



REPORT on the LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY-ELECTION for the DIVISION OF GREATOREX 28 JULY 2007

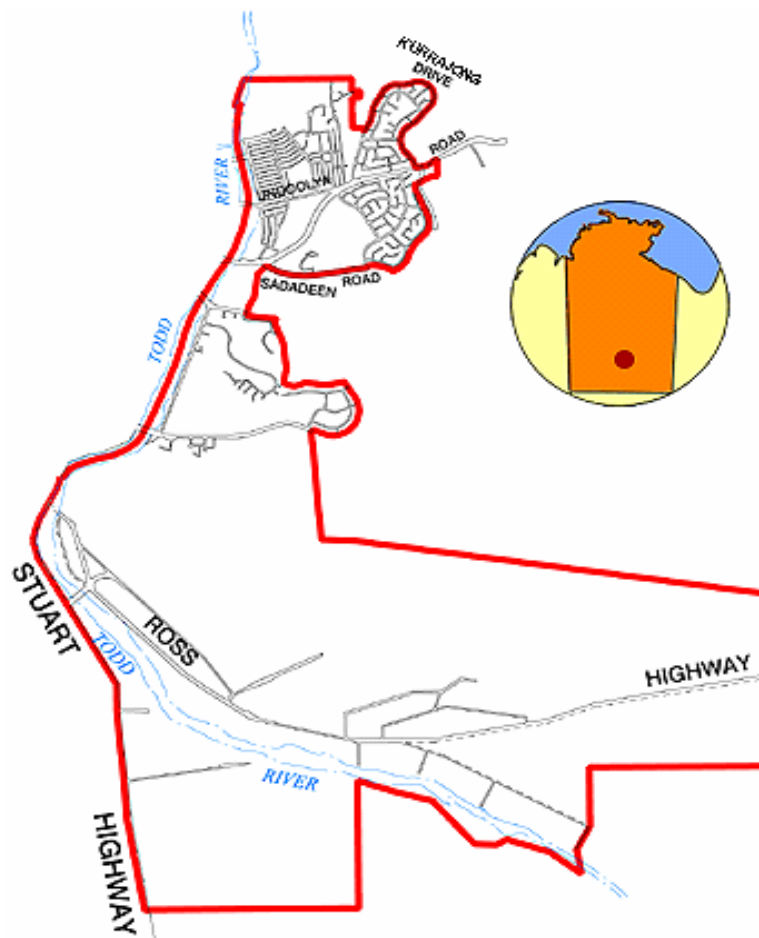


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(i) LETTER OF TRANSMISSION



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The Hon. Jane Aagaard MLA
Speaker
Northern Territory Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Darwin NT 0800

Madam Speaker

This report provides information on the Legislative Assembly By-election for the Division of Grotorex held 28 July 2007.

The Electoral Act requires the report to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly within three sitting days after its receipt. Additional copies have been provided for this purpose.

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

BILL SHEPHEARD
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

27 May 2008

(ii) FOREWORD BY THE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

The announcement of the resignation of the sitting member for Greatorex on 29 June 2007 and the issue of the writ 11 days later, effectively provided a 30 day election for the by-election. The additional 11 days eased some of the pressures on this agency and would have provided electors with some additional notice of their voting obligations and options.

Nevertheless, the conduct of a keenly contested election at short notice in Alice Springs provided the usual set of challenges for the staff of this office. Several staff had to be outposted from Darwin for the duration of the election and all agency staff tried hard to use the event to implement as many improvements as they could to our general service delivery. I therefore would like to take this opportunity to commend all staff on their efforts in this regard.

As for the election itself, turnout was down on the 2005 General Election but this is to be expected at by-elections, where polling facilities outside of the division are limited and public awareness is impaired with the speculation/notice of an impending poll being greatly reduced. Additional efforts to publicise the poll were made by the Commission with some success in this context, including additional advertising, letter-box drops and a significant local enrolment drive. Regular election bulletins were also issued electronically to candidates and campaign organisers, in line with the Commission's more recent attempts to keep those individuals informed of their rights and obligations in a consistent and timely fashion.

Unfortunately, once again, extra attention had to be devoted to control candidate signage at polling places and in general. This continues to be a troublesome and contentious issue at elections in this jurisdiction as candidates jostle for advantage during the campaign. It certainly provides an enduring distraction for election organisers during the election period as they are frequently called upon to settle disputes and ensure any restrictions applied by venue providers are observed.

Finally, many recommendations made in the Commission's Report on the 2005 Legislative Assembly General would have enhanced services at this by-election and I would urge government to give consideration to those recommendations as soon as possible.



BILL SHEPHEARD
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER

27 May 2008

1. INTRODUCTION

This report analyses the 2007 Legislative Assembly by-election for the Division of Greatorex.

1.1 ELECTION SNAPSHOT

WRIT DETAILS

- Date of issue Tuesday 10 July 2007
- Roll closed 8pm Thursday 12 July 2007
- Nominations closed 12 noon Monday 16 July 2007
- Polling day Saturday 28 July 2007
- Writ returned Friday 3 August 2007

POLLING DETAILS

- Mobile polling: 30 votes counted 0.9% - 1 team used
 - Commenced Thursday 26 July 2007
 - Ceased 6pm Friday 27 July 2007
- Postal voting: 111 votes counted 3.3%
 - Commenced Thursday 19 July 2007
 - Ceased Overseas Tuesday 24 July 2007
 - Within Aust. Thursday 26 July 2007
 - Deadline for return 6pm Friday 3 August 2007
- Pre poll voting: 361 votes counted 10.7%
 - Commenced Monday 23 July 2007
 - Ceased 6pm Friday 27 July 2007
- Other declaration voting: 1 vote counted <0.1%
- Static polling: 2863 votes counted 85.1% - 2 polling places
 - Polling times 8am - 6pm 28 July 2007
- Poll declared Thursday 2 August 2007

CANDIDATE DETAILS

The 4 candidates in ballot paper order (with affiliation) were:

