

# **District of Victoria Park By-election**

**11 March 2006**



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN Electoral Commission

## **Election Report**



## REPORT ON THE VICTORIA PARK BY-ELECTION 11 MARCH 2006

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit to you, for presentation to Parliament, my report on the administration of the Victoria Park district by-election held on 11 March 2006 in addition to the statistical return previously provided to your office.

Warwick Gately AM  
**ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER**

October 2006



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## SUMMARY

The result of the Victoria Park by-election was declared by the Returning Officer, Mr Warren Southwell, on 17 March 2006. Mr Ben Wyatt (ALP), one of 11 candidates contesting the by-election was elected, gaining 49.37% of the first preference votes. The two-party preferred majority was 11.18%, reduced by 4.86% from the State general election in the previous year.

Early voting (in person) was available for electors at 36 locations throughout Western Australia, interstate and in London. In an evident trend, early voting (by post) increased by over 15% compared to the last State general election. On polling day, the same 13 polling places as used in the State general election were again provided in the district in order to remove potential confusion for electors.

It is quite usual following a State general election to test new initiatives, processes and systems at a following by-election. In this case paper electoral rolls were replaced in polling places with electronic copies held on laptop computers. Early advice has indicated that this change worked well in reducing queuing times and improving efficiency in checking enrolment details.

In an effort to maximise voter turnout on polling day, an information postcard was delivered to every household within the district. This carried key messages in line with the advertising campaign particularly reminding electors that voting was compulsory. Also, scooters towing billboards reminding electors to vote were used for the first time, particularly in busy shopping areas.

Despite these efforts voter turnout was lower than previous by-elections at 64%. In part, this may be due to electors considering the seat "safe" and therefore not inclined to vote. A survey of electors was undertaken to better understand the lack of motivation evident in meeting the requirement to vote and to allow plans to be developed for the future. It is also possible that the \$20.00 first offence fine for not voting is an insufficient deterrent.

The total cost of the by-election was \$187,793.61 excluding GST, and does not include Commission overheads including salaries.



## THE VICTORIA PARK DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

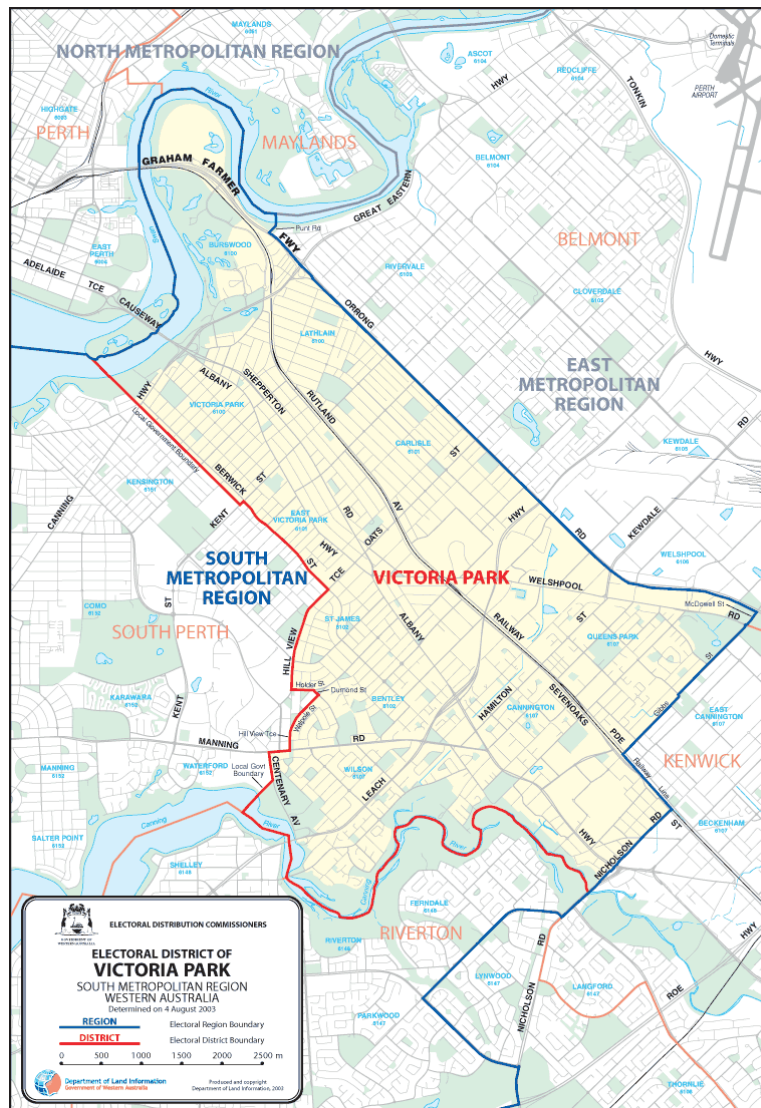
### The Victoria Park District

Area: 31 km<sup>2</sup>

Location: One of 10 districts in the South Metropolitan Region

Includes Suburbs/Towns: Bentley, Burswood, Cannington, Carlisle, East Cannington, East Victoria Park, Kensington, Lathlain, Queens Park, Rivervale, St James, Victoria Park, Welshpool, Wilson

### Map of the Victoria Park District





## Former Members

The district of Victoria Park was established in 1930. The seat was first held by Mr Howard Raphael from the Australian Labor Party. Since its inception as a district of Western Australia the seat has been held by the following parties, represented by the following members:

Period	Member	Party Affiliation
1930 – 1944	Howard Raphael	Australian Labor Party
	Member for Victoria Park	1930–1944
	Member of Metropolitan Council ALP	1923–1930
	State Executive	1928–1930
	Amalgamated Road Transport Workers Union Representative at ALP Triennial Congress	1935–1935
1945 – 1953	William Raymond Read	Independent
	Member for Victoria Park	1945–1953
1953 – 1961	Hugh David Andrew	Australian Labor Party
	Member for Victoria Park	1953–1961
1961 – 1986	Ronald Davies	Australian Labor Party
	Member for Victoria Park	1961–1986
	Secretary of State Parliamentary Labour Party	1962–1968
	Minister for Prices Control and Consumer Protection	1971–1974
	Minister for Health, Fisheries and Fauna, and Environmental Protection	1971–1972
	Minister for Town Planning	1972–1972
	Opposition Spokesman for Health and Community Welfare	1974–1978
	Opposition Leader	1978–1981
	Spokesman for Treasury, Immigration, Ethnic and Cultural Affairs	1978–1983
	Spokesman for Urban Development and Town Planning, and Cultural Affairs	1981– 1983
	Minister for the Environment, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs, and The Arts	1983–1986
	Minister for Forests	1984–1985
Minister for Conservation and Land Management	1985–1986	



