3 Navigating EasyCount Senate

EasyCount Senate is used in the vote counting process for Senate elections. The application is used for entry of below the line senate votes and "counting" of above the line and below the line votes (i.e. distributing preferences). It is currently used at eight different locations throughout Australia on non-networked PCs and laptops. The EasyCount Senate program interacts with the Election Management System (ELMS) which is run on the Australian Electoral Commission's IT network.

3.1 Event Roles

There are three levels of user accounts available in EasyCount Senate, these levels control the users access to functions in EasyCount Senate.

Batch Controller – allows full access to all functions on batch control and data entry laptops except for data entry and verification.

Supervisor – Provides access to functions not available to Data Entry Operators eg. Correction functions, can also do data entry and verification.

Operator – Applies to Data Entry Operator staff. Data Entry Operator is limited to data entry / verification and import / export functions only.

Note: There is also an Administrator level but this will ONLY be used by Easycount Administrators.

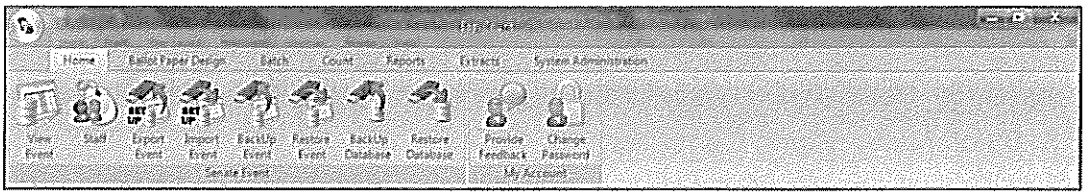
3.2 Menus

3.2.1 Home Menu (Batch Controller)

Home menu is accessed by a Batch Controller.

Note 1: The home menu options are different depending on whether you are logged in as an Administrator, Batch Controller or as a Supervisor or Data Entry Operator.

Note 2: The event must be loaded and computer and user accounts created for all options to become visible.



View Event – View the current event details.

Staff – Allocate staff to the current event. Determine which role each staff member will have.

Export Event – Export the event for loading onto data entry laptops.

Import Event – Import event information from ELMS into EasyCount Senate.

Backup Event – Back up the current event to file. This may take several minutes.

Restore Event – Restore an event from a file backup. This may take several minutes.

Backup Database – (Normally only used by IT area) Backup the database to a file. No other work on the database should be performed while this is performed.

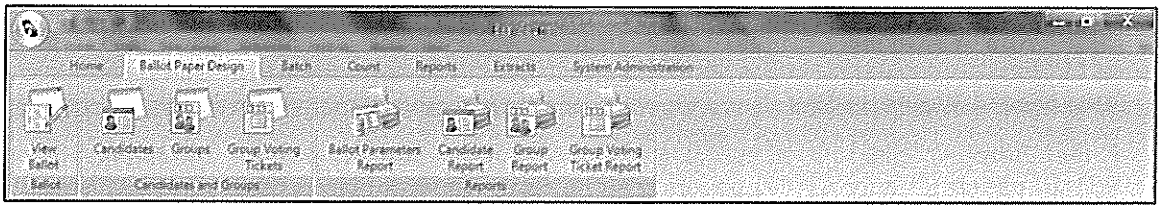
Restore Database– (Normally only used by IT area) Restore database from file. This may take several minutes. No other work on the database should be performed while this is performed.

Provide Feedback – Provide feedback on any issues you have while using EasyCount Senate. Make suggestions about any improvements you feel could be made. Feedback is collated into the feedback report which is accessible via **Reports > System Administration Reports > Feedback Report.**

Change Password – Change your password on the current PC you are using.

3.2.2 Ballot Paper Design Menu (Batch Controller)

Ballot Paper Design menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



View Ballot – View the rules governing the conduct of the ballot.

Candidates – Shows the list of candidates for a ballot. Mark candidates that are no longer eligible to contest the ballot.

Groups – View the list of groups that candidates belong to.

Group Voting Tickets - Define the group voting tickets for the ballot. Lock the ticket definitions once approved.

Ballot Parameters Report – Election details including formality and counting rules for the ballot.

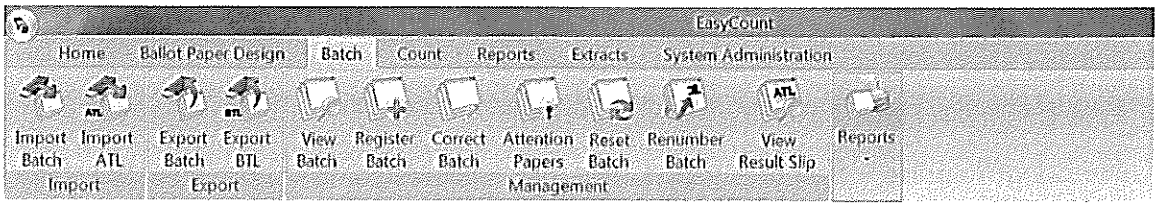
Candidate Report – Lists all the candidates for the ballot.

