

Pre-Poll Voting Procedures

Australian Electoral Commission / AEC

EF151

How to use this manual

You should read this Manual thoroughly and then complete the Home Exercise Workbook. Bring both to your Pre-Poll Voting Centre as you will need them for reference during the polling. Feel free to make notes in this manual, as it is yours to refer to during all phases of your duties.

This manual has been divided into four parts.

Part 1 – Introduction

- Contains general information about pre-poll voting.

Parts 2, 3 and 4 are the three phases of your duties as a Pre-Poll Voting Officer.

Part 2 – Before polling

- Covers all the activities to be completed to prepare for pre-poll voting.

Part 3 – Polling

- Covers all procedures used during the days of operation of the Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

Part 4 – After polling

- Covers procedures to be followed to reconcile the ‘OIC’s Return’ and package and return all materials.

Message from the Electoral Commissioner

Welcome to the Team

My name is Bill Gray and I am the Electoral Commissioner and the Chief Executive Officer Of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).



You are about to play a vital role in the most important democratic process available to Australian citizens — a federal election.

The Australian electoral system is considered to be amongst the fairest and most open of any in the world. The forthcoming election is fundamental to our democratic processes and your part in that election will be critical. To maintain the confidence of the Australian electors, it is essential that the election is, and is seen to be, run fairly and impartially by the AEC. As part of the AEC team you will have a key role in meeting the objective of delivering a fair, impartial and professionally conducted election.

As a Pre-Poll Voting Officer you will be responsible for the conduct of the voting at your Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

During polling, I would ask that you remember at all times that the AEC is a service-organisation, dedicated to helping eligible Australians to fulfil their legal obligation to vote and enabling them to do so with a minimum of fuss and a minimum of delay.

Polling is carried out in line with the legislation and the guidelines set out in this manual. Please study the guidelines carefully and make sure they are strictly followed in your Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

Finally, on behalf of the AEC, I would like to thank you for making yourself available to undertake this important task. I wish you well in your study of this manual and in the conduct of the federal election. Once again, welcome to the team.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Gray'.

Bill Gray

Electoral Commissioner

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Introduction

Introduction to ~~Pre-Poll~~ voting procedures

In order to provide a service to voters who are unable to attend a polling place in their home State on polling day, the Commonwealth Electoral Act 19 18 permits the establishment of Pre-Poll Voting Centres in different locations such as holiday areas, transport terminals, shopping centres and areas remote from Divisional Offices. The dates and times of operation of Pre-Poll Voting Centres are determined by the Divisional Returning Officer (DRO) and published in the *Commonwealth* Gazette.

You have been appointed as a polling official at a Pre-Poll Voting Centre. Your duties and the procedures to follow in carrying out your various tasks are explained in detail in this manual. Read the manual carefully. It is essential that you understand your duties fully before you begin work. If you are unsure of any procedures, or if you have any questions, please contact the DRO responsible for your Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

This manual is dated October 1995. It has been published specifically for this Federal Election and supersedes any previous manual.

PLEASE BRING THIS MANUAL WITH YOU TO YOUR TRAINING SESSION.

Pre-Poll Votes and Postal Votes

Voters applying for Pre-Poll Votes

Staff at a Pre-Poll Voting Centre issue pre-poll votes only.

There is no written application for a pre-poll vote.

To obtain a pre-poll vote, the voter must:

- provide a reason in support of the request; and
- supply an enrolled address so that the vote can be issued for the elector's correct Division.

Any elector who attends your Pre-Poll Voting Centre and whose reason for applying for a pre-poll vote meets one or more of the special circumstances listed on page 24 must be issued with a pre-poll vote in accordance with the instructions on page 28.

Voters applying for Postal Votes

Written postal vote applications can be processed only at the Divisional Office.

All applications for postal votes you receive are to be sent daily to the DRO.

As postal ballot papers cannot be posted to electors after the last outward mail clearance on the Thursday before polling day, you must make daily phone calls to the Divisional Office to advise details of any postal vote applications you have received.

NOTE: If an elector brings you a postal vote application, you should ask the elector whether they require assistance to complete their postal vote application or whether they would now prefer to vote as a pre-poll voter. If the elctor chooses to cast a pre-poll vote you must destroy the postal voteappliiandissuethethevoterwithapre-pollvote.

Pre-Poll Voting Centre staff

Divisional Returning Officer (DRO)

The DRO, a permanent officer in the Australian Public Service, is responsible for the conduct of the election within the Division. The DRO, as your manager, will help you if you have questions or problems relating to your duties or conditions of service. In some Divisions the DRO may have delegated the responsibility for your Pre-Poll Voting Centre to an Assistant Returning Officer (ARO).

Officer-in-Charge (OK) of a Pre-Poll Voting Centre

The OIC of a Pre-Poll Voting Centre is responsible for all aspects of the conduct of voting at that centre. The following matters require special attention and planning.

- Behaviour of staff must be of a high standard at all times.
- Material necessary for polling is listed on the inventory.
- The OIC must make sure that all the material needed to conduct voting each day is available.
- Security of all ballot boxes, ballot papers and other material under the OIC’s control must be maintained at all times.
- Records and returns which OIC’s or other staff have been instructed to prepare are to be completed promptly and as directed.

Substitute Officer-in-Charge

If the OIC is required to leave the Pre-Poll Voting Centre at any time during polling, the second-in-charge (2IC) or the most senior polling official must be appointed as substitute OIC. The appointment form for Substitute OIC is included at page 2 in the OIC’s General Return.

Staff

The DRO may appoint one or more staff members to assist the OIC.

Staff duties may include:

- issuing ballot papers and declaration envelopes to voters;
- assisting voters as required;
- ensuring that only one person is in a voting screen at any one time unless the voter is being assisted;
- ensuring that completed ballot papers are placed in Declaration Envelopes before being placed in the ballot box;
- guarding the ballot box; and
- maintaining the Pre-Poll Voting Centre in a clean and orderly condition.

Employment Forms, Contracts and Identification Badge

Your DRO should have sent you initially an 'Offer of Employment' form, together with 'Taxation' forms and another form concerning 'Superannuation'. You should have completed and returned all these forms to the Divisional Office. If you did not receive any of these forms or have not sent them back, contact the office urgently.

Failure to complete these forms correctly and return them could affect your employment and payment.

