

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d)

Title: 2021–22 Federal Election: Planning for a 2022 election
MRN: s 47E(d) 24/11/2021 09:37:04 AM ZE10
To: Austrade Consular PPT Posts; FAF Posts
Cc:
From: Canberra
(CHCH/DFAT/CCD/CIB/CON)
From File: 20/16954
EDRMS
Files:
References: s 47E(d)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Response: Routine, Information Only

Annotations: Small posts are requested to respond to tasking
Summary

CCD seeks posts' input into planning for in-person and postal voting support for a federal election in 2022. An election must occur before 28 May 2022. Noting the AEC will arrange delivery of ballots by international courier, postal voting will be the main overseas voting mechanism. The AEC has requested advice from 20 posts in relation to possible in-person voting services. We expect, however, that only a small number of locations will be approved. All posts s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d) will be requested to collect postal votes. We request responses to
by 3 December 2021.

As per previous reftels, DFAT and Austrade continue planning with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to support overseas voting at the next federal election, which must take place before 28 May 2022. Although the election could be called at any time, planning has now moved to consider an election in the 2022 window. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Postal voting

2. Noting the AEC will arrange delivery of ballots by international courier (rather than using standard international mail), the primary means of overseas voting will be by postal ballot returned either directly to the AEC by the voter or to a DFAT/Austrade post. We continue to request all posts s 22(1)(a)(ii)

assist by collecting postal votes, including by being
designated publicly by the AEC as Ballot Collection Centres. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

The AEC has now sent

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 47E(d)

postal ballot collection material to all posts by DHL s 22(1)(a)(ii)

In-person voting

3. Given the ongoing uncertainty in relation to COVID-19, we anticipate the AEC may only consider a small number of posts to provide in-person voting services targeting locations that can provide both COVID-safe voting and expect high numbers of overseas voters. Even in locations approved for in-person voting, postal voting will remain an option for voters. The AEC will therefore advise *all* overseas voters to register for a postal vote to ensure they retain the ability to postal vote should the in-person voting option be removed at short notice due to the unpredictable operating environment globally.

4. Based on expected voting numbers, the AEC now requests the top 20 posts from the 2019 election (based on voting numbers) assess their ability to support in-person voting in a COVID-safe manner for an election in the 2022 window. We request the attached risk assessment template be completed for these 20 posts if in-person voting can be supported to s 47E(d) by 3 December 2021. Consulates should work with their supervising mission to obtain HOM endorsement of the proposed approach. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Post responses will be provided to the DFAT Deputy Secretary and Austrade Chief Operating Officer for consideration in early December before submitting to AEC. AEC decision outcomes will be provided to posts once received.

5. The top 20 posts from 2019 are:

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

15. Auckland

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6. Advice on in-person voting is not required for other posts, unless posts have a business case for in-person voting they would like to put forward for AEC consideration.

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Other updates

7. We appreciate posts' input to date to planning and providing Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) nominations. The AEC will be in contact with AROs directly on training requirements and resourcing (including funding requests) in January 2022.

8. AEC communications relating to overseas voting will be distributed on the @dfat and @smartraveller social media accounts in due course. We will request posts amplify these messages on your social media platforms and post websites.

9. Thank you to posts for continued support towards the next federal election.

10. This cable has been prepared in consultation with the AEC and Austrade.

text ends

Sent by: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Prepared

by:

Approved

by:

Topics: CONSULAR/Australian Elections, CONSULAR/Public Information, CONSULAR/Services and Policy

▼ New Distribution

s 47E(d)

Page 4 exempt under s 47E(d)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s 47E(d)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) [zz \[External\] consular-passports@austrade.gov.au; s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)
Subject: Auckland Post 2022 Election Planning. Response to s 47E(d) [SEC=OFFICIAL] [Kirsty McNeil; Patricia Forsythe; s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)
Date: Friday, 3 December 2021 1:51:36 PM
Attachments: [Auckland Post risk assessment - in person voting 03-12-2021.docx](#)

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Good afternoon,

As per the request for a further risk assessment regarding In-person voting (s 47E(d)), please accept this email as Auckland Post's REVISED RETURN. Post's earlier risk assessment (originally provided 25-06-2021) remains largely unchanged but has been updated to reflect current New Zealand Covid-19 management protocols.

In particular, Post notes New Zealand's progressive move toward policies and management frameworks to "live with Covid-19" rather than pursue an eradication strategy. These policies and management frameworks require further precautions by NZ community (e.g. traffic light system and use of My Vaccine Pass for ease of entry to commercial facilities) however **the overall Risk Assessment does not change.**

Auckland Post re-confirms:

1. Assessment of practicality of facilitating postal voting:

Auckland post is able to facilitate postal voting. Post does not require an exemption. Post has read and discussed the "expected role" and procedures regarding postal voting accompanying s 47E(d) and can comply.

