



Explanatory Notes

1. Section 77 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 provides that voting documents may not be used at an election or poll unless they are consistent with at least one of the general formats approved under that section by the Secretary for Local Government.
2. The approved formats are general in nature and, provided that they do not detract from what is intended by the general format, they may be modified. Acceptable modifications could, for example, include those required:
 - to meet the circumstances of particular elections or polls such as the number of candidates;
 - to accommodate differences between postal voting and booth voting; and
 - for voting documents to be used for special votes.
3. In addition to being consistent with one or more of the approved general formats, voting documents for elections and polls must comply with sections 75 and 76 of the Local Electoral Act 2001 which specify the directions and information voting documents must contain.
4. The following provisions of the Local Electoral Regulations 2001 also apply to voting documents:
 - the order candidates' names are to appear on voting documents (regulation 31);
 - the combining of voting documents (regulation 32);
 - the printing of voting documents double-sided (regulation 33(1)); and
 - different coloured voting documents for different elections and polls and different kinds of voting documents at the same election or poll (regulation 33(2)).
5. The approved general formats cover the following issues:
 - a first past the post (FPP) election;
 - a single transferable voting (STV) election;
 - an FPP poll requiring a vote for or against a proposal;
 - an FPP poll requiring a vote on a particular option; and
 - an STV poll.
6. Also shown, for assistance of electoral officers, is an illustration of how election and poll issues may be combined including introductory matters, using the individually approved general formats, for the purposes of a triennial general election.



7. The text contained in the general formats is not part of the formats but is included for illustrative purposes. The text is based on research conducted on behalf of Taituarā, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Office for Disability Issues and is recommended as being good practice.
8. The Secretary for Local Government's approval is not required for specific voting documents. If, however, there is any uncertainty as to whether a voting document complies with an approved general format, the Local Government Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs may be able to assist. That assistance will not constitute legal advice. Contact details are as follows: localelections@dia.govt.nz