NSW
Electoral
Commission

Electoral Act 2017

STATE BY-ELECTIONS

APPROVAL OF THE MANNER TO PACKAGE AND SECURE BALLOT PAPERS AND OTHER MATERIALS USED AND PROVIDED FOR USE AT VOTING CENTRES

1. This instrument is made in respect of any state by-election held between the date of this instrument and the 2027 general election.

2. Pursuant to section 169(1) of the *Electoral Act 2017*, the Electoral Commissioner is to approve the manner for each voting centre manager to package and secure all the ballot papers and other materials used and provided for use at a voting centre.

3. I approve the manner set out in the Annexure hereto as the manner for each voting centre manager at the by-election to package and secure all the ballot papers and other materials used and provided for use at the voting centre.

Matthew Phillips
Acting Electoral Commissioner

4 June 2024

Annexure

Extract from "SEBY.400 Voting centre manager manual", as at 21/08/2023

5.4.4. Separate vote types

Declaration vote envelopes are sorted into the following separate vote types for both own district and other districts:

- **Absent elector's declaration SE.415** (other districts only – if applicable)
- **Elector's declaration – Enrolment/Name not on roll SE.428** (own and other districts)
- **Name already marked as voted elector's declaration SE.431** (own district only)
- Postal votes handed in at the voting centre (all districts in one pile)

Note: You may not have envelopes for all vote types in your voting centre.

5.4.5. Sort envelopes

Procedure

Follow these steps to sort and count the declaration vote envelopes:

1. Before opening the declaration vote ballot box(es) at 6pm check the security seal number on the boxes against those recorded in the **Record of seals on ballot boxes** in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405**.

2. Open the declaration vote ballot box (es) and sort envelopes into their separate vote types and into own and other districts, using the **Declaration envelope sorting cards SE.448** and write the number of envelopes on the sorting card.

   Bundle with sorting card and rubber band each 'own' and 'other district' bundles in 20s with any odd number placed on top with sorting card.

   Within each of the 'other district' vote types, sort to the elector's district alphabetically (there is no need to fine sort by elector surname within each district).

Take note
Postal Vote certificate SEBY.301 envelope handed in at the voting centre will not have a sorting card place.

3. You **must** record the number of declaration vote envelopes for each vote type in Section 3 of **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** by transferring the numbers from the sorting cards. Note: Please disregard the sections that refer to the Legislative Council.

4. For Legislative Assembly **Own** District pads, complete Section 1 of the **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418.**

Section 1 – Legislative Assembly ballot papers allocation in own district							
COMPLETE THIS SECTION THROUGHOUT THE DAY Record ballot papers received from the voting centre manager for all declaration vote issuing table(s) for **own** district in section 1.							
Name of OWN District	First ballot papers received	Second ballot papers received	Third ballot papers received	Total ballot papers received	Spoilt ballot papers	Unused ballot papers	Total ballot papers issued
					-	-	=*

Note: the figures from Section 1 are transferred to the **Account of ballot papers - Legislative Assembly** in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405.**

5. **Nil returns:** In some smaller voting centres no declaration votes may be issued. If no declaration vote envelopes were issued the **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** must still be completed.

6. Take all unused Legislative Assembly ballot papers from the declaration vote tables to the return of materials table and place them in the Legislative Assembly unused ballot papers section of the table.

7. Place all **Voting centre Legislative Assembly spoilt ballot paper envelopes SE.435A** on the return of materials table.

8. Return the completed **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** to the Voting Centre Manager.

9. The Voting Centre Manager must:

Transfer figures from →	Transfer figures to
Section 1 of the **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418**	**Part 2** of the **Account of ballot papers – Legislative Assembly in the Voting centre manager register SE.405**
Section 3 of the **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** H (SE.500), I, M and N	**Part 3** and **Part 4** of the **Account of ballot papers – Legislative Assembly in the Voting centre manager register SE.405**

10. The Voting Centre Manager must hand the **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** form back to the nominated Declaration Vote Issuing Officer to pack with the declaration vote envelopes.

