



25 March 2013

Australian Federal Government Election – 14 September 2013 Using Anglican Halls and Rooms as Polling Places

On 30 January 2013 the Prime Minister announced that a Federal Government Election will be held on **Saturday 14 September 2013** with writs to be issued Monday 12 August 2013.

The [Australian Electoral Commission](#) (“AEC”) is the body responsible for the conduct of all federal government elections. The Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney (“ACPT”) standard licence agreement has been approved by AEC for signature by Returning Officers.

I am writing to remind you about the [ACPT standard licence agreement for the use of an Anglican church hall or rooms as a polling place](#) that Wardens are authorised to sign.

If approached by a Returning Officer on behalf of the AEC to use your parish hall or rooms for an election, the ACPT *approved* form of licence agreement can be accessed from the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat website www.sds.asn.au (“For Wardens & Parish Councillors” → “Property” → “Leasing and Licensing of Church Property” → “[Licence Agreement for Use of an Anglican Hall or Rooms \(excluding Church Building\) as a Polling Place](#)”).

There is no prescribed fee for the hire of Anglican Halls or Rooms for use as a polling place. Rather, the cost of hiring premises is subject to negotiation between the Wardens and the Returning Officer. However, based on an ACPT survey of Anglican Parishes in 2010, *the ACPT recommendation* is that a polling place licence fee be negotiated that is no less than –

- \$2,200 (for the Sydney Metropolitan Area); and
- \$1,100 (for all other areas).

The ACPT polling place licence agreement includes a clause which allows the Wardens to issue directions to the Returning Officer about the use of the premises for the election. For example, the distribution of political information and “how-to-vote” cards on church property can be prohibited. Similarly, access to areas of the parish grounds can be restricted. Such directions should be given to the Returning Officer in writing by the Wardens.

A final note of caution: Returning Officers may propose the use of a government prepared agreement for hire of premises as a polling place. However, Wardens should not sign such an agreement as it is not approved by the ACPT and does not provide adequate protection from legal liability.

To ask a question about Polling Place licence agreements or other ACPT matters, please contact the Manager with responsibility for ACPT matters in your region –

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Yours sincerely

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