

# 5

Tasmanian Electoral Commission  
'21 HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

## Polling Place Liason Officer

### Manual



# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Role of the PPLO</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| Vehicle use   | 3         |
| Managing election supplies  | 3         |
| Time management   | 3         |
| <b>Your PPLO Return</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| Polling place visit summary   | 4         |
| PPLO Evaluations  | 5         |
| The integrity sheets  | 6         |
| Administration pages  | 6         |
| <b>Before polling day</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| Preparing for polling day   | 7         |
| Preparation for polling day   | 7         |
| Evening before polling day  | 7         |
| PPLO Return   | 7         |
| <b>Polling day</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| Your day begins when you arrive at your first polling place at 7.00am | 8         |
| Timetable for the day   | 8         |
| The first polling place visit   | 8         |
| Keeping contact with the Returning Officer                            | 9         |
| Your return visit   | 9         |
| PPLO Return   | 9         |
| <b>Polling day after 6.00pm</b>                                       | <b>10</b> |
| PPLO Return   | 10        |
| Debriefing  | 10        |

# Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to work as a Polling Place Liaison Officer (PPLO) for the upcoming Legislative Council elections.

The Returning Officer (RO) and Polling Manager both have statutory responsibilities. As PPLO you are the conduit between these two positions.

For this position you are required to read:

- Instructions for Polling Place Liaison Officers (this document);
- Instructions for Polling Managers;
- Instructions for Issuing Declaration Votes; and
- Instructions for Polling Officers.

You are also required to attend a face-to-face training session and complete the online eLearning.

The *Electoral Act 2004* gives the Tasmanian Electoral Commission (TEC) considerable discretion to approve procedures for polling. The instructions in this booklet are consistent with the *Act* and the TEC's approvals.

Best wishes for a successful polling day.



Andrew Hawkey

ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER



# Role of the PPLO

The RO will assign a group of polling places to each PPLO. As a PPLO your role is to:

- monitor and evaluate the setup and workings of your assigned polling places,
- provide guidance to Polling Managers, making suggestions where appropriate,
- respond to any crisis,
- supply materials, as and when required, to polling places, and
- be the RO's 'eyes out in the field'.

While you will receive instructions from your RO, no set of instructions can deal with every contingency. Always ask your RO for guidance if something occurs that is not covered by these instructions.



## Vehicle use

Where possible the RO will organise the hire of a vehicle for your travels on polling day. For some of the more remote areas of Tasmania a hire car may not be available and we will require you to use your own vehicle.

Your own vehicle must be road worthy, registered and insured and must be suitable for the secure storage and transport of election materials and equipment (e.g. no single cab utes). Should you have any concern meeting this requirement, advise your RO immediately.

The PPLO return folder contains a claim form for private vehicle usage for PPLO duties. This includes the use of your vehicle to travel to the training session where the distance was in excess of 30kms.

The RO will give you details about when and where to pick up and return your hire vehicle. Pickup will generally be on a Friday and return on a Sunday.



## Managing election supplies

Each PPLO will be allocated backup supplies that may be needed at a polling place at short notice on polling day. These supplies include:

- **Election material**
- **Election equipment**
- **Ballot papers** – must be stored securely whilst under your control
- **Netbook reserve** – please make sure your netbooks are secure while in your possession and are fully charged **the day before** polling day

A list of the election supplies allocated to you will be included in your PPLO Return (Sheet 13). Make sure you check that the supplies match Sheet 13 before polling day.



## Time management

Managing time is a crucial part of your duties as PPLO.

**Your workday begins at 7.00am** by which time you are to be at your first polling place or doing an early drive-by of a few closely located polling places on your way to the first stop.

You will be provided with a general timetable for the day at training, but it is important to be aware that issues can and do occur and you may need to alter this timetable to enable you to assist with any issues and still complete your duties by the end of the day.

**Your day ends once your RO no longer requires you.**



## PPLO Evaluations

The folder contains an evaluation form for each polling place assigned to you. The evaluation form contains

- A visit summary sheet (cover)
- Evaluation sections covering: premises setup and material, voting processes, staff management; and
- An observation assessment table for assessing how the Polling Manager is managing their polling place.

Polling place evaluations should take place across the two visits, with the Polling Manager observations being completed on your second visit.

Note this form describes what you have observed as occurring in the polling place. You should circle at least one box within each row. The Polling Manager will be using similar observation tables for polling place staff.

Where appropriate, you can discuss your observation assessments with the Polling Manager.

