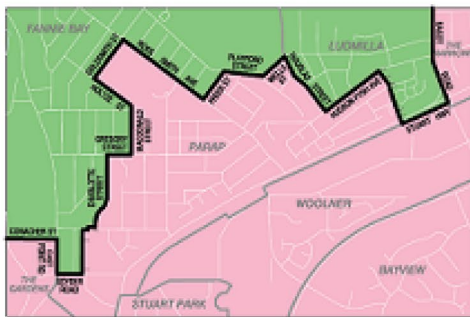


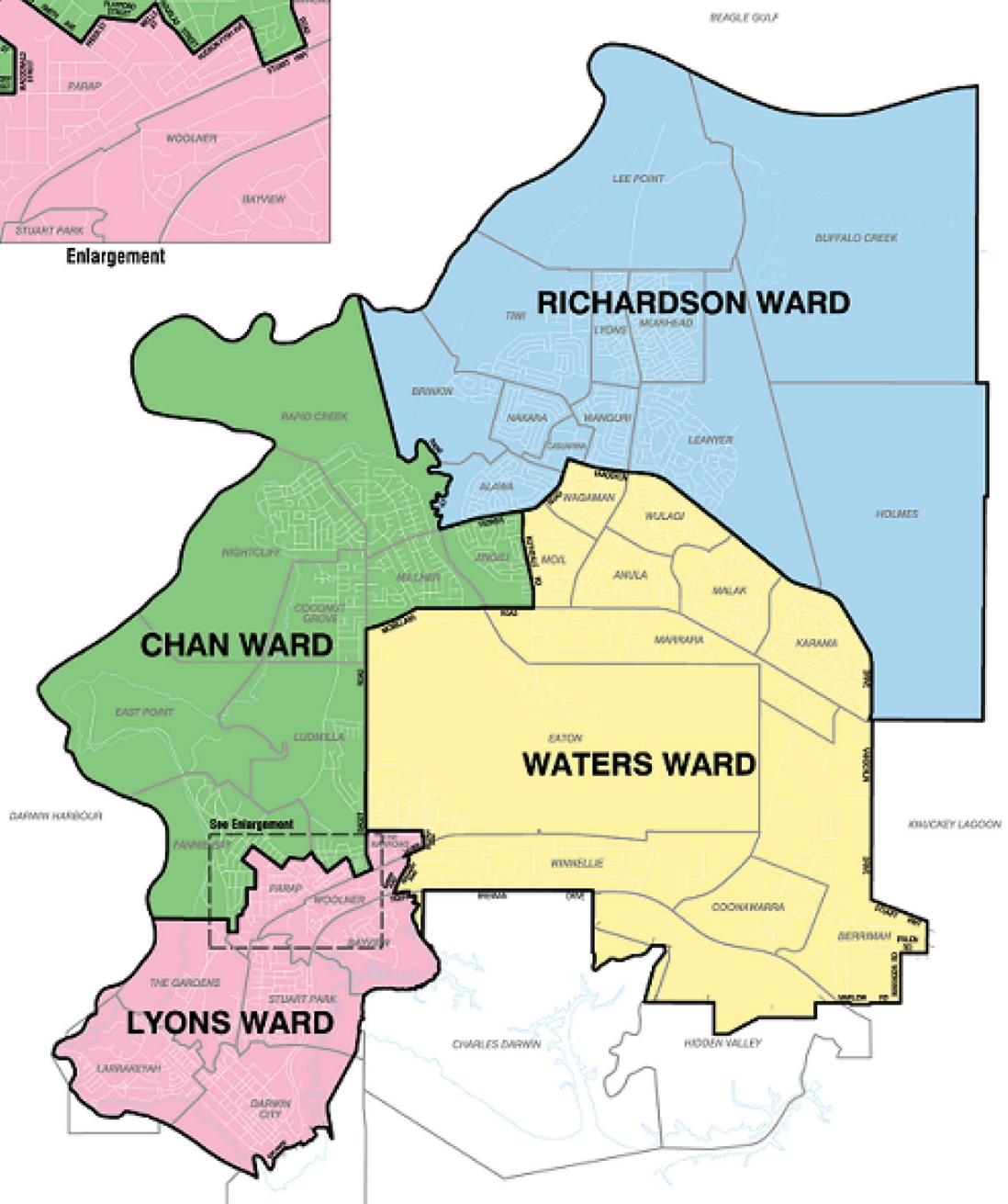


# City of Darwin

## Election Report



Enlargement



## NTEC version control

### 2021 Local Government Elections - City of Darwin report

Version Number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1.0	Final version approved by K. Kelly	K. Kelly NTEC	21/12/2021
1.1	Addition of version control Removal of blank page	M. O'Brien	12/04/2022
1.2	Revised front cover map	M. O'Brien	12/04/2022
1.3	Mayoral ballot paper informal ballot table figures (pg. 12) updated to reflect correct informal ballot paper totals. Manual Count error when categorising informal votes.	M. Wilton	21/04/2022

