

Allocation of Broadcasting Time and Money for the 2017 General Election

The deadline by which political parties must give written notice to the Electoral Commission of eligibility for an allocation of broadcasting time or money under the Broadcasting Act 1989 for the 2017 General Election is **Friday 3 March 2017 at 5.00pm**.

The Broadcasting Act 1989 (“Act”) describes the responsibilities of the Electoral Commission (“Commission”) to allocate time and money to eligible political parties to enable them to broadcast election programmes during the election period.

The Commission allocates to eligible political parties:

- a. the time that is made available by Television New Zealand (TVNZ) and Radio New Zealand (RNZ) free of charge for the broadcasting of opening and closing addresses; and
- b. the money that is appropriated by Parliament for the purpose of funding the broadcast of election programmes during the election period.

Eligibility for allocation of broadcasting time and money

The Commission must not allocate any time to a political party under section 73 of the Act, or make an allocation of money under 74A of the Act, in respect of an election period unless:

- a. the party has given the Commission written notice by **3 March 2017 at 5.00pm** that the party considers itself eligible for an allocation of time under section 73 of the Act or of money under section 74A of the Act; and
- b. the party is registered with the Commission at the time Parliament is dissolved.

What the notice must contain

Notices should be addressed to the Electoral Commission.

In accordance with section 70C of the Act, every notice given to the Commission must state:

- a. the full name of the political party;
- b. the name and address of the person providing the notice and the capacity in which he or she provides the notice;
- c. where the person providing the notice is not the secretary of the political party, the name and address of the secretary of the political party;
- d. details of any relationships that may exist between that political party and any other political parties in New Zealand which the Commission may need to take into account in allocating time or money to political parties;
- e. either:
 - i. that the party is registered on the Register of Political Parties; or
 - ii. that the party is intending to apply for registration on the Register of Political Parties in order to be registered at the date of dissolution or expiry of Parliament; and
- f. whether or not the political party intends to submit a list under section 127 of the Electoral Act 1993 for the 2017 General Election.

How to give notice

Notices may be given by mail, facsimile or email, or can be delivered by hand to the Electoral Commission’s office.

The Commission’s postal address is PO Box 3220, Wellington 6140. Telephone: (04) 495 0030. Facsimile: (04) 495 0031. Email: enquiries@elections.govt.nz. The Commission is located at Level 10, 34–42 Manners Street, Wellington.

Broadcasting (Election Programmes and Election Advertising) Amendment Bill 2016 (Broadcasting Amendment Bill)

On 27 October 2016, the Broadcasting Amendment Bill was introduced into Parliament. The Broadcasting Amendment Bill proposes to:

- remove the requirements for opening and closing addresses to be broadcast at election time, along with the need for TVNZ and RNZ to provide free broadcasting time for these addresses; and
- enable parties to use their allocations of funding for Internet advertising, in addition to television and radio as currently permitted.

Although the changes proposed affect the allocation, to ensure timely decisions, the Commission is commencing the early stages of the process under the current legislation which will include asking TVNZ and RNZ what times will be made available for opening and closing addresses.

Dated at Wellington this 2nd day of February 2017.

Issued on behalf of the Electoral Commission:
ALICIA WRIGHT, Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Commission.

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