

26 May 2016

Hon Bill English
Deputy Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

cc Minister of Justice

REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION ON THE FIRST AND SECOND REFERENDUMS ON THE NEW ZEALAND FLAG

OVERVIEW

1. In October 2014, Cabinet decided to hold postal referendums on the New Zealand flag in November 2015 and in early 2016.
2. The Electoral Commission (the Commission) had responsibility for the delivery of both referendums and these were conducted smoothly and within budget, with all statutory deadlines being met.
3. The preliminary results for the first referendum were reported after the close of voting on 11 December 2015 and the official results were declared on 15 December 2015. 3,170,726 voting papers were posted to enrolled voters and 1,546,734 votes were returned (a 48.78% turnout).
4. The preliminary results for the second referendum were reported after the close of voting on 24 March 2015 and the official results were declared on 30 March 2016. 3,158,576 voting papers were posted to enrolled voters and 2,140,895 votes were returned (a 67.80% turnout).
5. Conducting two nation-wide postal referendums in quick succession was a major logistical exercise. The period between the Cabinet decision to hold the referendums and the close of the preliminary roll for the first referendum was just 11 months and the first and second flag referendums were held within four months of each other. The Commission's systems development and testing and other preparations were challenging. This was because of the short timeframes, the fact each referendum was to be conducted using a different voting system, that preparations needed to precede the finalisation of the legislation and that there were late changes to the form of the first voting paper. These challenges were all successfully managed.
6. In this report, the Commission identifies ways to improve the conduct of future postal referendums including recommendations regarding enrolment, overseas voting, vote issuing, and voter education which are summarised at **Appendix A**.

PLANNING AND TIMETABLE

7. Administering two postal referendums within a four month period, including the Christmas period, was a major logistical exercise for the Commission. The Chief Electoral Officer was responsible, as the Returning Officer under the legislation, for the delivery of the referendums. In March 2015, the Commission convened a steering committee (committee) to provide strategic and high level leadership for the flag referendums. The committee included representatives from the Commission, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (including the Flag Project Secretariat), Ministry of Justice, Enrolment Services, New Zealand Post and Catalyst Ltd. The committee worked well and ensured good communication and coordination throughout both referendums.
8. To be ready, preparations needed to start as soon as government decisions to hold postal referendums were made in October 2014. Preparations, including the development and testing of the vote processing system, establishment of the vote processing centre, development of training, public information and advertising materials were challenging because the legislation setting out the form of the voting paper, the flag options, key referendum dates and the method of voting would not be finalised until approximately eight weeks before the first referendum. The Commission's preparations had to adapt to decisions to change to the preferential voting system, the addition of a fifth alternative flag option for the first referendum, and a change to the timing of the second referendum. In the end these challenges were all successfully managed.
9. For the first referendum, enrolment closed on Thursday 19 November 2015. The voting period commenced on Friday 20 November and closed on 11 December. Voting papers postmarked during the voting period and received by noon on 15 December were included in the official count.
10. For the second referendum, enrolment closed on Wednesday 2 March 2016. The voting period commenced on Thursday 3 March and closed on Thursday 24 March. Voting papers postmarked during the voting period and received by noon on 30 March were included in the official count.
11. A detailed timetable is attached as **Appendix B**.

INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

12. Voters are less familiar with the postal referendum voting process than the process for a parliamentary election and the key messages the Commission needs to convey to the public are more complex: particularly around enrolment requirements and the timeframes for returning voting papers. For example, to receive a voting paper at the beginning of the referendum voting period a voter needed to be enrolled by the date the main roll closed to enable sufficient time for the printing of voting packs. Even though it is a three week voting period, people cannot enrol once it starts, in contrast to local body elections or the advance voting period during a parliamentary election. For returning voting papers, there are also a range of important dates that need to be communicated:
 - the date by which voters need to have put their voting paper into a NZ Post street receiver to be confident it would be returned in time;
 - if the street receiver date is missed, the deadline for returning it to a PostShop; and

- the date by which the Commission must have received it for the voting paper to be included in the official count.
13. The Commission conducted limited public information campaigns for both of the referendums. For the first referendum there was a household mail-drop, and then some advertising featuring ‘Orange Guy’ on television, radio, in print and online reminding people of the deadline to enrol, voting packs being sent out, and then reminders towards the close of the voting period. For the second referendum there was no separate enrolment advertising, but limited advertising about voting packs being sent out and then reminders about voting closing.
 14. For both referendums the Commission sent information to approximately 3,000 stakeholders and organisations providing them with brochures in English and te reo Māori, a brochure from the Flag Consideration Panel, and a poster and ways to get further information. Information packs and media briefings were given. Overseas voters were targeted through community organisations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and online.
 15. The Commission provided information in English, Māori, New Zealand Sign Language and 24 other languages to help meet the language needs of New Zealand’s increasingly diverse population. We used Census information to determine the languages needed.

Public enquiries

16. The Commission’s national office responded to over 5,300 emails and telephone enquiries as well as a number of enquiries received on the Commission’s Facebook page. The table below shows the very large number of calls, emails and texts received by the Commission’s 0800 provider, TelNet, for each referendum.

