



SOLGM ELECTORAL WORKING PARTY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2014

Working Party Vacancy

There is a vacancy on the SOLGM Electoral Working Party and SOLGM has called for applications to fill that vacancy. Applications close on 19 September 2014. For further information please contact Raymond Horan, Sector Improvement Manager, SOLGM. raymond.horan@solgm.org.nz

Report of the Justice and Electoral Committee on the 2013 Elections

The Electoral Working Party has agreed to action recommendations included in the Justice and Electoral Committee report that are within the EWP's mandate. They include:

- Discussing with LGNZ and other strategic partners the feasibility and desirability of a national campaign to inform the public about, and encourage participation in, local elections;
- To develop more accessible documents for electors with vision impairments;
- To support any trials of on-line voting systems;
- To provide guidance in the Code of Good Practice on the format and design of candidate profile statements and pre-election reports, and the use of these reports to inform candidate profile statements.

Other recommendations will be further considered to establish where the EWP may be able to assist with implementation that does not require any legislative changes.

SOLGM Code of Good Practice for the Management of Local Authority Elections and Polls

Parts 2 (Electoral Timetables), 4 (Electoral Systems), 6 (Polls), and 19 (Term of Office of Elected Members and Extraordinary Vacancies) of the Code of Good Practice for the Management of Local Authority Elections and Polls have all been reviewed and published. Part 5 (Representation Arrangements), has been reviewed and will be published as soon as a legal overview of this part of the Code has been completed.

NZ Post

NZ Post hosted the most recent EWP meeting discussing aspects of the 2013 elections process and the impacts of slow deliveries, profile book errors etc and gave a presentation on developments within their business. Whilst the defects were overall very minor in impact they never-the-less made front page news that was not beneficial to the election process or the reputation of NZ Post. We discussed delivery frequencies in the future and the possibility of special arrangements for elections. The initial response was very positive towards solutions for the 2016 elections. There are also options to include links to post box/post shop locators or embedding them into web sites carrying election information. It is important that electoral offices recognise the important role that NZ Post and their staff play as partners in the election process and to ensure this message is communicated to communities.

On Line Voting Update

The Online Voting Working Party report and recommendations were discussed and well received. A meeting with those local authorities who have been pro-active and determined that they would like to be considered in any online voting trials took place this week with Local Government New Zealand and the Department of Internal Affairs. The outcome of this and any further meetings that occur on this matter will inform the Department's advice to the Minister. It is expected that the Online Voting Working Party report will be considered by Cabinet in November.

Long Term Plans

Another reminder that Electoral Officers should consider making bids during the development of their Council's long term plans to ensure there is adequate funding to ensure appropriate election publicity and education campaigns and that there are funds available to contribute to agreed national projects.

ISO Standards

Standards New Zealand sought advice

A request from Carolyn Gay, Senior Manager Solutions, Standards NZ seeking comments on a proposal from the ISO technical committee to develop standards for electoral representation was considered by the EWP.

The EWP decided to pass on the following advice to SOLGM regarding the proposal:

In New Zealand, the Society of Local Government Managers has developed a Code of Practice for the administration of local elections that is followed by all organisations responsible for local elections including local authorities, district health boards and licensing trusts. The Code is overseen by experienced electoral officers and representatives from local government including SOLGM and LGNZ, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Local Government Commission and is subject to legal overview. Whilst we are happy to share these resources we do not consider that establishing an ISO standard is necessary in New Zealand as it will provide the same information as is included in the Code of Practice. An ISO standard will cost to develop and maintain as well as add costs to compliance. In addition, we would also lose some of the flexibility we have under the current system to meet the needs of the quite disparate communities we have to run elections for.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryl Griffin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Darryl Griffin
Chairperson
SOLGM Electoral Working Party