



Electoral Commission
QUEENSLAND

2026 Stafford State by-election report

Acknowledgement of Country

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Electoral Commission of Queensland

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Contents

Introduction	1
Snapshot	2
Timetable	3
Nominations.....	4
Voter services.....	5
Enrolment	5
Election day voting	5
Early voting	6
Voting centres and office premises.....	7
Postal voting.....	7
Electronically assisted voting.....	8
Declared institution voting (mobile polling)	9
Accessibility services.....	9
Election staff.....	9
Communication and awareness	10
ECQ website	10
ECQ service centre.....	11
Waste management	11
Feedback and complaints.....	11
Election results	12
Compliance activities.....	13
Electoral participant compliance	13
Election summary returns.....	13
Election funding claims.....	14
Voter compliance	14
Review of informal ballot papers	15
Outcomes.....	15
Unintentional informal voting	16
Intentional informal voting	17
Appendices.....	18



**Electoral
Commission**
QUEENSLAND

15 October 2026

The Honourable Deb Frecklington MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Integrity
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Email: attorney.general@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Attorney-General

Please find enclosed a report on the Stafford State by-election held on 16 May 2026 for tabling in Parliament.

In accordance with section 18(2) of the *Electoral Act 1992* (the Act), the report details the operation of part 7 of the Act in relation to the by-election. I note under section 18(3) of the Act, a copy of this report is required to be laid before the Legislative Assembly within three sitting days from its receipt.

The report will also be published on the ECQ website, subject to it being tabled.

Should you require further information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Pat Vidgen PSM
Electoral Commissioner

Introduction

On Saturday, 16 May 2026, the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) conducted a by-election to fill a vacancy in the Queensland State electorate of Stafford.

Stafford is a metropolitan electorate located in the north of Brisbane. Its area encompasses the areas of Wilston, Chermside, Grange, Kedron, Stafford and Stafford Heights among others.

The vacancy arose following the passing of the then sitting member for Stafford, Mr Jimmy Sullivan MP on Thursday, 9 April 2026.

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, issued the Writ for Election (writ) on Friday, 17 April 2026. The writ was issued under section 83(1)(b) of the *Electoral Act 1992* (the *Electoral Act*), to fill a vacancy arising when the Legislative Assembly is not sitting.

This was the second State by-election held during the term of the 58th Parliament of Queensland.

Voter participation for the Stafford State by-election (the by-election), referred to as 'turnout', was 81.63%. This is higher than the recent Hinchinbrook State by-election held in November 2025, which had a turnout rate of 77.81%. Generally voter turnout at by-elections declines when compared to participation at quadrennial elections. For example, at the 2024 State general election, voter turnout for the Stafford electorate was 90.23%, around 8.5 percentage points higher than turnout at the by-election.

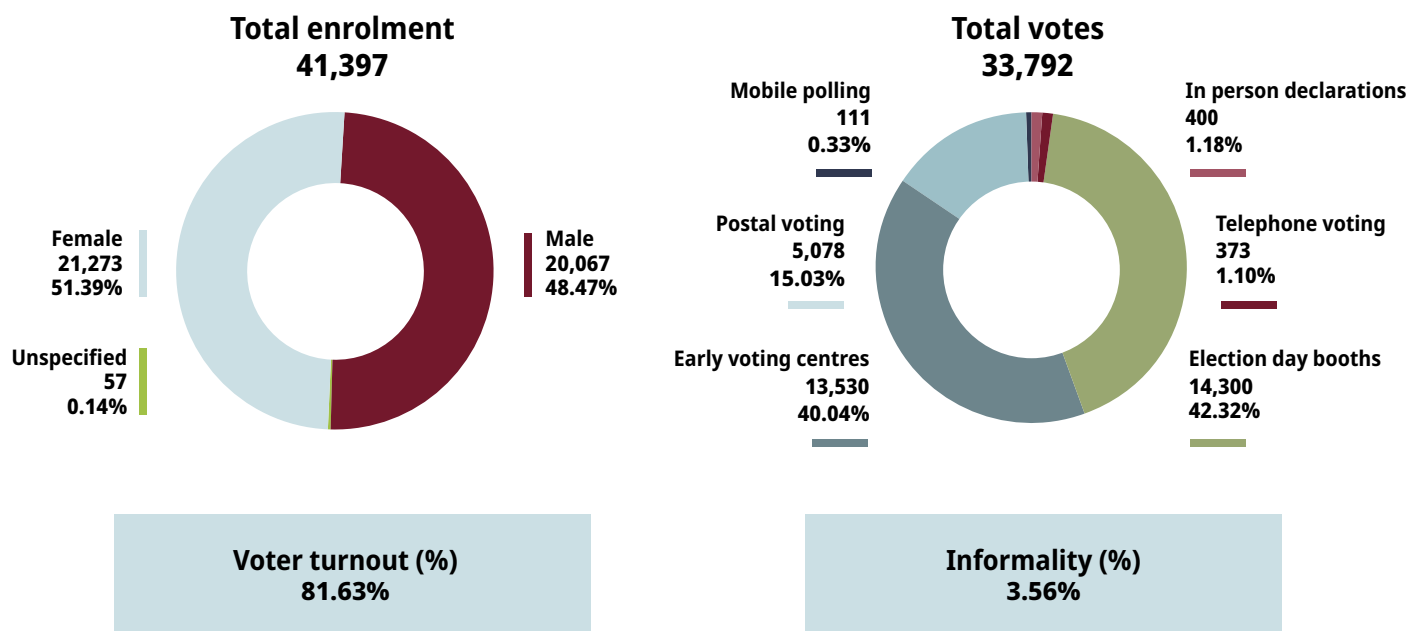
Queensland State elections use the full preferential voting system. Voters are required to place a first preference next to the name of their preferred candidate and then rank all other candidates in their order of preference. Informality, where voters incorrectly fill out their ballot paper, was 3.56% at the by-election, which is higher for Stafford compared to the 2024 State general election where informality was 2.64%.

Following the completion of the by-election and counting of votes, Mr Luke Richmond of the Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland) was elected to represent the Stafford electorate.

The writ declaring the name of the elected candidate was returned to the Governor of Queensland on Friday, 22 May 2026. ECQ also published a notice declaring the election result and notifying the return of the writ in the Queensland Government Gazette on the date of the writ's return.

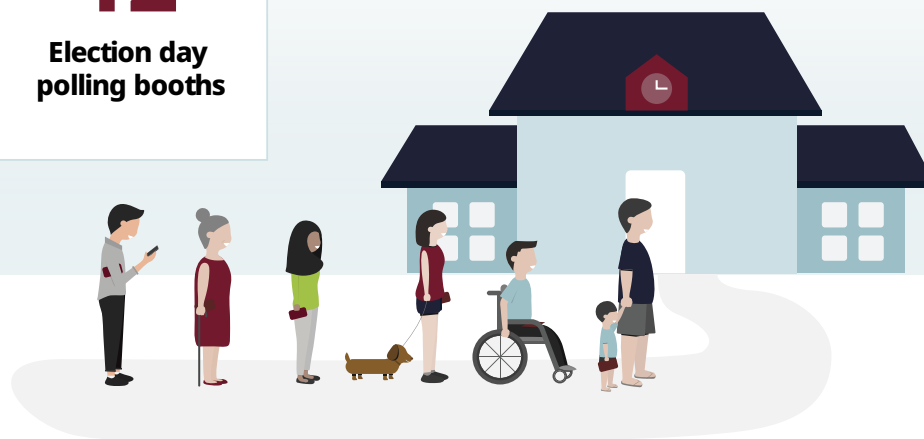
A copy of the finalised writ and gazetted elected candidate notice are available on our website and at **Appendix A**.

