tabled in parliament during the May 2017 sittings which reviewed innovations, new systems and processes, ballot paper informality and the impact of legislative changes – including the introduction of OPV and the 100 metre campaign exclusion zone.
Methodologies to include measurement of performance outcomes against the Service Charter, obtaining feedback from clients through surveys.	Surveys received from various stakeholders post-election.
Commence preparations and implementation of election plans for the conduct of the August 2017 NT Council elections.	Electoral service agreements in place with all councils.
Liaise with the DLGCD on any proposed amendments to local government electoral legislation and incorporate changes to systems and processes should legislative amendments be tabled and assented to prior to the August 2017 NT Council elections.	Various meetings held with DLGCD and proposed amendments to local government electoral legislation deferred until after the 2017 NT Council elections.
Conduct the 2017 Northern Territory Public Service Enterprise Agreement Ballot using online voting.	2017 NT Public Service Enterprise Agreement Ballot delayed until 2017-2018 reporting year.
Draft and table the 2016 Territory election report with recommendations to improve electoral practices.	Election report tabled in May 2017.

Task	Progress
Provide technical advice on any review/proposed changes to the Northern Territory <i>Electoral Act</i> .	Advice provided.
Implement the 2016 Territory election strategic communication plan and review its effectiveness against KPIs in the Service Charter.	Strategic communication plan implemented and evaluated against KPIs in the Service Charter.
Commence planning and preparation for a public awareness program for the 2017 NT Council elections, building on established advertising and sponsorship partnerships to continue voter engagement.	2017 NT Council elections communication strategy developed.
Continue participation in the parliamentary electoral education sessions.	Education and Engagement Officer employed to deliver electoral education sessions.
Develop a targeted community based program to engage remote voters with democratic processes.	Working closely with the AEC in developing a remote voter engagement program.
Review the structure and content of the NTEC website.	Contractor engaged to review and document website usage to enable development of new platform in late 2017.
Examine outcomes of the July 2016 federal election, including any potential impact for public awareness actions and strategies.	Review undertaken and learnings adopted into 2016 Territory election delivery plans.
Monitor expenditure and finalise processing and reporting for the 2016 Territory election; apply for Treasurer's Advance to cover election expenses.	Expenditure monitored and Treasurer's advance received.
Complete and implement business plans for the 2016 Territory election, including pre-election activities.	Documented plans and activities undertaken prior to the 2016 Territory election.
Continue to support the Indigenous Employment Program (IEP).	Ongoing.
Review the organisation structure of the Alice Springs office.	Review and recruitment completed.
Finalise the filing structure and standardise titling conventions in preparation for electronic document records management (EDRM).	Further research and review to be undertaken before implementation in late 2017.
Extending the Alice Springs office MoU with the AEC.	MoU extended for a further five year period.

THE YEAR AHEAD

ENROLMENT

- Undertake an enrolment promotion campaign in the lead up to the 2017 NT Council elections.
- Analyse the impact of the 2017 NT Council elections enrolment programs on enrolment outcomes, including the review of the roll cleansing project undertaken by regional councils.
- In consultation with the AEC, develop ongoing partnerships with LG councils in providing electoral enrolment and education outcomes in remote communities.
- Development of an enrolment strategy following the AEC's decision to transfer enrolment functions to Queensland.

ELECTIONS

- Conduct the 2017 NT Council elections.
- Review and evaluate the conduct of the 2017 NT Council elections and recommend operational improvements for future elections; suggest legislative changes as required.
- Develop and provide all councils with individual election reports that contribute to the 2017 NT Council elections report.
- Develop detailed plans and/or research on the proposed amendments to the NT *Electoral Act*, as detailed in the 2016 Territory election report.

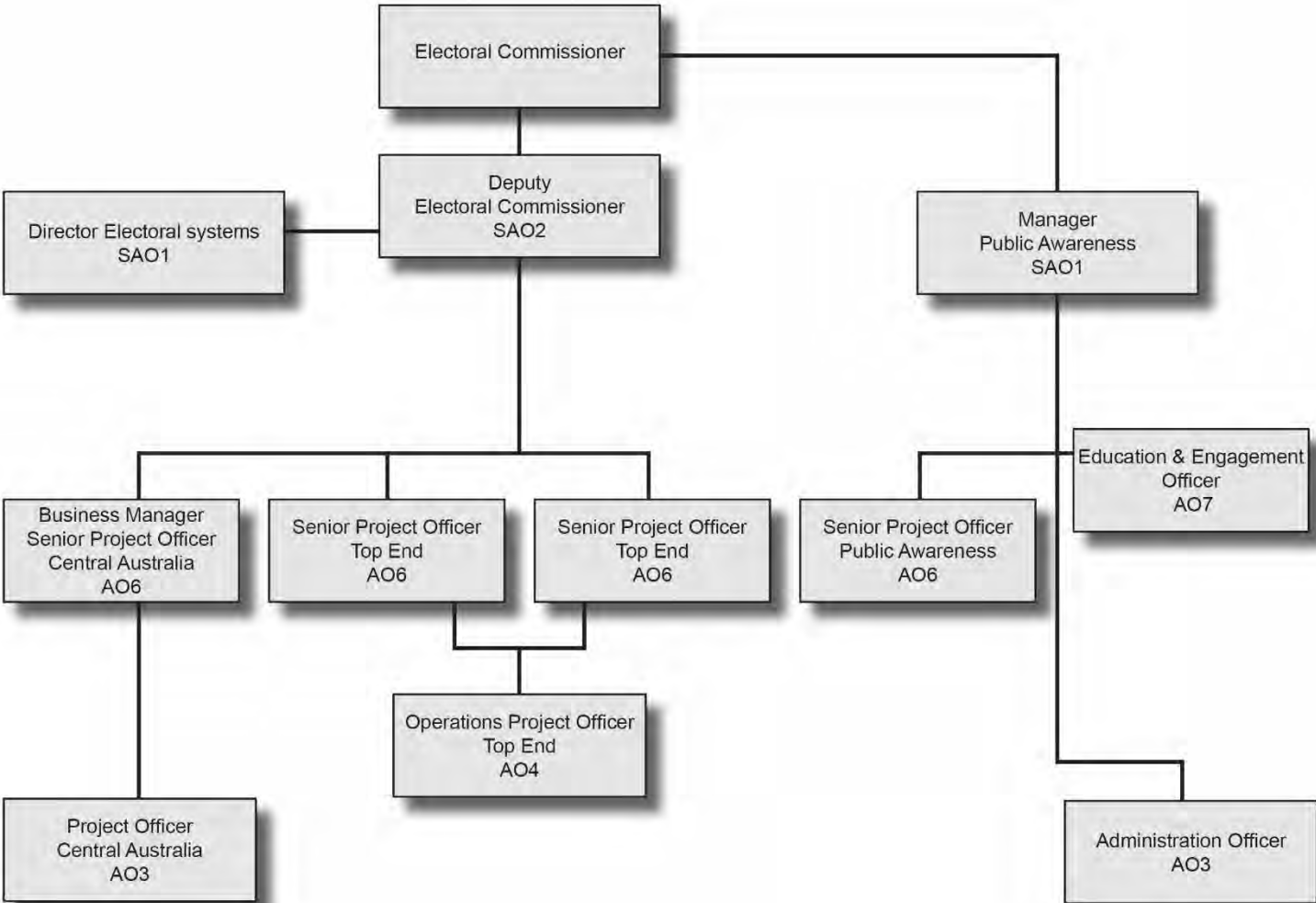
PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Implement the 2017 NT Council elections strategic communication plan and review its effectiveness.
- Improve and expand the education and community engagement functions.
- Review the NTEC website and develop a plan for an improved and more user friendly product.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- Monitor expenditure and finalise processing and reporting for the 2017 NT Council elections.
- Undertake a review of the organisational structure to ensure it reflects the future direction and needs of the agency and government.
- Review and modernise the IT infrastructure that supports the Election Management System (EMS).
- Review of the role, budget and functions of the agency.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



AGENCY FUNCTIONS

ENROLMENT

OBJECTIVE

Contribute to the maintenance and security of a joint roll of eligible Northern Territory electors.

Strategies	Performance measures
Maintain an efficient and effective joint electoral roll with the AEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increase in the number of eligible electors correctly enrolled in the Territory. ▪ Number of enrolment transactions and other information collected from enrolment activities. ▪ Percentage of requests where accurate roll data was provided in a timely manner. ▪ Level of compliance with commitments detailed in service level agreements with the AEC. ▪ Timely and thorough redistribution data requests to the AEC. ▪ Redistribution data, that is quality assured, loaded into the national roll management database (RMANS).
Undertake regular research to identify activities to complement Continuous Roll Update (CRU) and Federal Direct Enrolment Update (FDEU).	
Develop and implement enrolment stimulation activities and initiatives and participate in joint programs and workshops with the AEC.	
Monitor enrolment performance in terms of completeness, accuracy and the timely update of the electoral roll.	
Provide support to Redistribution Committees and effect changes following final boundary determinations from the Committee and other sources.	
Provide roll data within legislative requirements.	

ROLL MAINTENANCE

The enrolment provisions of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* (1918) (unchanged during the reporting year) apply for Northern Territory purposes, so that if an eligible person resident in the Territory is enrolled on the Commonwealth roll, he/she is automatically enrolled for LA and LG elections. This is in accordance with the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act* 1978. Amendments to the *Electoral Act* in force at 2 March 2016, included an express provision regarding compulsory enrolment.

Section 20 of the *Electoral Act* provides that the Administrator may enter into an arrangement with the Governor-General for the maintenance of the joint Northern Territory and Commonwealth roll. The present arrangement has been in place since 1994. The roll is maintained by the AEC and provided to the NTEC on request, in accordance with the JRA.

ELECTORAL ROLL STATUS

During the reporting period the Northern Territory electoral roll increased by 4,215 electors to a total of 136,833 as at 30 June 2017. The increase can, in part, be attributed to roll stimulation activities in the lead-up to the 2016 Federal election as well as the enrol-to-vote campaign for the 2016 Territory election.

The Northern Territory's participation rate in relation to enrolment and voting has averaged between 10 to 15 per cent below that of most interstate jurisdictions and the national average. This is due in part to the younger average age of the eligible population, the high level of mobility in the community, and the difficulties in maintaining the roll in remote areas of the Northern Territory where enrolment and voting rates are significantly lower than urban areas. Under-enrolment is estimated at approximately 30,000 eligible electors.

Table 1: Estimated eligible participation on the roll – 2010 to 2017

Biennial participation rates 2010 to 2017 ¹			
Year	Area	% Total enrolment	% 18-25 years enrolment
2010	NT	74.5	52.0
	National	89.7	77.5
2012	NT [#]	78.9	56.0
	National	90.6	73.0
2014	NT	80.8	60.8
	National	92.3	78.5
2016*	NT	81.4	63.4
	National	93.9	87.0
2017	NT	82.7	64.5
	National	95.0	85.7

¹ Electoral Management Information System, Australian Electoral Commission

[#] Figures are before the close of the roll (COR) for the NT LA election on 8 August 2012

* Figures encompass the COR campaign for 2 July 2016 Federal election

Data from enrolment stimulation and review programs, as well as enrolment forms collected from the public in community settings and at elections, are provided to the AEC for processing.

DIRECT ENROLMENT

The Federal Direct Enrolment Update (FDEU) program was rolled out in the Northern Territory in February 2013. The process involves the AEC receiving advice of a person's name and address details from a reliable and trusted source - currently the Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Northern Territory motor vehicle data.

- The person's details are checked against the electoral roll and where the person is not correctly enrolled, a letter is mailed to the person.
- If the person is not qualified to be enrolled at the address, the person is asked to advise the AEC.
- If no advice is received, the person is enrolled for the address provided by the reliable and trusted source.

As the FDEU program depends on electors having a reliable mail address, the program does not operate in rural and remote areas of the Northern Territory, including Tennant Creek. The following are statistics for FDEU processing from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017:

- **9,130** FDEU letters sent
- **8,487** people enrolled as a result of letters being sent
- **267** people provided a suitable reason as to why their enrolment should not be updated (a crossover between electors enrolling and the mailing of FDEU letters is responsible for the numbers not balancing)
- **376** enrolment action cancelled due to other reasons. This includes other enrolment action, death notification and requests for further information not provided.

The AEC does not record statistics on enrolment reversals for people who respond too late to the FDEU letter or other reasons.

ELECTORAL ROLL STIMULATION ACTIVITIES

In accordance with the JRA, the agency contributes to roll maintenance by undertaking enrolment stimulation activities in the lead-up to any LA and LG general or by-election and by maintaining a regular presence at public awareness events such as the NT show circuit and defence/university orientation days. Analysis of enrolment trends and discussions at election management body forums indicate that a presence must be maintained in social media and youth outlets as well as directing resources to promote remote area enrolment.

