

INQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE 2010 FEDERAL ELECTION

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the above inquiry.

My original complaint was as follows;

I received a postal vote application from the current member for Cook for the Federal election On 21st August 2010

The enclosed letter explained the postal vote application and enclosed a prepaid envelope addressed to the member's office indicating they would pass on the application form.

The application form contains information not available on the electoral roll such as date of birth, phone number and e.mail address.

I had two complaints about this process,

{a} By returning the application to the member he can collect data not available from the electoral role. I am aware that I do not have to send the form back to the member's electoral office but the enclosed stamped address envelope to his office implies this is the procedure..

{b} The application form also has the member's photo and the office phone number printed on the application form again implying that you should send the form to his office. Also I object to the use of an official Government form to advertise the member's name ,photo and his electoral office.

A copy of the application form was enclosed.

In a response from the Standing Committee on Electoral matters I received this,

Quote "The committee acknowledges that a number of inquiry participants were concerned about the involvement of political parties and candidates in the postal voting process, and that concerns have also been expressed about this practice during the recent 2010 Federal election."

" However, the committee notes the findings of the previous committee, that the sending of postal vote applications by political parties and candidates is now common practice and a valuable information dissemination service to electors. Please be assured that this committee believes that it is vital when providing this service that parties and candidates should have regard to electors' privacy concerns and returning applications to the AEO in a timely manner"

This response did not fully cover my complaint.

If the Committee see this as a valuable information dissemination service for electors then in my opinion tighter rules should be applied to political parties and candidates to cover my privacy concern about private details being sent to the candidates office i.e date of birth, phone numbers and email address and the use of official government document as advertising material.

It should be made clear to all political parties and candidates that the following procedure apply when mailing out the postal voting form

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{a} the postal voting form should be sent out with a stamped address envelope to the local Australian Electoral Office and **NOT** addressed to the office of the political party or member's office, and clearly stating the postal voting form should be sent directly to the AEO

{b} The postal vote application is a Government form and should not have the member's name, photo or office phone number printed on the application.