



2022 Council Election Report

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Abbreviations

City of Adelaide Act 1998	CoA Act
Central Processing Centre	CPC
Council Liaison Officer	CLO
Council Supplementary Roll	CSR
Deputy Returning Officer	DRO
Electoral Commission of South Australia	ECSA
House of Assembly	HA
Local Deputy Returning Officer	LDRO
Local Government Act 1999	LG Act
Local Government Association	LGA
Local Government (Election) Act 1999	LGE Act
Local Government (Election) Regulations 2010	LGE Regulations
Local Government (General) Regulations 2013	LGG Regulations
South Australian Civil and Administrative	SACAT
Proportional Representation	PR
Telephone Assisted Voting	TAV



Message from the Electoral Commissioner

The 2022 local government periodic elections (2022 Council Elections) commenced with the close of rolls on Friday 29 July 2022 and concluded with the final formal declaration of results on Monday 28 November 2022.

At the close of rolls, the total number of enrolled electors was 1,288,329 compared to 1,213,862 for the 2018 Council Elections. Nominations closed at 12 noon, Tuesday 6 September 2022 with 1,256 nominations accepted compared to 1,374 in 2018.

The 2022 Council Elections were conducted for 66 of the 67 councils within South Australia to elect representatives to a total of 683 possible positions. The District Council of Coober Pedy was under administration, so no elections were required. Voting in the elections was voluntary and the majority of electors participated via post. For the first time, ECSA also provided telephone assisted voting services to electors who are blind or have low vision or who were interstate or overseas during the voting period.

184 separate contested elections were conducted with candidates elected under the system of proportional representation. There were 36 elections that were uncontested, with the candidates in those elections elected unopposed due to the number of nominations being fewer than or equal to the number of positions available. Two elections were deemed to have failed as there were no nominations received.

The *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999* provides for the appointment of persons to the roles of Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) and other electoral officers, with a range of delegations and responsibilities, to assist in the conduct of elections. As Returning Officer, I appointed over 1,000 electoral officers to assist in the conduct of the elections. Electoral officers were supported with in-person training, manuals and written instructions where necessary.

Using a new method of measuring participation as outlined in this report, the 2022 elections saw a participation rate of 32.9%, which is an increase of 1.3% from 2018. The 2022 Council Elections again saw higher participation in country councils. The total average participation rate in country councils was 43.3% (down just marginally from 43.6% in 2018), compared to 29.6% in metropolitan councils (up from 27.8% in 2018).

The electoral system for local government elections is proportional representation (PR). PR counts are complex and technical, and take time and care to complete. Many candidates did not understand the PR system of counting and ECSA will continue to consider ways to more effectively communicate and explain the PR count process to candidates and electors.

For complex counts which involve many candidates and positions, numerous distributions are required and therefore computer software is used. For the 2022 elections, 25 elections were conducted using computer software. In December 2023 while preparing for the City of Adelaide Central Ward Court of Disputed Returns matter, an error was detected in one of the settings for the 25 computer count elections. This error did not affect the candidates elected in 24 of the elections, however it regrettably resulted in two candidates being incorrectly elected in the Adelaide Plains Council area councillor election. At the time of publishing this report, the Court of Disputed Returns declared that the two incorrectly elected candidates were not duly elected, and the two candidates who should have been elected were duly elected.

The number of complaints regarding alleged breaches of electoral law increased significantly to 570, compared to 317 lodged for the 2018 elections. The increase was mainly attributed to the growing use of social media by candidates. Unsuccessful candidates lodged three petitions with the Court of Disputed Returns. One was withdrawn, one was dismissed and the other remains ongoing at the time of publishing this report.

Several disruptions were experienced throughout the election including a severe weather event that delayed the count at a number of locations across South Australia. White powder was found in a returned ballot pack which disrupted the processing of votes at ECSA's Central Processing Centre (CPC), and significant disruptive behaviour by scrutineers and supporters of some candidates at the City of Onkaparinga required police to be called and delayed the count.

The 2022 elections also involved a number of allegations of fraudulent voting activity. These matters required the implementation of additional scrutiny measures to ensure the integrity of the electoral process. These matters are currently ongoing at the time of publishing this report and therefore limited details can be included, however this report includes several recommendations identified throughout these investigations to strengthen the integrity of the election process.

Since the last council elections, considerable legislative changes were made and came into effect for the 2022 elections. These changes include telephone assisted voting for eligible electors, the requirement for candidate profiles to advise if they are or have been a member of a registered political party in South Australia, and an additional week of voting.

Legislative changes were also made to candidate campaign donation returns including the requirement for candidates to lodge two campaign donations and a large gift return for gifts over \$2,500. For the 2022 elections with 1,256 candidates, the legislative changes required 2,512 donation returns to be lodged plus any large gift returns. The vast majority of returns lodged were nil returns. A total of 21 large gift returns were lodged by 187 candidates however only four were genuine returns with declared gifts over \$2,500. 45 elected candidates failed to lodge their second gift return on time and under legislation were required to vacate their office. Although these candidates were able to apply to SACAT to seek relief from this provision, the Government subsequently introduced legislation (*Local Government (Casual Vacancies) Amendment Act 2023*) to retrospectively reinstate the members and permit them additional time (if required) to lodge any missing return/s.

The total cost of the elections was \$8.93 million (excluding GST) compared to the \$6.57 million for the 2018 elections. This increase is largely due to the unavoidable cost pressures and changes in conditions over the four years between elections. Of particular note were the increased mail-out and mail return charges, including utilisation of the priority postage service to ensure electors received their voting packs in a timely manner. Further, inflationary indexation over four years, an increase in the number of electors and the volume of materials and services also contributed to the increase in costs.

Consistent with previous council elections, ECSA encountered significant challenges delivering the state and local government periodic elections in the same year. Planning for the council elections is delayed due to finalising the state election and ECSA staff are required to work additional hours to ensure the council elections can be delivered in November. As with the past three council election reports, ECSA again recommends Parliament consider moving the local government periodic elections from the same year as the state election.

Finally, I wish to thank all organisations and individuals that contributed to the 2022 council election. This includes council CEOs and staff, the Local Government Association, electoral officers and ECSA staff. I express my sincere gratitude for everyone's role in the successful delivery of the 2022 Council Elections.

Mick Sherry **ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER**



Election highlights



1,288,329

ELECTORS
ENROLLED

↑ 6% increase
from 2018



67 COUNCILS



674 POSITIONS
UP FOR ELECTION



32.9%
PARTICIPATION

↑ up from 31.6%
in 2018



1,256
CANDIDATES

↓ down from 1,374
in 2018



18,518
INFORMAL
VOTES

2.5% informality rate



570 COMPLAINTS

↑ up from 317
in 2018



1,243,661
ELECTORS
SENT A POSTAL
VOTING PACK



184 CONTESTED
ELECTIONS

36 UNCONTESTED
2 FAILED ELECTIONS



34%
RETURNED
VOTING PACKS



25 COMPLEX
COUNTS

↓ down from 42
in 2018



744 VOTERS
VOTED VIA
TELEPHONE
ASSISTED
VOTING (TAV)



7 RECOUNTS
1 CHANGE TO
ORIGINAL RESULTS

Election timeline

Rolls close

Friday 29 July

Nominations open

Tuesday 23 August

Nominations close

12 noon, Tuesday 6 September

Draw for positions on the ballot paper

4pm, Tuesday 6 September

Mailout of voting material to electors

Friday 14 October to Thursday 20 October

Last day for postal issue/ re-issue of voting material

5pm, Thursday 3 November

Close of voting (polling day)

5pm, Thursday 10 November

Scrutiny and count commences

9am, Saturday 12 November

Written advice to candidates notifying of the election results

Monday 28 November

Public notice of election results

Thursday 8 December



Election results snapshot

TABLE 1

Summary of council elections, 2010 – 2022				
	2022	2018	2014	2010
Councils	67	67	67	67
Voters roll				
Electors on roll	1,288,329	1,213,862	1,155,695	1,125,061
Nominations				
Contested elections	1,163	1,326	1,261	1,174
Uncontested elections	93	48	73	100
Failed elections	0	0	0	0
Total nominating	1,256	1,374	1,334	1,274
Elections				
Contested	184	206	189	194
Uncontested	36	23	45	45
Failed	2	1	0	40
Total elections	222	230	234	239
Participation*				
Percentage	32.9%	31.6%		
Costs				
Total cost	\$8,930,000	\$6,570,172	\$4,357,028	\$3,555,059

* The participation figures reported in this table differ from those reported in previous periodic council election reports. In this Report, ECSA has introduced a new method of measuring and reporting voter participation at council elections consistent with how participation is measured and reported at parliamentary elections and at most council elections around Australia. For more information, see Chapter 4.

** Table 1 excludes data in relation to the two potential elections for the District Council of Coober Pedy which were cancelled following the commencement of the Local Government (Defaulting Council) Amendment Act 2022.

Recommendations for legislative change

A summary of recommendations for legislative change outlined as follows:

Recommendation 1: TIMING OF THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Section 5 (the LGE Act)

To support the provision of high quality and best-practice electoral services to the South Australian community, change the fixed date of the council elections to the second Saturday in November in the year following a state election. Introduce transitional provisions to extend the term of currently elected members to expire in accordance with the next council elections.

Recommendation 2: COUNCIL SUPPLEMENTARY ROLL APPLICATIONS

Section 14 (the LGE Act) Schedule 1, Part 2 (COA Act)

Modernise council roll application processes by amending section 14 of the LGE Act to remove the witness requirement and enable digital applications. In section 14 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the COA Act, introduce a requirement for a natural person applying for the council roll to supply identification and proof of residence as required by the returning officer.

Recommendation 3: VOTERS ROLL BUILD

Section 15 (LGE Act) Schedule 1, Part 2 (COA Act)

Amend section 15 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the COA Act to ensure the roll is brought up-to-date three weeks after the roll close date, and therefore prior to nominations opening to ensure that the eligibility of people who nominate for election can be assessed efficiently.

Recommendation 4: ACCESS TO THE VOTERS ROLL

Section 15 (the LGE Act) Schedule 1, Part 2 (COA) Act

Amend section 15(15) of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the COA Act to allow candidates, at any time between the declaration of nominations and polling day, to request from the returning officer a copy of the voters roll for an election, excluding any candidate declared elected in accordance with sections 25(1) and (1a) of the LGE Act.

Recommendation 5: DECLARATION OF NOMINATIONS

Section 29 (the LGE Act)

Maximise the opportunity to ensure that people who intend to nominate for election can do so validly by changing the time for the draw for position on the ballot paper by amending:

- section 29(3)(a) of the LGE Act to allow the draw for position on the ballot paper to be conducted on the day following the close of nominations at a time determined by the returning officer; and
- section 25(1) to allow the declaration of candidates elected unopposed to be conducted at the same time as the draw for position on the ballot paper.

Recommendation 6: AVOIDANCE OF SUPPLEMENTARY ELECTION

Sections 7, 8 (the LGE Act)

Amend the definition of 'election failure' under section 7 to include that receiving less nominations than the number of vacancies means the election has partially failed to provide a direct connection with section 6(1)(a). Amend section 8(1a) to apply to candidates elected under section 25(1a) to clarify that councils may only appoint a person to a vacant office after a supplementary election has failed.

Recommendation 7: NOMINATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Section 17 (the LGE Act)
Schedule 1, Part 3 (COA Act)

Consider the nomination eligibility criteria and whether the LGE Act, COA Act or regulations should be amended to introduce any further eligibility criteria.

Recommendation 8: APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICERS

Section 10 (the LGE Act)

Remove section 10(3) so that the ability to appoint a deputy returning officer for an area is solely the returning officer's responsibility.

Recommendation 9: TELEPHONE ASSISTED VOTING

Section 41A(8) (the LGE Act)

Amend section 41A (8) of the LGE Act, or amend the regulations, to expand the eligibility criteria for prescribed electors to include people with disability.

Recommendation 10: COMMENCEMENT OF COUNTING

Section 47 (the LGE Act)

Amend section 47(1)(b) of the LGE Act to extend the period between close of voting and commencement of the scrutiny and counting of votes by making ballot papers available on the third business day following the close of voting to allow adequate time to prepare for scrutiny and count processes and support staff health and wellbeing.

Recommendation 11: CONDUCT AND DIRECTION OF SCRUTINEERS

Section 66 (the LGE Act)

Consistent with recent *Electoral (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2024*, amend the LGE Act to introduce standards of conduct for scrutineers and offences with penalties for obstructing the exercise of electoral duties. Electoral officers should have the ability to direct a person to leave a location where electoral activities are being exercised, and this should be coupled with a requirement to comply with a reasonable direction.

Recommendation 12: MISLEADING INFORMATION

LGE Act

Amend the LGE Act to prohibit people and groups from misleading or deceiving electors in relation to how they should mark their ballot papers and/or exercise their vote.

Recommendation 13: REJECT ENVELOPES WITHOUT DATE OF BIRTH

Sections 39, 47(2) (the LGE Act)
Schedule 1, Part 7 (COA Act)

To provide additional measures to ensure the authenticity of returned postal voting pack, amend section 39 of the LGE Act by deleting subsection 10 and removing the reference to a voter's date of birth in subsection 11. Amend section 47(2)(a) to compel the returning officer to reject any envelope where the date of birth does not, to the satisfaction of the returning officer, correspond with the date of birth of the elector. Amend Schedule 1, Part 7 of the COA Act accordingly.

Recommendation 14: DEFINITION OF CANDIDATE

Section 4, Part 14 (the LGE Act)
Schedule 1, Part 8 (COA Act)

Consider defining the term 'candidate' either as an explicit deeming provision or in Part 14 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 8 of the COA Act for the purpose of providing disclosure returns.

Recommendation 15: DEFINITION OF CONCLUSION OF ELECTION

Sections 4, 6, 25, 50, 51, 70, 80, 91A

Review the actions, activities, and events under the LGE Act and COA Act dependent on the definition of the 'conclusion of the election' and introduce a consistent definition of the term. Interdependent activities should relate to a fixed date for all elections, such as polling day.

Recommendation 16: DISCLOSURE AND LODGEMENT PERIODS

Section 80 (the LGE Act)

Regulation 11A (the LGE Regulations)

Section 24B (COA Act)

Parliament should consider the appropriate disclosure period, however suggestions for amendments to the LGE Act are provided as follows:

- Amend section 80 so that the second campaign donation return is due within 30 days of polling day, not within 30 days after the conclusion of the election.
- Amend the disclosure period to be the same for 'new' and 'not new' candidates as a fixed period, such as 12 months prior to polling day.
- Introduce a specific disclosure period for each disclosure return i.e.:
 - the disclosure period for the first campaign donation return (and any large gifts received in the same period) commences 12 months prior to polling day and concludes at the close of nominations; and
 - the disclosure period for the second campaign donation return (and any large gifts received in the same period) commences on the day after the close of nominations and concludes on polling day.
- Amend regulation 11A to specifically refer to the prescribed period.
- Amend section 24B in the CoA Act 1998 to provide the same disclosure period commencement date for 'new' and 'not new' candidates.

Recommendation 17: LARGE GIFT RETURNS

Sections 81A, 81B the LGE Act

Regulation 11A (LGE Regulations)

Amend the LGE Act to remove the requirement for candidates to lodge large gift returns, including the requirement for candidates to lodge large gift returns in between elections, and the annual reporting period under regulation 11A.

If large gift returns are retained, amend regulation 11A to define 'year' as a calendar year. This definition should also be updated in regulation 6 of the *City of Adelaide (Elections and Polls) Regulations 2010*.

Recommendation 18: DISCLOSURE RETURNS NON-COMPLIANCE PENALTIES

Section 80 the LGE Act

Regulation 11A (LGE)

Section 24B (COA Act)

Amend section 54(1)(h) of the LGE Act 1999 to remove the automatic triggering of a casual vacancy for non-compliance with campaign donation return requirements. A more suitable penalty such as the suspension of entitlements should be considered.

Ensure this also applies to members elected in accordance with the CoA Act 1998.

Further, amend the LGE Act to disqualify previous candidates who were not compliant with the returns requirements from being an eligible candidate for a recount under section 6A until the non-compliance is resolved.

Amend section 17 so that the failure to lodge a return disqualifies an individual from nominating as a candidate in future elections until the non-compliance is resolved.

Recommendation 19: FILLING CASUAL VACANCIES

Section 6 (the LGE Act)

Amend section 6(2)(c) to apply to vacancies occurring within 12 months of polling day for the periodic elections or designated supplementary elections.

Amend section 6A(2) so that the initial declaration required by operation of section 6A(2)(b) (and subsequently regulation 3A (1)) is the only necessary declaration.

Chapter 1

Election participants and environment

Legislative requirements and responsibilities

The legislation governing the conduct of council elections comprises the *Local Government (Elections) Act 1999 (LGE Act)*, *Local Government Act 1999 (LG Act)*, *City of Adelaide Act 1998 (CoA Act)*, *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010 (LGE Regulations)*.

The Electoral Commissioner is the Returning Officer for all council elections.

The Returning Officer's legislated responsibilities include:

- Promoting participation in the electoral process.
- Providing information, education and publicity on electoral matters including enrolment, method of voting and the vote counting system.
- Appointment of electoral officers to assist in the conduct of elections and polls.
- Preparing statutory notices and ballot material.
- Mailing out ballot material and conducting telephone-assisted voting, processing returned ballot material and counting votes.
- Administering campaign donations and expenses returns.
- Accountability for any errors, oversights, or breaches of electoral law.

Councils have responsibilities and work in partnership with ECSA. Key council responsibilities include:

- Maintaining the council's voters roll.
- Promoting participation in the electoral process.
- Providing information, education and publicity on electoral matters including enrolment, informing potential voters about candidates standing for election and advising the community about the outcomes of elections and polls.
- Administering provisions of the LG Act in relation to election signage.

Legislative changes (overview of changes that occurred since 2018)

There have been considerable changes to the LGE Act, CoA Act, and the LG Act since the 2018 elections, including:

- Modifications to the election timetable to provide an additional week of voting, provide an additional business day prior to the commencement of counting votes, and an earlier cut-off for re-issue applications to accommodate postage timeframes.
- Candidate profile content changed from 150 words to 1000 characters, additional declarations for political party membership and place of residence now required.
- Nominations not to be displayed at the principal office of the council, and instead published by the Returning Officer within 24 hours following the close of nominations.
- Campaign donations returns responsibility shifted to ECSA and requirement for lodgment of second return.
- Ability introduced for the Electoral Commissioner to make application to the Supreme Court for withdrawal and retraction of inaccurate and misleading electoral material, or to petition the Court of Disputed Returns.
- Introduction of telephone assisted voting for certain electors.
- Prohibition of certain types of election signage and amendments to authorisation requirements for electoral material published online.

Timing of council elections

Council elections must be held in November at intervals of four years commencing from 2006 (see section 5 of the LGE Act). State elections are also fixed at four-year intervals (see section 28 of the *Constitution Act 1934*) and are held in March of the same calendar year as council elections.

Being required to deliver two major election events in the same year and only eight months apart is extremely challenging. ECSA has repeatedly experienced the difficulties of delivering both major events in the same calendar year. In 2022 this was exacerbated by a by-election and significant legislative reform.

It is important to highlight that the state election does not simply conclude after polling day in March. ECSA staff spent the weeks and months following polling day undertaking many activities to conclude the state election, including:

- overseeing counts and full distributions at every House of Assembly district office,
- conducting the Legislative Council count,
- completing results reporting,
- decommissioning of leased facilities and return of materials,
- preparing materials for storage and disposal,
- managing and investigating complaints, particularly complex complaints around inaccurate and misleading advertising,
- issuing non-voter notices, and
- completing a full evaluation of the election.

In some ways, the coordination of council elections is more complex than the state election. Council elections are postal elections, involving up to 67 councils, geographically spread across South Australia. There were 674 positions to fill across 222 elections. In 2022, there were 1,256 accepted nominations, 184 contested elections with voting packs addressed and sent to 1,243,661 electors across the state.

Consistent with previous experience over a number of election cycles, ECSA's evaluation of the 2022 Council Elections again demonstrated that the overlap with state election activities means that planning and execution of council election activities occurs too late. Election planning and delivery requires specialist and experienced staff. The requirement to deliver two major election events in the same calendar year places significant strain on the small cohort of specialist staff available to support this work and inevitably leads to delayed planning and preparation for the council elections.

A key theme that emerged in all the post-election staff surveys and election project evaluations was that critical planning and execution activities occurred too late. This is unavoidable due to the overlap with the state election planning and execution period.

This limits ECSA's capacity to implement continuous improvement activities to support best practice electoral services. In addition, the need to sustain an extended period of high intensity service delivery affects staff health and wellbeing and negatively affects the long-term retention of critical and experienced staff.

The overlap with the state election period also poses problems with implementing the outcomes of representation reviews. ECSA is required to certify the reviews. This is a resource intensive process that must occur during the peak planning period for the state election when limited experienced staff are available to assist.

Further, reviews often include several complex multi-ward councils with ward boundary adjustments and consequent elector movements. This redistribution of electors must be implemented on the electoral roll. However, due to high enrolment activity and the close of roll date for the state election, representation review roll changes can only be implemented after the state election. Notably, the key roll close date for the council elections is just four months later, which provides a narrow period to implement these highly technical changes.

Consistent with the approach in many other jurisdictions, ideally, the two elections should occur, to the nearest extent possible, two years apart. Notably, in New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria, and the Northern Territory, state and local government elections are from one to two years apart.

Some council Chief Executive Officers expressed concerns about potential elector fatigue as the 2022 Council Elections followed the State Election, the Bragg by-election, and federal election. Elector fatigue, confusion and the impact on elector participation should also be factors in considering the timing of the council elections.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Timing of the council elections

For a number of years, ECSA has recommended moving the date of the council elections so that they occur in the year following state elections. This recommendation was included in the 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018 Council Election Reports.

This approach is consistent with many interstate jurisdictions. It also recognises that elections are continuing to evolve and increase in scope and complexity as enrolment and participation continue to increase, and more convenient methods of voting are introduced. The lack of time to adequately plan and execute council elections after the delivery of the state election creates a significant risk to the quality of service delivery and impacts on ECSA's ability to support and sustain the health and wellbeing of critical specialist staff.

Consequently, as a first priority for reform, ECSA recommends the date for the council elections is moved so that the elections occur in the year following state elections. This is critical to ensuring that ECSA can continue to deliver high-quality and best practice electoral services to the South Australian community.

Recommendation 1.

To support the provision of high quality and best-practice electoral services to the South Australian community, change the fixed date of the council elections to the second Saturday in November in the year following a state election. Introduce transitional provisions to extend the term of currently elected members to expire in accordance with the next council elections.



Representation reviews

Council structure

Councils are required to conduct a review of their composition and ward structure at least once during each relevant period prescribed by the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2013* (LGG Regulations). The relevant period during which each review is undertaken is determined by the Minister and published in the South Australian Government Gazette.

As part of this representation review, councils should consider factors such as the type of principal member, whether to keep, change or abolish internal wards, and the number and type of councillors. The number of councillors per elector must also be

considered to ensure that electors are represented fairly across different wards.

Since the 2018 Council Elections and prior to the 2022 Council Elections, the Electoral Commissioner certified 30 representation reviews. Most councils retained their existing structure and representation arrangements. The Electoral Commissioner also gave effect to changes for one further council which did not satisfactorily complete the representation review in the required time frame.

Details of the 11 councils that made a change to their structure or representation arrangements are outlined in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: Council structure changes, 2022

Council	Principal member	Wards and boundaries	Councillors
Adelaide	Retained Mayor	Retained 3 wards, no boundary adjustments.	Area councillors reduced from 4 to 2. Ward councillors increased from 7 to 9.
Adelaide Plains	Retained Mayor	Abolished wards.	Retained 9 councillors.
Alexandrina	Retained Mayor	Reduced from 5 to 3 wards. Major boundary adjustments.	Retained 9 councillors.
Charles Sturt	Retained Mayor	Retained 8 wards. Minor boundary adjustments.	Retained 16 councillors.
Coorong	Changed from Chairperson to Mayor*	Abolished wards.	Reduced from 9 to 7 councillors.
Goyder	Retained Chairperson	Retained 4 wards. Minor boundary adjustments.	Retained 7 councillors.
Light	Retained Mayor	Reduced from 4 to 3 wards. Major boundary adjustments.	Reduced from 10 to 9 councillors.
Mid Murray	Retained Mayor	Retained 3 wards. Major boundary adjustments.	Reduced from 9 to 8 councillors.
Mitcham	Retained Mayor	Retained 6 wards. Major boundary adjustments.	Reduced from 13 to 12 councillors.
Mount Barker	Retained Mayor	Retained 3 wards. Major boundary adjustments.	Retained 10 councillors.
Prospect	Retained Mayor	Retained 4 wards. Minor boundary adjustments.	Retained 8 councillors.

*Poll conducted in October 2021 to enable Mayor to be elected at 2022 Council Elections

Notifications of the outcomes of all reviews completed during the period were published in the South Australian Government Gazette prior to 1 January 2022. Changes to representation and

structure came into effect from 10 November 2022, being polling day of the first council election held after the date of publication (as per section 12(18) of the LG Act). Council structures are detailed in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Council structures, 2018 – 2022

Councils with...	2022		2018		Change	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mayors	53	79.1	52	77.6	1	1.5
Chairpersons	14	20.9	15	22.4	-1	-1.5
Total	67		67			
Area Councillors	37	55.2	35	52.2	2	3.0
Ward Councillors	29	43.3	31	46.3	-2	-3.0
Ward Councillors and Area Councillors	1	1.5	1	1.5	0	0.0
Total	67		67			

Legislative reform for representation reviews

Prior to the next council elections, 36 councils will complete a scheduled representation review in accordance with the amended provisions under the LG Act. These amendments include the introduction of a member cap and a requirement that all principal members be an elected mayor. A further eight councils will complete a review under transitional regulations. Six councils will be required to revise their composition to introduce a mayoral position, and two will address the issue of having more elected members than the member cap.

Elector representation

Table 30 in Appendix 9.1 contains statistics on the total eligible electors and number of ward and area councillors in each council at the 2018 and 2022 elections. This also includes the number of electors per councillor (excluding mayoral positions).

Roll management and enrolment

Entitlement to vote in a council election is based on two categories:

1. Enrolment on the state electoral roll (automatically included on the voters roll).
2. Application to be on the council supplementary roll for a council area.

Applications to be on the council supplementary roll can be made to the relevant council Chief Executive Officer on several eligibility criteria:

- A natural person who is a resident, sole owner, or occupier of a rateable property,
- A group of natural persons,
- A body corporate that is the owner or occupier of a rateable property.

Voting entitlements were established as at the close of the voters roll, at 5:00pm on Friday 29 July 2022.

Following the close of the roll, each council reviewed the state electoral roll entitlements against applications for inclusion on the supplementary roll. This ensured that all electors were allocated the correct entitlement, as an elector is only entitled to a single vote in any given election. However, an elector may be entitled to vote in more than one election for the council area, such as additional ward elections based on council supplementary roll entitlements.

To assist councils in keeping their voters roll up-to-date, ECSA provides monthly information relating to additions, changes and deletions affecting the state roll. A full list of electors from the state roll is also supplied monthly.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Council Supplementary Roll (CSR) applications

Under section 14(3b) of the LGE Act, an application for the council supplementary roll must be:

- in a form approved by the returning officer; and
- signed and witnessed as required by the returning officer; and
- made to the chief executive officer of the council.

Councils received a mix of hard copy and digital application forms. Feedback from stakeholders demonstrated a strong call to fully digitise the application process for future elections. Roll officers, Council Liaison Officers (CLOs) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) cited the administrative burden for council staff who assess CSR applications.

Currently, residents who apply for the CSR must have lived in the council area for at least one month prior to completing their application and have their form signed by a witness. To ensure the integrity of the enrolment process, in ECSA's

view, individuals applying as residents should be required to supply identification and proof of residence in lieu of having their application form witnessed. Supporting evidence for property owners or non-residential occupants may not be necessary, as this information is often held in the council's assessment record.

Legislative change to section 14(3b) would offer the opportunity to take a modern approach while maintaining flexibility to offer digital and paper-based options, if necessary.

Recommendation 2.