If you have completed and returned the forms, you will have been sent a 'Confirmation of Employment'. You should bring your 'Confirmation of Employment' to the Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

To help electors recognise polling officials, each polling official will be given an identification badge. This badge must be worn at all times while you are on duty.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is committed to the principles and practices of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). EEO aims to provide staff with opportunities to contribute based on their abilities, talent, performance and potential in a non-discriminatory working environment.

The Officer in Charge is responsible for ensuring that all staff are treated equitably and fairly and that the workplace is free of any unjustified discrimination. All staff must treat their co-workers with courtesy and sensitivity in accordance with EEO principles.

A copy of the AEC's EEO program 1993-96 is available in each Divisional Office.

Workplace Harassment

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has an obligation to provide, and all staff of the AEC have a right to expect, a harassment free work environment.

Workplace harassment is unwelcome, unsolicited, usually unreciprocated and usually (but not always) repeated. It makes the workplace unpleasant, humiliating, intimidating and makes it difficult for effective work to be done. It must, however, not be confused with legitimate comment and advice (including negative feedback) from managers and supervisors on the work performance of an individual or group.

The Officer in Charge is responsible for ensuring that your workplace is free of any type of harassment. The AEC strongly disapproves of improper conduct by its staff and harassment in any form will not be tolerated.

A copy of the AEC's Workplace Harassment policy and guidelines is available in each Divisional Office.

Meal breaks

There are no official meal breaks for polling staff. Staff will be rostered to meal breaks in non-peak times and they should be aware that these breaks will not always correspond to accepted meal times. Staff should take adequate food and refreshments for each day. Some may wish to take cushions and other small items for personal comfort.

Property

Please note that the Commonwealth Government accepts no responsibility for the loss of property belonging to employees or damage to their vehicles to and from the Pre-Poll Voting Centre. Staff must therefore make sure that their personal property is safe and secure at all times.

Smoking in the Pre-Poll Voting Centre

Smoking in the Pre-Poll Voting Centre is prohibited.

Staff Training

The DRO will arrange a one-hour face-to-face training session for Pre-Poll Voting Centre staff.

Before attending you must read this manual and complete the exercises in the Home Workbook. At the training session, your DRO will collect your 'Home Workbook' for marking and answer any questions you may have regarding the exercises involved.

Remember to bring your manual with you to the training session for use as a reference.

Candidates, Party workers and Scrutineers

Candidates

Candidates are not allowed to take part in any way in the conduct of an election. They may not enter a Pre-Poll Voting Centre except to record their own votes (provided they are entitled to a Pre-Poll Vote). They may mix with electors and party workers outside the pre-poll voting centre.

Party Workers

Party workers are allowed to canvass outside the Pre-Poll Voting Centre, but not to hinder voters entering the centre.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers cannot be appointed to observe voting at Pre-Poll Voting Centres.

If a scrutineer asks to be present, he or she must be asked to contact the DRO.

Before polling

A Pre-Poll Voting Centre

The sizes of Pre-Poll Voting Centres and their distances from the Divisional Office will vary considerably. Some centres may be in a different town to the Divisional Office, some will have a large number of staff, others will have few staff.

Setting up a Pre-Poll Voting Centre

The DRO may ask the OIC to assist in organising the Pre-Poll Voting Centre. In this case the OIC needs to check the suitability of the premises and plan the layout of the polling area.

Check polling area

Your DRO will tell you the address of your Pre-Poll Voting Centre and inform the OIC as to what access arrangements have been made. The OIC should arrange to inspect the Pre-Poll Voting Centre as early as possible. During the inspection the OIC should check the following:

- that there is enough suitable furniture for voting needs;
- toilet facilities;
- kitchen and tea-making facilities;
- waste paper facilities;
- access to a telephone (the DRO must be given the telephone number);
- parking facilities; and
- secure storage for ballot boxes and ballot papers.

All inadequacies **must** be discussed with the DRO.

NOTE: This check should be done as soon as possible and not left until the night before Pre-Poll Voting commences.

Plan layout for voting

When you are planning the layout of the Pre-Poll Voting Centre, the following points must be considered.

Use of space

Depending on the number of voters expected, the layout must include provision for:

- bank-style queuing of voters;
- orderly access to all issuing points;
- use of one door as an entry and one as an exit (if the centre has two doors);
- a clear view for issuing officers of voting screens (only one voter is permitted in a voting screen at any time); and
- constant supervision of the ballot boxes.

Furniture and equipment

The Pre-Poll Voting Centre should be equipped with:

- tables (or counters) for each issuing point;
- chairs for issuing officers and for elderly or disabled electors;
- queuing equipment;
- voting screens;
- ballot boxes; and
- facilities for disabled electors, for example table top screens.

Secure storage should be available for ballot boxes and ballot papers.

If the DRO has provided a plan for the layout of the Pre-Poll Voting Centre, minor changes only are allowed, to meet unforeseen circumstances.

Polling Material

Your DRO will provide the OIC with the material and equipment needed to run a Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

Material received and checked by OIC

The OIC will be supplied with:

- ballot box(es), locks, keys and security seals;
- ballot papers;
- Pre-Poll Declaration Envelopes (pre-numbered);
- Envelope No. 1 for keys to ballot boxes;
- signs (Polling Place, Pre-Poll Centre, Interstate Voting Centre, etc);
- Notice: ‘Grounds for Pre-Poll Voting’ (EF050);
- Group Voting Ticket posters for all States and Territories;
- List of Localities and Streets (EF054) for all States and Territories;
- pens, pencils and sharpeners;
- security tape;
- General Return for Pre-Poll and Postal Voting (OIC’s Return);
- Elector Information Reports; and
- List of Candidates (EF 132)

Upon receipt of the material the OIC must:

- check that the correct quantity of each item (as detailed in the inventory) has been received;
- count each ballot paper individually (to ensure the correct number of ballot papers has been received);
- record on pages 4 and 5 of the OIC’s Return, the number of ballot papers actually received; and
- let your DRO know if any items are missing; and sign the receipt at the bottom of the inventory form and return it to the DRO.

