

AEA RESPONSE TO THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION'S REPORT ON THE MAY 2019 ELECTIONS

We welcome today's report from the Electoral Commission, which echoes many of the recommendations made in our [post-election statement](#) published last month.

The reduced level of voter confidence in how May's elections were run is discouraging. For the European Parliamentary Elections, this understandably stems from the widely reported difficulties faced by significant numbers of EU citizens which was disappointing given the complexities of their registration process was highlighted by the Commission five years ago.

As the electoral community prepares for a potential short-notice general election, the Commission is correct to raise how crucial it is for the UK Government to consider how to ensure British voters living overseas can confidently and conveniently cast their vote.

The Commission's acknowledgement of the "challenging resource backdrop" for elections in the UK is important, and we are ready to work with them and the UK Government to address "decreasing availability of expertise in the sector". However, the stretched capacity of specialist electoral suppliers and printers continues to be a pressing worry for us and our members.

We strongly support the Commission's recommendation: "to simplify the legal process for challenging elections, particularly so that mistakes made by ROs can be rectified more quickly without recourse to the election petition process". The complexity and length of election counts can lead to honest mistakes. A quick and clear way to correct these should be available, benefitting everyone involved.

Peter Stanyon, AEA chief executive, said: "It is to Returning Officers' and electoral administrators' immense credit that they achieved what they did in May. Electoral teams have high standards, and the problems caused by outdated

electoral law and prescribed processes need addressing urgently, as outlined by the Commission in this comprehensive and timely report.”