2. Assessment of practicality of in-person voting:

Auckland post is able to facilitate in-person voting. Post risk assessment is attached. Risk assessment has been provided to and discussed with AHC Wellington.

Regards,
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Australian Consulate-General, Auckland

Level 7, 188 Quay Street, Auckland City
Private Bag 92023 Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142, New Zealand

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

www.austrade.gov.au

Risk Assessment – Provision of in person voting^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

Instructions – Please rate the level of risk at your post for each of the risks below using the DFAT Risk Matrix (see below) for the remainder of 2021, and provide a brief rationale for the assessment.

Post name: **AUCKLAND**

Current CAP level: **RED as at 03-12-2021**

Is post currently open to the public? (open/reduced/appointment only/emergency only/closed): **OPEN FOR CONSULAR and PASSPORT ACTIVITY FOR BOTH APPOINTMENTS AND (TRIAGED) WALK-IN'S as at 03-12-2021.**

Post staffing arrangements (returned to normal/reduced/essential only/split teams/closed): **CURRENTLY SPLIT TEAMS (TEAM A AND TEAM B) as at 03-12-2021.**

Risk (if post offers in-person voting)	Risk Rating			Rationale
	Likelihood	Consequence	Overall	
COVID-19 outbreak and/or lockdown leads to the closure of the chancery, resulting in the late cancellation of in-person voting.	Possible	Limited	Low	In the event of a “lockdown” (NZ Levels 3 & 4, ref detail here) commercial building management protocols require closure of office building to public access. Such closures have occurred on several occasions over past 18 months and local (Auckland) community has become acclimatised to the necessary disruptions to service and daily life. Post notes that as at 03-12-2021 New Zealand government has instituted a traffic light system (Red, Yellow and Green) for access to commercial and other premises. Auckland is currently at Red level which is, effectively, an equivalent of Level 3 with the additional opportunity for members of the public to display a

Risk (if post offers in-person voting)	Risk Rating			Rationale
	Likelihood	Consequence	Overall	
				"MyVaccinePass" for entry to commercial and other premises. For Post, the practical impact is negligible. Consequences are therefore regarded as limited with limited potential for reputational damage.
Civil disorder and/or security risks leads to reduced public access to the chancery, resulting in the late cancellation of in-person voting.	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Historically, post has very low levels of direct civil disorder (protests). Protocols exist with building management to lockdown lifts to Consulate General floor (level 7) within the commercial office block in the event of same. All visitors to Consulate General are screened (metal detector and CCTV) and security staff are present in public areas. Relations and communication with local authorities (diplomatic police etc) are strong. In the unlikely occurrence of an event, there is a need to consider potential damage to property/assets issues however given the multiple barrier approach to accessing the Consulate General such consequences are most likely to be minor.
Offering in-person voting could be seen to contradict travel advice provided to Australians in country and local restrictions in place.	Unlikely	Limited	Low	In-person voting would only occur in the context of travel and other advice provided to Australians in country and local restrictions in place. All Covid-19 management protocols (hand sanitising, masks, social distancing, visit recording etc.) can be accommodated in context of post layout and voter management requirements.
Limitations in the physical size and/or layout of the chancery's public area means that post is unable to offer in-person voting in a 'COVID safe' manner	Unlikely	Limited	Low	Post has managed previous elections (Federal and State) within the current office configuration. The overlay of Covid-19 management protocols (sanitising, social distancing etc.) can be accommodated. If pre-poll voting is required post has a separate consular window to manage the process. On polling day (where larger numbers of people are anticipated) post manages people flow by using the Level 4 building entry and Level 7 foyer to control numbers accessing the lifts and entering the designated polling place (i.e. the public waiting room of the Consulate General).
The significant number of Australians seeking consular and repatriation assistance reduces post's capacity to support in person voting.	Unlikely	Limited	Low	Post maintains timely services to Australians. Given the NZ Covid-19 management regime to date and ongoing protocols re outbreak management and vaccination framework, post does not anticipate significant increases in numbers of Australians seeking consular and repatriation assistance.