How-to-Vote cards

Candidates may supply Pre-Poll Voting Centres with ‘How-to-Vote’ cards for the use of voters. Any cards you receive should be displayed away from the area where votes are being issued, preferably in another room, hall or corridor. It is not your responsibility to request additional supplies if a shortage is brought to your notice. Display those which are given to you, even if other candidates fail to provide supplies.

Respond to requests from voters for how-to-vote cards by telling them where the cards are. Staff must not enter into discussion about the party affiliations of candidates or the contents of how-to-vote cards, or be seen to be in any way partisan.

Group Voting Tickets

Electoral Commission posters from each State and Territory showing Senate Group Voting Tickets **must** be displayed in a prominent position in the Pre-Poll Voting Centre. These posters set out how a voter’s preferences will be distributed if the voter marks the Group Voting Ticket section of the Senate ballot paper.

Polling

Period of operation

Pre-Poll Voting Centres may begin operation:

- the day after nominations have closed for a House of Representatives election; or
- the second day after nominations have closed for a Senate election; or
- the second day after nominations have closed for a combined Senate and House of Representatives election.

The number of days each centre operates depends on local needs.

Hours of operation

Pre-Poll Voting Centres will operate during dates and times determined by the DRO and published in the Commonwealth Gazette. Times vary to suit local needs but most centres will be open from 9am to 4.30pm. Your DRO will advise you of the times of operation of your Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

Issuing hours on Polling Day

8am to 6pm unless advised otherwise by your DRO.

Security of material
Responsibility of the OIC

The OIC is responsible at all times for the security of:

- ballot boxes and
- ballot papers (both used and unused).

Cardboard ballot boxes must not be used in Pre-Poll Voting Centres.

A ballot box is not in itself a security container and therefore must not be left unattended at any time, even when locked and sealed. Ballot papers in your care must never be left unattended in the public view.

Overnight security

If you need to keep ballot boxes overnight and you cannot return them to the Divisional Office, you may be able to obtain permission to use the security facilities in such establishments as:

- banks,
- post offices,
- police stations, or
- local government authority offices.

If such premises are not available, discuss with your DRO what is the best alternative.

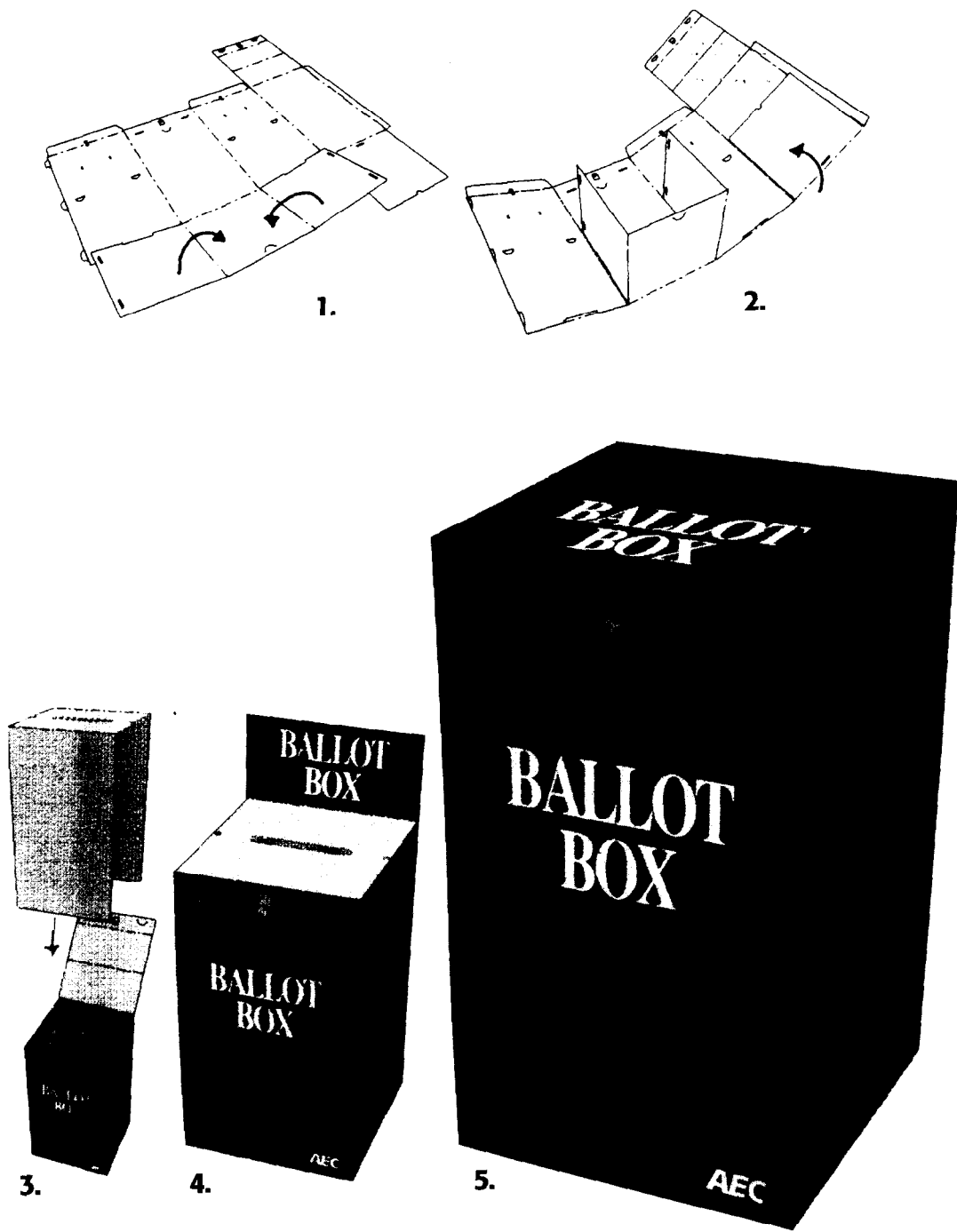
When travelling

Make sure when you travel that:

- ballot boxes are always inside the vehicle, and
- ballot papers are stored in a locked container (for example, a briefcase).

