

Ballot paper formality at a referendum

Making decisions on formality



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Key provisions in the Referendum Act

Section 24 of the [Referendum \(Machinery Provisions\) Act 1984](#) (Referendum Act) sets out the manner of voting:

The voting at a referendum shall be by ballot and each elector shall indicate his or her vote:

- (a) if the elector approves the proposed law—by writing the word “**Yes**” in the space provided on the ballot paper;
- (b) if the elector does not approve the proposed law—by writing the word “**No**” in the space so provided.

Key provisions in the Referendum Act

Section 93 of the Referendum Act sets out the formality requirements:

(1) A ballot paper is informal if:

(a) ...[no official mark]

(b) it has no vote marked on it or the voter's intention is not clear;

(c) it has more than one vote marked on it;

(d) it has upon it any mark or writing (not authorized by this Act or by the regulations to be put upon it) by which, in the opinion of a Divisional Returning Officer, the voter can be identified.

Key provisions in the Referendum Act

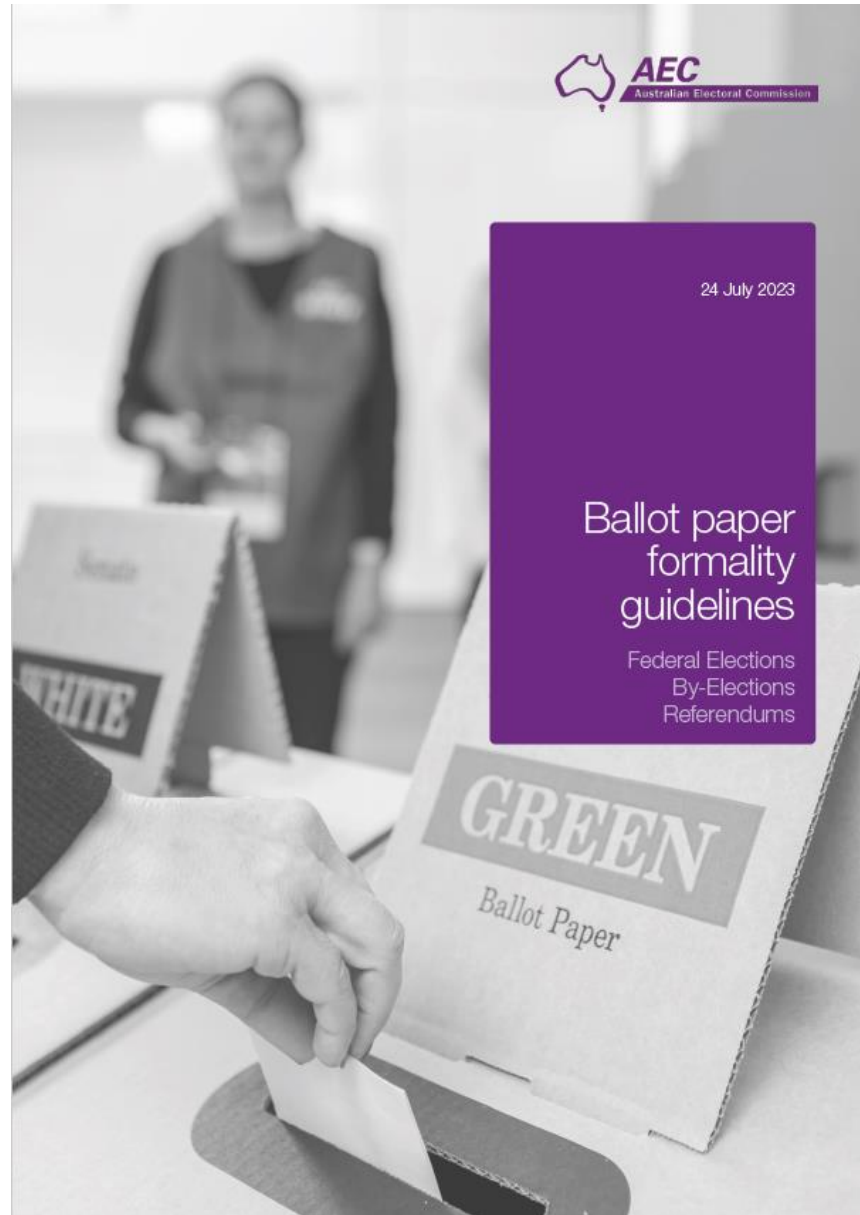
Section 93 also provides:

(8) Effect shall be given to a ballot paper of a voter according to the voter's intention, so far as that **intention is clear**.

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www.aec.gov.au/Elections/candidates/formality





Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER



Referendum on proposed Constitution alterations

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write **"YES"** or **"NO"** in the
space provided opposite the
question set out below.

A PROPOSED LAW:

Description of the proposed
constitutional change.

Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?

Yes ✓

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"



Australian Electoral Commission

SAMPLE



Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER



Referendum on proposed Constitution alterations

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write **"YES"** or **"NO"** in the
space provided opposite the
question set out below.

A PROPOSED LAW:

Description of the proposed
constitutional change.

Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?

No x

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"



Australian Electoral Commission

SAMPLE



Commonwealth of Australia

BALLOT PAPER



Referendum on proposed Constitution alterations

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write "YES" or "NO" in the
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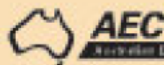
A PROPOSED LAW:

Description of the proposed
constitutional change.

Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?

OK X

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

SAMPLE



Commonwealth of Australia

BALLOT PAPER



Referendum on proposed Constitution alterations

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write "YES" or "NO" in the
space provided opposite the
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A PROPOSED LAW:

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Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?

☺

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"



AEC

Australian Electoral Commission

SAMPLE



Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER



Referendum on proposed Constitution alterations

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write **"YES"** or **"NO"** in the
space provided opposite the
question set out below.

A PROPOSED LAW:

Description of the proposed
constitutional change.

~~Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?~~

Do you want
a free meal?

Yes

WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"



AEC
Australian Electoral Commission

SAMPLE

Ticks and crosses



Ticks are formal
for 'Yes'



Crosses are
informal – could be
'Yes' or 'No'



Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER
 Australian Capital Territory



Referendum on proposed Constitution alteration

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

**Write "YES" or "NO" in the
 space provided opposite the
 question set out below.**

A PROPOSED LAW:

To alter the Constitution to allow
 the Federal Parliament to make laws
 about Australia's railways.

**Do you approve
 this proposed
 alteration?**



WRITE "YES"
 OR "NO"



Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER
 Australian Capital Territory



Referendum on proposed Constitution alteration

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Commonwealth of Australia
BALLOT PAPER
Australian Capital Territory



Referendum on proposed Constitution alteration

DIRECTIONS TO VOTER

Write "YES" or "NO" in the
space provided opposite the
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A PROPOSED LAW:

To alter the Constitution to allow
the Federal Parliament to make laws
about Australia's railways.

Do you approve
this proposed
alteration?



WRITE "YES"
OR "NO"

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Foreign languages

Translations of 'Yes' and 'No'

English	Yes / YES	No / NO
Arabic	نعم	لا / كلا
Assyrian	ܠܝܗ	ܠܐ
Bengali	হ্যাঁ	না
Bosnian	Da / DA	Ne / NE
Burmese	ထောက်ခံသည်	မထောက်ခံပါ
Chinese	是	否

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