Risk (if post offers in-person voting)	Risk Rating			Rationale
	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Consequence</i>	<i>Overall</i>	
Post staffing levels are insufficient to support in-person voting and/or meet ballot handling requirements as specific by the Australian Electoral Commission.	Unlikely	Minor	Low	<p>Post staff are experienced and have historically participated in election support activities. They can be expected to do so again.</p> <p>Post may need to consider engaging an additional security officer for polling day to assist with monitoring people flow and lift access between Level 4 (building entry) and Level 7 (Consulate-General).</p> <p>Whilst unlikely, post may also require polling clerk support for polling day (not for pre-poll). ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}</p> <p>Current post staff complement is 12 persons (including 1 A-based). Depending on date of election and staff availability (e.g. leave arrangements at Christmas), there may be a need to contemplate external support for polling day.</p>
Other risk (please specify if applicable)	Nil	Nil	N/A	N/A

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Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Minute

To: Craig Maclachlan Deputy Secretary, Security, Legal and Consular Group, DFAT
 Rob Donnelly, Chief Operating Officer, Austrade
File no: 20/16954
Date: 20 December 2021

Through: Jenny Dee, AS CIB; Patrick Hanlon, CSO Austrade

CC: Kate Logan, FAS CCD; Jo Stevens, AS OXD/EXD

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Director CON

Contact Officer: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Australian federal election – 2022 window - Overseas voting risk analysis and recommendations

This Minute seeks your agreement to proposed options to support overseas voting during the 2022 federal election window (1 January to 28 May 2022) by DFAT and Austrade posts.

2. The global situation, including the unpredictable COVID operating environment overseas, posts' security environment, and resource constraints continue to impact the level of support that can be offered by the DFAT and Austrade overseas network for the federal election.
3. The most significant risk being addressed by DFAT/Austrade/AEC in relation to overseas voting is that postage delays mean postal votes may not be received within legislated timeframes leading to voters being disenfranchised, criticism of the Government and questioning of the election's integrity. The AEC is seeking to mitigate this risk by contracting a point-to-point courier delivery solution to send ballots to overseas voters – also reducing the requirement for in-person voting in an uncertain environment due to COVID-19 - and through early and regular communications to overseas voters encouraging postal voting.
4. There remains ongoing risk across all posts that host countries will enforce new COVID restrictions at short notice that coincide with the election period, hindering the ability of posts to conduct in-person voting and therefore disenfranchising voters at the last minute who could have otherwise voted by post. Postal ballot is therefore the AEC's preferred voting method for Australians overseas, with voters encouraged to send their ballot back directly to the AEC or to their nearest listed mission. It is not compulsory to vote while overseas – voters can apply for an exemption via an overseas notification form.
5. Then Dep Sec ISG (Sheehan) and Austrade COO approved a 29 July 2021 Minute which set out the key risks and recommendations considered for the 2021 window. The EXD-endorsed risk assessment (**Attachment A**) remains extant for planning for a 2022 election.
6. In a 24 November 2021 cable from CCD to posts, we requested updated advice on the level of support posts could provide for a 2022 election. As per the AEC's request, the focus was on the

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top 20 locations in terms of the number of votes received in the 2019 federal election. All missions, s 22(1)(a)(ii) will act as ballot collection centres. Posts' responses to the tasking cable, along with CCD comments, are at **Attachment B**.

7. Fourteen missions in the top 20 indicated they can support **in-person voting** in 2022. An additional 10 missions (i.e. outside the top 20) are also seeking to provide in-person voting s 22(1)(a)(ii) s 22(1)(a)(ii)

9. While the DFAT Medical Unit is advising posts that they should not (as a rule) prevent unvaccinated clients from entering missions, clients are subject to rules of their host governments which may include building entry requirements and local restrictions for unvaccinated clients. As mandated locally, posts can enforce screening for symptoms and strongly encourage the use of masks where there is community transmission. This issue may need to be carefully managed given it is AEC policy that voters are not disenfranchised because of their vaccination status.

10. For **postal vote collection**, the AEC has dispatched material to enable all posts to receive postal votes either in-person or by mail from overseas voters, which can then be returned to the AEC via diplomatic bag.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

12. Consular Policy Section's assessments of post responses is in **Attachment B**. Subject to your agreement, we will recommend 22 of the 24 post requesting in-person voting s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

to the AEC

for decision. However, it is possible not all of these locations will be approved for in-person voting by the AEC given the preference for postal votes for all overseas voters, logistical effort required to get ballots and materials to post, and because the risk in-person voting may be removed at short notice due to changes in the COVID environment. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

13. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment (responsible for Austrade) were informed of proposed plans for the 2021 election window (MS21000806 and via FMO updates). A subsequent 'for info' Ministerial Submission will be sent before any AEC decisions for the 2022 window is communicated to posts.

14. There will still be some voters who will be unable to vote in person or by postal vote, for example due to their remote location. Messaging for these voters will advise them to inform the AEC that they are overseas so that they avoid a fine for not voting.

15. After the AEC's decision on in-person voting is communicated to posts, the AEC will liaise directly with posts to arrange approval for any funding required to support in-person and/or postal vote collection. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

The AEC will also provide

relevant training and other materials to posts.

16. The AEC is developing a communications plan to ensure messaging is provided to overseas voters to advise of their options for voting overseas, particularly to encourage early registration for a postal vote. DFAT and Austrade are prepared to amplify messages through the @DFAT and @Smartraveller social media platforms and through post social media accounts and websites.