Lock and seal ballot boxes

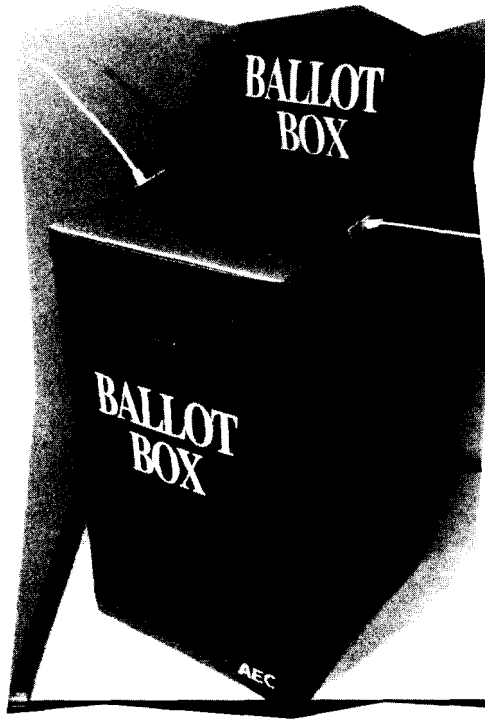
Pre-Poll Voting Centres will be provided with polypropylene ballot boxes. Below are the instructions on how to assemble these ballot boxes.



First day: preparation of a new ballot box

At the start of voting, and whenever a new ballot box is brought into use, you must:

- assemble ballot box following the above instructions, as far as step 4;
 - show the empty ballot box to any person present;
 - close the ballot box;
 - * seal by placing security seals through the two holes, so that the box cannot be opened without first breaking the seals;
- and



- enter the details of ballot box number and security seals numbers in the 'Record of Ballot Boxes and Security Seals' section of the OIC's Return (page 3). This record requires the signatures of the OIC and a witness.

Devision/Pre-Poll Voting Centre

Record of Ballot Boxes and Security Seals

1. Allocate a number to each ballot box.

2. When a seal is fixed to a ballot box at the start of finish of polling, record the details in columns 1,2 and 3 using a new line for every seal. Add signatures for each seal in columns 4 and 5.

3. When a seal is broken for the purpose of further polling or the scrutiny, verify that it was intact prior to being broken by signing columns 6 and 7.

1

2

3

Date

Ballot box number

Seal number

4

5

Fixing Seals

OIC Signature

Witness Signature

6

7

Breaking Seals

OIC Signature

Witness Signature

Page 3

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8 of OIC's Return

A U S T R A L I A N E L E C T O R A L C O M M I S S I O N

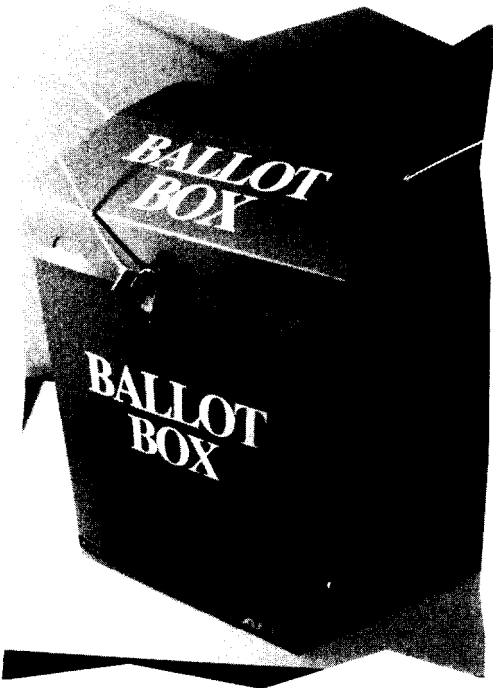
21

The DRO will advise you on the use of ballot boxes, but generally you will use separate ballot boxes for 'own Division' and 'other Divisions'.

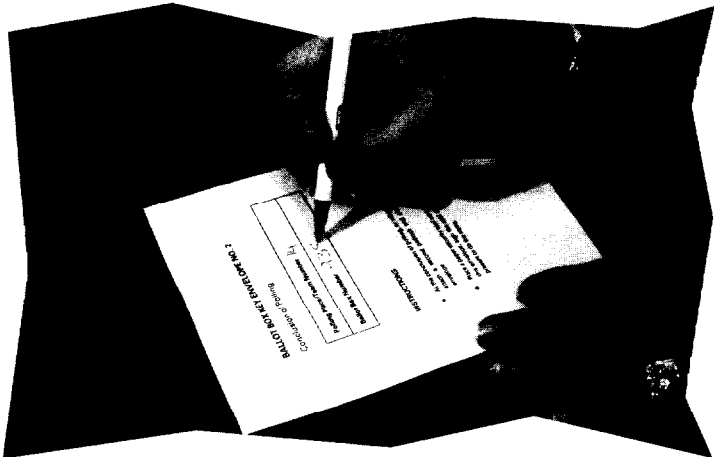
At the close of polling each day (or if ballot box is full)

At the close of voting each day or when a ballot box is full, you must use a padlock and third seal to seal the box in the following manner:

- as per instructions provided, close the security lid on the ballot box;
- place the padlock through the locking staple so that the ballot box cannot be reopened without removing the lock;
- thread a security seal through the locking staple and snap lock so that the box cannot be reopened without first breaking the security seal;



- put the key to the padlock in '**Key Envelope No. 1**' and seal the envelope with security tape;
- endorse '**Key Envelope No. 1**' with the Pre-Poll Voting Centre name and the ballot box number; and



- sign across the security tape on the back of the envelope;
- invite any persons present to sign across the security tape; and
- enter the details of the ballot box number and security seal number in the 'Record of Ballot Boxes and Security Seals' section of OIC's Return.

Second and following days: preparation of ballot box

At the time set down for the start of voting on all other days (if the ballot box already contains Declaration Envelopes), you should take the following steps to reactivate the ballot box:

- show the locked and sealed ballot box to all persons present;
- check the seal numbers to see that they match your records;
- invite any person present to check the seal numbers;
- sign an entry in the OIC's Return certifying the numbers of the seals on the ballot box;
- invite any person present to witness the entry;
- remove the seal and padlock from the locking staple to uncover the slot in the lid; and
- retain the broken seal to return to the DRO.

At the completion of the day's polling, follow the procedures outlined in the preceding Section.

NOTE: In reactivating a ballot box the first seals securing the ballot box must not be removed.

