

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

**Issued by the authority of the Minister for Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989

TORRES STRAIT REGIONAL AUTHORITY ELECTION AMENDMENT RULES 1999

These Amendment Rules were made under section 143G of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* (the Act). That section provides that the Minister may, after consulting with the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), make rules about the manner in which TSRA elections under the Act are to be conducted.

Following a review of the conduct of the 1996 and 1997 elections for the ATSIC Regional Councils and the TSRA, the AEC provided submissions relating to the future conduct of those elections. These Amendment Rules give effect to these submissions by providing increased efficiency in the conduct of TSRA elections and a more effective service to voters.

These Amendment Rules reflect the change to the TSRA Rules which redefines the Thursday Island (Port Kennedy) community and the Horn Island and Prince of Wales electorate as two wards. This change will ensure that only those persons who are enfranchised for the election will be enabled to vote. The relevant map has been clarified and updated in order to accurately identify the two wards. The map is identified in Schedule 1 to the Rules.

The Amendment Rules set out the procedures which electors are required to follow when casting postal votes and the processes which polling officials are required to observe during the scrutiny of votes.

Other changes are of a technical nature.

The Amendment Rules commenced upon gazettal.