

**Submission  
No 46**

## **INQUIRY INTO 2008 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**

**Organisation:** Wellington Council  
**Name:** Mr Allan Dive  
**Position:** General Manager  
**Date Received:** 15/05/2009

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Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Submission to the Inquiry into 2008 Local Government Elections

Wellington Council wishes to make a submission to the Inquiry into 2008 Local Government Elections and, in particular, wishes to comment on Clause 2 (b) of the Terms of Reference for the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters relating to the administration of, and practices associated with, the electoral laws in the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912.

Council wishes to raise the following matters.

1. An amendment to allow for an extension of the period of nomination.

Wellington Council has nine Councillors. At the close of nominations for the September 2008 Election, only seven nominations had been received by the Returning Officer. All seven nominees were elected and it was necessary to conduct a by-election in November 2008 to fill the remaining two vacancies.

Council respectfully suggests that, under those circumstances, the legislation provide that, should insufficient nominations be received by nomination day, the Electoral Commission has the delegation to extend the period by, say seven days, to enable further nominations to be lodged. This could alleviate the holding of a by-election and burden Council with additional election expenses.

2. An amendment to allow for the count to be continued to decide additional councillors.

Wellington Council, apart from the need to hold a by-election to fill two vacant positions on Council, also had a vacancy in December 2008 from the death of a councillor declared elected at the September 2008 Ordinary Election.

Council wishes to submit for discussion, the proposal that the count at an ordinary election be continued to decide further positions on Council in the event that a councillor dies or resigns from Council within a period of say, six months from the declaration of the poll. Such a provision would enable the Electoral Commission to approach the next unsuccessful candidate in turn who would be "next in line" and enquire whether he/she was interested in filling the position on Council and be declared elected, therefore alleviating the need of holding a by-election and involving Council in further election costs.

Council believes that these suggestions warrant discussion in the interests of good governance and minimising the cost to Local Government at elections and by-elections and improving the electoral system.

Myself or the Mayor of Wellington, Councillor Anne Jones, would be available to address the committee if considered necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity of making this submission.

Yours faithfully



A B Dive  
GENERAL MANAGER