1986 – 2006	<b>Geoffrey Ian Gallop</b>	<b>Australian Labor Party</b>
	Member for Victoria Park	1986–2006
	Deputy Chairman of Committees	1988–1990
	Minister for Education, Parliamentary and Electoral Reform, and Minister Assisting the Treasurer	1990–1991
	Minister for Fuel and Energy, Microeconomic Reform, Parliamentary and Electoral Reform, and Minister assisting the Treasurer	1991–1993
	Shadow Minister for Resources and Energy, and Parliamentary and Electoral Reform	1993–1994
	Shadow Minister for Health, Public Sector Management, and Accountability	1994–1994
	Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Health, Accountability, Federal Affairs, and Community Infrastructure	1994–1996
	Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Health, Accountability, Aboriginal Affairs, and Sport and Recreation	1996–1996
	Leader of the Opposition	1996–2001
	Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Treasurer and Shadow Minister for Federal Affairs, South West, and Sport and Recreation	1996–1997
	Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Treasurer and Shadow Minister for Federal Affairs and Finance	1997–1999
	Premier and Minister for Science, Citizenship and Multicultural Interests	2001–2005
	Premier and Minister for Public Sector Management and Federal Affairs	2001–2006
	Premier and Minister for Water Resources	2005–2006
2006 – 2006	<b>Benjamin Sana Wyatt</b>	<b>Australian Labor Party</b>
	Member for Victoria Park	2006–2006

## Previous By-elections

There has been one previous by-election conducted in the district of Victoria Park which was held on 7 June 1986. The seat was retained by the Australian Labor Party.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND KEY RESULTS

### 2006 By-election

The 11 March 2006 by-election was held due to the resignation of the Hon. Geoffrey (Geoff) Gallop on 25 January 2006.

Dr Gallop took office in the district of Victoria Park after a by-election held on 7 June 1986 and held the position as the member for Victoria Park for 19 years, 7 months and 14 days.

Dr Gallop became Premier of Western Australia on 16 February 2001 after the Australian Labor Party won a landslide victory over Richard Court's Liberal Party, in which the Liberals lost 13 seats to Labor.

Dr Gallop served as the State Premier for 4 years, 11 months and 9 days.

### Victoria Park By-election Timetable

Issue of the writ	Thursday 2 February 2006
Nomination for candidates opens	Friday 3 February 2006
Applications for Early Votes (by post) opens	Friday 3 February 2006
Electoral district roll close	6.00 pm Friday 10 February 2006
Close of nominations - political parties	Thursday 16 February 2006
Close of nominations & draw for ballot paper positions	6.00 pm Friday 17 February 2006
Early Votes (in person) opens	Tuesday 21 February 2006
Early Votes (by post) commences	Wednesday 22 February 2006
Mobile polling for special institutions and hospitals commences	Monday 27 February 2006
Close of written applications of Early Votes (by post)	6.00 pm Thursday 9 March 2006
Close of Early Votes (in person)	6.00 pm Friday 10 March 2006
Polling Day	8.00 am to 6.00 pm Saturday 11 March 2006
Close of receipt of Early Votes (by post)	9.00 am Tuesday 14 March 2006
Date for the return of the writ	Friday 5 May 2006

### 2006 By-election Results – District of Victoria Park

Enrolled electors	25,580	n/a
Total votes	16,381	64.04%
- Formal votes	15,769	96.26%
- Informal votes	612	3.74%
Non voters	9,199	35.96%

#### First Preference Results

Andrew Owens (Independent)	217	1.38%
John Tattersall	131	0.83%
Dee Margetts (Greens (WA))	1,328	8.42%
Teresa van Lieshout (Independent)	43	0.27%



Mike Ward (Independent)	83	0.53%
Sue Bateman (ONE NATION)	436	2.76%
James Dunn (Daylight Saving Party)	156	0.99%
Ben Wyatt (Australian Labor Party)	7,786	49.38%
Peter Greaves (FAMILY FIRST)	151	0.96%
Bill Heggors (Christian Democratic Party WA)	551	3.49%
Bruce Stevenson (Liberal)	4,887	30.99%

Two Candidate Preferred Result

Ben Wyatt (Australian Labor Party)	9,632	61.18%
Bruce Stevenson (Liberal)	6,111	38.82%

## Recent Results

### 2005 State General Election – District of Victoria Park

Enrolled electors	26,136	n/a
Total votes	22,911	87.66%
- Formal votes	21,692	94.68%
- Informal votes	1,219	5.32%
Non voters	3,225	12.34%

### First Preference Results

Sue Bateman (One Nation)	576	2.66%
Brett Crook (Christian Democratic Party WA)	785	3.62%
Dave Fort (Greens (WA))	1,880	8.67%
Neil Fearis (Liberal)	6,019	27.75%
Geoff Gallop (Australian Labor Party)	12,432	57.31%

### Two Candidate Preferred Result

Neil Fearis (Liberal)	7,362	33.96%
Geoff Gallop (Australian Labor Party)	14,314	66.04%

### 2001 State General Election – District of Victoria Park

Enrolled electors	24,800	n/a
Total votes	21,937	88.46%
- Formal votes	20,859	95.09%
- Informal votes	1,078	4.91%
Non voters	2,863	11.54%

### First Preference Results

Juanita Miller (Greens (WA))	1,685	8.08%
Sandra Brown (Liberal)	5,612	26.90%
Peter David (Pauline Hanson's One Nation)	1,417	6.79%
Collin Mullane (Democrats)	825	3.96%
Geoff Gallop (Australian Labor Party)	10,833	51.93%
Andrew Fox (Independent)	487	2.33%

### Two Candidate Preferred Result

Sandra Brown (Liberal)	7,503	36.18%
Geoff Gallop (Australian Labor Party)	13,236	63.82%

## SERVICES TO ELECTORS

### Issue of the Writ

The writ for the by-election in the Legislative Assembly electoral district of Victoria Park was issued by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to the Acting Western Australian Electoral Commissioner on Thursday 2 February 2006.

The writ laid out key dates necessary for the returning officer to arrange the poll to be conducted in the electoral district, these were:

Close of Roll:	Friday 10 February 2006
Close of Nominations:	Friday 17 February 2006
Polling Day:	Saturday 11 March 2006
Return of Writ	Thursday 23 March 2006



## Advertising

The Commission placed numerous advertisements in the only state-wide newspaper, *The West Australian*, and the two local newspapers in the district, namely the *Canning Times* and the *Southern Gazette*. The advertisements were designed to notify electors of important information leading up to polling day. The advertising undertaken represented that which is required to be provided as specified in the *Electoral Act 1907* and campaign advertising chosen to be undertaken at the discretion of the Commission.

Advertisements were placed in the newspapers listed below on the dates shown covering the following details:

Type of Advertisement	Newspaper	Date of Publication
Notice of issue of the writ and details	<i>Government Gazette</i>	3 February 2006
Notice of Election	<i>The West Australian</i>	4 February 2006
	<i>Canning Times</i>	7 February 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	7 February 2006
Enrolment	<i>Canning Times</i>	7 February 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	7 February 2006
Details of Returning Officer, place of declaration of nominations, polling places, declared special institutions, declaration of boundaries of a polling area, list of registered political parties	<i>Government Gazette</i>	10 February 2006
Compulsory Voting	<i>Canning Times</i>	21 & 28 February 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	21 & 28 February 2006
Details of Candidates	<i>The West Australian</i>	22 February 2006
Reminder to Vote	<i>Canning Times</i>	2 March 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	2 March 2006
Polling Place Locations	<i>Canning Times</i>	7 March 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	7 March 2006
How to Vote	<i>Canning Times</i>	7 March 2006
	<i>Southern Gazette</i>	7 March 2006
Vote Today	<i>The West Australian</i>	11 March 2006
By-election Results	<i>The West Australian</i>	18 March 2006

## Media Alerts

Six media alerts were sent to all Western Australian metropolitan media at various stages of the by-election period.