17. As required for each federal election, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DFAT and AEC will be agreed once a decision on overseas voting support is confirmed, signed at AS level. Austrade will be included under DFAT.

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Recommendations

- i. Agree to the approach proposed for a federal election to be held in 2022.
- ii. Agree that 22 posts which have identified they are in a position to provide in-person voting for an election in 2022 (and which have been endorsed by CCD) should be considered by the AEC for in-person voting.

AGREE / DISAGREE
/ DISCUSSAGREE / DISAGREE
/ DISCUSS

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- iv. Note an MOU will be signed at AS level between DFAT and the AEC once there is an agreement on overseas support for the federal election.

NOTE / DISCUSS

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director, Consular Policy Section

Craig MacLachlan
DFAT SLG DepSec

Date: 21 / 12 / 2021

Rob Donnelly
Austrade COO

Date: / 12 / 2021

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Recommendations

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| i. | Agree to the approach proposed for a federal election to be held in 2022. | AGREE / DISAGREE
/ DISCUSS |
| ii. | Agree that 22 posts which have identified they are in a position to provide in person voting for an election in 2022 (and which have been endorsed by CCD) should be considered by the AEC for in person voting. | AGREE / DISAGREE
/ DISCUSS |

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------|
| iv. | Note an MOU will be signed at AS level between DFAT and the AEC once there is an agreement on overseas support for the federal election. | NOTE / DISCUSS |
|-----|--|----------------|

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



Director, Consular Policy Section

Craig MacLachlan
DFAT SLG DepSec

Rob Donnelly
Austrade COO

Date: / 12 / 2021

Date: 20/ 12 / 2021

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Attachment A Overseas voting risk assessment 2021-22 (as at 20 December 2021)

Consular Policy Section (CON) identified the following key risks for the Australian Government in facilitating overseas voting in the next federal election in collaboration with Enterprise Risk Section (EXD), AEC and Austrade.

Category	Risk	Risk type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Impact	Overall risk rating	DFAT role in management	AEC role in management
(E) Electoral integrity – risks that would impact the integrity of the election	(E1) Poor communication with overseas electors leads to a large number not being aware of the arrangements for overseas voting, leading to their real or perceived disenfranchisement	COVID-19 related/elements of Business as usual	Possible	Major	High	Amplify AEC-led communications to Australians overseas through @DFAT and @Smartraveller and amplified on post social media accounts and post websites.	Develop communications strategy for advising Australians overseas of changed arrangements, including using DFAT and post social media accounts to reach Australians overseas.
	(E2) Inappropriate ballot handling measures by staff at post leads to ballots being 'spoiled', disenfranchising voters	Business as usual	Possible	Major	High	Implement ballot handling measures in accordance with AEC requirements. Complete AEC's mandatory training.	Provide guidance and training to DFAT staff on ballot handling requirements. Establish and monitor ballot handling mechanisms. Establish mechanisms under the MOU to ensure that all relevant DFAT staff have completed mandatory training.
	(E3) Inadequate monitoring mechanisms lead to voter fraud, undermining the integrity of the election	Business as usual	Possible	Severe	High	Implement fraud prevention mechanisms in line with AEC guidelines.	Ensure processes to ensure only one declaration vote per elector is counted. Provide guidance and training to DFAT staff on fraud prevention mechanisms.

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Category	Risk	Risk type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Impact	Overall risk rating	DFAT role in management	AEC role in management
(L) Logistics – risks that would prevent completed ballots arriving in Australia in the required timeframes	(L1) Issues with courier services prevent posts from receiving the necessary election materials to support in-person and/or postal voting collection.	COVID-19 related	Possible	Severe	High	Seek advice from posts on disruptions to diplomatic mail services and inform AEC.	Early and ongoing engagement with DHL to understand courier times to posts. Advise relevant Minister/s of expected disruption to the voting process due to COVID-19.
	(L2) Issues with local postal services prevent Australians receiving ballots in time to complete them before deadlines, preventing them from voting.	COVID-19 related	Almost certain	Severe	Very high	Monitor performance of local postal services by seeking input from posts and provide advice to AEC of in country limitations. Amplify AEC-led communications to Australians overseas through @DFAT and @Smartraveller and on post social media accounts and post websites.	Develop communications strategy to encourage early registration for overseas postal votes, to ensure ballots can be sent as soon as possible. Where appropriate, include information on local postal restrictions. AEC to implement a 'point-to-point' delivery solution to courier ballots directly to voters overseas. Early engagement with DHL to manage expectations on postal votes returned to posts. Where possible and in line with COVID-safe measures, consider options for in-person voting at a small number of posts.
	(L3) Issues with local postal services prevent Australians returning ballots in time to	COVID-19 related	Almost certain	Major	Very high	Seek advice from posts on local postal services and inform AEC.	Develop communications strategy to encourage overseas postal

