

Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

Our Purpose

To deliver accessible, fair and transparent electoral services to all Queenslanders.

Our Vision

Electoral excellence with integrity for Queensland.

Our Values



Customers first

- Know your customer
- Deliver what matters
- Make decisions with empathy



Ideas into action

- Challenge the norm and suggest solutions
- Encourage and embrace new ideas
- Work across boundaries



Unleash potential

- Expect greatness
- Lead and set clear expectations
- Seek, provide and act on feedback



Be courageous

- Own your actions, successes and mistakes
- Take calculated risks
- Act with transparency



Empower people

- Lead, empower and trust
- Play to everyone's strengths
- Develop yourself and those around you

In delivering our strategic objectives, the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ) contributes to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community, Unite and Recover, by Safeguarding our health, Supporting jobs and Backing our frontline services. The ECQ achieves this by delivering COVID-safe elections, which employ Queenslanders, comply with electoral laws, and enable participation by all Queensland voters.

The ECQ respects, protects and promotes human rights in its decision-making and actions, including supporting the right to take part in public life under section 23 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, which provides that every eligible person has the right, and is to have the opportunity, to vote and be elected at State and local government elections.

The ECQ applies a policy of political neutrality for all staff to ensure the ECQ's functions are performed independently, impartially and apolitically.

Strategic objectives and key performance indicators

Deliver fair and transparent Queensland elections

Strategies

- Deliver all State, local government and industrial elections in accordance with legislated requirements and in a way that maximises opportunities for electoral participation by all Queensland voters.
- Build a skilled, diverse and empowered workforce that meets current and future service delivery needs.
- Ensure transparency of the electoral process through key electoral information and data being publicly reported in a timely and accessible manner, including information regarding political donations, electoral expenditure, election results and reports on the conduct of elections.
- Ensure Queensland maintains balanced electoral representation by undertaking regular reviews of electoral boundaries and arrangements.

Key performance indicators

- Improved satisfaction of electors and other stakeholders with the conduct of elections.
- Improved timeliness in publication of electoral information and data on the ECQ website, including through the Electronic Disclosure System, and the Open Data portal.
- Confidence in the integrity of the conduct of elections and the election results with minimal number of challenges lodged with the Court of Disputed Returns.

OBJECTIVE 1

Increase electoral awareness and participation

Strategies

- Deliver multi-channel communication campaigns that promote understanding of electoral matters and raise awareness of the conduct, voting options and how to cast a formal vote for election events.
- Deliver programs that inform and educate students, voters, political parties and candidates on their electoral rights, responsibilities and the correct voting methods for each election.
- Administer an effective non-voter compliance program that promotes participation in future elections.

Key performance indicators

- Increased voter participation rates in elections, including in communities with identified low turnout rates.
- Decrease in informal votes in elections, including in communities with identified high informality rates.
- Improved reach of the ECQ's communication campaigns.

OBJECTIVE 2

OBJECTIVE 3

Continual improvement in electoral services

Strategies

- Undertake formal evaluations of the conduct of elections, including consultation with key stakeholders, to identify key areas for improvement in delivery of electoral services.
- Enhance research and data analysis capability to conduct and promote research into electoral and other matters and to inform innovation.
- Strengthen the internal control environment for major projects.
- Continue to foster leadership behaviours and workforce planning capability to design and deliver better electoral services.
- Ensure critical election systems are secure, fit-for-purpose and contemporary and are able to respond to changing business, legislative and cyber security requirements.
- Continued implementation and refinement of the ECQ's Cyber Security Strategy and action plans under the guidance of the ECQ Information Security Steering Committee to address the contemporary threat environment and promote future use of technology while protecting capabilities of critical infrastructure.

Key performance indicators

- Improved satisfaction of electors and other stakeholders with the conduct of elections.
- Demonstrated success of measures to prevent any cyber security breaches of critical election systems.
- Demonstrated performance of critical election systems to support the conduct of election events.

OBJECTIVE 4

Ensure compliance with electoral funding and disclosure laws

Strategies

- Promote public awareness of funding and disclosure requirements by candidates, political parties and other political participants through the provision of information, education and support.
- Undertake targeted audits of disclosure returns to provide public assurance that political entities are complying with their obligations and to take enforcement action when in the public interest to do so.
- Develop risk assessment approaches to assess non-compliance during the 2020 local government quadrennial elections and the 2020 State general election.

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased proportion of disclosure returns for State and local government elections submitted on time.
- Increased detection of significant non-compliance through the audit program.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Undertaking evaluations and using data from the major election events conducted in 2020 will inform improvements to the ECQ's future operations, identify efficiencies and ensure service delivery standards are maintained.
- Increasing transparency in the electoral process by ensuring obligations for reporting of donations and electoral expenditure by candidates, political parties and other political participants contributes are met.
- Responding to COVID-19 has required the ECQ to be a more flexible, agile and collaborative organisation, which if fostered, can become the standard for future elections.

RISKS

- The emergence of the COVID-19 global pandemic has created uncertainty in the service delivery model for State and local government by-elections, requiring revision of planning activities and consideration of additional measures to protect public safety.
- The ECQ must ensure appropriate systems, business continuity planning and processes are implemented so that it is always election ready and can guarantee the continuation of public administration in unforeseen circumstances.
- Increased reliance on technology creates additional service delivery and cybersecurity risks including the possibility of external entities seeking to undermine the integrity of the electoral process or otherwise disrupt the operation of electoral technology and systems.