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## Election timetable

### 2021 Local Government Elections

**28 August 2021**

Date	Time	
Friday 16 July		Nominations open
Tuesday 27 July	5:00 pm	Electoral roll closes
Thursday 5 August	12:00 noon	Nominations close
Friday 6 August	12:00 noon	Declaration of nominations, draw for position on ballot papers
Monday 9 August		Postal vote mail-out commences
Monday 16 August	8:00 am	Early voting commences Mobile voting commences
Tuesday 24 August	6:00 pm	Overseas postal voting despatches cease
Thursday 26 August	6:00 pm	All postal voting despatches cease
Friday 27 August	6:00 pm	Early voting ceases
Saturday 28 August	6:00 pm	Primary counts of postal, mobile and early votes commence
		<b>Election day</b>
	8:00 am	Election day voting commences
	6:00 pm	Election day voting ceases Mobile voting ceases Primary counts of ordinary, postal and early votes commence
Monday 30 August	9:00 am	Declaration vote verification checks, commence recheck of all counts
Thursday 2 September	9:00 am	Primary counts of accepted declaration votes, further postal counts
Friday 10 September	12:00 noon	Deadline for receipt of postal votes Final counts of postal votes commence
	6:00 pm	Distribution of preferences
Monday 13 September	10:00 am	Declaration of the election result

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## BACKGROUND

### Elections

Election day for the 2021 Local Government Elections was Saturday 28 August. Local government general elections in the Northern Territory cover 17 local government areas and include 60 separate elections for 159 positions. For the City of Darwin, there were 5 elections: one mayoral and one for each of its 4 wards:

- Chan Ward – 3 aldermen
- Lyons Ward – 3 aldermen
- Richardson Ward – 3 aldermen
- Waters Ward – 3 aldermen

### Legislation

This was the first general election under the new *Local Government Act 2019* (which commenced 1 July 2021), with further electoral legislative and regulations changes included in amendments passed in May and June 2021.

The key changes relating to local government elections resulting from these amendments are:

- Changes to declaration voting that allows electors who turn up at a voting centre, but are not enrolled (or are enrolled for an interstate address) to still cast a vote that can be admitted to the count. The declaration envelope acts as an enrolment form which is forwarded to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for processing. If the person is able to be enrolled, their vote is added to the count. Previously, declaration votes would result in updated enrolments, but their ballot papers would not be included in the count.
- Financial disclosure requirements were simplified so that only candidates who receive reportable donations and loans are required to complete a return, and disclosure timeframes were generally aligned to those in the *Electoral Act 2004*. (The financial disclosure requirements do not come into effect until 1 July 2022, so were not relevant to the 2021 Local Government Elections.)
- Other amendments included changes to the election timetable and nomination requirements.

### Service Charter

The service charter (one document for all councils) provided an overview of service commitments and associated standards that councils could expect from the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC). The charter also described how councils could assist in the delivery of the elections and thereby offset some of their costs. These are detailed in individual service level agreements that the NTEC had with each council.

### Service Level Agreement

As part of its service level agreement signed 31 March 2021, the City of Darwin opted to provide or facilitate the following for its elections:

- a candidate information session in partnership with the Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT)
- the use of Casuarina Library for early voting and election day voting at no cost
- support the use of the Darwin Entertainment Centre as an early voting centre and election day voting centre
- identify and sign disabled parking spots at the Darwin Entertainment Centre and Parap Primary School voting centres
- the loading zone in Briggs Street for the return of materials on election night

- promotion of the election via its social media outlets and front counter rolling message service
- Signage locations provided around City of Darwin for the placement of banners at no cost.

## **BOUNDARY CHANGES**

There were changes to the internal boundaries of the City of Darwin gazetted in December 2020 resulting from a review of electoral representation conducted by the council.

These changes included:

- Wagaman moved from Richardson Ward to Waters Ward
- The Narrows moved from Waters Ward to Lyons Ward
- Fannie Bay moved from Lyons Ward to Chan Ward
- There were no changes to the number of members in each ward.

## **ENROLMENT**

At the close of the electoral roll on Tuesday 27 July 2021 at 5:00pm there was a total of 51,060 electors enrolled in the City of Darwin. This was a 1.9% increase in enrolment from previous local government general elections held in 2017.

Enrolment numbers per ward were as follows:

- Chan Ward – 12,537
- Lyons Ward – 13,159
- Richardson Ward – 12,526
- Waters Ward – 12,838

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

### **Campaign overview**

The public awareness campaign for the 2021 Local Government Elections was implemented in two broad phases. The first phase focused on awareness and enrolment. The second was a call to action for all eligible Territorians to vote.

