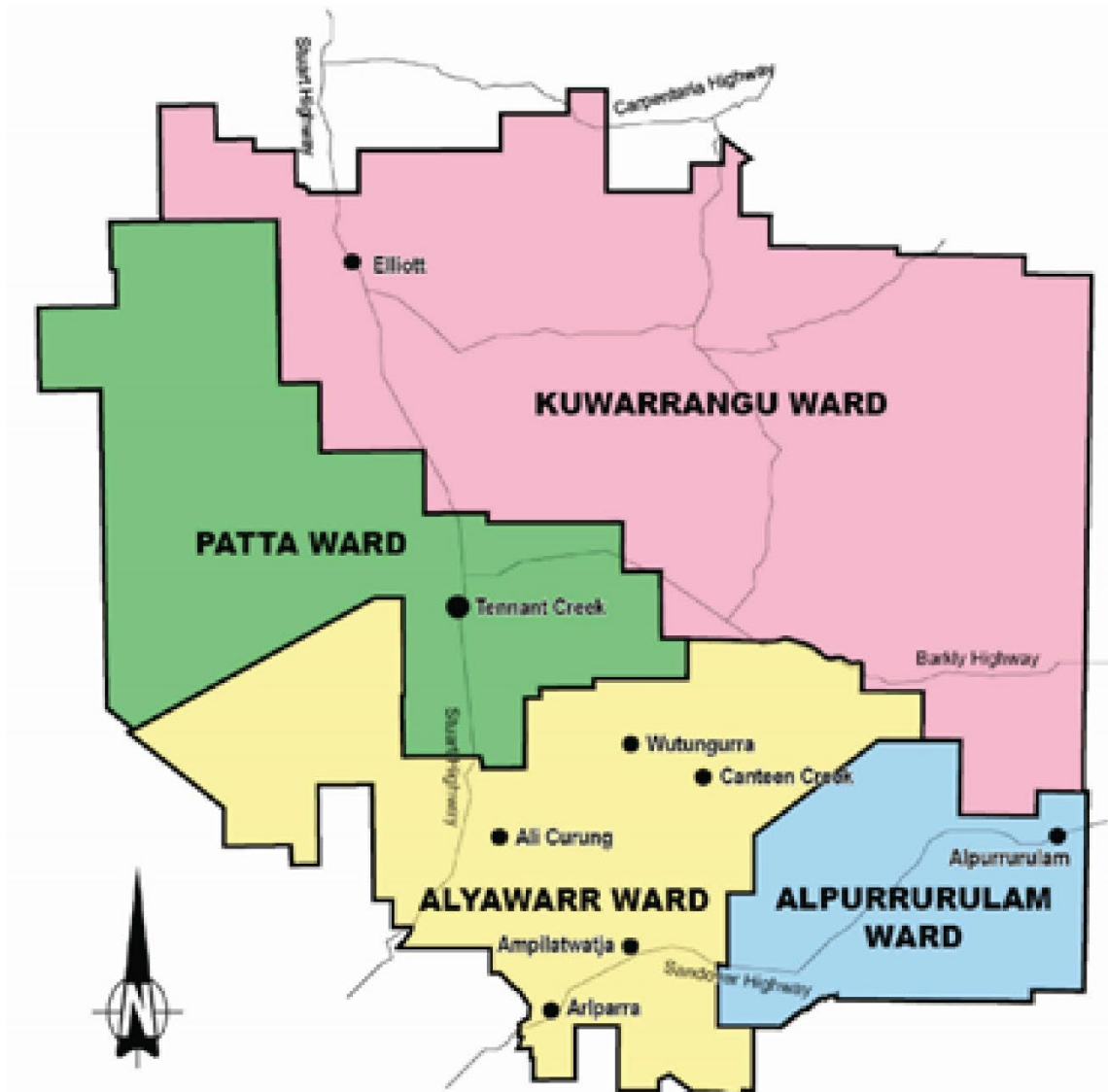
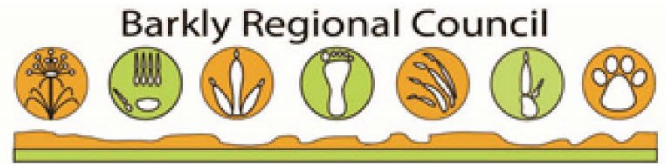


