

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Finance Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Electoral Commission
Outcome/Program: General
Topic: Homeless voting

Senator: Ludwig

Question reference number: F142

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday, 11 April 2014

Number of pages: 4

Question:

1. Does the AEC have data on how many homeless people are enrolled to vote in Australia?
 - a) If no: Why not?
 - b) If yes: Please table a copy of the data, please break down by:
 - i) Age.
 - ii) Gender.
 - iii) State of enrolment.
 - iv) Electorate of enrolment
 - v) Length of time they have been on the role.
 - vi) Any other relevant data that is available.
2. Provide comparative data from question (1) for the elections of 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010.
3. Does the AEC have any programs for encouraging and assisting homeless people to enrol to vote?
 - a) If no: Why not?
 - b) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - i) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - ii) Dates they were implemented.
 - iii) Any available data that shows how successful they have been at enrolling homeless people to vote.
 - c) Are there any plans or discussions within the AEC or between the AEC and the government about producing programs that would assist homeless people to enrol to vote?
 - i) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - a) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - b) Dates they will be implemented (if applicable).
 - c) Any available data that shows how successful these programs will be towards enrolling homeless people to vote.

- d) Have there been any plans since September 7, 2013 that were proposed or discussed and were aimed at encouraging or assisting homeless people to vote, but were abandoned before the implementation stage?
 - i) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - a) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - b) Dates they were proposed and dates they were abandoned.
 - c) Any available data that shows how successful these programs would have been towards enrolling homeless people to vote.
- 4. Does the AEC have data on how many homeless people actually vote in Australia?
 - a) If no: Why not?
 - b) If yes: Please table a copy of the data, please break down by:
 - i) Age.
 - ii) Gender.
 - iii) State where they are enrolment.
 - iv) Length of time they have been on the role.
 - v) Any other relevant data that is available.
- 5. Does the AEC have any programs for encouraging or assisting homeless people to vote in elections?
 - a) If no: Why not?
 - b) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - i) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - ii) Dates they were implemented.
 - iii) Any available data that shows how successful they have been at improving the voting rate of homeless people.
 - c) Are there any plans or discussions within the AEC or between the AEC and the government about producing programs that would improve the voting rate of homeless people?
 - i) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - a) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - b) Dates they will be implemented (if applicable).
 - c) Any available data that shows how successful these programs will be towards improving the voting rate of homeless people.
 - d) Have there been any plans since September 7, 2013 that were proposed or discussed and were aimed at improving the voting rate of homeless people, but were abandoned before the implementation stage?
 - i) If yes: Please table a list of these programs, please include:
 - a) Cost breakdowns for these programs.
 - b) Dates they were proposed and dates they were abandoned.
 - c) Any available data that shows how successful these programs would have been towards improving the voting rate of homeless people.

Answer:

1. Yes. Note however that data only relates to a subset of electors enrolled as 'itinerant' whose eligibility is determined based on the elector identifying themselves as homeless.

a) N/A.

b) As at 28 February 2014:

i)

Age	Enrolled persons identified as homeless
<35*	12
35-39	10
40-44	13
45-49	11
50-54	10
55-59	17
60-64	14
65+*	26
Total	113

*The age brackets up to 35 years and 65 years onwards have been combined so as not to identify individual electors.

b) ii)

	Enrolled persons identified as homeless
Female	24
Male	89
Total	113

b) iii)

State	Enrolled persons identified as homeless
NSW	21
VIC	30
QLD	14
WA	33
SA & ACT*	5
TAS	10
NT	0
Total	113

* The numbers in these two states were combined so that individual electors cannot be identified.

b) iv) The breakdown of data requested is not provided so as to prevent individual electors from being identified.

b) v) This data is not available.

b) vi) N/A.

2. Comparative data from previous federal elections are not available as the AEC did not identify electors who were homeless. This changed with the *Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Modernisation and Other Measures) Act 2010*. The system changes required to capture data on electors who identified as 'homeless' were instituted on 28 March 2012.

3. Yes.

a) N/A.

b)

- Formulation and provision of information kits.
- Delivery of presentations and information sessions at various homeless shelters and related facilities.

- Access to computer facilities, to assist persons experiencing homelessness to check and update their enrolment online.

The number of programs, scale and nature of activities conducted at local levels within populations of persons experiencing homelessness varies greatly, in line with local circumstances and needs.

b) i) – ii) To provide the level of detail sought would involve an unreasonable diversion of Agency resources.

b) iii) This data is not available.

c) No.

i) a)-c) N/A.

d) No.

i) a)-c) N/A.

4. No.

a) The AEC does not record an elector's enrolment status when they vote.

b) i) – v) N/A.

5. Yes.

a) N/A.

b)

- Provision of information about requirements to cast a formal vote.
- Information about voting options such as pre-poll voting locations and polling booth locations on polling day.
- Identifying appropriate locations to dispatch mobile polling teams to on polling day.

The number of programs, scale and nature of activities conducted at local levels within populations of persons experiencing homelessness varies greatly, in line with local circumstances and needs.

b) i) – ii) To provide the level of detail sought would involve an unreasonable diversion of Agency resources.

b) iii) There is no data available.

c) No.

c) i) a)-b) To provide the level of detail sought would involve an unreasonable diversion of Agency resources.

c) i) c) There is no data available.

d) No.

d) i) a)-c) N/A.