

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

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Electoral Commission

Outcome/Program: General

Topic: Direct enrolment

Senator: Ryan

Question reference number: F68

Type of question: Hansard, F&PA Committee, Page 71, 30 May 2013

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday 12 July 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Mr Killesteyn: Yes. If the 'return to sender' mail happens while we are in the middle of a process, we stop action. But, if it comes after we have applied the direct enrolment, we back out.

Senator RYAN: Do you have data on the number of times you have had to do that with this process?

Mr Gately: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator RYAN: I would appreciate it if you have separate data on when in the 28-day period you have paused the process and, secondly, when you then have had to revert and amend the roll to reflect, as the commissioner said, the way it was before.

Mr Killesteyn: We will see if we can get that data for you.

Answer:

The AEC mailed 549,081 letters of intent to directly enrol an individual or update the address details of an elector in the period 20 November 2012 to 30 May 2013. In response to these letters of intent,

- 12,617 (2.3 per cent) letters were returned-to-sender within the 28 day response period before the electoral roll was updated; and
- 904 (0.2 per cent) letters were returned-to-sender after the electoral roll was updated following the 28 day response period.

Where letters of intent are returned-to-sender within the 28 day response period and before the electoral roll had been updated, the AEC ceases all direct enrolment or update action for the individual the letter was sent to. This means that:

- where the return-to-sender mail is in response to a letter of intent to enrol an individual, the individual will not be placed on the electoral roll,

- where the return-to-sender mail is in response to a letter of intent to update the address details of an elector, the elector will remain enrolled at the address they were on the electoral roll for prior to the commencement of the direct update process.

When a letter of intent is returned after the enrolment or update is applied, we will correct, or roll back the enrolment, unless other information is received from the elector about whether that action, or what alternative action, should be taken.