Barkly Regional Council

Election Report



NTEC version control

2021 Local Government Elections - Barkly Regional Council report

Version Number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1.0	Final version approved by K. Kelly	K. Kelly NTEC	08/02/2022
1.1	Addition of version control Removal of blank page	M. O'Brien	12/04/22

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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 Election day
	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 Barkly Regional Council, there were 5 elections: one for mayor, and one for each of the 4 wards:

- Alpururulam Ward – 1 councillor
- Alyawarr Ward – 4 councillors
- Kuwarrangu Ward – 2 councillors
- Patta Ward – 5 councillors.

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 17 June 2021, Barkly Regional Council opted to provide or facilitate the following for its elections:

- voting services in agreed council delivery centres from 23 August 2021 to 27 August 2021
- council staff and premises for the council delivery centres
- council staff training including the requirement to provide council delivery centre managers face-to-face training in Alice Springs by NTEC
- delivery and return to communities of election materials and ballot papers in a secure and safe manner
- security of used and unused ballot papers, ballot boxes, and netbook machines
- mobile voting to minor communities if required in conjunction with NTEC

- council owned accommodation (if required) and voting premises at no cost
- promotion of the election through social media and council sites throughout the council area
- receive and forward nominations to the NTEC for official processing

All other electoral services were provided by the NT Electoral Commission.

BOUNDARY CHANGES

There were no boundary or representative structure changes as a result of the representation review of Barkly Regional Council conducted prior to the election.

ENROLMENT

At the close of the electoral roll on Tuesday 27 July at 5:00pm there was a total of 4,072 electors enrolled in the Barkly Regional Council. This was a 4.7 per cent decrease in enrolment from the previous local government general elections in 2017. The enrolment numbers per ward were as follows:

- Alpururulam Ward – 181 (down from 214 in 2017)
- Alyawarr Ward – 1,555 (down from 1602 in 2017)
- Kuwarrangu Ward – 449 (down from 487 in 2017)
- Patta Ward – 1,887 (down from 1,961 in 2017)

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 Barkly Regional Council results and information page engagement, prior to and post election day.

Total website page views	865,814
Barkly mayor results page views	4,786
Barkly councillor results page views (all wards)	4,882
Barkly list of mayoral candidates	917
Barkly list of councillor candidates (all wards)	1,949
Other Barkly content related page views	4,454
Total Barkly content related page views	16,988

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 ads were broadcast on Channel 7, Channel 9 and Imparja networks. Placement of the ads 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 through plays of the two, 15 second ads run across the campaign.

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

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

Television

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

Radio

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

Social Media

Campaign	Reach	Impressions	Click through rate
2021 Local Government Elections – overall	168,472	2,825,293	1.07%*
Barkly geo-targeted ads#	28,584	129,843	1.2%

*Industry standard 0.89%

#Includes only ads targeted to run in Central Australia, which included the Barkly Regional Council area. Includes in language ads run in Warlpiri and Arrernte. Does not include Territory wide targeted ads

Call centre

A call centre was established on Monday 2 August and ran until 6:00, Saturday 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 of 8 metres x one metre in high traffic locations around Tennant Creek 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
Bluestone Motor Inn	ENROL TO VOTE	12/07 – 26/07
	VOTE EARLY NOW	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 28/08
Eldorado Motor Inn	ENROL TO VOTE	12/07 – 26/07
	VOTE EARLY NOW	09/08 – 23/08
	VOTE SATURDAY	23/08 – 28/08

Candidate information sessions

The Local Government Association of the NT (LGANT) contacted every council to offer candidate information sessions which the NTEC would also present at. There were no candidate information sessions held for Barkly Regional Council, but online resources for candidates were available from both LGANT and NTEC.