Group Report – Lists all the groups defined for the ballot.

Group Voting Ticket Report – Lists details of all Group Voting Tickets for the ballot.

3.2.3 Batch Menu (Batch Controller)

Batch menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



Import Batch – Import batches that have been exported from a data entry laptop.

Export Batch – Export batches for importing onto a data entry laptop.

Import ATL – Import verified Above-The-Line (ATL) and obviously informal results from ELMS (Results Slips).

Export BTL – Export Below-The-Line (BTL) first preference and informal results to ELMS.

View Batch – View a selected batch. In the view batch screen you can see a list of ballot papers contained in a batch. You can right mouse button click on a listed ballot paper and click correct batch to go to the batch correction screen.

Register Batch – Record the number of papers registered for a single batch. Also allows for multiple batches to be registered as having no papers.

Correct Batch – Fix issues with batches. Papers within a batch may be deleted or the number of papers registered updated. Papers may be inserted, have their preferences updated, marked for attention, marked obviously informal or deleted.

Attention Papers – View a list of papers marked for attention. Double clicking on an entry or right clicking on an entry and selecting Correct Batch will open the Batch Correction dialog at the selected attention paper.

Reset Batch – Reset the status of a batch to Unregistered, Registered, Confirmed or Verify ATL (0 papers). Verify ATL (0 papers) can be used where a polling place has been abolished since the event was loaded and the ATL batch needs to be set to verified (0 papers) to allow a final count to run.

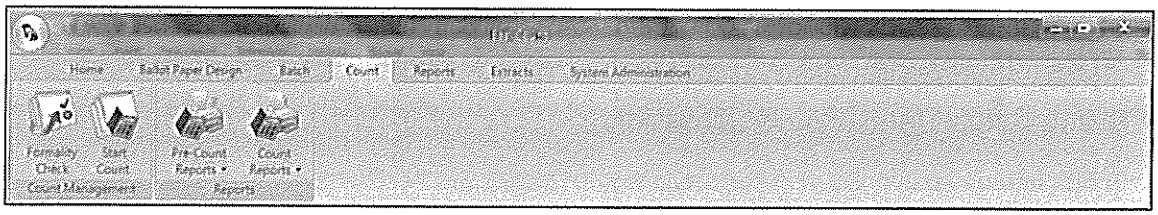
Renumber Batch – Done where the papers for one batch have been mistakenly entered as belonging to another batch.

View Result Slip – View ATL and Obviously Informal Results for polling places and declaration scrutiny counts. The list of polling places/declaration scrutiny counts to select from is limited by division and polling location type.

Reports – A list of all reports and their functions can be found in Section 9 of this User Guide.

3.2.4 Count Menu (Batch Controller)

Count menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



Formality Check – Perform formality checks on a nominated list of batches. Only required if formality rules have changed since data entry/verification.

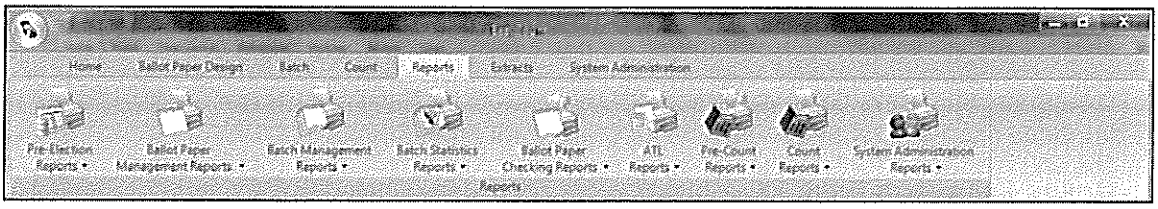
Start Count – Perform a count for the current ballot.

Pre-Count Reports - A list of all reports and their functions can be found in Section 9 of this User Guide.

Count Reports - A list of all reports and their functions can be found in Section 9 of this User Guide

3.2.5 Reports Menu (Batch Controller)

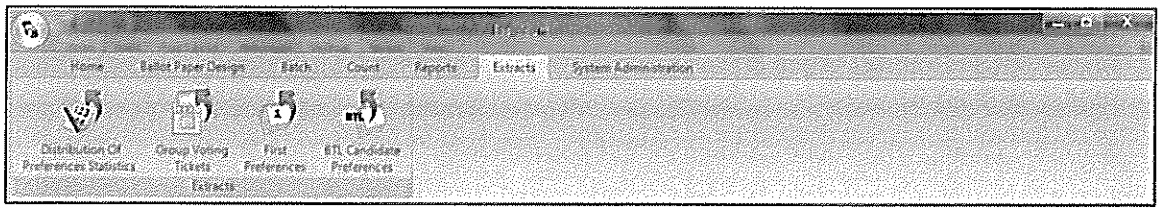
Reports menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



A list of all reports and their function can be found in Section 9 of this manual.

