

EMC Submission No. 7
Received 22 October 2021

The Secretary
Electoral Matters Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

By email: emc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Secretary,

The Australian Labor Party – Victorian Branch welcomes the opportunity to provide our submission into the Inquiry into whether Victoria should participate in a national electoral roll platform. Turning to the three considerations in the Terms of Reference, Victorian Labor wishes to contribute specifically in relation to the possible implications, if any, of a national electoral roll platform on the independence of the Victorian Electoral Commission.

Victorian Labor believes that an independent Victorian electoral roll should be maintained to safeguard the ability of the Victorian Parliament to legislate to enhance the accuracy, security and ease of enrolment of the electoral roll, as the roll relates to state and local government elections. Victorian Labor does not suggest any legislative changes at this time that would require this level of independence and flexibility, merely that consideration be given to the additional administrative and compliance hurdles that would be created if Victoria were to move to a national electoral roll platform.

Victorian Labor notes that there are around 15,000 more enrolments on the Victorian electoral roll than on the Commonwealth electoral roll, which indicates the success of the VEC's programme of direct enrolment by information sharing with state government agencies which naturally have a greater interaction with Victorians on a daily basis than does the Australian Electoral Commission. In any discussion of participation in a national electoral roll platform, consideration must be given to whether the Australian Electoral Commission can source data for direct enrolment from state government agencies (particularly the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, VicRoads and Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria) and what would happen to ensure that this cohort of voters are not disenfranchised in the transition to a national roll platform.

Lastly, the Committee should investigate opportunities for greater information sharing between the VEC and the AEC to ensure that discrepancies between the State and Federal roll are kept to a minimum, particularly as these discrepancies relate to direct enrolment. We believe that, through information sharing relating to direct enrolment originating from the state agencies that Victorians interact with on a frequent basis, there is an opportunity for the VEC to improve the quality and accuracy of the Commonwealth electoral roll, without sacrificing the independence that comes from a separate state electoral roll.

We thank the Committee for your consideration of our submission.



Cameron Petrie
Assistant State Secretary
Australian Labor Party – Victorian Branch