Snapshot



2
Early voting
centres

12
Election day
polling booths



Returning Officer (RO): Stephen Hodge

RO Office: Unit 4, 77 Araluen Street
KEDRON QLD 4031

Voting system: Full preferential voting

Elected candidate: Mr Luke Richmond
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)

*Refer to full distribution of preferences at **Appendix D** and on the ECQ's website.*

Timetable

Writ issued	Friday, 17 April 2026
Candidate nominations opened	9.00am Saturday, 18 April 2026
Electoral roll closed	Tuesday, 21 April 2026
Candidate nominations closed	12.00pm Friday, 24 April 2026
Ballot paper order draw	2.30pm Friday, 24 April 2026
Postal voting application period	Start: 10.00am Friday, 17 April 2026 End: 7.00pm Monday, 4 May 2026
Early voting period	Start: 8.00am Tuesday, 5 May 2026 End: 6.00pm Friday, 15 May 2026
Electronically assisted voting period (telephone voting)	Start: 9.00am Tuesday, 5 May 2026 End: 6.00pm Saturday, 16 May 2026
How-to-vote card lodgement deadline	5.00pm Friday, 8 May 2026
Election day voting	8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday, 16 May 2026
Deadline for completing postal votes	6.00pm Saturday, 16 May 2026
Deadline for the return of postal votes	6.00pm Tuesday, 26 May 2026
Writ returned	Friday, 22 May 2026
Deadline for filing a challenge to the result	Friday, 29 May 2026
Last date for return of writ	Thursday, 9 July 2026
Deadline for the return of election summary returns	Monday, 31 August 2026

Nominations

Candidate nominations opened 9.00am, Saturday 18 April and closed at 12.00pm Friday, 24 April 2026. Nine candidates nominated to contest the by-election, 7 of whom were endorsed by registered political parties and 2 of which were not endorsed by any registered political party.

Once nominations closed, the Returning Officer conducted a ballot paper order draw at 2.30pm on Friday, 24 April 2026. In the presence of witnesses, the Returning Officer drew the names of each nominated candidate to determine the order in which the candidates' names were to appear on the ballot paper.

A gazetted register of political parties and a register of candidates were published in accordance with the *Electoral Act*, with both documents available on our website and included at **Appendix B**.

ECQ printed a total of 62,500 ballot papers for the by-election to ensure adequate supply across the electorate.

Candidates in ballot paper order

1. RICHMOND, Luke
AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (STATE OF QUEENSLAND)
2. VERNE, Jacqueline
LEGALISE CANNABIS QUEENSLAND (PARTY)
3. SMART, Damien
4. SELFF, Daniel
LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF QUEENSLAND
5. PARRY, Liam
6. LANE, Jess
QUEENSLAND GREENS
7. O'BRIEN, Lucy
ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY (QUEENSLAND)
8. DENARO, Adam
FAMILY FIRST QUEENSLAND
9. HAMMOND, Fiona
LIBERAL NATIONAL PARTY OF QUEENSLAND

Voter services

Voting is compulsory in Queensland and ECQ ensures all voters have adequate opportunity to cast a ballot through accessible and widely available voting services.

For the by-election, ECQ offered in-person voting services for 2 weeks of early voting and on election day. To maximise convenience for Stafford voters, early voting hours were offered from 8.00am to 6.00pm

Enrolment

At the close of the electoral roll on Tuesday, 21 April 2026, the Stafford electorate had 41,397 enrolled voters.

New enrolments and updates to enrolment details were still accepted until 6.00pm Friday, 15 May 2026.

across a nine-day period, enabling voters to attend polling places ahead of election day. ECQ also made other voting services available for voters unable to attend polling places, including postal voting, telephone voting and mobile poling in declared institutions.

Voters who updated their details during this period may have had to complete a declaration vote to enable ECQ to verify their updated enrolment information.

For the by-election 400 in person declaration votes were cast.

Election day voting

Election day voting fast facts		
12 polling booths	14,300 votes cast	42.32% voted on election day

From 8.00am to 6.00pm on election day, Saturday, 16 May 2026, Stafford voters were able to attend 12 polling booths across the electorate. Approximately 42.32% of votes in the by-election were cast at election day polling booths.

Historically, election day voting has accounted for most of the votes cast at Queensland elections and remains the

busiest single day of voting. While election day voting was still the most popular voting service for the by-election, the number of voters choosing to cast their vote early continues to increase, with early voting demand at the Stafford by-election closely rivalling election day.

Polling booth details are listed below.

Election day polling booths			
Location	Venue	Address	Wheelchair access
Chermside East	Centrepont Church Hall	240 Hamilton Road, CHERMSIDE, QLD Australia 4032	Full
Chermside South	Chermside Kedron Community Church	Cnr Rode & Gympie Roads, KEDRON, QLD Australia 4031	Full
Chermside West	Craigslea State High School Auditorium	685 Hamilton Road, CHERMSIDE WEST, QLD Australia 4035	Full

Election day polling booths			
Location	Venue	Address	Wheelchair access
Grange	Wilston Scout Den	72 Sellheim Street, GRANGE, QLD Australia 4051	Full
Kedron	Kedron State School	Leckie Road, KEDRON, QLD Australia 4031	Assisted
Kedron West	Little Flower Church Hall	Cnr Wayland Street & Turner Road, KEDRON, QLD Australia 4031	Full
Newmarket	Newmarket State School	15 Banks Street, NEWMARKET, QLD Australia 4051	Assisted
Somerset Hills	Somerset Hills State School	233 Kitchener Road, STAFFORD HEIGHTS, QLD Australia 4053	Full
Stafford	Stafford State School	314 Stafford Road, STAFFORD, QLD Australia 4053	Full
Stafford Heights	Stafford Heights State School	95 Redwood Street, STAFFORD HEIGHTS, QLD Australia 4053	Full
Stafford West	Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church Hall	10 Thuruna Street and Appleby Road, STAFFORD, QLD Australia 4053	Full
Wilston	Wilston State School	11 Primrose Street, GRANGE, QLD Australia 4051	No access

Early voting

Early voting fast facts		
2 early voting centres	13,530 votes cast	40.04% voted early

Two early voting centres operated for a 2-week period between Tuesday, 5 May and Friday, 15 May 2026. Due to the Labour Day public holiday falling on Monday, 4 May 2026, early voting was held over 9 days.

Early voting was available from 8.00am to 6.00pm, continuing the expansion of early-voting hours that has been provided since the 2024 State general election.

This service proved to be very popular at the by-election, with approximately 40% of

votes cast during the early voting period, approximately 2% less than election day voting.

Early voting centre details are listed below.

Early voting centres			
Location	Venue	Address	Wheelchair access
Kedron	Chermside Kedron Community Church	Cnr Rode & Gympie Roads, KEDRON, QLD Australia 4031	Full
Stafford	Wilston Grange Australian Football Club	Hickey Park, Babarra Street, STAFFORD, QLD Australia 4818	Full

A polling and voter services notice was published on our website to notify and declare the availability of election day and early voting polling place information. The notice is included at **Appendix B**.

