

Greg Madson
40a Bulimba Road
NNEDLANDS WA 6009

15 May 2008

Submission for the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters inquiry into and report on the conduct of the 2007 election and matters related thereto.

During the 2007 Australian Federal election, for the first time in 20 years, I was able to use my right as an Australian citizen and vote independently.

Let me explain; I am 46 years old and lost my sight 20 years ago due to a retinal dystrophy . This, of course made it impossible to read print material. Since I have been blind I have not been able to vote; I am a strong believer in the secret ballot. Up till now there has been no opportunity to vote without sighted assistance.

I must say the feeling of being able to cast my own secret vote at the 2007 election using the Electronic Assisted Voting (EAV) system was extremely empowering. For the first time, since I lost my sight, I truly felt part of the Australian community again.

My thanks go out to those who have advocated for such a system to assist the blind to vote and the Australian electoral commission for providing this essential tool for Australians who are blind.

Greg Madson