Subject	Date of Release
Enrol now	3 February 2006
Targeting young people	7 February 2006
Candidates	17 February 2006
Early voting	20 February 2006
Election night results	11 March 2006
Final results	17 March 2006

An interview with the Acting Electoral Commissioner, emphasising the importance of voting in a by-election, providing historical information on the electoral district of Victoria Park and outlining issues with the youth vote, was published by the *Canning Times* and *Southern Gazette* on 7 February 2006.

An additional media release on compulsory voting was also provided to the *Canning Times*, *Southern Gazette* and selected metropolitan media on 23 February 2006.



## Elector Postcard

In an effort to maximise elector turnout an information postcard was produced and distributed to every household within the district on the 28 February and 1 March 2006. The messages in the postcard reminded electors that voting was compulsory, gave the date and time of voting and provided an address list of all polling places within the district.



Victoria Park  
By-election  
Vote Saturday  
11 March 2006

It is compulsory for all  
eligible electors in the district  
to vote in this by-election.

It's best to be involved in the decision process.

VICTORIA PARK BY-ELECTION

**Don't forget, voting is compulsory.**

**On Polling Day**, you can vote at any of the locations listed:  
Bentley Community Centre, Nyamup Way, Bentley ☺  
Bentley Community Kindergarten, 6 John Street, Bentley  
East Victoria Park Primary School, Beatty Avenue, East Victoria Park  
Gibbs Street Primary School, 79–93 Gibbs Street, East Cannington  
Harold Hawthorn Centre, 2 Memorial Avenue, Carlisle  
Homestead Seniors Centre, 5 Mackie Street, Victoria Park ☺  
Lathlain Primary School, 120 Howick Street, Lathlain  
Leisure Life Centre, Cnr Kent & Gloucester Streets, East Victoria Park  
Millen Primary School, Playfield Street, East Victoria Park  
Queens Park Primary School, 202 Treasure Road, Queens Park  
Sevenoaks Senior College (Cannington SHS), 275 Sevenoaks Street, Cannington ☺  
South Bentley Community Care Centre, Hill View Place, Bentley ☺  
Wilson Community Hall, Braubrise Road, Wilson  
☺ Best wheelchair access and parking

**Before Polling Day**, if you expect to be unable to vote at one of the listed locations on Polling Day, you can make an application for an early vote in person at the following locations:  
AEC Division of Swan, Unit 2A, 1336-1340 Albany Highway, Cannington  
Western Australian Electoral Commission, Level 2, 111 St Georges Terrace, Perth  
Court houses throughout Western Australia  
Interstate electoral authorities and selected overseas locations

You can also obtain a postal vote application form from Post Offices in the district, the GPO in Perth or the Western Australian Electoral Commission.

Please visit [www.waec.wa.gov.au](http://www.waec.wa.gov.au) or call the Election Line on 13 63 06 for postal vote applications, early vote location details and updated information about the by-election.

**Warwick Gately AM**  
Acting Electoral Commissioner

Western Australian Electoral Commission, Level 2, 111 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000. [www.waec.wa.gov.au](http://www.waec.wa.gov.au)

It's best to be involved in the decision process. Vote Saturday 11 March 2006.

VICTORIA PARK BY-ELECTION



Feedback from electors suggests that the delivery mechanism for the postcard and the visual image depicted were not ideal. In some cases the postcard was nestled with other advertising material and was therefore not seen by householders who regularly discard this type of non-addressed material without review. Additionally, this method of delivery does not guarantee that every letter box within the district is visited by the casual staff charged with the task of distribution.

**Summary:** The concept and most content of the elector postcard is sound however the delivery mechanism and subsequent review by the elector could be improved by personally addressing the postcard to the elector and delivering it via Australia Post.



## Scooters Towing Billboards

On polling day and the Saturday prior to polling day two scooters towing billboards with posters reminding electors in the district to vote were driven around the district.



Feedback from the elector survey indicates that it was in fact of little benefit with a small number (1%) of survey respondents recalling sighting the scooters and only half of those who did recall it suggesting that it prompted them to vote.

**Summary:** Although it seemed an eye catching and visible trigger to remind electors to vote in the by-election the subsequent survey indicated that it was not effective at all and it is unlikely to be recommended to be used again in this context.

## Election Information Services – Election Line and Web Site





During the entire period of the by-election, the Western Australian Electoral Commission provided a telephone enquiry service to the general public through a 1300 number which had previously been established for elector enquiries. The Election Line was opened the day after the issue of the writ and was staffed from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm every weekday and throughout polling day.

A total of 1,219 calls were made to this service over the election period. The majority of enquiries were with regard to early voting, enrolment status, postal voting and voting locations.

The Commission web site also contained contact details of the returning officer, information regarding the timetable of the by-election, early voting (by post) application forms, details of early voting (in person) locations, polling places, a colour map of polling places within the district, district profile and at the conclusion of polling was continuously updated with polling results.

## **Electors with Disabilities**

All polling places and early voting (in person) issuing offices were equipped with magnifying sheets, large 2B pencils with a triangular grip and hearing impairment information desk cards.

On polling day, four of the 13 polling places were available with full wheelchair access. As well, polling place managers were trained and prepared to issue a vote to electors unable to come into a polling place.

## **Early Voting (by post)**

Early voting (by post) was available to electors who were unable to visit a polling place on polling day.

Application forms were available for download from the Commission web site, nine Australia Post offices in the district, one Australia Post office in the City of Perth and upon request from the election line staff.

Early voting (by post) commenced on Wednesday 22 February and closed at 9.00 am Tuesday 14 March 2006. Final postal votes received prior to 9.00 am on the Tuesday morning bearing a postmark prior to 6.00 pm on 11 March 2006 were accepted, in accordance with the Act.

Processing of all applications was performed centrally at Commission offices. Of the 1,494 postal votes issued, 1,259 were returned. Of those returned 1,053 were deemed to be valid votes.

## Early Voting (in person)

Early voting (in person) was available to Victoria Park electors from Tuesday 21 February at the following offices during normal business hours and concluded at 6.00 pm on Friday 10 March 2006.