Voting centres and office premises

ECQ selects the most suitable premises available at the time of an election. Venue considerations are extensive and include size, security, location, accessibility, amenities, street frontage, access for deliveries, internet connectivity, workplace

health and safety and availability. The ability to secure premises that meet functional requirements can present challenges, particularly in negotiating agreements to enter short-term leases when the supply of premises is limited.

Postal voting

Postal voting fast facts		
6,129 postal votes issued	15.03% voted by post	
5,199 returned prior to the deadline	5,078 accepted into the count	121 rejected at scrutiny

Postal voting applications opened from Friday, 17 April 2026, and closed at 7.00pm Monday, 4 May 2026. Applications could be submitted online through our website, by telephone or through completing an application form.

ECQ commenced printing and despatch of postal vote materials to voters after Friday, 24 April 2026, following the close of candidate nominations and the ballot paper order draw.

Applications for postal votes ¹			
Online	Phone	Application forms (physical and email)	Special postal voters (automatically sent)
2,313	262	2,839	1,099

¹ Application data includes duplicates where a voter may have applied more than once. Where this occurred, the voter would still have only been issued one postal vote.

For the by-election, ECQ issued 6,129 postal votes , with 5,078 ballot papers returned and included in the count. This represented 15.03% of votes cast for the by-election.

Every postal vote returned to ECQ is scrutinised to ensure it meets legislative requirements. Postal votes that do not meet these requirements are rejected and not

included in the count. For the by-election, ECQ rejected 121 returned postal ballots from the count. The primary reasons for rejection were either related to postal vote declarations not signed by the voter or not witnessed, or where the elector had already voted through another service such as early voting.

Electronically assisted voting

Telephone voting fast facts		
395 registrations	373 votes cast	1.10% voted by telephone

Electronically assisted voting, commonly known as telephone voting, is a limited service primarily designed for voters who have an impairment, live a long distance from polling places or have a low level of literacy, enabling them to cast their vote anonymously via telephone. Although a resource and time-intensive method of taking votes, telephone voting is designed to enfranchise voters who:

- ▶ could not vote without assistance due to an impairment or insufficient level of literacy
- ▶ could not vote at a polling place due to an impairment
- ▶ were a registered special postal voter who was not detained in lawful custody
- ▶ distance voters whose enrolled address was more than 20 kilometres from a polling booth, or
- ▶ were not in Queensland at any time during the voting period, including electors located interstate or overseas

To cast a telephone vote, voters were required to make 2 phone calls, the first to check eligibility and register for the service, and the second to anonymously cast their vote.

ECQ uses two separate call centres for telephone voting to ensure the secrecy of the ballot. In the first call, voters applied to use the service and once deemed eligible, received a registration number and PIN.

In the second phone call, voters used the registration number and PIN to have their name anonymously marked off the electoral roll. During this call, an ECQ officer completed the ballot paper as dictated by the voter, with a second ECQ officer listening and observing to ensure the vote was recorded as per the voter's direction.

At the by-election, eligible voters were able to register to use the telephone voting service from Tuesday, 5 May until 12.00pm on election day, Saturday, 16 May 2026. Voters could then cast their telephone vote during the voting period from Tuesday, 5 May up until 6.00pm on election day.

At the by-election, Stafford voters cast 373 telephone votes. This is a significant increase when compared with the 2024 State general election, where Stafford voters cast 217 telephone votes.

Declared institution voting (mobile polling)

Mobile polling fast facts		
5 declared institutions were mobile polling booths	111 votes cast	0.33% voted by mobile polling

Declared institution voting is a form of mobile polling where polling officials visit patients and residents of registered declared institutions, such as aged care facilities, to enable them to more conveniently cast a ballot. To deliver the service, ECQ contacts registered declared institutions within the Stafford electorate to offer mobile polling

services to residents, especially those in high care, who could not otherwise attend a polling booth.

ECQ delivered mobile polling at 5 institutions for the by-election. The details of these institutions are available on our website and are included at **Appendix B**.

Accessibility services

ECQ provided a variety of services to ensure voting services at the by-election were accessible to all electors. This included:

- ▶ telephone voting
- ▶ declared institution voting
- ▶ publishing disability access information for polling places on our website
- ▶ making translation and interpreter services available for people who speak English as a second language
- ▶ providing a Multilingual Guide to Voting which included voting information in 25 languages other than English.

Disability access is a key consideration in the selection of election day and early voting venues and their locations. A total of 14 polling places were in operation for the

by-election, including 2 early voting centres and 12 election day polling booths. The table below shows a breakdown of polling place accessibility for the by-election.

Accessibility	Early voting centres	Election day venues
Full	2	9
Assisted	-	2
No accessibility	-	1

Additionally, at Queensland elections, voters are entitled to request a person join them in the polling booth to assist them to cast their ballot. This person can act as an interpreter, read or explain the ballot paper instructions, or complete the ballot paper according to the elector's instructions and place the ballot paper in the ballot box.

Election staff

Temporary election staff are vital to ensuring the smooth administration of election facilities and delivering voting services in the community.

ECQ appointed the Returning Officer for the by-election from the pool of staff who had previously worked at the local government elections and State general election in 2024.

This pool was created following a merit-based recruitment exercise undertaken in 2023. The role of the Returning Officer is to manage candidate nominations and voting operations in the electorate and ensure the election is conducted according to requirements of the *Electoral Act*.

The Returning Officer employed 195 temporary election staff to undertake various roles to deliver the by-election. These roles included supervising polling places, issuing votes, processing postal ballots, and counting votes. We received 271 applications to work at the by-election.

Communication and awareness

ECQ delivered a multi-channel communication and awareness strategy for the by-election. This was to ensure voters were aware of the by-election, had the necessary information to participate and cast a formal vote. Activities included:

- ▶ posting a voter information card to every elector as well as an electronic voter information card to all voters with a registered email address on the electoral roll
- ▶ sending 2 reminder SMS messages to Stafford voters with a registered mobile number on the electoral roll
- ▶ delivering a targeted social media information campaign
- ▶ advertising in local print media and on digital news websites
- ▶ distributing stakeholder kits to 51 local community organisations
- ▶ delivering a proactive media strategy targeting print and radio outlets.

Our social media information campaign comprised of 11 Facebook and Instagram posts published at key stages of the election period.

ECQ website

The ECQ website provided a range of information to support participation in the by-election for voters and political participants. The public could access the election timetable, information on candidate obligations, names of candidates, voting options, polling place details and election results.

All temporary election staff completed an online training program. Staff in more senior roles, such as booth supervisors, also attended face-to-face training delivered by the Returning Officer.

The posts reached 39,636 voters, were interacted with 491 times and resulted in 3,550 link clicks. Examples of social media posts are at **Appendix C**.

Election information was advertised in local print and online publications including The Courier-Mail, Everton Echo and NewsCorp (online). Advertisements provided the election date, polling place opening hours, reminders that voting is compulsory. We also provided a QR code linking to the ECQ's 'Where is my electorate' page to help those uncertain if they lived in the Stafford electorate.

Due to the significant media interest, ECQ's Assistant Electoral Commissioner gave 2 media interviews throughout the election period to raise awareness about the by-election.

Eight media releases were disseminated to journalists across Queensland, with 5 of these issued during the election period and 3 in the period following the close of polls to the declaration of results.

