

Tom Rogers Opening Statement

Senate Estimates – 25 February 2014

Inquiry: Add. EstimatesDate/Time: 25/2/14Witness Name: Mr Tom RogersOrganisation: AEC

Thank you Chair.

In opening, it would be wrong for me not to acknowledge that the last few months have been challenging for the AEC. As has been stated previously, the AEC is conscious of the cost and inconvenience that the loss of the 1,370 Western Australian Senate ballot papers has caused, along with the flow-on effects on the voters of Western Australia, the candidates, parties, the Commonwealth Parliament, and the wider impact on the community's confidence in the AEC.

Our previous and widely reported apologies, and the resignations of Mr Killesteyn and Mr Kramer (AEO and State Manager in WA), are recognition of the significance of this matter, and a reflection of the deep regret felt by the AEC and its staff for what occurred.

In recognition of the events that occurred in WA, on 5 November 2013 Mr Killesteyn asked Mr Mick Keelty AO to conduct a review into the circumstances of the missing ballots. The recommendations of Mr Keelty's report titled 'Inquiry into the 2013 WA Senate Election' were endorsed by the full three-person Electoral Commission in early December 2013.

The AEC is now implementing Mr Keelty's recommendations as a priority in preparing for future elections, along with other robust, comprehensive, and effective measures that address the issues surrounding the loss of votes. All actions taken by the AEC have been undertaken with a commitment to transparency and accountability for failures where they occurred, and to restoring the community's confidence in the AEC.

papers at all stages, a review of procedures and guidelines around the security of ballot papers, and improved materials management processes.

These measures are currently being evaluated for implementation, or are being implemented, with appropriate adjustments, at the forthcoming WA Senate Election. We expect this process will provide lessons that go some way to informing our overall approach to implementation across all states and territories for future electoral events.

Thank you.