### ARMADALE

Armadale Court House

### CANNINGTON

Australian Electoral Commission  
Division of Swan

### FREMANTLE

Fremantle Court House

### JOONDALUP

Joondalup Court House

### MANDURAH

Mandurah Court House

### MIDLAND

Midland Court House

### PERTH

Western Australian Electoral Commission

### ROCKINGHAM

Rockingham Court House

### ALBANY

Albany Court House

### BROOME

Broome Court House

### BUNBURY

Bunbury Court House

### BUSSELTON

Busselton Court House

### CARNARVON

Carnarvon Court House

### COLLIE

Collie Court House

### DERBY

Derby Court House

### ESPERANCE

Esperance Court House

### GERALDTON

Geraldton Court House

### KALGOORLIE

Kalgoorlie Court House

### KARRATHA

Karratha Court House

### KATANNING

Katanning Court House

### KUNUNURRA

Kununurra Court House

### MANJIMUP

Manjimup Court House

### MERREDIN

Merredin Court House

### MOORA

Moora Court House

### NARROGIN

Narrogin Court House

### NORTHAM

Northam Court House

### ROEBOURNE

Roebourne Court House

### SOUTH HEDLAND

South Hedland Court House

## Other Australian States and Territories

There were seven electoral offices in the other Australian States and Territories where Western Australian electors could cast an early vote (in person) before polling day.

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

ACT Electoral Commission

### VICTORIA

Victorian Electoral Commission

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

Northern Territory Electoral  
Commission

### QUEENSLAND

Electoral Commission Queensland

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

State Electoral Office South Australia

### TASMANIA

Tasmanian Electoral Office

### NEW SOUTH WALES

State Electoral Office

## Overseas

There was one office outside Australia where Victoria Park electors could cast an early vote (in person) before polling day.

### UNITED KINGDOM

Government of Western Australia  
European Office

A total of 589 early votes (in person) were made of which 14 were informal. This resulted in 575 formal votes being included in the count.

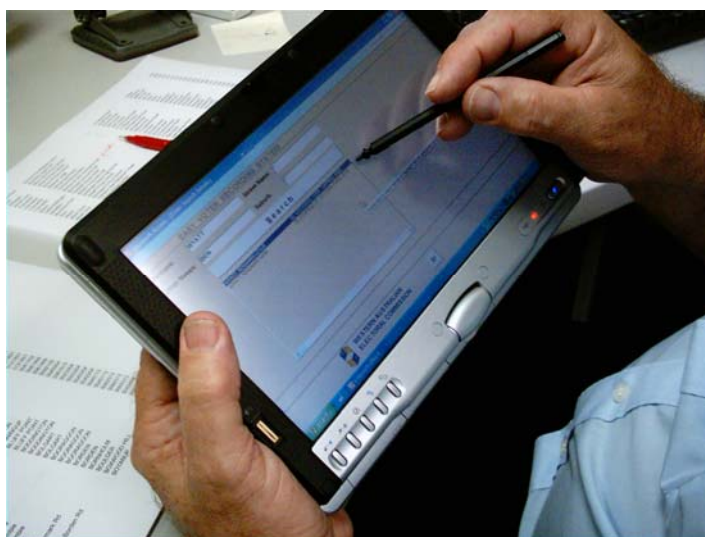
## Hospitals and Special Institutions

One mobile team was allocated to visit five special institutions and hospitals within the district before polling day. The team had the use of a new tablet PC which could be operated by pen or by keyboard.

The PC, a Fujitsu LifeBook P1510, weighed only one kilogram and could be used with either the keyboard or by rotating the screen, folding it over the keyboard and operating it via a stylus on the screen. The handwriting recognition software proved to be very user friendly and members of the mobile team gave the PC a very positive report.

The PC has a three hour battery life, was easy to operate in both standing (tablet usage) or sitting (keyboard) usage modes.

**Summary:** For portable use, the tablet PC is a significant improvement for polling staff who are required to be 'on the move'. It is recommended that the tablet PC be utilised for future by-election mobile polling teams and by the busier mobile polling teams (visiting large hospitals) at the next State general election.



The details of the special institutions and hospitals within the district were:

Name	Address
Agmaroy Nursing Home	115 Leach Highway , WILSON 6107
Bentley Hospital	Mills Street, BENTLEY 6102
Castledare Retirement Village	108 Fern Road, WILSON 6107
Lathlain Nursing Home	63-67 Archer Street, CARLISLE 6101
Windsor Park Aged Care	110 Star Street, CARLISLE 6101

A total of 84 votes were issued and collected from these locations of which three were informal. This resulted in 81 formal votes being included in the count.

## Polling Places

There were 13 polling places provided for electors on polling day. Three of these were just outside the district. These polling places were the same venues which were available to electors at the State general election in 2005.





All polling places were open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm on polling day. Polling places with the best wheelchair access and parking are indicated.

Polling Place Location	Address	
Bentley Community Centre	Nyamup Way, BENTLEY 6102	♿
Bentley Community Kindergarten	6 John Street, BENTLEY 6102	
East Victoria Park Primary School	Beatty Avenue, EAST VICTORIA PARK 6101	
Gibbs Street Primary School	Gibbs Street, EAST CANNINGTON 6107	
Harold Hawthorn Centre	2 Memorial Avenue, CARLISLE 6101	
Homestead Seniors Centre	5 Mackie Street, VICTORIA PARK 6100	♿
Lathlain Primary School	120 Howick Street, LATHLAIN 6100	
Leisure Life Centre	Cnr Kent St and Gloucester St, VICTORIA PARK 6101	
Millen Primary School	Playfield Street, EAST VICTORIA PARK 6101	
Queens Park Primary School	202 Treasure Road, QUEENS PARK 6107	
Sevenoaks Senior College	275 Sevenoaks Street, CANNINGTON 6107	♿
South Bentley Community Care Centre	Hillview Place, BENTLEY 6102	♿
Wilson Community Hall	Braibrise Road, WILSON 6107	

## Electronic Electoral Rolls

A decision was taken early in the planning for the by-election to replace paper electoral rolls in polling places with electronic copies held on laptop computers.

Fifty laptops were hired (including 10 spares), for a nine day period, and had the Early Vote Recording System (EVRS) and the full State electoral roll loaded onto them. Forty ordinary issuing officers and declaration issuing officers were brought into the Commission offices to attend a two hour training course. Each laptop had a security strap, to prevent theft, and a USB memory stick for backup purposes.



The software and database were configured so that any elector, who was found to be from outside the district, was highlighted in a bright red text box to clearly indicate that they were not entitled to a vote, but were on the State roll.

Although it was thought that using this system would be a very effective method of reducing the requirement of providing provisional votes, 129 were issued, of which 18 were valid. This was a marked increase on the previous State general election and previous by-elections.

A rudimentary paper copy of the district roll was provided to each polling place as a backup however operators used these extensively to check spelling of electors' names.