5.4.6. Materials required

Materials required to pack declaration vote envelopes into NSWEC secure bags at the voting centre:

- One or more labels – **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427**
- One or more NSWEC secure bags
- **Declaration envelope sorting cards SE.448**
- Rubber bands
- Completed **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418**

5.4.7. Contents of the declaration vote NSWEC secure bag

The declaration vote NSWEC secure bag should contain the following:

Label number and name	Contents of declaration vote secure bag
Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427	All declaration vote envelopes from all declaration vote tables including completed: • **Absent elector's declaration SE.415** • **Elector's declaration – Enrolment/Name not on roll SE.428** • **Name already marked as voted elector's declaration SE.431** • **Postal Vote certificate SEBY.301** envelope handed in at the voting centre (if any); and • Completed **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418**

5.4.8. Pack the declaration vote NSWEC secure bag

Procedure

Follow these steps to pack declaration vote envelopes into the NSWEC secure bag for return to the Election Manager's office:

1. Complete the details on the **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label with the electoral district name, voting centre name, the security bag seal number, the number of bags and the quantity of each type of declaration vote envelope. Place the label on the clear NSWEC secure bag carrying declaration vote envelopes.

2. Place all declaration envelopes, rubber banded in bundles of 20, secure with rubber band and with their respective **Declaration envelope sorting cards SE.448** and the completed **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** inside the NSWEC secure bag.

3. Seal the NSWEC secure bag by peeling off the 'peel here' paper strip.

    Note: Do not remove the blue adhesive strip otherwise the bag will not seal.

4. Record the NSWEC secure bag seal number on the **Record of seals on ballot paper cartons/bags** in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405**.

5. Place the **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** bag(s) on the return of materials table.

5.4.9. Nil returns

You must complete a nil return if your voting centre did not issue any declaration vote envelopes. The Election Manager will expect a **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label secure bag either containing declaration vote envelopes, or a nil return, from every voting centre.

Procedure

Follow these steps to pack a nil return:

1. Complete the details on the **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label with the District name, voting centre name, the NSWEC secure bag seal number, the number of **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label bags ie 1, and zero quantity of each type of declaration vote envelope.

2. Place the completed **Account of declaration vote envelopes SE.418** form, showing a nil return with zero quantities in Section 3, inside the secure bag.

3. Seal the NSWEC secure bag by peeling off the 'peel here' paper strip.

   Note: Do not remove the blue adhesive strip otherwise the bag will not seal.

4. Record the security seal number on the **Record of seals on ballot paper cartons/bags** in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405**.

5. Place the **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label bag on the return of materials table.

5.9. Pack Legislative Assembly ballot papers

5.9.1. Training video

A training video explaining how to pack the Legislative Assembly ballot papers following the Two Candidates Preferred count is available on the roll tablet.

The Voting Centre Manager must ensure the nominated election official has watched and understood this video prior to commencing the packing of the Legislative Assembly ballot papers.

5.9.2. Materials required

The Legislative Assembly ballot papers are packaged at the Voting Centre into the original cartons they were received in. The following materials required to complete the pack are:

- Original ballot paper carton(s) identified by the **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A**.

- Original paper carton(s) identified by the **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B** (if applicable).

- Original ballot paper carton(s) identified by the **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D** (if applicable). .

- Packing tape.

- A **Green tamper evident seal EL.486** for each carton.

- Record of seals on ballot paper cartons/bags in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405**.

The contents of each Legislative Assembly ballot paper carton is illustrated in the table below.

Carton with label name and number	Contents of Legislative Assembly ballot paper carton(s)
Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A This label is already applied by the printers to every carton containing own district Legislative Assembly ballot papers.	All own district Legislative Assembly ballot papers in first preference order for each candidate and informal ballot papers (counted & bundled) with a **Legislative Assembly Result Slip – Ordinary ballot papers SE.412** completed for each candidate and informals. All unused own district ballot papers from each ordinary vote table. All unused own district ballot papers from each declaration vote table. All unused own district ballot papers from the Voting Centre Manager reserve stock. All **Voting centre Legislative Assembly spoilt ballot paper envelope SE.435A** from ordinary and declaration vote table(s). The **Voting centre Legislative Assembly discarded ballot paper envelope SE.436A** from the Voting Centre Manager table.