The by-election web page received 69,911 views over the duration of the election campaign.

We published pre-election day voting metrics for this by-election, including the number of postal vote applications received, postal votes returned and voting mark-off data. The figures were updated daily during the election period.

ECQ service centre

Our service centre operated throughout the by-election, supporting voters to access the services and information they needed and respond to their enquiries. Members of the public could phone ECQ's 1300 881 665 number, or email ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au to receive assistance.

Service centre staff assisted with a range of enquiries including:

- ▶ registering electors for telephone voting
- ▶ processing postal vote applications

- ▶ providing information about the different voting services available
- ▶ responding to general enquiries.

During the election period, the service centre was open from 9.00am to 5.00pm on Monday to Friday and operated from 8.00am to 6.00pm on election day. The service centre remained open until 7.00pm on Monday, 4 May 2026, for the close of postal voting applications.

Waste management

In providing electoral services, wherever possible ECQ seeks to use paper and cardboard items made from recycled content and makes efforts to recycle paper and cardboard items.

For the by-election, standard cardboard items were used in voting centres for voting

screens, accessible voting screens, ballot boxes, caution signs and recycle bins.

Cardboard is often re-used by schools and community groups before being recycled through their programs.

Feedback and complaints

Members of the public were able to provide feedback or lodge a customer complaint about ECQ services, actions or decisions via our feedback and complaints process.

We received several submissions during the by-election period, however, none of the feedback received met the threshold to be classified as a formal customer complaint

or required further investigation or action. Several submissions related to the activities and behaviour of campaign workers and these matters were referred to ECQ's Compliance unit for assessment. All feedback is noted for future consideration and business improvement.

Election results

Following the close of polling at 6.00pm on election day, Saturday, 16 May 2026, temporary election staff undertook a preliminary count in the presence of scrutineers. This count provided electors, candidates, parties and other election participants an early indication of the results.

The official first preference count commenced on Sunday, 17 May 2026.

When the outcome became certain, the Electoral Commissioner was able to declare Mr Luke Richmond of the Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland) as the successful candidate for the electoral district of Stafford.

The Electoral Commissioner returned the completed writ for the by-election to the Governor of Queensland on Friday, 22 May 2026. A notice advising of the return of the writ and the name of the elected candidate was published in the Queensland Government Gazette on the date of writ's return. Mr Luke Richmond was sworn into the Queensland Parliament on Tuesday, 2 June 2026.

ECQ completed an official distribution of preferences count following the deadline for the return of postal votes and finalised the results on Thursday, 28 May 2026. Mr Luke Richmond received 30.79% of first preference votes and, after the distribution of preferences, received 51.36% of the total vote.

The first preference count and distribution of preferences are on our website and in **Appendix D**.

Compliance activities

ECQ carried out compliance and enforcement actions for the by-election, to ensure electoral participants adhered to their funding and disclosure obligations.

We also routinely undertake enforcement action against enrolled electors who have

failed to vote at elections. These actions promote transparency in the electoral system and incentivise greater electoral participation.

Electoral participant compliance

ECQ works closely with candidates, registered political parties, and other election participants, as well as their staff and volunteers, to promote awareness and support compliance with legislative obligations. We produce a range of resources for these electoral participants including handbooks, fact sheets and guides to explain endorsement, nomination and disclosure requirements.

On election day, we received reports that 2 registered third parties were distributing how-to-vote cards which did not comply with authorisation requirements as the authorisations were too small and/or only printed on one side of the card. In both cases, the third parties agreed to stop distributing the cards, had them reprinted with correct authorisations and began distributing the corrected cards.

We also received reports throughout the election period of various election materials which were not properly authorised by third party campaigners. In most cases, attempts were made to authorise the materials but they were found to be deficient against the requirements of the *Electoral Act*. In all cases, the relevant authors updated their materials to include a correct authorisation and we determined that no further action would be taken in relation to these matters.

One instance of unauthorised election material distributed by a registered political party or its candidate resulted in a warning letter.

Election summary returns

All political parties, candidates, associated entities and registered third parties were required to submit an election summary return by 31 August 2026. Upon receipt of returns, ECQ conducts examinations of

the returns to assess compliance with the political donation cap, electoral expenditure cap and other funding and disclosure obligations.

Election funding claims

In Queensland State elections, candidates and registered political parties can submit election funding claims based on the number of first preference votes received. Applications for election funding are due to for submission to ECQ by 6 October 2026. The three eligible registered political parties and/or candidates submitted their funding claim by 2 September 2026.

Political parties were entitled to claim a maximum of \$6.842 per formal first preference vote received. Candidates were entitled to claim a maximum of \$3.422 per formal first preference vote.

The following table shows the payments made following the Stafford by-election.

General election participant		Election funding amount paid
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	Party	\$64,052.46
	Candidate	\$34,336.35
Liberal National Party of Queensland	Party	\$89,944.93
	Candidate	\$11,443.50
Queensland Greens	Party	No claim to be submitted
	Candidate	\$16,346.89

Voter compliance

Voting is compulsory in Queensland, and it is an offence for an elector to fail to cast a vote without a valid and sufficient reason. We may identify and communicate with individuals

who appeared to have failed to vote in an election, with the aim of reinforcing the importance of voting and encouraging participation at future elections.

Review of informal ballot papers

To cast a formal vote, Stafford voters were required to preference every candidate on the ballot paper, in accordance with the full preferential voting system that operates at Queensland State elections.

Whether by mistake or choice, a portion of the ballot papers cast at most elections are found to be informal and are unable to be counted towards the election of a candidate or candidates. ECQ regularly undertakes research of informal ballots to better understand informal voting in Queensland and identify strategies to reduce it.

There were 1,202 informal ballot papers cast at the by-election, and the ECQ reviewed these ballot papers and categorised them into 29 categories². Seventeen of

these categories captured ballot papers assumed to be intentionally informal, while the remaining 12 unintentional informal categories captured those ballots where the elector seemingly tried to cast a formal vote but made an error and invalidated their ballot paper in the process.

Noting the intention behind each informal vote is not always clear, in undertaking the categorisation process, educated assumptions were made based on the content of each informal ballot paper.

The full list of categories and their definitions, and the number of informal ballots cast for each category is included at **Appendix E**.

Outcomes

The rate of informal voting at the by-election was 3.56%, which is an increase from rates of informality seen in Stafford at past statewide elections.

It is a well observed trend that by-elections generally attract lower voter participation than statewide elections, and it is possible this may have also impacted informal voting.

