

INQUIRY INTO 2008 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Organisation: Parramatta City Council

Name: Mr Graeme Riddell

Date Received: 12/05/2009

Submission to the:

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
Fax: 9230 3309

We would firstly like to express our concerns about the alarming increase in election costs compared to the 2004 election and question the methodology and calculations used by the NSWEC to arrive at the budget estimates sent to our council. Our election costs increased by \$163,000 for the 2008 election, which has added further pressure to council's capacity to deliver services.

We also wish to raise the following complaints we had received from candidates and voters in relation to the way in which the election was conducted on the day of the election: These are:

- Insufficient provision of ballot papers
- Potential voters advised no ballot papers were available but they just had to get their name marked off the role and they would not be fined
- Electoral staff inadequately trained
- Name of Ward not appearing on "How to Vote" material causing confusion
- Booth understaffed
- 12 days to declare the election when council ran election it only took 4 days!
- High cost of placing advertising.
- Traditional polling places closed, new polling place opened but not discussed with council officers first.
- That boundaries used for polling places at the 2008 Local Government election were derived from the previous state election and were not relevant to the Local Government Election boundaries.

Other issues raised by councillors at Parramatta City Council are regarding the cost associated with the need for candidates to register with an authority before accepting political donations. Concerns were raised by various councillors that the cost associated with registering with a "Certified Practising Accountant" (CPA) would be around \$1500. This expense would be significant to an independent candidate and may disadvantage a community member running for council.

Thank you