Carton with label name and number	Contents of Legislative Assembly ballot paper carton(s)
Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B (if applicable). This label is already applied by the printers to every carton containing other districts pads of Legislative Assembly ballot papers.	Unused other districts Legislative Assembly ballot paper pads from each declaration vote table.
Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D (if applicable). This label is already applied by the printers to every carton containing other districts book sets of Legislative Assembly ballot papers.	Other districts book sets of Legislative Assembly ballot papers.

5.10. Legislative Assembly ballot paper packaging

Procedure

Follow these steps to package Legislative Assembly ballot papers for return to the Election Manager's office.

Take note

The **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A**, **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B** and **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D**, applied to each carton by the printer, has been pre-populated with the District name, Voting Centre name, the quantity of ballot papers allocated to the Voting Centre and total number of cartons for each type allocated to the Voting Centre.

1. Place all items as listed above in the 'Contents of Legislative Assembly ballot paper cartons' table in the cartons provided as applicable.

   All Legislative Assembly ballot paper cartons originally supplied to the voting centre, pre-labelled with **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A**, **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B** (if applicable) and **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D** label <u>MUST</u> be returned to the Election Manager's office.

   Empty Legislative Assembly ballot paper cartons **<u>MUST</u>** also be returned to the Election Manager's office.

2. Close and seal the cartons using the packaging tape provided. Secure the carton(s) by applying the **Green tamper evident seal EL.486** over the lip on the long edge of each carton.

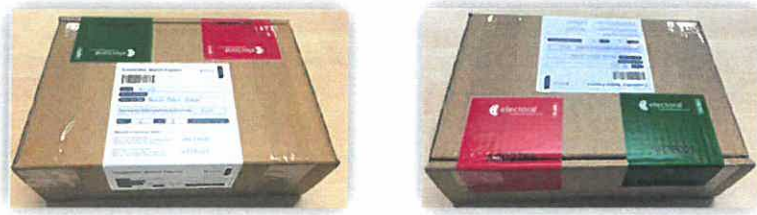3. Record the unique **Green tamper evident seal EL.486** number on the **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A**, **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B** (if applicable) and **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D** on each carton and complete the Record of seals on ballot paper cartons/bags in the **Voting centre manager register SE.405**.

4. Sign the ballot paper carton labels **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton label SE.422A**, **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton label SE.422B** (if applicable) and **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets carton label SE.422D**.

   Note: If there is a scrutineer present, ask them to also sign each label. If no scrutineer is present, an election official should sign as a witness.

5. Place all Legislative Assembly ballot paper cartons including any empty ballot paper cartons, on the return of materials table.

5.11. Pack other materials

5.11.1. Packing secure items

The following items need to be packed in the boxes they came in and secured with white plastic seal:

- Authorised rolls
- Roll tablet with charger (pack carefully as fragile).

Pack the **Voting centre manager forms and records envelope SE.420.**

It must include:

Form
Voting centre manager register SE.405
Legislative Assembly first preference votes – voting centre result sheet SE.500
Legislative Assembly Two Candidates Preferred (TCP) – voting centre result sheet SE.501
Completed **Eligible electors- failure to vote – reason SE.111**

Form
Workplace health and safety checklist EL.175 (in the register)
Completed **Appointment of scrutineer SE.213**
Completed **Code of conduct and employment conditions acknowledgment SE.136**
Voting centre attendance list SE.404
Voting centre attendance list (blank manual version) SE.404A (if used)
Completed **Postal ballot papers lost/not received elector's declaration SE.429**
Completed AEC enrolment forms

5.11.2. Pack stationery

All left over stationery should be placed in a box and secured with tape. The box is likely to include:

- pens, rubber bands etc.
- vests and ID lanyards
- unused envelopes
- unused forms
- electoral district map
- **Vote here EL.458** sign
- **Accessible parking available EL.462** sign

5.11.3. Summary of items to be returned to the Election Manager's office

The following items should be on the return of materials table, packed and labelled for return to the Election Manager's office:

