

# News releases - John Rau

## Greater support for vision impaired voters

John Rau

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In a South Australian first, new technology will be available at three pre-poll voting centres to better support voters who are blind or have a vision impairment at the upcoming state election.

The Government has approved the use VoteAssist, a system designed to make it easier for people who are blind or have a vision impairment to cast a secret vote.

The decision follows the passage of legislation through State Parliament last year, paving the way for the use of electronically assisted voting technology to better support people with a disability when casting their vote.

VoteAssist will be available in three pre-poll voting centres at Royal Society of the Blind locations – 230 Pirie St Adelaide, 27 Anderson Walk Smithfield and 58 Dyson Road Noarlunga Downs.

### **Background**

VoteAssist has been used successfully in Western Australia.

The system uses specially designed computer terminals coupled with headphones and a numeric keypad, with audio prompts to guide people through the voting process.

Once the voter has completed the process, an audio prompt confirms the preferences before a ballot paper is printed and can be placed in the declaration envelope.

VoteAssist is restricted to people who are blind or who have a vision impairment.

More information is available at [www.ecsa.sa.gov.au/voting/voting-at-the-state-election/electronically-assisted-voting](http://www.ecsa.sa.gov.au/voting/voting-at-the-state-election/electronically-assisted-voting)

### **Quotes attributable to Attorney-General John Rau**

This important service will enable voters with vision impairment to cast a secret ballot for the first time.

The Electoral Commission of South Australia, supported by the Royal Society for the Blind, will manage three locations where this technology will be used in the lead up to the state election.

VoteAssist will make it significantly easier for people who are blind or have a vision impairment to lodge their vote, while respecting the confidentiality of their choices at the ballot box.

**Quotes attributable to Disabilities Minister Katrine Hildyard**

VoteAssist is another step toward ensuring South Australians with disability have equal access to all aspects of community life.

This will make it easier for people who are vision impaired to engage in the political process and that is a good thing.