3.2.6 Extracts Menu (Batch Controller)

Extracts menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



Distribution of Preferences Statistics – Distribution of Preferences Statistics Extract. *Made available to the public on the Virtual Tally Room website.*

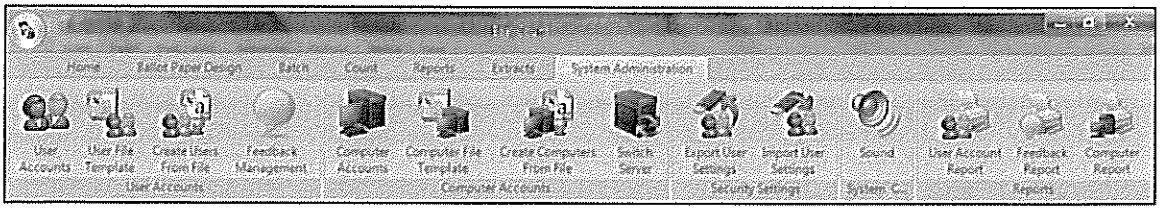
Group Voting Tickets – Group Voting Tickets Extract for loading Group Voting Ticket definitions into ELMS.

First Preferences – Extract first preferences by polling place. *Made available to the public on the Virtual Tally Room website.*

BTL Candidate Preferences – Extract candidate BTL preferences. *Made available to the public on the Virtual Tally Room.*

3.2.7 System Administration Menu (Batch Controller)

System Administration menu can only be accessed by a Batch Controller.



User Accounts – Create and maintain the accounts of users who have access to EasyCount Senate.

User File Template – Access the User File Template which can be filled in and then imported into EasyCount Senate (Create Users From File).

Create Users From File – Import a pre filled User File Template to automatically create users (note you can only create Data Entry Operators from file, you cannot create Batch Controllers or Supervisors).

Feedback Management – View, update, report on and create feedback on issues and suggestions.

Computer Accounts – Record the computers to be used for the event. Assign aliases to each computer. Batches will be allocated using these aliases.

Computer File Template - Access the Computer File Template which can be filled in and then imported into EasyCount Senate (Create Computers From File).

Create Computers From File - Import a pre filled User Computer Template to automatically create computers (servers and workstations).

Switch Server – Change the SQL Server (database) that EasyCount Senate is using. This allows a backup batch control PC to connect to a primary batch control PC and be networked together.

Export User Settings – Export users for the current event for importing onto another PC (data entry laptop) or server (batch control PC).

Import User Settings – Import users exported from another PC (data entry laptop) or server (batch control PC).

Sound – Change the sound settings for the application.

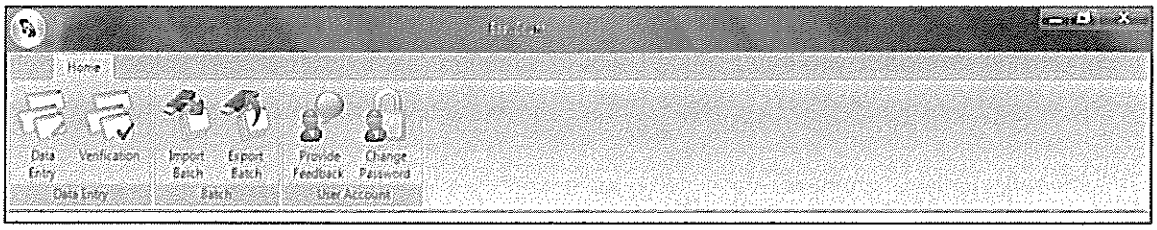
User Account Report – List all user accounts with access to EasyCount Senate.

Feedback Report – Report of feedback from EasyCount Senate users.

Computer Report – List all computer accounts created.

3.2.8 Home Menu (Supervisor and Data Entry Operator)

Home menu can only be accessed by a Supervisor or Data Entry Operator



Data Entry – Perform initial data entry of batches of ballot papers.

Verification – Perform verification data entry of batches of ballot papers which have been through initial data entry.

Import Batch – Import batches that have been exported from a batch control PC.

Export Batch – Export batches for importing back to a batch control PC.

