

ASUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION NO. 115

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Inquiry into Civics and Electoral Education

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

7 August 2006

Question: AEC 1

Topic: 18-25 year olds not enrolled

Hansard Page: EM 46

Mr Danby asked:

I would like the numbers of all of the people aged 18 to 25, as of June 2006, who are not enrolled and what percentage of the Australian population they form?

Answer:

The following table provides the AEC's estimate of people aged 18 to 25 year old who were not enrolled at 30 June 2006 and the proportion of the eligible population in this age cohort that this represents.

Enrolment of persons aged between 18 and 25 years as at 30 June 2006					
State	Population Estimate (ABS estimate adjusted for unsound minds, British Subjects, etc.)	Federal Enrolment (Total enrolment less State Only electors)	Participation Rate (Enrolment as a % of Population Estimate)	Estimated number of persons NOT enrolled	Proportion of 18-25 year olds NOT enrolled (Enrolment as a % of Population Estimate)
NSW	659,461	489,955	74.30	169,506	25.70
VIC	500,913	411,184	82.09	89,729	17.91
QLD	417,898	299,141	71.58	118,757	28.42
WA	206,700	159,895	77.36	46,805	22.64
SA	156,424	125,652	80.33	30,772	19.67
TAS	48,582	41,974	86.40	6,608	13.60
ACT	40,425	33,120	81.93	7,305	18.07
NT	24,838	15,187	61.14	9,651	38.86
Australia	2,055,241	1,576,108	76.69	479,133	23.31

The figures in the table above need to be interpreted with care.

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There are two components to the attached youth statistics, the number of people at a given age that are enrolled and the proportion of the eligible population (again at a given age) that is enrolled – this latter component is, of course, based on an estimate of the relevant population as there is no single list of persons entitled to be enrolled; for example, there is no register of Australian citizens (whether born or naturalised), against which electoral rolls can be compared. As such, all measurement attempts must rely on methods that are an approximation only and are dependent on the input data, the assumptions made and the formulae used.

In particular, the AEC adjusts the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) published Demographic Statistics for:

- non-citizen residents included in the count (*removed*)
- residents temporarily overseas (*removed*)
- eligible overseas electors (*added*)
- enrolled British Subjects (*added*)
- persons of unsound mind (*removed*)
- prisoners (*removed*).

For all of these components the AEC uses the best available data but this might not actually be precise and therefore, any use of the participation rate should be cautious and clearly identify that this is an estimate only.

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7 August 2006

Question: AEC 2

Topic: School participants in school visits

Hansard Page: EM 50

Senator Carr asked for a breakdown of participant numbers over the last 10 years.

Answer:

Table 1 below outlines visitor numbers to all the Electoral Educations Centres (EECs) and participants in the Schools and Community Visits Program (SCVP) over the last 10 years. The table also shows participants in the AEC's professional development program, *Your Vote Counts*.

Table 1: EEC visitors & other education program participants

Year	Canberra	Melbourne	Adelaide	SCVP	Professional Development	Total No
1994 / 95	63,572	10,562		99,907	1,170	175,211
1995 / 96	67,029	14,013		67,565	800	149,407
1996 / 97	62,932	14,490		87,827	1,066	166,315
1997 / 98	65,110	20,415		123,157	436	209,118
1998 / 99	65,612	24,938	6,927	128,747	986	227,210
1999 / 00	65,450	32,500	8,230	165,885	962	273,027
2000 / 01	60,475	38,564	8,525	176,985	1,089	285,638
2001 / 02	65,209	32,672	8,212	149,103	696	255,892
2002 / 03	68,756	16,308	8,032	146,446	1,278	240,820
2003 / 04	68,899	18,259	10,623	119,837	1,026	218,664
2004 / 05	71,588	15,853	8,572	91,366	1,394	188,783
2005 / 06	69,108	13,637	7,086	99,004	1,635	190,470

Figures sourced from AEC Annual Reports

1997-98 and 1998-99 – figures are corrected figures reported in following year Annual Reports

Adelaide figures commence from opening of centre - July 1998

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Question: AEC 3, 4 and 5

Topic: School participants in school visits

Hansard Page: EM 50

Senator Carr asked:

- 3. Over the past 10 years has there been a reduction in the scale of AEC education programs and the level of AEC financial investment?**
- 4. What percentage of the AEC budget does Outcome 3 represent over the last 10 year period?**
- 5. What were the equivalent expenditures, both as an absolute figure and a percentage for each of the electoral periods throughout that 10-year period? Is it up or down?**

Answer:

Table 2 below provides a comparison of financial information about the AEC's education programs between 1995-96 and 2005-06.