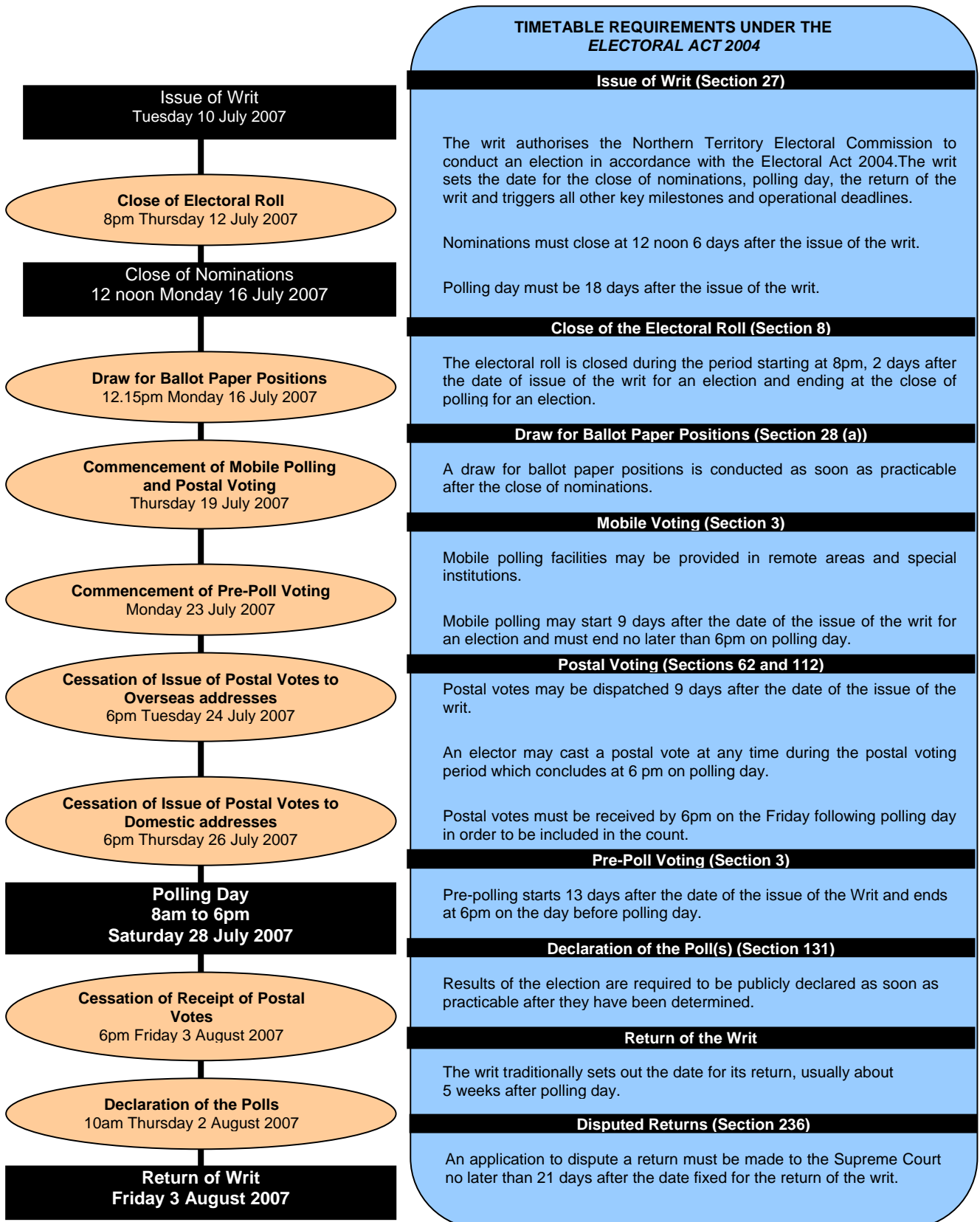
- Jo Nixon (ALP)
- Paul David Herrick (Independent)
- Matt Conlan (CLP)
- Jane Clark (Green)

ELECTION OUTCOMES

- Electors on roll 4 564
- Electors voting 3 366 (73.8%)
- Informality 75 (2.2%)
- 2 candidate preferred
 - (a) Conlan CLP 65.3%
 - Nixon ALP 34.7%
 - (b) Conlan CLP 57.7%
 - Herrick Ind 42.3%
- Cost per elector \$8.21
- Cost per vote admitted to count \$11.13

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. ELECTION TIMETABLE



The Member for the Legislative Assembly Division of Greatorex, Dr Richard Lim, announced on 29 June 2007 that he would tender his resignation from the Parliament ten days later on Monday 9 July 2007. He was elected at the 1994 Legislative Assembly General Election and had been re-elected at subsequent Legislative Assembly elections in 1997, 2001 and 2005.

The writ for the by-election was issued the day following the submission of Dr Lim's resignation (Tuesday, 10 July 2007). The Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) had a standard 19 day election period to conduct the election for the Alice Springs urban electorate; however, the advance notice of the member's resignation enabled more time to put arrangements in place, including the implementation of an extensive close of rolls campaign.

The reports into the 2005 Legislative Assembly election and the Stuart by-election drew attention to the short timeframes for election periods. The Greatorex by-election reinforced the Commission's belief that a longer period is required to maximise outcomes.

The key milestones, operational deadlines and legislative base for the by-election are shown in the election timetable opposite.

2.2. POINTS OF INTEREST

The Division of Greatorex is an electorate in Central Australia covering an area of 69.5 sq kms, including the Alice Springs urban area on the eastern side of the Todd River and the rural residential area on the eastern side of Stuart Highway, outside the Gap.

At the 2005 Legislative Assembly General Election, Dr Richard Lim won Greatorex with a majority of 1.38%. As such, it was considered to be a marginal seat at the by-election.

The Division of Greatorex was serviced by two static polling places and a mobile polling program conducted at four locations. The election was conducted from the Commission's Office in Alice Springs.

2.3. OTHER ISSUES

Following the 2005 General Election, the Electoral Commissioner made sixteen (16) recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Legislative Assembly elections in the Territory. Subsequent by-elections in Stuart and Greatorex have strongly reinforced the Commissioner's belief of the need for these changes. At this point, the NT Government has not given an indication of their view on these recommendations and no legislative amendments have been implemented as yet.

3. KEY RESULT AREA - ENROLMENT

3.1. ENROLMENT TRANSACTIONS

In the period 18 June 2005 to 9 July 2007, the roll for the Division of Greatorex fell from 4517 electors to 4478, a decrease of 0.9%. Following the resignation of Dr Lim, there were 126 additions to the close of rolls for the by-election and 40 deletions. The net result was an increase in the number of electors of 1.9% to 4564. The table below sets out the numbers of additions and deletions for each period.