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 Barkly Regional Council area received 4 messages before election day, 28 August. Details of those messages were:

Message	No. of emails sent	Date sent	No. of SMS sent	Date sent
Enrolment	697	19-07-2021	954	22-07-2021
Voting suspended (COVID-19)	43*	16-08-2021	887	16-08-2021
Vote now, early voting (post lockdown)	634	19-08-2021	672 (Tennant Creek)	23-08-2021
Community specific message sent 2 days before remote team visit			138	21-08-2021 – 24-08-2021
Last day/s to vote#	340	26-08-2021	357	28-08-2021
Totals	1,714		3,008	

*Sent only if no SMS contact and if elector had not already voted

#Sent only to electors who had not yet 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.

VOTING SERVICES

Nominations

Nominations opened Friday 16 July and closed on Thursday 5 August at 12:00 noon. For Barkly Regional Council, there were a total of 19 accepted nominations for 12 council vacancies and 4 nominations for mayor. One nomination for Kuwarrangu Ward was rejected due to not being enrolled in the council area.

The declaration of nominations was held at the NTEC's Central Australia election office at the Arid Zone Research Institute, 519 Stuart Hwy, Kilgariff. The event was attended by candidates, the general public and council representatives. 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.

Barkly Regional Council – summary of accepted nominations/candidates

Mayor (1 vacancy)	Russell O'DONNELL
	Brian COLEMAN
	Jeffrey MCLAUGHLIN
	Hal RUGER

Ward	Nominations
Alpurrurulam Ward (1 vacancy)	Pam CORBETT

Alyawarr Ward (2 vacancies)	Derek WALKER
	Noel HAYES
	Anita BAILEY
	Jack CLUB
	Lucy JACKSON

Kuwarrangu Ward (2 vacancies)	Lennie BARTON
	Kevin Raymond GASKIN
	Sharon BILL
	Heather WILSON

Patta 5 Vacancies	Ronald PLUMMER
	Brian COLEMAN
	Catherine GRIMLEY
	Russell O'DONNELL
	Karan HAYWARD
	Kelly WHITE
	Dianne Seri STOKES
	Hal RUGER
	Greg MARLOW

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

At the close of nominations the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies in the Alpururulam Ward, therefore an election was not required for this ward.

Council delivery centres

Within the Barkly Regional Council area, early voting services were offered over four days across 5 council delivery centres. The table below shows the location of the council delivery centre and the number of votes issued at each one.

Council delivery centre statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Location	Votes issued
Ali Curung	126
Alpurrurulam	75
Ampilatwatja	32
Elliott	131
Wutunugurra	95
Total	459

Early voting

Within the Northern Territory, early voting services were offered for two weeks (from Monday 16 August to Friday 27 August) at 7 early voting centres, and for one week at the Tennant Creek early voting centre (Monday 23 August to Friday 27 August). 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 those early voting centres (EVCs) that issued votes to Barkly Regional Council electors.

Early voting statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Location	Votes issued
Alice Springs EVC	30
Casuarina EVC	3
Coolalinga EVC	1
Darwin EVC	1
Katherine EVC	4
Palmerston EVC	1
Tennant Creek EVC	601
Yarrowonga EVC	5
Total	646

Remote mobile voting

Remote mobile voting teams visited 12 communities in the Barkly Regional Council area. The teams issued 55 votes.

Mobile voting – urban institutions

Mobile voting teams visited the Tennant Creek Hospital, Pulkapulka Kari Nursing Home and Barkly Work Camp. These teams issued 3 votes to Barkly Regional Council 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 Barkly Regional Council electors.