	Referendum One	Referendum Two
Calls	33,486	33,657
Emails (enrolment only)	1,693	1,955
SMS (enrolment only)	1,012	780

Kids Voting

17. The Commission used the second referendum on the New Zealand flag as an opportunity to build students’ knowledge about our democracy. Over 147,000 students from 740 schools registered to take part in Kids Voting for the second referendum on the New Zealand flag. This compares with 78,000 students and 556 schools who took part in the Kids Voting programme for the 2014 general election. Teacher evaluation shows that 93% of teachers thought the programme met its objectives, 98% would definitely participate again, and 76% said that it had motivated their students to discuss electoral participation and the voting process with their parents and whānau.

ENROLMENT

18. The Commission recommends that a full enrolment update campaign is conducted before the voting period begins for all future postal referendums, if it has been more than six months since the last update campaign. As explained in more detail below, the large number of voting packs returned ‘Gone No address’ (GNA) and the large number of

requests for replacement voting packs to new addresses indicates that a more extensive enrolment campaign prior to the referendums would have been beneficial.

19. For each referendum, an individual had to be enrolled by the close of the referendum roll, or have applied to enrol before the start of the voting period, to be eligible to vote. The Commission could only issue voting papers to registered electors who were on the referendum roll or the supplementary referendum rolls.
20. Under the continuous enrolment system, the roll is updated on a daily basis as electors enrol or update their details and are removed from the roll as a result of information provided to the Commission. However, enrolment activity peaks just before a general election as media and public attention heightens and as the Commission runs a full update campaign that includes writing to every elector asking them to check and update their details and delivering a mass reach advertising campaign aimed at reminding people who did not receive an update pack to enrol or update their details.
21. We know that twenty per cent of electors move each year. In between elections, as time passes since the last update campaign, the electoral rolls become less current. When a referendum or by-election is held during the parliamentary cycle, consideration is given to the type of enrolment campaign needed to update the rolls based on proximity to the last update campaign.
22. At the time of the referendums, it had been 15 months since the enrolment update campaign for the 2014 General Election. The short timeframe between the first and second referendums meant that any further enrolment campaign for the second referendum would need to take place in January and would be unlikely to be effective given that it would be during the summer holiday period when many electors are away from home.
23. To mitigate the risk of a large number of returned voting papers and lower turnout, the Commission had recommended a full update campaign that would have cost approximately an additional \$4 million (\$2 million for the cost of an enrolment pack to be mailed to each elector and \$2 million for increased advertising).
24. For the first referendum, the \$1.8 million that was provided for the enrolment drive allowed for a much lower-level enrolment campaign (a household drop notifying electors that the referendums were coming and a limited advertising campaign). There was no enrolment campaign for the second referendum.
25. For the first flag referendum the Commission processed 68,482 enrolment applications and updates between the start of the enrolment campaign on 4 October and 19 November 2015 (the last day to enrol for the first referendum) resulting in a net increase to the roll of 23,182 electors.
26. During the period between the referendums (11 December 2015 and 4 February 2016) the Commission processed 42,319 enrolment applications and updates. From the close of the roll for the second referendum and the beginning of the voting period (4 February to 8 March 2016) the Commission processed a further 25,935 enrolment applications and updates.
27. The number of eligible electors enrolled for the first referendum was 92.95% and 92.58% for the second referendum (comparable to the number enrolled at the last

parliamentary election – 92.6%). The lowest levels of enrolment for both referendums were in the 18-29 year old cohort.

Total enrolled voters for referendums one and two

Enrolment rate	Referendum One			Referendum Two		
	23 Oct 2015 (close of referendum roll)	20 Nov 2015 (start of voting period)	Growth	4 Feb 2016 (close of referendum roll)	3 Mar 2016 (start of voting period)	Growth
Total eligible population	92.30%	92.95%	0.65%	92.23%	92.58%	0.35%
18-29 year olds	77.36%	78.17%	0.81%	76.63%	77.08%	0.45%

28. However, both the number of people whose packs came back GNA (and the very large number of people who had to request a replacement voting paper) indicate that the lack of a full update campaign did impact on the accuracy of the referendum roll and did result in people being unable to vote in the referendums because they had been removed from the roll for a district and put on the dormant roll¹.
29. In a postal referendum, dormant electors are not eligible to vote as postal voting papers cannot be sent to an elector for whom the Commission has no current address information. Members of the public who were not enrolled, or who were on the dormant roll, and who contacted the Commission during the voting periods for the referendums, were often disappointed to find out they could not vote even though the voting period was still open.
30. For the first referendum, 69,438 voting packs were returned GNA by the time the processing centre closed on 15 December 2015, or around 2.2% of voters on the referendum roll. For the second referendum, 49,720 voting packs were returned GNA by the time the processing centre closed on 30 March 2016, or around 1.6% of voters on the referendum roll. This compares to the much lower level of GNA at the general election where 2,489 or 0.4% of EasyVote packs were returned GNA.
31. Between the two referendums approximately 36,000 living people were removed from the electoral rolls. The main reason for people having been removed from the electoral rolls between the referendums was not being able to contact electors at their enrolled addresses. For example, electors were removed from the rolls where their referendum voting pack was returned with an accompanying message clearly indicating the elector no longer lived at the address. These electors were put on the dormant roll.
32. **Recommendation:** The Commission recommends that a full enrolment update campaign is conducted before the voting period begins for all future postal referendums, if it has been more than six months since the last update campaign.