Secrecy Of the vote

Use of Declaration Envelopes

Electors may ask how their vote can be kept secret if their ballot papers are enclosed in an envelope which identifies them. Explain to these electors that strict procedures are laid down for the removal of Pre-Poll Votes from envelopes during scrutiny. These procedures prevent any envelope being linked with the ballot papers removed from it.

Entitlement to a Pre-Poll Vote

Electors are entitled to apply for a Pre-Poll Vote if, during the hours of polling on polling day, one or more of the following apply:

- they will not be within the State or Territory for which they are enrolled;
- they will not be within 8 kilometres, by the most practical route, of a polling place in the State or Territory for which they are enrolled;
- they will be travelling under conditions that will prevent them attending a polling place in the State or Territory for which they are enrolled;
- they are by reasons of illness, infirmity or approaching maternity unable to attend a polling place;
- they will be at a place other than a hospital caring for a seriously ill or infirm person or a woman approaching maternity, and therefore unable to attend a polling place;
- they will be patients in a hospital and unable to vote at that hospital;
- they are precluded from attending a polling place by reason of membership of a religious order or religious belief;
- they are precluded from attending a polling place by reasons of imprisonment, lawful custody or detention;
- the elector's address has been excluded from the Certified List (Silent Elector); and/or
- throughout the hours of polling day, the elector will be engaged in employment or occupation and the elector is not entitled to leave of absence under section 345 of the Commonwealth *Electoral Act 1918* or the absence of the elector from his or her employment would cause loss to the employer.

Notice: 'Grounds for Pre-Poll Voting' (EF050) must be displayed prominently at every place where pre-poll voting takes place.

Issuing Pre-Poll Votes

Ballot papers used with Pre-Poll Votes are inserted into ‘**Declaration Envelopes**’ and forwarded to the Division for which the elector is claiming enrolment. The envelope has a **counterfoil** which is removed and filed in a ‘**Declaration Records**’ folder. This is a record that the elector voted at your Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

GRIP
HERE

A9500e2

Australian Electoral CommissionAEC

PRE-POLL NUMBER
45510

DECLARATION VOTE

ELECTOR DETAILS – PLEASE PRINT NEATLY

OFFICE USE

Your full name

Surname

Given names

Your former name (if applicable)

Surname

Given names

Your date of birth (DAY/MONTH/YEAR)

Your current permanent address

Postcode

Address you are enrolled under (if different)

Postcode

If the addresses are different – date you moved to your current permanent address

Daytime phone no.

Declaration – I declare that I am entitled to vote, that I have not already voted in this election, and that the information I have given on this form is complete and correct.

Signature or mark of elector

The personal information you give on this Declaration Vote envelope is used for electoral purposes only and may be viewed by authorised staff and scrutineers.

PRELIMINARY SCRUTINY

1. Signature Check

2. Elector

3. Enrolment Check

4. Delivered

5. Del Code

6. Date Delivered

7. Subdivision Code

8. Reinstated

9. Determined

10. This Div

11. Other Div

12. Advised

13. Rejected

14. Del letter sent

15. Details

16. Data Check of Register

17. Enr sign check

18. Admitted

19. Title Div

20. Other Div

21. Rejected

22. Details

23. Enrolment

24. Tick box if enrolment action required

POLLING OFFICIAL TO COMPLETE – PLEASE PRINT FIRMLY

Pre-poll

Absent

Provisional

Not found

Issued

Other

Enrolled Division

Enrolment form received

Signature of issuing officer

Date

Issuing Division or District Post

Polling Place or Pre-poll Centre

Enrolment

Sample of Declaration Vote Envelope

The elector ‘**Declares**’ that he or she is entitled to vote by signing the Envelope.

Under no circumstances allow a Pre-Poll voter to take away voting material from a Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

A U S T R A L I A N E L E C T O R A L C O M M I S S I O N

POLLING

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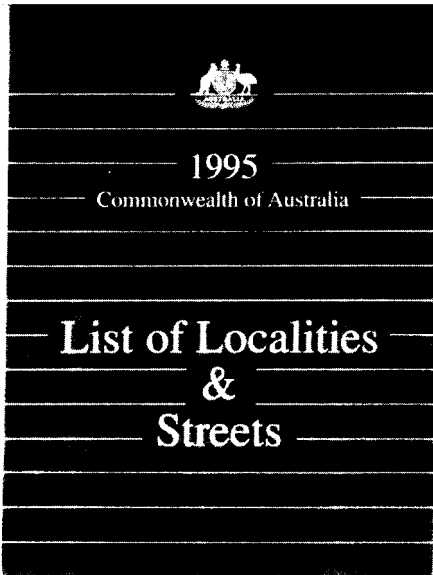
List of Localities and Streets (EF054)

The **List of Localities and Streets** is an alphabetical listing of all localities within a State or Territory. It is used to determine to which Division any address within a State or Territory belongs. It comes in four parts:

- the Front Matter section with a red page edge;
- the Locality section with a green page edge;
- the Street section with a blue page edge; and
- the Map section with a purple page edge.

Suburbs or localities **wholly** contained within a Division will show the Division's name as an entry next to the suburb or locality in the 'Locality' section. There is no need to use the 'Street' section in these cases.

If a suburb/location crosses a divisional boundary, comments will be shown so that you can determine the correct Division. The 'Locality' section will refer to the 'Street' section when street information is required to determine the correct Division for a particular address and in some cases to the Map section.



New South Wales

List of Localities and Streets

Australian Electoral Commission / AEC

EF54 7

Full instructions on how to use the *List of Localities and Streets* are to be found in the Front Matter section of the list. You must fully understand the use of the *List of Localities and Streets* before you commence issuing pre-poll votes.

The following points are particularly noteworthy.

The alphabetical indexing used in the list of Localities and Streets

You must be aware of the style of alphabetical indexing used in the *List of Localities and Streets*.

Some examples are:

Maas St	O'Brien Rd	Sahora St
Macadam Rd	Ocker St	Saifby Pl
McBride Pl	O'Day St	St James St
Macca Cres	Dddine Pl	St John Rd
Mace Rd		Saintsom Cres
Macey St		Saintta Rd
McFadden St		Saint Thomas St
Madden Pl		St William St

Mac and **Mc** are indexed as **Mac**.

O' names are indexed as starting with **O**.

St names are indexed as if they start with **Saint**.