Informal voting and turnout fast facts		
Stafford: 2026 by-election	Stafford: 2024 SGE	Stafford: 2020 SGE
1,202 informal ballots	971 informal ballots	827 informal ballots
3.56% informality	2.64% informality	2.38% informality
81.63% turnout	90.23% turnout	89.35% turnout

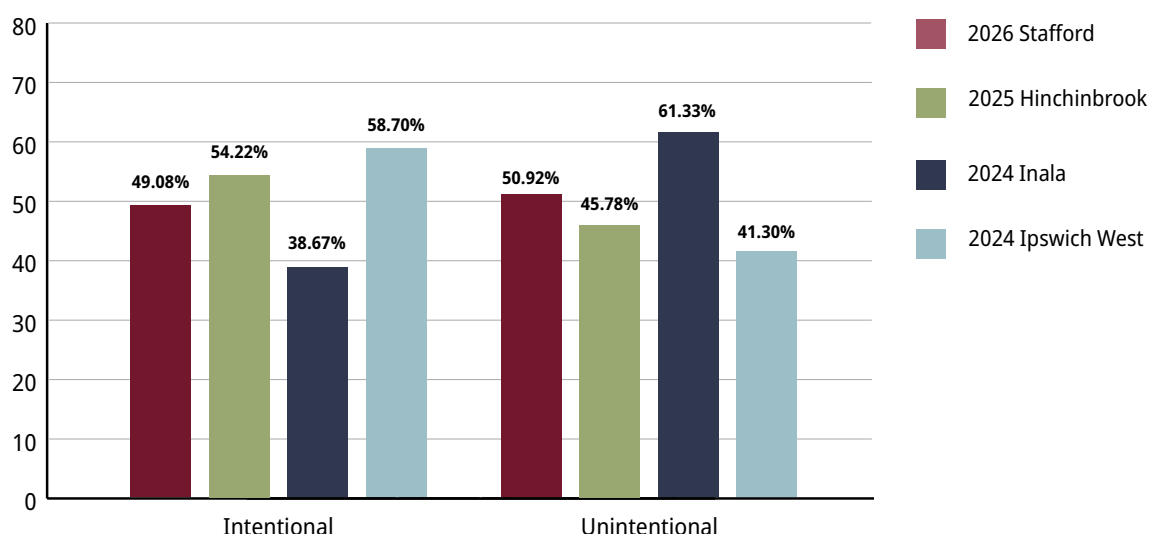
The informal ballot paper review found that assumed unintentional informal voting accounted for 50.92% of informal ballot papers cast at the by-election, while 49.08% were assumed to be intentionally informal.

Stafford informal ballot papers were not reviewed following the 2024 or 2020 State

general election and therefore comparison data between these events is limited to the total number of informal ballots. The graph below provides a comparison of informality, both assumed intentional and unintentional, for the most recent state by-elections. As the graph demonstrates, informality is complex and is not uniform across Queensland.

² The categories are the same as those used for the 2024 State general election (2024 SGE) informality review, except with one additional unintentional informal category. The 'voter identifiable' category was added, following a few instances of this type of ballot paper appearing during the 2024 SGE review, and noting this category has previously been used for reviews.

Informal voting data comparison - Stafford electorate



Unintentional informal voting

The majority of informal ballot papers cast for the Stafford by-election, 50.92%, are assumed to be cast unintentionally.

The categories that captured most of the unintentional informal ballot papers included:

- ▶ 'Numbers – repetition' – 13.56%
- ▶ 'Numbers insufficient – but more than one' – 12.06%
- ▶ 'Numbers – sequence error' – 9.07%
- ▶ 'Numbers – just voted one' – 6.66%

Importantly, approximately 23% of the informal ballot papers cast at the Stafford State by-election were the result of voters failing to follow the full preferential voting system for State elections. This is where voters appear to be voting using the optional preferential voting system.

Additionally, approximately a quarter of informal ballot papers appear to be the result of voters making a mistake in numbering their preferences. Either they have repeated a number or had a sequencing error. Evidence from previous informal ballot paper reviews suggest that this type of error increases as the number of candidates on the ballot paper increases.

Intentional informal voting

Of the informal ballots, 49.08% of were assumed to be cast intentionally. The categories that captured the most of the intentional informal ballot papers included:

- ▶ 'Blank' – 15.22%
- ▶ 'Drawing – ballot paper crossed out' – 7.99%
- ▶ 'Numbers - deliberate' – 7.40%
- ▶ 'Ticks, crosses or marks – deliberate' – 6.41%.

As most intentional informal ballot papers were categorised in the above 4 categories, these ballots provide little insight into the voters reasoning for voting informally, nor how they might be encouraged to vote formally at future elections.

The data gathered through informal ballot paper reviews provides ECQ with useful insight into informal voting across Queensland. This in turn may assist with future election service planning and education programs.

We will consider the results of this review, as well as data from previous informality reviews, to identify opportunities to address unintentional informal voting by targeting and improving voters' understanding of formal voting for future elections.

Appendices

Appendix A – Writ and results notice.....	19
Writ	19
Elected Candidate Notice	21
Appendix B – Statutory notices.....	22
Register of Political Parties.....	22
Register of Candidates.....	23
Polling and Voter Services Notice.....	24
Declared Institutions Voting (Mobile Polling) Notice.....	25
Electronically Assisted (Telephone) Voting Eligibility Notice	26
Appendix C – Communication and advertising campaign.....	27
Social media	27
Print and online advertising.....	29
Appendix D – Results	30
First preference count by booth	30
Full distribution of preferences by booth	31
Summary of distribution of preferences.....	32
Appendix E – Informal ballot paper review	33
Categories and total number of informal ballots cast	33

Appendix A – Writ and results notice

Writ

STATE OF QUEENSLAND

Electoral Act 1992

Writ for Election

*Charles the Third, by the Grace of God, King of Australia and His other Realms
and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.*

To the Electoral Commission of Queensland

I, Jeannette Rosita Young AC PSM, Governor -

(i) direct that you proceed according to the law to an election of a Member of the
Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the Electoral District of Stafford;

(ii) appoint -

Friday, the seventeenth day of April 2026 to be the day of issue of this Writ;
Tuesday, the twenty-first day of April 2026 to be the cut-off day for electoral rolls
for the election;

Friday, the twenty-fourth day of April 2026 to be the cut-off day for the
nomination of candidates for the election;

Saturday, the sixteenth day of May 2026 to be the polling day; and

Thursday, the ninth day of July 2026 for the return of this Writ.



Signed and sealed with the Public Seal of the State on 17 April 2026.

By Command

RECORDED in the Register of Patents, No. 54, page 72, on 17 April 2026.

Clerk of the Executive Council

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED THAT:

Luke Thomas Richmond was duly elected a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the Electoral District of Stafford by virtue of the within Writ.



Electoral Commission of Queensland

Elected Candidate Notice

[95]



Queensland Government Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

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FRIDAY 22 MAY 2026

[No. 17

Elected Candidate Notice
2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION
SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



On 17 April 2026, a Writ was issued for a by-election for the Queensland electorate of Stafford. The by-election was held on Saturday, 16 May 2026.

In accordance with section 132(2)(c) of the *Electoral Act 1992*, this notice advises that the following candidate has been duly elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Electoral district	Elected candidate	Declaration date
Stafford	Luke Thomas RICHMOND	22 May 2026

In accordance with section 132(2)(a) of the *Electoral Act 1992*, the elected candidate's name has been written on the Writ issued for the by-election, which in accordance with section 132(2)(b) of the *Electoral Act*, will be returned to Her Excellency, the Governor of Queensland.

This notice is issued under section 132 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 22 May 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | **P:** 1300 881 665 | **W:** ecq.qld.gov.au
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | **A:** Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

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BRISBANE
22 May 2026

Appendix B – Statutory notices

Register of Political Parties

600

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT GAZETTE No. 58

[17 April 2026

Register of Political Parties 2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



In accordance with section 79(2) of the *Electoral Act 1992*, below is a list of the names of all registered political parties and the names of their respective registered officers which are included in the register of political parties maintained by the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ).