Modernise council roll application processes by amending section 14 of the LGE Act to remove the witness requirement and enable digital applications. In section 14 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the CoA Act, introduce a requirement for a natural person applying for the council roll to supply identification and proof of residence as required by the Returning Officer.

The prescribed period for finalising the voters roll conflicts with the nominations period. After the roll close date, councils may continue to review roll applications to finalise the council supplementary roll and compare this to House of Assembly (HA) roll records to remove duplicate entries. This had an impact on the timely assessment of nominations

as voters rolls were not confirmed prior to nominations opening.

ECSA also undertook extensive data matching and processing procedures to ensure the accuracy and quality of the voters roll. This occurred throughout the prescribed period for bringing the roll up-to-date in accordance with the LGE Act.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Voters roll build

The voters roll should be finalised prior to the opening of nominations to ensure there is no delay when nominations are assessed for eligibility.

A minor adjustment to the prescribed timeframes under the LGE Act would ensure there is no conflict between the period for finalising the voters roll and commencement of nominations.

Recommendation 3.

Amend section 15 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the CoA Act to ensure the roll is brought up-to-date three weeks after the roll close date, and therefore prior to nominations opening to ensure that the eligibility of people who nominate for election can be assessed efficiently.

City of Adelaide roll

The Council Supplementary Roll (CSR) for the City of Adelaide contains a high volume of bodies corporate, occupants, and non-citizen residents within the council area. In fact, the CSR comprised 54.5% of the total voters roll for the City of Adelaide. Many of these entries on the roll are automatically added based on the council's assessment record, which creates a considerable administrative burden for ECSA in detecting duplicate entries or correcting entitlements.

Uniquely for the City of Adelaide, entries on the CSR for bodies corporate or groups previously did not require the identification of a natural person who would be the designated person entitled to exercise the vote on behalf of the body corporate or group. All other councils are required to list the designated person, to ensure that a natural person is only voting once in any given election. A natural person must not have more than one entitlement in an election.

For the City of Adelaide roll, any person who is an officer of the body corporate or member of the group can complete and return the vote issued to the body corporate or group. Unfortunately, these votes are often rejected because the person already voted in another capacity, usually if they are themselves living in the City of Adelaide and are therefore a voter in their own right. This lack of understanding of the eligibility principle can lead to a diminished opportunity for a body corporate or group to exercise their vote.

Legislative changes were made to ensure that in future elections, all bodies corporate and groups on the City of Adelaide roll have identified a natural person to be the designated person for the purpose of exercising the relevant vote. However, these changes were not in effect for the 2022 Council Elections. They are expected to apply for the next periodic elections.

Access to voters roll

Under section 15(15) of the LGE Act, a nominated candidate for an election is entitled to obtain from the council a copy of the voters roll for the area at any time between the close of nominations and polling day. The voters roll includes the name and enrolled address of each individual, group, or body corporate on the roll for the relevant election.

This section of the legislation was amended after the 2018 Council Elections, removing the requirement for the voters roll to be in printed form. As the Act does not specify the format, it was found that councils took different approaches to how they supplied the roll and the methods of ensuring the information was shared securely.

These elections demonstrated the growing demand for access to the voters roll in digital format to enable campaigning techniques such as mailouts to electors. In addition, it also highlights the need for roll sharing processes to be supported by measures to ensure data confidentiality and security.



A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Access to the voters roll

It is recommended that ECSA, as the agency ultimately responsible for the roll should manage access to the voters roll by candidates. Feedback from council staff showed support for this change.

Further, access to the voters roll should also be limited to candidates proceeding to a contested election. Candidates who are elected unopposed are not required to influence the outcome of an election, and therefore do not have a genuine reason for accessing voters roll information.

Noting that the voter's roll contains a range of personal confidential information, further consideration should also be given to the extent to which any or all of the information on the roll is necessary to support campaigning activities and should be provided, and the requirements

to ensure the secure disposal of the information following the finalisation of the election.

Recommendation 4.

Amend section 15(15) of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 2 of the CoA Act to allow candidates, at any time between the declaration of nominations and polling day, to request from the returning officer a copy of the voters roll for an election, excluding any candidate declared elected in accordance with sections 25(1) and (1a) of the LGE Act.

Roll statistics

A total of 1,288,329 electors were enrolled to vote and included on the combined voters roll for the state, representing a 6.1% increase compared to 2018. Table 4 provides a comparison of total elector numbers for the HA roll and council roll since 2010.

Appendix 9.1 contains more voters roll statistics including enrolment by council and a comparison of the HA roll and council supplementary roll.

TABLE 4: Electors on the voters roll, 2010 – 2022

Roll	2022 No.	2022 percent	2018 No.	2018 percent	2014 No.	2014 percent	2010 No.	2010 percent
HA Roll	1,267,602	98.4	1,194,947	98.4	1,136,824	98.4	1,101,654	97.9
Council Roll	20,727	1.6	18,915	1.6	18,871	1.6	23,407	2.1
Total	1,288,329		1,213,862		1,155,695		1,125,061	

Candidate participation

Information for candidates

Following feedback from the 2018 Council Elections evaluation, ECSA adjusted the approach to candidate briefing sessions to implement a range of improvements including reducing the length of the sessions by focusing on election processes.

In addition, eight presentations were scheduled closer to the nominations period and two following the opening of nominations. These sessions were comprised of in-person and online meetings, held largely in the evening – see Table 5 below.

The briefing sessions covered key topics such as:

- The election timetable.
- Eligibility to be a candidate.
- Nomination procedures.
- Candidate profile and photograph requirements.

- Close of nomination procedures.
- Publication of election material.
- Illegal practices and complaint procedures.
- The mail-out and return of voting material.
- The appointment of scrutineers.
- Arrangements for the scrutiny and count.
- The vote counting system.
- Results.
- Conclusion of the election.
- Campaign Donations Returns.

For any intending candidates who could not make it to one of these sessions, ECSA also produced a recorded version and published it online.

Approximately 102 people attended the briefing sessions and there were 878 views confirmed on the pre-recorded information session.

TABLE 5: Candidate briefing sessions, 2022

No#	Date	Time	Style	Location
1	Monday 8 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Face to Face	Woodcroft Community Centre 175 Baines Road, Morphett Vale
2	Tuesday 9 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Webinar	Online
3	Wednesday 10 August 2022	2:00pm – 4:00pm	Face to Face	ECSA 60 Light Square, Adelaide (City of Adelaide only)
4	Monday 15 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Webinar	Online
5	Tuesday 16 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Face to Face	Elizabeth TAFE 2 Woodford Road, Elizabeth
6	Thursday 18 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Face to Face	ECSA 60 Light Square, Adelaide
Nominations open				
7	Wednesday 24 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Webinar	Online
8	Thursday 25 August 2022	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Webinar	Online (City of Adelaide only)

Nomination kits were provided to intending candidates. The nomination kits included nomination forms, a comprehensive Candidate Handbook, and a brochure outlining the requirements for candidate profiles and photographs.

In addition, the Local Government Association (LGA) ran several information sessions to explain the role of elected members and what being on council includes. Some councils also chose to run their own sessions locally. Feedback from Council Liaison Officers highlighted that 90% of those who responded to their evaluation survey held a local briefing session.

Eligibility to nominate

Section 17 of the LGE Act provides that a person is entitled to stand for election if:

- The person is an Australian citizen; and
- As at roll close:
 - The person is an elector for the council area; or
 - The person is the nominee of a body corporate or group which has its name on the voters roll for the area; or
 - The person's name has been omitted in error for the voters roll for the area, or the person is the nominee of a body corporate or group which has had its name omitted in error from the voters roll for the area.

A person is not eligible to be a candidate if the person:

- Is a member of an Australian Parliament; or
- Is an undischarged bankrupt or is receiving the benefit of a law for the relief of insolvent debtors; or
- Has been sentenced to imprisonment and is, or could on the happening of some contingencies become, liable to serve the sentence or the remainder of the sentence; or
- Is an employee of the council; or
- Is disqualified from election by court order under the *Local Government Act 1999*.

A person cannot nominate for more than one position.

The nomination process

To nominate, candidates had to lodge a nomination form with ECSA within the specified nomination period. For the nomination to be valid, the candidate had to complete the appropriate form that corresponded to their entitlement to nominate, being an elector on the voters roll for the area or the nominee of a body corporate or group with its name on the voters roll for the area.

All nominations were accompanied by a candidate's declaration of eligibility and a profile statement with a maximum length of 1000 characters (previously 150 words). Additionally, candidates had the option to submit an Australian passport size photograph of themselves taken within the preceding 12 months. Nomination materials, including the candidate handbook and relevant information to assist candidates to understand their rights and obligations, were available in the weeks prior to the opening of nominations on Tuesday 23 August 2022. Nomination kits were provided to each council for candidates who preferred to collect the information in printed copy.

Amendments were made to the LGE Act to facilitate the introduction of an online candidate portal where candidates could conveniently complete and lodge their nomination electronically. Traditional paper-based nomination forms were still available at council offices, though the vast majority of candidates preferred to utilise the convenience of the candidate portal. In 2022, approximately 94% of all nominations were lodged via the candidate portal. The new processes confirmed that the online approach creates significant efficiencies.

All submitted nominations had to be processed by ECSA staff to ensure their compliance with the legislative requirements. It is important to note that the demands of processing a paper-based nomination were considerably greater for ECSA staff. To create a central database of all submitted nominations and to facilitate the printing of candidate profile booklets, ECSA staff had to manually enter paper-based nominations into the candidate portal on behalf of the candidate. In these instances, the time spent processing a nomination was greatly increased and required additional quality assurance processes to address the risk of mis-keying candidate profile statements.

ECSA emailed candidates directly to acknowledge receipt of a nomination. Candidates were also advised by email if their nomination had been accepted, or if their nomination was deemed not to comply with the legislation and had been rejected. Rectifying non-compliant aspects of a nomination was far simpler for candidates that submitted via the candidate portal, as they could log in to the portal and make iterative amendments to their previous nomination before resubmitting. Conversely, candidates that submitted non-compliant paper-based nominations could only amend by completing and lodging a fresh nomination.

Following the close of nominations, ECSA staff conducted checks to ensure that all received nominations had been correctly processed and that no candidates had nominated for more than one position. At 4:00pm Tuesday 6 September 2022, the names of accepted candidates were declared at the respective council offices. In the instances where the number of accepted candidates was equal to or fewer than the number of vacancies, the accepted candidates were declared elected. In the instances where there were more accepted candidates than vacancies, a draw by lot was conducted to determine the order that candidate names would appear on the ballot paper.

Following this, correspondence was sent to all candidates advising of the:

- ballot paper draw results,
- scrutiny and count details,
- funding and donation disclosure requirements.

Candidate profile

To comply with the Regulations a candidate profile must:

- be accurate and not misleading,
- not contain commentary on decisions or actions made by the council or council members,
- not contain offensive or obscene material,
- not refer to another person who has nominated unless written permission is provided, and
- not exceed 1000 characters.

Restrictions on the content of candidate profiles

Under regulation 5(2)(iv), a candidate profile cannot comment on decisions or actions that have been made or taken by the council or on the decisions or actions of past or present members of the council. A 'comment' is taken to mean a criticism, value judgement or endorsement of a decision about a council or council members. It does not preclude statements of fact that are neutral but is intended to exclude commentary that is either negative criticism or positive endorsement.

The restrictions were intended to avoid inclusion of commentary that could be subject to civil action, including defamation action brought against the Returning Officer who must publish the information. While the regulations also require that a profile must be accurate and not misleading, no action for misleading material lies against the Returning Officer because of the indemnity provided in section 28(4) of the LGE Act.

The requirement to vet profiles for prohibited commentary when processing nominations is a complex and resource intensive process. For the 2022 Council Elections, several nominations were rejected due to the inclusion of prohibited commentary in a candidate profile. Where the nomination period was still open, candidates were able to amend their profile and re-lodge their nomination.

Candidate photographs

Under section 19 of the LGE Act, a candidate may provide a photograph with their nomination.

If provided, a photograph must meet the following requirements prescribed by the Regulations.

The photograph must:

- be the same size as an Australian passport photograph, unless approved by the Returning Officer,
- predominantly show the head and shoulders of the candidate,
- be taken within the last 12 months, and
- be endorsed by the candidate that the photograph is a photograph of the candidate and has been taken within the preceding 12 months.

Processing nominations

ECSA staff rigorously assessed all nominations to ensure each has been completed correctly and the candidate is eligible for the relevant office.

This included confirming:

- the candidate was enrolled on or before the close of rolls date,
- the candidate used the correct form and all relevant sections of the nomination form had been completed,
- the candidate profile complied with the Regulations, and
- the photograph (if provided) complied with the Regulations.

Accepted nominations

As soon as reasonably practicable after 4:00pm on the day of the close of nominations, the Local Deputy Returning Officer (LDRO) undertook the following for each of their elections:

- Announced publicly the names of candidates who had nominated.
- Declared elected any candidates where the number of nominations received did not exceed the number of vacancies.
- Conducted a draw by lot for each contested election to determine the order of candidate names on the ballot papers.

Confidentiality of nominations

For previous elections, the Returning Officer was obligated to cause a copy of a valid nomination to be displayed in the principal office of the council as soon as practicable after it was received. The suite of legislative amendments in 2021 removed this section, effectively making nominations confidential until the declaration conducted after the close of nominations.

In the 2018 Council Elections Report, ECSA recommended that section 21 be amended to make the Returning Officer responsible for publishing nominations after the close of nominations. This recommendation was made to make the nomination process consistent with state elections, and to reduce the possible manipulation of the nomination process. Under the previous legislation, candidates could withdraw their nomination in a contested election and lodge it again in another ward with no or fewer nominations. Examples of this were evident late in the 2018 elections nominations period.

For the 2022 elections, ECSA closely examined the impacts of this change, due to claims raised that it resulted in a reduction in the number of candidates nominating. Some councils directly attributed the increased number of supplementary elections required because of a lack of a candidate, to this change.

In the post-election survey of candidates, candidates were asked if the confidentiality of nominations had any impact on their decision to nominate. Seventy-eight percent of candidates who responded to the survey reported that the change in the nomination publication process did not affect their decision to nominate. More results from this survey are in Table 6.

TABLE 6: Candidates Survey results – confidentiality of nominations

Response	Percentage (%)
The change did not affect my decision to nominate	78.0
The change caused me to reconsider nominating	5.4
The change caused me to delay nominating	6.3
Other – generally supportive of publication of nominations	5.8
Other – I would have changed ward/position	1.5
Other – I wanted to know who I was running against	1.0
Other – generally supportive of confidentiality of nominations	1.0
Other – I would have withdrawn had I known who nominated	0.4
Other	0.4

ECSCA also surveyed a group known as ‘potential’ candidates. This group was comprised of people who registered for a candidate briefing session but did not nominate, or who commenced a nomination via the Candidate Portal but did not complete it.

This group was asked the following question: *In previous elections, accepted nominations were*

publicised on a noticeboard at the council office. However, this year, they were kept confidential until after the close of nominations. Did this have any impact on your decision to not nominate?

The responses demonstrated that the vast majority did not attribute their decision to not nominate to this specific issue: See Table 7 below.

TABLE 7: Potential Candidates Survey results – decision to nominate

Response	Number	Percentage (%)
No, this change did not affect my decision to not nominate	25	73.5
Yes, this change caused me to reconsider or delay nominating	5	14.7
Yes, this change was the reason I did not nominate	2	5.9
Other – <i>ineligible due to enrolment</i>	2	5.9
Total	34	100

To provide further insight, just three potential candidates from regional councils identified the change to being a contributing factor to their decision to not nominate.

It should be noted that the supplementary elections conducted because of election failure due to insufficient nominations or no nominations, were exclusively regional councils.

These numbers indicate that while the change in publication of nominations may have had some impact on the decision-making of a small number of individuals, the vast majority who were interested in nominating chose to do so regardless.

This was the first election the change in legislation was applied. Like any change, a period of adjustment is to be expected. The supplementary elections held in March 2023, just a few months after the council elections, saw a significant increase in the number of nominations for most positions. See Table 8 for vacancies and candidates for these supplementary elections.

TABLE 8: Nominations for supplementary elections

Council and Position	Vacancies	Candidates
Copper Coast – Area Councillor	1	11
Kimba – Area Councillor	1	2
Kingston – Mayor	1	1
Mount Remarkable – Willochra Ward	1	6
Northern Areas – Broughton Ward	1	2
Robe – Mayor	1	1
Southern Mallee – Area Councillor	5	13
Streaky Bay – Eyre Ward	1	1
Tumby Bay – Area Councillor	4	8
Wudinna – Area Councillor	1	2
Total	17	47

With a collective effort of ECSA promoting the nominations period, and councils demonstrating that the role of councillor is an attractive opportunity, ECSA anticipates that the

confidentiality of nominations will become the standard accepted practice, as it is for nominations in other elections and other jurisdictions.



A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Declaration of nominations

Under the LGE Act, the close of nominations is fixed at 12:00 noon on the sixth Tuesday after roll close. The draw for positions on the ballot paper must be conducted at 4:00pm (or as soon as is reasonably practicable after 4:00pm), on the day of the close of nominations. The Returning Officer must also declare the elected candidates for elections where the number of nominations did not exceed the number of vacancies.

This four-hour period is no longer sufficient to ensure last minute nominations received are processed and confirm no candidate has nominated for more than one office.

Despite encouraging candidates to complete their nomination early, the lodgement trend remained consistent with 44% lodging in the last two days. In 2022, a team of staff processed 218 nominations received on the final morning of the nominations period. This included contacting candidates to resolve errors where possible to ensure that as many as possible could be accepted.

To address this, it is recommended that the declaration and draw be conducted as soon as practicable after 9:00am on the day following

the close of nominations. For candidates and councils, the impact is effectively just one hour of the working day. For ECSA, the additional time will enable the agency to adequately process, check and confirm all nominations received at the close of nominations, conduct quality checks, and prepare for the declarations and draw for positions on the ballot paper.

Recommendation 5.

Maximise the opportunity to ensure that people who intend to nominate for election can do so validly by changing the time for the draw for positions on the ballot paper by amending:

- *section 29(3)(a) of the LGE Act to allow the draw for positions on the ballot paper to be conducted on the day following the close of nominations at a time determined by the returning officer; and*
- *section 25(1) to allow the declaration of candidates elected unopposed to be conducted at the same time as the draw for position on the ballot paper.*

Number of candidates

A total of 1,258 nominations were initially accepted for the 2022 Council Elections (see Table 9).

On 7 September 2022, the day after the declaration of accepted nominations, the then Minister for Local Government (the Hon. Geoff Brock) introduced a bill to extend the period of administration of the District Council of Coober Pedy until the council elections of 2026. This Act of Parliament, assented to on 29 September 2022, determined that the 2022 periodic election would cease to be held in Coober Pedy and anything done for the purposes of the election would be taken to be void and of no effect. Consequently, the two accepted nominations (both for the position of area councillor) were voided.

Because of this legislative change, the total number of candidates at the 2022 Council Elections was ultimately 1,256 instead of 1,258. This is a decrease from 1,374 in 2018. Of the 1,258 accepted nominations, almost 94% of candidates submitted their nominations via the candidate portal. Seventy-eight candidates submitted hard copy forms.

Approximately 44% of nominations were accepted in the final two days of the nomination period. Candidates submitted nominations marginally later than previous council elections – possibly a result of the increased convenience in nominating via the portal rather than at council offices.

Contested, uncontested elections and election failure

Across the state there were a total potential 222 elections to be conducted (see Table 10). Of those, 184 elections were contested. Another 36 were uncontested, with the candidates in those elections elected unopposed due to the number of nominations being fewer than or equal to the number of positions available. Two elections were deemed to have failed as there were no nominations received.

Supplementary elections were required to fill the remaining vacancies in seven of the uncontested elections where there had been insufficient nominations, as well as the vacancies in the two failed elections. For this reason, nine supplementary elections were scheduled as soon as possible, with nominations being held 13-27 January 2023 and close of voting for contested elections on 14 March 2023.

TABLE 9: Positions and candidates, 2010 – 2022

	2022	2018	2014	2010
Positions*	674	689	702	714
Candidates*	1,256	1,374	1,334	1,274
Ratio of candidates to positions	1.9:1	2:1	1.9:1	1.8:1

*The number of positions and candidates have been adjusted to reflect the cancellation of the 2022 periodic elections for the District Council of Coober Pedy and the voiding of the two accepted nominations for those elections.

TABLE 10: Contested, uncontested and failed elections, 2010 – 2022

Type of election	2022		2018		2014		2010	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Contested	184	82.9	206	89.6	189	80.8	194	81.1
Uncontested – no supplementary election required ¹	29	13.1	23	10.0	42	17.9	41	17.2
Uncontested – supplementary election required ²	7	3.2	0	0.0	3	1.3	4	1.7
Failed ³	2	0.9	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	222⁴		230		234		239	

¹ Uncontested elections – no supplementary election required refers to elections where the number of candidates equalled the number of positions available and the candidates were elected unopposed.

² Uncontested elections – supplementary election required refers to elections where the number of candidates was fewer than the number of positions available and the candidates were elected unopposed, but a supplementary election was required to fill the remaining positions vacant. These elections can also be described as partially failed elections.

³ Failed elections refers to those elections which failed due to no candidates nominating. It may also refer to elections which fail due to candidates dying or becoming ineligible between the close of nominations and close of voting.

⁴ The number of elections has been adjusted to reflect the cancellation of the 2022 periodic elections for the District Council of Coober Pedy and the voiding of the two accepted nominations for those elections.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Avoidance of supplementary election

Following the close of nominations, nine elections did not have enough candidates to fill the number of vacancies. Debate on how to fill these positions arose, namely sections 6(1)(a) and 8(1a) both appeared to be applicable to the circumstance. The former required supplementary elections to be held, while the latter allowed councils to appoint people to the vacancies. The different methods significantly vary in cost and time required.

Section 6(1)(a) states that if an election other than a supplementary election wholly or partially fails, a supplementary election will be held to fill the vacant office/s. However, section 8(1a) states that if the returning officer declares candidates elected but not all vacancies are filled (i.e. in an uncontested election), the council must appoint a person or people to the remaining office/s.

To avoid any uncertainty, ECSA recommends that a minor legislative amendment be made to clarify the circumstance in which a council may appoint someone to a vacancy, being after the failure of a supplementary election.

Recommendation 6.

Amend the definition of 'election failure' under section 7 to include that receiving less nominations than the number of vacancies means the election has partially failed to provide a direct connection with section 6(1)(a). Amend section 8(1a) to apply to candidates elected under section 25(1a) to clarify that councils may only appoint a person to a vacant office after a supplementary election has failed.

Candidate statements

Candidates were required to provide additional information as part of their nomination, including whether they lived in the area or ward and political party membership.

Of the 1,256 candidates, 164 (13.1%) stated that they did not live in the area or ward in which they nominated for election. Most of these candidates lived in another ward within the council area, however some were entitled to nominate through enrolment on the council supplementary roll as a property owner, nominee of a body corporate, or nominee of a group.

There were 280 (22.3%) candidates who stated that they were a member of a registered political party either at the time of their nomination, or within the 12 months preceding their nomination. Most commonly, these candidates were members of the Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division) or the Australian Labor Party (South Australian Branch). Further details of political party membership are provided in Table 11 (over leaf).

Candidate characteristics

The number and proportion of female candidates increased moderately to 466, which is 37.1% of all candidates, compared to 33.0% in 2018.

However, the proportion of candidates who were male continued to be significantly higher at 62.8%, down from 66.9% in 2018.

The data also shows those candidates who identified as a gender other than male or female. In future, ECSA is committed to offering more choice for gender identification. More information is available in Table 12 (over leaf).

There was a moderate increase in nominations from candidates in the 18-24, 35-44, and 45-54 age groups. The age breakdown between 2018 and 2022 is noted in Table 13, with age profile and segmentation in Table 14 (over leaf).

TABLE 11: Candidate political party memberships

Name of registered political party	No. of candidates who were a member
Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division)	137
Australian Labor Party (South Australian Branch)	94
Australian Greens SA	24
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	7
Animal Justice Party	5
Liberal Democratic Party	5
National Party of Australia (SA) Inc	5
Family First Party Inc	2
SA-Best Incorporated	1
Total	280

TABLE 12: Gender of candidates, 2018 – 2022

Gender	2022 Candidates	2018 Candidates
Female	466 (37.1%)	454 (33.0%)
Male	789 (62.8%)	919 (66.9%)
Other	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)
TOTAL	1,256	1,374

TABLE 13: Age of candidates, 2018 – 2022

Age	2022 Candidates	2018 Candidates
18-24	41 (3.3%)	40 (2.9%)
25-34	98 (7.8%)	115 (8.4%)
35-44	207 (6.5%)	192 (14.0%)
45-54	250 (19.9%)	255 (18.6%)
55-64	302 (24.0%)	385 (28.0%)
Over 65	358 (28.5%)	387 (28.2%)
TOTAL	1,256 (100%)	1,374 (100%)

TABLE 14: Age and gender profile of candidates, 2018 – 2022

Age	Male		Female		Other		Total	
	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018	2022	2018
18-24	29 (70.7%)	28 (66.7%)	12 (29.3%)	14 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	41	42
25-34	70 (71.4%)	80 (69.6%)	28 (28.6%)	35 (30.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	98	115
35-44	118 (57.0%)	108 (56.2%)	89 (43.0%)	83 (43.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)	207	192
45-54	136 (54.4%)	151 (59.2%)	113 (45.2%)	104 (40.8%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	250	255
55-64	180 (59.6%)	264 (68.6%)	122 (40.4%)	121 (31.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	302	385
Over 65	256 (71.5%)	288 (74.8%)	102 (28.5%)	97 (25.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	358	385
TOTAL	789 (62.8%)	919 (66.9%)	466 (37.1%)	454 (33.0%)	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)	1,256	1,374

New data now being captured by the Candidate Portal includes that 19 candidates identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Of those who identified as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander, 13 were aged 45 or older.

The most common countries of birth of candidates were Australia (1,043), United Kingdom (82) and India (42).

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Nomination eligibility requirements

The suitability of some candidates for elected office was raised by several stakeholders during the election process. ECSA notes that in other elections, legislation prescribes additional eligibility requirements to nominate, including minimum numbers of nominators, police checks, and corporations checks.

Through a number of feedback sources, it was suggested that candidates for council elections should be required to meet additional eligibility

criteria. Examples of suggestions include police checks, working with children checks, or mandatory training.

Recommendation 7.

Consider the nomination eligibility criteria and whether the LGE Act, CoA Act or regulations should be amended to introduce any further eligibility criteria.

Chapter 2

Election planning, preparation, and conduct



Election staffing

Appointment of Deputy Returning Officers and other Electoral Officers

In accordance with Part 3 of the LGE Act, the Returning Officer may appoint Deputy Returning Officers (DROs) for an area and engage other electoral officers to assist in the conduct of the elections. The Returning Officer delegates powers and functions to the DRO to manage the conduct of election activities. DROs serve an important function as a primary liaison point between ECSA and each council. For each of the 67 councils, the Electoral Commissioner appointed a local DRO (LDRO) who could complete activities at the council's primary premises, and an additional DRO within ECSA to complete other centrally coordinated activities.

In 2022, 12 LDROs were council staff members nominated by councils in regional areas, while the remaining 54 were appointed by ECSA. The recruitment of LDROs commenced in July 2022 with those who had demonstrated previous electoral experience, strong leadership, communication, and computer skills identified as suitable for the roles. As 49 councils were classified as country councils, the LDRO's proximity to the council was also a key consideration in their appointment.

LDROs were provided with training and support to enable them to properly discharge their responsibilities. Each LDRO was principally responsible for close of nominations, ballot paper draw, recruitment of electoral officers, and conduct of the scrutiny and count for their designated council.

All councils were also required to nominate suitable staff members for appointment to the roles of Council Liaison Officer (CLO), roll officer and other electoral services officers to assist with the council-related election conduct activities.

An additional 160 casual employees were sourced through a recruitment agency to support centrally managed functions such as the call centre and Central Processing Centre (CPC) operations which included the re-issue of voting packs, processing of returned postal votes, and data entry of complex computer counts.