The roll out of the public awareness campaign for the 2021 Local Government Elections commenced on 21 June and continued through until the declaration of the results on 13 September 2021. Social media was the primary channel used to promote the election Territory wide. Television, radio, digital and print media were also integral parts of the media mix.

In-language radio, TV and social media content was also created to promote the election throughout remote areas and communities in the Territory. Based on recommendations from the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia, content was developed in 9 Aboriginal languages which were geo-targeted to the regions where the languages are spoken.

Broadly understood Aboriginal languages such as Kriol and Arrernte were used right across the northern and southern parts to the Territory respectively to ensure that content developed in at least one relevant language other than English was available Territory wide.

### **Website**

The website for the 2021 Local Government Elections was launched early June and provided comprehensive information for candidates and electors. The site was designed to be the primary source of information for voters about enrolment and voting options, times and locations and results.

For candidates, the site provided information about nominating, campaigning, voting and scrutineering processes.

The following table shows website engagement for the election period (21 June through to 13 September) as well as specific City of Darwin results and information page engagement, prior to and post election day.

<b>Total website page views</b>	<b>865,814</b>
City of Darwin mayor results page views	13,805
City of Darwin alderman results page views (all wards)	46,219
City of Darwin list of mayoral candidates	7,266
City of Darwin list of alderman candidates (all wards)	20,993
Other City of Darwin content related page views	31,581
<b>Total City of Darwin content related page views</b>	<b>119,864</b>

## Newsletters



2021 Local Government Elections: Newsletter 2  
Issue date: Friday 18 June

A total of 10 election specific newsletters were emailed to stakeholders including councils and candidates, from 28 May through to 9 September. The newsletters kept stakeholders up to date with topics ranging from nomination information through to details of vote counting. The newsletters were also available on the NTEC website and links were shared on the NTEC's Facebook page.

## Advertising – radio, television, social media

NTEC branded advertisements of 15 seconds were developed for radio, television and social media. The advertisements carried simple, concise messages such as: 'check your enrolment', 'are you correctly enrolled?', 'early voting has started', and 'vote now'.

All advertisements promoted the NTEC website as the prime source of information for electors to 'find out more'.

These advertisements were also translated into 9 Aboriginal languages and broadcast on the CAAMA, Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia, Yolngu Radio and TEABBA radio networks throughout the Territory.

In-language versions were also broadcast on Aboriginal Broadcasting Australia TV and ICTV channels and were geo-targeted to their respective language areas on social media.

The stock advertisements were run on social media in conjunction with a series of video logs (vlogs) featuring well-known Territorians such as Charlie King, who promoted key election messages on behalf of the NTEC.

A number of social media advertisements were developed in collaboration with Bellette Media featuring Territorians raising awareness about the elections.

Facebook engagement statistics show that the vlog format advertisements proved highly successful. In total, 8 of the 42 social media advertisements were produced in either a vlog or light-hearted format. Those 8 advertisements accounted for 152,988 video views from the campaign total of 377,810 views.

English language radio advertisements were broadcast on Hot 100 and Mix-FM stations in the Top End and Sun FM and 8HA in Central Australia.

English language television advertisements were broadcast on Channel 7, Channel 9 and Imparja networks. Placement of these was focused on 'event' TV, or high-rating programs and popular sports such as AFL and NRL matches.

## Direct digital and print advertising

With a large decline in print media options since the 2017 general elections, newspaper advertising for the 2021 Local Government Elections was largely restricted to statutory advertising requirements as prescribed under the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2021. These advertisements ran in the NT News as the Territory's primary, widely-circulated newspaper.

However, further publications with a digital presence such as Alice Springs News Online, Tennant Creek and District Times and Katherine Times were also engaged for location targeted aspects of the campaign.

Direct digital advertising placements on millennial, tech-savvy platforms such as EA Games and NewsXtend, proved highly successful in terms of campaign awareness.

From 92,893 video impressions served on EA Games, a view through rate of 89.9 per cent was achieved, or put another way, there were 83,486 complete views of the two 15 second advertisements run across the campaign.

The NewsExtend platform also served 298,501 impressions Territory-wide and achieved 30,805 complete views of awareness video advertisements.

The following tables outline relevant statistics for different advertising channels and platforms.