Types of Transactions	18 June 2005 to 9 July 2007	10 July 2007 to 12 July 2007 Close of Rolls
New enrolments	195	23
Re-enrolments of electors previously enrolled in NT but not currently enrolled	252	15
Re-instatements	5	0
Transfers in from interstate	550	54
Transfers in from NT divisions	499	34
Net additions to roll for Greatorex	+1501	+126
Changes within division	330	24
Enrolment cards received and processed notifying same details	84	3
Total amendments to roll for Greatorex	414	27
Objection deletions	302	0
Death deletions	58	0
Duplicate deletions	6	0
Transfers out to NT Divisions	498	31
Transfers out to interstate addresses	676	9
Total deletions to roll for Greatorex	-1540	-40
Net change in total enrolled electors for Greatorex from 18 June 2005	- 39	+86

3.2. CLOSE OF ROLL ACTIVITY

The writ for the by-election was issued on Tuesday 10 July 2007 and the rolls closed two days later at 8pm, Thursday 12 July 2007. The formal campaign to raise public awareness on enrolment obligations commenced with the issue of the writ.

Enrolment stalls were located at the Alice Springs Post Office, the major shopping centres in Alice Springs and local shops in the Greatorex electorate. The close of roll notice (Appendix A) was displayed at the enrolment stalls.

Arrangements were also made with the Alice Springs Post Office to place any enrolment forms received in a ballot box, enabling these forms to be immediately available to the Commission for processing without being subject to more time consuming processes. The co-operation of the local Australia Post in regard to this enrolment initiative was much appreciated.



Enrolment stand outside the post office.



Ballot box inside post office

The 153 enrolment forms (126 additions and 27 amendments) received during this enrolment campaign is considered a good response.

3.3. ADVERTISING THE CLOSE OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

Radio advertising was carried out on stations 8HA, Sun FM and CAAMA during the enrolment campaign. The script used by the radio stations is at Appendix B.

A media release was issued by the NTEC following the issue of the writ for the by-election. It was forwarded to all media outlets in Alice Springs and advised the writ had been issued and the roll was to close at 8pm Thursday 12 July 2007.

3.4. COMPLETENESS AND ACCURACY OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL

The highly mobile population in the Territory, the extent of interstate moves and the tight timeframe once an election is announced all impact on roll completeness and accuracy.

The effectiveness of enrolment activities in the field and the advertising between the issue of the writ and the close of roll helped boost the quality of the election roll.

The Commonwealth amended its electoral legislation to withdraw voting rights to prisoners in June 2006. This change had an impact on the Territory electoral roll which operates under the same franchise arrangements. A list of prisoners was obtained from correctional services and their enrolment particulars were suppressed from voting rolls. Also, the prison was removed from the mobile polling schedule. (Note: A High Court decision has subsequently reinstated voting rights for prisoners serving less than three years.)

4. KEY RESULT AREA – EDUCATION & INFORMATION

4.1. ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Following the announcement of the by-election, an advertising campaign was devised which included newspaper, radio and television coverage.

Radio advertising was used to advise the close of roll deadline and related information. Newspaper advertising provided coverage for the advice of the issue of the writ for the election, the calling for nominations and details of pre-election voting times and locations.

The campaign planned television advertisements to advise electors of the polling locations, dates and times. However, the concerns expressed by one party over the use of the term 'mainly eastside' to describe the area of the electorate, resulted in the advertising being withdrawn at a very late stage in the election program.

4.2. MEDIA RELEASES

During the course of the election, ten media releases were issued on the following topics (number issued in brackets):

- Issue of the writ (1);
- Close of the roll (3);
- Nominations of candidates (2);
- Pre-election voting (2);
- Election night counts (1); and
- Declaration of the poll.

Media releases are an effective way of supplementing the paid advertising and increasing the election coverage by the media.

4.3. INFORMATION FOR ELECTORS

In addition to the media campaign mentioned above, an election notice (Appendix C) was forwarded to all residences within the Greatorex electorate. The notice provided a map of the division on one side and on the other side it contained information on:

- The close of the electoral roll;
- Pre-election voting times and locations;
- The location of polling places and voting times; and
- The obligation to vote.

It was delivered promptly by hand to the electorate, providing electors with plenty of time to either enrol (if required) or organise a pre-election vote, if unable to attend a polling place on polling day.

4.4. INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES

A Candidate's Pack, containing a Candidate's Handbook and other relevant information and forms, was distributed upon request. A handbook on financial disclosure requirements was also made available to candidates and parties in hard copy and on the website.

To ensure that parties and candidates simultaneously received prompt and consistent information, election bulletins were distributed regularly via email throughout the election period. The system worked effectively and all candidates supplied the Commission with a contact email address. The bulletin provided:

- Updates on election progress and emerging issues;
- Timely reminders about the rights and responsibilities of candidates and parties;
- The latest developments in relation to mobile polling.

Draft mobile polling schedules were forwarded to interested stakeholders, including parties and candidates for their information and feedback before the schedules were finally settled.

4.5. PROVISION OF ELECTORAL ROLL DATA

In line with Section 13 of the *Electoral Act*, the Commission must, when requested, give members of the Assembly a copy of the roll for their division and give registered political parties a copy of the roll for all divisions. The data is provided in electronic format and supplied at the end of each month. The supply is subject to security and privacy provisions to ensure that it is used only for approved purposes set out in the Act namely:

- for an MLA – the exercise of the MLA's functions;
- for the registered officer of a registered party – the exercise by an MLA who is member of the party of the MLA's functions;
- for an MLA or the registered officer of a registered party –
 1. a purpose connected with an election; or
 2. monitoring the accuracy of information in the roll;
- for anyone – a purpose prescribed by the Regulations.

There is no provision in the Act for the supply of roll data to candidates who are not sitting members. At this election, three of the four candidates were representing registered political parties and the Commission consequently supplied those parties with roll data as at the close of roll for the election as arranged. The registered political parties were able to utilise the roll data information to support their candidates.

4.6. CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

All nomination forms have provision for candidates to provide contact details to the Commission and, subject to the consent of the candidate, for the NTEC to make that

information available to the media and other interested parties. All candidates advised an email address and this information, as well as mobile and land line phone details, made contacting the candidates, their party (if applicable) and/or campaign manager a simple task.

