

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: F58

Outcome 1, Output 1.1.2

Topic: Street-Walk Program

Hansard page: N/A

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

Describe in detail any street-walk program in place at the AEC and the frequency with which this occurs.

Answer:

Prior to 1999, the AEC undertook habitation reviews approximately every 18 months to 2 years. In 1999 a process of continuous roll update (CRU) was introduced, with regular mail-outs as a centrepiece. This CRU program was designed to enable the Roll to be updated and to be kept more up to date at any point in time. The effectiveness of habitation reviews was found to be falling given the number of households that had occupants who were correctly enrolled (approximately 80%).

While the majority of households reviewed by the AEC's CRU program are reviewed by mail, a component of this roll review activity is undertaken by personal visit (sometimes described as door-knock or fieldwork) to selected households. The households selected for review by door-knock are those, for example, in areas where there is high turnover, those where there has been no response to a mail review letter, and those where external data indicates there has been a change in the residents. These reviews are generally undertaken in either or both spring and autumn.

The AEC also visits households as part of its Sample Audit Fieldwork (SAF) activity. SAF is an annual review of a statistically valid sample of households conducted to determine the accuracy and completeness of the electoral roll and to test the effectiveness of the AEC's CRU program.

In addition, the AEC undertook a major fieldwork activity between March and July 2007 targeted at 1.1 million addresses at which external data indicated that 1.8 million people were resident but who were not enrolled, or who had not updated their enrolment details.