ENROLMENT PROGRAMS

In April 2016, the first phase of the 2016 Territory election enrolment program commenced with a three-week enrolment drive designed to ensure that the electoral roll was as accurate as possible. The key campaign message was *Got an Opinion? Make it count. Enrol to Vote*, with electors encouraged to enrol online. Program activities included:

- television, radio and print advertising
- banners placed in prominent locations in Alice Springs, Darwin and Palmerston encouraging electors to enrol to vote online
- advertorials focussing on participative democracy in Territory Q magazine and youth publication 'Turn it Up'
- social media – the use of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to disseminate key messaging and advertisements
- a competition to win an iPad for electors who enrolled or updated their details online between 11 April and 31 July 2016.

NORTHERN TERRITORY SHOW CIRCUIT

Throughout July 2016, stands providing information on enrolment and election services were set up at the Alice Springs, Darwin, Freds Pass, Katherine and Tennant Creek shows. A total of 90 enrolments were conducted online and a further 173 enrolment forms were either collected or provided to electors to complete and return. Enrolment and election information stands are planned for July 2017 in the lead-up to the close of the electoral roll for the 2017 NT Council elections.

DEFENCE ORIENTATION DAYS

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) hosted a Community Service Expo at the Tindal Gymnasium on 28 January 2017. A week later another was held at the Darwin Exhibition Centre on 4 February. The expos were open to ADF members and their families as well as the general public.

Information stands were set up at both expos promoting online enrolment and the 2017 NT Council elections. Laptops loaded with the Northern Territory electoral roll allowed people to check their enrolment and, if necessary, update their details online.

ENROLMENT INITIATIVES

An agreed outcome, negotiated under the 2017 LG electoral service agreements, was that all regional councils would conduct a roll cleansing exercise in the lead-up to the 2017 NT Council elections. Council CEOs signed agreements to ensure the roll data was maintained securely before council area electoral rolls were provided. The exercise identified a number of deceased electors as well as electors who had left the community and this data was used to improve the accuracy of the electoral roll.

ALICE SPRINGS OFFICE (MYVOTE CENTRAL)

The Alice Springs office (MyVote Central) serves as a shopfront for enrolment and other electoral enquiries from the public. It provides a base for regular enrolment activities at public venues, schools and communities within the town and in central Australia generally, and assists with enrolment at citizenship ceremonies in Alice Springs.

AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION (AEC)

The AEC, in partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), commenced a remote enrolment program in April 2016, targeting approximately 100 remote communities.

Enrolment data showing a person's change of address was loaded into the DHS remote services system, providing information to DHS staff identifying electors needing to update their enrolment details. At the commencement of the program the data identified approximately 3,100 potential electors who were not currently enrolled and a further 2,900 electors who needed to update their address.

The program was suspended following the close of roll for the federal election on 23 May and recommenced on 18 July 2016. Approximately 800 enrolment transactions occurred through this project.

Table 2: Enrolment transactions – additions, deletions and transfers to the NT roll

Enrolment at start of financial year	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
		125,979		129,878		128,172		132,618
Plus additions to the roll								
New enrolments	5,207		4,267		5,069		4,869	
Re-enrolments	2,373		1,483		2,208		2,225	
Re-instatements	155		75		19		118	
Interstate transfers to NT	8,469		7,155		10,334		7,552	
Total additions		+16,204		+12,980		+17,630		+14,764
No change to total transfers within NT								
Transfer between divisions	8,730		8,622		11,214		9,434	
Changes within division	4,127		3,741		4,500		4,823	
Amendments to elector details	3,228		4,237		2,937		2,497	
Less - deletions to the roll								
Removal by objection	1,653		4,126		1,402		1,286	
Deaths	852		903		811		919	
Duplications	156		225		58		518	
Cancellations	14		46		50		12	
Interstate transfers from NT	9,638		9,386		11,223		7,814	
Total deletions		-12,313		-14,686		-13,544		-10,549
Net adjustments		8						
Enrolment at close of financial year		129,878		128,172		132,618		136,833

Notes:

- **New enrolments** - all electors who enrolled for the first time.
- **Re-enrolments** - re-enrolling electors who previously had been enrolled.
- **Re-instatements** - the re-instatement of electors to the roll removed previously based on the receipt of new information that they still reside at their earlier enrolled address.
- **Interstate transfers to NT** - transfers of enrolment to a Northern Territory address from interstate.
- **Interstate transfers from NT** - electors previously enrolled in the Northern Territory transferring their enrolment to another jurisdiction.
- **Transfers within NT** - electors notifying a change of address to another Northern Territory LA division or within same division. Transfers within NT do not alter total enrolment.
- **Amendments** - changes to enrolment details other than name or enrolled address e.g. amendment to mail delivery address, council re-numbering of street addresses.
- **Removed by objection** - electors removed from the roll, generally on the ground that they are apparently no longer resident at their enrolled address.
- **Duplications** - removal of a duplicate entry on the roll due to an official error e.g. a transfer of enrolment not matched to an existing enrolment.
- **Cancellations** - removals of individuals from the electoral roll who have not maintained their eligibility status for enrolment under the *Electoral Act*.
- **Adjustments** - variations to statistics arising from processing amendments.

Table 3: Enrolment by Legislative Assembly division 30 June 2017

Division		Division		Division	
Arafura	4,726	Drysdale	5,585	Nhulunbuy	5,775
Araluen	6,140	Fannie Bay	5,701	Nightcliff	5,350
Arnhem	4,989	Fong Lim	5,471	Port Darwin	5,439
Barkly	5,022	Goyder	5,472	Sanderson	5,531
Blain	5,718	Johnston	5,011	Spillett	5,562
Braitling	6,516	Karama	5,281	Stuart	5,125
Brennan	5,284	Katherine	5,654	Wanguri	5,843
Casuarina	5,493	Namatjira	5,208	Total	136,833
Daly	5,308	Nelson	5,629		

ELECTORAL EVENTS

2013 – 2014: Federal election, September 2013; Blain LA by-election, 12 April 2014

2014 – 2015: Casuarina LA by-election, 18 October 2014

2016 – 2017: Federal election, 2 July 2016; Territory election, 27 August

2017 – 2018: NT Council elections, 26 August 2017

REVIEWS OF REPRESENTATION BY COUNCILS

Local government in the Northern Territory comprises five municipal councils, nine regional councils, two community government councils and one shire council.

Under the *Local Government Act* (LGA) and Local Government (Electoral) Regulations (LGER), a council must:

- review its structure and representation once in every four year term [LGA s23(2)] and [LGER r63]
- prepare a plan for the council's composition, taking into account population change, geography and community interest; community feedback may be sought before finalising the plan
- consult with the NTEC during the process [LGER r63(4)]
- complete the review 12 months before the next general election [LGER r63(5)].

Two council reviews were received during the reporting period.

In reply to the Department of Local Government and Community Development (DLGCD) 2016 paper on the 'Proposed Content of New Local Government Legislation', the agency supported the recommendation in principal to establish an independent panel to determine council boundaries. This support also suggested alternative models for the composition of the panel and suggestions on the timing and process.

SUPPLY OF ELECTORAL ROLL DATA

In accordance with the JRA, roll data was extracted from the Roll Management System (RMANS) for the following:

- monthly updates for roll changes for supply to independent members of the Legislative Assembly and registered parties
- the 2016 Territory election
- the roll cleansing project for the 2017 NT Council elections
- enrolment drives at NT shows and defence expos.

The AEC met the performance standards set out in the JRA for the management of the close of electoral roll for the 2016 Territory election and was responsive to requests for ad-hoc data extracts. All electoral roll data was supplied within the specified time to the relevant stakeholders.

ELECTIONS

OBJECTIVE

Conduct elections that are impartial, efficient, transparent and in accordance with the law.

Strategies	Performance measures
Provide best practice in conducting government and non-government elections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of disputed returns upheld due to administrative error. ▪ Percentage of elections not conducted within statutory or required deadlines. ▪ Cost of elections (actual v estimate). ▪ Voter participation and informality rates. ▪ Feedback received from client surveys on elections conducted. ▪ Election based management system meets business requirements.
Develop and maintain election policies, procedures and processes.	
Enhance our knowledge of the needs of our diverse client base to customise electoral services.	
Develop, review and maintain an election based management system.	

LEGISLATION

NT Electoral Act

On 2 December 2015, the Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill (the Bill) was tabled in Parliament, proposing a range of amendments to the *Electoral Act*. The Bill addressed some of the recommendations made in the Commission's report on the 2012 LA election and, in addition, proposed other amendments.

On 11 December 2015, the NTEC released an 'Information Paper - Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill (2015)' that discussed the proposed amendments not canvassed in the 2012 LA election report.

The *Electoral Legislation Amendment Act* came into effect on 2 March 2016 and made the changes summarised in the following table.

Table 4: Summary of NT *Electoral Act* legislative changes effective 2 March 2016

Amendment	Legislative reference
Insertion of a note reinforcing compulsory enrolment.	s21
Provision for the Commission to authorise a person or body to print the ballot papers used in an election.	s40(4)
The ability for the draw of positions on the ballot paper to be conducted at a location determined by the Electoral Commissioner.	s41(2)
Change the method of voting from full preferential to optional preferential. This change requires a voter to mark a '1' on the ballot paper next to their most preferred candidate and may then choose whether or not to mark further preferences by using consecutively increasing whole numbers.	s50(2)
Removal of the criteria in relation to who may apply for a postal vote. This change provides that any person entitled to vote may apply for a postal vote.	s60
A provision allowing postal vote applications to be made at any time from 1 January of an election year.	s61
A provision that the authorised officer must not send postal voting papers to the applicant unless the application is received in the calendar year in which the election day occurs.	s62(3)
Removal of the restrictions on electors voting before election day, a change that applied to both early and postal voting.	s71
The Commissioner's power to approve electronic or other automated systems extended to the issuing and return of postal vote papers.	s85A
Extension of the time allowed for eligible postal votes to be received and included in the count to 12:00 noon on the second Friday after election day.	s96
Extending the restrictions on canvassing activities in a voting centre from 10 metres to 100 metres.	s275

Local Government Act and Local Government (Electoral) Regulations

There were no legislative amendments to the *Local Government Act* or *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations* during the reporting period.

ELECTORAL SERVICES

During the year, no casual vacancies occurred in the Legislative Assembly; however, a full Legislative Assembly election was conducted. Inter-jurisdiction support was provided for two State/Territory elections and one by-election in Tasmania. Two enterprise agreement ballots and one fee-for-service election were conducted.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

2016 Territory election (Legislative Assembly) - 27 August

The 2016 Territory election took place on Saturday, 27 August. The use of electronic certified lists quickened the voting process. Legislative change to the prohibition boundary for political canvassing at voting centres was increased from 10 metres to 100 metres. Electors were also able to vote early or apply for a postal vote without requiring a reason.

Election innovations

Large amounts of time and resources have been allocated to the redevelopment of the EMS. The major advancements have been:

- communication with potential voting staff by email rather than letter
- development of an online smart form to enable voting staff to accept the offer of employment and enter their own banking, tax and personal details
- allowing disclosure forms to be submitted electronically (this was a recommendation of the McGuinness Report)
- the production of print-ready PDF ballot papers
- enhancements to the postal voting module to allow for online applications
- enhancements to the remote mobile module
- direct publishing of results to the website via the virtual tally room
- implementation of a non-voter/multi-voter system.

The full development of the EMS for the Territory election was completed at the end of April 2016. Further development was conducted in preparation for the 2017 NT Council elections.

Department of Human Services (DHS)

The AEC engaged the services of DHS to assist with the provision of remote mobile voting services at the 2013 and 2016 federal elections.

Replicating the AEC arrangement, a partnership was negotiated with DHS to provide services assisting with the conduct of remote mobile voting. Under this partnership, DHS provided:

- vehicles with GPS tracking and two-way communication
- staff
- booking of accommodation and aircraft.

Electronic mark-off of voters (eLAPPS)

The introduction of electronic certified lists (eLAPPS) was developed and used in all voting centres for the 2016 Territory election. The eLAPPS software enabled:

- the live electronic mark-off of voters
- monitoring the number of votes issued and ballot paper stocks
- voting centre Officers in Charge (OIC) to document issues and submit them electronically.

Trials of the eLAPPS system were conducted at the City of Palmerston by-election in September 2015 and the Litchfield Council election in November 2015.

Based on the trial results, the agency purchased the eLAPPS software to use in all voting centres at the 2016 Territory and 2017 NT Council elections. To support this software a contract with F1 Solutions to redevelop eLAPPS to Northern Territory specifications was entered into. The value of the contract with F1 Solutions was \$357,000. There was a separate agreement with Elections ACT to jointly purchase a pool of netbooks required to roll out eLAPPS in all voting centres across the NT.

Online postal vote applications

A smart form was developed that enables electors to apply for a postal vote online.

Electors complete the application online and, when submitted, the application is lodged to the EMS. An operator then opens the application, upon which the EMS conducts a check of the electoral roll to identify if the person is eligible. If they are, a postal vote envelope is printed and ballot papers sent.

The envelopes are printed with a barcode to enable faster receipt and processing of returned completed envelopes. Each barcode is unique to the voter and recalls their details when scanned.