5. KEY RESULT AREA – ELECTIONS

5.1 NOMINATIONS AND DRAW FOR BALLOT PAPER POSITIONS

The Commission's offices in Darwin and Alice Springs were open for nominations from 13 July until 12 noon 16 July 2007. Nomination forms were provided for nomination by party or by individual.

At the close of nominations, four nominations had been received at the Alice Springs office. Three were endorsed and nominated by parties, one candidate each from the ALP, CLP and the Greens. The party name was listed underneath each endorsed candidate's name on the ballot paper. The remaining candidate was nominated as an independent and 'independent' was shown under his name on the ballot paper.

As required by the *Electoral Act*, the draw for positions on the ballot paper took place publicly at the office of the Electoral Commission in Darwin as soon as practicable after the close of nominations.

Restricting the draw to the office in Darwin effectively meant that the candidates, media representatives and interested parties from Alice Springs could not attend.

5.2 VOTING SERVICES

Electors were given a range of options for voting at the by-election:

- Postal and pre-poll voting at the Commission's offices in Darwin and Alice Springs;
- Mobile polling teams which visited four locations including the Alice Springs Hospital and Renal Unit; and
- Static polling places at Charles Darwin University and the Windmill Function Rooms which were open from 8am to 6pm on polling day.

In addition, the following initiatives to improve voting services to electors were provided:

- Personal data assistants (PDAs) listing the entire electoral roll for the Territory were used in both polling places to assist electors whose names could not be located on the roll for Greatorex; and
- Following complaints at the 2005 general election regarding the display of advertising material at the Greatorex polling places, the NTEC took the proactive action of advising candidates and their parties on the venue provider's requirements with regard to the placing of campaign signage and the time from which the set up of the signage could begin. Despite the detailed advice, it was necessary for the Commissioner to intervene to ensure compliance with the advice given.

Comparisons between the 2005 General and the 2007 by-election show that the roll increased by 35 electors, voter turnout suffered the traditional decrease for by-elections (9.3%), and informality decreased by 0.3% while the number of candidates increased from three to four. As there is no absent voting or interstate polling locations at by-elections (see

table below), turnout was affected. The lack of absent votes also serves to skew the relative percentages of each type of vote.

	2005 General Election		2007 By-election		+ -
	No.	%	No.	%	
Participation					
Electors on roll	4529		4564		+35
Formal votes	3811	97.5	3291	97.8	-520
Informal votes	97	2.5	75	2.2	-22
Total votes admitted	3908	84.1	3366	73.8	-542
Type of Vote Cast					
Ordinary votes	2952	75.5	2893	85.9	-59
Absent votes	403	10.3	nil	0.0	N/A
Postal votes	113	2.9	111	3.3	-2
Pre-poll votes	402	10.3	361	10.7	-41
Declaration votes	38	1.0	1	0.1	-37

5.3 POSTAL AND PRE-POLL VOTING

Postal voting is available to electors who cannot attend a polling place on polling day. Where electors have an ongoing reason for being unable to attend (eg religious reasons or infirmity), they may register as a Registered Postal Voter (RPV) and ballot papers are automatically mailed to them without the need to lodge an application at the time of the election. Under the *Electoral Act*, Territory voters are eligible RPVs if they have also registered with the Australian Electoral Commission as General Postal Voters under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. A total of 25 NT electors were registered as RPVs for Greatorex at the time of the by-election.

Postal voting is also available to electors who meet one of a number of prescribed criteria (eg travelling, illness, distance from a polling place, etc.) that makes attendance at a polling place difficult or impossible.

In order to ensure the shortest delivery times, postal voting papers were mailed from Darwin and Alice Springs on the Thursday morning following the close of nominations, 16 July 2007. The following table shows details of the dispatch and return of postal votes issued to registered postal voters compared with the 2005 General Election:

Event	Registered Postal Votes: Issued and Returned			
	Issued	Returned		Not Returned
		Before cut off time	After cut off time	
2005 General Election	36	34	0	2
2006 By-election	25	19	2	4

A total of 143 postal ballot papers (including both election specific and registered postal vote applications) was sent out to electors and 112 (78.3%) were returned within the time allowed.

The following tables show response rates and processing details for the postal voter service:

Total Postal Votes Issued and Returned		No.	%
No. of postal voting papers issued		143	
Postal Votes Returned			
By deadline		112	78.3
Unclaimed		0	0
After deadline		14	9.8
Not Returned		17	11.9

Postal Votes Received before Deadline - Admitted or Rejected		No.	%
No. returned by deadline		112	
Admitted for further scrutiny		111	99.1
Rejected - not signed/witnessed		1	0.9
- declaration signed after polling day		0	0

On the day before polling day, after the despatch of postal votes had ceased, a political party delivered a batch of six (6) postal vote applications to the Commission's office in Alice Springs. This situation had not occurred at the previous Stuart by-election or the 2005 General election.

Although the period for postal voting had closed under the *Act*, the Commission was able to contact all but two of the electors concerned and arrange voting for them. After the election, the Commission was advised that the remaining two electors were, in fact, in Darwin and therefore could have been advised to vote at the Commission's office in Darwin.

The NTEC, like all electoral authorities around Australia, is concerned to ensure there is no similar oversight at any future election and will continue to address this matter in election bulletins issued in conjunction with elections. The special attention afforded to the six postal applicants on this occasion cannot be guaranteed at future elections, especially a General Election where Commission resources are very stretched.

Pre-poll facilities were available at the NTEC's offices in Darwin and Alice Springs. In accordance with the *Act*, the pre-poll centres were open for polling in the week immediately preceding polling day.

A total of 361 votes were taken at pre-poll centres (10.7% of all votes), a decrease of 41 votes or 10.2% on the 2005 General Election.

5.4 MOBILE POLLING

Four polling places were appointed as mobile polling locations and polled by one mobile polling team over a two day period on the Thursday and Friday before polling day. A total of 30 votes were taken. The mobile polling schedule is at Appendix D.

5.5 ORDINARY VOTING

Ordinary voting took place at two static and four mobile polling locations. A total of 2893 ordinary votes were cast, a decrease of 59 votes. When compared to the total votes polled, this represents a 10.4% increase in ordinary votes over the 2005 General Election, a common occurrence where absent voting is unavailable. Details of the ordinary votes cast at each polling place are listed in Section 8 - Division Profile and Results.

A new ballot paper size was trialled successfully at the election, which enables ballot papers to be counted by machine.