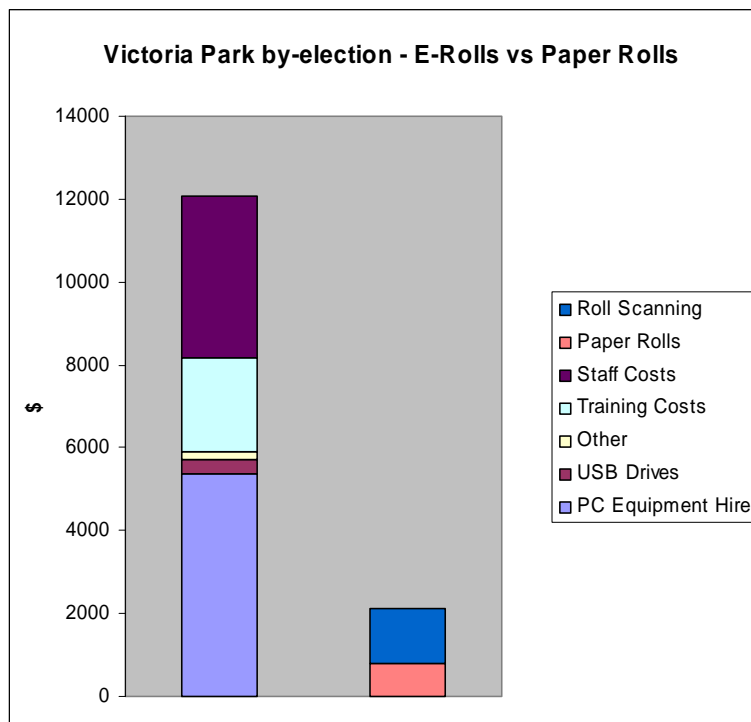
The EVRS software was not 'user friendly' when an elector's name was hyphenated, apostrophised or held an embedded space, such as:

AL VAREZ  
AL'VAREZ  
AL-VAREZ  
ALVAREZ

Operators found it easier to look an elector's name up on the paper copy of the roll and, after locating the name, typed in the spelling as shown on the paper copy of the roll.

Anecdotal evidence is that on the whole, faster throughput of electors was attained although this could be mitigated by that fact that only one ballot paper was provided and that there was a low voter turnout overall.

Costs for the initiative were high at around six times that of providing paper rolls.



Two laptops failed and were quickly replaced by IT staff members who were on hand for support on polling day.



## Training

Training of 40 ordinary issuing and declaration issuing officers was conducted by Commission staff in seven sessions in the week before the election. This was held at Commission offices and involved computer training using the Early Voter Recording System (EVRS).

The returning officer, Warren Southwell, conducted training for polling place managers, mobile polling place managers and assistant polling place managers on Sunday 5 March 2006 at the Homestead Seniors Centre from 1.00 pm.

*Summary:* Although the technological aspects were largely proven, it was considered that the marginal benefit gained in a by-election event were outweighed by the cost, the high number of provisional votes issued and the reliance on the backup paper roll to find electors.

This does not detract from the belief that the EVRS software on laptops would continue to be most useful in polling places expecting high absent voter attendance in State general elections.

## SERVICES TO REGISTERED POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

### The Returning Officer

Mr Warren Southwell was appointed returning officer for the Victoria Park by-election and worked from his home office in Darlington.

Under the direction of the Electoral Commissioner, a State returning officer performs specific duties and tasks, some of which are listed below.

#### General Administrative Duties and Tasks

- Provide ongoing security and safe-keeping for polling materials
- Maintain records (including correspondence, accounts and other relevant documents)
- Maintain staff payment records in accordance with requirements
- Respond to enquiries from candidates, potential candidates, public and polling site authorities

#### Prior to Issue of the Writ

- Become familiar with polling requirements and historical records for the district
- Prepare and dispatch provisional offers of appointment to polling staff (if applicable)
- Liaise with potential candidates regarding nomination procedures and their obligations

#### On Issue of the Writ

- Inspect polling places (including mobile polling sites)
- Complete and forward polling place profiles (form RO 8) for each polling place
- Attend training session
- Select and appoint staff
- Confirm polling place bookings



### Between Issue of the Writ and Nomination Day

- Receive local nominations
- Follow up outstanding hire of premises

### On Nomination Day

- Attend place for nomination between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm to receive nominations
- Conduct draw for positions on ballot paper
- Conduct candidate information sessions

### Between Close of Nominations and Polling Day

- Arrange premises and notify staff regarding face-to-face training sessions
- Conduct face-to-face training session for polling place managers and assistant polling place managers
- Conduct face-to-face training session for mobile polling teams
- Receive and check staff packs
- Dispatch polling official appointments, manuals and workbooks
- Receive and reconcile ballot papers received
- Receive and check other polling place materials
- Allocate materials to polling places
- Supply materials to polling place managers

### On Polling Day

- Visit polling places during polling hours
- Respond to candidate and public enquiries
- Receive and monitor the receipt of primary vote and notional count figure from polling places
- Transmit progressive polling place figures to the Commission
- Check in polling place materials returned by Polling Place Managers

### On the Sunday after Polling Day

- Reconcile polling place managers' returns
- Complete statistical returns
- Check and verify staffing records used for payment of polling officials
- Complete staff returns and assessments for polling place and casual staff
- Sort and package all used and unused materials for return to store
- Record number of unused ordinary ballot papers
- Sort and reconcile all provisional votes issued at polling places in district

### After Polling Weekend

- Conduct full distribution of preferences/two unexcluded candidate preference count
- Conduct informal vote survey
- Declare the poll



## Nominations and Ballot Paper Draw

The close of nominations and the draw for ballot paper positions was conducted at Commission offices at 111 St Georges Terrace, Perth by the returning officer.

The registered parties lodged the relevant nomination forms with the Electoral Commission centrally and Independent candidates lodged their forms with the returning officer prior to the close of nominations.

At the close of nominations at 6.00 pm on Friday 17 February 2006 eleven candidates had nominated to contest the election.

## List of Candidates (in ballot paper order and ballot paper name)

OWENS, Andrew	Independent
TATTERSALL, John	
MARGETTS, Dee	Greens (WA)
van LIESHOUT, Teresa	Independent
WARD, Mike	Independent
BATEMAN, Sue	ONE NATION
DUNN, James	Daylight Saving Party
WYATT, Ben	Australian Labor Party
GREAVES, Peter	FAMILY FIRST
HEGGERS, Bill	Christian Democratic Party WA
STEVENSON, Bruce	Liberal

## Party and Candidate Support and Training

An informational letter was sent to all political parties prior to the close of nominations.

All candidates, and prospective candidates, were provided with a pack which included a brochure titled Eligibility for Membership of State Parliament, a Candidates Guide Legislative Assembly, a Disclosure of Gifts, other income and electoral expenditure Guidelines, a nomination form and receipt, and various other forms nominating ballot paper particulars, appointment of an agent and scrutineer appointment forms. These items were also available for download from the Commission web site.

## Posters and Signage



There are certain requirements under section 191A and 192 of the Act which registered political parties and candidates are required to adhere to in regard to any advertisement, handbill or pamphlet which they produce. They must contain the name and address of the person authorising it, and the name and place of business of the printer.

Additionally, no electoral advertising is permitted within six metres from the entrance to a polling place on polling day. No polling place manager reported a breach of these requirements on polling day.

## Provision of Election Results

Election results were progressively available to electors, media and the general public via the Commission's web site at [www.waec.wa.gov.au](http://www.waec.wa.gov.au) and from [www.electionswa.com.au](http://www.electionswa.com.au). The Commission also provided a tally room in the area in order that results could be projected onto a large screen so that candidates and party workers would be able to avail themselves of the latest information at a central point close to polling places. It was also anticipated that the media would use the venue to gain up to date results information.