### Television

Network	Dates aired	Number of advertisements	
<b>Channel 7 Darwin</b>	04/07/2021 – 28/08/2021	<b>202</b>	
Channel 7 Central		228	
<b>Channel 9</b>		<b>78</b>	
Imparja		127	
ICTV		120	
<b>ABA</b>		<b>124</b>	
<b>Bold:</b> Channels aired throughout City of Darwin Council region		<b>Total</b>	<b>879</b>

### Radio

Network	Dates aired	Number of advertisements
<b>Hot 100</b>	04/07/2021 – 28/08/2021	<b>158</b>
<b>Mix FM</b>		<b>157</b>
CAAMA		168
<b>TEABBA</b>		<b>109</b>
<b>ABA</b>		<b>141</b>
Yolngu Radio		104
Sun FM		104
8HA		104
<b>Bold:</b> Channels aired throughout City of Darwin Council region	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,045</b>



## Social media

Campaign	Reach	Impressions	Click through rate
<b>2021 Local Government Elections – overall</b>	168,472	2,825,293	1.07%*
<b>City of Darwin geo-targeted ads#</b>	98,620	743,864	0.94%

\*Industry standard 0.89%

#Includes only ads targeted to run in City of Darwin Council area. Does not include Territory wide run ads which were also served in the City of Darwin area.

## Call centre

A call centre was established on Monday 2 August and ran until 6pm on 28 August, election day. Staff assisted electors with a variety of enquiries related to the election during this period.

Enquiry type	Enquiry numbers
Total phone calls	1,522
Emails to ntec@nt.gov.au	261
Front counter	88
Formal complaints	43

## Street banners

The NTEC placed large banners ranging in size from 4 metres x one metre up to 8 metres x one metre in high traffic locations around the City of Darwin to promote awareness of the 2021 Local Government Elections.

The following table details where and when those banners were located and what message they carried.

Banner location	Message	Display dates
Gardens Oval	ENROL TO VOTE	12/07 – 25/07
	VOTE EARLY	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 28/08
Ludmilla overpass	ENROL TO VOTE	12/07 – 25/07
Cnr McMillans and Bagot roads	ARE YOU CORRECTLY ENROLLED	12/07 – 25/07
	VOTE EARLY	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 28/08
Stuart Highway, Berrimah	ENROL TO VOTE	12/07 – 25/07
	VOTE EARLY	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 28/08
Trower Road	ENROL TO VOTE ONLINE	12/07 – 25/07
	VOTE EARLY NOW	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 29/08

### Candidate information sessions

There were one candidate information session organised by the LGANT in partnership with the council, which the NTEC presented at. The table below provides details about this session.

Date	Location	Number of attendees
21 July 2021	City of Darwin Civic Centre	17

### Email and SMS

Electors who have provided either their mobile phone number or email address or both are able to be contacted directly by the NTEC. Those electors in the City of Darwin council area received 4 messages before election day, 28 August. Details of those messages were:

Message	Email	Date Sent	SMS	Date Sent
Enrolment	21,308	19-07-2021	25,926	22-07-2021
Voting suspended (COVID-19)	*971	16-08-2021	23,870	16-08-2021
Vote now, early voting (post lockdown)	19,319	19-08-2021	23,870	19-08-2021
Last day/s to vote#	13,052	26-08-2021	14,341	28-08-2021
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54,650</b>		<b>88,007</b>	

\*Sent only if no SMS contact

#Sent only to electors who had not voted

### Other promotional activities

The NTEC hosted stalls on the show circuit promoting the upcoming 2021 Local Government Elections in Katherine and Darwin only. Stalls were ready to be run in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek but these shows were cancelled due to a COVID-19 lockdown.

The NTEC also attended the annual Welcome to the Top End Expo for Defence families and held a stall at the NAIDOC week celebrations in Darwin.

## VOTING SERVICES

### Nominations

Nominations opened Friday 16 July and closed on Thursday 5 August at 12:00 noon. For the City of Darwin there were a total of 25 accepted nominations for councillor and 6 accepted nominations for mayor.

The declaration of nominations was held in on Level 1 of the NTEC office building at 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin. The event was attended by candidates, the general public, council representatives and media. A random number generator selected the ballot paper position for each candidate and results were uploaded onto the NTEC website and Facebook page as soon as the draw was completed.

## City of Darwin – summary of accepted nominations/candidates

<b>Mayor</b>	Kon VATSKALIS
	Gary John HASLETT
	Amye UN
	Calvin DONALDSON
	Leah POTTER
	Robin LAWRENCE

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Nominations</b>
<b>Chan Ward - Alderman (3 vacancies)</b>	Morgan RICKARD
	Sally GEARIN
	Ed SMELT
	Jeff BORELLA
	Peter PANGQUEE

<b>Lyons Ward -Alderman (3 vacancies)</b>	Carol PHAYER
	Calvin DONALDSON
	Mick PALMER
	Sue SHEARER
	Adam TROYN
	Andrew LEE
	Paul ARNOLD
	Amye UN

<b>Richardson Ward - Alderman (3 vacancies)</b>	Martine SMITH
	Jimmy BOUHORIS
	Edwin JOSEPH
	Vim SHARMA
	Rebecca WANT DE ROWE
	Rajeev THAYIL

<b>Waters Ward - Alderman (3 vacancies)</b>	Robin LAWRENCE
	Andrew John ARTHUR
	Sylvia KLONARIS
	Gary John HASLETT
	Justine GLOVER
	Brian O'GALLAGHER

## Electronic mark-off

An electronic voter mark-off system is now used in all voting centres across the Northern Territory. The system records when someone has voted anywhere in the NT in real time. Where there is no internet coverage, each netbook stores the voter mark off information until such time as there is internet coverage which allows the netbooks to synchronise and send the information to NTEC offices.

