



Electoral Commission
QUEENSLAND

Report on the conduct of Preselection Ballots

2024 State General Election

May 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

The Electoral Commission of Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country and their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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1. Executive Summary

The Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) is authorised under former part 9 of the *Electoral Act 1992* (the Act) to perform inquiries and audits into the conduct of preselection ballots for State and local government elections in Queensland.¹

Between February 2025 and March 2026, the ECQ audited the conduct of preselection ballots by registered political parties for the 2024 State general election, which was held on 26 October 2024. The purpose of the audit was to identify whether the ballots were conducted in accordance with:

- The model procedures under schedule 1 of the Electoral Regulation 2013; and
- The parties' constitutions.

The ECQ used audit sampling to decide the total number of preselection ballots to audit for each registered political party. A random draw was then conducted in accordance with the Act to select which preselection ballots would be audited.

At the conclusion of the audit, the ECQ was required to produce a report (this report) identifying which preselection ballots were examined and any preselection ballots in which someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the parties' constitutions.

The ECQ found that someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the parties' constitutions in some of the preselection ballots that were examined. The preselection ballots that were audited, and the ECQ's findings, are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Preselection ballots audited by the ECQ for the 2024 State general election

Registered political party	Candidate	Electorate	Did someone vote in contravention of the model procedures or the party's constitution?
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	CARLIN, Claire	Burleigh	Y
	SULLIVAN, Jimmy	Stafford	Y
Queensland Greens	SORENSEN KARKLIS, Callen	Oodgeroo	Y
	WONG, Holstein	McConnel	Y
Liberal National Party of Queensland	KEMPTON, David	Cook	Unclear
	STOKER, Amanda	Oodgeroo	Unclear

It is important to note that the model procedures in the Electoral Regulation 2024 were updated to reflect modern practices such as electronic voting and emails. However, all of the above preselection ballots were conducted prior to those new model procedures coming into effect, meaning they were assessed against the previous model procedures which did not cater to these advancements. This is a key feature for the findings outlined in section 5 below.

¹ It is noted that part 9 of the Act was repealed by the *Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Act 2026*. However, section 455 of the Act confirms that former section 172 continues to apply to preselection ballot audits which had already commenced. All references to the Act in this report should be taken to be references to the Act as in force before the commencement of the *Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Act 2026*.

2. Background

Preselection is the process by which a political party chooses a candidate to endorse for a particular election. Registered political parties are free to adopt any form of preselection process that they wish, provided the rules associated with the preselection process are clearly stated in their constitutions.²

If part or whole of the preselection process involves conducting a preselection ballot for either a State or local government election, the registered political party must comply with particular requirements under the Act.

Part 9 of the Act empowers the ECQ to oversee the conduct of preselection ballots, including by performing inquiries or audits of the ballots.

2.1. What is a preselection ballot?

A preselection ballot is defined under schedule 1 of the Act as:

- a) The process, or that part of the process, of selecting a candidate to be endorsed by a political party for an election, or an election for a local government, in which a member of the party votes in a ballot in his or her capacity as a member of the party, rather than as a member of a committee (however called) of the party, for the candidate; and
- b) Includes matters preparatory to the ballot and the scrutiny and counting of votes in the ballot.

If the selection of a candidate for an election involves a poll of the party members followed by the endorsement of the poll result by a party committee, only the poll is a preselection ballot.

2.2. Notification of preselection ballots

The registered officer of a registered political party must give the ECQ at least 7 days written notice of when voting in a preselection ballot is to be held.³

Additionally, if a registered political party endorses a candidate in a state election, the party's registered officer must, not later than 30 days after polling day for the election, notify the ECQ whether the selection of the candidate involved a preselection ballot.⁴

2.3. Audits of preselection ballots

The ECQ must, after each state election, perform an audit on a selected number of preselection ballots of which it is notified by registered political parties. The purpose of the audit is to identify whether the ballots were conducted in accordance with:

- The model procedures, as prescribed under schedule 1 of the Electoral Regulation 2013; and
- The parties' constitutions.⁵

² Explanatory Notes, *Electoral and Other Acts Amendment Act 2002* (Act no.8 of 2002).

³ Section 167(1) of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

⁴ Section 170 of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

⁵ Section 172(1) of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

The ECQ must decide the total number of preselection ballots it will audit for each registered political party as soon as practicable after the 30th day after polling day for the election.⁶ The ECQ must then randomly select which preselection ballots are to be audited in accordance with the procedure set out under section 171(2) of the Act. The ECQ must allow any candidate, or representative of a candidate, to be present during this process.⁷

The ECQ is required to give notice of the preselection ballots selected for audit to the registered officer of the relevant registered political party, who must provide the ECQ with copies of the party's records for the ballots, including the names and addresses of party members who voted in the ballots, within one month of receiving the notice.⁸

An audit of the preselection ballots is then conducted by the ECQ in accordance with its *Inquiry or random audit of a preselection ballot conducted by a registered political party, policy and procedure*, which ensures a systematic approach to the audit while maintaining the focus on compliance.

2.4. Report on audit

Upon conclusion of the audit, the ECQ is required to give the Minister a report (this report), which identifies the preselection ballots that were examined as part of the audit, and any ballots in which someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the parties' constitutions.⁹

It is the ECQ's view that a finding that someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or a party's constitution may be made where there are substantial flaws in the overall processes used to conduct a preselection ballot, and not just where the flaws relate to the eligibility of the voters or the process of casting a ballot itself. This view is consistent with both the broad scope of the terms of the audit required to be conducted by the ECQ under section 172(1) of the Act, and the purpose of the legislation, which is to ensure that preselection ballots are 'transparent and accountable' and satisfy the 'general principles of free and democratic elections'.¹⁰

Section 173 of the Act makes it clear that an election is not invalid only because the ECQ gave the Minister a report that identified a preselection ballot in which someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or a party's constitution.