Although the venue was well set up physically, the computer communications relied upon a single land line which was shared by the facsimile, making a link to our central computer server over an ADSL link. At a critical time on election night the link failed and could not be brought back for some time. The workaround, using mobile communications, resulted in a significant delay in relaying results to the candidates, party workers and those gathered in the tally room.

Media had previously decided to focus their activities at the campaign office of the favoured candidate. Further, the informal communications from candidate scrutineers at polling places to candidate campaign offices provided quicker updates than the formal reporting process could deliver to Commission staff.

**Summary:** The cost benefit for a tally room in a by-election is not directly evident and it is recommended that future by-elections do not include a physical tally room. Results information can be made available via the Commission web site on a progressive basis throughout election night.

## COUNTING OF THE VOTES AND DECLARATION OF THE POLL

Counting of votes commenced at 6.00 pm on polling night with the results being received at the tally room, Gurney RSL and Community Centre, St James, periodically until approximately 8.45 pm when the final results for the night were received. The notional results were transmitted periodically from the tally room and relayed onto the Internet.

On Tuesday 14 March 2006 final postal votes and provisional votes were verified and counted.

On Thursday 16 March 2006 a full distribution of preferences was conducted at the Commission offices. This count expanded and refined the notional distribution of preferences conducted on election night, and resulted in a very similar outcome.

The Returning Officer formally declared the election on Thursday 16 March 2006 at the Commission offices. Mr Ben Wyatt, representing the Australian Labor Party, was declared elected as the new member for the Legislative Assembly district of Victoria Park, with a majority of 3,521 votes. Mr Wyatt was sworn into Parliament as the new member on Tuesday 28 March 2006.



Information relating to the by-election, which included the results on-line at polling place level, was included on the Commission's web site. Final results were updated on the Internet on 16 March 2006.

## Post By-election Survey

Patterson Market Research conducted an intercept and telephone survey during May 2006. A total of 1,083 people within the district were either interviewed over the telephone (697) or intercepted on the street (386).

Key learnings include:

- Approximately 13% of eligible adults within the district were not on the electoral roll.
- Younger voters are less inclined to vote – 48% of those aged 18–25 and 40% of those aged 26–39 did not vote. This compares with 30% for 40–60 year olds and 18% or those aged 61 or greater.
- The main reason provided by young people who did not vote was a lack of awareness of the by-election details. Demographically, for this particular district, these electors tend to move house more frequently and do not read newspapers on a regular basis if at all.
- Political party campaigning was effective at making electors aware of the by-election. Four fifths of electors indicated that they would prefer to be informed about the by-election by television advertisements.
- With regard to barriers to voting generally, younger voters tended to consider the process of voting at a polling place as inconvenient. Older voters were slightly more likely to express a lack of confidence in politicians or politics.
- While nine out of 10 electors knew that voting in Federal and State elections was compulsory, only seven out of 10 indicated that it was compulsory to vote in Federal or State by-elections.



- Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the Western Australian voting system. The remainder were generally younger people who would prefer a more convenient way to cast their vote.
- Current fines for non voting do not appear to have a material affect on voter turnout. Feedback provided indicates that they would have to be significantly higher to have a material difference.

## Non Voters

A total of 8,844 electors were identified as apparent non voters. At the time of writing this document, over 3,900 were excused for valid reasons. This included the elector being absent from the state, personal illness or having changed address.

Approximately 80% of payments of fines have been through Australia Post facilities.

Informal feedback from non voters reinforced the survey evidence of a lack of awareness of the by-election. Electors specifically requested that in future they are notified by personally addressed mail.

## Costs

The total cost of the by-election was \$187,793.61 excluding GST, and does not include WAEC overheads including salaries. This cost comprises of \$67,968.03 for remunerations, \$78,500.25 for advertising and communications, \$21,557.47 for services and contracts and \$19,767.86 for materials and administrative costs.

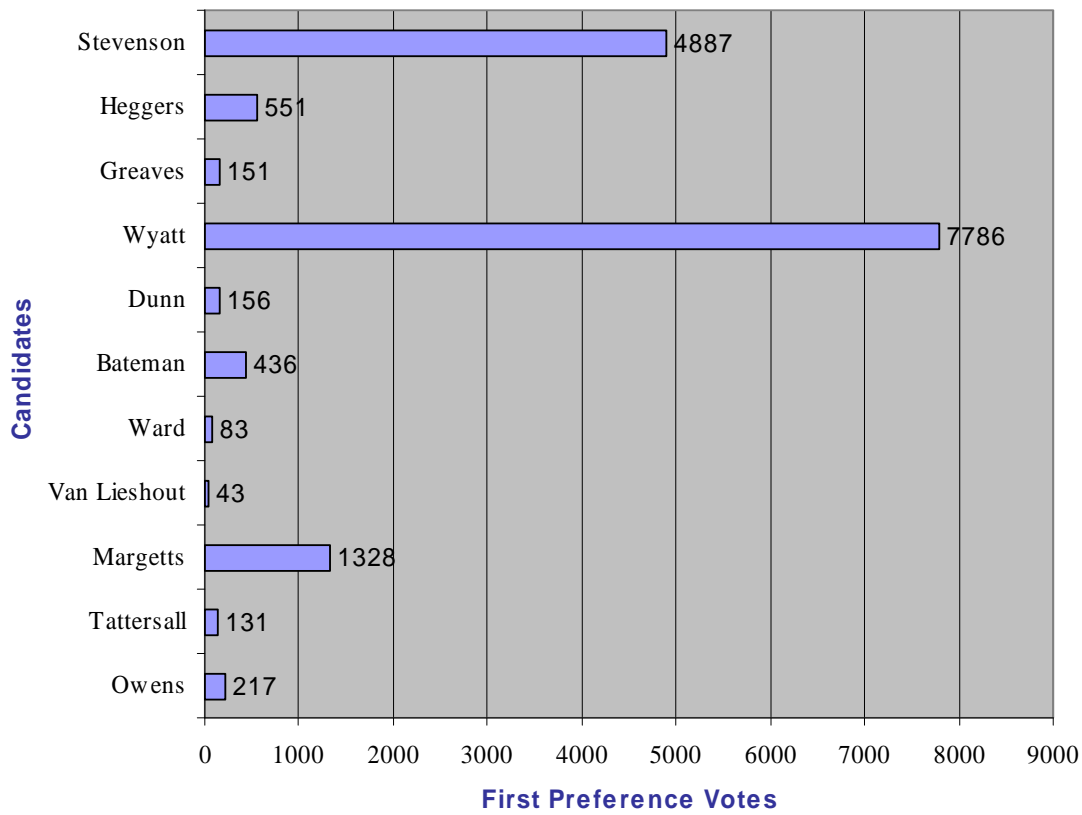


## RESULTS

Enrolment:	25,580	
Formal Votes:	15,769	
Informal Votes:	612	(3.74% of total votes)
Total Votes:	16,381	(64.04% of enrolled electors)