Online training of electoral officials

In the past, electoral official training has been onerous and often ineffective. It involved printing and posting a hardcopy manual and homework book for each electoral official engaged. This proved particularly problematic for electoral officials who were engaged close to election day.

A program was purchased to modernise and improve the delivery of training. All electoral staff undertook online training with face-to-face sessions provided to senior and remote voting staff.

Electronic ballot draws

An electronic random number generator was purchased to conduct the ballot draws in Alice Springs and Darwin. The electronic random number generator significantly reduced the time taken to decide ballot paper positions. The declaration of nominations event was open to the public where witnesses could view the draw taking place on a large display unit.

Recount policy

A recount policy was developed providing additional guidance to the recount clause in section 130 of the NT *Electoral Act*. The policy states that before a request for a recount is considered, it needs to identify specific ballot papers and associated significant counting process errors or irregularities that could change the result of an election within a division, unless the margin of votes is 100 or less, in which case a recount will be undertaken at the NTEC's initiative as stated under section 130(2) (b) of the Act.

This policy was enacted in five Legislative Assembly divisions based on the results being a difference of 100 votes or less.

ASSISTANCE FOR INTER-JURISDICTION ELECTIONS

The NTEC provides voting services on request for interstate and New Zealand electors located in Darwin and Alice Springs for elections in their own jurisdictions.

Inter-jurisdictional support was provided for the following events:

Jurisdiction	Election date	Election type
ACT	15 October 2016	General election
Western Australia	11 March 2017	General election
Tasmania	6 May 2017	By-election

PARTY REGISTRATION

Currently there are six political parties registered in the Northern Territory. The Shooters and Fishers Party applied to change their name; however, as the application was made within six months of the 2016 Territory election, the change was not permitted.

Political party	Date of registration
1 Territory Party	18 November 2015
Australian Labor Party NT (ALP)	18 April 2005
Citizens Electoral Council (NT Division)	6 March 2013
Country Liberals (CLP)*	27 January 2010
Shooters and Fishers Party	27 February 2015
The Greens	23 March 2005

*First registered 30 March 2005 as the Northern Territory Country Liberals

DISCLOSURE AND COMPLIANCE REVIEW

During 2016, a compliance review was conducted by accounting firm BDO (NT) for political disclosure returns submitted for the 2015-2016 financial year and the 2016 Territory election returns. The findings of this review indicated that the level of compliance had improved. In addition, the ALP and CLP were required to submit amended returns and a number of donors did not submit donor returns (as listed in BDO's report). Various recommendations from BDO to improve compliance were included in the 2016 Territory election report.

Targets 2017-2018

- Monitor registered political parties' registration with the AEC.
- Process any further requests for registration or changes to current registered parties.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

2017 NT Council elections - 26 August

During 2016-2017, significant planning was undertaken to ensure election readiness. Extensive liaison occurred with all councils to ensure detailed electoral service agreements were in place which reflected agreed responsibilities of both parties, and the cost of election services.

Election innovations

As a result of a review into electoral systems, procedures and practices, the following innovations will be put in place for the 2017 NT Council elections:

- Enhanced online training and materials have been developed for electoral officials to enable practicable adult learning methods.
- Online postal vote applications will be available through the NTEC website, providing electors with the ability to complete and lodge their application electronically.
- Electronic mark-off will be in place at all voting centres following the successful rollout during the 2016 Territory election. Electronic mark-off facilitates accurate and timely vote issuing, the ability to identify and stop potential multiple voters in real time, the provision of a management tracking tool, and alleviates the need to scan certified lists after the election for non-voter and multi voter follow-up.
- Electronic tablet technology will be utilised to provide consistent and impartial messages to electors seeking assistance with voting, as well as the provision of a digital training tool for staff employed as local assistants.
- Utilising electors' email and mobile phone details to improve timely transmission of key election messages via email and SMS as part of a communication strategy.
- Service Level Agreements (SLA) will be negotiated with each council that detail costs for the preparation and conduct of each council election. This includes the functions and responsibilities of the NTEC along with the agreed provision of council resources to lower costs.
- The publication of a document to improve transparency which outlines the model used for determining election costs to councils, how it is administered and key performance indicators.

By-elections

Changes to the *Local Government Act* enacted on 23 April 2015, state that if a council vacancy occurs within 18 months or less before the next general election, the council may (in accordance with its policy) co-opt a person to fill the vacancy until the next election. As the reporting period is within the 18-month period from the next general election, nil by-elections have occurred.

FEE-FOR-SERVICE ELECTIONS

Section 309(1) (h) of the NT *Electoral Act* allows for a payment to provide electoral goods and services to persons or organisations, using information or material in its possession or expertise acquired in the exercise of its functions.

Fee-for-service elections are conducted for government, non-government and community agencies and organisations that require decisions to be made by ballot. This includes enterprise agreements (EAs), the selection of office holders and plebiscites.

These elections are charged at commercial rates i.e. direct costs plus a 35 per cent management fee. The management fee is not charged when conducting elections for Northern Territory Government agencies.

Table 5: Fee-for-service elections conducted 2016-2017

Date	Ballot type	Number of electors		% Turnout
		Electoral roll	Returning BPs	
February 2017	Gunbalanya Community School:			
	Student representation	60	60	100
	Teachers representation	25	25	100
	Parents representation	250	224	89.6

ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT BALLOTS

Table 6: Enterprise agreement ballots conducted 2016-2017

Date	Enterprise Agreement (EA)	Number of electors		% Turnout
		Electoral roll	Returning BPs	
July 2016	NTPS Fire and Rescue Service	204	168	82.3
January 2017	NTPS Fire and Rescue Service	204	167	81.2

Table 7: Enterprise agreement ballots/fee-for-service elections 2011-2012 to 2016-2017

Year	Revenue (\$)	Number of elections/ballots
2011-2012	3,034	2
2012-2013	0	0
2013-2014	67,346*	7
2014-2015	7,336	4
2015-2016	9,095	5
2016-2017	5,274	3

*Includes the conduct of two postal NTPS enterprise agreements

PUBLIC AWARENESS

OBJECTIVE

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

Strategies	Performance measures
Conduct targeted advertising/publicity campaigns for brand building and election information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number and effectiveness of advertising/publicity campaigns. ▪ Interactions on social media channels – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. ▪ Number of schools visited and students attending electoral education sessions. ▪ Level of voter participation and satisfaction. ▪ Level and nature of informality. ▪ Number and nature of transactions logged on the NTEC website. ▪ Number of reports and publications produced.
Develop and deliver electoral education and information programs and services.	
Implementation of information and advertising campaigns across social media networks.	
Conduct electoral research to improve service and participation at electoral events.	
Co-ordinate public reporting.	
Undertake public awareness strategic planning for the 2017 Territory election and the 2017 NT Council elections.	
Develop and implement a revised advertising campaign.	

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS

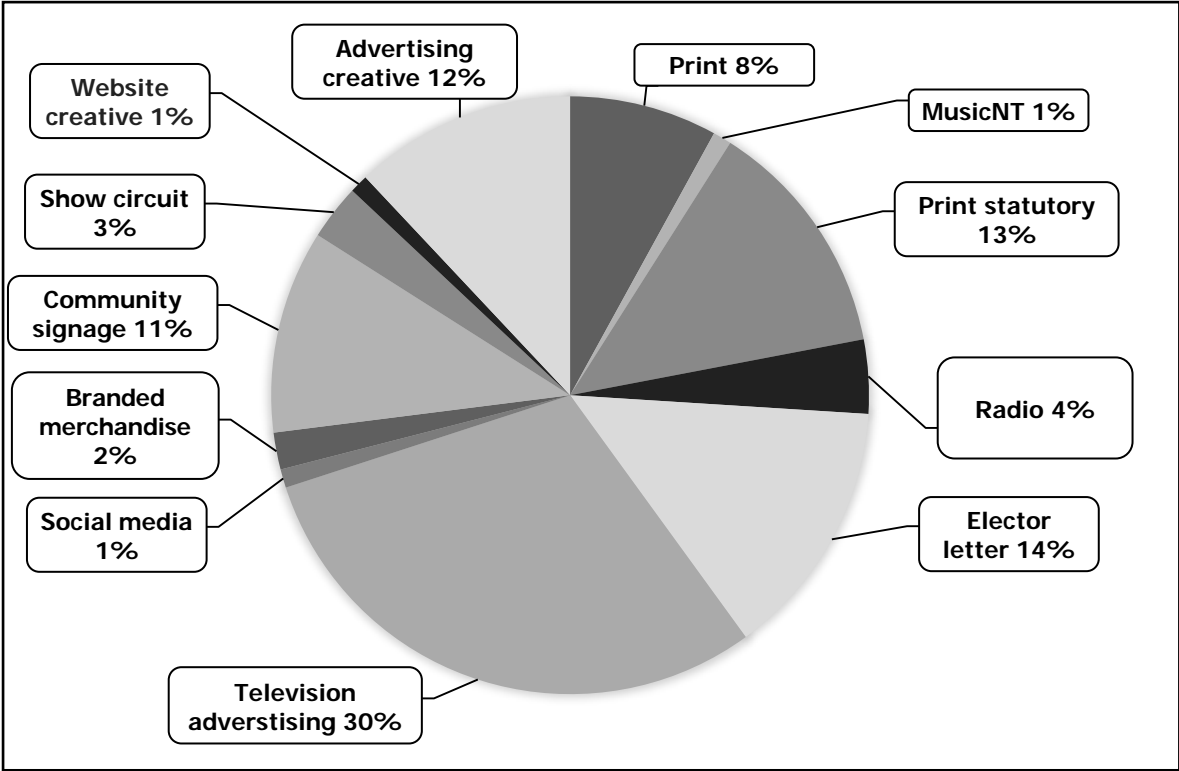
A brand building campaign continued throughout 2016-2017 via social media channels, Facebook and Twitter. The posts included general information about voting, democracy and elections, promotion of parliamentary and education sessions and electoral fast facts relevant to the NT context and special celebrations and events such as 50 years since the 1967 referendum.

Publicity promoting compulsory enrolment occurred in the periods leading into the 2016 Territory and 2017 NT Council elections, concluding at the close of the electoral roll for both events.

Election advertising for the 2016 Territory election was rolled out beginning in the weeks following the federal election on 2 July and continuing through to election day on Saturday 27 August.



Graph 1: 2016 Territory election public awareness and advertising expenditure



All further information regarding the public awareness campaign for this election is detailed in the 2016 Territory election report, which is available at ntec.nt.gov.au.

From May 2017, advertising and voting information was disseminated across social media, television, radio, councils, LGANT, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as well as print and digital platforms.

Television and radio advertisements were developed by Bellette Media utilising and adapting the design from the 2016 Territory election campaign. This ensured branding consistency and minimised development costs for the 2017 NT Council elections.

Apply for a postal vote online - campaign

- Extensive digital marketing through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other digital platforms
- Media release
- Newsletters to stakeholders
- Information disseminated through DHCD.

Enrol online – campaign

The following was undertaken in support of the 'enrol online' campaign:

- Social media campaign through Facebook and Twitter
- Enrol to vote posters to councils for dissemination as requested
- Extensive television and radio (including regional and Indigenous stations)
- Print and online campaign through the Rural Weekly and Off the Leash
- Extensive digital marketing through NewsXtend – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Information disseminated through DHCD (which has responsibility for Local Government).

In addition, bulk emails were sent in late May to over 1,500 organisations to encourage online enrolment. Organisation types included council service centres, the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP), Centrelink offices, stores, clinics & health centres, schools, remote stations, roadhouses, art centres, Aboriginal corporations, land councils, remote media contacts like the Aboriginal Resource and Development Services (ARDS) and the Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Service (RIBS), outstation resource centres, etc.

Further details about the public awareness campaign for the 2017 NT Council elections will be available in the election report due for publication in 2018.

EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Through a restructure of the Public Awareness team, an education and engagement officer position was created to incorporate the previously outsourced Education Officer role with an existing project officer role. This created the capacity to expand the education and community engagement function. As a result, all education materials including those for the parliamentary education sessions have been reviewed, updated and revised for curriculum relevance, age and cultural appropriateness as well as learning style diversity, in order to maximise student engagement and learning outcomes.

An education outreach program with students in non-urban and remote areas of the NT was also initiated with trial sessions run at Nhulunbuy Primary School, Nhulunbuy High School, Nhulunbuy Christian College and Yirrkala School. It is envisaged outreach programs will expand further during 2017-2018. Expansion of the engagement function to English as a second language (ESL) adults and refugees has also taken place.

Special education event – National Youth Week Democracy Dash – 6 April 2017

Democracy Dash was held as an event for National Youth Week (31 March - 9 April) and was open to school students in Years 9-12. Schools were asked to form groups of approximately 8-10 students with each team to be accompanied by a teacher/adult.

For the inaugural Democracy Dash, there were four registered teams, three from Taminmin College and one from Dripstone Middle School, with a total of 36 students and five adults. The event involved the student teams 'dashing' around the Darwin CBD to visit organisations whose work contributes to one or more of the four main elements of democracy: free, fair and open elections; democratic rights and freedoms, rule of law; and majority rule with protections for minorities and individuals.