Streets may belong to more than one Division

You should be aware and understand what is meant by such entries as:

Smith Street 1-99, Division of ASTON (i.e. all odd numbers between 1 and 39 (inclusive) are in the Division of Aston); and

Smith Street 2-100, Division of DEAKIN (i.e. all even numbers between 2 and 100 (inclusive) are in the Division of Deakin).

Declaration Envelopes

The envelope used to contain pre-poll vote ballot papers is called a **'Declaration Envelope'**.

On the outside of this envelope there are two sections to complete – one section for the elector to complete, and one for polling officials to complete using the details provided by the elector (see page 25).

Pre-numbered Declaration Envelopes

Your DRO will provide you with a set of pre-numbered Declaration Envelopes. This set of pre-numbered Declaration Envelopes is to be used for all pre-poll votes you issue.

Preparation of a Declaration Envelope and issue of Declaration Vote

Once you have established that the elector has an entitlement to a Pre-Poll Vote (see Entitlement to a Pre-Poll Vote, page 24), a Declaration Envelope must be prepared.

Each time a Declaration Envelope is prepared a record of that vote is achieved by the use of a pre-printed counterfoil in the Declaration Envelope.

To make sure that the details completed on the Declaration Envelope are clearly recorded on the counterfoil and that they can be read, TAKE CARE THAT YOU AND THE ELECTOR PRINT FIRMLY AND LEGIBLY. ONLY USE BALL POINT PENS.

NOTE: If an elector requires assistance, follow the procedures on page 33.

To correctly issue Declaration Votes, the following procedures should be followed:

- obtain an assurance that the elector has not already voted.
- take the next Declaration Envelope from the set of pre-numbered Declaration Envelopes.
- give the Declaration Envelope to the elector and ask him or her to fully complete the Elector Details Section. Request the elector to PRINT legibly and firmly. Ensure that the elector signs the Declaration Envelope. You may assist an elector who has difficulty writing.

From the address identified by the elector as the **enrolled address**, determine the elector's correct Division by referring to the appropriate State/Territory 'List *Of Localities and Streets*'. Write the elector's Division on the Declaration Envelope. Do this as soon as you have determined the Division. Do not leave it till later – mistakes can be made.

NOTE: Silent electors (electors whose addresses are not shown on the Certified List) will not complete the address sections of the Declaration Envelope. The word 'SILENT' is to be written in the address section. If the elector does enter the address or telephone number, it must be obliterated with black pen. To determine the Silent elector's Division, explain the use of the 'List of Localities and Streets' and ask him or her to identify the Division from the appropriate State/Territory list.

- Witness the elector's signature and make sure that the Pre-Poll voting centre details are shown on the envelope. Tick the relevant box on the envelope to indicate the type of declaration vote (Pre-Poll).
- Select the correct House of Representatives ballot paper. Make sure that the name of the Division on the ballot paper matches the name of the enrolled Division on the Declaration Envelope.
- Initial the back of this House of Representatives ballot paper and also the back of a Senate ballot paper for the elector's State or Territory.
- Hand these ballot papers to the elector and direct the elector to a vacant voting screen. Ask the elector to complete and fold the ballot papers and return them to you for inserting in the Declaration Envelope.

While the elector is voting

Keep the completed Declaration Envelope until the elector returns with the folded ballot papers. While the elector is voting:

- check again that all necessary details have been completed and that both the elector and you have signed the Declaration Envelope;
- remove the counterfoil from the Declaration Envelope and check that the information on the counterfoil can be read;
- place the counterfoil in the Declaration Records folder in alphabetical order, first by State, then by Division and then by voter surname.

When the elector returns with the completed ballot papers

- Ask the elector to repeat the name to ensure that you have matched the elector with the correct Declaration Envelope;
- check that the elector still has both the ballot papers issued;
- insert both ballot papers into the Declaration Envelope and seal it in the presence of the elector; and
- put the Declaration Envelope in the appropriate ballot box.

Those Pre-Poll Voting Centres which operate prior to polling day are to place their counterfoils into separate folders provided for 'own Division' and 'other Divisions'.

NOTE: Where a Pre-Poll Voting Centre operates over a number of days, counterfoils for different days should not be amalgamated until the daily records have been completed.

Ballot papers

You will have a supply of printed House of Representatives ballot papers for every Division in Australia. In the event that you run out of ballot papers for a particular Division, you can issue an 'Open' House of Representatives ballot paper. You will also receive fully printed Senate ballot papers for each State or Territory.


If it looks as though you may run out of ballot papers, ask the Divisional Office for more. However, in the meantime, make sure that you have one left which can be photocopied. Ensure you initial the back of any photocopied ballot papers. A note explaining that copies of a ballot paper for a Division, have been made, should be entered in the OIC's Return including the number of copies and the Division name.

NOTE: On Polling Day itself, Pre-Poll Voting Centres will not have ballot papers for the State or Territory in which the Pre-Poll Voting Centre is located.

Preparing an 'Open' House of Representatives ballot paper

To prepare the ballot paper:

- print the name of the State and Division at the top of the ballot paper;
- complete the 'Number the boxes' section on the ballot paper (for example, 1 to 2, 3,4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9);
- print the candidates names and party affiliations (EXACTLY as shown in the *List of Candidates* booklet);
- recheck the ballot paper against the *List of Candidates* booklet; and
- cross out the section of the ballot paper below the name of the last candidate you have listed. Use a 'Z' (two horizontal lines connected by a diagonal line) to cross out the section of the ballot paper which contains unused boxes and spaces for candidates' names and party affiliations.



BALLOT PAPER

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(STATE) _____

ELECTORAL DIVISION OF _____

Number the boxes
from 1 to **in the**
order **of your choice.**

☐

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AEC

Recording the receipt of ballot papers

The OIC will be given a ‘Pre-Poll Voting Centre Ballot Paper Inventory’ form (EF121) on which will be listed the number of House of Representatives ballot papers for each Division and the number of Senate ballot papers for each State and Territory allocated to the Pre-Poll Voting Centre by the DRO.

The OIC should check all ballot papers and write on the inventory form, the quantity actually received of each type of ballot paper and then return a copy of the form to the DRO.

The OIC should transfer the number of each ballot paper received to pages 4 and 5 of the OIC’s Return.

