

MEDIA RELEASE

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2007 MOCK REFERENDUM ON STATEHOOD STARTS THIS WEEKEND

SUE BRADLEY COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

The Northern Territory Statehood Steering Committee has joined with the AEC to run a Mock Referendum on Statehood during the 2007 Northern Territory Show season.

In a simulated voting exercise, Territorians will be asked to vote YES or NO to the following three questions:

- 1. Do you agree the Northern Territory should become a State under the Australian Constitution?*
- 2. Do you agree the Northern Territory, as a new State, should have the same powers as the existing States of Australia?*
- 3. Do you agree the Northern Territory, as a new State, should have the same number of Senators as the existing States of Australia?*

A YES Case and a NO Case have been published on the Statehood website and will be available at the 'Polling Places' at the shows.

The AEC will conduct the voting process with their usual high level of integrity. The Statehood Steering Committee will not have access to the ballot boxes; these will be under the control of the AEC.

The Mock Referendum will however feature some unique differences to the normal voting process.

For the Mock Referendum on Statehood, Territorians under the age of 18 will be eligible to cast a vote.

All Mock Referendum voters 17 years and over will be asked to ensure they are on the electoral role and younger voters will be provided with information on why enrolling to vote is so important.

Another significant difference is that polls will open on day one of the Fred's Pass Show on 19 May and will not close until the end of the final day at the Borroloola Show in August. But voters will still only be able to vote just once.

"This is an exciting initiative using the expertise of the independent Electoral Commission. We hope Territorians will enter into the spirit of the referendum and make an effort to make their voice heard" Sue Bradley said today.

Media inquiries Michael Tatham 040 111 9570
Australian Electoral Commission (08) 8982 8000