Political party	Registered abbreviation	Registered officer
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	Australian Labor Party	Benjamin Driscoll
Queensland Greens	The Greens	Lenore Keough
Liberal National Party of Queensland	LNP	Benjamin Riley
Pauline Hanson's One Nation Queensland Division	One Nation	Pauline Hanson
Katter's Australian Party (KAP)	KAP	Benjamin Fusco
Animal Justice Party (Queensland)	Animal Justice Party	Liela D'Rose
Legalise Cannabis Queensland (Party)		Louise Kiwara
Family First Queensland	Family First	Alexandra Todd
Libertarian Party of Queensland	Libertarians	Richard Davies

To view the register, visit the ECQ website: <https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/donations-and-expenditure-disclosure/registers>.

This notice is issued under section 79 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 17 April 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | P: 1300 881 665 | W: [ecq.qld.gov.au](https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au)
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | A: Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

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BRISBANE
17 April 2026

Appendix B – Statutory notices

Register of Candidates

Register of Candidates 2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



In accordance with section 101 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, this register includes the information, and a summary of the content of any statement, set out in the nomination form of each of the candidates nominated for the 2026 Stafford State by-election.

Ballot paper order	Candidate name	Registered political party	Enrolled suburb	Occupation
1	RICHMOND, Luke	Australian Labor Party	Stafford Heights	Assistant state secretary
2	VERNE, Jacqueline	Legalise Cannabis Queensland (Party)	Stanthorpe	Business development
3	SMART, Damian	Independent	Wynnum	Consultant
4	SELFF, Daniel	Libertarians	Newstead	Teacher
5	PARRY, Liam	Independent	Address suppressed	None submitted
6	LANE, Jess	The Greens	Stafford Heights	Teacher
7	O'BRIEN, Lucy	Animal Justice Party	Indooroopilly	Kindergarten teacher
8	DENARO, Alan	Family First	Stafford Heights	Contractor
9	HAMMOND, Fiona	LNP	Address suppressed	None submitted

All candidates in this register have consented to be nominated for election in the electoral district of Stafford.

If a registered political party appears adjacent to a candidate's name, this means the party's registered officer has endorsed the candidate.

This notice is issued under sections 101 and 388A of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 28 April 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | P: 1300 881 665 | W: ecq.qld.gov.au
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | A: Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

Appendix B – Statutory notices

Polling and Voter Services Notice

Polling and Voter Services Notice 2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



The Stafford State by-election will be held on Saturday, 16 May 2026. **Voting is compulsory.**

In-person voting services

In accordance with sections 98 and 99A of the *Electoral Act 1992*, the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) notifies and declares that election day polling booths and early voting centres will be available over the period specified below.

Early voting

- Early voting centres open Tuesday, 5 May to Friday, 15 May 2026 (excluding weekends).
- Voters may cast ordinary or declaration votes for the by-election at an early voting centre.

Election day voting

- Polling booths open from 8am to 6pm on election day, Saturday 16 March 2026.
- Voters may cast ordinary or declaration votes at a polling booth on election day.

A list of polling place locations and their hours of operation are available for both early and election day voting on the ECQ website or by phoning 1300 881 665.

Other voting services

Postal voting applications close 7pm on Monday, 4 May 2026

- Applications are available on the ECQ website or by calling 1300 881 665.

Telephone voting is open between Tuesday, 5 May and Saturday, 16 May 2026

- Telephone voting will be available for eligible voters. To check your eligibility and learn more about registering for this service, see the ECQ website or phone 1300 881 665.

Declared institution voting between Tuesday, 5 May and Saturday, 16 May 2026

- Mobile polling is available for eligible voters within registered institutions (such as aged care facilities). Information will be published on the ECQ website or phone 1300 881 665.

This notice is issued under sections 98, 99 99A, 119 and 121A of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 28 April 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | P: 1300 881 665 | W: ecq.qld.gov.au
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | A: Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

Appendix B – Statutory notices

Declared Institutions Voting (Mobile Polling) Notice

Declared Institutions (Mobile Polling) Voting Notice
2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION
SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



In accordance with section 99(4) and 99(12) of the *Electoral Act 1992*, the Electoral Commission of Queensland notifies and declares the following institutions to be mobile polling booths for the 2026 Stafford State by-election.

Only residents and patients of the institutions listed below are permitted to vote at the institutions during the appointed date and time. The Returning Officer for the Stafford State by-election will advise the registered institution regarding the voting date and operating hours.

Institution name	Address
Cooper House	930 Gympie Road, Chermside, QLD Australia 4032
Emmaus Village, Wesley Mission Queensland	930 Gympie Road, Chermside, QLD Australia 4032
Parkview	930 Gympie Road, Chermside, QLD Australia 4032
St Marks Aged Care Community	930 Gympie Road, Chermside, QLD Australia 4032
Tricare Stafford Lakes Aged Care Residence	682 Rode Road, Chermside West, QLD Australia 4032

This notice is issued under section 99 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 28 April 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | **P:** 1300 881 665 | **W:** ecq.qld.gov.au
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | **A:** Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

Appendix B – Statutory notices

Electronically Assisted (Telephone) Voting Eligibility Notice

Electronically Assisted (Telephone) Voting Eligibility Notice 2026 STAFFORD STATE BY-ELECTION SATURDAY 16 MAY 2026



The Stafford State by-election will be held on Saturday, 16 May 2026. **Voting is compulsory.**

This notice identifies the classes of electors who, under section 121A of the *Electoral Act 1992* and 6 of the *Electoral Regulation 2024*, may make an electronically assisted vote (telephone vote) at the 2026 Stafford State by-election.

Those eligible to use telephone voting for this by-election include:

- Electors who cannot vote without assistance due to an impairment or an insufficient level of literacy.
- Electors who cannot vote at a polling booth because of an impairment.
- Special postal voters who are not detained in lawful custody.
- Distance voters whose enrolled address is more than 20km from a polling booth.
- Electors who are not in Queensland at any time during the voting period, including electors located interstate or overseas.