NOTE: The number of ‘Open’ Ballot papers received, (if any), should be recorded in the space provided in the ‘Summary’ of actual number of ballot papers received on page 4(e) of the OIC’s Return.

Postal Vote Certificate Envelopes delivered to a Pre-Poll Voting Centre

Some electors may deliver their Postal Vote Certificate Envelope (or that of another person) to a Pre-Poll Voting Centre rather than post it to a Divisional Office. Other electors may wish to cancel a Postal vote in order to have a Pre-Poll vote.

Receipt of a completed written Postal Vote Certificate Envelope

Upon receipt of a Postal Vote Certificate Envelope, the OIC will:

- write the words ‘received by me’, at _____ Pre-Poll Voting Centre and add the time and date of receipt and signature on the back of the Postal Vote Certificate Envelope;
- write the details from the envelope in the ‘Record of Completed Certificates’ section of the OIC’s Return (page 9); and
- put the envelope in the appropriate ballot box, either for ‘own Division’ or ‘other Divisions’.

Cancelling a Postal Vote

The OIC will take the postal voting material and:

- write 'cancelled' in large, clear letters on the Postal Vote Envelope, place the ballot papers in the envelope and seal it (or ensure that this has already been done);
- record the receipt of such an envelope in the 'Record of Cancelled Certificates' section of the 'OIC's Return' (page 9);
- place the cancelled envelope in the appropriate ballot box; and
- direct the elector to an issuing point in order to Pre-Poll vote.

For the purpose of the OIC's Return, only Pre-Poll Votes issued at your centre are included in the account of ballot papers.

Assistance to Electors

The most important task for Pre-Poll Voting Centre staff is to make sure that each person who wishes to vote has the full opportunity to cast a formal vote. A number of people require assistance to do that. Such assistance may be provided if the OIC is satisfied that the voter is unable to vote without help.

The following electors may seek help:

- disabled people;
- blind or partially blind people;
- non-literate people;
- people from non- English speaking backgrounds (NESB); and
- people who, for any other reason, lack the ability to complete a ballot paper.

In Polling places where there are large numbers of non-English speaking background (NESB) electors, polling staff should be made aware of any additional multilingual staff employed and the languages spoken, so that NESB electors requiring assistance may be referred to them.

Where multilingual staff are not available to assist non-English speaking background electors, the following considerations will assist when communicating in English:

- speak a little more slowly than normal and as clearly as possible (there is no need to raise the voice);
- if there is still difficulty after repeating the sentence, change or simplify the language eg. 'Where do you live?' to 'What is your address?';
- use hand gestures or simple drawings to support what is being said if necessary; and
- ask the electors to write down the name to help with finding it on the roll (be aware that some NESB groups will write the surname first).

DO NOT assume people need help because they are taking a while to fill in the ballot paper. If they are obviously having problems, advise them how assistance can be arranged.

In all cases where a voter seeks help to complete the ballot paper, the voter must be directed to the OIC.

The elector can nominate any person (except a candidate) to assist. This person could be a friend or relative or any party worker or a polling official.

If the elector fails to nominate someone, then the OIC is to provide assistance.

Where assistance is being given to a Pre-Poll Voter, the Declaration Envelope may be completed by a person chosen by the Pre-Poll voter. The following steps should be taken:

- complete the required details on the envelope;
- read the details AND the declaration to the elector, and have the elector confirm that the information is correct – check spelling of names, e.g. Kathy/Cathy, Smith/Smythe;
- have the elector sign the declaration (electors unable to sign may make their mark – see below);
- sign the declaration in the space provided for the issuing officer; and
- obtain the signature of a witness (and title of the witness, e.g. polling official) under the space provided for the elector's signature.

Electors unable to sign their names

Electors unable to sign their names may make their mark as signature. In such cases the elector must make a mark in the presence of the issuing officer acting as a witness.

The issuing officer must identify the fact that the elector made the mark by:

- adding the words ‘his mark’ or ‘her mark’ above the elector’s mark; and
- printing under the elector’s mark the elector’s given names to the left of the mark and the elector’s surname to the right of the mark.
- The issuing officer must then sign as witness on the Declaration Envelope.

NOTE: A person who holds power-of-attorney for an elector is not permitted to sign any electoral form for that elector.

Assistance with voting

Person nominated by the elector

The elector and the person nominated enter an unoccupied voting screen. The nominated person helps in marking and folding the ballot papers.

Assistance by the OIC or delegate

If the OIC (or a staff member to whom the OIC delegates this duty) is assisting the elector, the following rules apply:

- written instructions on how to fill in the ballot papers, for example, a how-to-vote card, may be given to you by the elector;
- a witness must be present when the OIC or Delegate fills in the ballot papers (staff or some person nominated by the elector); and
- an interpreter is entitled to be present at all times if the elector needs such help.

If a visually impaired or non-literate elector presents written instructions (or a how-to-vote card), confirm that the elector is aware of the contents of the written document.

TAKE CARE not to ask leading questions or suggest particular answers.

Problems you may encounter

Difficulties in determining an elector’s correct enrolled Division

The ***List of Localities and Streets*** and any maps which may be available should be used to determine the correct Division.

Re-examine the steps in the front of the list. If the Division still cannot be identified, you should phone your DRO.

Photographers in the Pre-Poll Voting Centre

If the OIC is asked to allow photographers or television cameras into the Pre-Poll Voting Centre they may be admitted under the following conditions:

- their presence must be approved by the DRO;
- no photographs are to be taken of persons actually recording a vote;
- photographers or their equipment must not hinder, inconvenience or intimidate the polling staff or electors; and
- no undue delays are to be caused to electors recording their vote and leaving the Pre-Poll Voting Centre.

Political messages on badges and clothing

Electors are entitled to wear political messages on badges or clothing in the Pre-Poll Voting Centre if they wish to do so.

Party workers asked to assist electors must remove political badges before entering the polling place.

Advice concerning the inability of people to vote

An elector may advise you of the illness, death or other circumstances of people on the roll. All such details should be written in an Elector Information Report EF016. You must NEVER allow anyone to vote on behalf of another person.

Shortage of polling material

If you run short of any forms, envelopes or ballot papers and you are unable to obtain additional copies from your DRO, you may photocopy or amend forms in order to give people a vote.

