



Thousands voted twice in cliffhanger poll

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AS many as 16,000 Australians got away with voting more than once in the 2010 razor's edge federal poll.

Dozens may have voted three times or more, but only three copped a slap on the wrist.

The Australian Electoral Commission has admitted to a Senate committee its

own records make it difficult to tell who is flouting electoral laws. And it has been revealed little can be done if voters deny it.

Of the 16,189 people the AEC suspected of multiple votes, 5211 denied it and 80 per cent of the 1458 who confessed were new voters or did not understand how

to vote.

It was decided 7925 were errors, many caused when voters with similar names were recorded under the same name by accident.

Electoral Commissioner Ed Killesteyn told the committee the offence was hard to prove as there was no real evidence if a person denied

the offence.

Victorian Liberal senator Scott Ryan said the lack of prosecution sent a confusing message to the country.

There have been calls for the introduction of photo ID, with some seats won or lost on just a few votes.