- **Legislative Assembly ballot paper own district pads carton labelled with SE.422A**
- **Legislative Assembly ballot paper other districts pads carton labelled with SE.422B** (if supplied)
- **Legislative Assembly ballot paper book sets** labelled with **SE.422D**
- Any empty Legislative Assembly ballot paper carton(s)
- **Return of declaration vote envelopes SE.427** label bag(s)
- **Voting centre manager forms and records envelope SE.420**
- Authorised rolls, roll tablets
- stationery

The **Voting centre manager register SE.405** must be completed prior to the Voting Centre Manager returning all items to the Election Manager's office on election night. This will be placed in the **Voting centre manager forms and records envelope SE.420** and handed directly to the office assistant in the Election Manager's office checking all returns.

5.11.4. Returning all items to the Election Manager's office

The **Packing materials in a voting centre SE.102G** should be used to ensure all items are accounted for and packed correctly.

Pack all materials in the Voting Centre Manager's car and return directly to the Election Manager's office. Ballot papers and other secure items must be stored securely during the transport of items from the voting centre to the Election Manager's office. Voting Centre Managers should not leave ballot papers unattended at any time during transit.

On arrival at the Election Manager's office, all voting centre material will be checked by Election Manager staff in the presence of the Voting Centre Manager. Once all the checks are completed, the Voting Centre Manager can leave.

Postal ballot papers found in a ballot box with ordinary ballot papers

Postal ballot papers should be easily detected amongst the ordinary ballot papers as they are marked with a red line along the bottom of the ballot paper, and the initials circle in the top right corner is surrounded by a red background.

Note: The process regarding postal declaration vote envelopes handed in at the voting centre, and postal ballot papers handed in by the elector and requesting an ordinary ballot paper, remain as described in the voting centre manager and early voting centre manager manuals.

Procedure for voting centres

If a postal ballot paper is found in the ballot box for ordinary ballot papers, it must not be included in the count, nor accounted for with the ordinary ballot papers. Follow the process below:

- isolate any postal ballot papers found in the ballot boxes;
- once all ballot boxes have been opened and sorted, count all postal ballot papers found in the ballot boxes and record the total on a post-it-note placed on top of the ballot papers – secure all with a rubber band;
- record the total on the **SE.418 Account of declaration vote envelopes** by handwriting the text "Postal BPs Found In Ballot Box" and the total to the right of the "Postal declaration envelopes handed in at voting centre" field

Postal declaration envelopes handed in at polling place	*0*	*Postal BPs Found In Ballot Box: 2*

- pack the ballot papers in the secure bag labelled **SE.427 Return of declaration vote envelopes**.

Procedure for early voting

If a postal ballot paper is found in the ballot box for ordinary ballot papers, it must not be included in the count, nor accounted for with the ordinary ballot papers. Follow the process below:

- isolate any postal ballot papers found in the ballot boxes;
- once all ballot boxes have been opened and sorted, count all postal ballot papers found in the ballot boxes, and record the pre-poll venue and the total on a post-it-note placed on top of the ballot papers – secure all with a rubber band;
- record the total on the **SE.321 Early voting centre register / Daily account of early voting ballot papers** page, handwriting the text "Postal BPs Found In Ballot Box" and the total in the top right corner of the page;
- give the postal ballot papers and the **SE.321 Early voting centre register** to the Returning Officer.

Procedure for Election Manager

- retrieve and count any postal ballot papers returned from a voting centre (from the **SE.427 Return of declaration vote envelopes** bag) or from an early voting centre count;
- In the 'Postal Ballot Papers Found In Ordinary Ballot Boxes' spreadsheet in the Counting and Results folder on the F: drive,
  - for each venue, record the number of postal ballot papers found,
  - ensure the total matches the number recorded on the **SE.418 Account of ballot papers for all declaration vote issuing table(s) / SE.321 Early voting centre register / Daily account of declaration vote envelopes** page (as appropriate) - if there is a discrepancy, please provide an explanation in the Comments field.
- pack the postal ballot papers with the Rejected declaration envelopes.

Note: If postal ballot papers belonging to a local government election are found, they must not be included in the count, nor accounted for with the ordinary ballot papers. Contact your Election Manager Support Officer for instructions.