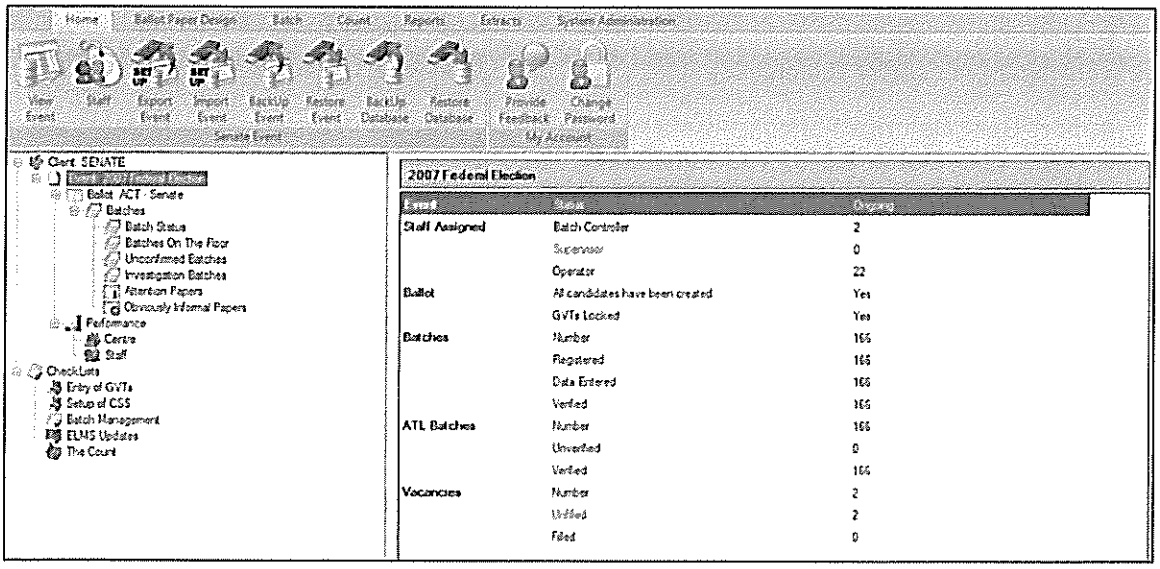
Provide Feedback – Provide feedback about any issues you have using EasyCount. Make suggestions about any improvement you feel could be made.

Change Password – Change your password.

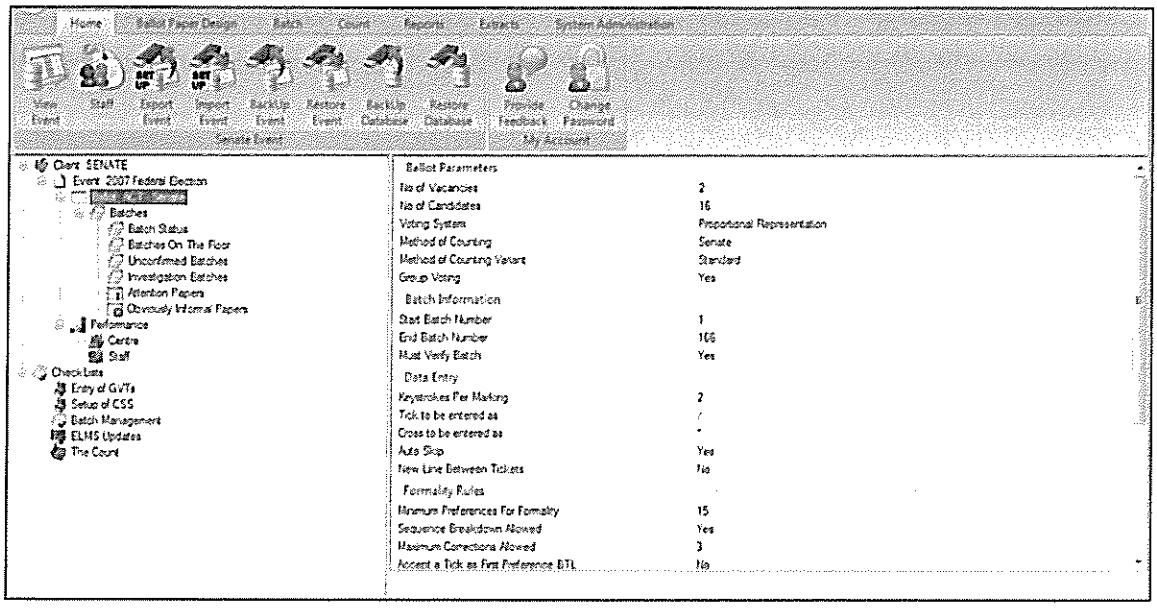
3.3 Client: Senate Screen

The Client: Senate Screen will display when and event has been loaded and a user is logged in as a Batch Controller when you first open EasyCount Senate. It consists of a split screen with menu options on the left hand side that display details on the right hand side of the screen. To make all options visible click on the boxes with + in them.