If you photocopy a ballot paper, it is essential that issuing staff initial the back of the ballot paper before giving it to a elector. Accurate records must be kept of the number of photocopied ballot papers for inclusion in the OIC’s Return.

Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Papers

You will be issued with Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelopes to use when processing spoilt or discarded ballot papers. A separate envelope should be used for each ballot paper. Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelopes are not put in the ballot box but are retained for ballot paper reconciliation.

Spoilt ballot papers

An elector who claims to have spoilt a ballot paper **MUST** be given a new ballot paper **AFTER** handing back the original. When the original ballot paper is handed back you must not look at the way it has been marked. The steps for dealing with spoilt ballot papers are:

- cancel the spoilt ballot paper by writing ‘Spoilt’ on the back;
- in view of the elector, put the spoilt ballot paper into a Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelope;
- tick the ‘SPOILT’ box on the envelope;
- mark the envelope with the type of ballot paper (House of Representatives or Senate) which is enclosed, and seal;
- issue a new ballot paper to the elector; and
- keep the Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelope for delivery to your DRO. Do not put it in the ballot box.

Australian Electoral Commission / AEC

SPOILT OR DISCARDED
BALLOT PAPER ENVELOPE

ON RECEIPT OF BALLOT PAPER

• Cancel the ballot paper by writing 'spoilt' or 'discarded' as appropriate on the back.

IN THE CASE OF A SPOILT BALLOT PAPER

• In the presence of the voter, place the spoilt ballot paper in the envelope and seal it.

• Issue a replacement ballot paper to the voter.

2

This envelope contains **ONE** ballot paper, namely:

☐ Spoilt

☐ Discarded

Tick relevant boxes ☒

☐ House of Representatives

Division of

☐ Senate

State/Territory

☐ Referendum

☐ issued to ordinary voter

☐ issued to declaration voter

4

SIGNATURE OF ISSUING OFFICER

5

POLLING PLACE

6

SPOILT - RECORD ON ACCOUNT OF BALLOT PAPERS AT GDM
DISCARDED - PASS DIRECTLY TO OIC ASAP

EF022 — 5/95

Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelope

Discarded ballot papers

During the day you or an elector may find ballot papers (marked or unmarked) that have been dropped in the pre-poll voting centre or left in a voting screen. If you find any such ballot papers, or they are handed to you, you must not put them in the ballot box but should:

- write 'Discarded' on the back of the ballot paper;
- put the ballot paper in a Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelope;
- tick the 'DISCARDED' box on the envelope;
- mark the envelope with the type of ballot paper (House of Representatives or Senate) which is enclosed, and seal; and
- keep the Spoilt or Discarded Ballot Paper Envelope for delivery to your DRO. Do not put it in the ballot box.

After polling

Records and Returns

The OIC is responsible for the accuracy of the records for the Pre-Poll Voting Centre.
The information recorded in the returns is required by the DRO to:

- complete the Divisional Return;
- process payments for staff; and
- plan arrangements for the next election.

Instructions on the completion of records will be provided by the DRO at the training session.

General Return for Pre-Poll and Postal Voting

The records of the Pre-Poll Voting Centre are consolidated in the document called the ‘General Return for Pre-Poll and Postal Voting’ (EF070). This document includes:

- Appointment of Substitute Officer-in-Charge;
- Record of Ballot Boxes and Security Seals;
- Record of Receipt of Ballot Papers;
- Daily Record of Issue of Ballot Papers;
- Daily Account of Certificates Issued;
- List of Postal Vote Certificates Handed In;
- Summary of Pre-Poll Votes Issued by Division;
- OIC's Staff Report;
- Pre-Poll Voting Centre Profile;
- Accident Report – Instructions;
- Report on Miscellaneous Matters; and
- Incident Report – Instructions.

While all these sections are important, great care should be taken with the following.

The 'Record of Ballot Boxes and Security Seals'.

This record must be signed and witnessed whenever a security seal is attached to, or removed from, a ballot box.

Reconciliation of ballot papers - 'Daily Record of Issue of Ballot Papers'

This section of the OIC's Return is completed progressively. The OIC is required to balance the number of House of Representatives and Senate ballot papers on hand at the finish of voting each day.

The counterfoils for each day's polling should be kept separate from the previous day's issue until this daily record has been completed.

Reconciliation of Certificate Envelopes - 'Daily Account of Certificates Issued'

This section of the OIC's Return is completed progressively. The OIC is required to balance the number of Certificates issued, by Division, at the finish of voting each day.

The counterfoils for each day's polling should be kept separate from the previous day's issue until the daily account has been completed.

At the close of polling on each day, count the number of counterfoils issued that day for each Division and record that number as the 'Daily Account of Certificates Issued'.

The counterfoils should be sorted into State, Division and name order.

Remember: Pre-poll votes for all States can be issued up until close of **polling on the Friday before polling day. Only interstate electors are issued with pre-poll votes on polling day.**

Reconciliation of Declaration Envelopes to counterfoils

At the conclusion of voting on the last day of operation:

- open the ballot boxes and record in the OIC's Return, the breaking of the seals;
- sort the Declaration Envelopes alphabetically first by State, then by Division and then by surname within the Division;
- count the total number of Declaration Envelopes for each Division and check that this number agrees with the total number of counterfoil cards for that Division in the 'Declaration Records Folder'.
- check that the 'Electors' names' on the Declaration Envelopes for each Division agree with the 'Electors names' on the counterfoil cards for that Division in the 'Declaration Records Folder';
- bundle the Declaration Envelopes in Divisions for despatch to the DRO; and
- a Declaration Votes Packaging Card (EF097), indicating the number of envelopes in the bundle is to be completed for each division and then secured to the top of each bundle using an elastic band.

Enter in the OIC's Return 'Pre-Poll Votes Issued' (EF070/10-12) the number of pre-poll vote Declaration Envelopes issued for each Division and complete the summary (EF070/13).

NOTE: The Commonwealth Electoral Act permits the opening of Pre-Poll Ballot Boxes only for despatch of Declaration Envelopes to the DRO. If the DRO has instructed that Declaration Envelopes are to be forwarded to the Divisional Office on a daily basis, then the ballot boxes may be opened and Declaration Envelopes sorted daily as described above. However, if the Declaration Envelopes are to be despatched to the DRO after the close of the final day of polling, then all ballot boxes must remain sealed until that time.