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Category	Risk	Risk type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Impact	Overall risk rating	DFAT role in management	AEC role in management
	complete them before deadlines, preventing them from voting.					Support AEC-led communications through social media accounts and similar outreach to Australians overseas.	<p>votes to return ballots as soon as possible.</p> <p>Advise relevant Minister/s of expected disruption to the voting process due to COVID-19.</p> <p>Where possible, provide a physical ballot box at the post for ballot returns or options for in-person voting with advice on deadlines for receipt.</p>
	(L4) Issues with diplomatic mail schedule prevent postal votes from being returned to Australia in time to be counted, disenfranchising voters.	COVID-19 related	Possible	Major	High	<p>Support arrangements for multiple ballot return shipments.</p> <p>Early engagement with DHL to manage expectations on postal votes returned to posts.</p> <p>Amplify AEC-led communications to Australians overseas through @DFAT and @Smarttraveller and amplified on post social media accounts and post websites.</p>	<p>Arrange for multiple ballot return shipments where feasible.</p> <p>Early engagement with DHL to manage expectations on postal votes returned to posts.</p> <p>Develop communications strategy to encourage overseas postal votes to return ballots as soon as possible (which would allow for multiple shipments).</p>

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Category	Risk	Risk type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Impact	Overall risk rating	DFAT role in management	AEC role in management
	(L5) Offering in-person voting at overseas post(s) results in an Australian voter(s) contracting the COVID-19 virus.	COVID-19 related	Possible	Severe	High	<p>Provide input into AEC's framework to assess the risks of offering in-person voting services, including consideration of posts' CAP status, local requirements, and travel advice.</p> <p>Implement AEC's COVID-19 guidelines at post as well as other relevant measures as determined by host country and post operations using each post's COVID-safe plan.</p>	<p>Develop a framework and liaise with DFAT Principal Medical Adviser to assess and mitigate the risks associated with offering in-person voting services.</p> <p>Develop COVID-19 safe guidelines and processes to share with posts in line with local health requirements.</p>
(C) Capability – risks that would prevent the post from providing the capability to support the election and/or other core functions (especially	(C1) Disruption to operations caused by COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown, civil disorder etc limit post ability to support election activity.	COVID-19 related/elements of Business as usual	Possible	Major	High	Maintain situational awareness and advise AEC of post specific risks.	Reinforce to posts that security and safety remains a primary consideration if making a case to offer in-person voting. Clarify and communicate requirements to register for a postal vote to ensure voters are able to default to a postal vote
	(C2) Election support disrupts, or is perceived to disrupt ongoing COVID consular services (including FCFs), leading to public criticism and reduced confidence in the	COVID-19 related	Possible	Moderate	Medium	<p>Messaging through social media to highlight that the Government remains committed to consular work.</p> <p>Posts to increase resources where required.</p>	Maintain clear AEC lead on electoral communications (to reduce perception that DFAT is stretching its resources). Clarify and communicate requirements to register for a postal vote.

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Category	Risk	Risk type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Impact	Overall risk rating	DFAT role in management	AEC role in management
consular support)	Government's commitment to support Australians overseas.						s 22(1)(a)(ii) Support to other posts will need to be considered by AEC if requested. AEC to support bids for additional resources.
	(C3) Small posts and posts with a reduced footprint are unable to meet electoral demand, impacting the administration of the election and/or other core business (especially consular support).	COVID-19 related/elements of Business as usual	Likely	Moderate	High	Assist AEC to assess likely demand for ballots and identify any capability issues in managing them. Post to work with geographic divisions to identify options to re-prioritise work (including considering temporarily moving some tasks to Canberra) to provide additional capability.	Supplement post resourcing/funding for temporary LES contractors and additional support as required.
(S) Staff health and safety	(S1) Offering in-person and/or postal voting services results in a DFAT staff member contracting the COVID-19 virus.	COVID-19 related	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Provide input to AEC's framework for assessing the risks of offering in-person voting services, including consideration of vaccination roll-out schedule and advice of post. Receipt of postal ballots at missions follows COVID-safe protocols.	Develop a framework for assessing the risks associated with offering in-person voting services based on prevailing conditions in country.

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Attachment B Post indications of the level of support they can provide for a 2022 election

Yellow – indicates a change from advice supplied in June 2021

Posts not listed on the table below have advised that they are able to facilitate postal ballot collection only.

Post	Country	Number of pre-poll votes in 2019 election	In a 2022 voting window, can post support:		Post comments	CCD/Austrade support for Post position
			in-person voting?	ballot collection centre?		
Top 20 Posts by 2019 voting numbers						

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Post	Country	Number of pre-poll votes in 2019 election	In a 2022 voting window, can post support:		Post comments	CCD/Austrade support for Post position
			in-person voting?	ballot collection centre?		