Postal voting statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Description	Number
Number of postal vote applications received	166
Number of postal votes issued	149
Number of postal vote applications rejected	17
Number of postal votes returned	116
Number of postal votes added to the count	66
Number of postal votes rejected	50

The reasons for rejecting postal vote applications were:

- multiple applications received from same the elector (14)
- postal address overseas (2)
- application received too late (1)

The reasons for rejecting returned postal votes were:

- vote received too late (24)
- ordinary vote issued (i.e. elector marked off as having voted in person) (10)
- postal vote not signed (9)
- return to sender (6)
- postal vote dated too late (1)

Declaration votes

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 Barkly Regional Council the table below shows the declaration votes admitted to the count and those rejected.

Declaration vote statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Accepted	Rejected	Total
79	5	84

The reason for rejecting the declaration votes was because 3 electors were enrolled for a different local government area to the one they completed the ballot paper for. 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. A further 2 declaration votes were not signed.

Election day voting centres

Election day was Saturday 28 August 2021. For the Barkly Regional Council area, there was one election day voting centre in Tennant Creek which was open from 8:00am to 6:00pm. This voting centre issued votes for all council areas.

Election day voting statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Election day voting centre	Location	Votes taken
Tennant Creek	Barkly Regional Council Chambers, Peko Rd	344*

*includes declaration votes issued

Participation

Turnout for the Barkly Regional Council election (based on mayoral ballot papers counted) was 41.3% with 1,680 electors voting out of a total enrolment figure of 4,072. The turnout rate was less than the previous elections in 2017 where the council had a turnout rate of 49.9% (2,128 electors out of 4,264 enrolled).

Turnout across the 3 wards that had elections was varied. Alyawarr Ward had a turnout rate of 25.0% (388 electors out of 1,555), Kuwarrangu Ward had 43.7% (196 electors out of 449) and Patta Ward had 54.2% (1,022 electors out of 1,887).

Comparatively, at the 2017 NT Council Elections, Kuwarrangu Ward had a turnout rate of 42.3% and Patta Ward was 60.8% (Alyawarr Ward did not go to election that year).

The following table details the total number of vote types for those votes admitted to the count.

Number of votes counted by voting centre type – Barkly Regional Council

Voting centre	Number of votes counted	% of total votes
Council delivery centres	459	27.3%
Remote and urban mobile voting	58	3.5%
Tennant Creek EVC	601	35.8%
Tennant Creek election day voting centre*	318	18.9%
Postal voting	66	3.9%
Declaration voting	79	4.7%
Absent voting	99	5.9%
Total	1,680	100%

*Staffed by and treated as a remote mobile team for NTEC purposes

Non-voters

There were 2,464 identified non-voters across the council area. The table below shows the age and gender demographics of these non-voters.

Non-voter statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Gender	18-29 years	30-49 years	50-69 years	70+ years	Total
Female	251	537	309	120	1,217
Male	247	585	310	103	1,245
Gender undisclosed	2				2
Total	500	1,122	619	223	2,464

Informality

Of the 1,680 ballot papers counted for mayor, 81 were considered informal and so not counted. This is an informality rate of 4.8%. For each of the wards, the informality rates for the councillor elections were:

- Alyawarr Ward – 5.7%
- Kuwarrangu Ward – 6.6%
- Patta Ward – 8.3%

Informal vote statistics – Barkly Regional Council

Location	Intentional	Unintentional	Total
Mayor	49	32	81
Alyawarr Ward	12	10	22
Kuwarrangu Ward	8	5	13
Patta Ward	61	24	85
Total	130	71	201

Voting system

The voting system for local government elections 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.

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 councillor was undertaken at the Tennant Creek election day voting centre. First preference votes cast at the Tennant Creek early voting centre were also counted on the night. Votes issued by council delivery centres and mobile teams were counted at the Alice Springs scrutiny centre.