The LDROs engaged over 900 people as electoral officers to assist in the conduct of the scrutiny and counting of votes in council offices across the state.

Over 1,200 positions were appointed to deliver the elections.

Standards for Electoral Officers

All DROs, LDROs, and Electoral Officers completed a code of conduct requiring disclosure of political neutrality. This required a declaration that they had no association with any political party or candidate, nor had any intention to be politically active. The code of conduct also required the notification of any prior criminal history, as well as a declaration of commitment to impartiality and professionalism to the roles, responsibilities, and behaviour of an electoral officer.

In addition, a criminal history check was conducted for all LDROs and other individuals in supervisory roles prior to making an offer of employment.

Thirty-eight individuals across all electoral officer appointment types (LDRO, CLO, roll officer, scrutiny and count, etc.) made a total of 51 disclosures in relation to the code of conduct.

As a result, 33 individuals were approved to work, and five electoral officers were not engaged. In summary:

- Two candidates for the role of CLOs were not approved due to political party membership.
- Two candidates for the role of electoral officer were not approved due to family members nominating for the council the individuals worked in.
- One candidate for the role of scrutiny and count staff was not approved due to political party membership.

Training and development

Training workshops for CLOs, LDROs and count software assistant (HC Auto Operator) were delivered face-to-face and online. ECSA staff appointed as DROs also attended an information and training workshop in July and August 2022, covering internal procedures and requirements topics such as:

- Election responsibilities,
- The voters roll,
- Advertising and media,
- Complaint management,
- Nominations procedures,
- Voting materials,
- Proportional Representation (PR) vote counting and ballot paper formality,
- Scrutiny and count procedures.

The training program for LDROs and CLOs was conducted separately with a series of initial sessions scheduled prior to the opening of the nominations period. Assessment exercises were conducted and reviewed by ECSA to ensure the effectiveness of the training sessions.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Appointment of Deputy Returning Officers

While the Electoral Commissioner is the returning officer for local government elections, they appoint individuals to act as Deputy Returning Officers for the purpose of exercising duties under the LGE Act in council offices across the state. Under section 10(3) of the Act, a council may nominate a person to be a deputy returning officer, and the Electoral Commissioner will make the appointment if satisfied that the person is an appropriate person, has sufficient training or experience, and in the circumstances, it is reasonable that an appointment be made.

Typically, most council nominated LDROs are from regional councils where accessibility to staff can be limited. In some cases, the LDRO was also the CEO of the council.

In 2022, the appointment of council staff into LDRO roles was raised as a potential conflict of interest issue by several stakeholders. The conflict of interest related to council staff having a level of investment in the outcome of the election, particularly CEOs who would be working closely with the elected members. Based on the questions raised by candidates at these elections, it is expected that the conflict of interest resulting from council staff involvement in the administration of elections will continue to be raised in the future.

Some CEOs and council staff also raised that in hindsight they would prefer that LDROs were not council staff.

The Electoral Commissioner is ultimately responsible for the elections and their integrity. Given the international trend of public trust in government declining, ECSA is supportive of fully removing the involvement of council staff in senior electoral officer positions. Therefore, council staff, especially council CEOs, should not be eligible to be nominated for the position of LDRO. This position must be impartial and must not give any appearance of bias or conflict of interest.

While this may cause ECSA to search more extensively for suitable individuals located in regional locations, the benefit gained from providing public confidence in the independence of the election process outweighs any additional challenge in recruitment.

Recommendation 8.

Remove section 10(3) so that the ability to appoint a Deputy Returning Officer for an area is solely the Returning Officer's responsibility.

Preparation

Central Processing Centre

A Central Processing Centre (CPC), consisting of around 4,000 square metres of office and warehouse accommodation, was established at Hindmarsh for the conduct of several key election activities including:

- Preparing, storing, and distributing election materials (before, during and after the election period),
- Testing, setting up and distributing IT equipment,
- Packing and distributing nomination, re-issue and scrutiny and count kits,
- Training staff,
- Preliminary processing and storing of returned ballot materials,
- Re-issue of ballot materials,
- Despatching ballot materials to councils for the scrutiny and counts, and
- Conducting complex computer counts.

Logistics

Significant planning and coordination is involved in managing the logistics for council elections.

A large range of election related materials are designed and produced by ECSA including procedure manuals, ballot paper envelopes, forms, nomination kits, count kits, and voting packs. All these materials were produced, received, and stored at the CPC in preparation for being packed for distribution.

Distribution began in August 2022 with the delivery of voting equipment and nominations materials to 67 councils across South Australia. Following the close of nominations, voting packs were assembled and distributed to all eligible electors in council areas with contested elections. Council offices also received materials required for the scrutiny and count process. Quantities were based on the number of electors in each council area.

All scrutiny and count materials were delivered on or before the morning of Saturday 12 November 2022. This included processed postal ballots received by ECSA, to be counted at council premises.

The next phase was to collect the complex count voting packs from relevant council locations and deliver them to the CPC for processing. Coordinating

collections from several councils required flexibility and responsiveness from ECSA, as the timing of collection was all dependant on the LDRO completing the first preference counts and informing ECSA.

Once the ballot papers for complex counts were delivered to the CPC, they were batched for data processing. Each box of ballot materials had careful measures put in place to ensure the effective chain of custody of these sensitive materials.

The final phase of the logistics process was to ensure all election materials were safely returned from the councils back to ECSA. All ballot materials were returned to the CPC and were carefully received, fully accounted for, packed, and sent to secure storage.

The logistics project manager reported using several initiatives to try and reduce overall costs, including using Australia Post to deliver nomination materials to country councils for the first time. This initiative was successfully implemented and provided an estimated cost saving of \$20,000.

Ballot paper production

Approximately 2.4 million ballot papers (and 1.3 million candidate profile booklets) were produced as part of the 2022 Council Elections. The significant printing task was spread across three different providers to minimise risk and allow the task to be completed with sufficient time to not delay mail insertion and mail out.

This quantity of ballot papers is far higher than the 1,243,661 electors eligible to vote at a contested election. The discrepancy arises from:

- electors typically receive multiple different ballot papers in one voting pack (mayor and area/ward councillor)
- electors may receive more than one voting pack (if on the council voters rolls)
- excess stock produced to account for re-issue kits, telephone voting, and any potential spoilage in the mail insertion process.

Ballot papers are colour coded depending on their election code. Colour coding is used to help distinguish ballot papers for electors and electoral officers extracting ballot papers as part of the scrutiny and count. It also helps to prevent errors during the mail insertion process.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

Digital transformation

For the 2022 Council Elections ECSA continued to implement the modernisation of its local government election systems and the shift from paper-based to digital solutions. These included:

- An online candidate portal for candidates to use for nominations.
- Telephone Assisted Voting for electors who are blind or have low vision, or are interstate or overseas, to vote.
- Online form for re-issue of postal voting packs to enable voters to apply for a replacement voting pack online.

These online options provided a better customer experience and improved data management.

For the 2022 Council Elections, the LDROs used an 'office in a box' comprised of laptops configured with the LDRO's email and count software to assist with counting of votes, along with a printer and consumables.

Testing

Testing of hardware, equipment, and software programs, including Hare-Clark Automation System (HC Auto) and Easycount, was undertaken to ensure all systems were operating effectively.

Cyber security

ECSA engaged with many external agencies to ensure all cyber risks were identified and mitigated. Penetration testing was undertaken.

There were no known cyber security incidents detected or observed at any time during the election.

Project management

Following the 2018 Council Elections, ECSA implemented a comprehensive overhaul of its project management methodology and system aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of its election projects.

A new system was introduced to implement task management procedures, track progress, and minimise risks. To facilitate this, projects were divided into a range of functions, each of which was assigned a function manager who reported regularly to the Election Delivery Committee (EDC). The function managers were responsible for supervising other project managers and ensuring the successful completion of all projects within their respective domains.

Feedback received from the previous election was integrated into the planning process for the 2022 elections which also included training for project managers on ECSA's project risk management methodology and the new system.

All project plans and risk registers were approved by the EDC. Given the time constraints, the Electoral Commissioner made strategic decisions prioritising concurrent work with the state election program. The 2022 Council Elections program comprised eight functions, encompassing 43 projects.

Details of the functional model, including the 43 election projects associated with delivering the election, can be found in Appendix 9.4 - Project Management.

Chapter 3

Getting the message out

Electoral
Commission
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Promotion and engagement

In a challenging electoral environment with electoral fatigue, disengaged electors and low participation rates, the aim of the 2022 Council Elections advertising campaign was to increase awareness and participation across the state through engaging creative and clear messaging, based on research data.

Advertising research

To inform the advertising, ECSA commissioned some pre-market advertising research which analysed several areas of council elections, including:

- elector influence points,
- elector attitudes and behaviours, and
- creative and messaging resonance.

The advertising research identified three main reasons why people do not vote in council elections, which was used to help understand non-voters and identify levers to increase participation.

- The point - “I don’t really care about it, and anyway, nothing will change.”
- The people - “I don’t know who to vote for.”
- The process - “it’s too easy to miss the whole election.”

Research findings were analysed against the key campaign objectives to help develop creative content, determine audience segmentation and media channels in a targeted communications strategy.

The 2022 Council Elections communications strategy was developed with three distinct campaign phases: ‘Enrol’, ‘Nominate’ and ‘Vote’. Each phase had distinct behaviours, audiences, and calls to action. It should be noted that ECSA was responsible for the ‘Enrolment’ and ‘Vote’ phases of the 2022 Council Elections communications strategy. The Local Government Association (LGA) was responsible for the design and implementation of the ‘Nominations’ campaign.

Stakeholder relations

The 2022 Council Elections involved many key stakeholders.

Consistent with the approach in 2018, ECSA and the LGA worked on the development of the advertising campaign and the development of some shared information and materials. An advertising agency was engaged to provide creative support for the advertising campaign.

Following ECSA’s initiatives to engage traditionally underrepresented sectors at the 2022 State Election, efforts were focused on a similar process of targeted communication and support. The sectors included Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people, hearing impaired, youth, culturally and linguistically diverse, people with an intellectual disability, and vision impaired. Each sector had a consultative phase with various peak bodies representing both public and private organisations.

During the consultative phase, engagement strategies and sector specific distribution networks were established. Examples include:

- Working with Royal Society for the Blind and Guide Dogs SA for blind and low vision community members, particularly with the use of telephone voting and its implementation at this election.
- A series of consultative meetings with Aboriginal sector stakeholders such as Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; and Australian Electoral Commission - Indigenous & Community Engagement Section.
- Partnering with Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, through existing relationships, with the preparation of video content for electors from CALD backgrounds, enabling the opportunity to participate in this election.

LGA Engagement

ECSA consulted extensively with the LGA to achieve better efficiencies and leverage media and creative spending to benefit both the LGA and the 2022 elections. A combined approach, including shared development of a research and evidence-based strategy and platform, consistent messaging, and production quality, and coordinated, integrated communications for each election advertising campaign, was agreed by both ECSA and the LGA to maximise efficiencies for advertising spend.

LGA Procurement was engaged to undertake the tendering and contract management relating to the manufacturing and purchasing of envelopes and associated handbooks, translation material and forms for this audience.

Council engagement

Council engagement sessions were conducted where all marketing contacts were invited with strategy, creative development, messaging and media shared with the group and assets provided to councils to create their campaign assets aligned with the campaign and messaging timing.

Recognising that communication is integral to the success of any good partnership, a regular Chief Executive Update for all councils was established with timely and topical newsletters forwarded to all council Chief Executive Officers, covering important areas including advertising, appointment of electoral officers, close of rolls, nominations, and results. A survey of council Chief Executive Officers after the elections found that over 92% of the 26 respondents were either satisfied or highly satisfied with ECSA's communications and updates.

Advertising campaign and information

Creative development

Based on the research findings, over 20 creative promotional ideas were explored and narrowed to six concepts with multiple advertising, communication, and messaging platforms. These were explored through consumer concept testing, including the previous "Make a difference campaign." Testing found that the preferred concept was the 'Shadow Puppets,' as displayed below.



Advertising and messaging refinement

With the Shadow Puppets' creative concept resonating well across all audiences, the advertising content and messaging were refined based on the research findings to ensure the effectiveness of the advertising campaign.

Phase 1 - Enrol

General Voters: With the State and Federal elections being held in the previous months, the need and benefit of investing in another general enrolment campaign for the House of Assembly roll was marginal, with advertising resources deployed in the final week before the close of rolls, to encourage eligible electors to update their details.

Business and Property Owners: By analysing the potential opportunity for communications to have the most considerable influence on driving enrolment, it was identified that less than 3% of eligible businesses apply to be included on the voters roll (this figure excludes the approximately 14,000 businesses automatically enrolled in City of Adelaide).

While building and maintaining the council voters roll is an individual council responsibility, ECSA developed a business-focused media engagement campaign to support councils and encourage businesses and property owners to enrol on their voters roll. This was conducted by engaging with Business SA, local business groups and the media. Additional messaging was developed around property ownership, voting entitlements, and enrolment targeting property investors and holiday homeowners.

Multiple media interviews across TV and radio (state-wide, metropolitan, and regional) were conducted during this period to ensure positive media coverage and consistent messaging and to reinforce paid media messaging; this media engagement also resulted in multiple articles in both state-wide and regional press.

Phase 2 - Nominate

The LGA was responsible for the nomination phase of this campaign.

The LGA led the nominate phase of this campaign. ECSA supported promotion of the nominate phase through publication of notices in the Government Gazette and local newspapers, social media platforms, and through both the ECSA and 2022 Council Elections website.

Phase 3 - Vote

ECSA's vote campaign aimed to ensure that all eligible South Australians were aware of the upcoming 2022 Council Elections, the voting process and how to ensure their vote would count.

Split into four separate messaging phases, the campaign commenced two weeks before posting voting packs. It increased message urgency throughout the voting period with specific single-minded calls to action to help ensure that electors knew what to expect or do.

Media channels utilised across this phase included TV, press (state-wide and regional), digital, social, radio (state-wide metro and regional), email and SMS. Councils were supplied with campaign assets for their own channels, distributed via the LGA.



Campaign effectiveness

Participation rate

There was an increase in the overall participation rate for the 2022 Council Elections to 32.9%, up from 31.6% in 2018. Given the environment in which the election was conducted, i.e., the third (or fourth in some cases) election in 2022, there was a significant risk of voter fatigue and a collapse in participation.

ECSA's goal was to ensure all electors were aware of the election and encourage participation. As such, the slight increase in participation should be taken as a positive result considering the potential voter fatigue of several elections in close proximity. A survey of electors highlighted the top three reasons for voting was that people wanted to have their say (45%), a responsibility to vote / sense of community (22%) and thinking it was compulsory to vote (10%).

TABLE 15: Survey of Electors - Main reason for voting

Reason	2022 (%)	2018 (%)
I wanted to have my say	45	41
I feel responsible to vote / sense of community	22	3
I thought it was compulsory to vote	10	7
I wanted change	9	18
I didn't like the previous councillors / mayor / council	7	10
Because of an issue / issues	7	8
I think everyone should vote	3	21
I supported candidate standing in my area	2	22

Additional communications required

Telephone voting

Legislation for telephone voting in council elections was passed in September 2022. Therefore, a significant focus on resources and advertising was required to ensure that eligible South Australians knew of the availability of the service.

ECSA engaged directly with the Royal Society of the Blind and Guide Dogs SA and utilised their communication channels to advise the availability of the service to blind and low vision South Australians directly.

With the availability of telephone voting for eligible interstate and overseas electors, potential interstate and overseas electors were identified on the roll. Where possible, they were emailed and sent SMSs outlining the availability of the service. Additionally, over 500,000 electors on the HA roll with email addresses and/or mobile phone numbers had messages sent to them that included the availability of telephone voting.

ECSA received 1,346 telephone votes from 744 individual blind and low vision, interstate, and overseas electors as a direct result of these communications, allowing eligible South Australians who may not have had the opportunity to vote in this election, the opportunity to do so.

Re-issues

Re-issues of voting pack material, either due to not being received or misplacement, had previously been a paper-based process where applicants for ballot paper re-issue needed to download a form and return the form to ECSA for a re-issue to be processed. The process was redeveloped to allow eligible electors seeking replacement ballot material to call the call centre and complete the application over the phone. Simplifying the process made communications, messaging, and the call to action simple and straightforward for electors.

Targeted engagement

Extensive consultation with CALD groups was conducted throughout the development of the 2022 Council Elections communications strategy, with specific assets developed for CALD and disability communities based on their needs.

The CALD community, through ECSA's existing relationships and local council community contacts, were targeted with tailored advertising and supplied with translations of key electoral information, including printed how-to-vote guides etc.

Video content was developed, designed to advise electors from CALD backgrounds of the opportunity to participate in the elections and enrol on their local council's supplementary roll if they were not citizens but were eligible to be included.

As the campaign developed, additional video content was developed in language to help people understand the voting process and how to make sure their vote counted.

This content and printed materials were available on the ECSA website and were distributed via CALD community groups, local libraries, and councils.

The blind and low vision community was engaged through the Royal Society of the Blind and Guide Dogs SA. They were provided with specific collateral on their voting options, especially the advent of telephone voting for this election - a first for South Australia. All information on the ECSA website was accessible to ensure these electors could find any required information.

Elections notices

The LGE Act prescribes the timeframes for the publication of public notices. Public notices were placed in the Government Gazette and across a variety of regional and metropolitan newspapers. The newspapers used were all identified and approved by each council. Table 16 provides an overview of the election notices placed and date of placement.

Table 16: Election notices

Description	Legislation	Placement	Latest Date
Close of rolls	LGE Act section 15(7)(a)	Newspapers & Gazette	21 July 2022
Nominations open	LGE Act section 18	Newspapers & Gazette	18 August 2022
Nominations received*	LGE Act section 26(1)	Newspapers & Gazette	15 September 2022
Election to be conducted by post*	LGE Act section 38 regulation 11	Included with nominations received notice	15 September 2022
Place of vote counting*	LGE Act section 30(2)	Included with nominations received notice	15 September 2022
Assisted voting	LGE Act section 9a (2)	Gazette	6 October 2022
Election results	LGE Act section 50(3)(b)	Newspapers & Gazette	8 December 2022

*These details are combined in a single notice to reduce costs and to simplify proofing schedules and print deadlines

Close of rolls notices were generic notices common across all councils and appearing in all newspapers across the state. The nominations open notices appeared as composite advertisements, where details for multiple council elections appeared in one advertisement in the relevant newspapers.

The nominations received notices appeared in all relevant newspapers within the council areas. These notices also included standard information for all

councils, including the elections being conducted by post, the dates for mail-out of voting packs and requirements for candidates to provide campaign donations returns.

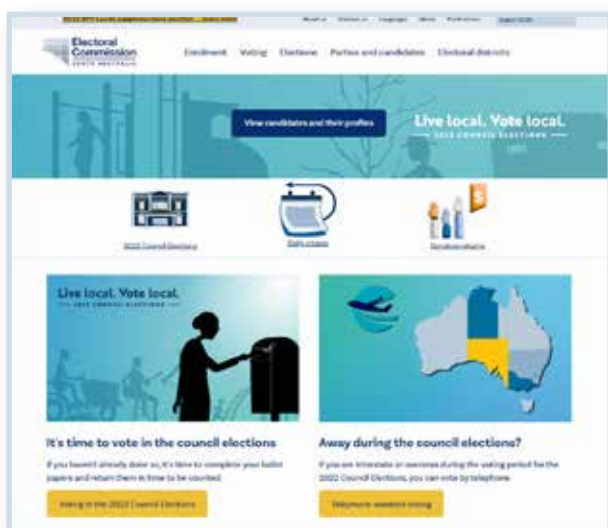
Results notices were also published individually in the relevant newspapers. Further to this, all the above notices were published in the Gazette within the relevant timeframes.

Website

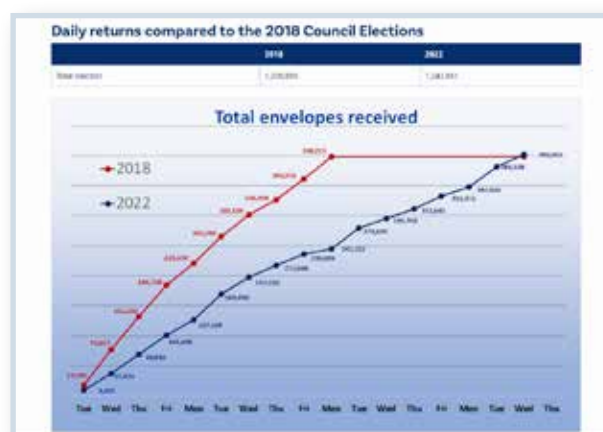
With the LGA, ECSA developed a new election-specific website instead of utilising separate websites for the LGA and ECSA to facilitate communications and information distribution.

The new website, councilelections.sa.gov.au, acted as an entry point for candidates and electors with content provided by ECSA and the LGA, which then took people to the relevant part of the respective organisations' websites for further information.

The call to action for all communications directed electors to visit councilelections.sa.gov.au. Website content was updated to reflect the phases of the election: enrolment, nominations, and voting. Additionally, the site provided a hub for candidate profiles and results.



Above: ECSA's website homepage during the voting phase in early November 2022



Above: ECSA's popular postal returns summary web page, which was updated daily in the two weeks leading up to the close of voting on 10 November 2022

Social media

Underpinning the advertising campaign was ECSA's social media campaign, which ran from July to November 2022 on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. During July, August, and September 2022 there were 152 social media posts, published across all platforms, to inform electors of key dates regarding enrolment and nominations.

During weekdays in October and November, daily social media posts were posted, and these were designed to engage electors and inform them of various stages of the campaign, emphasising the urgency to return postal votes. The posts reinforced the key messaging in the advertising campaign and highlighted the volume of postal votes received per council.

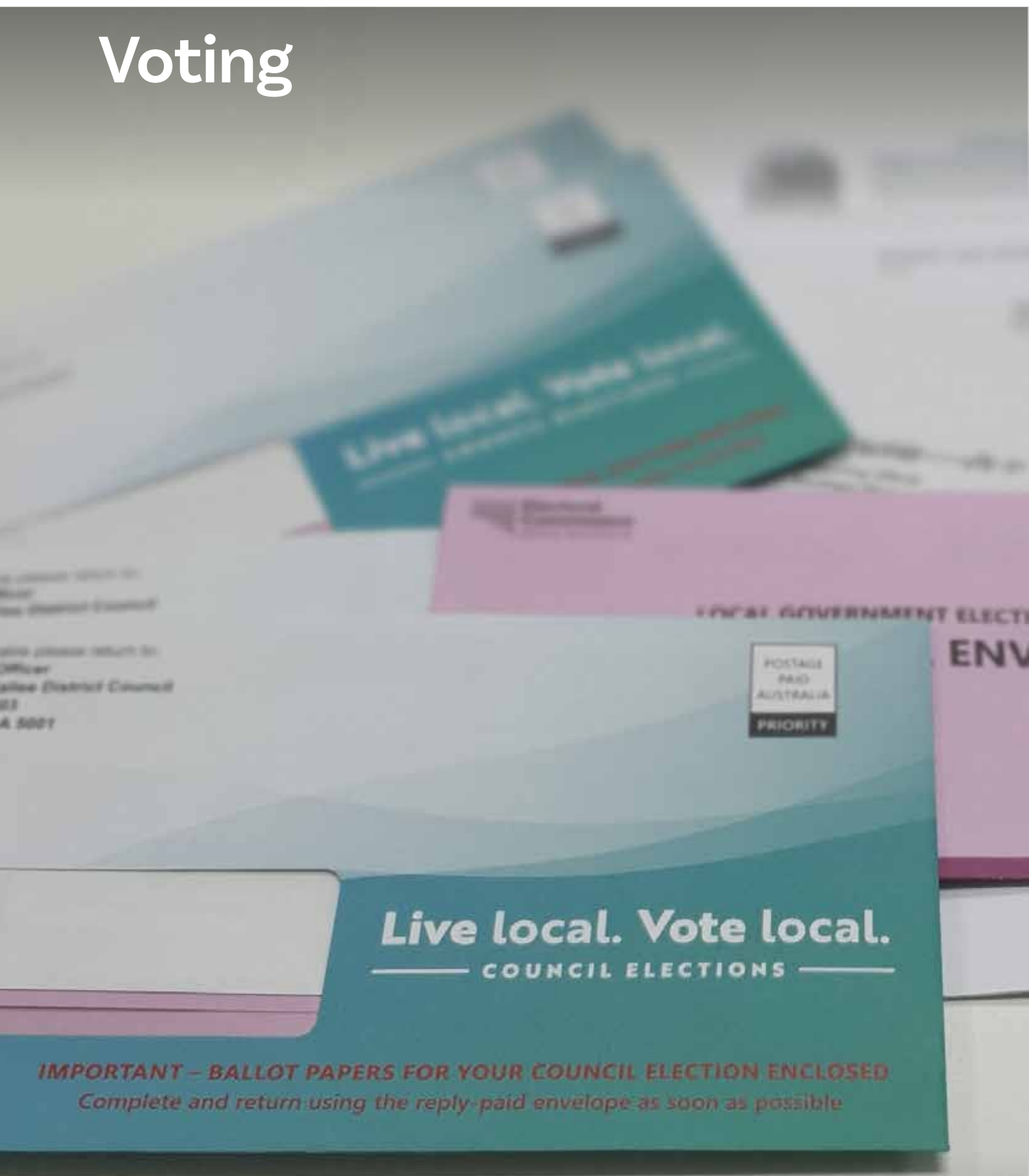
The social media campaign increased public engagement. Social media posts were also shared with council social media accounts, further increasing the reach of election messages. Table 17 highlights the social media used and their engagement.

TABLE 17: Social media statistics

	Number of posts	Reach	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement rate (%)
Facebook	53	127,750	145,748	5,174	3.5
Twitter	64	NA	40,850	1,706	4.2
Instagram	35	5,209	6,074	631	10.4
TOTAL	152	132,959	192,672	7,511	3.9

Chapter 4

Voting



Live local. Vote local.
— COUNCIL ELECTIONS —

IMPORTANT - BALLOT PAPERS FOR YOUR COUNCIL ELECTION ENCLOSED
Complete and return using the reply-paid envelope as soon as possible

Voting services

Voting in council elections must be available to every eligible elector through a postal voting pack. For the first time, an additional voting service was available for blind and low vision voters, as well as voters interstate or overseas. This chapter discusses the logistics of delivering voting services for the council elections.

Preparation of voting packs

Following the close of nominations and draw for ballot paper position on Tuesday 6 September, work immediately commenced on the creation of ballot papers and candidate profile brochures required for each voting pack. Accuracy is paramount when producing this material and each item was subject to a rigorous quality assurance process. 184 variations of ballot papers and 1,256 candidate profiles were reviewed and approved prior to forwarding to the printing contractors for formatting and printing. Print ready proofs were provided to ECSA for a final check and approval.

ECSA conducted quality control checks onsite at the printing contractors to ensure that the material printed was true to the approved copy.

All postal voting packs were dispatched using the priority mail service to provide the fastest delivery available. The reply-paid envelope enclosed in the voting pack was also priority paid to ensure prompt return of ballot material. Given the current postal delivery timeframes, this gave electors a period of around three weeks to vote and return their voting packs to ECSA.

Issue of voting packs

The LGE Act specifies the dates and timeframes of all key activities related to council elections. Section 39 of the LGE Act requires that the Returning Officer must, as soon as practicable after the twenty-eighth day before polling day and no later than 21 days before polling day, issue a postal voting pack to every eligible elector. For the 2022 Council Elections, ECSA had from the close of nominations on Tuesday 6 September until Friday 14 October to create, print, pack and lodge with Australia Post the 1,243,661 voting packs required for the elections.

KEY DATES FOR ISSUE AND RETURN OF VOTING PACKS

- **12 noon, Tuesday 6 September:**
Close of nominations
- **4:00pm, Tuesday 6 September:**
Draw of positions on the ballot paper
- **Friday 14 October to Thursday 20 October:**
Mailout of voting materials to electors
- **5:00pm, Thursday 3 November:**
Last day for postal and personal issue/re-issue of voting material
- **5:00pm, Thursday 10 November:**
Close of voting

Voting packs were assembled over a four-week period at three commercial mail houses. Several quality control processes were implemented at the mail houses during production.