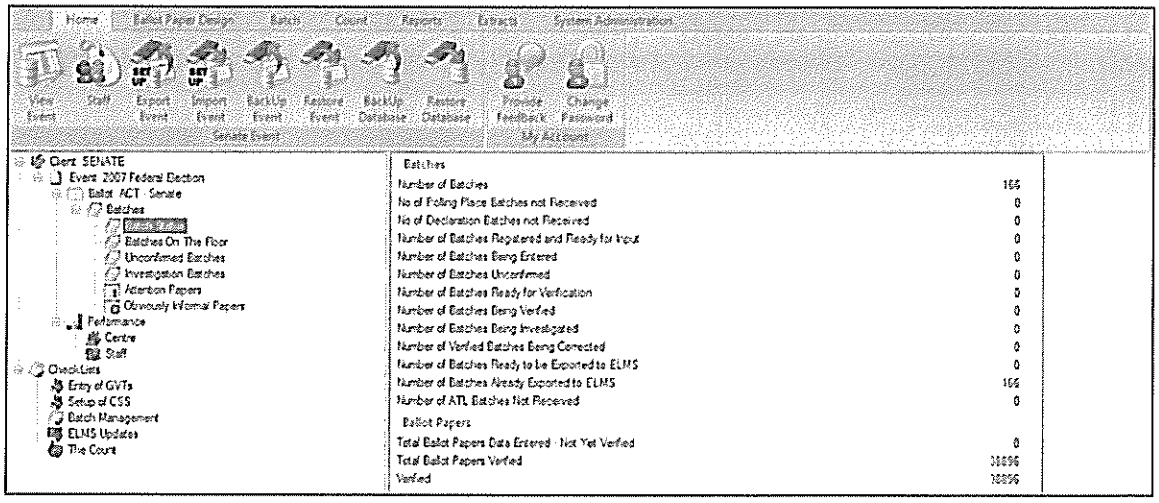
By clicking on the text on the left hand side you can access the required information. By clicking on Event you can access event information (screenshot below) including staff assigned, ballot, batches, ATL batches and vacancies. Items that still required actions will display in RED.



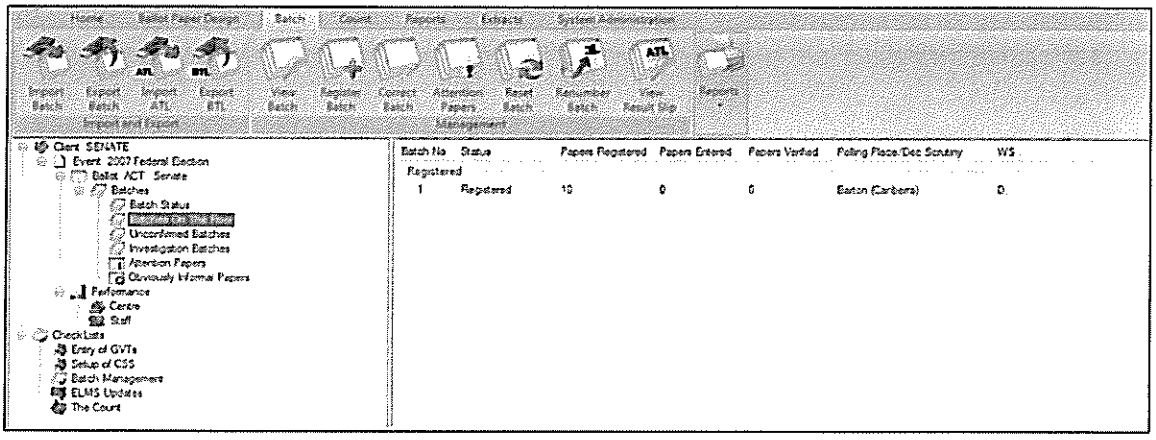
By clicking on **Ballot** you can access ballot information (screenshot below) ballot parameters, batch information, data entry, formality rules and counting options.



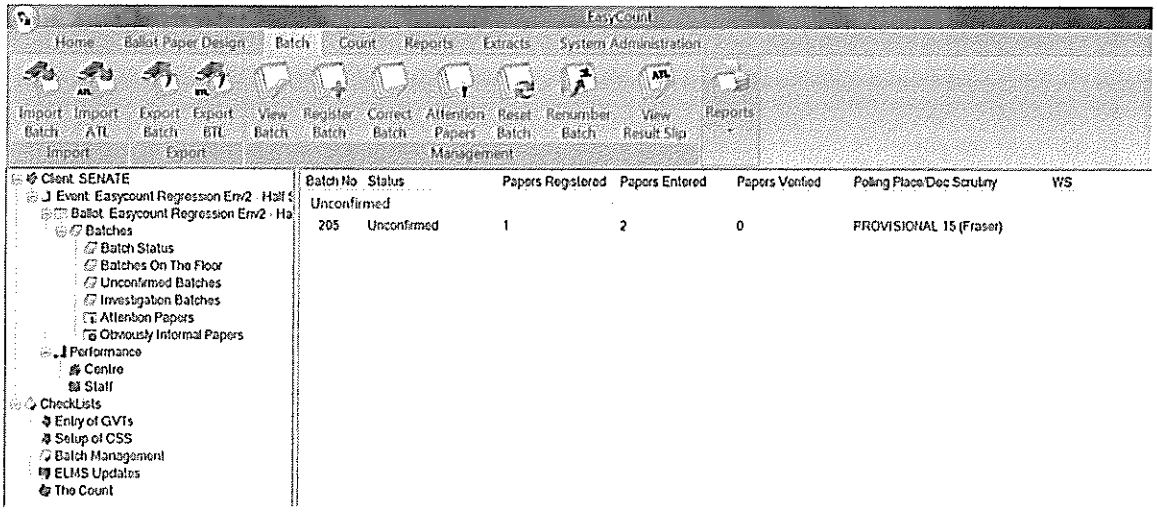
By clicking on **Batch Status** you can access batch information (screenshot below).



