

**Supplementary
Submission
No 13a**

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2023 NSW STATE ELECTION AND OTHER
MATTERS**

Name: Mr Michael Regan
Position: Member for Wakehurst
Date Received: 19 April 2024



Michael REGAN MP

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR WAKEHURST



16th April 2024

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters

Email: electoralmatters@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Re: Supplementary submission - overseas postal voting provisions

Dear Chair,

I am writing with a supplementary submission to the inquiry into the *Administration of the 2023 NSW state election and other matters*.

One of my constituents, Colin Tansley, has brought to my attention his experience of attempting to receive and lodge a postal vote from overseas.

Despite a sincere desire to vote, and registering for a postal vote, Mr Tansley did not receive a voting pack at his Thailand address. Mr Tansley has raised his concerns with the Electoral Commission of NSW and he was informed that the timeframe for postal votes is very limited because of the short period between the close of candidate nominations and election day, which is set out in legislation.

I was concerned to learn that despite the Electoral Commission issuing 20,418 postal votes to overseas electors, only 5,706 (28 per cent of the international postal votes issued) were received by the Commission prior to the close of postal vote returns on 6 April 2023. This is completely unacceptable.

The Commission acknowledges this is problematic in the [Report on the administration of the 2023 NSW State election](#), which includes the following proposal:

Proposal 5 Overseas postal voting

The Electoral Commission has explored ways to improve overseas postal voting arrangements in light of global postal service delays. These delays mean that overseas postal votes often are not received by the Electoral Commission in time to be included in the count. The options available for managing overseas postal voting at the 2023 State election were limited, because the legislation does not expressly make provision for the return of postal votes from overseas. The Electoral Commission supports the introduction of provisions to enable a greater proportion of overseas

postal votes to be received in time to be included in the count, for example, by allowing postal votes to be received by an election official located overseas by a prescribed date and time and for the forwarding of such postal votes to the Commission by courier. Increased flexibility as to who can be appointed as an election official for such a purpose would also assist with the return of overseas postal votes.

I would like to strongly encourage the committee to consider ways to improve overseas postal voting provisions as part of their recommendations.

My Constituent, Mr Tansley, values his right to vote and in 2024 we should have adequate systems in place that facilitate overseas voting.

Kind regards,



Michael Regan MP
Independent Member for Wakehurst