Each voting pack included:

- Ballot paper for each contested election for which the elector was entitled,
- Brochure containing the profile for each candidate,
- Postal voting guide,
- Reply-paid envelope, and
- Ballot paper envelope bearing a tear off declaration flap for completion by the elector.

Merger proposal ballot papers were included in the voting packs to be distributed to electors for the District Council of Grant and City of Mount Gambier elections.

Due to the volume of the mail-out and the requirement to meet strict legislative timeframes, ECSA sought cooperation from Australia Post to schedule lodgement times for metropolitan and country councils to ensure timely delivery to electors.

The significant volume of voting packs that must be prepared and the complexity of the various combinations of inserts for 184 separate contested elections, make achieving the current legislative timelines challenging, placing considerable pressure on ECSA staff.

FAST FACTS

- 184 different elections across 58 council areas
- 6.8 million items printed to enable postal voting
- During the voting period, 2,596 voting packs were re-issued by ECSA. This was an increase of 56.0% from the 2018 council elections.

Re-issue of voting packs

Section 43 of the LGE Act enables an elector to be given a fresh voting pack if the returning officer is satisfied that the original voting pack was not received, was lost, or spoiled. The Act requires records to be kept of any fresh voting packs issued.

Electors who required a re-issue could complete a form or contact ECSA's call centre to request a new voting pack. Once a request was received, details of the re-issued voting pack were recorded in ECSA's systems to ensure compliance with the legislative requirements and help ensure that duplicate or fraudulent votes were not included in the counting of votes.

During the voting period, all requests by electors for the re-issue of voting material were actioned by ECSA staff at the CPC. During previous elections, council staff were able to re-issue voting packs at council offices. However, the amended legislation resulted in all re-issue of voting packs to be conducted by post. As councils were no longer re-issuing voting packs, there was a significant increase in the number of voting packs re-issued by ECSA – see Table 18 for a comparison of the number of re-issued voting packs between 2018 and 2022.

For the first time, ECSA also utilised text messages to electors (where mobile phone numbers were available on the State electoral roll) to remind them of the council elections. This direct communication with electors may also have contributed to the increased number of re-issue requests.

TABLE 18: Re-issued voting packs, 2018 – 2022

	2022		2018	
	No.	% of all voting packs	No.	% of all voting packs
Voting packs re-issued	2,596	0.2	1,664	0.1

Issue of voting pack due to omission from voters in error

Voting materials must be issued to any person, body corporate or group of persons whose name does not appear on the voters roll but claims to be entitled to vote at the election. If an elector considers that they are entitled to vote but their name is not on the roll (for example, due to an error), they are required to apply to the returning officer for a voting pack to be issued (see section 39(4)), by using a form or contacting the ECSA call centre.

Any returned ballot paper envelopes are examined during the preliminary scrutiny process with the LDRO determining whether to reject or admit the envelopes from further scrutiny and count processes in accordance with section 47(2) of the LGE Act.

In the 2022 Council Elections, there were 47 voting packs issued to electors claiming they had been omitted from the roll in error, compared to 38 issued in 2018. Of the 47 voting packs issued, 21 were returned to ECSA. Six of these were accepted and 15 rejected prior to scrutiny and count.

Telephone Assisted Voting (TAV)

TAV was offered to South Australian electors for the first time at the 2022 Council Elections following amendments to the LGE Act by the *Statutes Amendment (Local Government Review) Act 2021*. Section 41A of the LGE Act and Regulations 9A and 9B of the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 2010 (Regulations)* enable electors who are blind or have low vision, or who were interstate or overseas to access TAV.

The Regulations outline the method for TAV. While the amendments to the LGE Act to facilitate TAV commenced on 10 November 2021, new Regulations 9A and 9B did not commence until 29 September 2022. This was notably after the printing of the relevant ballot material and the mail out of voting packs to electors for the 2022 Council Elections.

This delay and lack of certainty about the final TAV voting methodology made it difficult to finalise the arrangements for the service and communicate it to electors who potentially wanted to access it.

To support these changes, ECSA established a simple, single phone call service for TAV electors. Consistent with the voting method prescribed in the Regulations, ECSA call centre staff assisted electors to vote using the TAV process via a single telephone call but interacting with separate operators for registration and vote taking. When an elector called, they provided their personal details to enable the initial operator to verify their identity and confirm that they were eligible to vote and confirm they had not already voted. Following the confirmation of their eligibility, the operator registered the elector as a telephone assisted voter and provided them with a unique code. The elector was then advised they would be transferred to a second operator who would record their vote and was asked to not provide any personal identifying information to the second operator, to protect the secrecy of their vote.

Once the call was transferred to the second operator, a third independent operator listened to the call and observed the person recording the preferences of the elector on the ballot paper as instructed. This provided independent assurance that all preferences recorded were exactly as the elector specified. Completed ballot papers were sealed in a ballot paper envelope labelled with the elector's unique code and deposited into secure storage during the voting period.

The average call duration for electors casting their vote was just over seven minutes. ECSA's TAV service operated for a 4-week period from the dispatch of ballot papers to the close of voting.

During the 2022 council elections comprised of:

- 744 voters used ECSA's TAV services, casting 1,346 votes across 53 councils comprised of:
 - 46 blind and low vision voters
 - 155 overseas voters
 - 543 interstate voters.

This interest in TAV services is significant given that electors were not advised of the availability of the services in their voting packs. ECSA anticipates that demand for TAV services will continue to grow as more electors become aware it is available.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Telephone Assisted Voting

The eligibility criteria for telephone assisted voting should be expanded to include people living with a disability. This voting service would remove a barrier to participation for people who may not be able to physically or independently complete their ballot papers or deposit their ballot paper envelope at a postal facility or council office, without assistance.

ECSA has previously recommended that telephone assisted voting be introduced for state elections. When Parliament considers that recommendation and the eligibility criteria for prescribed electors, the same eligibility criteria

should be replicated in the *Electoral Act 1985*. This will create consistency for the prescribed group of electors in understanding the electoral services they are eligible for in elections administered by ECSA and may encourage participation where there otherwise may have been a barrier or deterrent to participation.

Recommendation 9

Amend section 41A (8) of the Act, or amend the regulations, to expand the eligibility criteria for prescribed electors to include people with disability.

Postal voting

Following a change to the legislation which brought forward the mailout of voting packs, electors were provided an extra week to vote in. This meant that electors had around three weeks in which to vote and return their voting pack to ECSA, instead of the previous two weeks. A total of 428,872 electors returned a voting pack before the deadline of 5:00pm on Thursday 10 November. This compares to 398,215 voting packs returned in 2018, an increase of 30,657 or 7.7%.

The expanded voting period accommodated the longer mail delivery times for letters and helped to increase the likelihood that postal votes could reach ECSA before the close of voting. For information on the number of ballot paper envelopes that reached ECSA too late to be included in the count, see Table 33 Appendix 9.2.

The daily postal return rate was more gradual than at previous periodic elections, with the total number of returns not surpassing the total 2018 figure until the second-to-last day of the voting period. The total postal return rate for the elections was 34.5% - 1.6% higher than in 2018. Note that this figure includes voting packs deposited by voters in ballot boxes at their local council.

Ballot boxes

While the time frame for returning postal voting packs increased by a week due to legislative change, there was still some demand for electors to have the option to deposit their completed vote in a ballot box in person. As a result, physical ballot boxes and security seals were provided to all councils for receipt of ballot material at their principal office during the voting period. Council appointed electoral officers were instructed to ensure that ballot boxes were constantly supervised and stored securely while on council premises.

Metropolitan councils delivered their ballot boxes directly to the CPC for processing twice during the final week of the voting period. Arrangements were made with country councils to return ballot material collected up until Monday 7 November, to ECSA via Express Post. Ballot material received at country councils between Monday 7 November and the close of voting was retained onsite for processing by the LDRO once voting had closed.

A total of 17,025 ballot paper envelopes were deposited in council ballot boxes across the state equating to 4.0% of the returned envelopes. This was 5,756 more envelopes than the total of 11,269 deposited in council ballot boxes in 2018.



Return to sender voting packs (unclaimed mail)

As each elector on the roll must be sent a postal voting pack, ECSA is reliant on the accuracy of postal data from the state electoral roll. Where an elector has a postal address listed against their enrolment, this is the default address to which the voting pack is sent. It is therefore critical that an elector's postal details are up to date on the State electoral roll.

ECSA currently has a limited ability to ensure the accuracy of the postal addresses on the State electoral roll as it is up to the elector to ensure their details are correct. ECSA's advertising campaign included a strong focus on encouraging electors and businesses to check and, if necessary, update their enrolled address prior to the close of rolls. Traditional print and digital advertising channels were utilised, including disseminating information through social media. ECSA engaged with the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community, through

formed relationships with CALD community organisations across the state. Councils were supplied with these advertising assets to use across their own advertising and promotional channels.

Where an elector's postal address is incorrect, ECSA is reliant on the recipient or Australia Post returning the voting pack as unclaimed mail so that the incorrect address can be actioned. Depending on the voting entitlement of the elector, returned mail details are forwarded to the Australian Electoral Commission or the relevant council so that elector details can be followed up and updated on the roll.

Despite ECSA's efforts to encourage electors to check and update their address details, there was a significant increase in the number and percentage of voting packs returned as unclaimed mail for the 2022 Council Elections in comparison with 2018. See Table 19 for an overview, and for more detailed information on the number of voting packs returned to sender for each council see Table 33.

TABLE 19: Return to sender voting packs, 2018 – 2022

	2022		2018		Change	
	No.	% of voting packs issued	No.	% of voting packs issued	No.	%
Return to sender voting packs	25,040	2.0	22,151	1.8	+2,889	+13.0



Voter participation

In the past, ECSA measured and reported voter participation at council elections using the postal return rate – that is, the number of returned postal vote envelopes as a percentage of enrolled electors. Using this method, participation at the 2022 Council Elections would be 34.5%, up from 32.9% at the 2018 Council Elections.

However, for the 2022 Council Elections and all future council elections, ECSA is changing the way it measures and reports voter participation. The rationale for this is as follows:

1. Since the advent of telephone voting in 2022, voting at council elections in South Australia is no longer exclusively by postal vote. With the addition of a new voting method, the postal return rate is no longer a suitable way of measuring the participation of all voters.
2. Using the postal return rate is inconsistent with how ECSA measures and reports voter participation at parliamentary elections – that is, the number of formal and informal ballot papers counted, as a percentage of enrolled electors. Comparisons of turnout at South Australia’s council and state elections are frequent from members of the public, the media, elected members, and others. A single consistent measure of participation is required across elections for all levels of government.
3. Finally, using the postal return rate as the measure of voter participation is inconsistent with how voter participation is reported at most council elections around Australia – that is, also using the number of formal and informal ballot papers counted, as a percentage of enrolled electors. It is noteworthy that this includes at council elections conducted using full postal voting in Queensland and Victoria.

For all these reasons, in this Election Report and in future, ECSA will report voter participation at council elections as the number of formal and informal ballot papers counted as a percentage of enrolled electors. Greater consistency with how participation is reported at parliamentary elections, and how it is reported by most electoral commissions at most council elections in Australia (and elsewhere around the world) will allow more accurate comparisons. The new method will also allow ECSA to report participation data more precisely than in the

past, and be able to, for the first time ever, report participation rates for each individual council election – be it for mayor, area councillor or ward councillor.

Using this new measure of participation, the total participation rate across all 58 councils holding contested periodic elections in 2022 was 32.9%, which is an increase of 1.3% from 2018 when participation was 31.6%.

There were 733,092 votes counted in total, up from 731,317 votes in 2018. Although this may appear to be just a slight increase, it should be noted that these totals come from very different numbers of contested elections – 184 elections in 2022, down from 206 elections in 2018 – which indicates that the average number of voters per election increased significantly in 2022: from 3,550 per election in 2018 to 3,984 per election in 2022. Table 34 in the Appendices to this Report displays the voter participation figures for every council and each contested election in 2022, as well as participation figures for every council and each contested election in 2018 recalculated using the new methodology.

It is important to note that adopting this new measure of participation does not mean that ECSA will stop reporting postal returns data. Indeed, Table 33 in the Appendices includes a detailed breakdown of postal returns for every council.

Voter participation trends

The 2022 Council Elections once again saw a marked difference in participation between country electors and their counterparts in metropolitan Adelaide. The total participation rate in country councils was 43.3% (down just marginally from 43.6% in 2018), compared to 29.6% in metropolitan councils (up from 27.8% in 2018).

The 18 councils located in metropolitan Adelaide all ranked among the lowest 26 councils for voter participation. Even proximity to Adelaide seemed to be a factor decreasing turnout in country councils: four of the country councils directly bordering the Adelaide metro area (Adelaide Plains Council, Adelaide Hills Council, Barossa Council and Mount Barker District Council) also appeared among the 26 councils with lowest voter participation.

The five councils with the highest voter participation were all located far from the state capital: Flinders Ranges Council (62.5%), District Council of Elliston (68.6%), District Council of Cleve (69.0%), District Council of Robe (69.2%), and District Council of Franklin Harbour (69.7%). By contrast, the five

councils with the lowest voter participation were all large metropolitan councils: City of Onkaparinga (24.8%), City of Tea Tree Gully (26.3%), City of Playford (26.5%), City of Marion (28.4%), and City of Adelaide (28.4%). See Table 20 below.

TABLE 20: Voter participation rate by councils

Voter participation rate (range)	Frequency	Councils (in ascending order, lowest to highest)
20 - 29.9%	7	Onkaparinga, Tea Tree Gully, Playford, Marion, City of Adelaide, Adelaide Plains, Charles Sturt
30 - 39.9%	18	Campbelltown, Adelaide Hills, Holdfast Bay, Salisbury, West Torrens, Port Adelaide Enfield, Unley, Burnside, Gawler, Norwood Payneham & St Peters, Mitcham, Murray Bridge, Light, Mount Barker, Prospect, Barossa, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln
40 - 49.9%	14	Walkerville, Mount Gambier, Whyalla, Lower Eyre, Berri Barmera, Port Augusta, Alexandrina, Mid Murray, Victor Harbor, Wakefield, Renmark Paringa, Wattle Range, Clare & Gilbert Valleys, Northern Areas
50 - 59.9%	9	Yorke Peninsula, Barunga West, Ceduna, Loxton Waikerie, Yankalilla, Coorong, Goyder, Naracoorte Lucindale, Kangaroo Island
60 - 69.9%	10	Tatiara, Kingston, Grant, Peterborough, Karoonda East Murray, Flinders Ranges, Elliston, Cleve, Robe, Franklin Harbour

The country - metro divide is even starker when looking at the participation rates at individual elections. Of the 100 elections with the lowest participation rates, 92 were in metropolitan councils and just eight in country councils. Full participation statistics for every council and its contested elections can be found in Table 34.

The five elections with the lowest voter participation in 2022 were: City of Onkaparinga Knox ward 22.2%, City of Tea Tree Gully Pedare ward 23.2%, City of Onkaparinga Pimpala ward 23.8%, City of Adelaide Central ward 24.3%, and City of Onkaparinga Mid Coast ward 24.3%.

At the other end of the spectrum, the five elections with the highest participation were:

District Council of Elliston area 68.6%, District Council of Cleve area 69.0%, District Council of Robe area 69.2%, District Council of Franklin Harbour area 69.7%, and District Council of Grant Port MacDonnell ward 72.7%.

Finally, the results of the 2022 Council Elections suggest that participation rates may vary depending on the type of election on the ballot paper. Participation in ward elections appears to have been lower than the other types of elections held:

- At mayoral elections, voter participation was 32.6% overall, but the average participation rate across the 38 contested mayoral races was 41.2%, ranging from 24.8% in the City of Onkaparinga up to 62.5% in the Flinders Ranges Council.
- In area councillor elections, the voter participation rate overall was 41.7%, averaging 50.0% across the 30 different area councillor elections.
- Ward councillor elections saw the lowest participation rates: 31.1% overall, averaging 35.1% across all 116 contested ward councillor elections. Participation rates did vary considerably however, ranging from just 22.2% in the City of Onkaparinga Knox ward up to 72.7% in the District Council of Grant Port MacDonnell ward.

In fact, these statistics are a little misleading. The reason why elections for area councillors had much higher turnout figures is most likely the fact that the immense majority of councils with area councillor positions are country councils (27 out of 30). Likewise, the reason that elections for ward councillors had lower figures is probably because there are many more wards - and many more electors - in metropolitan councils than there are in country councils. Separating out the country and the metro wards, average participation in the 30 elections for country ward councillors was 47.1% vs. an average participation rate of 26.6% in 86 elections for metro ward councillors.

Rejected ballot paper envelopes

A total of 12,852 ballot paper envelopes were rejected at scrutiny representing 3.0% of all ballot paper envelopes returned, an increase from 1.8% from the 2018 council elections. As highlighted in Table 21 the increase in the number of rejected ballot paper envelopes can mainly be attributed to greater numbers of ballot papers not returned inside the envelope, and a significant number of envelopes that bore either the wrong signature or no signature at all. This increase could be due to voters not following the instructions provided with their ballot papers.

A comparison of the number of rejected ballot paper envelopes categorised by reason is provided in the following Table 21.

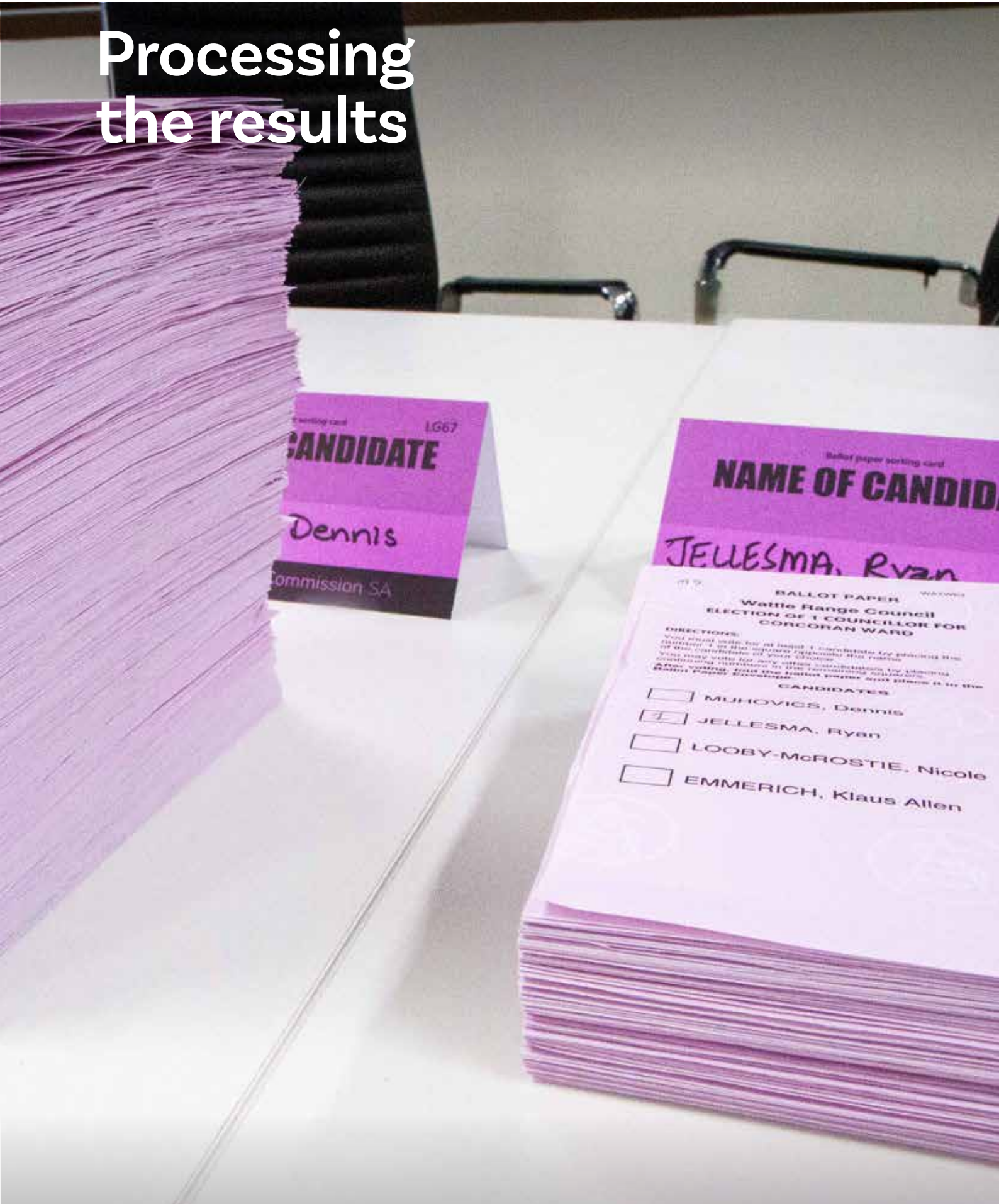
TABLE 21: Rejected ballot paper envelopes, 2018 – 2022

Reason for rejection	2022		2018	
	No.	%	No.	%
Ballot papers outside envelope	2,367	18.4	204	2.7
No witness	46	0.4	32	0.4
No signature	3,704	28.8	3,143	41.5
Wrong signature	2,708	21.1	715	9.4
Power of Attorney	36	0.3	20	0.3
Declaration flap returned but ballot paper envelope missing	12	0.1	12	0.2
Ballot paper envelope returned but declaration flap missing	964	7.5	-	-
Electors information removed	18	0.1	-	-
Manual rejects*	2,249	17.5	2,922	38.6
Rejected omission in error	15	0.1	26	0.3
Original removed	179	1.4	48	0.6
Duplicate removed	554	4.3	454	6.0
Total	12,852	100.0	7,576	100.0

* Manual rejects are any votes returned with nothing to enable ECSA to identify the elector, e.g. ballot papers only

Chapter 5

Processing the results



Voting and counting methods

The method of voting and counting continued to be a topic of interest among candidates. Similar to 2018, the post-election survey of candidates showed varying levels of understanding of and support for the proportional representation (PR) electoral system.

This is particularly demonstrated through the enquiries and comments received from candidates who questioned why they had not been elected when they had received a higher number of first preferences than other candidates, who were later elected through preference distributions.

Candidates and voters alike contacted the ECSA call centre throughout the election period for clarification on how preferences work and seeking an explanation of PR. Similar to previous years, some voters were opposed to ranking candidates using preferences as they wanted to give candidates equal weight. Other concerns related to the requirement for voters to allocate a specific number of preferences, in order to make a formal vote, including to candidates who they do not support.

Confusion about the electoral system was also demonstrated through candidates requesting recounts based solely on the margin of votes, without understanding how transfer values apply during the distribution of candidates' ballot papers. The complexity of the counting system meant that many candidates did not understand the election results and sought an explanation as to the final outcome.

ECSA recognises that more needs to be done to explain how voting and counting works at council elections. Despite information provided at candidate briefing sessions, in the candidate handbook, in online videos and website content, some candidates remained confused. Counting votes under the PR system can be a complex and protracted process, which also contributes to pressure from candidates and councils seeking faster results. However, particularly in elections where large fields of candidates contest multiple vacancies, PR can require numerous counts to distribute preferences, and the counting process can take considerable time.

In 2022, there were 25 contested elections deemed as complex counts as they were likely to require considerable manual effort to complete. Complex counts required additional resourcing and increased time with some results finalised five days after the close of voting. The largest number of counts recorded was for the Town of Gawler area councillor election which required 320 distributions. Of the 25 complex counts, 19 required more than 50 distributions to obtain a final result, with eight of those requiring more than 100 distributions.



Scrutiny and count arrangements

Location and timing

The scrutiny and count began at 9:00am on Saturday 12 November 2022 in local council venues across the state. Mayoral counts were the priority for Saturday, and 37 of 38 of these counts were successfully completed on that day.

Prior to counting the votes, the ballot papers were firstly extracted and reconciled. Count staff removed the declaration flaps from the ballot paper envelopes to ensure the secrecy of every vote.

Then the envelopes were opened, and the ballot papers extracted. The time taken for this process varied between councils depending on the number of ballot paper envelopes. For some councils, most of Saturday was spent conducting the extraction.

The ballot papers were reconciled at each stage to ensure that the total number of envelopes and ballot papers were accounted for. After the ballot papers were reconciled, count staff commenced checking for formality and the counting of first preferences, before finally undertaking the distribution of preferences. The count to first preferences for every election was counted at council premises or nearby venues, with the exception of the Flinders Ranges Council mayoral count which was undertaken at the ECSA Light Square office.

Counting continued into Sunday 13 November 2022, with 158 out of 184 counts completed and provisionally declared over the weekend.

Counting systems

The method of counting votes in council elections is prescribed by legislation and is complex as it involves several types of calculations. The following systems were utilised to assist with conduct of counts.

HC Auto counts

To ensure accuracy during the counting process, all LDROs used a Microsoft Excel based application called Hare-Clark Automation (HC Auto).

HC Auto was used to enter the number of ballot papers distributed at each count, calculate the quota and transfer values, and identify elected and excluded candidates. All LDROs completed training in using HC Auto which included several test exercises to ensure the system was functioning as expected.

However, some counts were predicted to be highly complex due to the number of candidates and number of vacancies. These counts often result in hundreds of individual distributions of ballot papers to achieve the final outcome, which cannot be completed during count weekend using the HC Auto software due to the extended time required.

Instead, ECSA continued counting during the week following count weekend to complete these elections via data entry. Software called Easycount was again used to conduct the extensive ballot paper distributions electronically as explained in the next section.

Complex data entry counts

Under section 55 of the LGE Act, the Returning Officer may, after consultation with council, decide to use a computer program to carry out steps involved in the recording, scrutiny or counting of votes.

Once nominations closed, ECSA conducted an analysis of all elections to identify which were most likely to be complex under the PR vote counting system. Based on the expected number of ballot papers, number of nominations and vacancies, 25 elections were selected for data entry. This was a significant decrease from the 42 identified in 2018.

The ballot papers for these elections were returned to ECSA's CPC after the extraction, reconciliation and first preference counts were conducted at council venues. The ballot papers were sorted into batches and data entry operators entered the preferences on each ballot paper into Easycount. Each batch was verified by a second data entry operator to ensure that the preferences were accurately entered. Once all data entry was completed, Easycount conducted the distribution to produce the final results.

Easycount was configured and tested in advance of count weekend to ensure that the software was functioning as expected. Testing included data entry of ballot papers from a previous 2018 election to ensure the same results were achieved.

Table 22 highlights the data entry counts for the 2022 Council Elections.

TABLE 22: Data entry counts, 2022

Area Councillor	No. Vacancies	No. Candidates
Adelaide Plains	9	15
Barossa	11	22
Ceduna	8	11
Coorong	7	15
Gawler	10	23
Loxton Waikerie	10	13
Mount Gambier	8	18
Murray Bridge	9	15
Naracoorte Lucindale	10	16
Port Augusta	9	13
Port Pirie	9	14
Tatiara	9	13
Victor Harbor	9	19
Walkerville	8	13
Whyalla	9	19

Ward	No. Vacancies	No. Candidates
Adelaide - Central Ward	4	14
Adelaide - South Ward	3	12
Adelaide Hills - Ranges Ward	7	12
Alexandrina - Alexandrina South Ward	3	13
Onkaparinga - Knox Ward	2	8
Onkaparinga - Mid Coast Ward	2	10
Onkaparinga - South Coast Ward	2	10
Onkaparinga - Southern Vales Ward	2	8
Playford - Ward 1	3	11
Playford - Ward 4	3	12

Software setting error discovered

In November 2023 during the preparations for the Court of Disputed Returns matter regarding the City of Adelaide Central ward election, ECSA identified an error in one of the settings of the computer software used for counting votes in complex elections. This software was used for 25 elections in the 2022 elections, so the settings for all those elections were reviewed. It was found the incorrect setting had been applied for all 25 elections.

The setting governed the transfer of ballot papers from candidates elected with surplus votes to candidates continuing in the count. When surplus votes are transferred, all the ballot papers received by the elected candidate throughout the count should be distributed at a calculated transfer value. However, the setting was set to only use the ballot papers the elected candidate received immediately prior to becoming elected, which is used in other jurisdictions for similar elections. This meant that not all ballot papers were included in the distributions of elected candidates' surplus votes.

