

**Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
INQUIRY INTO CIVICS EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT,
AND PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIA**

**RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Australian Electoral Commission**

Subject: Unsound mind provision
Question date: Received 22 October 2024
Question type: Written
Response date: 31 October 2024

Question

Can you please provide the Committee with data from the last five years on how many people were removed from the electoral roll due to the ‘unsound mind’ provision in the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*? Can you please break down this data into the reasons for removal – for example dementia, intellectual disability, etc.

Response

The following table indicates the number of people removed from the electoral roll due to the ‘unsound mind’ provision:

Year	Number
2019-20	14,173
2020-21	8,668
2021-22	10,911
2022-23	24,254
2023-24	22,934
Total	80,940

Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) policy requires objections to the enrolment under the ‘unsound mind’ provisions to be supported by a medical certificate. A registered medical practitioner must certify in writing that *the person is incapable of understanding the nature and significant of enrolment and voting because of unsound mind*, which aligns with section 93(8)(a) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. (Section 93 provides the entitlement to enrol and vote.)

The AEC does not require the condition that has led to incapacity to be disclosed in the medical certificate or in any other part of the process. Accordingly, the AEC does not hold data on specific reasons that objections were raised. The AEC can however advise, 73 per cent of the people removed due to the ‘unsound mind’ provision were aged 80 and over and 91 per cent were aged 70 and over.