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Auckland	New Zealand	967	✓	✓	<p>Whilst unlikely, post may also require polling clerk support for polling day (not for pre-poll). s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p> <p>s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p> <p>Current post staff complement is 12 persons (including 1 A-based). Depending on date of election and staff availability (e.g. leave arrangements at Christmas), there may be a need to contemplate external support for polling day.</p>	<p>Yes – noting if Auckland is approved for in-person voting, Wellington has proposed sending an A-based to support operations over the last week of the election. Wellington has strict COVID-prevention measures in place (including segregation of visitors based on vaccination status),</p>
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Post	Country	Number of pre-poll votes in 2019 election	In a 2022 voting window, can post support:		Post comments	CCD/Austrade support for Post position
			in-person voting?	ballot collection centre?		
						which would complicate in-person voting there. Wellington will operate postal ballot collection only.

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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) [Natasha Scandrett](#); s 22(1)(a)(ii) [Jenny Dee](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: For review: MinSub on federal election planning [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Date: Tuesday, 11 January 2022 2:58:24 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender.

Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) Our Executive Leadership Team have endorsed the recommended in-person service offering for the 2022 federal election consisting of 22 in-person locations, with Posts s 22(1)(a)(ii) operating as postal vote collection points – noting that some Posts may revert to postal collection only, if local conditions deteriorate.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

We will now commence preparations for these 22 Posts, and once they have been notified of their in-person/postal vote collection status by DFAT, we will be in comms with them.

Please let me know if any questions on the above.

Regards
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) **Director (A/g)**
 National Event Management Section | Delivery & Support Branch
 Australian Electoral Commission

s
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 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To:
Cc:
Subject: MS21-001682 - 2022 federal election: support by overseas missions - question from TTIM
 [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Date: Tuesday, 25 January 2022 11:19:30 AM
Attachments: [SEO18049P0422012508380.pdf](#)

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Hi s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Please find attached MS21-001682 on '2022 federal election: support by overseas missions' signed by Minister Tehan. s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Kind regards
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii) Departmental Liaison Officer
 Office of the Hon Dan Tehan MP
 Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment
 s 22(1)(a)(ii)
 s 22(1)(a)(ii) | www.minister.tehan.gov.au



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Ministerial Submission

MS21-001682

Cleared by: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Date sent to MO: 14 January 2022

Action Requested By: 28 January 2022

FOR: Senator the Hon Marise Payne

The Hon Dan Tehan MP

Reason for Urgency: DFAT will communicate the AEC's decision to posts on 31 January 2022 so preparations for overseas voting can commence.

2022 federal election: Support by overseas missions

<p>Key Issues: The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has endorsed in-person voting at 22 posts for the next federal election. This decision was based on DFAT and Austrade recommendations which considered local COVID conditions, expected voter volumes, and international and domestic mail conditions. Posts will again support the election by facilitating postal ballot return. There is a risk that some locations approved for in-person voting will need to revert to postal voting collection (only) should the local COVID situation deteriorate, including after being listed publicly for in-person voting. DFAT and Austrade will continue to review the situation in collaboration with posts and AEC, and update public information.</p>	
<p>Recommendation: That you:</p> <p>a) Note that – as detailed in Attachment A – the AEC has endorsed 22 posts for in-person voting based on DFAT and Austrade recommendations; and</p> <p>b) Note that, all posts will facilitate the return of postal votes.</p>	<p>Decision:</p> <p><u>Noted</u></p> <p><u>Noted</u></p>
<p>Domestic/Media Considerations: The COVID situation, including in locations with large numbers of Australian expatriates may continue to change quickly and prevent in-person voting. While Australians in these locations will be encouraged to postal vote, they may criticise the Government if they feel they have been disenfranchised.</p>	
<p>Marise Payne</p> <p>/ /</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> Dan Tehan 23/1/22 </p>	
<p>From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) A/g AS SLG CCD Consular Communications and Policy Branch</p>	<p>Contact: s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p>
<p>Can this proposal be funded from within your existing <u>divisional</u> allocation (departmental/aid)? Not Applicable</p> <p>If the proposal high risk/high value (over \$100m) concept has been approved by the Aid Governance Board? Not Applicable</p>	
<p>Consultation: AEC, Austrade, EXD, Posts</p>	