Table 2: Financial expenditure comparison

Year	Details	Amount	% Total appropriation	Comments
1995-96	Program 6.1	\$2.115m	3.56%	1995-96 was an election year. Total appropriation for this purpose excludes election funding for comparing with 2005-06 (non-election year)
2005-06	Outcome 3	\$4.971m	4.76%	

Source: 1995-96 data has been obtained from financial statements prepared as at 30 June 1996. The Information and Education branch expenditure showed \$11.241m which included \$9.127m for Elections-specific. The election specific expenditure has been reduced from the total expenditure for the branch for comparing with 2005-06 data. The attribution of administrative and salary expenditure could not be verified due to availability of limited information. 2005-06 data taken from 2005-06 annual report.

It is not possible to provide an exact comparison. The AEC's 2005-06 Annual Report is outcome-based and both the EECs and the SCVP are funded under Outcome 3. The AEC's 1995-96 annual report was structured according to 5 critical areas of main focus (Key Result Areas or KRAs), as identified in the AEC's Corporate Plan 1993-96. Community Awareness was reported as KRA 3. However, the Government related budget papers were prepared and reported by sub-programs. Thus, Community Awareness (KRA3) was grouped with Roll Management (KRA1) and Conduct of Elections (KRA2) in the annual reports and PBS and reported under Program 6.1.

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It should also be noted that the Outcome 3 expenditure reported for 2005-06 is not the total expenditure for all AEC public awareness activities. Information services, which include the AEC website and publications, are funded under Outcome 2 and there is funding under both Outcomes 1 and 2 for advertising and public relations activities related to election and enrolment activities.

There have been variations in the scale of AEC education programs and the level of financial investment over the last ten years. Over time, it is inevitable that priorities for the AEC's education programs change. For example:

- For 2002-03, the AEC identified 17 and 18 year olds and new citizens as key target audiences for public awareness activities. While school visits to primary schools continued, they were at a lower level than previous years. However, the EECs continued to service primary school participants.
- For 2003-04, voters with limited English language proficiency and indigenous voters were also identified target audiences in the lead up to the 2004 election. The AEC also targeted professional and community groups and associations that could disseminate electoral information to their members. There was an increased emphasis on community public awareness activities for these audiences.
- For 2005-06, a decision was made to give more priority to delivery of public awareness activities for secondary school children closer to voting age. In the case of the SCVP, AEC divisional staff have been set an annual target of visiting 30% of schools in their division of which 70% should be secondary schools.

The electoral cycle and some external factors can also contribute to the variation of activity. For example the 2005/06 AEC Annual Report (page 83) noted that changes made to school terms to accommodate the Commonwealth Games appear to have impacted on participant numbers at the Canberra and Melbourne EECs in that year.

As the Table 1 (in Question 2) shows, the number of visitors to the Canberra EEC, has been relatively stable over the past 10 years. This EEC is on the Canberra educational tourism circuit, which caters predominantly for primary schools, and bookings are made 12-18 months in advance.

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Question: AEC 6, 7 & 8

Topic: Staff employed for electoral education.

Hansard Page: EM 51

Senator Carr asked:

- 6. How many staff were employed for electoral education?**
- 7. Did they work full time or part time and were they casual or permanent?**
- 8. How do those figures compare with the employment figures for the periods of 1993, 1996, and 2001?**

Answer:

The AEC has assumed Senator Carr was requesting comparative data showing Electoral Education Centre employees.

The AEC is unable to provide staffing details prior to 1996, however Table 3 below shows the number of AEC staff employed as Electoral Educators or as administrative support for those educators from 1996-2006. The table indicates whether they are part time or full time and also shows Electoral Educator numbers as a percentage of total AEC staff for 1996, 2001 and 2006.

Table 3: Electoral Educators – Numbers

	Casual Full Time	Casual Part Time	Permanent Full Time	Permanent Part Time	Total	% of Total AEC staff
Jan-96		17			17	2.3
Jun-00	1	19			20	
Jun-01		22			22	2.5
Jun-02		2	6	6	14	
Jun-03	1	2	2	7	12	
Jun-04	1	3	6	6	16	
Jun-05		3	4	14	21	
Jun-06		7	4	11	22	2.7

Data collected from current and previous HR systems.