Voting centres are issued paper copies of the certified lists as an emergency backup option in case of complete failure of the electronic mark off system.

The system also prevents multiple voting, as a voter who is marked off electronically in one voting centre or who has completed a postal vote will appear in all voting centres as already voted.

## ELECTION

### Early voting

Early voting services were offered for two weeks (from Monday 16 August to Friday 27 August) at 8 early voting centres across the Territory, including 2 in the City of Darwin area at the Darwin Entertainment Centre and Casuarina Library. However, from 12 noon, Monday 16 August to 12 noon, Thursday 19 August, early voting was suspended Territory wide due to a COVID lockdown. To offset the loss of service to electors, early voting times were extended.

The table below shows the number of votes issued at each early voting centre (EVC) for this election, with comparison statistics from the 2017 City of Darwin elections.

### Early voting statistics compared – City of Darwin.

Voting centre	2021 Local Government Elections - Votes issued	2017 Local Government Elections - Votes issued
Alice Springs EVC	39	69
Casuarina EVC	9,267	6,377
Coolalinga EVC	227	124
Darwin Civic Centre EVC	N/A	1,356
Darwin EVC	4,758	3,795
Katherine EVC	36	49
Palmerston EVC	269	N/A
Tennant Creek EVC	4	9
Yarrowonga EVC	614	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,214</b>	<b>11,779</b>

Note – City of Palmerston were suspended during the 2017 NT Council Elections so there were no early voting centres located there.

### Mobile voting – urban institutions

Urban mobile voting teams attended hospitals and correctional centres to provide patients and inmates an opportunity to vote. These teams issued 2 votes in Alice Springs, 379 votes across Darwin and Palmerston and 1 vote in a regional area to City of Darwin electors.

### Postal voting

All electors have the option to postal vote. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, postal voting services were provided to all residents of urban aged care facilities (rather than in-house mobile voting as provided previously) throughout the Territory. As Australia Post could not guarantee the delivery and return of postal votes to overseas addresses within the legislated timeframes, due to the impact of COVID-19 on international flights, no postal votes were sent overseas. The table below provides further details about postal votes for Central Desert Regional Council residents.

**Postal voting statistics – City of Darwin**

Description	Number
Number of postal vote applications received	4,274
Number of postal votes issued	3,704
Number of postal vote applications rejected	570
Number of postal votes returned	3,347
Number of postal votes added to the count	2,861
Number of postal votes rejected	486

The reasons for rejecting postal vote applications were:

- multiple applications received from the same elector (387)
- overseas elector (114)
- too late for Australian address (47)
- called and rejected on request by elector (19)
- age care – incapacitate (2)
- insufficient postal address (1)

The reasons for rejecting returned postal votes were:

- postal vote not signed (165)
- ordinary vote issued i.e. elector marked off as having voted in person (164)
- postal vote received too late (67)
- postal vote dated too late (47)
- returned to sender (38)
- signatures do not match (5)

**Declaration voting**

A person who cannot be found on the electoral roll, but is entitled to vote, can be issued with a declaration vote after completing and signing a declaration envelope. Their ballot paper is placed in the envelope and a scrutiny of all declaration envelopes commences the day after election day.

Legislative amendments passed in May 2021 created a savings provision that allows eligible electors who are unenrolled at the close of roll date, a chance for their vote to be admitted to the count. During the declaration scrutiny process, all declaration envelopes are forwarded to the AEC and eligible electors are added to the roll using the envelope as an enrolment form. Where voters are unable to be enrolled, their declaration vote is rejected.

For the City of Darwin, the table below shows the declaration votes admitted to the count and those rejected.

**Declaration vote statistics – City of Darwin**

Accepted	Rejected	Total
314	17	331

The main reasons for rejecting declaration votes were:

- elector enrolled for a different local government area to the one they completed the ballot paper for (14). Electors must vote for the area they are enrolled in at the close of electoral roll, even if they have since moved to another NT address.
- insufficient evidence of identity to enrol the person or update their enrolment (2)
- declaration envelope/enrolment form not signed (1)

### Election day voting centres

Election day was Saturday 28 August 2021. For the City of Darwin, there were 8 election day voting centres, 2 located in each ward (detailed in the table below), all open from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

Following discussions with the council, it was agreed to reduce the number of election day voting centres due to the increasing trend of early voting by City of Darwin electors. In addition, NTEC proposed to use the 2 Darwin located early voting centres as election day voting centres. Overall, the reduction in election day voting centres was from 10 to 8.