OFFICIAL: Sensitive



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Ministerial Submission

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<p>Recommendation: That you:</p> <p>a) Note that – as detailed in Attachment A – the AEC has endorsed 22 posts s 22(1)(a)(ii) for in-person voting based on DFAT and Austrade recommendations; and</p> <p>b) Note that, s 22(1)(a)(ii) all posts will facilitate the return of postal votes.</p>	<p>Decision:</p> <p><u>Noted</u></p> <p><u>Noted</u></p>
<p>Domestic/Media Considerations: The COVID situation, including in locations with large numbers of Australian expatriates s 22(1)(a)(ii) may continue to change quickly and prevent in-person voting. While Australians in these locations will be encouraged to postal vote, they may criticise the Government if they feel they have been disenfranchised.</p> <p><i>Minister has noted this Brief.</i> 25 JAN 2022 <i>Office will follow up with the Dept.</i> 2202 JAN 2022 Marise Payne / / Dan Tehan / / Cag JB</p>	
<p>From: s 22(1)(a)(ii) A/g AS SLG CCD Consular Communications and Policy Branch s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p>	<p>Contact: s 22(1)(a)(ii)</p>
<p>Can this proposal be funded from within your existing <u>divisional</u> allocation (departmental/aid)? Not Applicable</p> <p>If the proposal high risk/high value (over \$100m) concept has been approved by the Aid Governance Board? Not Applicable</p>	
<p>Consultation: AEC, Austrade, EXD, Posts</p>	

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Overseas voting services as approved by the AEC for the 2022 federal election (as at 10 January 2022)

Post	Country	Approved by AEC to facilitate in-person voting in the January-May 2022 window?	Approved/exempted by AEC to facilitate postal voting as a ballot collection centre?
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Auckland	New Zealand	✓	✓
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Wellington	New Zealand		✓
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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Pages 40-41 out of scope - s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To: s 22(1)(a)(iii) [Consular Wellington](#); s 22(1)(a)(ii) s 47E(d)
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(iii)
Subject: RE: CABLE - 2022 federal election: Overseas voting[SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Date: Tuesday, 1 February 2022 10:30:53 AM

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Good morning Consular Policy,

Re CABLE - 2022 federal election: Overseas voting[SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive](s 47E(d)

Auckland post continues to confirm our ability to provide in-person voting.

Post notes and is grateful for assistance offered by Wellington post in delivery of same.

Post further notes continuing Covid-19 related restrictions in New Zealand and expected growth in Omicron variant viral infection numbers.

Post will continue to monitor and advise what, if any, impact Covid impacts have on post's ability to provide person to person voting service.

Regards,

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Australian Consulate-General, Auckland

Level 7, 188 Quay Street, Auckland City

Private Bag 92023 Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142, New Zealand

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

www.austrade.gov.au

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

CABLE -
s 47E(d)
s 22(1)(a)(ii)
31/01/2022
05:31:56 PM ZE10

Title: **2022 federal election: Overseas voting**

To: Austrade Consular PPT Posts, FAF Posts
Cc:

From: Canberra (CHCH/DFAT/CCD/CIB/CON) Sent by: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Topics: CONSULAR/Australian Elections
Approved By: s 22(1)(a)(ii) Director CON
From File: 20/16954
References: s 47E(d)
Attachments: ATT A - Overseas voting services as approved by the AEC.docx
Response: **Routine, Information Only**

Annotation:

Summary: The AEC has provided in-principle approval for 22 posts to offer in-person voting; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

No posts outside the 22 approved for in-person voting will be considered by the AEC. Grateful posts approved for in-person voting continue to update CON if their ability to provide in-person services changes, s 22(1)(a)(ii)

According to the AEC's timing, the election needs to be called by 18 April 2022 and held on or before 21 May 2022.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has accepted the list of 22 posts recommended by DFAT and Austrade to facilitate in-person voting; s 22(1)(a)(ii)

DFAT and AEC recommendations were based on post input in November and December 2021 s 22(1)(a)(ii) and Consular Policy discussions with relevant posts. A summary of the AEC-approved locations is at Attachment A.

2. No posts outside the 22 approved for in-person voting will be considered by the AEC. Locations for in-person voting and postal ballot collection will be published online once the date of the federal election is announced, which - according to the AEC's timing - needs to occur by 18 April 2022. Social media messaging and standardised language for post websites around overseas voting options is being prepared for posts to communicate to Australians overseas. The AEC will also shortly commence social media messaging to overseas voters which DFAT and Smartraveller will share. We will request post assistance to disseminate in due course.

3. Grateful posts continue to update Consular Policy with substantive changes to their risk assessments which affect their ability to offer in-person voting (where applicable) and/or postal ballot collection. Updated advice can be cabled or sent to s 47E(d) with 'Federal Election' in the subject line. Postal ballot remains as the preferred method for overseas voting as a contingency measure, including posts to operate as postal ballot collection centres across the network.

4. The AEC will shortly be in contact directly with nominated Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) with confirmation on nominations, advice on training requirements, processes for funding approvals and advice on additional dispatch of materials for in-person voting locations. Please advise Consular Policy if ARO details have changed since originally advised (in response to tasking s 47E(d)).