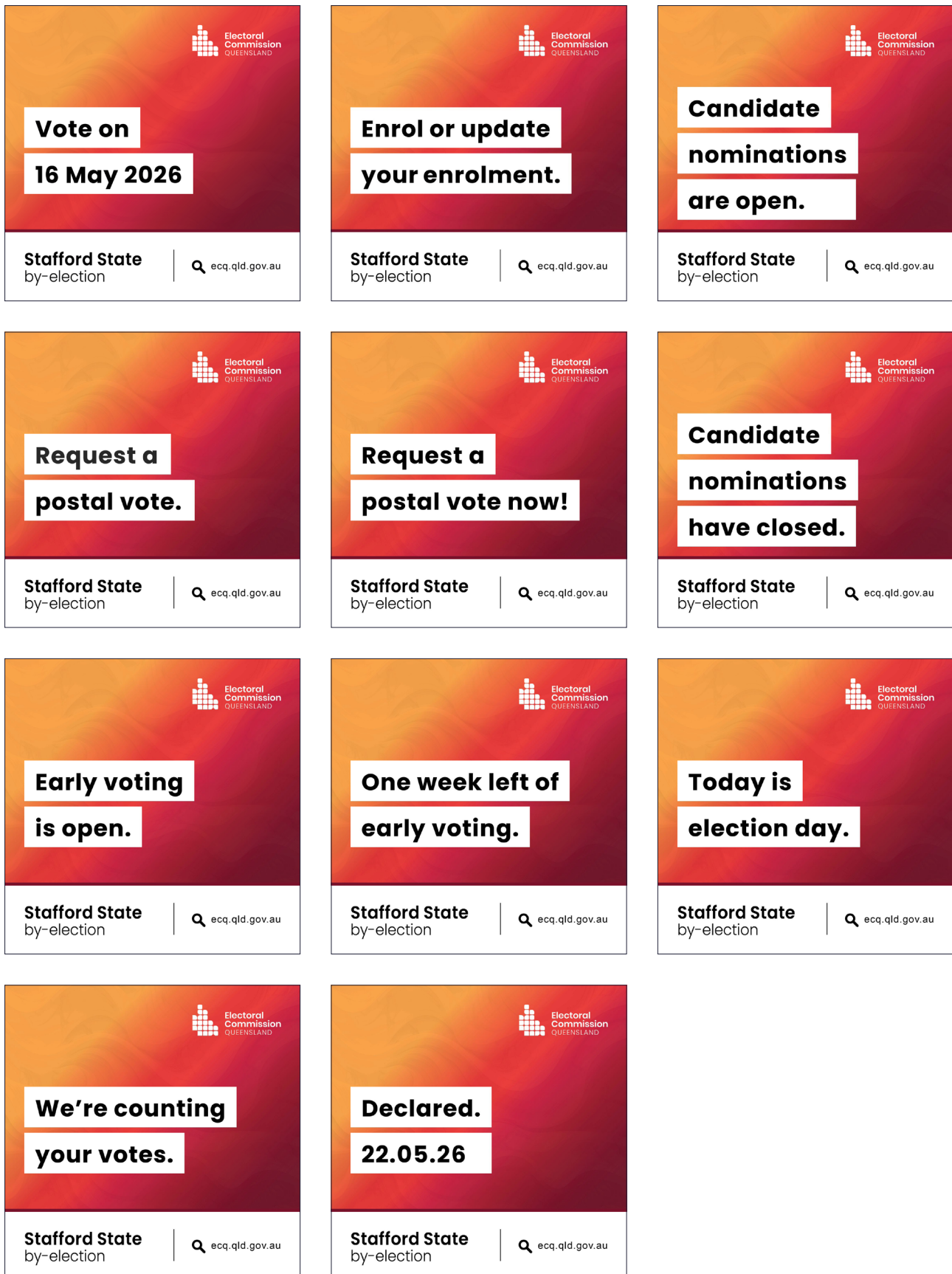
For information about registering to use the telephone voting service, please see the ECQ website or phone 1300 881 665.

This notice is issued under section 121A of the *Electoral Act 1992*, on 23 April 2026.

E: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au | P: 1300 881 665 | W: ecq.qld.gov.au
P: GPO Box 1393 Brisbane QLD 4001 | A: Level 20, 1 Eagle Street Brisbane QLD 4000

Appendix C – Communication and advertising campaign

Social media



Appendix C – Communication and advertising campaign



Hey Stafford

We're ready to help you vote today!



Polling places open to 6pm

- Centrepont Church Hall, **Chermside**
- Chermside Kedron Community Church, **Kedron**
- Craigslea State High School, **Chermside West**
- Wilston Scout Den, **Grange**
- Kedron State School, **Kedron**
- Little Flower Church Hall, **Kedron**



Polling places open to 6pm

- Newmarket State School, **Newmarket**
- Somerset Hills State School, **Stafford Heights**
- Stafford State School, **Stafford**
- Stafford Heights State School, **Stafford Heights**
- Our Lady Queen of Apostles, **Stafford**
- Wilston State School, **Grange**





Bring your Voter Information Card or email for quicker mark-off.





You can choose how to vote

Stafford State by-election |  ecq.qld.gov.au



Bring your voter card

Stafford State by-election |  ecq.qld.gov.au

Appendix C – Communication and advertising campaign

Print and online advertising

2026 Stafford State by-election



ELECTION INFORMATION

A by-election is being held in the Stafford State electorate to elect a new Member of Parliament on **Saturday, 16 May 2026**.

Vote early

Early voting is on weekdays from 8am to 6pm from Tuesday 5 May to Friday 15 May.
Find an early voting centre at ecq.qld.gov.au/StaffordEarlyVoting

Vote on election day

12 polling booths will be open from 8am to 6pm on Saturday 16 May.
Find the closest polling booth at ecq.qld.gov.au/StaffordVoting

Looking for more information?

Visit us at ecq.qld.gov.au/Stafford



Scan to check if you need to vote in this by-election

**VOTING IS
COMPULSORY**

For more information, visit ecq.qld.gov.au or call 1300 881 665.

2026 Stafford State by-election

Election day	Saturday 16 May
Early voting	Weekdays from Tuesday 5 May to Friday 15 May



**CLICK HERE TO
FIND OUT MORE**

2026 Stafford State by-election



ELECTION INFORMATION

A by-election is being held in the Stafford State electorate to elect a new Member of Parliament on **Saturday, 16 May 2026**.

Vote early

Weekdays from 8am to 6pm from Tuesday 5 May to Friday 15 May.
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Scan to check if you need to vote in this by-election

**VOTING IS
COMPULSORY**

For more information, visit ecq.qld.gov.au or call 1300 881 665.

Appendix D – Results

First preference count by booth

Polling booth	RICHMOND, Luke	VERNE, Jacqueline	SMART, Damian	SELF, Daniel	PARRY, Liam	LANE, Jess	O'BRIEN, Lucy	DENARO, Alan	HAMMOND, Fiona	Formal votes	Informal votes	Total votes
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Chermside East	324	28.42%	53	4.65%	20	1.75%	18	1.58%	74	6.49%	182	15.96%
Chermside South	273	31.82%	35	4.08%	14	1.63%	13	1.52%	43	5.01%	130	15.15%
Chermside South Early Voting Centre	2271	33.33%	154	2.26%	99	1.45%	86	1.26%	283	4.15%	880	12.91%
Chermside West	302	31.33%	54	5.60%	18	1.87%	6	0.62%	33	3.42%	170	17.63%
Grange	218	26.05%	24	2.87%	20	2.39%	14	1.67%	33	3.94%	130	15.53%
In Person Declaration Votes	130	33.68%	10	2.59%	7	1.81%	7	1.81%	28	7.25%	82	21.24%
Kadron	389	30.25%	47	3.65%	33	2.57%	13	1.01%	41	3.19%	226	17.57%
Kadron West	404	31.54%	36	2.81%	21	1.64%	12	0.94%	18	1.41%	172	13.43%
Mobile Polling	34	32.08%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.94%	0	0.00%	1	0.94%
Newmarket	299	30.79%	25	2.57%	33	3.40%	15	1.54%	59	6.08%	238	24.51%
Postal Declaration Votes	1511	30.43%	125	2.52%	75	1.51%	37	0.75%	83	1.67%	469	9.45%
Somerset Hills	292	29.38%	48	4.83%	27	2.72%	9	0.91%	56	5.63%	170	17.10%
Stafford	343	29.27%	46	3.92%	19	1.62%	21	1.79%	71	6.06%	228	19.45%
Stafford Early Voting Centre	1903	30.45%	154	2.46%	141	2.26%	69	1.10%	259	4.14%	939	15.03%
Stafford Heights	359	30.92%	42	3.62%	37	3.19%	11	0.95%	40	3.45%	168	14.47%
Stafford West	301	30.47%	42	4.25%	15	1.52%	9	0.91%	37	3.74%	162	16.40%
Telephone Voting	22	37.29%	2	3.39%	2	3.39%	0	0.00%	4	6.78%	15	25.42%
Telephone Voting - Early Voting	93	30.19%	7	2.27%	8	2.60%	6	1.95%	3	0.97%	54	17.53%
Willston	566	27.60%	56	2.73%	23	1.12%	23	1.12%	79	3.85%	361	17.60%
Totals	10034	30.79%	960	2.95%	612	1.88%	370	1.14%	1244	3.82%	4777	14.66%
							680	2.09%	767	2.35%	13146	40.34%
										32590	96.44%	33792