ECSA then reprocessed the counts for all 25 elections using the correct computer settings to review the impact on results. The error resulted in a very small change to the number of votes in each election. For 24 out of 25 elections, there was no change to which candidates were elected.

However, it was identified that two candidates for the Adelaide Plains Council area councillor election were incorrectly elected. As soon as the error was detected all affected candidates, and the Adelaide Plains Council CEO were notified. ECSA subsequently lodged a petition with the Court of Disputed Returns.

The Commissioner lodged a petition with the Court of Disputed Returns to correct the results of the election to ensure they reflected the will of the voters. As the petition was lodged more than 28 days after the conclusion of the election, the Commissioner applied for an extension of time to allow the petition to be heard. On 27 August 2024, the Court granted the extension of time. On 2 December 2024, the Court declared that the two incorrectly elected candidates were not duly elected, and the two candidates who should have been elected were duly elected.

An internal review of the circumstances of this error identified that internal procedures and risk mitigation strategies were followed, including double-checking the computer settings and running the votes from a previous 2018 election using the 2022 settings. The 2018 election chosen for testing did not involve a surplus transfer until the last distribution of the count. In that instance, the

impact of the surplus transfer was minor and did not change which candidates were elected during the test of Easycount. The settings error was therefore not detected as the elected candidates were correct.

The internal review also identified that the procedure manual is technical and complex, and used for many different count methods. A new procedure manual is being developed which will include clear instructions for the settings specific to the count system for South Australian local government elections. The procedure manual will also include detailed testing instructions to ensure all settings are performing correctly, and specific verification of correct surplus transfer calculations.

ECSA is committed to delivering all elections with the highest possible quality control measures in place. Regrettably, this software error was not discovered earlier; however, ECSA will be continually reviewing its internal processes and procedures to ensure errors of this nature do not occur again.

Recounts

Under section 49 of the LGE Act, unsuccessful candidates may request a recount within 72 hours of the provisional declaration. The Returning Officer may also initiate a recount.

When determining whether a recount should be undertaken, the Returning Officer required that candidates explain why they believed a recount would change the result. A small margin of votes between candidates is unlikely, of itself, to be considered sufficient reason for conducting a recount. Under section 49, recount requests may not be granted if the Returning Officer considers there is no prospect that a recount would alter the result of the election.

The number of requests for a recount from an unsuccessful candidate increased significantly to 40 from 28 received in the 2018 Council Elections. Of the 40 requests, two recounts were granted. One resulted in a change to an elected candidate for the City of West Torrens, Thebarton ward. The result for the other election, City of Marion, Warracowie ward, did not change.

The Returning Officer also initiated a further five recounts. This included the Adelaide Hills Council Ranges ward election due to identifying an anomaly in the total number of votes. The recount was conducted and the correct candidates were declared elected.

The Returning Officer also initiated recounts for each of the District Council of Grant elections. Upon initial scrutiny, some of the returned ballot paper envelopes were rejected due to a ballot paper being found outside the envelope. After the provisional declaration, a determination was made to admit

ballot papers enclosed within those rejected envelopes to the count.

Recount details are available in Table 23, highlighting the recounts initiated by the Returning Officer and approved requests from unsuccessful candidates.

TABLE 23: Recounts, 2022

Council	Election	Initiated by	Date and Location of Recount	Changes to provisional results		
				Formal ballot papers	Informal ballot papers	Elected candidate
Adelaide Hills	Ranges Ward	Returning Officer	16 November 2022 ECSA CPC	Y (+635)	Y (+50)	Y
Grant	Mayor	Returning Officer	16 November 2022 Council premises	Y (+55)	Y (+4)	N
Grant	Central Ward	Returning Officer	16 November 2022 Council premises	Y (+32)	Y (+8)	N
Grant	Tarpeena Ward	Returning Officer	16 November 2022 Council premises	Y (+4)	N	N
Grant	Port MacDonnell Ward	Returning Officer	16 November 2022 Council premises	Y (+15)	N	N
Marion	Warracowie Ward	Candidate	17 November 2022 ECSA CPC	Y (-2)	Y (+2)	N
West Torrens	Thebarton Ward	Candidate	17 November 2022 ECSA CPC	Y (-1)	Y (+1)	Y

Timeliness of results

The duration of the counting process depends on many factors, including the number of votes, the complexity of the formality check, the number of staff, the software used, and the number of distributions required. This is one of the reasons ECSA is not able to advise of specific start and finish times for each count, as the distributions required are unknown until counting commences.

However, all counts conducted using the HC Auto program were expected to be completed at council premises on count weekend. This was largely achieved, with the exception of three ward counts which were more complex than expected and transferred to ECSA's CPC for completion.

Counts conducted using Easycount continued through the following week and concluded by Friday.

The timeframe for provisional declarations were as follows in Table 24.

Final results were confirmed in writing to Council Chief Executive Officers and candidates following the expiry of the 72-hour period following the provisional declarations, on Friday 18 November to Monday 28 November 2022, including the final results for elections with recounts.

The increased participation of scrutineers during counting processes as well as weather conditions over the count weekend caused counts to extend longer than expected. This saw many count staff out at council venues and ECSA staff work additional hours to ensure provisional results were made available to candidates as quickly as possible. For example, out of the total counts completed on Saturday 12 November 2022, almost half were provisionally declared after 5pm.

TABLE 24: Number of provisional declarations made during count period

	Sat 12 Nov	Sun 13 Nov	Mon 14 Nov	Tues 15 Nov	Wed 16 Nov	Thurs 17 Nov	Total
HC Auto							
Mayor	37	1					38
Area Councillor	13	2					15
Ward Councillor	37	69	3				105
Easycount							
Area			3	5	1	6	15
Ward			2	1	4		11
Total	87	72	8	6	5	6	184

Simply increasing the number of staff does not properly solve this issue, especially as counts enter high numbers of distributions and become complex. ECSA will continue to consider ways to achieve the timely publication of results while managing acceptable working hours, resources, and expectations of candidates and council staff.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Commencement of counting

Sections 5 and 47 of the LGE Act specify key timeframes in the election timetable. Under the current provisions, only one working day is available to carry out critical administrative activities to collate and prepare voting material in readiness for the commencement of the scrutiny and count. This includes processing the returned voting packs received up until the close of voting, including those deposited in ballot boxes at council offices across the state and, reconciling and packaging all returned voting packs, and transporting sealed boxes of material to council offices across the state.

The only way to meet these current deadlines is for staff to continue to work out of ordinary business hours at the risk of their general health and wellbeing and non-compliance with work health and safety legislation.

These timelines are no longer sustainable without additional resources.

To accommodate the increasing volume of processing and transport, and meet work health and safety obligations, the Act should be amended to allow three working days between close of voting and commencement of counting.

Recommendation 10.

Amend section 47(1)(b) of the LGE Act to extend the period between close of voting and commencement of the scrutiny and counting of votes by making ballot papers available on the third business day following the close of voting to allow adequate time to prepare for scrutiny and count processes and support staff health and wellbeing.

Disruptions to scrutiny and count

Weather

On Saturday 12 November, first day of the scrutiny and count, severe thunderstorms struck Adelaide and greater South Australia, with wind gusts up to 109 km/h recorded in the metropolitan area. Thousands of people were left without power, some for several days. Rain was also extreme, with many sites hitting rainfall records on Sunday 13 November.

This extreme weather had an impact on several count sites, with staff having to manage resulting issues such as flooding, fallen trees and power outages.

- In Port Lincoln, a loss of power delayed their counting start time.
- In Modbury, the City of Tea Tree Gully council office experienced flooding and had to wait for electricians to confirm the area was safe to use.
- In Hilton, the City of West Torrens council office was subject to lightning strikes and evacuations, which caused several delays with count progress.

The extreme wind and rain at other locations made it challenging to manage candidates who were trying to access a safe place to wait away from the count area, requiring intervention from the LDRO to properly manage the integrity of the count and the safety of those involved. Some LDROs also struggled with phone reception and had difficulties contacting ECSA as well as candidates.

The LDROs are commended for handling these added pressures and being adaptive to changing circumstances.



Above: ECSA's social media post on the day of the storm interruptions

White powder at CPC

The established postal voting process involves completed ballot material being posted back to ECSA from electors.

During the receipt and preliminary processing of returned ballot material on Friday 21 October 2022, a white powdery substance was found in one of the Reply-Paid envelopes. It was identified that the Reply-Paid envelope was from the City of Playford area, but the sender could not be identified. The envelope only contained the white powder and did not contain any actual votes. Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) testing of the substance did not impact or destroy any live ballot material.

All staff were evacuated and SAPOL and MFS were notified and attended the CPC. The MFS established a command centre in the CPC car park to undertake their on-site investigation. MFS identified the white powder to be bicarbonate soda. SAPOL attended to investigate and took the Reply-Paid envelope as evidence.

To support staff wellbeing, a full staff debrief occurred at the CPC on Monday 24 October 2022.

As SAPOL could not identify the source of the Reply-Paid envelope, no further action could be taken.



Onkaparinga scrutiny and count

Volume of scrutineers

The scrutiny for Onkaparinga started at 9:00am Saturday 12 November in the council chamber of the City of Onkaparinga council office in Noarlunga. The LDRO reported that at least 50 scrutineers and supporters of candidates arrived at council premises and in the foyer for the commencement of the count. A group of these people appeared to be behaving aggressively towards other scrutineers and staff arriving for the count which created an intimidating environment in the foyer.

This also presented a significant challenge to staff responsible for ensuring that all scrutineers possessed the required documentation, and that no more than two scrutineers per candidate were admitted into the count room at any one time, as required under the Act.

Several scrutineers were also representing multiple candidates, adding a further level of complexity to ensuring that the scrutineer limits were not exceeded, and correct documentation was received.

This level of scrutineer engagement was unprecedented and not anticipated, based on ECSA's previous experience of the level of interest for a council election count. Consequently, ECSA was not prepared with adequate resources to manage the increased scrutineer presence. As an initial response, ECSA redeployed staff from a nearby counting centre at the City of Marion to provide additional support.

Hostility of scrutineers

A portion of the group of scrutineers were hostile towards the staff working at the count. Staff at the count reported that their approach appeared coordinated and planned.

Reports from the LDRO, ECSA staff, other scrutineers, and council staff have described the group as an ‘angry mob’ that came with the intent to ‘flood and disrupt’ the process.

Witnesses, including the LDRO, described a group of scrutineers and supporters of some candidates, as vocal, aggressive, organised and trained on what to say. The LDRO reported that the behaviour of the disruptive group forced them to negotiate for respectful behaviour instead of commencing scrutiny activities.

The LDRO reported that several count staff, other candidates, and their scrutineers and supporters, were subject to verbal abuse, intimidation, ageism, and threats of physical assault, as well as being filmed covertly and openly, and having footage posted online, against their will. Specifically, a video of the LDRO was posted online and was live for a short period, however, was later removed.

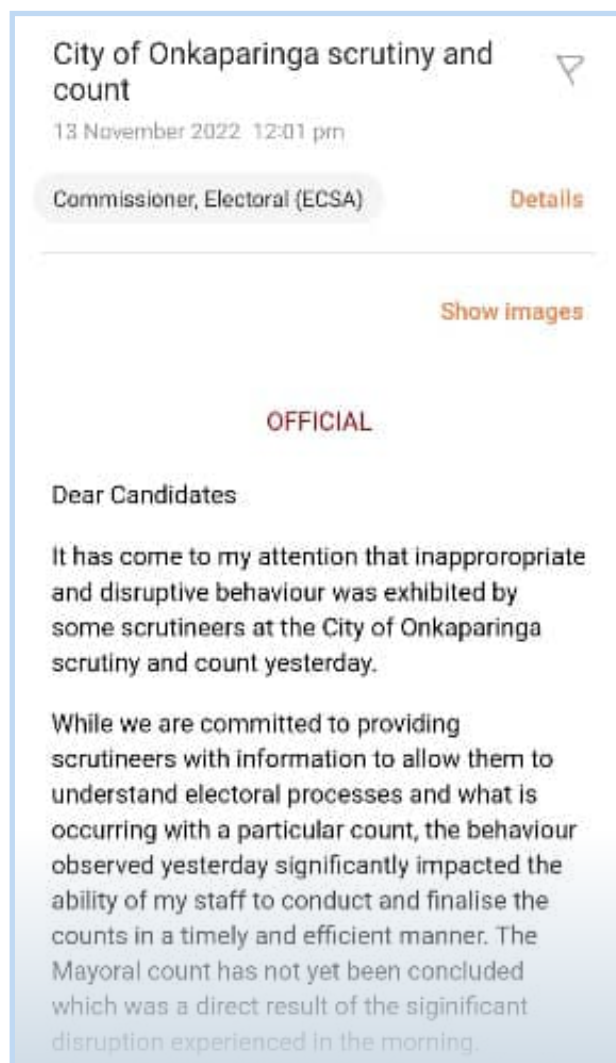
The behaviour impeded the process of the count to the extent that the Electoral Commissioner wrote to all candidates on Sunday 13 November 2022 to advise of behavioural expectations.

Escalation to authorities

In response to this behaviour, council staff called SAPOL twice to attend the count location. After the hostility of scrutineers on the morning of day one, the City of Onkaparinga council organised a security presence for day two.

Demands from hostile scrutineers

The count location facilities provided by the council consisted of three interconnected rooms. The LDRO had planned to use these three rooms to their full capacity however the scrutineers aggressively demanded only two rooms be used – as each candidate was only permitted to send in two scrutineers at a time, and it was voiced in displeasure that two scrutineers cannot spread across three rooms. In an attempt for peace, the LDRO decided to reduce the count to only two rooms. The reduction in space and number of tables



caused further delays in extracting, reconciling, and counting the returned voting packs.

As well as the demand for only two rooms to be used, the scrutineers also made other demands of the LDRO, which caused further delays including:

- Witnessing the breaking and affixing of every seal
- Making their own masking tape seal over the top of the seal
- Escorting ballot material to and from storage
- Ongoing electoral process questions directed at the senior ECSA staff redeployed to assist against hostile scrutineer behaviour.

While scrutineers are entitled to reasonably observe and inquire about processes in the context of the scrutiny and count, these demands far exceeded the usual practice and approach and appeared intended to disrupt, interfere with, and delay legitimate scrutiny and count processes.

The demands from this group of scrutineers continued into day two of counting – Sunday 13 November 2022. On the Sunday, several different but equally vocal and disruptive scrutineers attended the council chambers where detailed briefings concerning the full election process were once again provided.

Overall impact and delay

The overall impact of these actions made for a combative scrutiny and count experience, for staff, scrutineers, council staff and everyone present. Some of ECSA's temporary election staff have indicated they will not work in council elections again, following this experience.

The count was significantly longer and slower than previous counts. Counting was expected to conclude at 6:00pm on Saturday however continued for many hours.

The count then resumed at 9:00am the next day and after further delays caused by some scrutineers, was completed at 8:35pm that evening.

After the conclusion of the scrutiny and count there were several requests for recounts which required ECSA investigation and follow-up. One of the disruptive scrutineers lodged a complaint that the process took too long.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Conduct and direction of scrutineers

The conduct of scrutineers at the City of Onkaparinga demonstrated the need for additional powers to enable electoral officers to respond to disorderly and disruptive behaviour.

In this case, aggressive scrutineers did not comply with reasonable requests made by electoral officers to not film, record or take photographs of staff or electoral material. This made several staff feel intimidated and unsafe, however the LDRO had no authority or power to ensure compliance and address the behaviour of the scrutineers.

South Australia is currently the only jurisdiction that does not have prescriptive provisions around the behaviour of scrutineers, or the ability for electoral officers to remove scrutineers for disorderly behaviour, during local government elections.

ECSA requires the ability to ensure electoral processes are not disrupted during the scrutiny of ballot paper envelopes or counting of votes.

Such offences should carry a penalty. These provisions could be modelled on the amended requirements in section 119 of the *Electoral Act 1985* and should enable a person to be removed for failing to comply with a lawful direction, and to be guilty of a further offence for re-entering a premises.

This is consistent with the approach in other jurisdictions.

Recommendation 11.

Consistent with recent *Electoral (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2024*, amend the LGE Act to introduce standards of conduct for scrutineers and offences with penalties for obstructing the exercise of electoral duties. Electoral officers should have the ability to direct a person to leave a location where electoral activities are being exercised, and this should be coupled with a requirement to comply with a reasonable direction.

Chapter 6

After the election



Legal and compliance

General

The Electoral Commissioner has powers under the LGE Act to:

- Investigate any matters concerning the operation or administration of the Act, including a matter that may involve a breach of the Act.
- Where electoral material contains a statement purporting to be a statement of fact and that statement is found to be inaccurate and misleading to a material extent, request that material be withdrawn from publication and/or request that the publisher publish a retraction, in a specified manner and form.
- Issue a formal reprimand to a person who, in the opinion of the Electoral Commissioner, has been guilty of a breach of the Act.
- Make application to the Supreme Court for withdrawal and retraction of inaccurate and misleading electoral material.
- Bring proceedings for an offence against the Act.

Complaints

ECSA received a substantial number of complaints about alleged breaches of the LGE Act. To establish how complaints would be managed, a complaints protocol was published for the 2022 Council Election and included in both the Candidate Handbook and on the ECSA website. ECSA introduced an online complaints form including prompts for the information required, and explanations of the offences under the Act. This material was intended to help complainants understand the types of complaints that can

be made and acted on and the information that should be provided to support complaints.

Despite this, a significant proportion of complainants failed to provide sufficient information or submitted complaints about matters which were not an offence and could not be actioned. It was also clear that many candidates failed to understand the legislation which they are governed by, the seriousness of offences, or the Commissioner's role in complaints.

ECSA will further consider its information and education approach ahead of the next council elections in 2026 to seek to improve this understanding.

For those wishing to lodge a complaint, the protocol required that:

- the complaint be lodged on a complaint form,
- the complaint established the facts which are the basis of the allegation; and
- that evidence be provided supporting the alleged electoral offence.

For the 2022 Council Elections, a dedicated team was established to manage all complaints. An online complaint form was introduced. Where appropriate, advice was sought from the Crown Solicitors Office to inform the assessment of and response to complaints. At the conclusion of the election, all complaints were reviewed to determine if any should be referred for potential prosecution.

During the 2022 Council Elections there were 570 alleged breaches of the LGE Act. This is compared with 371 alleged breaches in 2018, an increase of 53.6%.

Table 25 provides a breakdown into categories of the alleged breaches.

TABLE 25: Complaints, 2022

Nature of complaint	Number received	
	2022	2018
Misleading electoral material (section 28)	246	145
Authorisation (section 27)	184	113
Violence, intimidation, bribery (section 57) and fraud (section 58)	57	78
Other (inc. conduct of officers & persons acting)	83	35
Total	570	371

Misleading electoral material

Under section 28 of the LGE Act it is an offence for electoral material to contain a statement purporting to be a statement of fact that is inaccurate and misleading to a material extent.

Many complainants do not understand how or when section 28 applies. For a breach of section 28 to be found, published electoral material must contain a statement purporting to be a statement of fact and this statement of fact must be inaccurate and misleading to a material extent. An opinion or a prediction of the future cannot be a statement of fact.

The complainant must provide supporting evidence that the statement is inaccurate and misleading to a material extent. Once this evidence is reviewed by ECSA, the publisher is given the opportunity to provide supporting evidence that their statement is true. An assessment is then made on the evidence provided and a determination made.

Of the 246 misleading material complaints,

- 155 were found not to be in breach of the LGE Act,
- 55 cases had insufficient evidence provided by the complainant to enable an assessment.
- 9 allegations were not within ECSA's jurisdiction to assess.
- 10 retractions were requested.
- 4 requests were made to cease publication.
- 2 amendments to the materials were requested.
- 12 warnings were issued.

The Electoral Commissioner has powers to request that the publisher withdraws the material or publish a retraction, and can apply to the Supreme Court to have the Court order the publisher to withdraw the material and/or publish a retraction. However, the investigation and prosecution of potential breaches of the offences in section 28 take time to complete and these usually take place following an election event.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Misleading information

Unlike every other electoral law in Australia, the LGE Act (and the corresponding regulations) contain no reference to prohibiting people from misleading or deceiving voters in relation to how they should mark their ballot papers or cast their vote.

ECSA cannot currently take action against a person or group who advocates that voters complete their ballot paper in a way which is wrong and would result in the casting of an informal vote, or against a person or group who tries to persuade voters to record a valid vote, but not for the candidate or candidates of the voters' choice. Likewise, ECSA is unable to take action against someone who provides misleading information about how to complete and return a ballot paper envelope, or who claims that electors can vote online at council elections or at a polling booth.

In the *Electoral Act 1985* which governs parliamentary elections in South Australia, such offences are covered by section 126 (1) and (2), and there are similar rules in all electoral legislation around the country. With the rise of electoral misinformation around Australia and the world, there is a critical need for legislative provisions to counter these types of communications at council elections.

Recommendation 12.

Amend the Act to prohibit people and groups from misleading or deceiving electors in relation to how they should mark their ballot papers and/or exercise their vote.

Authorisation of published electoral material

Section 27 of the LGE Act requires that a person must not publish electoral material or cause electoral material to be published unless the material contains the name and address of the person who authorises publication of the material and in the case of printed material, the name and address of the printer or other person taking responsibility for it.

When ECSA receives a complaint about unauthorised electoral material, it is assessed. Where it is determined that a breach of section 27 has occurred, ECSA will contact the person believed to be the publisher of the material and request that the material be authorised.

ECSA received 184 complaints regarding unauthorised material. With the increasing use of social media, most of these complaints related to a failure to understand social media authorisation requirements, despite guidance being provided during candidate briefing sessions and in nomination kits. There were 102 breaches identified where amendments of the materials were requested, or warnings were issued to the publisher.

Illegal practices – using violence, intimidation/bribery/fraud to influence voting and candidature

Section 57 of the LGE prohibits the use of violence, intimidation and bribery to induce a person to submit or withdraw their candidacy for election and/or to influence the vote of a person or otherwise interfere with an election or poll. Section 58 of the LGE Act prohibits a person from dishonestly exercising or attempting to exercise a vote at an election to which they are not entitled or from dishonestly influencing or attempting to influence the result of an election ('dishonest artifices').

Fifty seven complaints were lodged relating to section 57 and 58 of the LGE Act. 35 concerned allegations of violence, intimidation, and bribery and 22 were related to allegations of dishonest artifices.

Of the 35 complaints concerning violence, intimidation, and bribery, 24 complaints alleged intimidatory behaviour and half of these were within a social media context. Eleven complaints referred to allegations of bribery. Following an investigation into these, 23 were not considered a

breach, 11 were not substantiated and one was not within ECSA's jurisdiction.

Twenty-two complaints were related to dishonest artifices. Four of these were considered potential breaches of the LGE Act, however they related to matters already being investigated at the time of the complaint.

Other

A further 83 complaints were received that related to other sections of the LGE Act or other Acts. None of these complaints were substantiated.

Resources

ECSA increased its staffing for complaints management for the 2022 elections. However, the 53.6% increase in the number of allegations received meant that there continued to be a strain on resources.

This sharp increase required ECSA to prioritise serious matters, which led to some complainants expressing dissatisfaction with ECSA's processes.

ECSA expects that the number of complaints will continue to grow and additional resourcing will be required for future council elections to manage this demand.

Prosecutions

At the conclusion of the election, all complaints were reviewed to determine if any should be referred for prosecution. Several matters were referred to the Crown Solicitors Office for further advice, however it was subsequently determined that no complaints received during the election would be referred for prosecution.

Alleged voter fraud

Through the 2022 Council Elections, three separate instances of alleged illegal practices were identified.

A number of additional scrutiny measures were put in place at the time to ensure the integrity of the elections, and ECSA wishes to thank the relevant councils for their invaluable assistance in these activities.

At the time of publishing this report, these matters are the subject of ongoing investigations and in one case is a matter before the Court of Disputed Returns and as such limited detail can be published, however a brief overview of each of the matters is provided below.

City of West Torrens

In the City of West Torrens, an alleged irregularity was identified that appeared to be an attempt to increase the number of enrolments on the council's supplementary voters roll by submitting false enrolment forms to the council.

The issue was first identified by governance staff at the City of West Torrens, prior to the close of roll during July of 2022 where they noticed a significant increase in the number of enrolments being submitted for a particular ward.

The governance staff at the City of West Torrens reported the issue to ECSA and SA Police (SAPOL) and conducted some investigations into the increased enrolments. Further scrutiny of the enrolment forms occurred during the voting period. After this further scrutiny some returned ballot envelopes were withheld from the count. This matter remains under investigation.

Recommendation 2 addresses this issue through strengthening the supplementary roll application process.

City of Marion

The initial irregularity in the City of Marion appeared to be the alleged theft of ballot materials from letterboxes. This issue was discovered during the voting period. On further examination, it appeared that completed ballot paper envelopes had been purportedly returned from the impacted electors.

Once ECSA staff had determined that there was an issue, ballot paper envelopes that were suspected to be fraudulently completed were temporarily removed from the continuing election process for additional scrutiny and investigation.

As a result of those initial investigations some ballot paper envelopes were removed, and the affected electors offered a new voting pack. The excluded ballot paper envelopes were then scanned to allow further review and investigation while the still unopened original envelopes were secured and isolated.

The investigation set out to obtain written statements from some of the impacted electors.

Recommendation 13 in this report discusses how verifying the date of birth field on the declaration for a voting pack will significantly reduce the ability for a voting pack to be returned by a person other than the addressed elector.

City of Adelaide

A potential alleged irregularity in the City of Adelaide was identified, where it appeared that votes may have been harvested to increase the number of votes for a particular candidate.

The issue was identified by a candidate in the Central Ward election and reported to ECSA. The Advertiser published photos of individuals with a number of unopened voting packs outside several high-rise accommodation towers in the Adelaide CBD. This issue was reported during the voting period.

The complainant identified four specific high-rise accommodation towers of interest. In response, returned ballot paper envelopes received from electors in those buildings were removed and subjected to additional scrutiny and investigations. As a result of those investigations some ballot paper envelopes were rejected and not included in the election process. The excluded ballot paper envelopes were then scanned to allow further review and investigation while the still unopened original envelopes were secured and isolated.

The investigation set out to obtain a number of written statements from various relevant witnesses. Some original envelopes were subject to forensic analysis. A further review of supplementary enrolments was conducted in May 2023, including obtaining additional witness statements.

The outcome of this election has subsequently been the subject of legal proceedings in the Court of Disputed Returns which are unresolved at the time of writing this report.

Recommendation 13 to reject envelopes without the elector's date of birth, and Recommendation 12 to prohibit people and groups from misleading or deceiving electors in relation to how they should mark their ballot papers and or exercise their vote, aim to address this issue.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Reject envelopes without date of birth

Electors were supplied with a ballot paper envelope to return their ballot papers in, which included fields for the elector to print their name, date of birth, and signature. Under section 47 of the LGE Act, the returning officer must reject any unopened envelope where the signature does not correspond to the signature of the voter. However, envelopes do not have to be rejected for leaving the date of birth field blank, or filling it out with a mistaken date, such as the date the voter completed their ballot papers. Under section 39(10) of the LGE Act, the returning officer is not obliged to check the date of birth of a voter, and section 39(11) allows the returning officer to accept a ballot paper envelope for the count if this field is blank or completed incorrectly.

Therefore, Parliament should consider amending sections 39 and 47 to compel the returning officer to reject envelopes with a missing or incorrect date of birth. While this additional check would increase the time taken to process votes, it would help ensure the correct person has completed a returned ballot paper envelope.

Using a sample group, ECSA conducted an analysis of ballot paper envelope flaps and found that 1.2% of accepted envelopes could have possibly been rejected for having a blank or incorrect date of birth recorded. Should this recommendation be accepted, ECSA would ensure that voters are aware their vote will not be accepted without the correct date of birth, and highlight their privacy is protected as ballot paper envelopes are sealed within a reply-paid envelope.

Recommendation 13.