5.6 DECLARATION VOTING – NAMES NOT FOUND ON ROLL

Declaration votes are issued to people whose names could not be found on the roll and placed in envelopes. Thirty-eight declarations were admitted for further scrutiny at the 2005 General Election compared with only one at the by-election. The table below gives a comparison of the declaration votes cast, admitted to the count and reasons for rejection between the elections.

Event	Declaration Envelopes					
	Submitted	Admitted for Further Scrutiny	Rejected from Further Scrutiny			
			Not on Roll	Enrolled Elsewhere	No Signature	Total Rejected
2005 General Election	75	38	37	0	0	37
2007 By-election	44	1	11	32	0	43

5.7 INFORMAL VOTES

Seventy-five informal ballot papers were counted at the by-election, a reduction of 22 or 22.7% from the 2005 General Election. The number of candidates standing at the by-election increased to four from the three at the 2005 General Election. The table below gives a comparison of the informal votes at the elections by category and likely voter intent.

Informal Category	Voter Intent	2005 General Election		2007 By-election	
		No.	%	No.	%
Totally Blank	APPARENT INTENTIONAL INFORMALITY	19	19.6	20	26.7
Endorsements Dismissive of Process		6	6.2	12	16.0
Insufficient Numbers	APPARENT UNINTENTIONAL INFORMALITY	0	0.0	11	14.7
Numbers not Sequential		9	9.3	2	2.7
Indecipherable marks or Illegible Numbers		27	27.8	0	0.0
Ticks or Crosses		27	27.8	26	34.6
Number '1' only		9	9.3	4	5.3
TOTAL		97		75	

5.8 VOTER TURNOUT

The lack of notice and lower profile of a by-election leads to reduced public awareness in the electorate. The reduced early voting services and the lack of absent voting services across the NT also contributes to a traditional lower turnout for by-elections in comparison to general elections. At the 2005 General Election, 403 absent votes were polled for Greatorex, 10.3% of the total votes polled.

The by-election turnout of 73.8%, 10.3% less than the 84.1% turnout at the 2005 General Election, was disappointing on face value; however, when compared to the last four NT urban by-elections conducted over the last 10 years, this decrease in turnout percentage is slightly lower than urban by-elections during the period as shown in the table below.

By-election Division and Year	By-election			Previous General Election			Variation
	No.		% Voting	No.		% Voting	%
	Voters	Electors		Voters	Electors		
Greatorex 2007	3366	4564	73.8	3908	4529	84.1	-10.3
Stuart 2006	2389	4434	53.9	2535	4274	59.3	-5.4
Port Darwin 2000	3432	4868	70.5	3384	4012	84.4	-13.9
Blain 1999	3570	4610	77.4	3632	4091	88.8	-11.3
Wanguri 1999	2998	3878	77.3	3320	3902	85.1	-7.8

5.9 NON VOTING

Data extracted from the certified lists of electors marked by officials indicate electors who have been issued with a ballot paper at the election. The data is supplemented with information regarding the reasons why electors failed to vote received on or after polling day.

After allowances for information mentioned above, 999 apparent non-voters were identified and issued with a non voter notice.

Results of the dispatch were as follows:

Greatorex By-election Non-voter Action	No.	%
Electors who appeared to have failed to vote	1198	
Notices issued after culling from information already received	999	83.4
Electors supplying a valid and sufficient reason for failing to vote	327	32.7
Notices returned unclaimed	141	14.1
Notices not returned/Electors identified for follow up action	531	53.2

5.10 DECLARATION OF THE POLL AND RETURN OF THE WRIT

The poll was declared at 10am on Thursday, 2 August 2007. Although the successful candidate had an absolute majority on first preference votes, the Commission declared the result after the votes polled in polling places were checked and all possible declaration votes (with the exception of a handful of postal votes) had been admitted to the count.

The writ for the election was returned to the Administrator on Friday 3 August 2007.

5.11 NOMINATION DEPOSITS

Candidates are required to lodge a deposit of \$200 at the time of their nomination. These nomination deposits are forfeited to the Territory unless the candidate is elected or polls more than 20% of the total of 1st preference votes cast for the successful candidate. After the election, the deposits for three candidates, Conlan, Herrick and Nixon were returned, whilst the deposit for the remaining candidate, Clark was forfeited.

5.12 DISCLOSURE RETURNS

All candidates standing in the by-election were required to complete disclosure returns and had submitted disclosure returns by the deadline of 10 November 2007. Summaries of the returns were placed on the Commission's website and full copies were made available for public inspection at its offices in Darwin and Alice Springs.

Disclosure returns were provided by relevant broadcasters and publishers and placed on the Commission's website.

5.13 COMPLAINTS

There were no formal complaints during the election.

5.14 BY-ELECTION DATA

To assist with analysis and reference purposes, the Commission compiled data on by-elections since the Legislative Assembly was first established (1976).

This data is shown in Appendix E.

6. KEY RESULT AREA – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

6.1 BRANDING

The slogan ‘Every vote counts’ was placed on documentation, including advertising material, used at the by-election. The slogan reflected developments in strategic direction for the NTEC focusing on enrolment, education and information, elections and corporate governance and identified as key result areas outlined in this report.

6.2 PREMISES

6.2.1 ALICE SPRINGS OFFICE

The Commission’s joint office with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) in Alice Springs managed to cope with most of the urban by-election operations, although count facilities were not adequately catered for at the current premises. The space is insufficient to efficiently and effectively conduct a Legislative Assembly general election and several divisions with mobile polling programs being managed on a regional basis, and cater for overlapping Federal, Territory and local government electoral events.

The NTEC is seeking relocation to larger and more appropriate premises for joint electoral activities with the AEC.

6.2.2 POLLING PLACES

The two static polling places for the election were Charles Darwin University and Windmill Function Rooms, open from 8am to 6pm on polling day. Both polling places met operational and elector requirements.

The mobile polling team was able to adequately service the voting needs of electors at the four mobile polling places.

6.3 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

6.3.1 RECRUITMENT REQUIREMENTS

When the election was called, the Commission had a staff level (including temporary officers) of twelve, eleven of whom were in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. An additional 18 casual staff were subsequently employed for static and mobile polling services and to provide office support. The table below shows the number of positions and staff employed.

