

Duty Statement

Position:	Returning Officer
-----------	--------------------------

Role overview

The Returning Officer (RO) is directly responsible to the Electoral Commissioner for the management of State parliamentary elections and/or referendums in a designated House of Assembly (HA) district and acting as deputy RO for the Legislative Council (LC). For the 2026 State Election, all polling places must also offer voting for the South Australian First Nations Voice to Parliament Elections. The Electoral Commissioner delegates the operational management of ROs to the Returning Officer Liaison Officer (ROLO).

The RO is responsible for managing a range of election activities including arranging polling booths; training staff; receiving nominations; processing declaration votes; monitoring polling activities and responding to issues; conducting counts of ballot papers; and reconciling and completing election and financial returns.

All ROs will be assigned an Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), who will be required to understudy the RO position and work with the RO in the delivery of the election.

Key responsibilities

Venue management

- Establish and manage the RO office, ensuring it is set up, fit for purpose, complies with WHS requirements, and packed down.
- Facilitate final arrangements for polling place use.
- Asset and stock management.

Staffing management

- Lead and manage a team in a high pressure and deadline driven environment.
- Roster and organise the district workforce to successfully conduct and administer election services which are consistently delivered to a high standard.

Training

- Undertake and complete assigned training.
- Deliver face to face training for relevant district staff.
- Monitor training completion by district staff.

Candidates and stakeholder management

- Process candidate nominations.
- Respond to enquiries from a diverse range of stakeholders such as candidates, scrutineers and the public, in support of the election event.

Voting and count management

- Act with integrity and impartiality to ensure transparency in the conduct of the election.
- Oversee and manage electoral processes at polling places within the district.
- Conduct scrutiny and counts and supervise these processes as required.

Results and data management

- Lead the reporting and submission of election results in designated district.
- Effectively use a broad range of software programs in conjunction with the Election Management System (EMS).
- Completion and return of required election returns.

Time Management

- Deliver critical election tasks on time and according to legislative requirements and ECSA policies and procedures, including accurate and timely results.

Duty Statement

Essential hours of duty

Returning Officers will be onboarded by December 2025 with commitments to attend three face-to-face conferences, complete assigned online training, and read relevant manuals and other support materials.

Returning Officers will undertake the role full time for the period 16 February to 3 April 2026.

Attendance at face-to-face conferences is compulsory with dates currently scheduled for 6 December 2025, 17 January 2026, 7 February 2026, and a debrief in May 2026. Training will be held in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

Essential requirements

- Available to work the essential hours of duty.
- Capacity to quickly gain knowledge and understanding of new processes.
- Willingness and capability to follow strict procedures and processes whilst operating within tight timeframes.
- Demonstrated experience using Microsoft suite at an intermediate level, with the ability to learn new systems quickly.
- Experience leading teams in a fast-paced delivery/operations or logistics environment.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills including proven ability to build rapport quickly and work with a broad range of people.
- Excellent organisational skills with demonstrated experience organising work priorities to immutable deadlines whilst maintaining accuracy and attention to detail.
- Proven ability to lead and manage a team and coordinating resources to produce work of the highest levels of accuracy within absolute time constraints.
- Strong analytical, problem solving and conflict resolution skills to guide and empower staff to create solutions and results.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills to work collaboratively with ECSA peers and other stakeholders to align team objectives with broader operational goals.

Desirable requirements

- Experience in presenting training and/or information sessions.
- Experience in Work Health & Safety (WHS), ensuring compliance with workplace safety policies including fatigue management.

Remuneration

The indicative fixed fee remuneration for all work will be in the order of \$19,000, which will be paid in accordance with a schedule of payments.

Special conditions

- In order to not compromise the strict neutrality of the Commission, no person who is active in political affairs or intends to carry on this activity may be an employee.
- Significant out of normal hours work is required, especially during the weeks either side of polling day.
- Appointment is subject to a satisfactory Criminal History Check.
- A current driver's licence and access to a vehicle is required.