¹ An elector is placed on the dormant roll when a Registrar of Electors cannot contact an elector at the elector's address on the roll (section 89G of the Electoral Act 1993).

VOTING SERVICES

33. New Zealand Post produced the voting packs and managed the mail out and return of voting packs. New Zealand Post delivered 6.4 million pieces of outgoing mail and 3.7 million items of incoming mail for the two referendums.
34. In the Commission's view, the three week voting period continues to be the optimum timeframe for conducting a referendum using the postal service. This provides sufficient time to ensure:
- all voting packs can be delivered; and
 - any person who has not received their voting pack, has time to request a replacement voting paper.

Overseas voters

35. For the first referendum, 53,420 voters based overseas who were enrolled before 20 November 2015 were sent voting papers. International postal issues caused by the Christmas and holiday periods meant some overseas voters did not receive voting papers, or received them too late.
36. For the second referendum, 53,303 voters based overseas who were enrolled before 3 March 2016 were sent voting papers.
37. For the first time for a referendum, overseas voters were able to return their voting papers via internet upload. Some overseas voters returned their votes via post while a very small number of voters utilised the provision to return their voting paper by fax. The table below shows the number of overseas voters using internet upload and fax to return their voting papers.

Total overseas votes received by upload and fax

	Referendum One		Referendum Two	
	No.	%	No.	%
Upload	8,866	95.6	13,026	96.4
Fax	405	4.4	484	3.6
Total	9,271	100	13,510	100

38. At the 2014 general election, voters could download and upload their voting papers. The download facility was not provided for the referendums due to the short timeframe required to develop and test a robust system.
39. **Recommendation:** Due to the decline of postal services worldwide, the Commission recommends that consideration be given to whether both the download and upload system for overseas voters should be made available for future parliamentary referendums.

Services for remote voters

40. The Act enabled voters in remote locations to apply to receive and return their votes via non-postal mechanisms. Successful applicants were able to have their vote either emailed or faxed to them, which they were then able to return via internet upload, fax or post, or have their vote dictated over the telephone. Voters were able to apply on the grounds that they were based:
- on Tokelau, Campbell Island or Raoul Island;
 - in the Ross Dependency;
 - on a fishing or naval vessel; or
 - in a remote location overseas.
41. In order to facilitate voting from these remote locations, the Commission:
- contacted the Department of Conservation to determine if electors would be stationed in the areas under their control during the referendums;
 - obtained information from Fishserve so that fishing vessels identified as being at sea for the entire voting period could be contacted; and
 - contacted the Tokelau Administrator.
42. Due to concerns around the ability of other countries' postal systems to deliver voting packs within the prescribed timeframes, the Commission adopted a policy of determining whether a voter was in a 'remote location overseas' in terms of their access to a postal service that could deliver a voting paper within the voting period – not just the remoteness of their physical location. In general terms, anyone overseas who had not received their voting paper by day 12 of each referendum was able to make use of these provisions. 574 applications were received and approved in the first referendum and 770 in the second referendum.

43. **Recommendation:** Under the Act, only fishing vessels and navy vessels were eligible to use remote voting services. The Commission recommends that the remote voter provisions are extended to all types of vessels and offshore installations for future referendums.

Dictation voting

44. The Act enabled a telephone dictation voting service to be provided (for the first time in a referendum) to electors who are blind, partially blind or who have a disability which means they are unable to mark a voting paper without assistance. Enabling people who are blind or vision impaired to effectively participate in a very visual referendum meant working closely with support service providers to develop and distribute a DVD to enable voters to hear the official descriptions of the flag options and training dictation voting telephone operators to provide legal descriptions of the flags to callers. The Flag Consideration Panel also made flag designs available in braille. 131 voters cast their vote using the dictation service for the first referendum and 214 for the second referendum.

Services to other voters

45. The Commission provided additional services to electors who were likely to face particular issues receiving a postal voting paper including, people on police and armed force deployments, and remand prisoners. For example, special arrangements were made for service people in Iraq and Timor Leste. 204 replacement voting papers for the second referendum were generated for staff on the HMNZ Canterbury and HMNZ Wellington deployed to Fiji as a result of Cyclone Winston. In conjunction with the Department of Corrections, the Commission issued replacement voting papers for 245 remand prisoners in the first referendum and 204 in the second referendum.

REPLACEMENT VOTING PAPERS

46. Voters could request a replacement paper if they did not receive their original voting paper, or if they had lost, spoilt or damaged it. Voters were able to request replacement papers either by telephone, through the 0800 service, or via the elections website.
47. The Commission received 22,046 requests for replacement voting papers for the first referendum and 30,451 for the second referendum. **Appendix C** provides further statistics on the pattern of requests and the reasons for requesting replacement votes.

