



Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Standing Committee on the Integrity
Commission and Statutory Office
Holders

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into the operation of the 2024 ACT Election and Electoral Act 1992

Submission number: 004

Submitter: Tuggeranong Community Council

Date authorised for publication: 25 February 2025

Submission to the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders

Inquiry into the operation of the 2024 ACT Election and the Electoral Act 1992

From: Tuggeranong Community Council

1. Introduction

The Tuggeranong Community Council Inc (TCC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into the operation of the 2024 ACT Election and the Electoral Act 1992. As a long-standing volunteer-based community organisation, we play a vital role in facilitating community engagement, consultation, and discussion on local issues.

2. Concerns Regarding the Definition of Electoral Matter

The Council is concerned that the broad definition of electoral matter in the Electoral Act imposes unnecessary burdens and restrictions on community organisations like ours. Specifically, electoral matter is defined as content that contains an express or implicit reference to, or comment on:

- The election;
- The performance of the ACT Government, ACT Opposition, or past ACT Governments/Oppositions;
- The performance of an MLA or former MLA.

Our regular operations often involve discussions or advocacy on matters affecting Tuggeranong residents. For example, we may:

- Assess government projects impacting local infrastructure;
- Discuss policies affecting housing, education, or community health;
- Provide platforms for residents to express views about local MLAs' performance.

3. Impact on Financial Accountability and Resources

The requirement to lodge financial disclosures as a third-party campaigner if electoral expenditure exceeds \$1,000 is disproportionately burdensome for community groups like the TCC. Preparing election returns and complying with expenditure caps diverts limited volunteer resources away from core community work.

4. Duration of the Relevant Disclosure Period

The relevant disclosure period for third-party campaigners spans 17 November 2020 to 18 November 2024—a four-year duration. This is unnecessarily long and fails to account for the fact that much of our engagement is unrelated to the election. Shortening the disclosure period to the caretaker period before polling day would strike a better balance between accountability and operational practicality.

5. Recommendations

The Tuggeranong Community Council recommends the following:

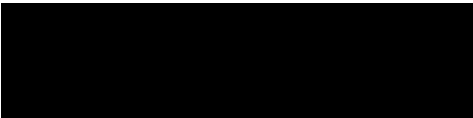
1. Narrow the definition of electoral matter to exclude routine community engagement and consultation that does not directly seek to influence voting.
2. Amend the financial accountability rules to exempt volunteer-based, non-partisan organisations from third-party campaigner requirements unless they actively engage in political campaigning.
3. Shorten the relevant disclosure period to one year before polling day to reduce administrative burdens on non-electoral entities.

6. Conclusion

The TCC remains committed to fostering active community participation in Tuggeranong. However, the current regulatory framework risks stifling genuine, apolitical community engagement through excessive compliance requirements. We urge the Committee to consider these concerns and adopt reforms that enable community organisations to operate effectively without undue restrictions.

We thank the Committee for considering this submission and welcome the opportunity to provide further input.

Yours sincerely,



Jeffrey Bollard
Vice President
Tuggeranong Community Council Inc
Date: 24 February 2025