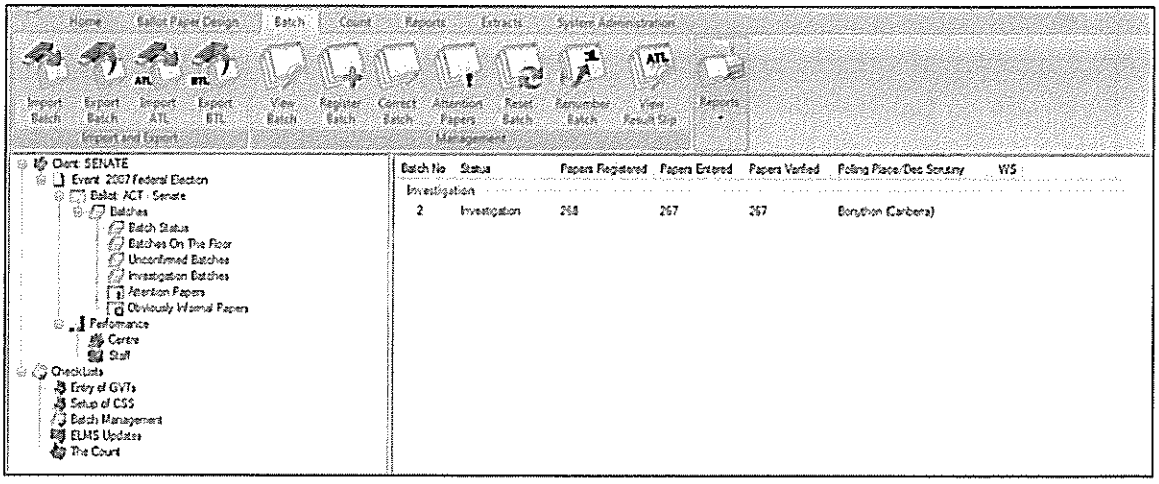
By clicking on **Batches On The Floor** you can access information on batches on the floor (screenshot below) including batch number, status, papers registered, papers entered, papers verified, polling place/declaration scrutiny and the workstation (WS) the batch is assigned to.



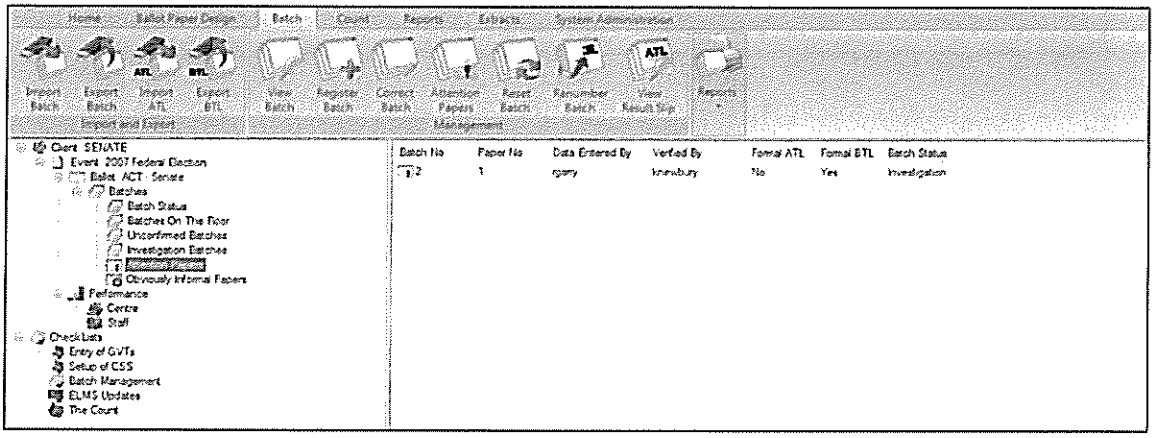
By clicking on **Unconfirmed Batches** you can access information on unconfirmed batches (screenshot below).