If voting on election day, electors had to vote at a voting centre located within their council area, although any elector could vote at the 2 early voting centres that were also open on election day (Darwin and Casuarina).

### Election day voting statistics – City of Darwin

Election day voting centre	Location	Votes taken
Casuarina	Casuarina Library 17 Bradshaw Terrace	2,274
Darwin City	Darwin Entertainment Centre 93 Mitchell St	1,915
Karama	O'Loughlin Catholic College, 70 Mueller Rd	1,944
Leanyer	Leanyer Primary School 114 Leanyer Drive	2,173
Ludmilla	Ludmilla Primary School 41 Bagot Rd	875
Moil	Moil Primary School 37 Lanyon Terrace	1,650
Nightcliff	Nightcliff Middle School 90 Nightcliff Rd	2,195
Parap	Parap Primary School Urquhart St	1,777
<b>Total</b>		<b>14,803</b>

### Absent voting

Electors wishing to vote on election day outside of their council area, had the opportunity to vote in Alice Springs, Coolalinga, Katherine, Palmerston or Yarrowonga. This option was not offered in the previous local government general elections in 2017.

**Absent voting statistics – City of Darwin**

Location	Votes issued
Alice Springs election day voting centre	20
Coolalinga election day voting centre	115
Katherine election day voting centre	44
Palmerston election day voting centre	92
Yarrowonga election day voting centre	146
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>417</b>

**Participation**

Turnout for the City of Darwin election was 66.5%. That means 33,942 electors voted out of a total enrolment figure of 51,060. The turnout rate was slightly lower than at the 2017 elections of 67.3%. The following table details the total number of vote types cast in the election.

**Number of votes by voting centre – City of Darwin (based on mayoral votes)**

Voting centre	Number of votes counted	% of total votes
Election day voting centres	14,796	43.6%
Early voting centres	15,246	44.9%
Postal voting	2,819	8.3%
Declaration voting	313	0.9%
Absent voting	768	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,942</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Non-voters**

There are 3,096 identified non-voters across the City of Darwin area. The table below shows the age and gender demographics of these non-voters.

**Non-voter statistics – City of Darwin**

Gender	18-29 years	30-49 years	50-69 years	70+ years	Total
<b>Female</b>	1,922	3,110	1,713	556	<b>7,301</b>
<b>Male</b>	2,485	4,390	2,444	752	<b>10,071</b>
<b>Gender undisclosed</b>	7	2			<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,414</b>	<b>7,502</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>17,381</b>

**Informality**

Of the 33,942 ballot papers counted for the both elections, 1,770 (5.2%) of the mayoral ballot papers were considered informal and 1,803 of the alderman ballot papers were considered informal (5.3%), and were therefore not counted.

**Informal vote statistics – City of Darwin**

<b>Ballot paper</b>	<b>Intentional</b>	<b>Unintentional</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mayor</b>	1,305	465	1,770
<b>Chan Ward</b>	345	82	427
<b>Lyons Ward</b>	355	70	425
<b>Richardson Ward</b>	389	79	468
<b>Waters Ward</b>	395	88	483
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,789</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>3,591</b>

**Voting system**

The voting system for local government elections where there are multiple vacancies to fill is proportional representation (PR):

- Electors must number all the boxes on their ballot paper sequentially starting with the number one for their first choice.
- First preference votes for each candidate on formal ballot papers are counted, then a quota is calculated.
- The quota is calculated using the following formula: (total number of formal votes / (number of vacancies + 1)) +1.
- The candidates with votes equal to or greater than the quota are elected. If all vacancies are filled, the election is complete.
- If not, preferences are distributed to the other candidates until all vacancies have been filled.

To learn more about the PR system, go to the vote counting page on the NTEC website. For single vacancy positions (like a mayor) a preferential count is conducted.

**Vote counting – election night**

Vote counting began immediately after the close of voting at 6:00 pm on election day. A count of first preference votes for mayor and alderman was undertaken at election day voting centres only. Votes taken at early voting centres and by remote and urban mobile teams were counted at the Darwin scrutiny centre.