These staffing figures do not include staff effort devoted to other education activities such as the Schools and Community Visits Program (SCVP). An integral part of the ongoing role of divisional office staff is to undertake visits to schools and community groups to explain Australia's electoral system and assist with the conduct of school elections. While this work can't be quantified, it should be acknowledged. The AEC does not have a breakdown of casual or part time numbers for staff undertaking this type of work.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

7 August 2006

Question: AEC 9 & 10

Topic: Staff employed for electoral education.

Hansard Page: EM 51

Senator Carr asked:

- 9. I am interested to know whether or not there has been a change in your priorities. Is this in fact a retreat from face-to-face educational programs and an increasing reliance on more indirect forms of education, which your submission says are more difficult to control and manage, if you like, and less effective?**
- 10. Is this a policy decision or an issue of you responding to your financial position?**

Answer:

While the AEC has made decisions affecting its priorities, target audiences and activities, there has not been a policy to decrease face-to-face educational programs.

The way that electoral education and public awareness activities are developed and delivered by the AEC are based on strategic policy decisions taking into account a number of considerations such as:

- findings of research which among other things provides guidance on the most effective ways to reach a particular target audience and their information preferences;
- opportunities to apply new technologies;
- opportunities to undertake activities in partnership with other agencies such as the State Electoral Commissions;
- feedback from staff;
- school curriculum changes; and
- available resources.

Research activities have guided the AEC's electoral education programs over the last few years including the Youth Electoral Study (YES) and focus group research undertaken as part of the development of the AEC's new Communication Strategy.

The YES is a joint project being funded by the AEC and the Australian Research Council and its main purpose is to determine why many young people do not enrol and vote and the impact of disengaged youth on Australian democracy. The study

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focuses on the links between pro-voting behaviour and family, school and other social and psychological variables.

As a direct result of the YES and the focus group research, the AEC developed specific education resources and introduced more “practical, how to” elements to its programs for senior secondary students and adults.

While the level of face-to face electoral education delivered by AEC staff can vary through an electoral cycle, or in response to particular circumstances, the AEC continues to support this method of education delivery. A new presentation kit for divisional office staff is being prepared, and lap top computers are being provided to all Divisional Offices to improve the quality of AEC school and community education sessions. The new kit will be finalised in early 2007 and the laptops will be issued in March 2007. The AEC is also looking to provide presentation skills training for AEC staff where this is required.

The AEC is also upgrading its electoral education resource for classroom teachers and will distribute this to all schools early in 2007. The resource will include activities for teaching upper primary, lower, middle and upper secondary school children. The resource has not been designed to decrease the amount of time that AEC staff spend visiting and assisting teachers. Rather, it is designed to provide classroom activities for teachers so they can also incorporate electoral education into the civics curricula. Divisional staff will continue to conduct school and community education sessions .

The change in AEC priorities for its education programs is being driven by strategic policy reasons. It is not being driven by the AEC’s financial position.

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Question: AEC 11 & 12

Topic: Costs for indirect education.

Hansard Page: EM 52

Senator Carr asked:

- 11. How much has it cost you for the electoral education resources for the primary and secondary education program you have developed, including the *Every Vote Counts* program and the other videos and programs?**
- 12. What was the cost of each of those and what was the total cost for the production of those materials?**

Answer:

Table 4 below shows the costs of resources developed for classroom teachers and distributed either through the Schools and Community Visits program, State Office staff, attendance at professional development sessions or handed out at the Electoral Education Centres.

The figures are GST inclusive and exclude AEC staff development and project management time expended as part of producing these products.

The AEC's professional development program is known as *Your Vote Counts*. Senator Carr asked about *Every Vote Counts*, which is actually a video with accompanying teachers' notes. These costings include resources developed for the *Every Vote Counts* program.

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Table 4: Electoral education resource material costs

Title	Year	Cost \$
<i>Every Vote Counts</i> : Video & Teachers Notes	2002	18,082
	2003	5,293
	2004	38,406
<i>Electoral Education Resource</i> : Teachers guidebook	2003	35,460
	2004	14,109
	2005	26,865
	2006	14,468
<i>Vote it's important</i> : Indigenous video package	2004	55,696
<i>Voting in Australia</i> DVD: English, Arabic, Vietnamese series Mandarin and Cantonese series	2005	108,153
	2006	222,145
<i>The Australian Democracy Magazine</i> : Secondary students	2001	15,274
	2002	20,220
	2003	31,357
	2004	10,902
<i>All You Ever Wanted to Know.... Magazine</i> : Primary students	2001	20,982
	2002	21,865
	2003	4,578
	2004	10,296
Total for all resources listed in Table 7		510,302