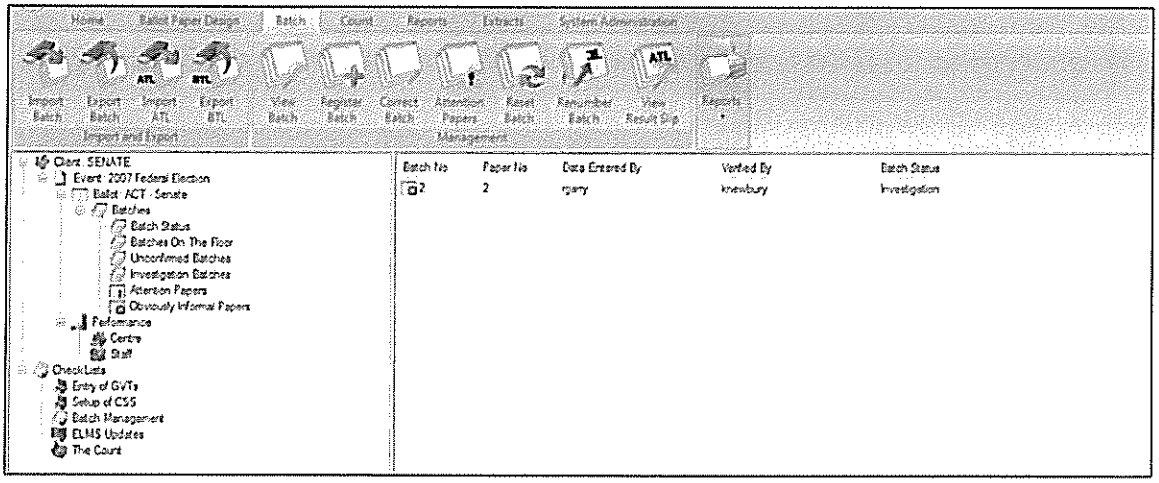
By Clicking on **Investigation Batches** you can access information on batches that require investigation (screenshot below).



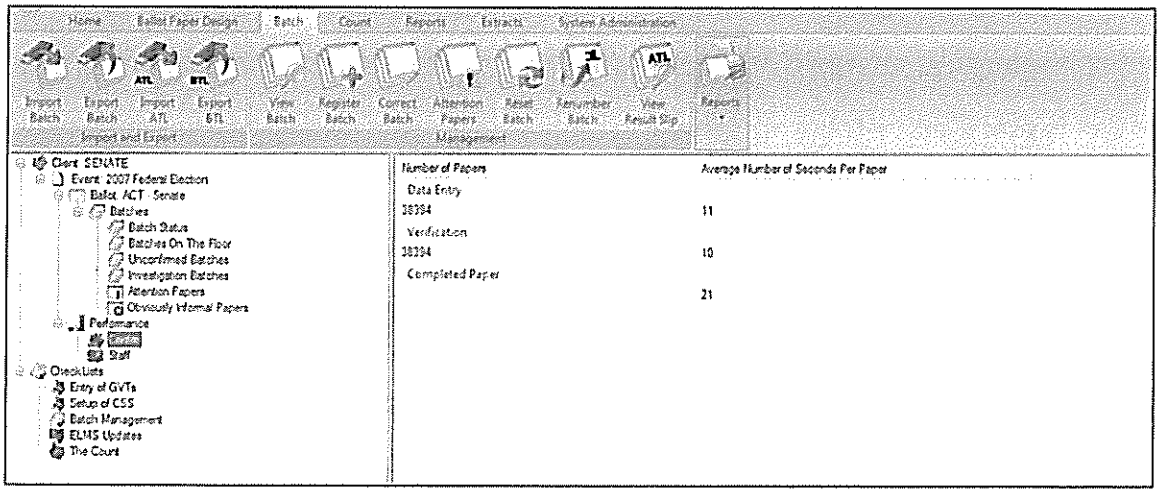
By Clicking on **Attention Papers** you can access information on papers that require attention (screenshot below).



