

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Finance and Administration Portfolio

Australian Electoral Commission

Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2007

Question: F57 and F60

Outcome 1, Output 1.1

Topic: Fake address enrolments

Hansard page: N/A

Written Questions on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

F57 Further to my questions at the estimates hearing on fake address enrolment, please provide details of any regular program in place to check that addresses are real.

F60 Please provide full details of all vacant lot checks since the 2004 election, including electorates covered.

Answer:

As part of the processing of applications for enrolment, the address information is checked against the address file within the AEC's roll management database. Any address claimed as a residence by the applicant that does not appear within the address file is checked by divisional office staff so that they may be satisfied that the address is in fact real and capable of having people live at the address. These checks may be with local council records, whether electronically, against hard copy or by phone. Staff may also visit the residence if there are no other means of checking.

Regular checks are also undertaken by matching the AEC address file against the Australia Post address file and against the address file of the Public Sector Mapping Authority.

As the AEC address file also contains information on many vacant blocks, and these entries in the address register are noted as being a vacant block, applicants for enrolment should not be able to enrol for a vacant block. Where an applicant claims to be living at an address that the AEC address file has noted as a vacant block, checks are undertaken with local council records, whether electronically, against hard copy or by phone to determine if a residence has been built. Staff may also visit the address if there are no other means of checking.

Once satisfied, a new address will be added to the address file, or the address record updated from being vacant to being residential.