While the event was initiated and coordinated by the NTEC, the other organisations involved in this year's event were:

1. Australian Electoral Commission
2. Darwin Community Legal Service
3. NAAJA – North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency
4. National Flags
5. Community Engagement Police Unit (via Mitchell Street Police Station)
6. Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission
7. Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission
8. Local Court
9. Parliament House
10. Northern Territory Library
11. City of Darwin
12. LGANT – Local Government Association of the Northern Territory

A work book was created for students that included a map, questions and activities to be completed at each stop. Students were also able to collect free giveaways and small promotional materials at each stop. There were individual prize packs, made up of donated prizes from most of the participating organisations, given to each student in the winning team.

The Office of Youth Affairs (OYA) offer a Quick Response Grant for any youth oriented event and \$1,000 was received to cover transport costs for the participating schools.

Feedback received from the participating schools and organisations was positive. There are plans to make Democracy Dash a regular National Youth Week event.

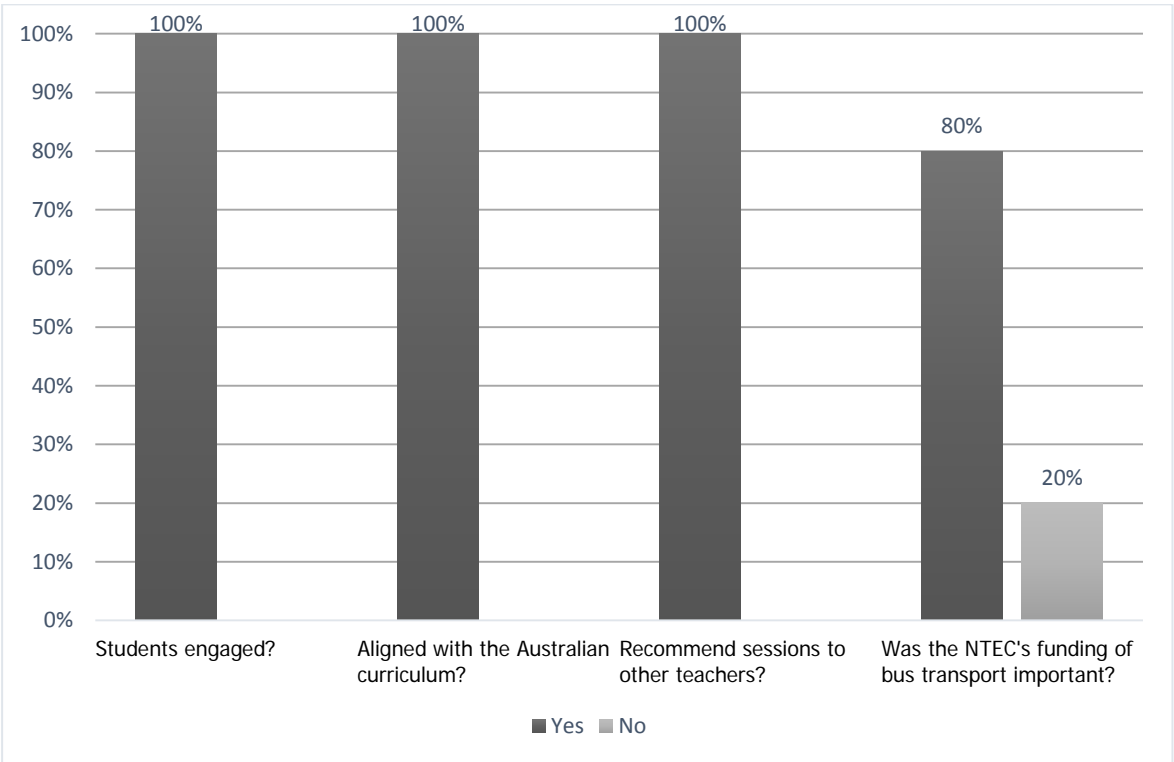
Table 8: Overview of education and engagement sessions 2015-2016 and 2016-2017

Group	Number of sessions 2015-2016	Number of participants 2015-2016	Number of sessions 2016-2017	Number of participants 2016-2017
Alice Springs	5	148	0	0
Darwin/Palmerston/Rural	48	1,877	64	2,435
English as Second Language (ESL)	(Darwin) 10	242	5	114
Katherine	3	102	2	74
Remote	17	687	11	371
Show Circuit (nine days) + Darwin High School and Palmerston Senior College Healthy Living Expos	10	1,552	11	1,767
NTEC managed school elections	(Darwin) 9	1,842	3	773
Democracy Dash	N/A	N/A	1	41
Total	102	6,450	97*	5,575*

* Due to timing factors around the recruitment for the new position of Education and Engagement Officer, no education sessions were conducted between November 2016 and March 2017.

Formal evaluation forms were provided to teachers across all the available education programs. A summary of these responses is included in the following graph.

Graph 2: Teacher feedback via evaluation forms



WEBSITE

The NTEC website provides information about the core business areas of enrolment, elections, voter awareness and corporate governance. There is also a Facebook feed and an 'email us a question' function on the landing page.

A dedicated website for the 2016 Territory election was developed and a specific 2017 NT Council elections website went live on 26 May 2017. The website included relevant information including online enrolment, candidate information, voting centres, counting information and results, employment opportunities and election newsletters.

As part of the 2016-2017 public awareness target to review the structure and content of the NTEC website, staff participated in a website review process. This was an initial step towards the end goal of creating a new, more functional and user-friendly website. The current website platform requires specialised technical support that is not readily available in the NT. Priorities for a new website include its construction in a platform that is easier to use and manage as well as improved functionality, especially when viewed on small screen devices.

RESEARCH AND ELECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS

Due to the conduct of a major electoral event and the ongoing development of electoral ICT software and accompanying hardware, no further research and electoral developments were undertaken during 2016-2017.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- 2015-2016 Annual Report was tabled in parliament on 22 November 2016
- 2016 Territory election newsletters – 22 sent to stakeholders including candidates, political parties, and media
- 2016 Territory Election Report was tabled in parliament on 9 May 2017.

PUBLIC AWARENESS TARGETS FOR 2017-2018

- Progress the development of a new website and platform
- Expand education engagement with schools and community groups especially in remote and non-urban areas
- Reports for each council in the 2017 NT Council elections
- Tabling the 2017 NT Council Elections Report
- Tabling the 2016-2017 NTEC Annual Report
- Increasing numbers of school-based visits
- Improving school engagement in the Alice Springs area through the adoption of a 'train the trainer' model to upskill Alice Springs' staff in conducting education sessions
- Continuation and expansion of the National Youth Week Democracy Dash event
- Further outreach to community organisations to facilitate enrolment and a stronger understanding of democratic rights and responsibilities
- Specifically targeting enrolment activities for high school students 16 years and older.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVE

An operating environment that features continuous improvement, is open and supportive of staff, promotes professional growth, mutual respect and recognition of achievements.

Strategies	Performance measures
Review and change the organisational structure to better meet the strategic challenges of the NTEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of policies reviewed to ensure they meet current business and public sector requirements. ▪ Number of system enhancements made (actual vs targeted). ▪ Improved staff responses in future staff surveys. ▪ Level of participation in staff development opportunities. ▪ Number of events held to celebrate staff achievements.
Document and implement policies and procedures that uphold the business requirements of the NTEC, the Northern Territory Public Service and relevant legislation.	
Maintain and enhance IT systems, an agency website and infrastructure that maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission's activities.	
Foster the professional development and expertise of staff.	
Recognise and celebrate the contribution of individuals and the team.	

THE ORGANISATION

There are two positions that manage the corporate function of the agency. These positions manage in-house human resource activities and financial matters including budgeting and reporting, procurement, IT and general office services. Secondments, specialist electoral staff and casual employees are required for general elections. A number of contract and casual staff were recruited for the 2016 Territory election as well as secondments from other electoral commissions.

Assistance from other NT government agencies is mainly provided by:

- the Department of Corporate and Information Services (DCIS) for ITC, payroll, procurement, property and recruitment support
- the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) for personnel issues
- the Department of Treasury and Finance for financial matters.

Table 9: Staffing profile as at 30 June 2017

Designation	Number of staff (including contract)	
	30 June 2016	30 June 2017
Executive Contract Officer 3	1	1
Senior Administrative Officer 2	1	1
Senior Administrative Officer 1	5#	4
Administrative Officer 7	0	1
Administrative Officer 6	6*	4.28
Administrative Officer 5	1	1
Administrative Officer 4	1.16	1
Administrative Officer 3	3	2
Administrative Officer 2	0	0
Administrative Officer 1	0	0
Total	18.16 FTE	15.28 FTE

* Includes two specialist short-term contract staff (one for the redevelopment of election software, one for specialist technical advice)

includes two specialist short-term contract staff (one for the redevelopment of election software, one for specialist technical advice)

EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

Ongoing employee expenses are met from the annual appropriation; separate arrangements are made for staff employed for by-elections, project work and secondments. In years when major electoral events take place, additional staff expenses are met from election budgets.

In 2016-2017, employee expenses were approximately \$2.605 million, which is 48.6 per cent of the total expenditure for the year.

Additional expenses included remuneration and other related costs for temporary project and election positions relating to:

- stands for the NT show circuit and similar enrolment/information events
- conducting enrolment initiatives for the 2016 Territory election
- conducting the 2016 Territory election (\$3.46 million)
- development of the election management system.

PREPARATION FOR THE 2017 NT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Darwin office

In June 2017, the Darwin office had a permanent staff complement of seven with a number of positions filled through secondments or contracts. Additional casual and temporary staff were engaged to assist in the election planning and preparation activities for both the Territory and council elections.

Alice Springs office (MyVote Central)

The Alice Springs office has two staff members (one permanent and one contracted) with additional staffing resources provided through secondments during the election. The business manager functions of the agency is managed by the Alice Springs office.

Staffing

A recruitment campaign for casual electoral officials for the 2016 Territory election, commenced in March 2016. The objective was to target young people, familiar with modern technology, who would be adept at using the eLAPPS system. Advertisements were placed in newspapers, on the website and through social media. Emails were sent to all NT public servants and students enrolled at Charles Darwin University (CDU). The recruitment drive resulted in over 900 people either updating their details or submitting new applications. There were 472 casual electoral positions filled for the 2016 Territory election.

Training

An online training system was used for all voting centre staff. Content for the web-based training was developed in-house and delivered using a software package sourced from the digital media organisation, Cre8ive. It contained modules for each position category and included multiple choice questions and short answers designed to test each participant's understanding of the electoral process. The online training was mandatory for all electoral officials. Face-to-face training was provided for eLAPPS, the change in the voting system to OPV (including associated vote counting processes) and ballot paper security procedures.

Local assistants were required to watch a seven-minute video on their role and responsibilities in delivering an impartial service to voters.

Staff development and recognition

A post-election conference was conducted to review election performance against the KPIs in the service charter and recognise achievements. The outcomes of the conference were used to prepare the 2016 Territory Election Report.

AGENCY MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Report under Section 18 of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act

DCIS and OCPE provide advice on the application of HR legislation, instructions, guidelines and the implementation of the relevant HR policies, practices, terms and conditions under NTG employment terms and conditions.

Annual reporting is required to the Commissioner for Public Employment in relation to compliance with the prescribed NTPS principles of human resource (HR) management.

Equal opportunity

All appointments to positions are made in accordance with merit principles and, for election casuals, following review of any assessments recorded in the election management system.

All staff, including temporarily employed office casuals and electoral officials, are required to sign an undertaking that they are not a member of a political party or active in political affairs, and that they will retain this status during the period of their employment.

Equity and diversity

Staff are recruited based on their capacity to communicate and interact with the many and diverse communities of the Northern Territory and deal sensitively and respectfully with issues presented by gender, language, ethnicity, disadvantage or any physical or other impairment. Election positions for both urban and remote locations are filled on the basis of the ability to deal with all voters fairly, courteously and without discrimination.

Freedom of information (FOI) requests

The *Northern Territory Information Act* allows for a person to apply to a public sector organisation for access to government information held by the organisation. Government information means records (including electronic records) that are required to be kept by Northern Territory public sector organisations as evidence of their activities or operations. FOI covers most records held by an organisation, including information about individuals and businesses. There were no FOI requests in 2016-2017.

Work Health and Safety (WHS)

The *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act* sets out the national WHS obligations for employers and employees and stipulates duties of care on employers and employees in relation to WHS.

The Commission assesses accommodation, travel arrangements and electoral programs to ensure compliance and stipulates written adherence to voting premises' requirements to responsible officers with reminders of the stipulations in face-to-face training sessions.

No reportable safety issues were recorded during the year.

Insurance reporting

Over the course of 2016-2017, no self-insurance claims were made.

Mitigation strategies were in place to reduce the insurable risk arising from agency operations. The agency complies with instructions as set out in the 'Accounting and Property Manual', which contains sections relating to insurance and litigation matters.