## First Preference Votes by Candidate



## First Preference Votes Polled for Each Candidate at Each Polling Place

PP No.	Polling Place	OWENS Andrew IND Votes	TATTERSALL John 0 Votes	MARGETTS Dee GRN Votes	van LIESHOUT Teresa IND Votes	WARD Mike IND Votes	BATEMAN Sue ONP Votes	DUNN James DSP Votes	WYATT Ben ALP Votes	GREAVES Peter FFP Votes	HEGGERS Bill CDP Votes	STEVENSON Bruce LIB Votes	Total Formal Votes	Informal Votes	Total Votes
1	Bentley Community Centre	6	0	29	2	7	5	1	285	3	21	95	454	17	471
2	Bentley Community Kindergarten	11	11	74	2	8	32	10	573	11	47	365	1144	67	1211
3	East Victoria Park Primary School	18	17	157	4	10	39	21	844	17	39	473	1639	65	1704
4	Gibbs Street Primary School	7	1	25	3	1	26	0	270	2	19	139	493	20	513
5	Harold Hawthorn Centre	17	10	88	3	9	47	7	615	5	32	316	1149	41	1190
6	Homestead Seniors Centre	16	11	134	3	6	37	15	712	11	31	519	1495	52	1547
7	Lathlain Primary School	21	9	145	7	9	49	18	764	16	48	549	1635	48	1683
8	Leisure Life Centre	21	12	237	4	7	35	17	818	20	34	478	1683	60	1743
9	Millen Primary School	4	5	57	2	1	14	8	225	4	14	110	444	14	458
10	Queens Park Primary School	9	12	39	0	4	33	2	351	8	27	179	664	41	705
11	Sevensoaks Senior College	20	13	81	0	3	25	11	534	12	45	342	1086	72	1158
12	South Bentley Community Care	10	5	26	2	0	12	1	273	3	22	132	486	27	513
13	Wilson Community Hall	30	17	113	2	3	49	18	747	19	132	542	1672	60	1732
<b>Polling Place Totals</b>		<b>190</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>1205</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>7011</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>4239</b>	<b>14044</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>14628</b>
Early Votes (by post)		21	3	72	7	12	20	21	451	12	17	417	1053	9	1062
Early Votes (in person)		5	5	48	2	3	10	5	291	7	21	178	575	14	589
Provisional Votes		0	0	3	0	0	1	0	9	0	0	3	16	2	18
Special Institutions & Remote		1	0	0	0	0	2	1	24	1	2	50	81	3	84
<b>Declaration and Mobile Votes Total</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>1725</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1753</b>
<b>Total First Preferences Votes</b>		<b>217</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>1328</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>7786</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>4887</b>	<b>15769</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>16381</b>
<b>% Total Valid Votes</b>		<b>1.38%</b>	<b>0.83%</b>	<b>8.42%</b>	<b>0.27%</b>	<b>0.53%</b>	<b>2.76%</b>	<b>0.99%</b>	<b>49.38%</b>	<b>0.96%</b>	<b>3.49%</b>	<b>30.99%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>		



## Distribution of Preferences

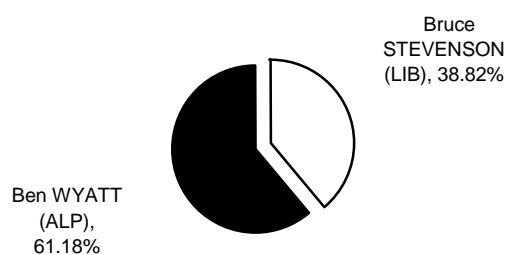
Preference Distribution	OWENS Andrew Votes	TATTERSALL John Votes	MARGETTS Dee Votes	van LIESHOUT Teresa Votes	WARD Mike Votes	BATEMAN Sue Votes	DUNN James Votes	WYATT Ben Votes	GREAVES Peter Votes	HEGGERS Bill Votes	STEVENSON Bruce Votes	Votes remaining in count	Exhausted Votes	Total Formal Votes
First Preference Votes	217	131	1,328	43	83	436	156	7,786	151	551	4,887	15,769		15,769
van LIESHOUT Excluded	7	4	4		7	3	3	5	3	4	3	43		43
Total	224	135	1,332	90	90	439	159	7,791	154	555	4,890	15,769		15,769
WARD Excluded	25	9	9			10	2	11	4	5	14	89	1	90
Total	249	144	1,341	449	449	449	161	7,802	158	560	4,904	15,768	1	15,769
TATTERSALL Excluded	21	4	76		4	4	6	23	3	2	8	143	1	144
Total	270	147	1,417	453	453	453	167	7,825	161	562	4,912	15,767	2	15,769
GREAVES Excluded	9	13	13			3	9	26	71	28	28	159	2	161
Total	279	149	1,430	456	456	456	176	7,851	633	4,940	4,940	15,765	4	15,769
DUNN Excluded	29	36	36			17		57	8	8	28	175	1	176
Total	308	162	1,466	473	473	473		7,908	641	4,968	4,968	15,764	5	15,769
OWENS Excluded			163			30		45	23	23	43	304	4	308
Total			1,629	503	503	503		7,953	664	5,011	5,011	15,760	9	15,769
BATEMAN Excluded			125					91	201	81	81	498	5	503
Total			1,754					8,044	865	5,092	5,092	15,755	14	15,769
HEGGERS Excluded			91					121		652	652	864	1	865
Total			1,845					8,165	5,744	5,744	5,744	15,754	15	15,769
MARGETTS Excluded								1,467		367	367	1,834	11	1,845
District Total								9,632	6,111	15,743	15,743	26	26	15,769
								61.18%		38.82%				Absolute Majority = 7872



## Two Candidate Preferred Results

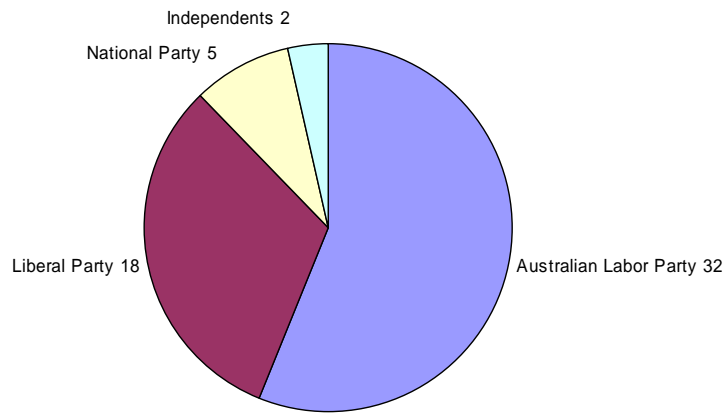
**Benjamin Sana WYATT**  
**Australian Labor Party**  
elected as the member for  
**VICTORIA PARK**  
with a majority of  
**3521 votes**

