

Parliament of NSW
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Mr Neville Newell
Member for Tweed
Shop 2, Tweed City Shopping Centre
Tweed Heads South 2486

Submission from the Byron Bay Branch ALP

The Byron Bay branch submission concerns para 1 (b) in respect of the 22 March 2003 NSW election.

When the list of declared institutions were received by the ALP, Feros Village Byron Bay was not included on the list.

Upon enquiry to the District Returning Officer, we were advised that Feros Village did not meet the the criteria under the NSW Electoral Act to be a declared institution. The reason given was that it was less than the required distance to the nearest polling booth. This ruling was queried as Australian Orthodox Home in Byron Bay is possibly closer to the nearest polling booth, Byron Bay Public school.

The administration staff contacted the DRO and were advised the decision stood. Consequently Feros Village residents were transported to the Byron Bay Community Centre, the local pre-polling centre, to cast their votes.

Feros Village is a declared institution under the Federal Electoral Act and it appears strange it does not meet the criteria under the NSW Electoral Act. Our concern is whether temporary DROs are either inexperienced or are prone to misinterpret the relevant legislation, in this case the NSW Electoral Act.



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