Drivers of Commission vehicles are required to operate according to guidelines set out in the 'NT Fleet handbook'.

Records management

Processes are in place to achieve compliance with the archives and records management provisions prescribed in Part 9, section 131, of the *Information Act*.

The Corporate Plan 2015-2019

The 2015-2019 Corporate Plan was released on 1 July 2015. The objectives, strategies and performance measures for the four core business areas are outlined at the beginning of each section of this report. A consolidated summary is provided below. Ongoing redevelopment of procedures and systems will assist in providing better services in elections and provide enhanced reporting and monitoring abilities.

Election Service Charter

The Commission outlined its broad goals and aims for the conduct of the 2016 Territory election in a service charter that defined the service level commitments to stakeholders. It included the key performance indicators that were used to evaluate election outcomes and provided a basis for determining recommendations to improve electoral practises.

Service charters aim to demonstrate the Commission's accountability and enhance operational transparency. They should also assist stakeholders (voters, candidates, registered political parties and the media) with their election preparations and determine their expectations of, and interactions with, the Commission.

A service charter was developed for the 2017 NT Council elections and provided to councils and LGANT.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

The 2017 NT Council elections are conducted as separate elections for all 17 councils. SLAs were negotiated with each council that documented electoral services to be provided, resources that councils would provide and the estimated cost of the election.

CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2019

Enrolment

Contribute to the maintenance and security of a joint roll of eligible Northern Territory electors.

Strategies	Performance measures
Maintain an efficient and effective joint electoral roll with the AEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ An increase in the number of eligible electors correctly enrolled in the Territory.▪ Number of enrolment transactions and other information collected from enrolment activities.▪ Percentage of requests where accurate roll data was provided in a timely manner.▪ Level of compliance with commitments detailed in service level agreements with the AEC.▪ Timely and thorough redistribution data requests to the AEC.▪ Redistribution data, that is quality assured, loaded into the national roll management database (RMANS).
Undertake regular research to identify activities to complement Continuous Roll Update (CRU) and Federal Direct Enrolment Update (FDEU).	
Develop and implement enrolment stimulation activities and initiatives and participate in joint programs and workshops with the AEC.	
Monitor enrolment performance in terms of completeness, accuracy and the timely update of the electoral roll.	
Provide support to Redistribution Committees and effect changes following final boundary determinations from the Committee and other sources.	
Provide roll data within legislative requirements.	

Elections

Conduct elections that are impartial, efficient, transparent and in accordance with the law.

Strategies	Performance measures
Provide best practice in conducting government and non-government elections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of disputed returns upheld due to administrative error. ▪ Percentage of elections not conducted within statutory or required deadlines. ▪ Cost of elections (actual v estimate). ▪ Voter participation and informality rates. ▪ Feedback received from client surveys on elections conducted. ▪ Election based management system meets business requirements.
Develop and maintain election policies, procedures and processes.	
Enhance our knowledge of the needs of our diverse client base to customise electoral services.	
Develop, review and maintain an election based management system.	

Public Awareness

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

Strategies	Performance measures
Conduct targeted advertising/publicity campaigns for both NTEC brand building and election information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number and effectiveness of advertising/publicity campaigns ▪ Interactions on social media channels – Facebook, Twitter and YouTube ▪ Number of schools visited and students attending electoral education sessions ▪ Level of voter participation and satisfaction ▪ Level and nature of informality ▪ Number and nature of transactions logged on the NTEC website ▪ Number of reports and publications produced
Develop and deliver electoral education and information programs and services.	
Implementation of information and advertising campaigns across social media networks.	
Conduct electoral research to improve service and participation at electoral events.	
Co-ordinate the NTEC's public reporting.	
Undertake public awareness strategic planning for the 2017 Territory election and the 2017 NT Council elections.	
Develop and implement a revised advertising campaign.	

Corporate

An operating environment that features continuous improvement, is open and supportive of staff, promotes professional growth, mutual respect and recognition of achievements.

Strategies	Performance measures
Review and change the organisational structure to better meet the strategic challenges of the NTEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of policies reviewed to ensure they meet current business and public sector requirements. ▪ Number of system enhancements made (actual vs targeted). ▪ Improved staff responses in future staff surveys. ▪ Level of participation in staff development opportunities. ▪ Number of events held to celebrate staff achievements.
Document and implement policies and procedures that uphold the business requirements of the NTEC, the Northern Territory Public Service and relevant legislation.	
Maintain and enhance IT systems, an agency website and infrastructure that maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission's activities.	
Foster the professional development and expertise of staff.	
Recognise and celebrate the contribution of individuals and the team.	

NTEC OFFICE PREMISES

Darwin

While no major works were carried out in the Darwin office during the year, the public awareness section had an office layout refurbish to create a more functional working environment. An industrial shed at Berrimah was leased to store election materials.

Alice Springs

MyVote Central was established in Alice Springs in mid-2009 and managed by the NTEC under a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the AEC to provide a one-stop shop for enrolment, elections and electoral education. The office was moved to a different location in the Yeperenye Centre on 30 April 2015.

Provision of services by DCIS and external ICT provider(s)

ICT support is provided by ICT Services, a division of DCIS, with responsibility for day-to-day ICT matters resting with the Business Manager.

Whole of government contracts determine providers for most telecommunications, hardware, generic software and helpdesk support. Specific agency hardware and software requirements are assessed on an 'as need' basis, and procurement of such items is carefully considered, as uncontracted purchases are not supported by NTG or covered by established safeguards and procedures.

Hardware

A hardware refresh for desktop appliances took place in May 2016 to provide increased capacity to deal with the upcoming major election cycle.

Software

Significant redevelopment of eLAPPS software was required to accommodate the requirements of local government elections. These changes were made under the three-year contract with F1 Solutions.

Website

The virtual tally room is linked to the EMS. On election night there were 171,879 hits from 23,486 visitors. The website for the 2017 NT Council elections went 'live' in May 2017.

TARGETS 2017-2018

- Deliver electoral services for the 2017 NT Council elections in accordance with service level agreements.
- Monitor expenditure and finalise processing and reporting for the 2017 NT Council elections.
- Review the organisational structure of the agency.
- Finalise a filing structure and standardise titling conventions in preparation for electronic document record management (EDRM).

FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

NTEC funding arrangements

The NTEC is funded through an annual appropriation from Treasury. Additional revenue is received by the Commission through the charging of a 15 per cent corporate overhead for conducting council by-elections and 35 per cent corporate overhead for fee-for-service elections. An annual contribution of \$15,000 is received from the AEC for the Alice Springs joint office initiative.

Funding for specific events is undertaken as follows:

- Legislative Assembly elections and by-elections – through a Treasurer’s Advance (TA). Traditionally the Commission received reimbursement through a TA after the election occurred and when all expenses had been received. In recent years, only the difference between advance funding and final actual costs is recouped through a TA
- Local government by-elections – from individual councils with a 15 per cent corporate overhead applied
- LA boundary redistributions – through a Treasurer’s Advance
- major initiatives, e.g. business specific software developments approved by Cabinet, are met by a Treasurer’s Advance
- fee-for-service elections – conducted at NTEC commercial rates including a 35 per cent corporate overhead
- NTPS Enterprise Agreement ballots – funding provided by the department on a marginal cost recovery basis.

In a non-election year major outgoing expenditure is attributed to staffing, property, IT, DCIS Free of Charge (FOC) notional expenses and payments to the AEC for maintenance of the NT electoral roll under the joint roll agreement. The annual appropriation budget supports:

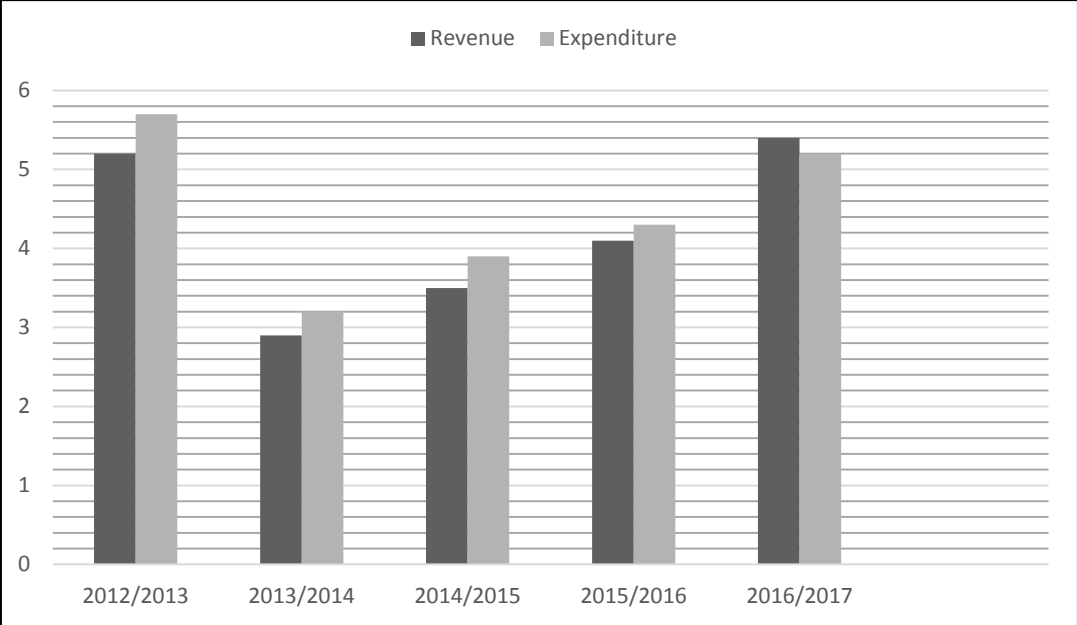
- the head office (Darwin) and MyVote Central (Alice Springs)
- salaries for staff and one executive contract officer
- enrolment, election, education and corporate governance functions
- the payment of approximately \$0.128 million for the annual Joint Roll Arrangement (JRA) costs.

Historical revenue and expenditure variations

The following graph shows revenue and expenditure fluctuations over the last four financial years. Peaks can be explained as follows:

- 2014-15 – the conduct of the QR14 enrolment program and the commencement of the 2015 redistribution of electoral boundaries
- 2015-16 – finalisation of the 2015 redistribution, pre-NTEC election expenditure
- 2016-17 – the conduct of the 2016 Legislative Assembly Election

Graph 3: NTEC revenue versus expenditure – Financial years 2013-2014 to 2016-2017



Financial compliance

In March 2017 an agency compliance review was undertaken by the Auditor-General’s Department as part of its audit program. The following minor matters were identified:

- The need to follow Treasurer’s Directions in relation to Property, Plant and Equipment.
- Updates required to the Accounting & Property Manual to include additional references to Treasurer’s Directions.
- To follow the correct procedures for the receipt of monies.

2016-2017 outcomes

The NTEC’s appropriation for 2016-2017 was \$2,372,000. The 2016-17 budget was later augmented by a Treasurer’s Advance of \$2 million for election expenditure relating to the 2016 Territory election.

Total actual expenditure for the 2016-17 financial year amounted to \$5.258 million. Included in this was \$2.602 million in staff costs, \$1.785 million for administrative expenses and \$0.707 million for goods and services received free of charge (the latter funded through DCIS).

The agency operated at a \$0.260 million surplus due to advance payments of \$309,090 for the 2017 NT Council elections, of which \$115,142 was expensed as well as the reversal of \$194,390 worth of additional assets purchased in 2015-16 that were initially incorrectly coded as an expense.

Legislative Assembly expenditure

In August 2015, the Commission provided NT Treasury with an initial election estimate of \$2.7 million. The estimate did include the EMS development but not the costs associated with eLAPPS as the decision to use electronic roll mark-off was not made until after the successful trials at local government elections in late 2015.

Total expenditure for the election was \$3.46 million, including development costs for the EMS (\$0.36 million) and the eLAPPS hardware/software (\$0.43 million)

A range of factors impacted on the 2016 Territory election budget, with additional expenditure occurring due to:

- incorporating extra enhancements to the EMS
- locating a number of EVCs in or near shopping centres to encourage convenience voting
- the purchase of Wi-Fi dongles for eLAPPS due to the inability to access school internet systems at election day voting centres
- IT costs associated with the ECQ call centre
- additional staffing requirements as a result of the extension to the election timetable by one week and the number of recounts
- legal costs associated with the referral of the division of Nhulunbuy result to the Court of Disputed Returns.

The following table provides an expenditure breakdown for the 2016 Territory election.

Table 10: 2016 Territory election expenditure

Expense Type	\$	% of total
eLAPPS	438,000	12.6
EMS	361,676	10.4
Staffing (including travel and overtime)	1,258,335	36.4
Voting centres and utilities	232,326	6.7
Ballot paper printing	35,321	1.0
Miscellaneous (vehicle hire, stationery)	63,799	1.8
Postal voting	44,026	1.3
Call centre	98,813	2.9
Public awareness	424,118	12.3
Remote mobile voting	504,327	14.6
Total	3,460,741	100.0

Revenue from local government and fee-for-service elections

Legislative changes to the *Local Government Act* means councils have the option not to conduct by-elections for vacancies that occur within 18 months of the 2017 NT Council elections in August. This change means there were no LG by-elections conducted in 2016-2017 hence no revenue derived. \$1,700 was derived through the conduct of fee-for-service elections.