To provide additional measures to ensure the authenticity of returned postal voting pack, amend section 39 of the LGE Act by deleting subsection 10 and removing the reference to a voter's date of birth in subsection 11. Amend section 47(2)(a) to compel the returning officer to reject any envelope where the date of birth does not, to the satisfaction of the returning officer, correspond with the date of birth of the elector. Amend Schedule 1, Part 7 of the CoA Act accordingly.



Court of Disputed Returns

There are provisions within the LGE Act for a petition to be lodged with the Court of Disputed Returns (the Court) to dispute the validity of an election. A petition needs to be lodged within 28 days after the conclusion of the election and must set out the facts relied on to invalidate the election.

After the conclusion of the 2022 elections, unsuccessful candidates lodged petitions at the Court of Disputed Returns for the following elections:

- City of Adelaide Lord Mayoral election
- City of Onkaparinga Mayoral election
- City of Adelaide Central ward election

City of Adelaide Lord Mayoral election

After the process of discovery was undertaken, the City of Adelaide Lord Mayoral petition was withdrawn in March 2023.

City of Onkaparinga Mayoral election

The City of Onkaparinga petition did not adequately set out the facts relied on to invalidate the election. As many as four directions hearings were held in the District Court to address the deficiencies with the original application and hear argument on subsequent applications. The petition was dismissed on 14 June 2023 on the basis that the petition did not particularise any claims or facts which could reasonably be said to have affected the result of the

election. The Court did afford the petitioner leniency due to being unrepresented and provided assistance, however also noted the importance of all parties being well informed when court proceedings are engaged to ensure they comply with the provisions of the LGE Act and the Rules of Court.

ECSA sought that the Court award costs for the City of Onkaparinga matter given no valid application was lodged that outlined adequate facts. However, costs were not awarded to either ECSA or the council. Legal fees for this case amounted to \$28,225. This does not include the significant amount of time and resources required to prepare documentation and manage the process.

City of Adelaide Central ward election

At the time of publishing this report, the City of Adelaide Central ward matter is currently before the Court of Disputed Returns.

Adelaide Plains Council area councillor election

The Electoral Commissioner also lodged a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns in February 2024 regarding the count software error that impacted the results for the Adelaide Plains Council area councillor election. At the time of publishing this report, an extension of time for the Court of Disputed Returns to hear this was granted. The final orders of the Court are not yet known.



Campaign donations returns

As a result of legislative amendments, several changes were made to how a candidate lodges their disclosure returns. This included the transfer of responsibility for receiving returns from the CEO of the relevant local government entity (council) to ECSA, and the introduction of an additional disclosure return to be submitted no later than 28 days after the close of nominations (retaining the return due no later than 30 days after the conclusion of the election).

Amendments introduced prior to the 2022 Council Elections expanded the financial compliance obligations of candidates contained in Part 14 of the LGE Act and Part 8, Division 2 of the CoA Act.

Candidates for a council election are now required to lodge:

- A first campaign donation return (no earlier than 21 days and not later than 28 days after close of nominations).
- A second campaign donation return within 30 days after the conclusion of the election.
- A campaign expenditure return (City of Adelaide candidates only) 30 days after the conclusion of the election.
- A large gift return within five days of receipt, for any gift more than \$2,500.

Candidates are required to lodge these returns regardless of whether they received any gifts above the threshold for disclosure of \$500 or regardless of whether they incurred campaign expenditure more than \$500. They are required to lodge a 'nil' return in situations where they have nothing to declare.

Candidates are not required to lodge a large gift return if they do not receive any gifts worth more than \$2,500.

The 2022 Council Elections involved 1,256 candidates. Consequently, a total of 2,512 campaign donation returns were due for lodgment.

The vast majority of these were nil returns. Only 33 returns disclosed donations above the \$500 threshold, with a total of \$36,894.91 donations disclosed.

All return details are available on the ECSA website.

Administering the donation returns

In the lead up to the 2022 Council Elections, ECSA developed new returns forms and procedures for candidates to assist them to comply with the new obligations.

To ensure candidates were aware of their legal obligations regarding donation and gift returns, ECSA provided information via:

- Candidate briefing sessions (conducted in person and webinar and a recorded version available on the ECSA website)
- The ECSA website
- A letter to candidates upon nomination
- A letter to candidates upon the results of the election
- Candidates handbook available in hard copy and electronically
- Gazette notices in newspapers circulated in South Australia
- Email reminders

As candidates could no longer lodge a return at the Council, a system was required for candidates across South Australia to lodge returns with ECSA. The candidate portal (which was used for the nomination process) was subsequently used for the lodgment of the disclosure returns. In the portal, candidates were able to download and upload fillable PDF forms.

Throughout the election period ECSA coordinated and monitored the returns from candidates, checked that the returns included the required information and sought additional information and/or amendments to the lodged returns, where needed to ensure compliance.

Candidate returns were published on the ECSA website.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Definition of candidate

Candidate is not currently a defined term under the LGE Act or CoA Act, however there are provisions which outline the entitlements and requirements of candidates, namely obligations to submit disclosure returns.

Candidates are defined differently for the purpose of disclosure returns. It is confusing for candidates to identify which category they belong to and therefore how to complete their disclosure returns with the correct disclosure and lodgement periods. Consideration should be given to clarify and confirm a single definition of candidate, either as an explicit deeming provision, or in Part 14 for the purpose of providing disclosure returns. This may not be essential if the recommendation to remove ongoing disclosure obligations in between elections is endorsed, which is discussed in this report.

Recommendation 14.

Consider defining the term 'candidate' either as an explicit deeming provision or in Part 14 of the LGE Act and Schedule 1, Part 8 of the CoA Act for the purpose of providing disclosure returns.

Definition of conclusion of election

Several provisions in the LGE Act, CoA Act and the regulations, reference the conclusion of the council elections as being relevant to another action or activity, including deadlines for lodging campaign donation returns.

Other actions and activities include:

- Casual vacancies occurring within 12 months after the conclusion of an election (s 6)
- Date of effect of election (ss 25 and 50)
- Returns made and certified by the returning officer (s 51)
- Candidate access to return (s 51)
- Deadline for petition to the Court of Disputed Returns (s 70)
- Conduct of council during election period (s 91A)

The LGE Act refers to the LG Act for the definition of conclusion of the elections, which has different meanings for contested and uncontested elections, and periodic and supplementary elections. The inconsistent definition of conclusion of the election makes it difficult for candidates to understand their obligations for disclosure returns and creates confusion around the other actions dependent on the conclusion of the election.

The definition of conclusion of the election should therefore relate back to a fixed day which would be applicable to all elections conducted as part of the four-yearly council elections.

Recommendation 15.

Review the actions, activities, and events under the LGE Act and CoA Act dependent on the definition of the 'conclusion of the election' and introduce a consistent definition of the term. Interdependent activities should relate to a fixed date for all elections, such as polling day.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

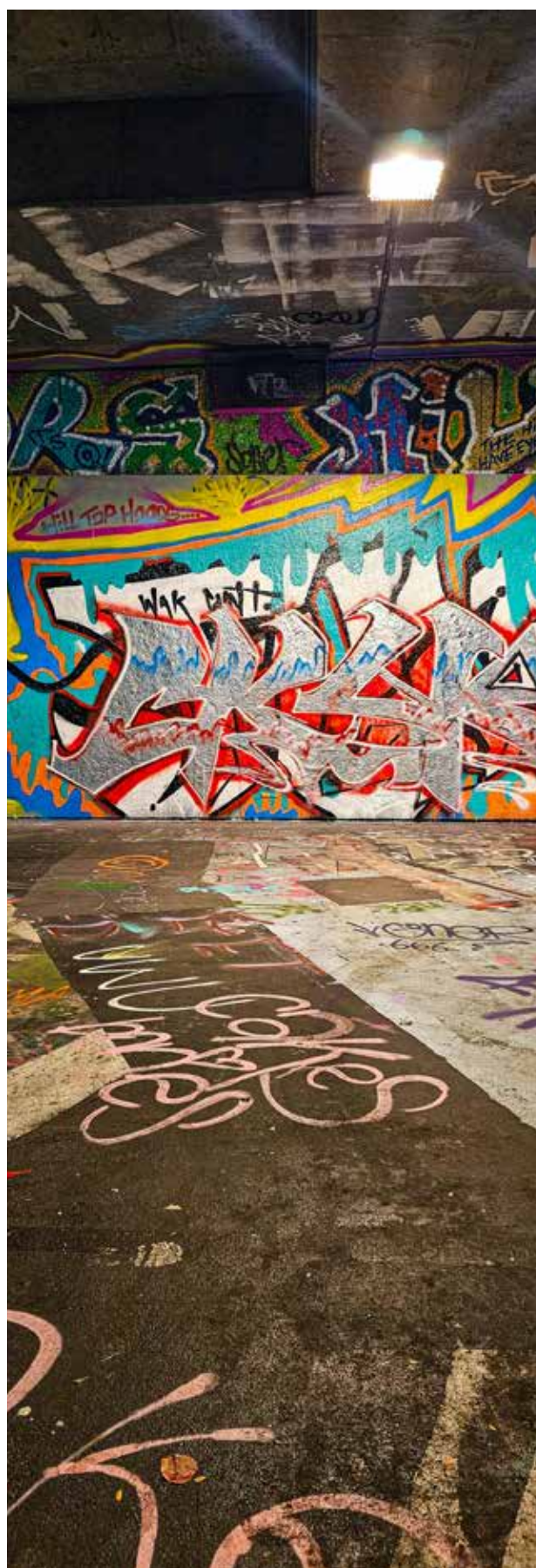
Disclosure and lodgement periods

Interpretation of the current prescribed disclosure periods is complex, with periods varying due to the dependence on the definition of ‘conclusion of the election’ and whether the election was contested.

Recommendation 16.

Parliament should consider the appropriate period, however suggestions for amendments to the LGE Act are provided as follows:

- Amend section 80 so that the second campaign donation return is due within 30 days of polling day, not within 30 days after the conclusion of the election.
- Amend the disclosure period to be the same for ‘new’ and ‘not new’ candidates as a fixed period, such as 12 months prior to polling day.
- Introduce a specific disclosure period for each disclosure return i.e.:
 - the disclosure period for the first campaign donation return (and any large gifts received in the same period) commences 12 months prior to polling day and concludes at the close of nominations; and
 - the disclosure period for the second campaign donation return (and any large gifts received in the same period) commences on the day after the close of nominations and concludes on polling day.
- Amend regulation 11A to specifically refer to the prescribed period.
- Amend section 24B in the CoA Act 1998 to provide the same disclosure period commencement date for ‘new’ and ‘not new’ candidates.



Large gift returns

A total of 216 large gift returns were lodged by 187 candidates. Only four returns disclosed items which met the definition of a large gift. The total sum between the four genuine large gift returns was \$47,430. Therefore, the remaining 212 were 'nil' returns lodged unnecessarily.

It should be noted that there is currently no way to immediately determine if a candidate has failed to lodge a large gift return as required (unless, for example, a donor was to make a report to ECSA). This has implications regarding the casual vacancy provisions within the LG Act.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Large gift returns

Given the small monetary value reported, the ongoing remote likelihood that candidates receive any large gifts, the automatic trigger of a casual vacancy if a return is not lodged within five days of receipt of the gift, and the associated administrative costs, the legislative benefit of the large gifts return requirement should be reviewed. Large gifts can be adequately captured in the standard campaign donation returns.

However, the City of Adelaide should remain unique as historically, gifts and large gifts are typically reported by City of Adelaide candidates.

Further, if large gift returns are to be retained, the threshold of \$2,500 should be reconsidered. This amount is not indexed and inflation will soon erode any perceived value in this amount being a large gift.

Legal advice obtained during the elections also identified a drafting issue in relation to the word

'year' in regulation 11A. The significance of this relates to the calculation of the period in which candidates must submit a large gifts return. If large gift returns are to be retained, regulation 11A should be amended to define 'year' as a calendar year, not a financial year.

Recommendation 17.

Amend the LGE Act to remove the requirement for candidates to lodge large gift returns, including the requirement for candidates to lodge large gift returns in between elections, and the annual reporting period under regulation 11A.

If large gift returns are retained, amend regulation 11A to define 'year' as a calendar year. This definition should also be updated in regulation 6 of the City of Adelaide (Elections and Polls) Regulations 2010.

Campaign expenditure returns

There were 45 City of Adelaide candidates. Their returns disclosed \$237,249.20 in the value of campaign expenditure. A total of seven of these returns were nil campaign expenditure returns.

Casual vacancy provisions

The LGE Act at section 85 and the CoA Act at section 29 provide that it is an offence to fail to lodge a return within the time specified by the Act. The maximum penalty is \$10,000.

The vast majority of the 1,256 candidates lodged both returns on time. However, 45 candidates who were elected to office failed to lodge their second return on time despite the information provided by ECSA.

In the notes to section 86, it states “*The office of a member of a council who fails to submit a return may become vacant under Chapter 5 Part 2 of the Local Government Act 1999.*”

ECSA sought advice on the operation of section 54(1)(h) and the impact of an elected member failing to lodge their second campaign return (or large gift return) in time.

Informed by that advice, ECSA concluded that the 45 council members identified as having failed to lodge their second campaign donation return within the prescribed time were subject to the casual vacancy provisions of section 54.

These members were able to apply to SACAT to seek relief from this provision. However, the Government moved to introduce legislation (*Local Government (Casual Vacancies) Amendment Act 2023*) to retrospectively reinstate the members and permit them additional time (if required) to lodge any missing return/s.

All affected members were reinstated upon successful lodgment of their missing campaign donation returns. Notably, all returns lodged were ‘nil’ returns.

Implications of the legislative changes

This was the first election where candidates were required to lodge two campaign donation returns and a new requirement for a large gift return was implemented.

It should be noted that ECSA experienced significant issues in ensuring that candidates understood and complied with their obligations. ECSA allocated additional resources to this task, recruiting an additional officer who spent numerous hours contacting candidates informing them of their requirements under the legislation and guiding them through the submission process.

Whilst most were able to lodge their returns, some candidates were unable to download a PDF, complete it, and submit it to the electronic portal potentially due to a lack of familiarity with this type of digital process. To assist these candidates and ensure compliance, ECSA began to accept email and postal submissions.

Following reports from a small number of candidates that the portal was not functioning, ECSA engaged an external provider to test the system and provide assurance. This process confirmed that the system was functioning as per specification and that any errors previously identified by candidates were user specific.

Whilst it remains the responsibility of candidates to lodge these returns, ECSA notes the difficulties suffered by some candidates and will endeavour to engage additional staff to assist at future elections provide support. ECSA will also consider modifications to its systems to ensure that they are as easy to use as possible to support timely compliance with legislative obligations, subject to the availability of funding to support improvements.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Disclosure returns non-compliance penalties

The changes to administration of the campaign donations returns revealed a problem with complexity of obligations and the appropriateness of the penalty for non-compliance. As most candidates lodge a return with no donations, the penalty of being immediately removed from office for non-compliance was widely regarded as disproportionate with the issue. Parliament should consider both simplifying the disclosure obligations as recommended in this report and introducing a more proportionate penalty for non-compliance.

The penalty for non-compliance in its current form also does not impact a candidate's ability to stand for election again through a supplementary election, or to fill a vacancy under a recount conducted in accordance with section 6A of the Act. To adequately deter candidates from non-compliance, they should not be eligible to nominate for another election, or be eligible for a section 6A recount, if they have outstanding disclosure returns from any previous election. The non-compliance should be rectified as part of the eligibility criteria.

Recommendation 18.

Amend section 54(1)(h) of the LG Act 1999 to remove the automatic triggering of a casual vacancy for non-compliance with campaign donation return requirements. A more suitable penalty such as the suspension of entitlements should be considered.

Ensure this also applies to members elected in accordance with the CoA Act 1998.

Further, amend the LGE Act to disqualify previous candidates who were not compliant with the returns requirements from being an eligible candidate for a recount under section 6A until the non-compliance is resolved.

Amend section 17 so that the failure to lodge a return disqualifies an individual from nominating as a candidate in future elections until the non-compliance is resolved.



Surveys

A range of surveys were conducted after the council elections to evaluate performance and inform planning for future elections. The survey of electors was conducted on ECSA's behalf by an independent research agency.

Survey of electors

Electors provided feedback about the council elections in a six-minute post-election survey. The representative sample included 830 electors (446 voters and 384 non-voters) from most council areas around the state. A mixed surveying method was used, via an online survey and computer assisted telephone interviews, between 14 and 28 November. The survey was completed by 446 voters (54%) and 384 non-voters (46%).

Voters

Among voters, the four most common reasons for voting were a desire to have their say (45%), they felt a responsibility to vote (22%), thinking that it was compulsory to vote (10%), a desire for change (9%).

Interestingly, support for candidates significantly declined since 2018, with only 2% of voters indicating they voted because they supported a candidate standing in their area, compared to 22% in 2018.

Voters were broadly positive about their voting experience and the services provided by ECSA at the elections. A strong majority of voters (78%) expressed satisfaction with the postal voting process they used for the elections. Regarding confidence with completing their ballot papers and postal declaration to ensure a valid vote, 88% of voters responded they were confident. Similarly, 85% were satisfied with the voting instructions ECSA provided in the postal voting packs.

The majority of voters stated that they returned their voting pack to either ECSA or their council within seven days of receiving it in the mail (65%).

Non-voters

Among non-voters, 47% stated that they did consider voting in the council elections before ultimately deciding not to. The five most common reasons for not voting were disinterest in the elections (22%), forgetting to vote (13%), lack of information about

the candidates (12%), not being aware of the election (12%) and being too busy to vote (11%).

When non-voters were asked what could encourage them to vote in council elections, the strongest responses by a large margin were greater awareness about what councils do (57%) and more information about the candidates running (62%). Other factors identified as likely to stimulate higher electoral participation included a better selection of candidates to choose from (42%) and giving councils greater powers (40%). Interestingly, non-voting respondents strongly rejected more advertising about the elections (60%) and more education about how to vote (60%) as elements likely to encourage them to vote.

Survey of candidates

ECSA conducted a post-election survey of candidates to capture participant satisfaction levels against quantitative assessment criteria while also providing for qualitative measurement of responses to a range of open-ended questions about the electoral process. Highlights of the survey are as follows:

Candidates

58.9% of candidates who responded to the survey had stood at previous council elections. Indeed, 54.8% of those surveyed had served as councillors or mayors. Responding to a question on when they made the decision to run for council:

- 44.4% decided to nominate more than three months prior to nominating
- 31.0% made the decision between one and three months prior, and
- 9.4% decided just in the week before nominating.

39.0% of candidates surveyed chose to nominate were motivated by a specific issue, 37.1% chose to nominate based on their previous experience as a mayor or councillor, and 45.5% were pushed to nominate by friends or family. On average, candidates surveyed campaigned for three days per week for a period of five weeks before the election. The average candidate surveyed personally spent \$1,665 on their campaign.

Election process

Candidates who responded to the survey provided a mixed view of ECSA's delivery of the elections. An overwhelming majority of candidates surveyed (87.2%) considered that ECSA had conducted the elections impartially and without bias.

Concerning the nomination process overall, 76.6% of candidates surveyed were satisfied. Concerning the results process overall, 62.6% of candidates surveyed expressed satisfaction, with 53.7% satisfied with the ballot paper scrutiny and counting process, and 58.0% satisfied with the timeliness of the results.

Free-text responses from candidates provided useful feedback about how to improve communication and awareness about the results process.

Complaints and legal obligations

Just 22.0% of candidates surveyed stated they experienced difficulties complying with the legal obligations relating to their requirements regarding signage, electoral advertising, social media and online campaigning, or their behaviour as a candidate.

A total of 19.2% of candidates surveyed said they either lodged a complaint with ECSA or had a complaint lodged about them. Of these candidates involved with a complaint, only 24.6% were satisfied with ECSA's complaints protocol and procedures.

Advertising and awareness campaigns

Some early advertising had been completed using the awareness campaign developed for the 2018 elections, 'Make a Difference.' While 94.6% of candidates surveyed recalled the 'Make a Difference' advertising campaign, only 53.6% considered that the campaign had been effective in encouraging people to consider nominating as candidates.

60.4% considered that the campaign raised public awareness of the council elections, while 41.4% thought that they successfully encouraged people to vote.

In comparison, 64.9% of candidates surveyed recalled seeing the 'Live local. Lead local' or 'Live local. Vote local' campaigns. 60.8% of those candidates considered the campaigns were effective in increasing public awareness of the election, and 46.6% thought the campaigns reminded people to return their ballot papers.

In their responses to open-ended questions, candidates provided multiple suggestions for how services can be improved for future council elections, as well as how to encourage more people to nominate and vote at council elections. These suggestions along with all the survey data have formed an integral part of ECSA's post-election evaluation process.

Survey of election staff

All CLOs and LDROs were invited to participate in separate online surveys to provide feedback on the training and preparation they received as well as ECSA's overall delivery of the council elections. Both surveys received extremely high response rates providing valuable feedback that will be used to analyse and improve ECSA's approach to engaging, training, and supporting the election workforce at future council elections.

Key positive findings included:

- A moderately experienced workforce with 65% of CLOs and 62% of DROs having worked in their roles at previous council elections.
- 86% of CLOs and 95% of LDROs stated that they were interested in working in their roles for ECSA again at future council elections.
- Positive feedback about the training and resources ECSA provided staff at the elections, with 78% of CLOs and 95% of LDROs satisfied that ECSA's training had prepared them to understand the roles and responsibilities of their jobs.
- Over 94% of both CLOs and LDROs were satisfied with the Guide for Electoral Officers booklet.
- Over 60% of CLOs opted to watch training videos as opposed to attending an in-person event.

Areas in the surveys for which less satisfactory ratings were provided included concerns about:

- candidate and scrutineer behaviour, with 30% of CLOs stating they had had difficulties or concerns with the behaviour or conduct of candidates, and 13% stating they had had difficulties or concerns with the behaviour or conduct of scrutineers.

Evaluation

An evaluation committee was formed to evaluate the conduct of the 2022 Council Elections. The purpose was to determine recommendations for legislative change and identify how delivery of elections can continue to be improved.

The evaluation committee used several data sources for their analysis, including:

- Project evaluation reports completed by ECSA project managers.
- Surveys of stakeholders including electors, candidates, LDROs, council staff and CEOs, and scrutineers and general feedback.
- Internal Innovations and Ideas Register.
- Data retrieved from election systems.
- Legal advice obtained during the election period.

The evaluation committee also worked with the LGA to debrief on the key successes and

challenges. A key output from the evaluation is the recommendations for legislative change mentioned throughout this report.

Filling casual vacancies

Legislative change since the 2018 Council Elections enabled vacancies to be filled by recounting the votes cast at a previous election, if the vacancy occurs in the office of a councillor elected in a contested election, within 12 months of the conclusion of an election.

Following the 2022 Council Elections, several vacancies occurred and were able to be filled using section 6(2)(c) and section 6A of the LGE Act, saving councils the costs of supplementary elections. To date, ECSA has filled vacancies in 10 councils using these provisions. In administering this function, opportunities for improving the legislative provisions have been identified.

A CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Filling casual vacancies

Vacancies can be filled using section 6A if they occur within 12 months of the 'conclusion of the election'. This date differs between each individual election, despite all being conducted as part of the periodic elections. This is due to the definition of 'conclusion of the election'. Parliament should consider amending section 6(2)(c) to apply to vacancies occurring within 12 months of polling day for the periodic elections or designated supplementary elections, to provide consistency for the relevant period.

Further, to fill a vacancy under section 6A, the Returning Officer must determine the successful candidate in accordance with the regulations. After making an initial declaration that they are willing and eligible to fill the vacancy, the successful candidate has a further one month to again declare that they are willing and eligible to fill the vacancy.

This creates a lack of certainty and creates inconsistencies with other provisions relating to the election of council members and when their election takes effect. Should a successful candidate no longer wish to be an elected member, the process under section 6A is simple enough to repeat for remaining willing and eligible candidates.

Section 6A (2) should be amended so that the initial declaration required by operation of section 6A(2)(b) (and subsequently regulation 3A(1)) is the only necessary declaration.

Recommendation 19.

Amend section 6(2)(c) to apply to vacancies occurring within 12 months of polling day for the periodic elections or designated supplementary elections.

Amend section 6A(2) so that the initial declaration required by operation of section 6A(2)(b) (and subsequently regulation 3A (1)) is the only necessary declaration.

Chapter 7

Election costs



In preparation for the elections process, the Electoral Commissioner wrote to all council chief executive officers in May 2022 to provide information on a number of issues relating to the conduct of the elections, including details of known impacting cost pressures that had occurred since the last elections in 2018.

These new and unavoidable cost pressures were forecast to increase the cost of the elections considerably and covered:

- Inflationary indexation over four years.
- Significant (above inflation) increases in costs of postage for both mail-out and mail return through Australia Post, including utilisation of the priority postage service to ensure electors received their ballot material in a timely manner.
- Increases in capped advertising campaign based on feedback from councils, targeted at improving enrolment and participation.
- Growth in the number of electors and the volume of materials and services.
- Impact of amendments to the LGE Act on ICT systems, in particular a candidate online nominations portal, campaign donation returns, and online publication of election results.
- Impact of amendments to the LGE Act to provide assisted voting for sight-impaired electors.
- Increased number of complaints.
- A combined approach with the LGA to advertising enrolment, awareness, and participation, including shared research as the foundation of the campaigns.

The COVID-19 pandemic was not expected to and did not have a significant impact on the conduct or cost of the elections.

The Electoral Commissioner provided an indicative cost per elector to council CEOs to assist councils with budgeting only. These indicative costs per elector were determined on the basis of similar volumes for nominations, contested elections and proportion of returned ballots to the 2018 elections levels plus the unavoidable cost pressures described above.

Expenditure

Total actual expenditure incurred by ECSA for the conduct of the 2022 Council Elections was \$9.82 million, including GST (or \$8.93 million excluding GST).

Consequently, the total election costs invoiced to councils for the 2022 Council Elections were \$9.82 million (including GST), representing the costs and expenses incurred by the Electoral Commissioner as the Returning Officer and recoverable under section 13 of the LGE Act.

Actual expenditure was \$420,000 or 4.5% less than the indicative costs provided to councils. The main reasons for the variation included:

- Efficiencies gained in processing both outgoing and returned ballot materials at the processing centre,
- Significantly lower than anticipated volume of assisted voting for sight-impaired, interstate, and overseas electors,

Total advertising was in line with the \$900,000 capped commitment to councils.

However, the cost for some country councils exceeded the indicative cost per elector, often due to participation rates exceeding 60% resulting in both higher postage and longer scrutiny and count times.

Total actual expenditure (excluding GST) incurred by ECSA for the 2022 Council Elections was \$2.36 million more than total expenditure for the 2018 elections due to the combined effect of:

New and unavoidable cost pressures advised to councils prior to elections (\$2.78 million), partially offset by Lower actual costs due to subsequent changes in conditions for the conduct of the elections (\$0.42 million).

Table 26 highlights the major expenses incurred and compared between the 2018 and 2022 elections.

TABLE 26: Major expense categories, 2018 – 2022

Expense category	2022	2018
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)
Advertising campaign	900	606
Statutory notices in newspapers and Government Gazette	207	251
Materials used in elections	1,015	922
Mailout and mail return of ballot papers - Australia Post costs	1,735	1,529
ICT systems and support	979	177
Postal ballot returns, processing, count and scrutiny	1,912	1,668
General recharge #	2,182	1,417
Total costs incurred by ECSA (excluding GST)	8,930	6,570
Goods and services tax (GST)	893	657
Total costs recoverable from council (GST inclusive)	9,823	7,227
Total electors on the roll	1,288,329	1,213,862
State-wide cost per elector (excluding GST)	\$6.93	\$5.41

General recharge includes costs of Deputy Returning Officers, preparation of election materials, training and information sessions, electoral rolls, nominations, processing centre, enquiry service, management support to Council Liaison Officers and other council staff, logistics and transport, quality controls, re-issues, results, legal matters, etc.

Cost per elector

There were 1,288,329 electors on the roll for the 2022 elections compared with 1,213,862 for the 2018 elections – an increase of 74,467 electors or 6.1%. The state-wide average cost per elector has increased to \$6.93 in 2022 from \$5.41 in 2018. The increase is due to the changes in conditions over the four years between elections reflected in the unavoidable cost pressures described above.