5. We appreciate posts' continued engagement to support the upcoming federal election.

6. Cabled prepared in consultation with AEC and Austrade. *(See attached file: ATT A - Overseas voting services as approved by the AEC.docx)*

ATT A - Overseas voting services as approved by the AEC for the 2022 federal election (as at 10 January 2022)

Post	Country	Approved by AEC to facilitate in-person voting in the January-May 2022 window?	Approved/exempted by AEC to facilitate postal voting as a ballot collection centre?
Auckland s 47E(d)	New Zealand	✓	✓
Wellington s 47E(d)	New Zealand		✓

Pages 46-47 out of scope - s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s 22(1)(a)(ii)
To:
Cc: s 22(1)(a)(ii) [Overseas Voting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Query from the FMO - seeking detail on AEC sign off [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Date: Wednesday, 9 February 2022 11:05:27 AM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender.

Hi Eleanor,

The final list of 22 in-person posts was approved by the AEC Executive Leadership Team in December 2021. The ELT includes the Electoral Commissioner (Tom Rogers) and the Deputy Electoral Commissioner (Jeff Pope).

Please let me know if you need anything additional.

Thanks
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Director (A/g)
National Event Management Section | Delivery & Support Branch
Australian Electoral Commission
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Page 49 out of scope - s 22(1)(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

RECEIVED
15/02/22

Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

REF: EC22-000289

MINUTE

SECRETARY

Through:

Craig MacLachlan *CBM 11/2*
Deputy Secretary, Security, Legal and Consular Group

Kate Logan

First Assistant Secretary, Consular and Crisis Management Division

SUBJECT: 2022 Federal Election: Overseas Voting

Critical Date: Not applicable

Reason: Routine

Recommendations:

1. That you **note** 22 posts have been approved by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to provide in-person voting services for the 2022 federal election, but that this number may reduce should in-country COVID-19 operating conditions or the security situation deteriorate prior to the election.

NOTED / ~~PLEASE DISCUSS~~

2. That you **note** all posts across the global network ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)} will facilitate overseas voting by being publicly listed by the AEC as postal ballot collection centres. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

NOTED / ~~PLEASE DISCUSS~~

3. That you **note** Minister Payne and Minister Tehan have been briefed on these arrangements via Ministerial Submission. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

NOTED / ~~PLEASE DISCUSS~~

^{s 22(} Thank you. I read the brief on the way up to the MOS so was tracking. *[Signature]*
Secretary:..... 21 FEB 2022

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE**Issues:**

1. The AEC has provided in-principal approval for 22 DFAT/Austrade posts ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)} to provide in-person voting in the 2022 federal election. The list of posts was based on post risk assessments, DFAT (CCD) and Austrade advice, and expected voting numbers with the AEC seeking advice on in-person voting support from the “top 20” posts only based on overseas voting numbers from the last federal election. Fourteen of the top 20 have been approved for in-person voting. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

2. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

All other posts will support postal ballot collection for return via diplomatic bag to the AEC.

3. Noting the evolving COVID-19 operating environment, posts have been tasked to inform CCD should a change in their in-country conditions make in-person voting and/or postal ballot collection not feasible prior to the election being called. Recognising the uncertainty in local conditions, DFAT has arranged a short window (one business day) after the election is called to receive final confirmation from posts that in-person voting can be supported before the AEC publishes the list of overseas in-person voting locations.

4. The AEC has contracted a point-to-point courier to send postal ballots to overseas voters to reduce the risk of postal delays. Given continuing global uncertainty including around new COVID variants, the risk remains that in-person voting options may be cancelled at short notice. While all voters (i.e. even those in locations approved for in-person voting) will be encouraged to apply for a postal vote, Australians who do not take up this option (because they expect to vote in person) may be critical of the Government. It is not compulsory to vote while overseas.

5. A communications plan is in place, with AEC messaging to be amplified on departmental and posts’ social media platforms.

Background:

6. The latest date an election could be called is 18 April 2022. The latest date on which the election can be held is 21 May 2022.

7. The Foreign Minister and the Trade, Tourism and Investment Minister (responsible for Austrade posts) were informed via Ministerial Submission MS21-00168. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

Financial Implications:

8. Not applicable – AEC is responsible for all associated costs incurred by posts on a reimbursement basis. ^{s 22(1)(a)(ii)}

Consultation:

9. DFAT and Austrade continue regular meetings with the AEC.

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

Summary of Attachments:

Attachment A: MS21-001682 – 2022 Federal Election support by overseas missions

Prepared by: Jenny Dee
Assistant Secretary, CIB/CCD/SLG
Phone Number: 6261 1243
Date: 11 February 2022