Table 11: Revenue from Fee-for-service elections conducted 2016-2017

Date	Election	Cost \$ (GST inc.)	Revenue \$
February 2017	Gunbalanya Community School: Student representation Teachers representation Parents representation	4,774	1,206
Total		4,774	1,206

Table 12: Revenue from Enterprise agreement ballots conducted 2016-2017

Date	Ballot	Cost \$ (GST inc.)	Revenue \$
July 2016	NTPS Fire and Rescue Service	250	250
January 2017	NTPS Fire and Rescue Service	250	250
Total		500	500

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVERVIEW

For the year ended 30 June 2017

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) provides an independent service to the people of the Northern Territory, the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, municipal and regional councils (mandated) and other organisations (by appointment).

Key responsibilities include:

- Contributing to the maintenance of the Northern Territory electoral roll;
- Managing parliamentary and non-parliamentary elections including local government and fee for service elections;
- Delivering public electoral awareness and education 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

The NTEC's income for 2016-17 was increased to \$5.450 million due to the conduct of the 2016 Legislative Assembly election. Expenses incurred for the year were \$5.258 million. The end result was an operating surplus of \$0.19 million.

The expenditure budget is due to the 2016 Territory election which was held on 27 August 2016 as well as some pre-election expenditure for the 2017 NT Council elections that will be conducted in August. The major expenditure items were:

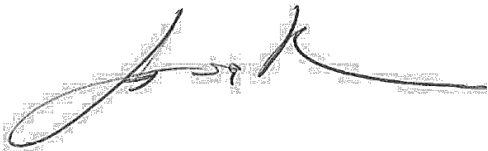
- Employee expenses relating to staffing for the 2016 Territory election.
- Costs associated with the conduct of the 2016 Territory election such as remote voting, public awareness campaigns and premises hire.

Certification of the financial statements

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

We further state that the information set out in the Comprehensive Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement, and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial performance and cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2017 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.



Iain LOGANATHAN

Electoral Commissioner - Accountable Officer

31 August 2017



Blake HARTMAN

Business Manager - Senior Project Officer

31 August 2017

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT
For the year ended 30 June 2017

	Note	2017 \$000	2016 \$000
INCOME			
Taxation revenue			
Grants and subsidies revenue		14	14
Current			
Capital			
Appropriation			
Output		4372	3039
Commonwealth			
Sales of goods and services ^(a)		357	400
Interest revenue			
Goods and services received free of charge	4	707	624
Gain on disposal of assets			
Other income ^(b)			
TOTAL INCOME	3	5450	4076
EXPENSES			
Employee expenses		2602	2123
Administrative expenses			
Purchases of goods and services	6	1785	1382
Repairs and maintenance		2	3
Depreciation and amortisation	9	161	120
Other administrative expenses ¹		707	624
Grants and subsidies expenses			
Current			
Capital			
Community service obligations			
Interest expenses	21		
TOTAL EXPENSES	3	5258	4294
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		192	-218
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Items that will not be reclassified to net surplus/deficit			
Changes in accounting policies ^(d)			
Correction of prior period errors ^(d)			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		68	
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		68	0
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		260	-218

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

^(a) Income received from a number of fee-for-service elections and advance payments relating to the 2017 NT Council elections.

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

BALANCE SHEET
As at 30 June 2017

	Note	2017 \$000	2016 \$000
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and deposits	7	250	321
Receivables	8	96	42
Inventories			
Advances and investments			
Prepayments			
Other assets ^(a)			
Total Current Assets		346	363
Non-Current Assets			
Receivables	8		
Advances and investments			
Property, plant and equipment	9	677	575
Intangibles			
Biological assets			
Heritage and cultural assets			
Prepayments			
Other assets			
Total Non-Current Assets		677	575
TOTAL ASSETS		1023	938
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Deposits held			
Payables	11	16	183
Borrowings and advances			
Provisions	12	201	161
Other liabilities			
Total Current Liabilities		217	344
Non-Current Liabilities			
Borrowings and advances			
Provisions	12	0	49
Other liabilities			
Total Non-Current Liabilities		0	49
TOTAL LIABILITIES		217	393
NET ASSETS		806	546
EQUITY			
Capital		2057	2057
Accumulated funds		-1319	-1511
Reserves		68	0
TOTAL EQUITY		806	546

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

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 30 June 2017

	Note	Equity at 1 July \$000	Comprehensive result \$000	Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners \$000	Equity at 30 June \$000
2016-17					
Accumulated Funds		-1511	192 ⁽¹⁾		-1319
Changes in accounting policy					
Correction of prior period errors					
Transfers from reserves					
Other movements directly to equity					
		-1511	192		-1319
Reserves	14		68		68
Capital – Transactions with		2057			2057
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation					
Equity transfers in					
Other equity injections					
Specific purpose payments					
National partnership payments					
Commonwealth – capital					
Equity withdrawals					
Capital withdrawal					
Equity transfers out					
		2057			2057
Total Equity at End of Financial		546	260		806
2015-16					
Accumulated Funds		1278	218	0	1496
Changes in accounting policy					
Correction of prior period errors					
Transfers from reserves		15	0	0	15
Other movements directly to equity					
		1294	218	0	1511
Reserves	19				
Capital – Transactions with					
Equity injections					
Capital appropriation		(17)	0	0	(17)
Equity transfers in		(1198)	0	(60)	(1257)
Other equity injections		(1081)	0	0	(1081)
Specific purpose payments					
National partnership payments					
Commonwealth – capital					
Equity withdrawals					
Capital withdrawal ^(a)		298	0	0	298
Equity transfers out					
		(1997)	0	(60)	(2057)
Total Equity at End of Financial		(704)	218	(60)	(546)

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

^(a) Use for cash distributions to Government.

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

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
For the year ended 30 June 2017

	Note	2017	2016
		\$000	\$000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Operating Receipts			
Taxes received			
Grants and subsidies received			
Current		14	14
Capital			
Appropriation			
Output		4372	3039
Commonwealth			
Receipts from sales of goods and services		436	498
Interest received			
Total Operating Receipts		4822	3551
Operating Payments			
Payments to employees		-2416	-2190
Payments for goods and services		-2092	-1394
Grants and subsidies paid			
Current			
Capital			
Community service obligations			
Interest paid			
Total Operating Payments		-4508	-3584
Net Cash From/(Used in) Operating Activities	15	314	-33
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Investing Receipts			
Proceeds from asset sales			
Repayment of advances			
Sales of investments			
Total Investing Receipts			
Investing Payments			
Purchases of assets		194	
Advances and investing payments			
Total Investing Payments		194	
Net Cash From/(Used in) Investing Activities		-194	
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Net Cash From/(Used in) Financing Activities			
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		-71	-33
Cash at beginning of financial year		321	354
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	8	250	321

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

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2017

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NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2017

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 and other organisations (if appointed), in an efficient and cost-effective manner, consistent with legislative requirements.

The agency is predominantly funded by, and is dependent on, the receipt of parliamentary appropriations. For the conduct of Legislative Assembly elections, a Treasurer's Advance is generally sought at the conclusion of the event. For a local government general election, an expenditure advance is requested; however, local government by-elections are invoiced after the event. The financial statements encompass all funds through which the agency controls resources to carry on its functions and deliver outputs.

For reporting purposes, outputs delivered by the agency are summarised into two output groups. Note 3 provides summary financial information in the form of a Comprehensive Operating Statement by output group.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Statement of Compliance

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

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

b) Basis of Accounting

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.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTORAL COMMISSION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2017

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

The following new and revised accounting standards and interpretations were effective for the first time in 2016-17:

AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures

This standard applies to not-for-profit sector for the first time in 2016-17. The accounting standard requires disclosures about the remuneration of key management personnel, transactions with related parties, and relationships between parent and controlled entities. For any such transactions, disclosures will include the nature of the related party relationship, as well as information about those transactions' terms/conditions and amounts, any guarantees given/received, outstanding receivables/payables, commitments, and any receivables where collection has been assessed as being doubtful.

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to the current reporting periods, but are considered to have no impact on public sector reporting.

At the date of authorisation of the financial statements, the following standards and interpretations were in issue but are not yet effective and are expected to have a potential impact on future reporting periods:

AASB 16 Leases

AASB 16 Leases is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and will be reported in these financial statements for the first time in 2019-20. When the standard is effective it will supersede AASB 117 Leases and requires the majority of leases to be recognised on the balance sheet.

For lessees with operating leases, a right-of-use asset will now come onto the balance sheet together with a lease liability for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying assets are of low value. The Comprehensive Operating Statement will no longer report operating lease rental payments, instead a depreciation expense will be recognised relating to the right-to-use asset and interest expense relating to the lease liability.

While for lessors, the finance and operating lease distinction remains largely unchanged. For finance leases, the lessor recognises a receivable equal to the net investment in the lease. Lease receipts from operating leases are recognised as income either on a straight-line basis or another systematic basis where appropriate.

Consequently, it is expected that no operating lease commitments will be required to be recognised in the balance sheet through a lease liability and corresponding right to use asset from 2019-20 in accordance with AASB 16 Leases. In the comprehensive income statement the operating lease expense will be replaced with a depreciation expense relating to the right to use asset and interest expense relating to the lease liability. These cannot be quantified at this time.

AASB 1058 Income for not-for-profit entities and AASB 15 Revenue from contracts with customers

AASB 1058 Income for not-for-profit Entities and AASB 15 Revenue with contracts with customers are effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019 and will be reported in these financial statements for the first time in 2019-20.

Under the new AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities, revenue from grants and donations will be recognised when any associated performance obligation to provide goods or services is satisfied, and not immediately upon receipt as currently occurs. Consequently, more liabilities will be recognised in the balance sheet after adoption of this standard.

AASB 1058 clarifies and simplifies income-recognition requirements that apply to not-for-profit entities in conjunction with AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers.

While the full impacts are yet to be determined, potential impacts identified include:

- Grants received to construct or acquire a non-financial asset will be recognised as a liability, and subsequently recognised as revenue as the performance obligations under the grant are satisfied. At present, such grants are recognised as revenue on receipt.
- Grants with an enforceable agreement and sufficiently specific performance obligations will be recognised as revenue progressively as the associated performance obligations are satisfied. At present, such grants are recognised as revenue on receipt.
- Grants that have an enforceable agreement but no specific performance obligations but have restrictions on the timing of expenditure will also continue to be recognised on receipt as time restriction on the use of funds is not sufficiently specific to create a performance obligation.
- Grants that are not enforceable and/or not sufficiently specific will not qualify for deferral, and continue to be recognised as revenue as soon as they are controlled.

Several other amending standards and AASB interpretations have been issued that apply to future reporting periods, but are considered to have limited impact on future financial reporting.

c) Reporting Entity

The financial statements cover the Department as an individual reporting entity. The Northern Territory Electoral Commission ("the Department") is a Northern Territory department established under the *Interpretation Act Administrative Arrangements Order*.

The principal place of business of the Department is: Level 3, TCG Building, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin.

d) Agency and Territory Items

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

Central Holding Authority

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

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

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

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

e) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information for the 2015-16 financial year has been reclassified to provide consistency with current year disclosures.

f) 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. Figures in the financial statements and notes may not equate due to rounding.

g) Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies adopted in 2016-17 as a result of management decisions.

h) Accounting Judgments and Estimates

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

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

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

i) 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.

j) Contributions by and Distributions to Government

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

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

3. COMPREHENSIVE OPERATING STATEMENT BY OUTPUT GROUP

	Note	Electoral Services		Corporate and Governance		Total	
		2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
		\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
INCOME							
Taxation revenue							
Grants and subsidies revenue							
Current		14	14	0	0	14	14
Capital							
Appropriation							
Output		4372	3039	0	0	4372	3039
Commonwealth							
Sales of goods and services ^(a)		357	400	0	0	357	400
Interest revenue							
Goods and services received free of charge	4	707	624	0	0	707	624
Gain on disposal of assets							
Other income							
TOTAL INCOME		5450	4076	0	0	5450	4076
EXPENSES							
Employee expenses		2436	1953	170	170	2602	2123
Administrative expenses							
Purchases of goods and services	5	1776	1372	10	10	1786	1382
Repairs and maintenance		2	45	0	0	2	45
Depreciation and amortisation	9	161	120	0	0	160	120
Other administrative expenses ¹		707	624	0	0	707	624
Grants and subsidies expenses							
Current							
Capital							
Community service obligations							
Interest expenses	21						
TOTAL EXPENSES		5082	4114	180	180	5258	4294
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		368	-38	-	-	192	-
				180	180		218
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME							
Items that will not be reclassified to net surplus/deficit							
Changes in accounting policies							
Correction of prior period errors							
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		68	0	0	0	68	0
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		68	0	0	0	68	0
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT		438	-38	-	-	260	-
				180	180		218

¹ Includes DCIS service charges.