Please ensure you familiarise yourself with the evaluation form before polling day to best understand the expectations required of Polling Managers.

| EVALUATION - PREMISES & MATERIAL  |     |                  |
|---|-----|------------------|
| Check Item  | Y/N | Comments if 'No' |
| <b>PREMISES ACCESS AND LAYOUT</b>   |     |                  |
| Polling place clearly signed and easy access to the building?   |     |                  |
| Are there any hazards that have not been addressed?   |     |                  |
| Does the layout allow good voter flow?  |     |                  |
| Is the Polling Manager desk in a good location?   |     |                  |
| Is the ballot box for ordinary voters in an appropriate place and correctly sealed with seal numbers recorded on Sheet 1. |     |                  |
| Is the Declaration Officer space set up correctly?  |     |                  |
| <b>ISSUING POINT SETUP</b>  |     |                  |
| Are all issuing points open?  |     |                  |
| Does each issuing point have access to ballot papers for all divisions?   |     |                  |
| Are all networks working correctly?   |     |                  |
| Are unallocated ballot papers in a secure location?   |     |                  |

  

| PPLO'S OBSERVATIONS OF THE POLLING MANAGER       |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Observations of Polling Manager: <<DIC_Name_01>> |  |  |  |
| CRITERIA   | Circle <b>one box for each criteria</b> that best describe what you observed today |  |  |
| <b>Managing Polling Place &amp; Materials</b>    | Excellent polling place layout.  | Suitable polling place layout.                           | Unsuitable polling place layout.                   |
|  | Proactively monitoring and anticipating.   | Appropriate management of ballot papers.                 | Ballot papers not well managed / not secure.       |
| <b>Managing People &amp; Processes</b>           | Anticipating and finding solutions before problems occur.                          | Delivered briefings.                                     | Confusion of roles / responsibilities.             |
|  | Proactively supporting staff.  | Staff understanding roles & procedures correctly.        | Processes not conducted as required.               |
| <b>Organisational Skills</b>                     | Clearly communicating.   | Monitoring staff.  | Lacking leadership.                                |
|  | Exceptionally well prepared for next stage and for contingencies.                  | Achieved required processes in reasonable time.          | Not always ready or prepared in a timely manner.   |
| <b>Attitude and Teamwork</b>                     | Using Polling Manager Return folder to manage day.                                 | Completing integrity sheets.                             | Not using Polling Manager Return folder correctly. |
|  | Appropriate communication with PPLO.   | Minor corrections by PPLO needed.                        | Ineffective.                                       |
| <b>Use of Technology</b>                         | Calmly & professionally solved problems, using initiative & flexible approach.     | Acknowledged problems.                                   | Unable to come up with effective solutions.        |
|  | Dealt with people in respectful manner.  | Dealt with people in respectful manner most of the time. | Disrespectful to others.                           |
| <b>Comments (required)</b>                       | Team working cohesively.   | Team mostly cohesive.                                    | Dysfunctional team.                                |
|  | Competently prepared networks and delivered Polling Officer training.              | Understand Hiding Officer training.                      | Numerous problems using technology.                |
|  | Successfully troubleshooted issues using the Polling Manager Manual.               | Networks correctly setup.                                | Did not address them appropriately.                |
|  |  |  | Inadequate training delivered.                     |

Please include comments about any areas that needed attention as well as any information that might be useful for TEC when considering appropriateness of staff for future roles. Your evaluations and observations are reviewed after the elections and help us manage future electoral events. Please ensure these evaluations are completed and are an accurate reflection of the polling place.



# Before polling day

## Preparing for polling day

Prior to attending face-to-face training, you must read the four manuals and complete the eLearning modules provided to you via email. If you are having trouble accessing the eLearning contact your RO.

Where possible each PPLO will be allocated to the same training session as the Polling Managers with whom they will work on polling day. As well as fully undertaking the training, it is worthwhile gaining an understanding of the experience and abilities of your Polling Managers during the training.

## Preparation for polling day

Similar to Polling Managers, prior to polling day you are to:

- check all forms and equipment against the inventory – let your RO know of any **significant** discrepancy.
- count ballot paper parcels – let your RO know of **any** discrepancy  
Sealed packs can be accepted as containing the correct number (either 100 or 25 ballot papers).
- familiarise yourself with the PPLO Return.
- check and charge all netbooks before polling day.
- collect your hire car (if applicable).