Timeframes for request of replacement votes

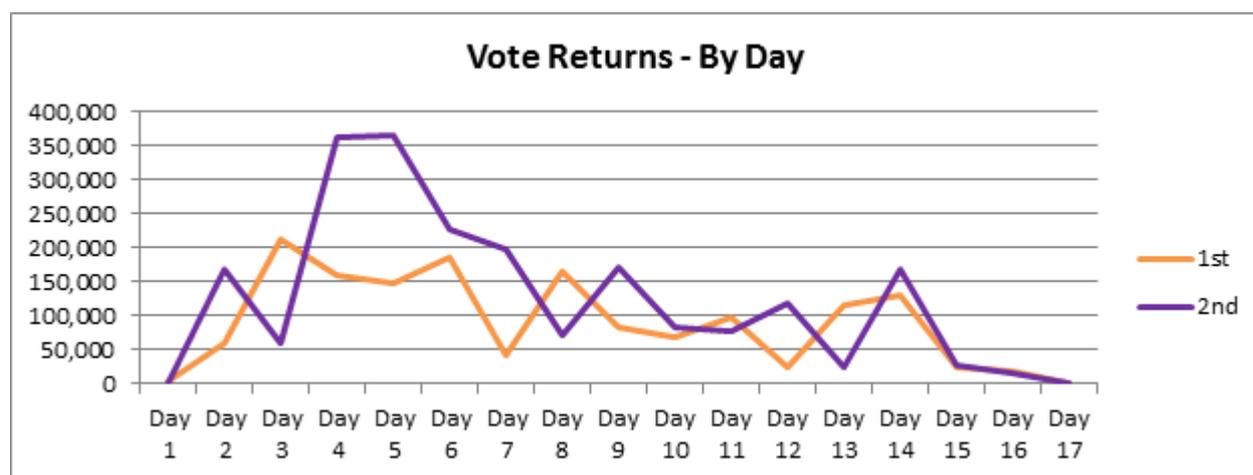
48. The majority of requests for replacement voting papers occurred because the elector had not received their voting paper. The elector had either:
- Permanently changed their residential or postal address, but had not updated their details with the Commission prior to the close of the referendum roll for printing purposes (23 October 2015 for the first referendum and 4 February 2016 for the second referendum); or
 - Were going to be away from their usual address for the voting period and needed a voting paper to be sent to a temporary address.
49. It could take up to five working days for a voter to receive a replacement voting paper. The Commission found that some people that applied for replacement voting papers just prior to the noon deadline three days before the last day of the voting period, did not receive their voting papers in time to return them before the close of the voting period.

- | |
|---|
| <p>50. Recommendation: The Commission recommends that the deadline to request replacement voting papers is noon six days before the last day of the voting period to better reflect the time it takes to issue and deliver the replacement voting paper and for the elector to have sufficient time to vote.</p> |
|---|

VOTE PROCESSING

51. The Commission established a 1,500m² vote processing centre to receive, process, and secure voting papers in the Commission's offices. Over the two voting periods, over 210 temporary staff were involved in processing the votes.

52. The vote processing centre dealt with a very high volume of returned votes processed on a daily basis throughout the voting periods as shown in the table below.



53. Data was progressively scanned, captured and stored during the voting period but, in accordance with the legislation, not counted. To maintain the secrecy of the ballot, the vote data and elector data were stored in separate databases and voting papers could not be linked back to individual voter details by processing staff.
54. Voting papers were placed into batches of 50 (approximately 73,750 batches in total). The batches were then scanned and uploaded into the referendum management system (RMS). Each voter had a unique referendum ID which was recorded on their voting paper in a QR code. The referendum ID was used to mark each person off the roll as having voted. RMS used Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for the first referendum and Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) for the second referendum to capture the vote on each voting paper.
55. Any mark on the voting paper that RMS could not read went to an operator for primary consideration. The operator could either modify or confirm the vote. If the operator was not sure about the markings, the vote would be escalated for review. All voting papers underwent a secondary check to ensure RMS (and any primary check) had correctly recorded the vote.
56. Any inconsistencies between primary and secondary checks would result in the vote being automatically sent for review. The Returning Officer or, on the application of the Returning Officer, the Judge appointed to supervise the referendums made the final review decisions.
57. The Commission conducted daily auditing of voting papers during all stages of vote processing to ensure the information in RMS accurately captured the information on physical voting papers. **Appendix D** provides a diagram of the steps involved in vote processing.

Security

58. Up to three security guards were stationed on site 24 hours per day for the duration of each voting period. Access to the processing area of the floor was restricted to approved persons only. All persons working inside the processing area signed a secrecy declaration and no phones or other portable electronic devices were allowed in the vote

processing areas. A secure room was set up on site for the storage of voting papers during the voting periods.

Supervision of processing

59. His Honour Judge John Walker was appointed to supervise the referendums along with 11 Justices of the Peace, who were appointed to assist the Judge. Theirs is a vitally important role undertaken on behalf of the New Zealand public to monitor the integrity of the vote processing.
60. A Justice of the Peace was on site (on each floor) during the entirety of the vote processing period for both referendums. The Commission provided the Judge with daily updates on progress and the Judge made determinations on the formality or informality of voting papers referred to him by the Returning Officer. The Judge also provided written decisions of the application of the law to invalid votes and the reasonableness of the period for lodging voting papers with the Clerk of the House for safe custody. Together, the Judge and Justices carried out over 1,000 hours of supervisory work over the two referendums.