^(a) Income received from a number of fee-for-service elections and advance payments relating to the 2017 NT Council elections.

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

Income

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.

Grants and Other Contributions

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

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

Appropriation

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

Commonwealth appropriation follows from the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations, resulting in Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs) and National Partnership (NP) payments being made by the Commonwealth Treasury to state treasuries, in a manner similar to arrangements for GST payments. These payments are received by the Department of Treasury and Finance on behalf of the Central Holding Authority and then on-passed to the relevant agencies as Commonwealth appropriation.

Revenue in respect of appropriations is recognised in the period in which the agency gains control of the funds.

Sale of Goods

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

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

Rendering of Services

Revenue from rendering services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract.

The revenue is recognised when:

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

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
4. GOODS AND SERVICES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE		
Corporate and information services	707	624
Internal audits and reviews		
	707	624

5. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES

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

Goods and services expenses:

Consultants ⁽¹⁾	17	22
Advertising ⁽²⁾	69	11
Marketing and promotion ⁽³⁾	250	157
Document production	50	81
Legal expenses ⁽⁴⁾	6	
Recruitment ⁽⁵⁾	2	
Training and study	4	5
Official duty fares	36	40
Travelling allowance	35	20
Agent Service	617	197
Property Management	128	24
	1214	556

⁽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.

Repairs and Maintenance Expense

Funding is received for repairs and maintenance works associated with agency assets as part of output appropriation. Costs associated with repairs and maintenance works on agency assets are expensed as incurred.

Interest Expense

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

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

	Agency No. of 2017 Trans.		Agency No. of 2016 Trans.		Territory Items No. of 2017 Trans.		Territory Items No. of 2016 Trans.	
	\$000		\$000		\$000		\$000	
Write-offs, Postponements and Waivers Under the <i>Financial Management Act</i>								
Represented by:								
<i>Amounts written off, postponed and waived by Delegates</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Irrecoverable amounts payable to the Territory or an agency written off								
Losses or deficiencies of money written off								
Public property written off								
Waiver or postponement of right to receive or recover money or property								
Total Written Off, Postponed and Waived by Delegates	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

7. CASH AND DEPOSITS

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
Cash on hand	3	3
Cash at bank	247	318
On call or short-term deposits		
	250	321

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 20.

8. RECEIVABLES

Current

Accounts receivable	102	18
Less: Allowance for impairment losses	0	0
	102	18

Interest receivables		
GST receivables		24
Other receivables	-6	
		24
	6	

Non-Current

Other receivables

Total Receivables	96	42
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Receivables include accounts receivable and other receivables and are recognised at fair value less any allowance for impairment losses.

The allowance for impairment losses represents the amount of receivables the agency estimates are likely to be uncollectible and are considered doubtful. Analyses of the age of the receivables that are past due as at the reporting date are disclosed in an aging schedule under credit risk in Note 21 Financial Instruments. Reconciliation of changes in the allowance accounts is also presented.

Accounts receivable are generally settled within 30 days.

Prepayments

Prepayments represent payments in advance of receipt of goods and services or that part of expenditure made in one accounting period covering a term extending beyond that period.

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
9. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Plant and Equipment		
At fair value	1590	1328
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(913)	(753)
	<u>677</u>	<u>575</u>
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	<u>677</u>	<u>575</u>

2017 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2016-17 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant and Equipment	Leased Property, Plant and Equipment	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2016					575		575
Additions					194		194
Disposals							
Depreciation					-161		-161
Additions/(Disposals) from administrative restructuring							
Additions/(Disposals) from asset transfers							
Revaluation increments/(decrements)					68		68
Impairment losses							
Impairment losses reversed							
Other movements							
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2017					<u>676</u>		<u>676</u>

9. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (continued)

2016 Property, Plant and Equipment Reconciliations

A reconciliation of the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment at the beginning and end of 2015-16 is set out below:

	Land	Buildings	Infrastructure	Construction (Work in Progress)	Plant and Equipment	Leased Property, Plant and Equipment	Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Carrying Amount as at 1 July 2015					636		636
Additions							
Disposals							
Depreciation					-120		-120
Additions/(Disposals) from administrative restructuring							
Additions/(Disposals) from asset transfers					60		60
Revaluation increments/(decrements)							
Impairment losses							
Impairment losses reversed							
Other movements							
Carrying Amount as at 30 June 2016					575		575

Acquisitions

All items of property, plant and equipment with a cost, or other value, equal to or greater than \$10 000 are recognised in the year of acquisition and depreciated as outlined below. Items of property, plant and equipment below the \$10 000 threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition. The construction cost of property, plant and equipment includes the cost of materials and direct labour, and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

Complex Assets

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

Subsequent Additional Costs

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

Construction (Work in Progress)

As part of the financial management framework, the Department of Infrastructure is responsible for managing general government capital works projects on a whole of Government basis. Therefore appropriation for all agency capital works is provided directly to the Department of 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.

Revaluations and Impairment

Revaluation of Assets

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

- land;
- buildings;
- infrastructure assets;
- heritage and cultural assets;
- biological assets; and
- intangibles.

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

Impairment of Assets

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

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

In certain situations, an impairment loss may subsequently be reversed. Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement as income, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment reversal results in an increase in the asset revaluation surplus. Note 17 provides additional information in relation to the asset revaluation surplus.

Agency property, plant and equipment assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2017. No impairment adjustments were required as a result of this review.

Depreciation and Amortisation Expense

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

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

The estimated useful lives for each class of asset are in accordance with the Treasurer's Directions and are determined as follows:

	2016	2015
Plant and Equipment – Computer hardware	3-6 years	3-6 years
Plant and Equipment – Intangibles	10 years	10 years

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

Assets Held for Sale

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission held no assets for sale in 2016-17 and 2015-16.

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 lease asset and lease liability equal to the lower of the fair value of the leased property and present value of the minimum lease payments, each determined at the inception of the lease, are recognised.

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.

10. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT OF NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

a) Fair Value Hierarchy

Fair values of non-financial assets categorised by levels of inputs used to compute fair value are:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total Fair Value
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
2016-17				
Asset Classes^(a)				
Plant and Equipment (note 9)		676		676
Total				
2015-16				
Asset Classes^(a)				
Plant and Equipment (note 9)		575		575
Total				

There were no transfers between Level 1 and Levels 2 or 3 during 2016-17.

b) Valuation Techniques and Inputs

Valuation techniques used to measure fair value in 2016-17 are:

	Level 2 Techniques ^(b)	Level 3 Techniques ^(b)
Asset Classes^(a)		
Plant and Equipment	cost	
Land		
Buildings		
Infrastructure		

There were no changes in valuation techniques from 2015-16 to 2016-17.

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000
11. PAYABLES		
Accounts payable	6	26
Accrued expenses		157
Other payables	10	
Total Payables	16	183

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.

14. PROVISIONS

Current

Employee benefits

Recreation leave	154	115
Leave loading	19	19
Other employee benefits	5	4

Other current provisions

Other provisions	23	23
	201	161

Non-Current

Employee benefits

Other employee benefits	0	49
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Other non-current provisions

Other provisions		49
	0	49

Total Provisions

	201	210
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The Agency employed 15.28 employees as at 30 June 2017 (18.78 employees as at 30 June 2016).

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, 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 Northern Territory Electoral Commission and as such no long service leave liability is recognised in agency financial statements.

13. COMMITMENTS

Disclosures in relation to capital and other commitments, including lease commitments. Commitments are those contracted as at 30 June where the amount of the future commitment can be reliably measured.

	2017		2016	
	Internal ^(a)	External ^(a)	Internal	External
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
(i) Other Expenditure Commitments				
Other non-cancellable expenditure commitments not recognised as liabilities are payable as follows:				
Within one year		146		84
Later than one year and not later than five years				377
Later than five years				
		146		461

14. RESERVES

Asset Revaluation Surplus

(i) Nature and purpose of the asset revaluation surplus

The asset revaluation surplus includes the net revaluation increments and decrements arising from the revaluation of non-current assets. Impairment adjustments may also be recognised in the asset revaluation surplus.

(ii) Movements in the asset revaluation surplus

Balance as at 1 July		0
Changes in accounting policies		
Correction of prior period errors		
Increment/(Decrement) – Property, Plant and Equipment		68
Balance as at 30 June		68

	2017	2016
	\$000	\$000

15. NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Reconciliation of Cash

The total of agency 'Cash and deposits' of \$249 805 recorded in the Balance Sheet is consistent with that recorded as 'Cash' in the Cash Flow Statement.

Reconciliation of Net Surplus/(Deficit) to Net Cash from Operating Activities

Net Surplus/(Deficit)	192	
<i>Non-cash items:</i>		
Depreciation and amortisation	161	120
Asset write-offs/write-downs		
Asset donations/gifts		
(Gain)/Loss on disposal of assets		
<i>Changes in assets and liabilities:</i>		
Decrease/(Increase) in receivables	-54	-19
Decrease/(Increase) in inventories		
Decrease/(Increase) in prepayments		
Decrease/(Increase) in other assets		
(Decrease)/Increase in payables	-166	90
(Decrease)/Increase in provision for employee benefits		-3
(Decrease)/Increase in other provisions	-9	-3
(Decrease)/Increase in other liabilities		
Net Cash from Operating Activities	124	-20

Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities

Finance Lease Transactions

During the financial year the agency did not acquire plant and equipment/computer equipment and software by means of finance leases.

16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

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

k) Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the agency becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument. The agency's financial instruments include cash and deposits; receivables; advances; investments loan and placements; payables; advances received; borrowings and derivatives.

Due to the nature of operating activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statutory obligations rather than a contract. Such financial assets and liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments as per AASB 132 Financial Instruments Presentation. These include statutory receivables arising from taxes including GST and penalties.

a) Categorisation of Financial Instruments

The carrying amounts of the agency's financial assets and liabilities by category are disclosed in the table below.

2016-17 Categorisation of Financial Instruments

	Fair value through profit or loss			Financial assets - Loans and receivables	Financial assets - available for sale	Financial Liabilities - amortised cost	Total
	Held for trading	Designated at fair value	Held to maturity investments				
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Cash and deposits		250					250
Receivables ¹		102					102
Advances							
Investments loans and placements							
Other financial assets							
Interest rate swaps							
Total Financial Assets		352					352
Deposits held ¹							
Payables ¹		16					16
Advances							
Loans							
Finance Lease Liabilities							
Interest rate swaps							
Total Financial Liabilities		16					16

1.Total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts

2015-16 Categorisation of Financial Instruments

	Fair value through profit or loss			Financial assets - Loans and receivables	Financial assets - available for sale	Financial Liabilities - amortised cost	Total
	Held for trading	Designated at fair value	Held to maturity investments				
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Cash and deposits		321					321
Receivables ¹		18					18
Advances							
Investments loans and placements							
Other financial assets							
Interest rate swaps							
Total Financial Assets		339					339
Deposits held ¹							
Payables ¹		183					183
Advances							
Loans							
Finance Lease Liabilities							
Interest rate swaps							
Total Financial Liabilities		183					183

1.Total amounts disclosed here exclude statutory amounts

Classification of Financial Instruments

AASB 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures requires financial instruments to be classified and disclosed within specific categories depending on their nature and purpose.

Financial assets are classified into the following categories:

- financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- held-to-maturity investments;
- loans and receivables; and
- available-for-sale financial assets.
- Financial liabilities are classified into the following categories:
- financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss (FVTPL); and
- financial liabilities at amortised cost.

Financial Assets or Financial Liabilities at Fair Value through Profit or Loss

Financial instruments are classified as at FVTPL when the instrument is either held for trading or is designated as at FVTPL.

An instrument is classified as held for trading if it is:

- acquired or incurred principally for the purpose of selling or repurchasing it in the near term with an intention of making a profit; or
- part of a portfolio of identified financial instruments that are managed together and for which there is evidence of a recent actual pattern of short-term profit-taking; or
- a derivative that is not a financial guarantee contract or a designated and effective hedging instrument.
- A financial instrument may be designated as at FVTPL upon initial recognition if:
 - such designation eliminates or significantly reduces a measurement or recognition inconsistency that would otherwise arise; or
 - the instrument forms part of a group of financial instruments, which is managed and its performance is evaluated on a fair value basis, in accordance with a documented risk management or investment strategy, and information about the grouping is provided internally on that basis; or
 - it forms part of a contract containing one or more embedded derivatives, and AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement permits the contract to be designated as at FVTPL.
- Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss include deposits held excluding statutory deposits, accounts payable and accrued expenses. Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss include short-term securities and bonds.

Held-to-Maturity Investments

Non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturity dates that the entity has the positive intent and ability to hold to maturity are classified as held-to-maturity investments. Held-to-maturity investments are recorded at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment, with revenue recognised on an effective yield basis.

Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market other than those held for trading and available for sale. Loans and receivables exclude statutory receivables.