Post-election night scrutinies

- A count of postal votes returned by election day were counted followed by a re-check of first preferences for the mayor vacancy was conducted during the week following election day. Counts of 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 Barkly 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 4 candidates for the mayor vacancy and 19 candidates contesting 12 councillor 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 4 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preference votes
Russell O'Donnell	310
Brian Coleman	123
Jeffrey McLaughlin	772
Hal Ruger	394
Total	1,599

The number of votes required to win as per the preferential voting system (more than half) was 800, which no candidate received.

Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (*Electoral*) Regulations, **Jeffrey McLaughlin** was duly elected as mayor.

Election of 1 councillor – Alpururulam Ward

At the close of nominations the number of candidates was not more than the number of vacancies and **Pam CORBETT** was duly declared elected.

Election of 4 councillors – Alyawarr 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 preference votes
Derek WALKER	97
Noel HAYES	84
Anita BAILEY	81
Jack CLUB	56
Lucy JACKSON	48
Total	366

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 74. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (*Electoral*) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Derek WALKER, Noel HAYES and Anita BAILEY** received the quota at count 1
- **Jack CLUB** received the quota at count 4

Derek WALKER, Noel HAYES, Anita BAILEY and Jack CLUB were duly elected.

Election of 2 councillors – Kuwarrangu Ward

At the close of nominations there were 4 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preference votes
Lennie BARTON	104
Kevin Raymond GASKIN	25
Sharon BILL	13
Heather WILSON	41
Total	183

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 62. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (*Electoral*) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Lennie BARTON** received the quota at count 1
- **Heather WILSON** received the quota at count 3

Lennie BARTON and Heather WILSON were duly elected.

Election of 5 councillors – Patta Ward

At the close of nominations there were 9 candidates. An election was duly held and the first preference votes were recorded as follows:

Candidate	First preferences
Ronald PLUMMER	169
Brian COLEMAN	43
Catherine GRIMLEY	9
Russell O'DONNELL	115
Karan HAYWARD	96
Kelly WHITE	16
Dianne Seri STOKES	199
Hal RUGER	165
Greg MARLOW	125
Total	937

The quota required under the proportional representation voting system was 157. Following the distribution of preferences, and in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (*Electoral*) Regulations, the results were as follows:

- **Dianne Seri STOKES, Ronald PLUMMER and Hal RUGER** received the quota at count 1
- **Russell O'DONNELL** received the quota at count 15
- **Greg MARLOW** received the quota at count 23

Dianne Seri STOKES, Ronal PLUMMER, Hal RUGER, Russell O'DONNELL and Greg MARLOW were duly elected.

Declaration of the election results

The declaration of election results took place at the Central Desert Regional Council on Bagot St, Alice Springs at 10:00am on Monday 13 September 2021.

Declared election results for Barkly Regional Council

Mayor	Jeffrey MCLAUGHLIN
Alpurrurulam Ward	Pam CORBETT
Alyawarr Ward	Derek WALKER Noel HAYES Anita BAILEY Jack CLUB
Kuwurrangu Ward	Lennie BARTON Heather WILSON
Patta Ward	Dianne Seri STOKES Ronald PLUMMER Hal RUGER Russell O'DONNELL Greg MARLOW

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 – Barkly Regional Council

Election area	Estimated cost
Public awareness	\$9,219
Staffing	\$44,647
Operational	\$38,368
Sub total	\$92,234
10% GST	\$9,223
Total estimated cost	\$101,457

Actual cost – Barkly Regional Council

Election area	Actual cost
Public awareness	\$5,855
Staffing	\$33,163
Operational	\$8,747
Sub total	\$47,765
10% GST	\$4,776
Total actual cost	\$52,542