Informality of voting papers

61. For the first referendum, an informal vote was recorded when the voting paper did not clearly indicate the voter's first preference. For the second flag referendum, an informal vote was recorded when the voting paper did not clearly indicate the option for which the elector wished to vote. A vote could be informal because the voter left the paper blank, the voter took deliberate action to spoil the paper, or the voter was unsure how to mark their voting paper and their intention was not clear.
 62. For the first referendum, 9.7% of valid votes were recorded as informal compared to 0.2% for the second referendum.
 63. For both referendums the Commission undertook an audit of informal votes to understand:
 - potential voter confusion resulting from the use of preferential voting in the first referendum; and
 - the number of voters who deliberately informalised their voting papers.
 64. The results of the Commission's audit are detailed in **Appendix E**.
 65. The audit shows that the much higher level of informality for the first referendum was due mostly to voters deliberately spoiling their voting paper (92.9%). However, the level of informality as a result of confusion on the part of the voter about how to mark the voting paper was much higher in the first referendum, under the preferential system (7.1%), than in the second referendum, under First Past the Post (1.2%). This represents a small but significant minority of an estimated 10,650 people that voted in the first referendum but whose vote could not count because they did not understand how to mark their paper.
66. **Recommendation:** The Commission recommends conducting a more extensive voter education campaign if preferential voting, or any voting system other than First Past the Post, is proposed for future referendums.

ENFORCEMENT

67. The referendum legislation did not allow a voter to vote more than once and dual votes were excluded from the count. RMS was designed to identify if more than one vote was returned for the same voter, (i.e. by returning original and replacement voting papers or returning duplicate copies of a voting paper) and to detect any unusual patterns of replacement requests.
68. For the first referendum, the Commission referred to the Police seven instances of apparent dual voting.
69. For the second referendum, the Commission referred to the Police:
- Fourteen instances of apparent dual voting.
 - Five incidents involving individuals who posted on social media that they have voted or intended to vote more than once using other electors' voting papers.
 - Two instances of apparent theft of voting papers. (The first referral involved the theft of two voting papers. The second referral involved theft of 188 voting papers which is outlined in more detail below.)
70. On 22 March 2016, the Commission detected an unusual pattern of 'wrong version' voting papers being returned from the Hutt South electorate. In examining the original and replacement voting papers, it became evident that whilst the replacement votes varied, the original votes all had very similar markings on them. The papers had all been delivered to seven interconnected streets in the Lower Hutt area.
71. The Commission looked further at the timing of delivery, the timing of replacement requests, and votes received from the immediate locations. The Commission concluded that it appeared likely that a person or persons had intercepted the mail and stolen voting papers from mailboxes along these streets, consistently marking the voting papers, and returning them.
72. Of the 188 voting papers, 83 papers were already invalid because the elector to whom the vote had been issued had requested a replacement voting paper. In the remaining cases, no replacements had been requested, but were disallowed by the Returning Officer on the basis that the paper appeared to have been stolen and marked by a person other than the voter to whom it was issued.
73. These matters are still with Police and we await their determinations.

REFERENDUM ADVERTISING RULES

74. The Commission recommended a light-handed advertising regime given the unique nature of the flag referendums.
75. The referendum advertising rules worked well, attracting few complaints. In particular, the Commission noted a high level of engagement on social media. Material published online was exempt from the advertising rules, allowing members of the public, interest groups and others to freely debate and express their views in this medium.

RESULTS

Preliminary results

76. For each referendum the vote counting process began immediately after the close of voting at 7:00pm. Preliminary results were reported by the target time of 8:30pm on the last day of the voting period via a press release and the Commission's election results website.
77. The results were provided much sooner after the close of voting than is possible in a general election because the vote information is captured progressively during the voting period in RMS.

Official results

78. For each referendum, official results were declared before the target time of 5:00pm on the date of the official results. Results were released by press release and by publication of a notice in the New Zealand Gazette for both referendums.
79. Voter turnout for the first referendum was 48.78%. Turnout for the second referendum was 67.8%. See **Appendix F** for detailed results and statistics.
80. Under the Act, the Commission was not required to count and declare the results by electorate for the first flag referendum. Under a preferential voting system for a nationwide referendum it was not possible to provide results based on the number of votes each flag design received by electorate. This is because the result and the calculation of votes to be transferred at each iteration, at which an option is excluded, is based on the total number of valid votes nationwide and those voters' first and subsequent preferences.
81. During both referendums, the Commission received a number of enquiries from voters who wished to check that their vote had been received. Under the Act, there was no way, either during or after the referendum, that a voter could check that their vote had been received. The referendum roll is not available for public inspection. It is secured with the Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives after the result is declared, it must be held unopened except by order of the Court or Parliament, and it must be destroyed after six months.
82. Following a general election, a master roll for a district is available for public inspection at the Office of the Registrar of Electors. The master roll shows who has been marked off the roll as having voted. The master roll cannot be inspected electronically and cannot be copied.
83. **Recommendation:** The Commission recommends that, similar to a general election, a master roll for future referendums is produced and available for public inspection. The Commission's national office and each Registrar could hold a printed copy for inspection for six months which would be consistent with all referendum material being held for six months by the Clerk of the House and then destroyed.

FINANCE

84. The Commission's projected budget for the conduct of both referendums was \$15.64 million. The Commission delivered the referendums within budget at a total cost of \$13.525 million. The under-spend was largely due to final voter turnout and related savings in costs of postage and vote processing. **Appendix G** summarises actual costs against budgeted costs approved by Cabinet.