Available-for-Sale Financial Assets

Available-for-sale financial assets are those non-derivative financial assets, principally equity securities that are designated as available-for-sale or are not classified as any of the three preceding categories. After initial recognition available-for-sale securities are measured at fair value with gains or losses being recognised as a separate component of equity until the investment is derecognised or until the investment is determined to be impaired, at which time the cumulative gain or loss previously reported in equity is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement.

Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost

Financial instrument liabilities measured at amortised cost include all advances received, finance lease liabilities and borrowings. Amortised cost is calculated using the effective interest method.

Derivatives

The agency enters into a variety of derivative financial instruments to manage its exposure to interest rate risk. The agency does not speculate on trading of derivatives.

Derivatives are initially recognised at fair value on the date a derivative contract is entered in to and are subsequently remeasured at their fair value at each reporting date. The resulting gain or loss is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement immediately unless the derivative is designated and qualifies as an effective hedging instrument, in which event, the timing of the recognition in the Comprehensive Operating Statement depends on the nature of the hedge relationship. Application of hedge accounting will only be available where specific designation and effectiveness criteria are satisfied.

Netting of Swap Transactions

The agency, from time to time, may facilitate certain structured finance arrangements, where a legally recognised right to set-off financial assets and liabilities exists, and the Territory intends to settle on a net basis. Where these arrangements occur, the revenues and expenses are offset and the net amount is recognised in the Comprehensive Operating Statement.

b) Credit Risk

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

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

Receivables

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

Internal Receivables	Aging of Receivables	Aging of Impaired Receivables	Net Receivables
	\$000	\$000	\$000
2016-17			
Not overdue			
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total			
Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses			
Opening			
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in			
Total			
2015-16			
Not overdue			
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total			
Reconciliation of the Allowance for Impairment Losses			
Opening			
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total			

External Receivables**2016-17**

Not overdue

Overdue for less than 30 days

Overdue for 30 to 60 days

Overdue for more than 60 days

Total

	Aging of Receivables \$000	Aging of Impaired Receivables \$000	Net Receivables \$000
Not overdue	18		18
Overdue for less than 30 days	85		85
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total	103		103

**Reconciliation of the Allowance for
Impairment Losses**

Opening

Written off during the year

Recovered during the year

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in
profit or loss**Total****2015-16**

Not overdue

Overdue for less than 30 days

Overdue for 30 to 60 days

Overdue for more than 60 days

Total

Not overdue	18		18
Overdue for less than 30 days			
Overdue for 30 to 60 days			
Overdue for more than 60 days			
Total	18		18

**Reconciliation of the Allowance for
Impairment Losses**

Opening

Written off during the year

Recovered during the year

Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in
profit or loss**Total**

Opening			
Written off during the year			
Recovered during the year			
Increase/(Decrease) in allowance recognised in profit or loss			
Total			

c) Liquidity Risk

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

The following tables detail the agency's remaining contractual maturity for its financial assets and liabilities.

2017 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities

	Variable Interest Rate			Fixed Interest Rate			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Assets									
Cash and deposits							250	250	100
Receivables							103	103	100
Advances									
Investment, loans and placements									
Total Financial Assets							353	353	100
Liabilities									
Deposits held									
Payables							-16	-16	100
Advances									
Loans									
Finance lease liabilities									
Provisions							-201	-201	100
Total Financial Liabilities							-217	-217	100

2016 Maturity analysis for financial assets and liabilities

	Variable Interest Rate			Fixed Interest Rate			Non Interest Bearing	Total	Weighted Average
	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Less than a Year	1 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years			
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Assets									
Cash and deposits							321	321	
Receivables							18	18	100
Advances									100
Investment, loans and placements									
Total Financial Assets							339	339	100
Liabilities									
Deposits held									
Payables							-183	-183	100
Advances									
Loans									
Finance lease liabilities									
Provisions							-161	-161	100
Total Financial Liabilities							-344	-344	100

d) Market Risk

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

(i) Interest Rate Risk

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

(i) Price Risk

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

(ii) Currency Risk

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

d) Net Fair Value

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Fair value measurement of a non-financial asset takes into account a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use. The highest and best use takes into account the use of the asset that is physically possible, legally permissible and financially feasible.

When measuring fair value, the valuation techniques used maximise the use of relevant observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs. Unobservable inputs are used to the extent that sufficient relevant and reliable observable inputs are not available for similar assets/liabilities.

Observable inputs are publicly available data that are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Observable inputs used by the agency include, but are not limited to, published sales data for land and general office buildings.

Unobservable inputs are data, assumptions and judgments that are not available publicly, but are relevant to the characteristics of the assets/liabilities being valued. Such inputs include internal agency adjustments to observable data to take account of particular and potentially unique characteristics/functionality of assets/liabilities and assessments of physical condition and remaining useful life.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within the following fair value hierarchy based on the inputs used:

Level 1 – inputs are quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;

Level 2 – inputs are inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly; and

Level 3 – inputs are unobservable.

The fair value of financial instruments is determined on the following basis:

- the fair value of cash, deposits, advances, receivables and payables approximates their carrying amount, which is also their amortised cost;
- the fair value of derivative financial instruments are derived using current market yields and exchange rates appropriate to the instrument; and
- the fair value of other monetary financial assets and liabilities is based on discounting to present value the expected future cash flows by applying current market interest rates for assets and liabilities with similar risk profiles.

For financial instruments measured and disclosed at fair value, the following table groups the instruments based on the level of inputs used.

2017	Total Carrying Amount	Net Fair Value Level 1	Net Fair Value Level 2	Net Fair Value Level 3	Net Fair Value Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Financial Assets					
Cash and deposits	250	250			250
Receivables	103	103			103
Total Financial Assets	353	353			353
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	-16	-16			-16
Provisions	-201	-201			-201
Total Financial Liabilities	-217	-217			-217
2016	Total Carrying Amount	Net Fair Value Level 1	Net Fair Value Level 2	Net Fair Value Level 3	Net Fair Value Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Financial Assets					
Cash and deposits	321	321			321
Receivables	18	18			18
Total Financial Assets	339	339			339
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	-183	-183			-183
Provisions	-161	-161			-161
Total Financial Liabilities	-344	-344			-344

There were no changes in valuation techniques during the period.

17. Related Parties

i) Related Parties

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission is a government administrative entity and is wholly owned and controlled by the Territory Government. Related parties of the department include:

- the Portfolio Minister and key management personnel (KMP) because they have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the department directly; and
- spouses, children and dependants who are close family members of the Portfolio Minister or KMP; and
- all public sector entities that are controlled and consolidated into the whole of government financial statements; and
- any entities controlled or jointly controlled by KMP's or the Portfolio Minister or controlled or jointly controlled by their close family members.

ii) Key Management Personnel (KMP)

Key management personnel of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission. These include the Chief Minister and the Electoral Commissioner.

iii) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

The details below excludes the salaries and other benefits of the Chief Minister as the Minister's remunerations and allowances are payable by the Department of the Legislative Assembly and consequently disclosed within the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statements.

The aggregate compensation of key management personnel of the Northern Territory Electoral Commission is set out below:

	<u>2016-17</u>
	\$000
Short-term benefits	204
Post-employment benefits	21
Termination benefits	<u>0</u>
Total	<u>225</u>

iv) Related party transactions:

Transactions with Northern Territory Government controlled entities

The departments' primary ongoing source of funding is received from the Central Holding Authority in the form of output and capital appropriation.

The Agency has significant transactions with the Department of Corporate and Information Services for delivery of Goods and Services.

The following table provides quantitative information about related party transactions entered into during the year with all other Northern Territory Government controlled entities.

Related Party	Revenue	Payments to	Amounts owed	Amounts owed
	from related	related	by related	to related
	parties	parties	parties	parties
	Year	Year	Year	Year
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
<i>All NTG Government departments</i>	708	1012		12

The departments' transactions with other government entities are not individually significant.

Other related party transactions are as follows:

Given the breadth and depth of Territory Government activities, related parties will transact with the Territory Public sector in a manner consistent with other members of the public including paying stamp duty and other government fees and charges and therefore these transactions have not been disclosed. No related party transactions in excess of \$10,000 or otherwise considered significant occurred during the reporting period.

18. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

a) Contingent Liabilities

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission holds a number of contingent liabilities relating to the 2012 and the 2016 Legislative Assembly General Elections (LAGE). The liabilities relate to leases signed with respective stakeholders regarding voting centre locations. Instruments relating to LAGE have since expired however, the liabilities remain current.

The Commission also holds current and on-going liabilities for storage sheds situated in Darwin and Alice Springs, voting software and an agreement with Australia Post.

b) Contingent Assets

The Northern Territory Electoral Commission had no contingent assets as at 30 June 2017 or 30 June 2016.

19. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

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

20. ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER'S TRUST ACCOUNT

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

Nature of Trust Money	Opening Balance 1 July 2016	Receipts	Payments	Closing Balance 30 June 2017
Retention money	225	0	225	0

21. BUDGETARY INFORMATION

Comprehensive Operating Statement	2016-17	2016-17	Variance ^(c)	Note ^(d)
	Actual ^(a)	Original Budget ^(b)		
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
INCOME				
Taxation revenue				
Grants and subsidies revenue				
Current	14	15	-1	
Capital				
Appropriation				
Output	4372	4372		
Commonwealth				
Sales of goods and services	357	400	-43	
Interest revenue				
Goods and services received free of charge	707	610	97	
Gain on disposal of assets				
Other income				
TOTAL INCOME	5450	5397	53	
EXPENSES				
Employee expenses	2602	2594	8	
Administrative expenses				
Purchases of goods and services	1785	2187	-402	1
Repairs and maintenance	2	6	-4	
Depreciation and amortisation	161	121	40	
Other administrative expenses	707	610	97	
Grants and subsidies expenses				
Current				
Capital				
Community service obligations				
Interest expenses				
TOTAL EXPENSES	5257	5518	-261	
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	193	-121	314	
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items that will not be reclassified to net surplus/deficit				
Changes in accounting policies		–		
Correction of prior period errors		–		
Changes in asset revaluation surplus	68	–	68	
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	68	0	68	
COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	261	-121	382	

Notes:

Variances greater than \$100 are recognised as significant and as such require explanation.

- The Northern Territory Electoral Commission purchased software and netbooks for the conduct of the 2016 Legislative Assembly Election. The purchase was budgeted as an expense but later categorised as an asset resulting in the variance.*

Balance Sheet	2016-17 Actual ^(a)	2016-17 Original Budget ^(b)	Variance ^(c)	Note ^(d)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
ASSETS				
Current assets				
Cash and deposits	250	321	-71	
Receivables	96	42	54	
Inventories				
Advances and investments				
Prepayments				
Other assets				
Total current assets	<u>346</u>	<u>363</u>	<u>-3</u>	
Non-current assets				
Receivables				
Advances and investments				
Property, plant and equipment	677	454	223	
Intangibles				
Biological assets				
Heritage and cultural assets				
Prepayments				
Other assets				
Total non-current assets	<u>677</u>	<u>454</u>	<u>223</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1023</u>	<u>817</u>	<u>219</u>	
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Deposits held				
Payables	16	182	-166	
Borrowings and advances				
Provisions	201	210	-9	
Other liabilities				
Total current liabilities	<u>217</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>-23</u>	
Non-current liabilities				
Borrowings and advances				
Provisions				
Other liabilities				
Total non-current liabilities				
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>217</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>-175</u>	
NET ASSETS	<u>806</u>	<u>425</u>	<u>381</u>	
EQUITY				
Capital	2057	2057	0	
Reserves	68	0	68	
Accumulated funds	-1319	-1632	313	
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>806</u>	<u>425</u>	<u>381</u>	

Cash Flow Statement	2016-17	2016-17	Variance ^(c)	Note ^(d)
	Actual ^(a)	Original Budget ^(b)		
	\$000	\$000	\$000	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING				
Operating receipts				
Taxes received				
Grants and subsidies received				
Current	14	15	-1	
Capital				
Appropriation				
Output	4372	4372		
Commonwealth				
Receipts from sales of goods and services	436	400	36	
Interest received				
Total operating receipts	4822	4787	35	
Operating payments				
Payments to employees	2416	2594	-178	
Payments for goods and services	2092	2193	-101	
Grants and subsidies paid				
Current				
Capital				
Community service obligations				
Interest paid				
Total operating payments	4699	4787	-88	
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	123		123	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING				
Investing receipts				
Proceeds from asset sales				
Repayment of advances				
Sales of investments				
Total investing receipts				
Investing payments				
Purchases of assets	194		194	
Advances and investing payments				
Total investing payments	194		194	
Net cash from/(used in) investing	-194		194	
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING				
Financing receipts				
Proceeds of borrowings				
Deposits received				
Equity injections				
Capital appropriation				
Commonwealth appropriation				
Other equity injections				
Total financing receipts				
Financing payments				
Repayment of borrowings				
Finance lease payments				
Equity withdrawals				
Total financing payments				
Net cash from/(used in) financing				
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	-71		-71	
Cash at beginning of financial year				
CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	250	321	-71	