

## POSTAL VOTING FOR OVER 70s

### Early Voting, including Postal Voting

There are two methods of early voting at elections in Australia. Electors who can satisfy at least one of ten designated criteria can vote early, either in person or by post, in the weeks leading up to an election for the Federal Parliament. They can either attend an early voting centre (including a mobile polling place) or vote by post.

### Postal Voting

Most candidates send out postal vote application forms, which can also be obtained from postal shops or electoral offices. However, if an elector registers as a General Postal Voter, ballot papers are automatically forwarded by mail from the Australian Electoral Commission, after an election has been announced and nominations have closed.

### Eligibility criteria for Registration as a General Postal Voter

The eligibility criteria for registration as a General Postal Voter differ slightly from those for early (personal or **postal**) voting at Federal elections, although very similar in effect.

### Victorian State (and Municipal) Elections

Victorian electoral laws provide **two additional criteria** for postal voting eligibility, neither of which is included in the laws of the Commonwealth or any other State or Territory. In this State the entitlement to a postal vote **is extended to an elector who is serving a prison sentence of less than five years; or HAS ATTAINED 70 YEARS OF AGE.**

### The Anomaly

Although Victorian electors over 70 have been automatically entitled to postal votes for many years, such is not the case for elections for the Commonwealth Parliament unless they can satisfy at least one of the other criteria. Similarly, electors over 70 in the other States and Territories do not have this automatic entitlement. Surely it is time this issue was addressed by the Commonwealth Parliament.