CONCLUSION

85. The referendums were conducted smoothly, within budget, and all statutory deadlines were met.

RECOMMENDATIONS

86. I recommend that you:

- **Note** that the first and second referendums on the New Zealand flag were conducted within budget and that statutory deadlines were met.
- **Agree** to refer a copy of this report for the information of the Justice and Electoral Select Committee.
- **Note** that the Commission will publish this report on its website.

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE REFERENDUMS

	Recommendation	Reference in report
1.	Conduct a full enrolment update campaign before the voting period begins for all future postal referendums, if it has been more than six months since the last update campaign.	Pages 3-5
2.	Consider whether both the download and upload system for overseas voters should be made available for future parliamentary referendums.	Page-6
3.	Extend the remote voter provisions to include all types of vessels and offshore installations for future referendums.	Page 7
4.	Change the deadline to request replacement voting papers to noon six days before the last day of the voting period to better reflect the time it takes to issue and deliver the replacement voting paper and for the elector to have sufficient time to vote.	Page 8
5.	Conduct a more extensive voter education campaign if preferential voting, or any voting system other than First Past the Post, is proposed for future referendums.	Page 10
6.	Produce a master roll for future referendums which is available for public inspection.	Page 12

APPENDIX B – FLAG REFERENDUMS TIMELINE

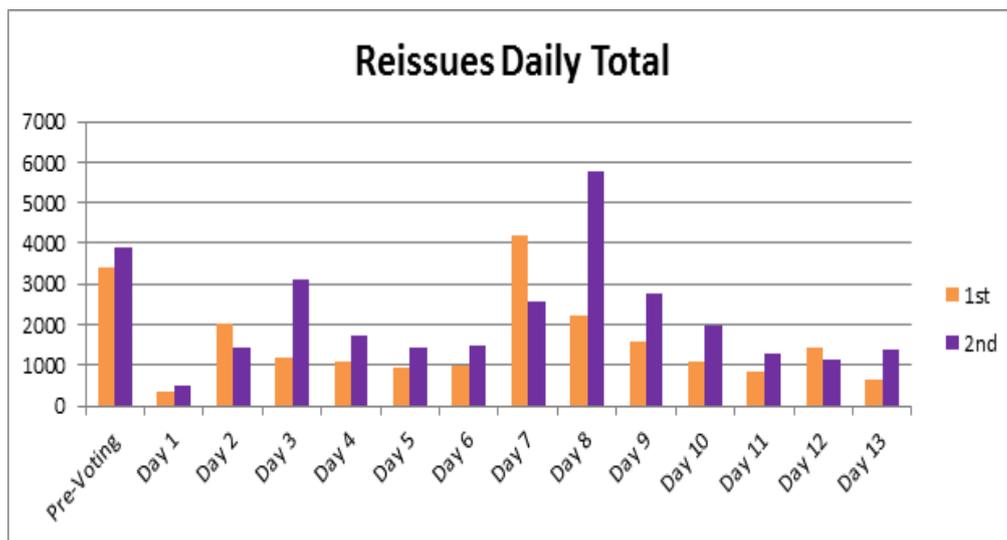
ITEM	DATE
Referendum 1 Conduct	October – December 2015
Gazetting of the closure of the Preliminary Referendum Roll	18 September 2015
Close of main Referendum Roll	23 October 2015
Start of public requests for replacement voting papers	30 October 2015
Start of delivery of voting packs with overseas addresses	18 November 2015
Start of voting period	20 November 2015
Delivery of main run voting packs (4 days)	20 – 24 November 2015
Replacement (reissue) voting paper packs produced	20 November – 8 December 2015
Supplementary referendum roll generated	24 November 2015
Supplementary voting packs delivered (FastPost)	27 November 2015
Requests for replacement voting papers closes	12 noon, 8 December 2015
End of Voting Period (“Election Day”)	7:00pm, 11 December 2015
Preliminary Count	After 7:00pm, 11 December 2015
Official Count declared	After midday, 15 December 2015
Application for an Inquiry – 20 working days	16 December 2015 – 21 January 2016
Referendum 2 Conduct	February – April 2016
Close of main Referendum Roll	4 February 2016
Start of delivery of voting packs with overseas addresses	1 March 2016
Start of voting period	3 March 2016
Delivery of main run voting packs (4 days)	3 – 7 March 2016
Replacement (reissue) voting paper packs produced	3 – 21 March 2016
Supplementary referendum roll generated	8 March 2016
Supplementary voting packs delivered (FastPost)	11 March 2016
Requests for replacement voting papers closes	12:00 noon, 21 March 2016
End of Voting Period (“Election Day”)	7:00pm, 24 March 2016
Preliminary Count	After 7:00pm, 24 March 2016
Easter	25 – 28 March 2016
Official Count declared	After midday, 30 March 2016
Application for an Inquiry – 20 working days	31 March – 29 April 2016