Position Type	Staff Appointed
Mobile polling positions	2
Static polling positions	12
Pre election voting positions	5
Election awareness positions	4
Total	23*

** These 23 positions were filled by permanent and casual staff,*

6.3.2 OFFICE AND POLLING STAFF

Casual, static and mobile polling staff are contracted for work under a Determination by the Commissioner for Public Employment, made on advice from the Electoral Commissioner. The polling staff employment package comprises a daily rate and a training component. Remuneration for casual staff undertaking pre-poll voting and general office duties is based on an hourly rate.

The mobile polling team was led by an officer on a short term contract from the NTEC Darwin office who was temporally seconded to Alice Springs. The position of mobile polling team member was filled through local recruitment. Alice Springs residents were recruited to work in the two static polling places and assist the Commission's regional officer in the Alice Springs office with pre-election voting and other office duties.

All casual officers and polling staff were required to sign a statement attesting to their political neutrality and agree to basic electoral good practice principles, as part of their undertaking in response to the offer of employment.

6.3.3 TRAINING

The Commission provided training for mobile polling staff and the senior officials in the static polling places prior to the commencement of their duties.

All staff received procedure manuals and, in some cases, homework books specific to their duties. Training materials and manuals were updated for the by-election. The training sessions undertaken for the by-election are detailed in the table below.

Training Type	No. Officers	Training Sessions	Venue
Pre-polling	4	1 session	Darwin
	1	1 session	Alice Springs
Mobile polling	1	1 session	Alice Springs
Static polling	4	1 session	Alice Springs
Public awareness	4	1 session	Alice Springs

6.3.4 REGULAR STAFF MEETINGS

As the by-election was largely conducted out of the Alice Springs office, a key feature in the conduct of this by-election was the regularity of telephone conferences for staff between the NTEC's two offices. Conferences were routinely scheduled on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and these meetings prepared staff for all major milestones in the election process and ensured all tasks were completed on time.

NTEC ACTION ITEM 1

Conduct regular event management teleconferences between Darwin and regional locations as a key feature of future elections.

6.4 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

During the election, the NTEC's Election Management System (EMS) generally operated to specification and was networked to users in the Commission's Darwin and Alice Springs offices. Response times in Alice Springs were slow and this has been drawn to the attention of the service provider. The system is fairly dated and in need of a significant overhaul or replacement. A modern day EMS is expected to provide more information and be integrated with other in-house systems, especially the website.

The Commission's website, designed a decade ago, has substantial limitations. During the by-election, it was able to provide basic information for enrolment, the candidates, polling places and times and the results of the election. The site, however, does not provide the options and flexibility required of a modern electoral administration. Moreover, there is no direct feed into the website for election results and many tasks need to be replicated and therefore can become error prone. Election night results for the by-election were lost at one point on polling day evening, possibly due to human error or system shortcoming.

The NTEC sees a lot of potential for an enhanced website in the delivery of ongoing enrolment, public awareness and election programs and will seek support to upgrade it as soon as possible.

NTEC ACTION ITEM 2

Continue to seek additional resources to upgrade or replace the Commission's EMS and website to facilitate improvement in election management and the delivery of services.

6.5 OFFICE SERVICES

Since the set up of the Electoral Commission and the consequential changes to legislation and delegations, the Commission has become directly responsible for managing election finances, purchases and bookings, accounts processing and recruiting from its own resources. It does not process wages, but arranges the payment of wages through the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

As with the previous Stuart by-election, Greatorex placed demands on the finance section of the Commission over and above its normal financial management responsibilities.

Purchasing and staffing arrangements did not produce the workload of a general election and service delivery was able to be maintained. Requirements for the timely recruitment and payment processing were adequately addressed by the service provider.

6.6 FINANCE

Expenditure for the election was \$37 454. Nearly 35.4% was allocated to employee expenses (not including ongoing salaries) and 64.6% to operating expenses. The expenditure does not include any notional costs for recruitment and payroll processing

charges by the government's service provider (Department of Corporate and Information Services).

The cost of the by-election per enrolled elector is \$8.21 and as expected is about a third of the cost per elector of the recent Stuart by-election (\$24.80).

GREATOREX BY-ELECTION COSTS

ITEM	ACTUAL \$
OPERATIONAL COSTS	
Accommodation	2 620.00
Advertising	5 574.00
Airfares	3 603.00
Communications	254.00
Consumables/Equipment/Stationery	1 133.00
Document Production	1 937.00
Freight	1 390.00
Legal Opinions	0.00
Motor Vehicle	1 163.00
Nonvoters	3 784.00
Property Management	590.00
Travel Allowance	1 659.00
Workers Comp & Public Liability	498.00
PERSONNEL COSTS	
Salaries & Meal Allowances	13 249.00
TOTAL \$	37 454.00

7. NTEC ACTION ITEMS

NTEC ACTION ITEMS

NTEC ACTION ITEM 1

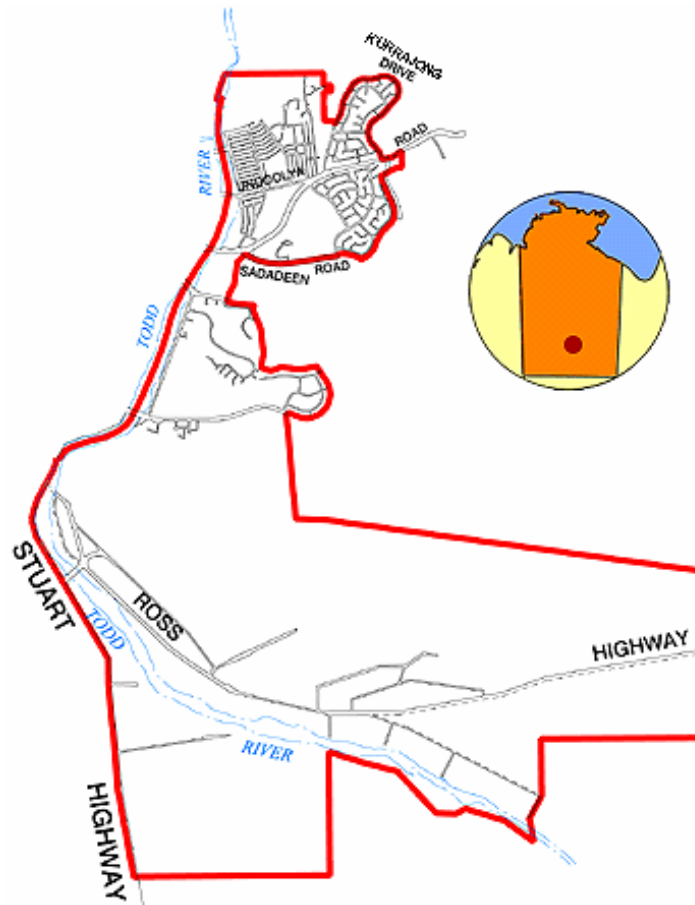
Conduct regular event management teleconferences between Darwin and regional locations as a key feature of future elections.

