



9 May 2019

Local Government Election Cost Review  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
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Dear Ms Blackwell

### **Review of local government election costs**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on your review of the cost of local government election services. Byron Shire Council welcomes the review. Our election costs have increased significantly over the past 15 years and we appreciate the opportunity to identify cost efficiencies in the provision of these services. As an example, costs in 2004 were \$83,970 (where Council ran its own elections). This escalated to \$127,190 in 2008 under the NSWEC, \$143,833 in 2012 and \$187,195 in 2016.

In response to the review, Byron Shire Council offers the following comments:

- When would a council prefer to use a private provider, rather than the NSWEC, to conduct its elections?

*Council would utilise the services of a private provider for reasons of cost efficiency, being mindful that the provider needs to hold sufficient knowledge and expertise to guarantee a smooth and efficient election process, with timely results.*

- What are the barriers to private providers offering election services to councils? Are there more opportunities for private providers in particular geographic or service areas?

*As stated in your issues paper, private providers would not be able to undertake part of the election process without the expense of acquiring the required technology, but they could perform other election roles, eg. staffing, venues, ballot paper production.*

*Being a regional council we anticipate the only cost that would be higher for us than a metropolitan council would be logistics, for delivery of ballot papers and materials. All other services are not physical ones, and can be undertaken from wherever the provider is based, eg. polling place hire, IT support, call centre.*

*We would also welcome the private sector – usually nimble in nature – as able to respond to emerging technologies and leverage these for election services.*



- How should we assess the efficient costs of providing election services to local councils?

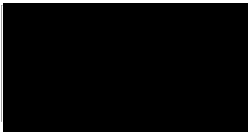
*We believe that costs should be assessed on a per elector basis.*

*It is understood that in 2012 there was a regional procurement process to provide election services and there was a saving of nearly \$60,000 per participating council – this illustrates that there are some opportunities for efficiencies and Byron Shire Council would welcome this.*

- How should we allocate the council-share of costs between councils? For example, on a 'per elector', or some other basis?

*Council believes that the 'per elector' basis is the fairest rationale.*

Yours sincerely



Vanessa Adams  
Director Corporate and Community Services