APPENDIX C – REPLACEMENT VOTE STATISTICS

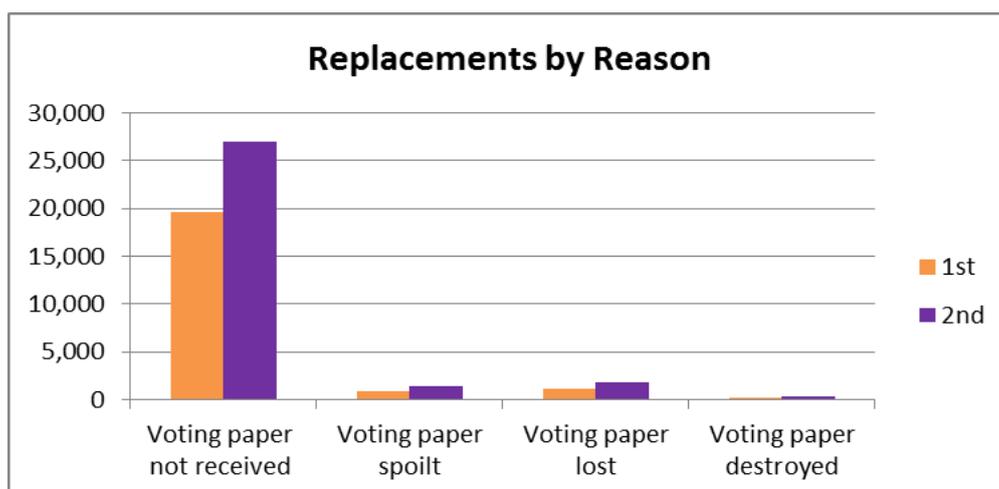
Total replacement votes

	Referendum One		Referendum Two	
	No.	%	No.	%
Call	12,257	55.6	16,366	53.7
Website	9,789	44.4	14,085	46.3
Total	22,046	100.0	30,451	100.0

The pattern of requests for replacement voting papers for both referendums

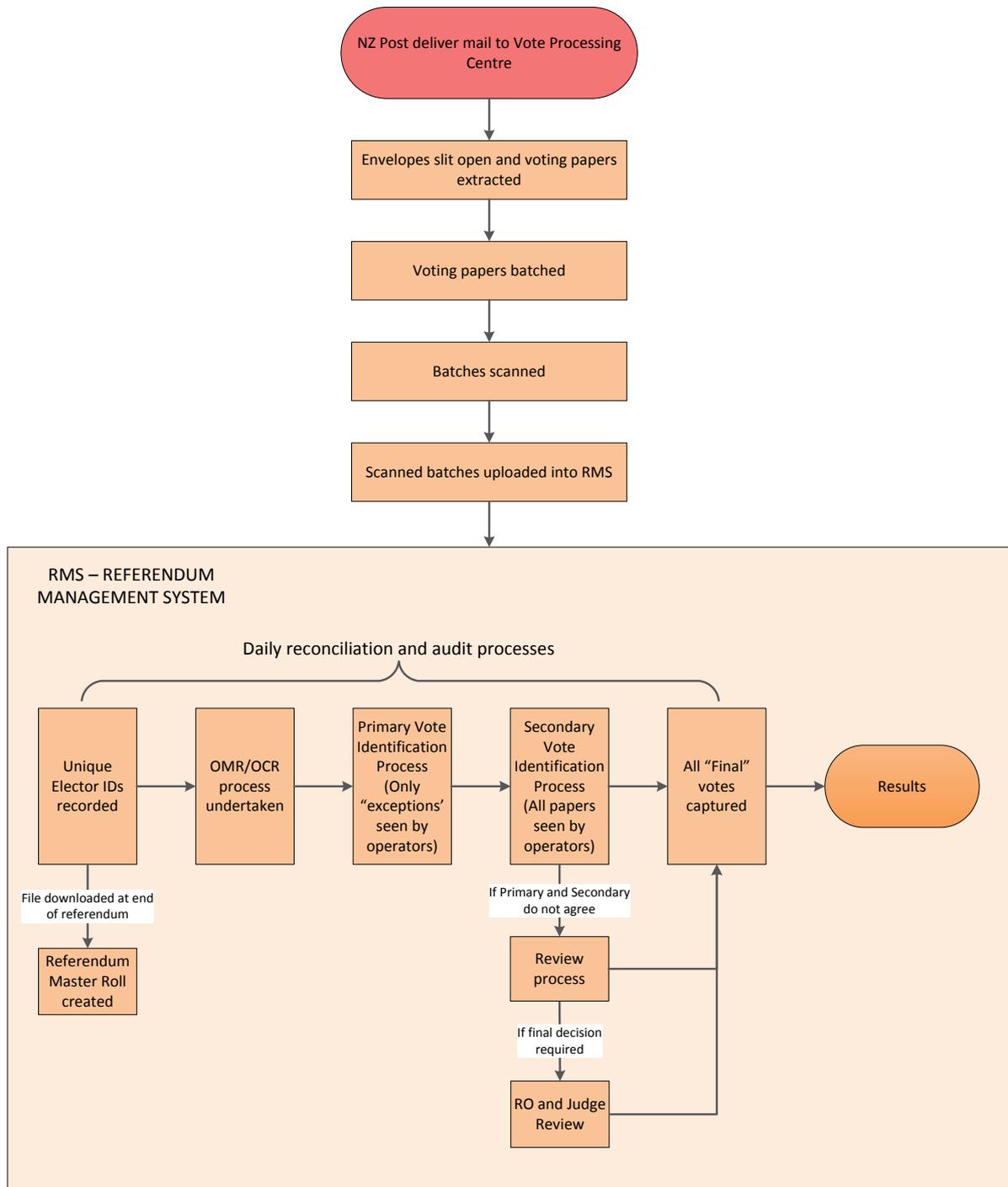


Reasons why most replacement voting paper requests were made



APPENDIX D – VOTE PROCESSING CHART

Voting Processing



APPENDIX E – RESULTS OF INTERNAL AUDIT: INFORMALITY

A number of informal votes were audited during each referendum and the following categories used to determine the reason for a vote's informality. The numbers chosen provide for a 99% confidence level, and have a margin of error of +/-3%.