POST ELECTION DE-BRIEF

- A de-brief session of the election activities and outcomes took place between Barkly Regional Council and NTEC on 30 September where the council noted it would be willing to provide similar assistance in future election events.
- The council also noted that it did not feel that they, nor NTEC, could do anything further to provide voting opportunities and increase participation. However, it was noted that remote stores and other well-attended facilities in communities might make more effective voting centre locations. Barkly Regional Council also noted it would like to see voting centres open at 10.00am and remain for one or 2 days in larger communities rather than the period offered during this election.
- The council did however want to see awareness and advertising (on the ground) in the lead up to elections. They also suggested that candidate specific awareness and/or training would be beneficial for the candidates and might have a positive impact on voter awareness and turnout. The council found that some candidates lacked an understanding of their responsibilities and some did not provide enough contact details (with their nomination) to be able to maintain effective communication or for voters to find out more about them.
- Barkly Regional Council also held an internal debriefing following the election and provided NTEC with a copy of the minutes where they noted the following:
 - The council delivery centre and shared resourcing model helped to reduce overall election costs for the council
 - Need to increase the awareness of voting times and locations communities, outstations and stations. There was an increase in voting once council staff used social media to help promote the voting times and locations.
 - Consider reducing voting timeframe from 4 days to one or 2 days, and hold a BBQ at the voting centres in community to promote voter turnout
 - Training for council delivery centre staff to be more practical and hands-on, where staff can use the systems and materials in scenario based contexts.
 - Consider training opportunities for candidates to include information about early voting, scrutineers and protocols for visiting communities.
 - Consider mobile voting location options in Queensland, as well as extending the public awareness campaign to cover certain areas. For example a rodeo in Mount Isa took many people away from their communities.
 - Consider adding Marlinja to the mobile voting schedule.

ISSUES OF NOTE

- Early voting was provided over a two week period in most urban local government locations throughout the Northern Territory. The Barkly Regional Council requested to deliver early voting services in Tennant Creek for a 5 day period from 23 August to 27 August 2021. A total of 601 votes were cast during this period as compared to a 1,251

voter turnout in the 2020 Territory Election 12 months earlier. With a low voter turnout in the Barkly Regional Council area, a longer early voting period may need to be considered in future electoral events.

- Connectivity issues were experienced in a number of voting locations, however systems can be used in an offline mode with data being uploaded when connectivity resumes. In one council delivery centre a discrepancy was found between the number of votes marked off compared to the number of ballot papers counted, with the amount issued being considerably lower than the number counted. After an investigation by NTEC, it was concluded that the ballot papers were likely to have been issued without the voter being marked-off due to connectivity issues. The ability to mark-off voters while in offline mode will need to be reinforced during future training for council delivery centres. Certified lists are also available should the system not be available, and these were used in Elliott.
- Feedback on the planning and delivery of remote mobile voting services provided by Department of Local Government and Regional Development staff suggested that the voting schedules attempted to visit too many communities within the day and not enough time was dedicated to each community.
- Complaints were received via the Department of Local Government and Regional Development staff from the public querying the advertised scheduling of community voting periods. It was unknown to the NTEC that some scheduling adjustments had occurred with changes to community voting days and times. Unfortunately this resulted in the NTEC website and social media advising of incorrect voting times.
- Identifying and obtaining suitable qualified casual staff to undertake electoral functions in early and election day voting centres in Tennant Creek was again a major issue for NTEC. Prior to the next election alternative recruitment strategies will need to be considered.
- The NTEC periodically placed a returning officer in Tennant Creek to facilitate various election milestones and provide remote mobile voting leadership and election day functions including election night count and scrutiny. This officer returned to Alice Springs post-election day to assist in post-election Barkly Regional Council scrutinies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Council to consider providing early voting services in Tennant Creek for a minimum of 2 weeks.
- NTEC to consider options for election resourcing in Tennant Creek including the feasibility of a returning officer being located in Tennant Creek for the election period.
- Voting schedule changes must be advised to the NTEC immediately for approval and to ensure changes are documented and communicated within the community. NTEC to ensure all councils continue to be aware of this requirement and establish clear procedures in instances where there are changes to voting schedules.