

**Submission
No 69**

INQUIRY INTO 2008 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Name: Mr John B Jensen

Date Received: 22/06/2009

[REDACTED]

22 June 2009

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters,
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Fax: 02 9230 3309

SUBMISSION OF A COMPLAINT AGAINST THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF NSW

Dear Sir/Ms,

In the 2008 Local Government Elections, I was appointed PPM, 3 tables, for the booth of Lambton in Ward 3, Newcastle. As I had worked at this booth many times before, I felt that the table numbers allocated were too low. I contacted the Returning Officer for Newcastle Catherine Cole, stating my misgivings. She said the decision was made by Electoral Commission of NSW HQ, and she would contact them regarding this & another similar complaint, regarding borderline table numbers. Ringing back she stated that the 600 voters per table were just covered by the 1800 potential voters allocated to this booth, meaning that if I had 1801 potential voters I should have had 4 tables. I stated that, that was a spurious target, as in all the elections at this booth I had been associated with over the last 20+ years, at no time had that low figure been achieved. Again I requested my figures, averaging over 2000 voters, be re-presented to the Electoral Commission of NSW with the same negative result.

The results were as I predicted, we had 2050 votes issued that day. Resulting in the tired staff & myself having to extend our already long work day by several work hours, for a base salary that was worked out on the low 1800 votes, to process the increased number of ballot papers. I would therefore be appropriate for my staff to have their salary increased in proportion to the increased workload thrust upon them, & I be paid at the 4 table figure that should have been in place.

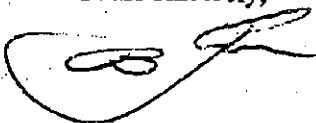
The reply to my complaint of 30/9/08 to Electoral Commission of N.S.W. did not address that complaint, so another letter was sent focusing on the nub of my complaint on 8/10/08. The second reply was still of a general nature.

I have subsequently contacted the NSW Ombudsman on the 5/11/08, & NSW Office of Industrial Relations on the 20/11/08, both advised that the complaint was outside their remit. I was advised in a letter dated 20/3/09, from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, of the possibility of a submission to your committee, if public submissions were called. It would appear that there is no independent complaint process available within the NSW Government, that is the reason for this correspondence.

The guidelines for the allocation of tables per 600 votes were clearly subverted, in the case of my booth, & quite possibly other booths. Therefore I request investigation, appropriate correction action, & reimbursement.

I apologise for this late submission, but lodge it with hope that it will be acceptable & appropriately actioned.

Yours sincerely,



John B Jensen. email: [REDACTED]