



ROWAN RAMSEY MP

Member for Grey



Mr Daryl Melham MP
Chairperson Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House Canberra

Dear Daryl

Please find outlined below some observations and suggestions in relation to the 2010 Federal Election.

ROWAN RAMSEY MP **Federal Member for Grey**

ELECTION REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS - GREY ELECTORATE

REVIEW THE NUMBER OF BOOTHS IN GREY

Grey has a disproportionate number of booths in its regional cities. Whyalla for example has approx 1300 voters per booth average compared to Hindmarsh with approx 2000 voters per booth and Pt Adelaide with approx 1980 per booth. Whyalla should lose at least one booth perhaps Long Street School site as it is very close on one side to Fisk Street School booth and on the other to Stuart High School booth. Davenport mobile booth is also a considerable waste of taxpayer's money when most of the people using it are driving out from Pt Augusta and those few living there go into town for everything else, bread and milk etc.

UPDATE THE CANDIDATES HANDBOOK

- **Observers Ruling: Ruling on presence of observers in voting area needs to be made clear in handbook and on web. The do's and don'ts. (eg does a scrutineers form need to be filled in for a person to observe inside the booth?)** It is important to be able to view the voting process particularly with mobile booths when locals are employed to help fill in voting slips and observers need to know the process to lodge a complaint if unjustness is noticed. (example candidates nominee was asked not to be in booth although they had no party/candidate identification and was not in the way)

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- **How to vote material Ruling:** ruling to be clearer on distribution of *how to vote* material in hospitals and aged care facilities **particularly so it is clear to those facilities what their obligations are** and candidate's volunteers can be made aware of what they can and can't do. The electoral commission could send letters to hospitals and aged care facilities outlining the rules, if this is too onerous then candidates at least have the opportunity to copy wording and supply it to the facilities with the *how to votes*. (Problems encountered 2010 election with some hospitals and aged care facilities not making *how to votes* available because they did not have *how to votes* from all candidates and some just refusing to make them available even when asked by voters)

TIME FRAMES

Time frames are particularly important for large electorates like Grey, postal votes received in isolated areas can be too short for the returns to be posted in time. (Had several pastoral station people comment they didn't vote because they could not get it in the post in time, some had not received their postal voting forms before the cut off date. A couple of instances where one spouses postal vote form arrived but the other never arrived even though applied for at the same time.)

EDUCATED BOOTH WORKERS

Reasonable training for booth workers and especially new booth managers. Problems encountered with inexperienced booth workers giving wrong advice. (eg. had people voting within electorate but made to fill out absentee votes also people wrongly advised they could absentee vote at certain interstate booths.)

ADVERTISING PRIOR TO ELECTION

In advertising campaign by electoral commission prior to election it could be made clearer that only some booths in the larger centres are able to take absentee votes.
Also to stress that if people intend to be away from their electorate on election day to apply for a postal vote.

CLOSURE OF ROLLS

Late closure of roll puts too much pressure on Federal Electoral Commission Offices.

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