⁶ Section 171(1) of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

⁷ Section 171(3) of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

⁸ Section 172 of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

⁹ Section 172(5) of the *Electoral Act 1992*.

¹⁰ Explanatory Notes, *Electoral and Other Acts Amendment Act 2002* (Act no.8 of 2002).

3. Notice of preselection ballots

In accordance with section 170 of the Act, all nine registered political parties which endorsed candidates in the 2024 State general election notified the ECQ about whether the selection of their candidates involved a preselection ballot.

Three parties confirmed that the selection of their endorsed candidates did involve a preselection ballot. These were:

- Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)
- Queensland Greens
- Liberal National Party of Queensland

The remaining six parties confirmed that the selection of their endorsed candidates did not involve a preselection ballot.

The names of all the registered political parties that endorsed candidates for the 2024 State general election, and the details of their notices under section 170 of the Act, are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Notice from registered political parties about whether the selection of candidates for the 2024 State general election involved a preselection ballot

Registered political party	Notice received from registered officer under s170 of the Act	Selection of candidates involved a preselection ballot
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	Y	Y
Queensland Greens	Y	Y
Liberal National Party of Queensland	Y	Y
Pauline Hanson's One Nation Queensland Division	Y	N
Katter's Australian Party (KAP)	Y	N
Animal Justice Party (Queensland)	Y	N
Legalise Cannabis Queensland (Party)	Y	N
Family First Queensland	Y	N
Libertarian Party of Queensland	Y	N

4. Conduct of audit

4.1. Selection of preselection ballots

On 27 November 2024, the ECQ decided the total number of preselection ballots that it would audit for the 2024 State general election. In making this decision, the ECQ referred to its *Internal Audit Sampling Policy*, which provided a minimum sample size for testing small populations that are subject to compliance requirements.

The total number of preselection ballots selected for each registered political party is outlined in Table 3 below. The number selected ensured an equitable approach was adopted across all relevant registered political parties.

Table 3 – Number of preselection ballots selected for audit for the 2024 State general election

Registered political party	Total no. of preselection ballots conducted	Total no. of preselection ballots selected for audit
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	2	2
Queensland Greens	3	2
Liberal National Party of Queensland	12	2
TOTAL	17	6

The ECQ notified the registered officers for the Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland), Queensland Greens, and Liberal National Party of Queensland of the total number of preselection ballots to be selected for the audit, as well as the date, time, and location of the ECQ's random draw to select the preselection ballots. The ECQ invited candidates and their representatives to be present during the draw.

The ECQ conducted the draw for each registered political party in accordance with the procedure set out in section 171(2) of the Act. The preselection ballots that were selected for the audit are set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4 – Preselection ballots selected for audit for the 2024 State general election

Registered political party	Candidate	Electorate
Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)	CARLIN, Claire	Burleigh
	SULLIVAN, Jimmy	Stafford
Queensland Greens	SORENSEN KARKLIS, Callen	Oodgeroo
	WONG, Holstein	McConnel
Liberal National Party of Queensland	KEMPTON, David	Cook
	STOKER, Amanda	Oodgeroo

The ECQ provided notice of the preselection ballots selected for the audit to the registered officer of the relevant registered political party and requested that they provide documentation relating to the ballots within one month of receiving the notice.

4.2. Examination of documentation

In some instances, documentation that was requested for the audit was not provided in a readily accessible format due to privacy concerns. Where documentation for the audit was provided to the

ECQ, the documentation was examined and assessed against the model procedures under schedule 1 of the Act and each party's constitution.

4.3. Consultation

The ECQ consulted with representatives of the relevant registered political parties throughout the course of the audit to clarify any discrepancies or to request additional information or documentation as necessary.

The registered officers of each registered political party were also given the opportunity to comment on the ECQ's preliminary findings once the audits had been completed.

5. Findings of audit

5.1. Australian Labor Party (State of Queensland)

The ECQ found that someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the party's constitution in **all** preselection ballots that were audited for the 2024 State general election (see Table 1).

5.2. Queensland Greens

The ECQ found that someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the party's constitution in **all** preselection ballots that were audited for the 2024 State general election (see Table 1).

5.3. Liberal National Party of Queensland

It is not clear whether someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the party's constitution in the preselection ballots that were audited for the 2024 State general election (see Table 1). Despite the audits concluding that nothing had come to the attention of the auditor to indicate that the preselection ballots were not conducted in accordance with the model procedures or the party's constitution, these conclusions were based on the auditor's inability to sight sufficient appropriate evidence to demonstrate the party's compliance with the model procedures and the party's constitution.

The ECQ elected not to pursue the limited and conditional options offered by Liberal National Party of Queensland to access further records. This was based on the view that although the exercise may have identified relevant information to clarify whether someone voted in contravention of the model procedures or the party's constitution, in the absence of a future role (by the ECQ) in preselection ballot audits, any findings made would not be able to be followed up in future audits and as such the exercise was deemed not to be in the public interest.

6. Conclusion

The requirement for the ECQ to conduct preselection ballot audits was repealed in the *Electoral Laws (Restoring Electoral Fairness) Amendment Act 2026*.

The ECQ had not commenced an audit in relation to any preselection ballots held for the 2025 Hinchinbrook State By-election prior to the commencement of the new provisions. As such, this will be the final report regarding preselection ballot audits conducted by the ECQ.