Recovery from councils

Section 13 of the LGE Act requires that all costs and expenses incurred by the Returning Officer in carrying out official duties must be defrayed from funds of the council. Accordingly, councils are charged for electoral services on the basis of cost recovery.

Councils were charged a progress instalment on 17 November 2022 representing estimated costs incurred to 31 October 2022. The balance of electoral services costs was invoiced to councils on 31 May 2023. The final invoice was issued later than planned due to additional time required to ensure accuracy and resolve mailout and mail return charges for each council.

Chapter 8

Council amalgamation poll



The *Plebiscite (South East Council Amalgamation) Act 2022* was introduced to Parliament in early September 2022. This Act directed ECSA to conduct a plebiscite of two councils in the south-east of SA: the District Council of Grant, and the City of Mount Gambier.

The state government was considering whether it was appropriate to refer a proposal to amalgamate the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to the Local Government Boundaries Commission (the Boundaries Commission) to undertake a formal inquiry.

The plebiscite was a non-binding poll which sought to ascertain the level of community support within the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier, for the examination of an amalgamation of the two councils to form a single council.

Voters were specifically asked to answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the following question: **Do you support the examination of an amalgamation of the District Council of Grant and the City of Mount Gambier to form a single council?**

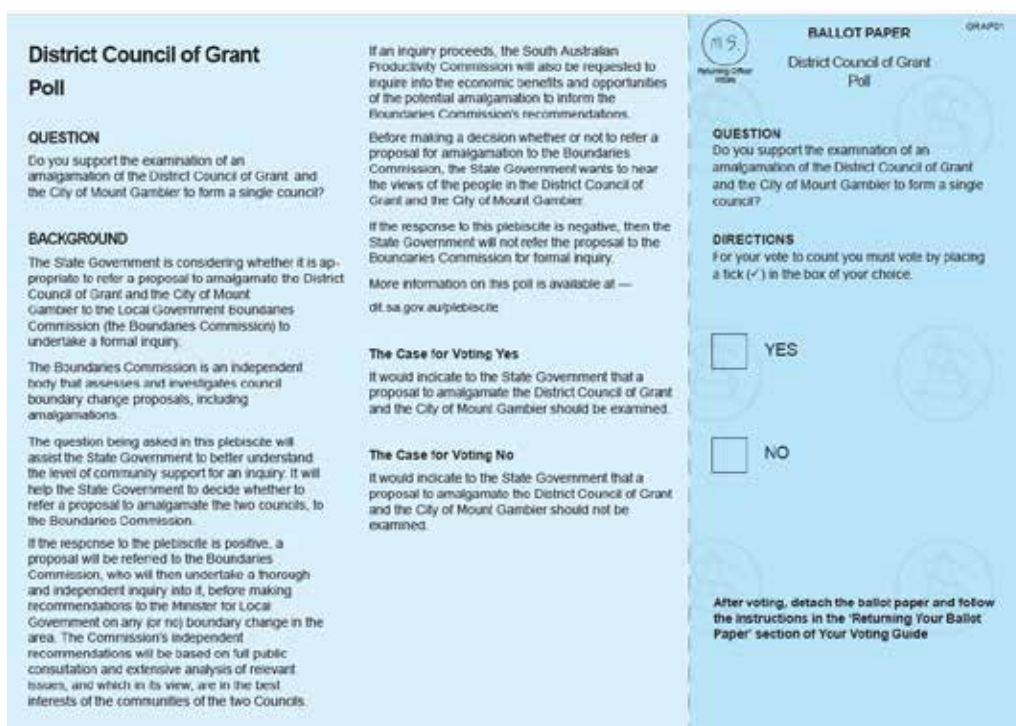
In managing this plebiscite, ECSA produced a unique ballot paper with instructions and included it in the postal voting pack for the elections, which was sent to electors, bodies corporate and groups whose names appeared on the voters roll for each council.

ECSA also designed and delivered an advertising campaign to inform electors in the areas of the poll.

Postal voting packs were mailed out to electors in these two councils from Friday 14 October 2022 to Thursday 20 October 2022. These packs included the ballot paper for the poll in addition to each elector’s vote entitlement for their respective council and ward. Voting closed at 5:00pm on Thursday 10 November 2022, and the scrutiny and count of the poll commenced shortly after midday on Saturday 12 November 2022 at the District Council of Grant council office, and at 9:30pm at the City of Mount Gambier council chambers.

To ensure the scrutiny and count was managed effectively and independently, two ECSA staff members managed the process. Counting was undertaken without the assistance of staff from either council who were appointed as electoral officers for the purpose of the elections.

Under section 36 of the LGE Act, the council may appoint suitable persons to act as scrutineers for a poll. The Electoral Commissioner invited the chief executives from each council to scrutineer at the respective poll counts. The chief executives were also able to appoint another person to act as a scrutineer on their behalf.



Results

The results of the non-binding plebiscite are provided in the tables below – Tables 27-29.

TABLE 27: District Council of Grant plebiscite results

Ward	Yes	No	Formal votes	Informal votes	Total
Central	219	2,254	2,473	7	2,480
Tarpeena	42	297	339	2	341
Port MacDonnell	17	362	379	1	380
Total	278	2,913	3,191	10	3,201

TABLE 28: City of Mount Gambier plebiscite results

Yes	No	Formal votes	Informal votes	Total
2,663	4,041	6,704	40	6,744

TABLE 29: Combined plebiscite results

Council	Yes	No	Formal votes	Informal votes	Total
Grant	278	2,913	3,191	10	3,201
Mount Gambier	2,663	4,041	6,704	40	6,744
Total	2,941 (29.7%)	6,954 (70.3%)	9,895	50	9,945

Costs

The total costs of \$26,616 (excluding GST) were recovered through the Office of Local Government (OLG). The costs of the advertising campaign, including production of content and media placement and statutory notices were \$17,337. Materials, including printing ballot papers and the insertion of materials into envelopes cost \$6,920 and the scrutiny and count team cost \$2,358.



Above: Map of District of Grant and City of Mount Gambier

Appendices



9.1 Enrolment

TABLE 30: Elector representation, 2018 – 2022

This table contains statistics on the total eligible electors and number of ward and area councillors in each council at the 2018 and 2022 elections. This also includes the number of electors per councillor (excluding mayoral positions).

Council	2022 Eligible Electors	2022 No. Reps	2022 Electors per Rep	2018 Eligible Electors	2018 No. Reps	2018 Electors per Rep
Adelaide	30,410	11	2,765	26,538	11	2,413
Adelaide Hills	30,549	12	2,546	29,608	12	2,467
Adelaide Plains	7,023	9	780	5,964	9	663
Alexandrina	22,530	9	2,503	20,485	11	1,862
Barossa	18,856	11	1,714	17,583	11	1,598
Barunga West	2,068	9	230	1,976	9	220
Berri Barmera	7,561	8	945	7,304	8	913
Burnside	32,315	12	2,693	31,554	12	2,630
Campbelltown	37,111	10	3,711	34,934	10	3,493
Ceduna	2,130	8	266	2,058	8	257
Charles Sturt	90,029	16	5,627	83,958	16	5,247
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	6,945	9	772	6,668	9	741
Cleve	1,279	7	183	1,249	7	178
Cooper Pedy	910	0	0	961	8	120
Coorong	3,901	7	557	3,778	9	420
Copper Coast	12,174	9	1,353	11,200	9	1,244
Elliston	742	8	93	729	8	91
Flinders Ranges	1,178	8	147	1,186	8	148
Franklin Harbour	926	6	154	905	6	151
Gawler	19,330	10	1,933	17,535	10	1,754
Goyder	3,164	7	452	3,050	7	436
Grant	5,639	9	627	5,505	9	612
Holdfast Bay	28,668	12	2,389	27,624	12	2,302
Kangaroo Island	3,674	9	408	3,476	9	386
Karoonda East Murray	745	6	124	746	6	124
Kimba	750	7	107	801	7	114
Kingston	1,905	7	272	1,827	7	261
Light	11,309	9	1,257	10,328	10	1,033

Council	2022 Eligible Electors	2022 No. Reps	2022 Electors per Rep	2018 Eligible Electors	2018 No. Reps	2018 Electors per Rep
Lower Eyre Peninsula	3,941	7	563	3,708	7	530
Loxton Waikerie	8,404	10	840	8,155	10	816
Marion	68,556	12	5,713	64,049	12	5,337
Mid Murray	6,987	8	873	6,432	9	715
Mitcham	49,481	12	4,123	48,258	13	3,712
Mount Barker	28,742	10	2,874	24,563	10	2,456
Mount Gambier	20,190	8	2,524	19,336	8	2,417
Mount Remarkable	2,189	7	313	2,134	7	305
Murray Bridge	15,550	9	1,728	14,339	9	1,593
Naracoorte Lucindale	5,909	10	591	5,875	10	588
Northern Areas	3,502	9	389	3,378	9	375
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	26,211	13	2,016	25,226	13	1,940
Onkaparinga	131,498	12	10,958	123,876	12	10,323
Orroroo Carrieton	666	6	111	678	6	113
Peterborough	1,243	8	155	1,205	8	151
Playford	67,965	15	4,531	60,373	15	4,025
Port Adelaide Enfield	89,021	17	5,237	82,814	17	4,871
Port Augusta	9,618	9	1,069	9,495	9	1,055
Port Lincoln	10,882	9	1,209	10,322	9	1,147
Port Pirie	13,127	9	1,459	12,792	9	1,421
Prospect	15,285	8	1,911	14,666	8	1,833
Renmark Paringa	6,722	8	840	6,469	8	809
Robe	1,376	6	229	1,184	6	197
Salisbury	98,277	14	7,020	93,937	14	6,710
Southern Mallee	1,338	7	191	1,353	7	193
Streaky Bay	1,658	8	207	1,558	8	195
Tatiara	4,553	9	506	4,505	9	501
Tea Tree Gully	74,686	12	6,224	72,865	12	6,072
Tumby Bay	2,104	6	351	1,981	6	330
Unley	28,061	12	2,338	27,441	12	2,287
Victor Harbor	13,398	9	1,489	12,363	9	1,374
Wakefield	5,030	9	559	4,757	9	529
Walkerville	5,836	8	730	5,674	8	709
Wattle Range	8,867	11	806	8,483	11	771

Council	2022 Eligible Electors	2022 No. Reps	2022 Electors per Rep	2018 Eligible Electors	2018 No. Reps	2018 Electors per Rep
West Torrens	43,403	14	3,100	40,905	14	2,922
Whyalla	15,594	9	1,733	15,267	9	1,696
Wudinna	827	7	118	846	7	121
Yankalilla	4,630	9	514	4,241	9	471
Yorke Peninsula	9,181	11	835	8,829	11	803
Total	1,288,329	622	2,071	1,213,862	637	1,906

TABLE 31: Number of enrolled electors per council, 2010 – 2022

Council	Country/Metro Council *	2022	2018	2014	2010
Adelaide	M	30,410	26,538	24,183	23,236
Adelaide Hills	C	30,549	29,608	29,094	28,767
Adelaide Plains	C	7,023	5,964	5,824	5,583
Alexandrina	C	22,530	20,485	18,887	18,097
Barossa	C	18,856	17,583	16,803	16,155
Barunga West	C	2,068	1,976	2,012	2,018
Berri Barmera	C	7,561	7,304	7,300	7,284
Burnside	M	32,315	31,554	31,607	31,990
Campbelltown	M	37,111	34,934	34,205	33,531
Ceduna	C	2,130	2,058	2,178	2,154
Charles Sturt	M	90,029	83,958	78,195	75,273
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	C	6,945	6,668	6,630	6,465
Cleve	C	1,279	1,249	1,291	1,333
Cooper Pedy	C	910	961	1,123	1,184
Coorong	C	3,901	3,778	3,896	4,016
Copper Coast	C	12,174	11,200	10,385	9,778
Elliston	C	742	729	750	880
Flinders Ranges	C	1,178	1,186	1,234	1,201
Franklin Harbour	C	926	905	938	921
Gawler	M	19,330	17,535	15,497	14,698
Goyder	C	3,164	3,050	3,085	3,194
Grant	C	5,639	5,505	5,544	5,672
Holdfast Bay	M	28,668	27,624	26,746	26,062
Kangaroo Island	C	3,674	3,476	3,418	3,428

Council	Country/Metro Council *	2022	2018	2014	2010
Karoonda East Murray	C	745	746	807	831
Kimba	C	750	801	791	845
Kingston	C	1,905	1,827	1,928	1,897
Light	C	11,309	10,328	9,948	9,432
Lower Eyre Peninsula	C	3,941	3,708	3,694	3,378
Loxton Waikerie	C	8,404	8,155	8,165	8,168
Marion	M	68,556	64,049	61,097	59,426
Mid Murray	C	6,987	6,432	6,149	6,573
Mitcham	M	49,481	48,258	47,264	46,547
Mount Barker	C	28,742	24,563	21,864	20,384
Mount Gambier	C	20,190	19,336	18,485	17,940
Mount Remarkable	C	2,189	2,134	2,235	2,283
Murray Bridge	C	15,550	14,339	13,447	12,954
Naracoorte Lucindale	C	5,909	5,875	5,778	5,954
Northern Areas	C	3,502	3,378	3,489	3,550
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	M	26,211	25,226	24,796	24,709
Onkaparinga	M	131,498	123,876	115,399	111,137
Orroroo Carrieton	C	666	678	748	697
Peterborough	C	1,243	1,205	1,270	1,348
Playford	M	67,965	60,373	53,257	47,927
Port Adelaide Enfield	M	89,021	82,814	76,671	73,518
Port Augusta	C	9,618	9,495	9,244	9,255
Port Lincoln	C	10,882	10,322	9,946	9,799
Port Pirie	C	13,127	12,792	12,361	12,231
Prospect	M	15,285	14,666	14,347	13,950
Renmark Paringa	C	6,722	6,469	6,367	6,427
Robe	C	1,376	1,184	1,248	1,366
Salisbury	M	98,277	93,937	87,720	84,674
Southern Mallee	C	1,338	1,353	1,403	1,513
Streaky Bay	C	1,658	1,558	1,516	1,591
Tatiara	C	4,553	4,505	4,524	4,683
Tea Tree Gully	M	74,686	72,865	71,274	70,936
Tumby Bay	C	2,104	1,981	2,058	2,122
Unley	M	28,061	27,441	26,988	26,924

Council	Country/Metro Council *	2022	2018	2014	2010
Victor Harbor	C	13,398	12,363	11,714	10,975
Wakefield	C	5,030	4,757	4,730	4,814
Walkerville	M	5,836	5,674	5,326	5,358
Wattle Range	C	8,867	8,483	8,540	8,688
West Torrens	M	43,403	40,905	39,281	38,726
Whyalla	C	15,594	15,267	14,832	14,555
Wudinna	C	827	846	904	971
Yankalilla	C	4,630	4,241	3,944	3,643
Yorke Peninsula	C	9,181	8,829	9,321	9,442
Total		1,288,329	1,213,862	1,155,695	1,125,061

*C = country council, M = metropolitan council

TABLE 32: Electors on the HA roll vs council roll, 2022

Council	HA Roll	Council Roll	Total
Adelaide	13,844	16,566	30,410
Adelaide Hills	30,531	18	30,549
Adelaide Plains	7,012	11	7,023
Alexandrina	22,435	95	22,530
Barossa	18,782	74	18,856
Barunga West	2,054	14	2,068
Berri Barmera	7,558	3	7,561
Burnside	32,290	25	32,315
Campbelltown	37,075	36	37,111
Ceduna	2,109	21	2,130
Charles Sturt	89,984	45	90,029
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	6,865	80	6,945
Cleve	1,274	5	1,279
Cooper Pedy	908	2	910
Coorong	3,893	8	3,901
Copper Coast	12,092	82	12,174
Elliston	718	24	742
Flinders Ranges	1,166	12	1,178
Franklin Harbour	920	6	926
Gawler	19,310	20	19,330

Council	HA Roll	Council Roll	Total
Goyder	3,079	85	3,164
Grant	5,612	27	5,639
Holdfast Bay	28,644	24	28,668
Kangaroo Island	3,618	56	3,674
Karoonda East Murray	741	4	745
Kimba	728	22	750
Kingston	1,810	95	1,905
Light	11,178	131	11,309
Lower Eyre Peninsula	3,870	71	3,941
Loxton Waikerie	8,396	8	8,404
Marion	67,897	659	68,556
Mid Murray	6,885	102	6,987
Mitcham	49,454	27	49,481
Mount Barker	28,687	55	28,742
Mount Gambier	20,143	47	20,190
Mount Remarkable	2,167	22	2,189
Murray Bridge	15,490	60	15,550
Naracoorte Lucindale	5,889	20	5,909
Northern Areas	3,466	36	3,502
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	26,182	29	26,211
Onkaparinga	131,418	80	131,498
Orroroo Carrieton	660	6	666
Peterborough	1,242	1	1,243
Playford	67,923	42	67,965
Port Adelaide Enfield	88,882	139	89,021
Port Augusta	9,484	134	9,618
Port Lincoln	10,871	11	10,882
Port Pirie	13,120	7	13,127
Prospect	15,266	19	15,285
Renmark Paringa	6,718	4	6,722
Robe	1,234	142	1,376
Salisbury	98,207	70	98,277
Southern Mallee	1,333	5	1,338
Streaky Bay	1,628	30	1,658
Tatiara	4,527	26	4,553
Tea Tree Gully	74,647	39	74,686

Council	HA Roll	Council Roll	Total
Tumby Bay	2,101	3	2,104
Unley	27,957	104	28,061
Victor Harbor	13,217	181	13,398
Wakefield	4,966	64	5,030
Walkerville	5,819	17	5,836
Wattle Range	8,852	15	8,867
West Torrens	42,838	565	43,403
Whyalla	15,586	8	15,594
Wudinna	823	4	827
Yankalilla	4,457	173	4,630
Yorke Peninsula	9,070	111	9,181
Total	1,267,602	20,727	1,288,329

9.2 Postal and telephone assisted voting

TABLE 33: Postal returns and telephone voters, 2022

Council	Voting packs sent	Telephone voters	Voting packs returned	Postal returns rate	Returned to sender	Returned to sender rate	Voting packs returned late	Late returns rate
Adelaide	30,410	45	9,598	31.6%	1,092	3.6%	153	0.5%
Adelaide Hills	30,549	10	9,463	31.0%	718	2.4%	152	0.5%
Adelaide Plains	7,023	2	2,162	30.8%	239	3.4%	39	0.6%
Alexandrina	22,530	15	10,241	45.5%	740	3.3%	98	0.4%
Barossa	18,856	8	7,691	40.8%	619	3.3%	117	0.6%
Barunga West	2,068	0	1,116	54.0%	49	2.4%	16	0.8%
Berri Barmera	7,561	7	3,362	44.5%	289	3.8%	35	0.5%
Burnside	32,315	30	10,829	33.5%	475	1.5%	205	0.6%
Campbelltown	30,040	16	9,331	31.1%	439	1.5%	159	0.5%
Ceduna	2,130	1	1,193	56.0%	87	4.1%	14	0.7%
Charles Sturt	90,028	62	27,975	31.1%	1,420	1.6%	503	0.6%
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	6,945	3	3,422	49.3%	201	2.9%	37	0.5%
Cleve	1,279	1	896	70.1%	28	2.2%	3	0.2%
Coorong	3,901	5	2,214	56.8%	107	2.7%	36	0.9%
Elliston	742	2	517	69.7%	23	3.1%	5	0.7%
Flinders Ranges	1,178	0	750	63.7%	30	2.5%	3	0.3%
Franklin Harbour	926	2	652	70.4%	29	3.1%	0	0.0%
Gawler	19,330	6	6,650	34.4%	441	2.3%	114	0.6%
Goyder	2,695	2	1,593	59.1%	94	3.5%	16	0.6%
Grant	5,639	10	3,645	64.6%	87	1.5%	58	1.0%
Holdfast Bay	28,663	23	9,280	32.4%	549	1.9%	128	0.4%
Kangaroo Island	3,674	13	2,246	61.1%	90	2.4%	46	1.3%
Karoonda East Murray	745	1	485	65.1%	20	2.7%	4	0.5%
Kingston	1,905	1	1,186	62.3%	38	2.0%	4	0.2%
Light	11,309	2	4,248	37.6%	324	2.9%	55	0.5%
Lower Eyre Peninsula	3,941	3	1,714	43.5%	136	3.5%	23	0.6%

Council	Voting packs sent	Telephone voters	Voting packs returned	Postal returns rate	Returned to sender	Returned to sender rate	Voting packs returned late	Late returns rate
Loxton Waikerie	8,404	4	4,640	55.2%	280	3.3%	35	0.4%
Marion	68,556	32	20,489	29.9%	1,165	1.7%	404	0.6%
Mid Murray	6,987	2	3,158	45.2%	220	3.1%	38	0.5%
Mitcham	49,481	15	17,534	35.4%	647	1.3%	199	0.4%
Mount Barker	28,742	11	10,790	37.5%	847	2.9%	125	0.4%
Mount Gambier	20,190	14	8,508	42.1%	525	2.6%	138	0.7%
Murray Bridge	15,550	5	5,861	37.7%	639	4.1%	88	0.6%
Naracoorte Lucindale	5,909	1	3,648	61.7%	128	2.2%	27	0.5%
Northern Areas	2,758	0	1,381	50.1%	71	2.6%	16	0.6%
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	26,211	14	8,957	34.2%	419	1.6%	111	0.4%
Onkaparinga	131,498	44	33,687	25.6%	2,091	1.6%	590	0.4%
Peterborough	1,243	0	796	64.0%	23	1.9%	2	0.2%
Playford	67,965	25	19,098	28.1%	1,531	2.3%	427	0.6%
Port Adelaide Enfield	89,021	73	29,934	33.6%	1,545	1.7%	705	0.8%
Port Augusta	9,618	7	4,466	46.4%	304	3.2%	57	0.6%
Port Lincoln	10,882	16	4,465	41.0%	411	3.8%	66	0.6%
Port Pirie	13,127	3	5,362	40.8%	287	2.2%	58	0.4%
Prospect	15,285	15	6,091	39.8%	239	1.6%	82	0.5%
Renmark Paringa	6,722	8	3,298	49.1%	222	3.3%	28	0.4%
Robe	1,376	1	965	70.1%	27	2.0%	12	0.9%
Salisbury	98,277	61	32,411	33.0%	1,471	1.5%	622	0.6%
Tatiara	4,553	1	2,811	61.7%	178	3.9%	23	0.5%
Tea Tree Gully	74,686	28	20,148	27.0%	937	1.3%	292	0.4%
Unley	28,061	16	9,520	33.9%	479	1.7%	136	0.5%
Victor Harbor	13,398	12	6,538	48.8%	362	2.7%	50	0.4%
Wakefield	3,975	0	1,936	48.7%	126	3.2%	29	0.7%
Walkerville	5,836	10	2,425	41.6%	103	1.8%	35	0.6%
Wattle Range	8,867	5	4,339	48.9%	242	2.7%	70	0.8%
West Torrens	37,261	32	12,389	33.2%	633	1.7%	189	0.5%

Council	Voting packs sent	Telephone voters	Voting packs returned	Postal returns rate	Returned to sender	Returned to sender rate	Voting packs returned late	Late returns rate
Whyalla	15,594	9	6,867	44.0%	269	1.7%	71	0.5%
Yankalilla	4,630	8	2,538	54.8%	161	3.5%	9	0.2%
Yorke Peninsula	2,616	2	1,363	52.1%	94	3.6%	21	0.8%
State total	1,243,661	744	428,872	34.5%	25,040	2.0%	6,778	0.5%

9.3 Voter participation, 2018 – 2022

TABLE 34: Voter participation per council and per election – 2022 and 2018

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
City of Adelaide						
Lord Mayor	8,630	30,410	28.4%	7,293	26,538	27.5%
Area councillors	8,588	30,410	28.2%	7,248	26,538	27.3%
North ward councillors	2,486	7,169	34.7%	2,328	6,998	33.3%
Central ward councillors	3,382	13,909	24.3%	2,375	10,886	21.8%
South ward councillors	2,843	9,332	30.5%	2,642	8,674	30.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			28.4%			27.5%
Adelaide Hills						
Mayor		Uncontested		9,087	29,608	30.7%
Ranges ward councillors	5,302	18,209	29.1%	5,630	17,619	32.0%
Valleys ward councillors	3,984	12,340	32.3%	3,502	11,989	29.2%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			30.4%			30.8%
Adelaide Plains						
Mayor	2,080	7,023	29.6%	1,993	5,964	33.4%
Area councillors (established at 2022 election)	2,089	7,023	29.7%			NA
Mallala/Dublin ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	770	1,928	39.9%
Two Wells ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	665	1,810	36.7%
Lewiston ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	556	2,226	25.0%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			29.7%			33.4%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Alexandrina						
Mayor	9,958	22,530	44.2%	8,490	20,485	41.4%
Alexandrina West ward councillors <i>(ward established at 2022 election)</i>	3,177	7,544	42.1%		NA	
Alexandrina North ward councillors <i>(ward established at 2022 election)</i>	3,076	7,555	40.7%		NA	
Alexandrina South ward councillors <i>(ward established at 2022 election)</i>	3,707	7,431	49.9%		NA	
Nangkita Kuitpo ward councillor <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>		NA		750	1,987	37.7%
Strathalbyn ward councillors <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>		NA		1,879	4,370	43.0%
Angas Bremer ward councillors <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>		NA		1,503	3,946	38.1%
Port Elliot Middleton ward councillors <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>		NA		1,356	3,251	41.7%
Goolwa Hindmarsh Island ward councillors <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>		NA		3,052	6,931	44.0%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			44.2%			41.6%
Barossa						
Mayor	7,394	18,856	39.2%	6,214	17,583	35.3%
Area councillors	7,446	18,856	39.5%	6,248	17,583	35.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			39.4%			35.4%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Barunga West						
Area councillors	1,087	2,068	52.6%	1,102	1,976	55.8%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			52.6%			55.8%
Berri Barmera						
Mayor	3,256	7,561	43.1%	3,094	7,304	42.4%
Area councillors	3,244	7,561	42.9%	3,114	7,304	42.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			43.0%			42.5%
Burnside						
Mayor	10,561	32,315	32.7%	9,442	31,554	29.9%
Beaumont ward councillors	1,886	5,328	35.4%	1,568	5,159	30.4%
Burnside ward councillors	1,666	5,297	31.5%	1,497	5,221	28.7%
Eastwood & Glenunga ward councillors	2,051	5,471	37.5%	1,661	5,106	32.5%
Kensington Gardens & Magill ward councillors	1,518	5,375	28.2%	1,552	5,373	28.9%
Kensington Park ward councillors	1,962	5,622	34.9%	1,663	5,531	30.1%
Rose Park & Toorak Gardens ward councillors		Uncontested		1,480	5,164	28.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			33.1%			29.9%
Campbelltown						
Mayor		Uncontested		10,519	34,934	30.1%
Hectorville ward councillors	2,500	8,112	30.8%	2,053	7,470	27.5%
Gorge ward councillors	2,225	7,265	30.6%	2,450	7,138	34.3%
Newton ward councillors	2,141	7,112	30.1%	1,754	6,607	26.5%
River ward councillors	2,245	7,551	29.7%	2,286	7,058	32.4%
Woodforde ward councillors		Uncontested		1,977	6,661	29.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			30.3%			30.1%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Ceduna						
Mayor	1,138	2,130	53.4%	1,047	2,058	50.9%
Area councillors	1,143	2,130	53.7%	Uncontested		
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			53.5%			50.9%
Charles Sturt						
Mayor	26,717	90,028	29.7%	23,922	83,958	28.5%
Semaphore Park ward councillors	3,344	10,174	32.9%	3,082	9,752	31.6%
Grange ward councillors	3,297	10,831	30.4%	3,175	10,391	30.6%
Henley ward councillors	3,056	11,045	27.7%	2,966	10,581	28.0%
Woodville ward councillors	4,141	12,297	33.7%	3,466	11,255	30.8%
West Woodville ward councillors	3,348	11,646	28.7%	2,702	10,455	25.8%
Findon ward councillors	3,777	11,696	32.3%	3,456	10,857	31.8%
Hindmarsh ward councillors	3,043	11,765	25.9%	2,603	10,694	24.3%
Beverley ward councillors	Uncontested			2,722	9,973	27.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			29.9%			28.6%
Clare & Gilbert Valleys						
Mayor	3,359	6,945	48.4%	Uncontested		
Area councillors	3,355	6,945	48.3%	2,905	6,668	43.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			48.3%			43.6%
Cleve						
Area councillors	882	1,279	69.0%	804	1,249	64.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			69.0%			64.4%
Coober Pedy						
Mayor	Election not held			529	961	55.0%
Area councillors	Election not held			527	961	54.8%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>	No elections held					54.9%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Coorong						
Mayor (established at 2022 election)	2,146	3,901	55.0%			
Area councillors (established at 2022 election)	2,155	3,901	55.2%			
Parks ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	533	837	63.7%
Mallee ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	1,043	1,778	58.7%
Lakes ward councillors (ward abolished at 2022 election)			NA	Uncontested		
Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)			55.1%			60.3%
Copper Coast						
Mayor		Uncontested		5,253	11,200	46.9%
Area councillors		Uncontested		5,280	11,200	47.1%
Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)		No elections held				47.0%
Elliston						
Area councillors	509	742	68.6%	510	729	70.0%
Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)			68.6%			70.0%
Flinders Ranges						
Mayor	736	1,178	62.5%	Uncontested		
Area councillors		Uncontested		704	1,186	59.4%
Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)			62.5%			59.4%
Franklin Harbour						
Area councillors	645	926	69.7%	Uncontested		
Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)			69.7%	No elections held		