### 2 Candidate Preferred

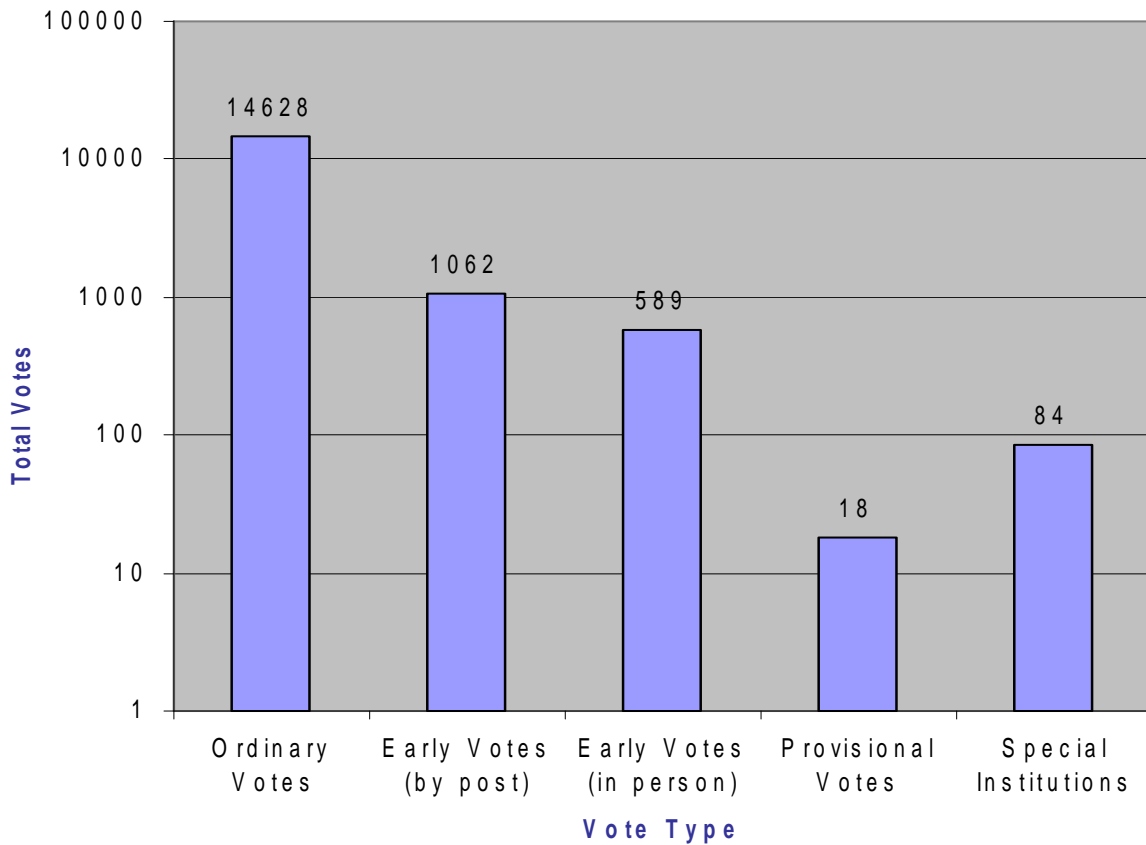




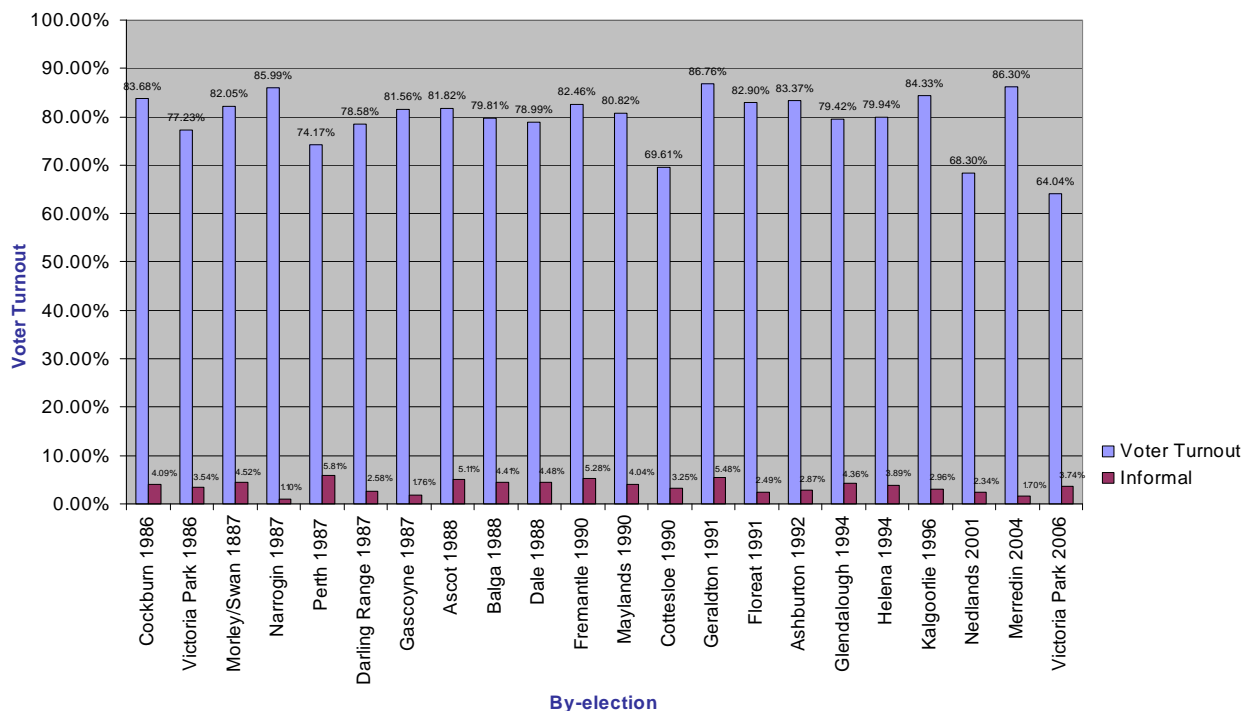
## Composition of the Legislative Assembly following the By-election



## First Preference Results by Type of Vote



## Voter Turnout and Informal Votes at Western Australian By-elections 1986–2006





## APPENDIX FOR INTERNAL REFERENCE ONLY

Individual Post Election Reports are available in iManage as follows:

Post Election Report Title	Author	iManage Document Number
Victoria Park By-election Costs	David Payne	89806_1
Summary letter to the Minister	David Payne	89099_1
Tally Room Report	Hervé Felix	89003_1
Results and Statistics	Susan Armstrong	89041_1
Early Voting – by Post	Jasmine Martini	89030_1
Early Voting – in Person	Jayne Warren	88926_1
Ballot Paper Printing	Cathy King	89278_1
Declaration Processing	Katrina Collins	89270_1
Declaration Vote Count	Katrina Collins	89281_1
Centralised Nominations	Vanessa Beckingham	89402_1
Web Page Creation & Maintenance	Natalie Stillitano	89269_1
Issuing Officer Training	Katrina Collins	89311_1
Forms Preparation	Katrina Collins	89327_1
Advertising, Gazetting, Media & Elector Postcard	Michelle Conaboy	89382_1
Complaints Handling	Brian Gordon	89305_1
Political Part Liaison	Vanessa Beckingham	89404_1
Multiple Voters	Jasmine Martini	89640_1
Survey Report	Patterson Market Research	90477_1
Survey Report - Questionnaire	Patterson Market Research	89798_2