**Post-election night scrutinies**

- A recheck of mayoral votes from all voting centres was undertaken on the Monday after election day. Counts of absent, declaration and postal votes returned during the counting period were undertaken over the 13 days following election day.
- As the mayoral position was a single-vacancy election, all counts were done manually.
- Votes received for the councillor vacancies were entered into an electronic count system that the NTEC uses to count votes using proportional representation (Easy count). All votes are then re-entered for verification purposes.
- Using this system alleviates the need to undertake a fresh re-check of ballot papers as each paper is entered and verified by two different data operators.
- Following the deadline for the receipt of postal votes at 12 noon on Friday 10 September, a distribution of preferences for the mayor was required as the leading candidate did not secure more than 50 per cent of the first preference votes. This count was done manually. The distribution of preferences for the councillor positions was conducted electronically using the Easy Count software.



## ELECTION OUTCOMES

There were 6 candidates for the mayor vacancy and 25 candidates contesting 12 aldermen vacancies. The successful candidates and first preference votes received are detailed in the tables below.

### Election of mayor

At the close of nominations there were 6 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preferences
Kon VATSKALIS	18,411
Gary John HASLETT	3,192
Amye UN	4,083
Calvin DONALDSON	456
Leah POTTER	3,964
Robin LAWRENCE	2,066
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,172</b>

The number of votes required to win as per the preferential voting system (more than half) was 16,087. A distribution of preferences was not required as **Kon VATSKALIS** received more than half the votes in first preferences.

**Kon VATSKALIS** was duly elected.

### Election of 3 aldermen – Chan Ward

At the close of nominations there were 5 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preferences
Morgan RICKARD	1,873
Sally GEARIN	1,587
Ed SMELT	1,724
Jeff BORELLA	763
Peter PANGQUEE	1,889
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,836</b>

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 1,960. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Peter PANGQUEE** received the quota at count number 2
- **Morgan RICKARD** received the quota at count number 2
- **Ed SMELT** received the quota at count number 3

**Peter PANGQUEE, Morgan RICKARD** and **Ed SMELT** were duly elected.

**Election of 3 aldermen – Lyons Ward**

At the close of nominations there were 8 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>First preferences</b>
Carol PHAYER	745
Calvin DONALDSON	96
Mick PALMER	1,515
Sue SHEARER	423
Adam TROYN	1,116
Andrew LEE	712
Paul ARNOLD	1,929
Amye UN	1,134
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,670</b>

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 1,918. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Paul ARNOLD** received the quota at count number 1
- **Mick PALMER** received the quota at count number 16
- **Amye UN** received the quota at count number 28

**Paul ARNOLD, Mick PALMER and Amye UN** were duly elected.

**Election of 3 aldermen – Richardson Ward**

At the close of nominations there were 6 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>First preferences</b>
Martine SMITH	565
Jimmy BOUHORIS	2,879
Edwin JOSEPH	959
Vim SHARMA	1,353
Rebecca WANT DE ROWE	2,320
Rajeev THAYIL	598
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,674</b>

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 2,169. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Jimmy BOUHORIS** received the quota at count number 1
- **Rebecca WANT DE ROWE** received the quota at count number 1
- **Vim SHARMA** received the quota at count number 7

**Jimmy BOUHORIS, Rebecca WANT DE ROWE and Vim SHARMA** were duly elected.

**Election of 3 aldermen – Waters Ward**

At the close of nominations there were 6 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preferences
Robin LAWRENCE	611
Andrew John ARTHUR	677
Sylvia KLONARIS	2,141
Gary John HASLETT	714
Justine GLOVER	1,760
Brian O'GALLAGHER	2,056
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,959</b>

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 1,990. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Sylvia KLONARIS** received the quota at count number 1
- **Brian O'GALLAGHER** received the quota at count number 1
- **Justine GLOVER** received the quota at count number 4

**Sylvia KLONARIS, Brian O'GALLAGHER and Justine GLOVER** were duly elected.

**Declaration of the election results**

The declaration of election results took place at the City of Darwin Civic Centre at 9:00am on Monday 13 September 2021.

**Declared election results for City of Darwin**

Lord Mayor	Chan Ward (3 vacancies)	Lyons Ward (3 vacancies)	Richardson Ward (3 vacancies)	Waters Ward (3 vacancies)
Kon VATSKALIS	Peter PANGQUEE Morgan RICKARD Ed SMELT	Paul ARNOLD Mick PALMER Amye UN	Jimmy BOUHORIS Rebecca WANT DE ROWE Vim SHARMA	Sylvia KLONARIS Brian O'GALLAGHER Justine GLOVER

A copy of the full distribution of preferences is available on the 2021 Local Government Elections [results page](#) of the website.