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Gawler						
Mayor	6,423	19,330	33.2%	Uncontested		
Area councillors	6,408	19,330	33.2%	4,963	17,535	28.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			33.2%			28.3%
Goyder						
Hallett ward councillor	278	472	58.9%	183	396	46.2%
Burra ward councillors	739	1,260	58.7%	778	1,288	60.4%
Eudunda ward councillors	537	963	55.8%	495	960	51.6%
Robertstown ward councillor	Uncontested			Uncontested		
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			57.7%			55.1%
Grant						
Mayor	3,491	5,639	61.9%	2,345	5,504	42.6%
Central ward councillors	2,662	4,433	60.0%	1,798	4,332	41.5%
Tarpeena ward councillor	371	613	60.5%	Uncontested		
Port MacDonnell ward councillor	431	593	72.7%	Uncontested		
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			61.7%			42.1%
Holdfast Bay						
Mayor	8,990	28,663	31.4%	9,244	27,624	33.5%
Glenelg ward councillors	2,139	7,032	30.4%	2,012	6,804	29.6%
Somerton ward councillors	2,318	7,216	32.1%	2,420	7,088	34.1%
Brighton ward councillors	Uncontested			2,449	6,865	35.7%
Seacliff ward councillors	2,308	7,218	32.0%	2,287	6,867	33.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			31.4%			33.3%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Kangaroo Island						
Mayor	2,199	3,674	59.9%	2,260	3,476	65.0%
Area councillors	2,206	3,674	60.0%	2,263	3,476	65.1%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			59.9%			65.1%
Karoonda East Murray						
Mayor		Uncontested			Uncontested	
Area councillors	465	745	62.4%	473	746	63.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			62.4%			63.4%
Kimba						
Area councillors		Uncontested		641	801	80.0%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held				80.0%
Kingston						
Mayor			Failed	1,147	1,827	62.8%
Area councillors	1,160	1,905	60.9%	1,150	1,827	62.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			60.9%			62.9%
Light						
Mayor	4,088	11,309	36.1%		Uncontested	
Dutton ward councillors	1,908	3,951	48.3%	1,216	3,050	39.9%
Light ward councillors	1,117	3,539	31.6%	732	2,290	32.0%
Laucke ward councillors <i>(ward abolished at 2022 election)</i>			NA	512	1,996	25.7%
Mudla Wirra ward councillors	1,080	3,819	28.3%	587	2,992	19.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			36.2%			29.5%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Lower Eyre						
Area councillors	1,693	3,941	43.0%	1,532	3,708	41.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			43.0%			41.3%
Loxton Waikerie						
Mayor	4,489	8,404	53.4%	4,746	8,155	58.2%
Area councillors	4,521	8,404	53.8%	4,772	8,155	58.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			53.6%			58.4%
Marion						
Mayor	19,433	68,556	28.3%	16,003	64,049	25.0%
Mullawirra ward councillors	3,321	12,035	27.6%	2,594	10,761	24.1%
Woodlands ward councillors	3,379	11,823	28.6%	2,555	10,892	23.5%
Warracowie ward councillors	3,279	12,238	26.8%	3,075	11,189	27.5%
Warriparinga ward councillors	3,343	11,196	29.9%	2,555	10,434	24.5%
Coastal ward councillors	3,376	10,555	32.0%	2,823	10,381	27.2%
Southern Hills ward councillors	2,747	10,709	25.7%	2,335	10,392	22.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			28.4%			24.9%
Mid Murray						
Mayor	3,092	6,987	44.3%	2,789	6,432	43.4%
Eyre ward councillors	727	1,667	43.6%	821	2,113	38.9%
Shearer ward councillors		Uncontested		1,318	3,084	42.7%
Murray ward councillors	733	1,612	45.5%	661	1,235	53.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			44.3%			43.4%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Mitcham						
Mayor	17,179	49,481	34.7%	15,675	48,258	32.5%
Boorman ward councillors	2,862	8,143	35.1%	2,401	7,684	31.2%
Gault ward councillors	2,817	8,634	32.6%	2,370	7,715	30.7%
Overton ward councillors	2,286	7,910	28.9%	1,808	7,591	23.8%
Babbage ward councillors	2,729	8,266	33.0%	2,093	7,171	29.2%
Craigburn ward councillors	3,149	8,416	37.4%	4,074	10,933	37.3%
The Park ward councillors	3,255	8,112	40.1%	2,786	7,164	38.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			34.6%			32.3%
Mount Barker						
Mayor	10,556	28,742	36.7%	Uncontested		
North ward councillors	2,929	7,929	36.9%	3,112	9,603	32.4%
Central ward councillors	4,387	12,421	35.3%	3,178	10,734	29.6%
South ward councillors	3,237	8,392	38.6%	1,272	4,226	30.1%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			36.7%			30.8%
Mount Gambier						
Mayor	Uncontested			8,036	19,336	41.6%
Area councillors	8,162	20,190	40.4%	8,035	19,336	41.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			40.4%			41.6%
Mount Remarkable						
Telowie ward councillors	Uncontested			Uncontested		
Willochra ward councillors	Uncontested			734	1,185	61.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>	No elections held					61.9%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Murray Bridge						
Mayor	5,605	15,550	36.0%			Uncontested
Area councillors	5,619	15,550	36.1%	4,927	14,339	34.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			36.1%			34.4%
Naracoorte Lucindale						
Mayor	3,527	5,909	59.7%	3,182	5,875	54.2%
Area councillors	3,533	5,909	59.8%	3,190	5,875	54.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			59.7%			54.2%
Northern Areas						
Belalie ward councillors	809	1,566	51.7%	776	1,520	51.1%
Broughton ward councillors		Uncontested			Uncontested	
Rocky River ward councillors	536	1,192	45.0%	556	1,132	49.1%
Yackamoорundie ward councillor		Uncontested				Failed
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			48.8%			50.2%
Norwood Payneham & St Peters						
Mayor	8,713	26,211	33.2%	7,481	25,226	29.7%
St Peters ward councillors	1,459	3,825	38.1%	1,401	3,827	36.6%
Torrens ward councillors	1,357	4,227	32.1%	1,098	3,968	27.7%
Payneham ward councillors	1,241	3,963	31.3%	1,159	3,869	30.0%
Maylands/Trinity ward councillors	1,914	6,055	31.6%	1,614	5,808	27.8%
West Norwood/Kent Town ward councillors		Uncontested		1,127	4,052	27.8%
Kensington/East Norwood ward councillors	1,316	3,791	34.7%	1,130	3,702	30.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			33.3%			29.8%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Onkaparinga						
Mayor	32,668	131,498	24.8%	31,834	123,876	25.7%
South Coast ward councillors	6,100	22,883	26.7%	5,849	21,243	27.5%
Mid Coast ward councillors	6,020	24,729	24.3%	5,481	22,539	24.3%
Knox ward councillors	4,647	20,965	22.2%	4,576	19,915	23.0%
Pimpala ward councillors	5,071	21,274	23.8%	4,834	20,596	23.5%
Thalassa ward councillors	5,338	20,340	26.2%	5,285	19,985	26.4%
Southern Vales ward councillors	5,473	21,307	25.7%	5,797	19,598	29.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			24.8%			25.7%
Orroroo Carrieton						
Area councillors		Uncontested		469	678	69.2%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held				69.2%
Peterborough						
Mayor	766	1,243	61.6%			Uncontested
Area councillors	770	1,243	61.9%	736	1,205	61.1%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			61.8%			61.1%
Playford						
Mayor	17,945	67,965	26.4%	14,880	60,373	24.6%
Ward 1 councillors	4,122	14,991	27.5%	3,213	12,158	26.4%
Ward 2 councillors	4,212	16,333	25.8%	2,846	13,273	21.4%
Ward 3 councillors	3,152	12,005	26.3%	3,043	11,712	26.0%
Ward 4 councillors	3,086	11,911	25.9%	2,733	11,208	24.4%
Ward 5 councillors	3,446	12,725	27.1%	2,919	12,022	24.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			26.5%			24.5%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Port Adelaide Enfield						
Mayor		Uncontested		23,781	82,814	28.7%
Outer Harbor ward councillors	3,083	10,327	29.9%	3,432	9,974	34.4%
Semaphore ward councillors	3,223	9,917	32.5%	3,109	9,604	32.4%
Port Adelaide ward councillors	3,129	9,986	31.3%	2,660	9,345	28.5%
Parks ward councillors	5,067	14,948	33.9%	4,185	13,839	30.2%
Enfield ward councillors	5,415	15,964	33.9%	4,003	14,758	27.1%
Klemzig ward councillors	3,034	10,059	30.2%	2,125	9,396	22.6%
Northfield ward councillors	6,177	17,820	34.7%	4,309	15,898	27.1%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			32.7%			28.7%
Port Augusta						
Mayor	4,226	9,618	43.9%	4,524	9,495	47.6%
Area councillors	4,249	9,618	44.2%	4,523	9,495	47.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			44.1%			47.6%
Port Lincoln						
Mayor	4,350	10,882	40.0%	4,388	10,322	42.5%
Area councillors	4,309	10,882	39.6%	4,338	10,322	42.0%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			39.8%			42.3%
Port Pirie						
Mayor		Uncontested		5,995	12,792	46.9%
Area councillors	5,206	13,127	39.7%	5,997	12,792	46.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			39.7%			46.9%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Prospect						
Mayor	5,942	15,285	38.9%	4,655	14,666	31.7%
North ward councillors	1,342	3,692	36.3%	1,147	3,890	29.5%
West ward councillors	1,626	3,910	41.6%	1,254	3,782	33.2%
Central ward councillors	1,597	3,947	40.5%	1,043	3,445	30.3%
East ward councillors	1,350	3,736	36.1%	1,202	3,549	33.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			38.8%			31.7%
Renmark Paringa						
Mayor	3,212	6,722	47.8%	3,260	6,469	50.4%
Area councillors	3,216	6,722	47.8%	3,265	6,469	50.5%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			47.8%			50.4%
Robe						
Mayor			Failed	785	1,184	66.3%
Area councillors	952	1,376	69.2%	786	1,184	66.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			69.2%			66.3%
Salisbury						
Mayor	30,906	98,277	31.4%	25,287	93,937	26.9%
Central ward councillors	4,615	14,481	31.9%	3,634	13,832	26.3%
East ward councillors	3,868	13,822	28.0%	3,322	13,369	24.8%
South ward councillors	3,971	13,174	30.1%	3,049	12,837	23.8%
Hills ward councillors	3,755	13,147	28.6%	3,218	12,783	25.2%
Para ward councillors	5,315	14,716	36.1%	4,434	14,062	31.5%
North ward councillors	4,528	14,327	31.6%	3,829	13,099	29.2%
West ward councillors	4,874	14,610	33.4%	3,804	13,955	27.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			31.5%			26.9%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Southern Mallee						
Area councillors		Uncontested		916	1,353	67.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held				67.7%
Streaky Bay						
Flinders ward councillors		Uncontested		384	763	50.3%
Eyre ward councillors		Uncontested		419	795	52.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held				51.5%
Tatiara						
Mayor	2,742	4,553	60.2%			Uncontested
Area councillors	2,750	4,553	60.4%	2,089	4,505	46.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			60.3%			46.4%
Tea Tree Gully						
Mayor	19,594	74,686	26.2%	18,872	72,865	25.9%
Pedare ward councillors	3,046	13,125	23.2%	3,364	12,933	26.0%
Drumminor ward councillors	2,951	11,393	25.9%	2,779	11,191	24.8%
Hillcote ward councillors	3,022	11,882	25.4%	2,835	11,859	23.9%
Balmoral ward councillors	3,446	12,199	28.2%	3,050	11,654	26.2%
Steventon ward councillors	3,775	13,226	28.5%	3,583	12,782	28.0%
Water Gully ward councillors	3,399	12,861	26.4%	3,279	12,446	26.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			26.3%			25.9%
Tumby Bay						
Mayor		Uncontested		1,305	1,981	65.9%
Area councillors		Uncontested		1,301	1,981	65.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held				65.8%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Unley						
Mayor	9,210	28,061	32.8%	8,418	27,441	30.7%
Unley ward councillors	1,687	4,844	34.8%	1,503	4,607	32.6%
Parkside ward councillors	1,421	4,489	31.7%	1,117	4,372	25.5%
Fullarton ward councillors	1,633	5,008	32.6%	Uncontested		
Goodwood ward councillors	1,526	4,572	33.4%	1,493	4,535	32.9%
Clarence Park ward councillors	1,457	4,383	33.2%	1,372	4,310	31.8%
Unley Park ward councillors	1,502	4,765	31.5%	Uncontested		
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			32.8%			30.7%
Victor Harbor						
Mayor	6,362	13,398	47.5%	6,335	12,363	51.2%
Area councillors	6,338	13,398	47.3%	6,312	12,363	51.1%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			47.4%			51.1%
Wakefield						
Mayor	Uncontested			Uncontested		
North ward councillors	750	1,625	46.2%	697	1,533	45.5%
Central ward councillors	1,141	2,350	48.6%	1,085	2,227	48.7%
South ward councillors	Uncontested			405	997	40.6%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			47.6%			46.0%
Walkerville						
Mayor	2,352	5,836	40.3%	Uncontested		
Area councillors	2,359	5,836	40.4%	1,890	5,674	33.3%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			40.4%			33.3%

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Wattle Range						
Mayor		Uncontested		4,237	8,483	49.9%
Kintore ward councillors	854	1,525	56.0%	Uncontested		
Riddoch ward councillors	768	1,575	48.8%	667	1,507	44.3%
Corcoran ward councillors	1,931	4,249	45.4%	2,199	4,104	53.6%
Sorby Adams ward councillors	696	1,518	45.8%	626	1,443	43.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			47.9%			49.7%
West Torrens						
Mayor		Uncontested		11,825	40,905	28.9%
Keswick ward councillors	2,344	6,713	34.9%	1,684	5,739	29.3%
Hilton ward councillors	2,023	6,382	31.7%	1,558	6,030	25.8%
Plympton ward councillors	1,981	5,796	34.2%	1,744	5,449	32.0%
Lockleys ward councillors	1,961	6,000	32.7%	1,611	5,699	28.3%
Airport ward councillors	1,740	6,075	28.6%	1,990	5,848	34.0%
Morphett ward councillors		Uncontested		1,561	5,965	26.2%
Thebarton ward councillors	2,074	6,295	32.9%	1,661	6,175	26.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			32.5%			28.9%
Whyalla						
Mayor	6,603	15,594	42.3%	7,210	15,267	47.2%
Area councillors	6,556	15,594	42.0%	7,163	15,267	46.9%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			42.2%			47.1%
Wudinna						
Area councillors		Uncontested		Uncontested		
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>		No elections held		No elections held		

Council and election	2022 Council Elections			2018 Council Elections		
	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation	Total votes	Eligible electors	Voter participation
	no.	no.	%	no.	no.	%
Yankalilla						
Field ward councillors	983	2,077	47.3%	811	1,929	42.0%
Light ward councillors	1,525	2,553	59.7%	1,257	2,312	54.4%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			54.2%			48.8%
Yorke Peninsula						
Mayor		Uncontested		4,552	8,829	51.6%
Kalkabury ward councillors		Uncontested		1,503	3,156	47.6%
Gum Flat ward councillors	1,334	2,616	51.0%	1,421	2,530	56.2%
Innes/Penton Vale ward councillors		Uncontested		1,625	3,143	51.7%
<i>Overall voter participation for council (all elections combined)</i>			51.0%			51.5%
Total (participation across all elections combined)			32.9%			31.6%
Notes:						

1. This table shows the voter participation figures at the 2022 and 2018 council elections calculated using the new measure of voter participation ECSA has adopted from this Election Report onward. That is, the number of formal and informal votes counted as a percentage of the number of enrolled electors.

2. An uncontested election refers to a situation where the number of candidates who nominated equalled or was fewer than the number of positions available, and those candidates were elected unopposed without the need for an election to occur. A supplementary election is required whenever unfilled vacancies remain.

3. A failed election refers here to a situation where no candidates nominated for election and a supplementary election was required to fill the vacancy or vacancies.

TABLE 35: List of council elections, 2022

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Adelaide	Lord Mayor	1	5	Contested
Adelaide	Area councillor	2	9	Contested
Adelaide	North ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Adelaide	Central ward councillor	4	14	Contested
Adelaide	South ward councillor	3	12	Contested
Adelaide Hills	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Adelaide Hills	Ranges ward councillor	7	12	Contested
Adelaide Hills	Valleys ward councillor	5	6	Contested
Adelaide Plains	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Adelaide Plains	Area councillor	9	15	Contested
Alexandrina	Mayor	1	4	Contested
Alexandrina	Alexandrina West ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Alexandrina	Alexandrina North Ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Alexandrina	Alexandrina South ward councillor	3	13	Contested
Barossa	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Barossa	Area councillor	11	22	Contested
Barunga West	Area councillor	9	11	Contested
Berri Barmera	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Berri Barmera	Area councillor	8	9	Contested
Burnside	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Burnside	Beaumont ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Burnside	Burnside ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Burnside	Eastwood and Glenunga ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Burnside	Kensington Gardens and Magill ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Burnside	Kensington Park ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Burnside	Rose Park and Toorak Gardens ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Campbelltown	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Campbelltown	Hectorville ward councillor	2	7	Contested
Campbelltown	Gorge ward councillor	2	4	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Campbelltown	Newton ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Campbelltown	River ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Campbelltown	Woodforde ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Ceduna	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Ceduna	Area councillor	8	11	Contested
Charles Sturt	Mayor	1	4	Contested
Charles Sturt	Semaphore Park ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Charles Sturt	Grange ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Charles Sturt	Henley ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Charles Sturt	Woodville ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Charles Sturt	West Woodville ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Charles Sturt	Findon ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Charles Sturt	Hindmarsh ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Charles Sturt	Beverley ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Clare & Gilbert Valleys	Area councillor	9	10	Contested
Cleve	Area councillor	7	11	Contested
Coorong	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Coorong	Area councillor	7	15	Contested
Copper Coast	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Copper Coast	Area councillor	9	8	Uncontested – supplementary election required
Elliston	Area councillor	8	11	Contested
Flinders Ranges	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Flinders Ranges	Area councillor	8	8	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Franklin Harbour	Area councillor	6	9	Contested
Gawler	Mayor	1	4	Contested
Gawler	Area councillor	10	23	Contested
Goyder	Hallett ward councillor	1	3	Contested
Goyder	Burra ward councillor	3	7	Contested
Goyder	Eudunda ward councillor	2	6	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Goyder	Robertstown ward councillor	1	1	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Grant	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Grant	Central ward councillor	7	10	Contested
Grant	Tarpeena ward councillor	1	2	Contested
Grant	Port MacDonnell ward councillor	1	3	Contested
Holdfast Bay	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Holdfast Bay	Glenelg ward councillor	3	8	Contested
Holdfast Bay	Somerton ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Holdfast Bay	Brighton ward councillor	3	3	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Holdfast Bay	Seacliff ward councillor	3	5	Contested
Kangaroo Island	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Kangaroo Island	Area councillor	9	11	Contested
Karoonda East Murray	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Karoonda East Murray	Area councillor	6	11	Contested
Kimba	Area councillor	7	6	Uncontested – supplementary election required
Kingston	Mayor	1	0	Failed – supplementary election required
Kingston	Area councillor	7	9	Contested
Light	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Light	Dutton ward councillor	3	8	Contested
Light	Light ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Light	Mudla Wirra ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Lower Eyre Peninsula	Area councillor	7	8	Contested
Loxton Waikerie	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Loxton Waikerie	Area councillor	10	13	Contested
Marion	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Marion	Mullawirra ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Marion	Woodlands ward councillor	2	9	Contested
Marion	Warracowie ward councillor	2	8	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Marion	Warriparinga ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Marion	Coastal ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Marion	Southern Hills ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Mid Murray	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Mid Murray	Eyre ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Mid Murray	Shearer ward councillor	4	4	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Mid Murray	Murray ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Mitcham	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Mitcham	Boorman ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Mitcham	Gault ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Mitcham	Overton ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Mitcham	Babbage ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Mitcham	Craigburn ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Mitcham	The Park ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Mount Barker	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Mount Barker	North ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Mount Barker	Central ward councillor	4	5	Contested
Mount Barker	South ward councillor	3	5	Contested
Mount Gambier	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Mount Gambier	Area councillor	8	18	Contested
Mount Remarkable	Telowie ward councillor	3	3	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Mount Remarkable	Willochra ward councillor	4	3	Uncontested - supplementary election required
Murray Bridge	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Murray Bridge	Area councillor	9	15	Contested
Naracoorte Lucindale	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Naracoorte Lucindale	Area councillor	10	16	Contested
Northern Areas	Belalie ward councillor	4	5	Contested
Northern Areas	Broughton ward councillor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Northern Areas	Rocky River ward councillor	3	5	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Northern Areas	Yackamoорundie ward councillor	1	1	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	St Peters ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	Torrens ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	Payneham ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	Maylands/Trinity ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	West Norwood/Kent Town ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Norwood Payneham & St Peters	Kensington/East Norwood ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Onkaparinga	Mayor	1	8	Contested
Onkaparinga	South Coast ward councillor	2	10	Contested
Onkaparinga	Mid Coast ward councillor	2	10	Contested
Onkaparinga	Knox ward councillor	2	8	Contested
Onkaparinga	Pimpala ward councillor	2	7	Contested
Onkaparinga	Thalassa ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Onkaparinga	Southern Vales ward councillor	2	8	Contested
Orroroo Carrieton	Area councillor	6	6	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Peterborough	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Peterborough	Area councillor	8	10	Contested
Playford	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Playford	Ward 1 councillor	3	11	Contested
Playford	Ward 2 councillor	3	10	Contested
Playford	Ward 3 councillor	3	10	Contested
Playford	Ward 4 councillor	3	12	Contested
Playford	Ward 5 councillor	3	6	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested – no supplementary election required
Port Adelaide Enfield	Outer Harbor ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Semaphore ward councillor	2	6	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Port Adelaide Enfield	Port Adelaide ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Parks ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Enfield ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Klemzig ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Port Adelaide Enfield	Northfield ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Port Augusta	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Port Augusta	Area councillor	9	13	Contested
Port Lincoln	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Port Lincoln	Area councillor	9	10	Contested
Port Pirie	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Port Pirie	Area councillor	9	14	Contested
Prospect	Mayor	1	5	Contested
Prospect	North ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Prospect	West ward councillor	2	8	Contested
Prospect	Central ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Prospect	East ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Renmark Paringa	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Renmark Paringa	Area councillor	8	10	Contested
Robe	Mayor	1	0	Failed - supplementary election required
Robe	Area councillor	6	12	Contested
Salisbury	Mayor	1	4	Contested
Salisbury	Central ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Salisbury	East ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Salisbury	South ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Salisbury	Hills ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Salisbury	Para ward councillor	2	8	Contested
Salisbury	North ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Salisbury	West ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Southern Mallee	Area councillor	7	2	Uncontested - supplementary election required
Streaky Bay	Flinders ward councillor	4	4	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Streaky Bay	Eyre ward councillor	4	3	Uncontested - supplementary election required

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Tatiara	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Tatiara	Area councillor	9	13	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Mayor	1	5	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Pedare ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Drumminor ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Hillcott ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Balmoral ward councillor	2	8	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Steventon ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Tea Tree Gully	Water Gully ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Tumby Bay	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Tumby Bay	Area councillor	6	2	Uncontested - supplementary election required
Unley	Mayor	1	4	Contested
Unley	Unley ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Unley	Parkside ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Unley	Fullarton ward councillor	2	5	Contested
Unley	Goodwood ward councillor	2	7	Contested
Unley	Clarence Park ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Unley	Unley Park ward councillor	2	4	Contested
Victor Harbor	Mayor	1	3	Contested
Victor Harbor	Area councillor	9	19	Contested
Wakefield	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Wakefield	North ward councillor	3	6	Contested
Wakefield	Central ward councillor	4	6	Contested
Wakefield	South ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Walkerville	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Walkerville	Area councillor	8	13	Contested
Wattle Range	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Wattle Range	Kintore ward councillor	2	3	Contested
Wattle Range	Riddoch ward councillor	2	3	Contested

Council	Position	Vacancies	Candidates	Election status
Wattle Range	Corcoran ward councillor	5	6	Contested
Wattle Range	Sorby Adams ward councillor	2	4	Contested
West Torrens	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
West Torrens	Keswick ward councillor	2	6	Contested
West Torrens	Hilton ward councillor	2	4	Contested
West Torrens	Plympton ward councillor	2	5	Contested
West Torrens	Lockleys ward councillor	2	4	Contested
West Torrens	Airport ward councillor	2	6	Contested
West Torrens	Morphett ward councillor	2	2	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
West Torrens	Thebarton ward councillor	2	6	Contested
Whyalla	Mayor	1	2	Contested
Whyalla	Area councillor	9	19	Contested
Wudinna	Area councillor	7	6	Uncontested - supplementary election required
Yankalilla	Field ward councillor	4	6	Contested
Yankalilla	Light ward councillor	5	10	Contested
Yorke Peninsula	Mayor	1	1	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Yorke Peninsula	Kalkabury ward councillor	4	4	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Yorke Peninsula	Gum Flat ward councillor	3	4	Contested
Yorke Peninsula	Innes/Penton Vale ward councillor	4	4	Uncontested - no supplementary election required
Total all councils		674	1,256	

9.4 Project management

2022 Local Government Program

Election oversight, evaluation and reporting	Workforce	Election procedures, materials, logistics	Community awareness and information	Voting services and Central Processing Centre	Systems and ICT	Results management	Compliance
Budget for LG periodic elections	Workforce Administration	Printing management	Advertising and statutory notices	Mailout of ballot materials and AusPost liaison	ICT requirements for electoral officers	Scrutiny and count arrangements	Complaints management
Project cost allocations and invoicing	Recruit, onboard and manage DROs and Electoral Officers	Materials and equipment management	Call Centre	Arrange issue/re-issue of ballot material	Software deployment and support	HC Auto count management	8.2 Disclosure Returns
Election governance	Develop and deliver training programs	Logistics and transport	Digital communications	Receipt and processing of returned ballot material	Telephony/connectivity	Complex count management (computer count)	
Post election evaluation	Engagement and onboarding	Preparation of staffing manuals, handbooks and forms	Targeted engagement	Roll management	Enhancements to LGA/LGEMS	Results management	
Election reporting	Payroll processing	Strategic Procurement	Media management	CPC management	Candidate Portal		
Legislative overview and compliance	Work Health and Safety	Nominations		Telephone voting	Results application		
		Ballot paper and profile management			Cybersecurity		
		Candidate briefings					

Notes

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of numerous horizontal lines.



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