NTEC ACTION ITEM 2

Continue to seek additional resources to upgrade or replace the Commission's EMS and website to facilitate improvement in election management and the delivery of services.

8. DIVISION PROFILE AND ELECTION RESULTS

PROFILE



Geographic Classification: Urban
District Area: 69.5 sq km

POLLING LOCATIONS

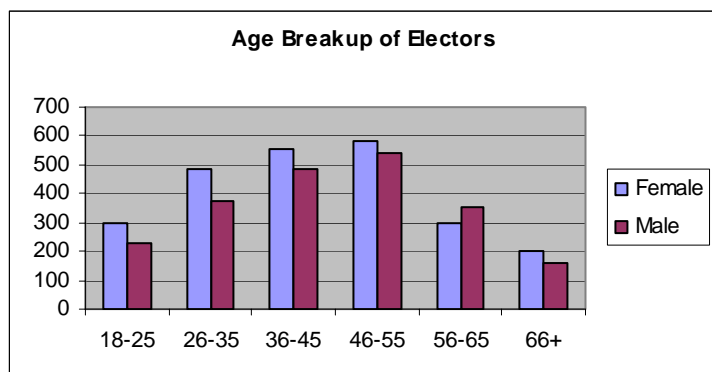
Mobile Polling Places

Alice Springs Hospital, Alice Springs Renal Unit, Old Timers Aged Care Facility, Hetti Perkins Home for Aged

Static Polling Places

Alice Springs Campus, Charles Darwin University, Grevillea Drive, Sadadeen.
 Windmill Restaurant and Function Rooms, Palm Circuit, Alice Springs

Electors as at the Close of Roll		
Female	2422	53.1%
Male	2141	46.9%
Total	4564	



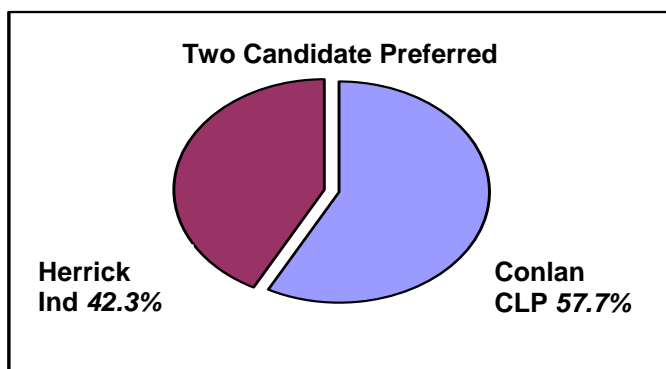
ELECTION RESULTS

Number of electors:	4564	
Formal votes	3291	97.80%
Informal votes	75	2.20%
Total votes (turnout)	3366	73.60%

Polling Place/ Declaration Type	1st Preference Votes for each Candidate and Distribution of Preferences				Ballot Papers Counted		
	NIXON (ALP)	HERRICK (IND)	CONLAN (CLP)	CLARK (GREENS)	Formal	Informal	Total
Sadadeen	412	503	1170	248	2333	59	2392
Windmill	46	88	298	31	463	8	471
Mobile 1	7	3	16	2	28	2	30
Pre Poll	60	58	211	27	356	5	361
Postal + Declaration (1)	16	18	69	8	111	1	112
1st PREFERENCE VOTES	541	670	1764	316	3291	75	3366
Clark excluded (-316)	167	123	26	-316			
Progressive total	708	793	1790	Excluded	3291		
Nixon excluded (-708)	-708	599	109				
TOTAL VOTES	Excluded	1392	1899		3291	75	3366
%		42.3	57.7		97.8	2.2	

CONLAN ELECTED

Polling Place/ Declaration Type	Two party preferred				
	NIXON (ALP)		CONLAN (CLP)		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Sadadeen	875	37.5	1458	62.5	2333
Windmill	109	23.5	354	76.5	463
Mobile 1	11	39.3	17	60.7	28
Pre Poll	111	31.2	245	68.8	356
Postal + Declaration (1)	35	31.5	76	68.5	111
TOTAL VOTES	1141	34.7	2150	65.3	3291



Result

Matt Conlan
Country Liberal Party

elected as member for the
Division of Greatorex
by an absolute majority on primary
votes

Previous Members	Party	Period
Matt Conlan	CLP	2007 - Present
R S H Lim	CLP	1994 – 2007
D W Collins	IND	1990 – 1994

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – CLOSE OF ROLL NOTICE

**Northern Territory
Electoral Commission**



GREATOREX BY- ELECTION **Saturday 28 July 2007**

Rolls Close – Thursday 12 July 8pm

Enrol Now



www.ntec.nt.gov.au

NTEC EVERY vote counts!

APPENDIX B – RADIO SCRIPT FOR CLOSE OF ROLL**30 SECOND RADIO SCRIPT****TOPIC – CLOSE OF ROLL**

The electoral roll for the Greatorex by-election closes Thursday at 8pm. So make sure that you are correctly enrolled before then. If you've changed address or recently turned 18 you'll need to complete an enrolment form. By enrolling now you are eligible to vote at all local, Territory and Commonwealth elections. Pick up an enrolment form today from any post office, Northern Territory Electoral Commission office or call the enrolment hotline on 13 23 26. Remember voting is compulsory and every vote counts.

Authorised by Bill Shephard, Northern Territory Electoral Commission, Darwin

APPENDIX C – ELECTION NOTICE TO ELECTORS

Northern Territory Electoral Commission



GREATOREX BY- ELECTION – SATURDAY 28 JULY 2007

It is compulsory for all eligible electors in the Division of Greatorex to vote at this by-election (refer to the map overleaf).

ROLLS CLOSE FOR THIS ELECTION ON THURSDAY 12 JULY 2007 AT 8PM

Those who need to enrol or update their address have until this time to lodge enrolment forms for this election.