**Ballot papers and netbooks must always be stored securely while they are in your care.**

## Evening before polling day

As Polling Managers should be setting up their polling place on the evening before polling day, you may be required to assist or liaise with the RO if any issues arise.

## PPLO Return

You are required to enter information on the following sheets before polling day:

**Sheet 2** – confirmation and documentation of allocated netbook reserve.

**Sheet 3** – confirmation and documentation of allocated ballot paper stock.

**Sheet 9** – documentation of motor vehicle usage for traveling in excess of 30km to training session (and polling day if a hire car is not available).

**Sheet 13** – confirmation and documentation of allocated inventory.

# Polling day

Your day begins when you arrive at your first polling place at 7.00am

Your first polling place may sometimes have an inexperienced Polling Manager who will benefit from having you to assist them to undertake training and opening for voting.

## Timetable for the day

Your RO will discuss your timetable for the day with you at your training session, however this timetable is only a guide for the day, as at any time you could get a call from the RO regarding an issue at a particular polling place and will have to change your plans accordingly.

A PPLO needs to make, at a minimum, two visits to each polling place over the day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, and further visits if necessary. There may also be occasions where you will be asked to visit a polling place normally covered by another PPLO, if you are currently closer.

## The first polling place visit

The following is a guide to your first visit of each polling place:

- When you arrive note the time of arrival on the polling place visit summary and the cover of that polling place's evaluation form.
- As you walk to the polling place, commence the evaluation checklist - premises and storage.
- Once you enter the polling place, review the setup, voter flow and engagement of staff. It should also be evident that the Polling Manager is in charge, rather than a 2IC or other member of staff. It is important to be aware of any WH&S issues and whether there is appropriate signage.
- Introduce yourself to the Polling Manager & see how they are going. Have there been any issues?
- Evaluate the voting processes and make a note of any ways that the processes can be improved, or on something that may have been missed.
- Where the Polling Manager can improve processes, wait until the Polling Manager is free and quietly take them aside to make some suggestions. It is important to not undermine the Polling Manager's authority in the polling place unless absolutely necessary.
- Once you return to your car, note the length of time taken at the visit.

Remember you are the liaison between the RO and the Polling Manager. You should respect these positions – always providing friendly, open and professional service.

You should also have a wider understanding of any issues that may be affecting the election process as you travel between polling places. It is important that the PPLO is able to pick up patterns occurring in the area.

## Keeping contact with the Returning Officer

At different stages through the day you should check in with the RO to let them know your progress and any issues that may have come up. Once you have completed your first visit of each polling place ring your RO to provide an update.

The RO does not need to know about everything happening in the polling places. Small issues (e.g. Polling Manager did not have signs up) should be recorded in the evaluation for later discussion, while larger issues – netbook errors, an elector being injured or a need to allocate additional ballot papers – should be passed on to the RO as soon as practical.

## Your return visit

At your second visit you should:

- Note the time of arrival on the relevant documents.
- Go through the evaluation checklists again to ensure processes are maintained or improved.
- Complete the PPLO's observations of the Polling Manager and briefly discuss with the Polling Manager.

If you are called to do other duties by the RO and are unable to complete all of your second visits you **must still complete the assessment of all Polling Managers.**

## PPLO Return

On polling day you **may** also be required to enter information on the following sheets:

**Sheet 2** – if distributing some of the netbooks;

**Sheet 3** – if distributing part of the reserve ballot paper stock; and

**Sheet 9** – if using own car on polling day.

# Polling day after 6.00pm

A PPLO's tasks from the close of polling may vary depending on the location and the RO's requirements. A PPLO may act as a courier, helping to bring ballot papers and material back to a collection point, or they may be sent to a particular polling place to oversee close of polling day processes. Your RO will advise you of this at your training session.

## PPLO Return

Ensure you have completed:

- Sheet 3** – final reconciliation of your ballot papers;
- Sheet 9** – the motor vehicle usage form (if necessary); and
- Sheet 13** – return of materials.

Your RO will provide details concerning the return and handover of election material.

Once you are finished for the day, please call your RO for any final tasks to be completed before you head home. You are not cleared to go home until your RO releases you.

## Debriefing

A debriefing for PPLOs will take place in the week following polling day, covering:

- Any issues that arose in specific polling places during the day;
- Any issues that arose with Polling Managers or 2ICs;
- General issues for the geographical area covered by the PPLO.

It is important that during this debriefing session only issues that were recorded by you in your PPLO Return be addressed.

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