## ELECTION COSTS

### Estimate of cost – City of Darwin

Election area	Estimated costs
Public awareness	\$109,586
Staffing	\$223,937
Operational	\$192,606
Sub total	\$526,129
10% GST	\$52,613
<b>Total estimated cost</b>	<b>\$578,742</b>

### Actual cost – City of Darwin

Election area	Actual cost
Public awareness	\$71,623
Staffing	\$439,214
Operational	\$145,737
Sub total	\$656,574
10% GST	\$65,657
<b>Total actual cost</b>	<b>\$722,231</b>

The main reason behind the large difference between the estimate and actual costs for the City of Darwin election was a significant under-estimation of staffing costs on behalf of the NTEC. This is partially due to COVID related issues, including the lockdown during the early voting period and additional measures taken to reduce risks. COVID also impacted the ability to second specialist electoral expertise from interstate electoral commissions which is usual practice and saves on costs. None of the interstate specialist staff utilised were seconded. There were also significant increases in the costs for express postage.

It was determined by the Electoral Commissioner that the City of Darwin would be only be invoiced for the estimated amount plus a \$20,000 contribution to offset the COVID-19 costs incurred during this election.

The causes behind the increased staffing and operational costs were explained to Treasury who agreed to meet the shortfall left after the COVID contributions.

## POST ELECTION DE-BRIEF

A de-brief of the election activities and outcomes took place with the City Darwin on 17 September 2021. Overall, the council were satisfied with the level of services provided by the NTEC.

City of Darwin were pleased with the decision have two early voting centres based in the council area. It may be viable for future elections to consider other prime locations for additional early voting centres.

It was noted that some candidates were not fully aware of what was required of them in the way of authorisation and advertising guidelines for campaign materials, and this resulted in both informal and formal complaints to the NTEC and council.

A complaint was sent to the CEO of the City of Darwin by a candidate with concerns of the reduced number of voting centres in Waters Ward which resulted in slow moving queues, the lack of disabled parking at the Karama voting centre and concerns over a voting centre that had run out of ballot papers. During the de-brief, it was agreed that NTEC will review the number of voting centres, the venues used and the number of issuing points for the City of Darwin.

## ISSUES OF NOTE

- As part of the lease agreements for early voting centres located in shopping centres, it was a condition of hire that no physical campaigning by candidates was permitted to minimise disruption to shoppers. For the first time at an NT election, the NTEC provided displays stands to host candidate how-to-vote material at the entrance to voting centres. Some of the feedback received by councils and the NTEC was those candidates whose material was placed at the bottom of the display stand they were disadvantaged to those candidates over the ones that were given an area higher up. NTEC has sourced a new style of display that will give all candidates even representation for their campaign material.
- The COVID-19 lockdown in the first week of early voting, followed by compulsory mask wearing is likely to influenced voters in choosing to vote on election day rather than voting early. Based on recent trends of early voting becoming the most popular option, the number of election day voting centres was reduced to 2 per ward. On election day however, electors experienced long queues, even with the higher than usual staff numbers at each voting centre. In some voting centres, the lack of shade when queuing was more of an issue than the wait times.
- At the Moil election day voting centre, due to the larger number of voters than anticipated, the allocated supply of ordinary ballot paper ran short. A supplementary supply of ballot papers was delayed, which resulted in some voters having to wait to cast their vote. NTEC have committed to incorporating additional training for the procedures to follow in this circumstance, and will stock all election day voting centres with surplus ballot papers.
- A complaint was received at the NTEC office counter from a candidate reporting a voting centre staff member advising electors in line at an early voting centre at 5:50pm that they would be unable to vote after 6.00pm. All voting staff and managers are instructed to place a staff member at the end of the voting queue at 6.00pm. All electors in the line who were there prior to 6.00pm are given an opportunity to vote, however if an electors turns up after 6.00pm they will be advised they will not be able to vote.
- Another candidate queried an apparent loss of first preference votes during the counting period (there was a reduction in their first preference votes compared with the results published on election night.). The votes counted on election night are an indicative count and a re-check of all votes is conducted on the Monday following election day. An error had occurred for this candidate on election night which was rectified as part of the fresh scrutiny as per normal practice. Candidates are welcome to appoint scrutineers to observe both election night counts and the fresh scrutiny where they can challenge ballot papers.
- The suitability of Casuarina library as an EVC and election-day voting centre needs to be considered. The Casuarina EVC took 3000 additional votes compared to the 2017 election. The premises is suitable during the majority of the early voting period, but on the Friday before the election and election day there were periods where electors has to queue for extended periods.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- NTEC and the City of Darwin to meet in person to do a thorough estimate of election costs before the next election.
- Revisit election day voting centre requirements based on 2021 data and logistics in managing public health issues. This includes staffing resources, venues, locations and WHS requirements.
- Consider additional early voting centres in prominent locations which become election day voting centres. Possible locations could include Karama and North Lakes shopping centres. A supplementary early voting centre situated in Casuarina Square or Casuarina Village may alleviate the large number of electors voting at the Casuarina Library.