Referendum One

Categories	Total	Percentage	Mistake/ Deliberate	Group percentage
No number '1', but other numbers	117	6.17	M	7.1
More than one number '1'	16	0.84	M	
Unreadable handwriting (resulting in no number '1')	2	0.11	M	
More than one 'other' mark	458	24.17	D	92.9
Blank	103	5.44	D	
Paper crossed through or wording written on it that does not change the question and no preferences given	1,156	61.00	D	
Changed written question	2	0.11	D	
Changed a flag design they have given a number '1'	25	1.32	D	
Drawn own flag and allocated a number '1'	16	0.84	D	
Total	1,895	100.00		

Referendum Two

Categories	Total	Percentage	Mistake/ Deliberate	Group percentage
Unable to determine if the mark is a positive vote for the option	23	1.21	M	1.2
Blank	1,347	70.90	D	98.8
Either crossed through or marks placed in both boxes (e.g. two crosses or two ticks)	417	21.95	D	
Written question has been changed	0	0.00	D	
Flag option has been changed	113	5.95	D	
Total	1,900	100.00		100

APPENDIX F – OFFICIAL RESULTS

Full results, including turnout by electorate are available at www.electionresults.govt.nz

First Referendum on the New Zealand Flag Final Result, 15 December 2015

The Electoral Commission has released the final result for the first referendum on the New Zealand Flag. The referendum asked the question:

"If the New Zealand flag changes, which flag would you prefer?"

The most preferred alternative flag design chosen through the first referendum was Option A: Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue).



The next most preferred flag design was Option E: Silver Fern (Red, White and Blue) followed in order of preference by Option B: Red Peak, Option D: Silver Fern (Black and White) and Option C: Koru.

The total votes received were 1,546,734, which includes 149,747 informal votes (9.7%) and 3,372 invalid votes (0.22%).

Voter turnout was 48.78%. Turnout is calculated by taking the total votes received as a percentage of the total number of voters enrolled as at 19 November 2015 (3,170,726).

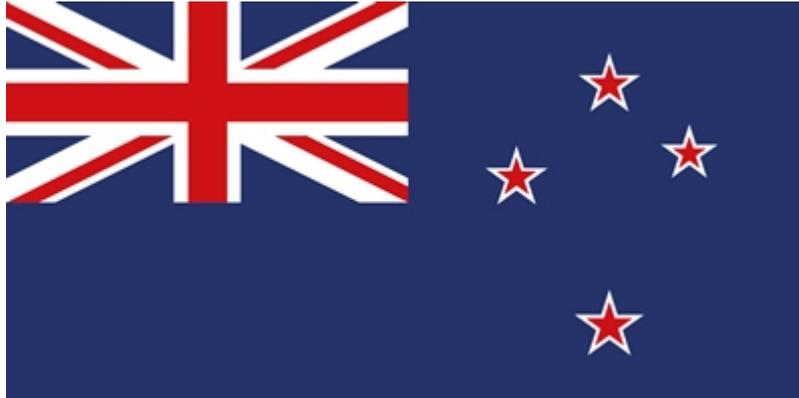
Second Referendum on the New Zealand Flag Final Result, 30 March 2016

The Electoral Commission has released the final result for the second referendum on the New Zealand Flag. The referendum asked the question:

"What is your choice for the New Zealand flag?"

The option with the most votes was

Option B: Current New Zealand Flag



The votes were cast as follows:

		Number of Votes Received	Percentage of Total Valid Votes
Option A: Silver Fern Flag		921,876	43.2%
Option B: Current New Zealand Flag		1,208,702	56.6%
Informal Votes		5,044	0.2%
Total Valid Votes		2,135,622	100%

The number of invalid votes cast was 5,273.

Voter turnout was 67.8%. Turnout is calculated by taking the total number of votes received (2,140,895 valid and invalid votes) as a percentage of the total number of voters enrolled as at 3 March 2016 (3,158,576).

APPENDIX G – ACTUAL AND BUDGETED COSTS

	Activity	Budget (million)	Actual (million)
Referendum One	Enrolment drive	\$1.800	\$1.874
	Postage	\$2.550	\$2.124
	Software, printing and distribution	\$1.350	\$1.729
	Temporary staff and operating expenses	\$1.780	\$0.788
	EC Public education campaign	\$1.350	\$1.387
	Total	\$8.830	\$7.902
Referendum Two	Enrolment drive	\$-	\$-
	Postage	\$2.550	\$2.441
	Software, printing and distribution	\$1.200	\$1.075
	Temporary staff and operating	\$1.710	\$0.714
	EC Public education campaign	\$1.350	\$1.393
	Total	\$6.810	\$5.623
EC Total		\$15.640	\$13.525