Enrolment forms are available from post offices, NTEC offices or the NTEC website at www.ntec.nt.gov.au

The NTEC's Alice Springs office has extended its opening hours and will be open till 6pm on Wednesday 11 July and 8pm on Thursday 12 July. Enrolment forms can also be faxed to the NTEC on 8953 0702.

Polling places for this election will be open from 8am to 6pm on polling day and will be located at:

- Charles Darwin University
Alice Springs Campus
Grevillea Drive, Sadadeen
- Windmill Restaurant & Function Centre
Palm Circuit
Alice Springs

If you are unable to attend a polling place on polling day, you may be eligible to vote at a pre-poll centre or as a postal voter. Pre-polling services are provided from NTEC offices. Postal vote applications are available from post offices, NTEC offices and the NTEC website.

For enquiries call 1800 019 159.

Voting is compulsory and every vote counts.

Contact Details for Further Information:

Alice Springs

Suite 4 Leichhardt Building
16 Leichhardt Terrace

PO Box 2304

Phone: 8951 5838

Fax: 8953 0702

Darwin

Level 2, AANT Building
79 – 81 Smith Street

GPO Box 2419

Phone: 8999 5617

Fax: 8999 5845

www.ntec.nt.gov.au

NTEC EVERY vote counts!

APPENDIX D – MOBILE POLLING SCHEDULE

Team, Division & Location	Date	Polling Time	
		From	To
Team 1			
Old Timers Aged Care Facility	Thursday, 26 July 2007	9.30am	11.30am
Alice Springs Renal Unit	Thursday, 26 July 2007	12 noon	3pm
Hetti Perkins Home for the Aged	Thursday, 26 July 2007	3.30pm	4.30pm
Alice Springs Hospital	Friday, 27 July 2007	9am	11.45am
Alice Springs Renal Unit	Friday, 27 July 2007	12 noon	3pm

APPENDIX E – LIST OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY-ELECTIONS SINCE 1976

Division	PREVIOUS GENERAL ELECTION				BY-ELECTION				
	Date	Elected	Turnout %	Swing to lose %	Cause	Date	Elected	Turnout %	Swing to lose %
Greatorex	18.06.2005	Lim CLP (3)	86.3	1.5	Res.	28.07.2007	Conlan CLP (4)	73.8	7.8 <i>2CP</i> <i>am</i> (15.4 <i>2PP</i>)
Stuart	18.06.2005	Toyne ALP (2)	59.3	21.1 <i>am</i>	Res.	23.09.2006	Hampton ALP (6)	53.9	17.7
Katherine	18.08.2001	Reed CLP (5)	82.8	2.3 <i>am</i>	Res.	4.10.2003	Miller CLP (5)	75.8	4.4
Port Darwin	30.08.1997	Stone CLP (3)	84.3	14.5 <i>am</i>	Res.	11.03.2000	Carter CLP (4)	70.5	1.1 <i>am</i>
Blain	30.08.1997	Coulter CLP (2)	88.8	23.9 <i>am</i>	Res.	31.7.1999	Mills CLP (4)	77.4	3.4
Wanguri	30.08.1997	Bailey ALP (2)	85.1	2.1 <i>am</i>	Res.	31.7.1999	Henderson ALP (4)	78.1	3.7 <i>am</i>
Stuart	4.06.1994	Ede ALP (2)	66.6	2.0 <i>am</i>	Res.	28.09.1996	Toyne ALP (2)	63.7	5.3 <i>am</i>
Arnhem	4.06.1994	Lanhupuy ALP (2)	62.6	24.6 <i>am</i>	Res.	7.10.1995	Ah Kit ALP (4)	62.3	1.9 <i>am</i>
Fannie Bay	4.06.1994	Perron CLP (2)	88.3	8.0 <i>am</i>	Res.	17.06.1995	Martin ALP (2)	76.3	1.4 <i>am</i>
Arafura	27.10.1990	Tipiloura ALP (2)	67.8	16.6 <i>am</i>	Dec'd	7.11.1992	Rioli ALP (3)	65.3	14.1 <i>am</i>
Millner	27.10.1990	Smith ALP (2)	84.7	6.8 <i>am</i>	Res.	7.12.1991	Parish ALP (4)	70.4	1.2 <i>am</i>
Wanguri	7.03.1987	Dale CLP (3)	88.0	9.5	Res.	19.08.1989	Bailey ALP (5)	82.1	8.1
Flynn	7.03.1987	Hanrahan CLP (3)	63.9	0.6 <i>am</i>	Res.	10.09.1988	Floreani NAT (3)	70.5	5.5
Barkly	7.03.1987	Tuxworth CLP (4)	65.8	0.6	GE result voided	5.09.1987	Tuxworth NAT (4)	68.3	6
Araluen	3.12.1983	Robertson CLP (3)	89.1	11.8 <i>am</i>	Res.	19.04.1986	Poole CLP (2)	66.0	7.0 <i>am</i>
Jingili	3.12.1983	Everingham CLP (2)	89.1	21.9 <i>am</i>	Res.	15.12.1984	Setter CLP (2)	76.0	5.0 <i>am</i>
Millner	7.06.1980	Isaacs ALP (2)	<i>nr</i>	1.9 <i>am</i>	Res.	21.11.1981	Smith ALP (5)	<i>nr</i>	4.3
MacDonnell	7.06.1980	Perkins ALP (2)	<i>nr</i>	7.7 <i>am</i>	Res.	28.03.1981	Bell ALP (2)	<i>nr</i>	17.8 <i>am</i>
Alice Springs	19.10.1974	Kilgariff CLP (3)	<i>nr</i>	22.3 <i>am</i>	Res.	7.02.1976	Manuell CLP (3)	<i>nr</i>	3.3 <i>am</i>

am – Absolute majority on 1st preference count Res. – Resignation Dec'd – Deceased () – Candidates standing
2CP – Two candidate preferred *2PP* – Two party preferred *nr* – Not Recorded

Contact Information

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2nd Floor, AANT Building
79 Smith St
DARWIN NT 0800

Postal: GPO Box 2419
DARWIN NT 0801

Phone: (08) 8999 5617
Fax: (08) 8999 5845

2. Electoral Services Centre
Suite 4, Leichhardt Building
16 Leichhardt Tce
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870

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Fax: (08) 8953 0702

Email: ntec@nt.gov.au

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