

**AFTERNOON TEA TO ACKNOWLEDGE STAFF OF THE
TASMANIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION RE 2024 ELECTIONS
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DRAWING ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 16 MAY 2024**

Good afternoon, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Government House.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

We have asked you all here for afternoon tea to thank you all for your work with our recent general and Legislative Council elections.

Notwithstanding your tight timelines between the proclamations for proroguing and dissolution of Parliament, issue of the writs, polling day and return of the writs for the general election, you were certainly up to the challenge.

I understand that vote counting was challenging, with significant numbers of informal votes. You also had the usual challenges associated with our unique Hare Clark distribution of preferences. Still, you ensured that the writs were returned on time, in fact 13 days before the due date.

Then you had to stand up teams for three divisions for our Legislative Council. Again, you responded in a professional and timely manner. Again, these election writs were returned a week before the due date – a credit to you all and well done.

For our State, these elections were organised precisely and flawlessly. May I highlight just a few impressive facts:

- The increased membership in our House of Assembly brought changes to formal voting requirements. A new public awareness campaign, “7 or more”, underpinned your response to this change.

- A record number of candidates for this State election (167), surpassing the previous record of 158 candidates in 1996.
- Expanded ballot papers to accommodate a record number of columns. Due to our unique Robson Rotation system, this resulted in more than 700 ballot rotations across all divisions.
- A roll of 408,197 Tasmanian electors turned out to vote at more than 250 community centres, clubs, schools and gyms.
- The establishment of a new telephone service centre in Glenorchy, offering phone voting for the first time at a State election and providing frontline support services for electors.
- More than 1,500 staff coming together across our State to support the smooth operation of our elections, and
- Our nation's last surviving tally room was the beating heart of our election night, back in full force after the restrictions of 2021.

Your work for our Electoral Commission is always reliable, but usually unheralded. Your work is an important and trusted safeguard that has the confidence of our voting population. We trust our elections and know that they are conducted without bias or influence. Our community appreciates and values your work and what you achieve at each election.

My thanks to you all, and now, please, join us for some refreshments.