Appendix D – Results

Full distribution of preferences by booth

Polling booth	RICHMOND, Luke		HAMMOND, Fiona		Total votes
	Votes	Percentage	Votes	Percentage	
Chermside East	614	53.86%	526	46.14%	1140
Chermside South	461	53.73%	397	46.27%	858
Chermside South Early Voting Centre	3523	51.70%	3291	48.30%	6814
Chermside West	522	54.15%	442	45.85%	964
Grange	408	48.75%	429	51.25%	837
In Person Declaration Votes	250	64.77%	136	35.23%	386
Kedron	681	52.95%	605	47.05%	1286
Kedron West	617	48.17%	664	51.83%	1281
Mobile Polling	35	33.02%	71	66.98%	106
Newmarket	629	64.78%	342	35.22%	971
Postal Declaration Votes	2156	43.42%	2809	56.58%	4965
Somerset Hills	559	56.24%	435	43.76%	994
Stafford	674	57.51%	498	42.49%	1172
Stafford Early Voting Centre	3211	51.38%	3038	48.62%	6249
Stafford Heights	614	52.89%	547	47.11%	1161
Stafford West	503	50.91%	485	49.09%	988
Telephone Voting	40	67.80%	19	32.20%	59
Telephone Voting - Early Voting	161	52.27%	147	47.73%	308
Wilston	1080	52.66%	971	47.34%	2051
Totals	16738	51.36%	15852	48.64%	32590

Appendix D – Results

Summary of distribution of preferences

Preference distribution	RICHMOND, Luke	VERNE, Jacqueline	SMART, Damian	SELF, Daniel	PARRY, Liam	LANE, Jess	O'BRIEN, Lucy	DENARO, Alan	HAMMOND, Fiona	Exhausted	Votes remaining in count	Total formal votes
First preference	10034	960	612	370	1244	4777	680	767	13146	0	32590	32590
SELF, Daniel excluded	44	32	51		42	32	18	59	92	0	370	370
Total	10078	992	663		1286	4809	698	826	13238	0	32590	
SMART, Damian excluded	62	58			175	60	37	167	104	0	663	663
Total	10140	1050			1461	4869	735	993	13342	0	32590	
O'BRIEN, Lucy excluded	130	139			70	193		118	85	0	735	735
Total	10270	1189			1531	5062		1111	13427	0	32590	
DENARO, Alan excluded	77	172			186	127			549	0	1111	1111
Total	10347	1361			1717	5189			13976	0	32590	
VERNE, Jacqueline excluded	293				415	441			212	0	1361	1361
Total	10640				2132	5630			14188	0	32590	
PARRY, Liam excluded	389					1359			384	0	2132	2132
Total	11029					6989			14572	0	32590	
LANE, Jess excluded	5709								1280	0	6989	6989
Total	16738								15852	0	32590	32590

Appendix E – Informal ballot paper review

Categories and total number of informal ballots cast

Intentional informal	Definition	Total number of informal ballots cast
Blank	Ballot papers that have been left blank.	15.22%
Drawing – ballot paper crossed out	The elector has drawn a cross through the ballot paper.	7.99%
Drawing – discriminatory	Ballot papers featuring offensive drawings with specific imagery, for example racist, Islamophobic, Anti-Semitic or similar themes.	0.00%
Drawing – offensive	Ballot papers featuring offensive drawings.	0.25%
Drawing – other	Ballot papers featuring other types of drawings.	1.83%
Writing – discriminatory	Writing that includes specific themes, for example racist, Islamophobic, Anti-Semitic or other statements.	0.08%
Writing – against compulsory voting	Writing that protests compulsory voting.	0.33%
Writing – corruption	Writing referencing alleged corruption.	0.00%
Writing – voting makes no difference	Writing where the voter states the view that voting is pointless, or words to that effect.	0.17%
Writing – anti-government	Writing that references opposition to government or democratic institutions more generally, for example sovereign citizens, QAnon or ‘against the system’ type commentary.	0.25%
Writing – restricted choice	Writing that protests the choice of candidates or political parties, including dissatisfaction with the choices, or a lack of knowledge of the choices.	2.08%
Writing – none of the above	The elector has written ‘none of the above’ or ‘NOTA’.	1.33%
Writing – other protest	The elector has written some other form of protest not captured by the other ‘writing’ categories.	1.58%
Writing – other	Writing that does not fit in the other ‘writing’ categories, including writing in an alternative ‘joke’ candidate name.	4.08%

Appendix E – Informal ballot paper review

Intentional informal	Definition	Total number of informal ballots cast
Fragments	Torn ballot papers that have been placed in the ballot box by the elector.	0.08%
Numbers – deliberate	Intentionally defective numbering, for example where all boxes have been numbered 1.	7.40%
Ticks, crosses or marks – deliberate	Intentionally defective markings such as all boxes ticked, crossed, or featuring smiley faces.	6.41%
Total		49.08%

Appendix E – Informal ballot paper review

Unintentional informal	Definition	Total number of informal ballots cast
Numbers - Just voted 1	The elector has only voted for one candidate and has not preferenced all the other candidates as required under the full preferential voting system.	6.66%
Numbers insufficient - but more than 1	The elector has allocated preferences for more than one candidate but has not preferenced every candidate as required under the full preferential voting system.	12.06%
Numbers – 1 and other symbols	The elector allocated a first preference for one candidate, and all other boxes have ticks, crosses or other symbols, and no way to discern an order of preferences.	0.67%
Numbers – sequence error	The elector has skipped numbers and an order of preferences is unclear.	9.07%
Numbers – obscured	It is not possible to determine a clear order of preferences, due to unclear or illegible handwriting.	3.16%
Numbers – repetitions	It is not possible to determine a clear order of preferences, due to numbers being repeated.	13.56%
Numbers – includes 0	The elector has put 0 against a candidate and the specific order of preferences is unclear.	0.25%
Numbers – other	Ballot papers featuring unintentional numbering errors that do not fit within the other 'numbers' categories.	0.75%
Ticks, crosses or marks – preferences 1 candidate	Ballot papers where the elector appears to have unintentionally invalidated their ballot, by using a tick, cross or mark to 'just vote 1'.	3.91%
Ticks, crosses or marks – other	Ballot papers where the elector appears to have unintentionally invalidated their ballot, by using ticks, crosses or marks, and no clear order of preferences can be discerned.	0.83%
Voter identified	Ballot papers that contain any writing or mark that identify the elector.	0.00%
Administrative error	Ballot papers thought to be formal.	0.00%
Total		50.92%



**Electoral
Commission**
QUEENSLAND

Email: ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au

Telephone: 1300 881 665

Post: GPO Box 1393
BRISBANE QLD 4001