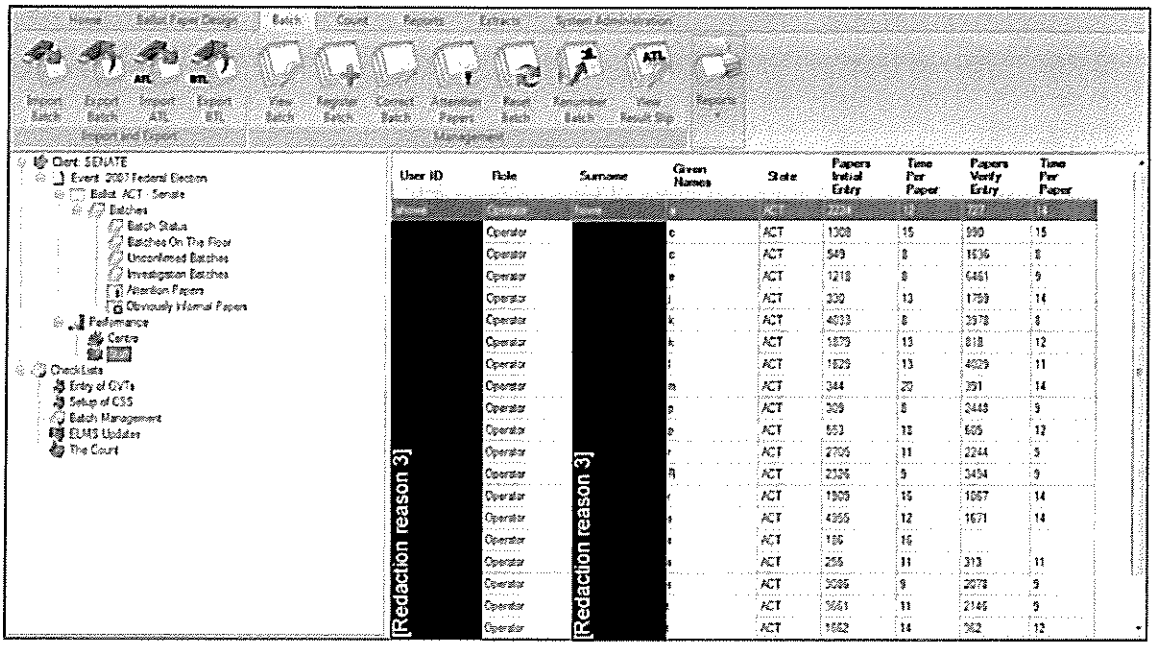
By Clicking on **Obviously Informal Papers** you can access information on papers with the status Obviously Informal (screenshot below).



By Clicking on **Performance > Centre** you can access the information about the performance of the CSS Centre (screenshot below).



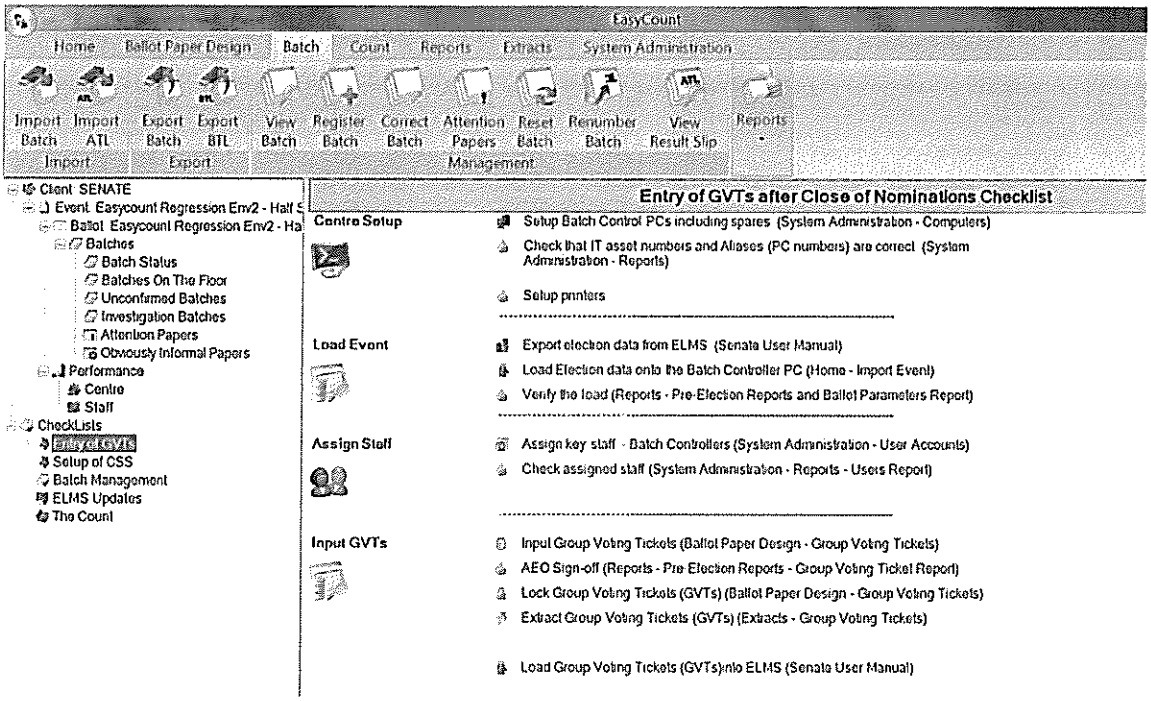
By Clicking on **Staff** you can access information about data entry performance of staff (screenshot below).



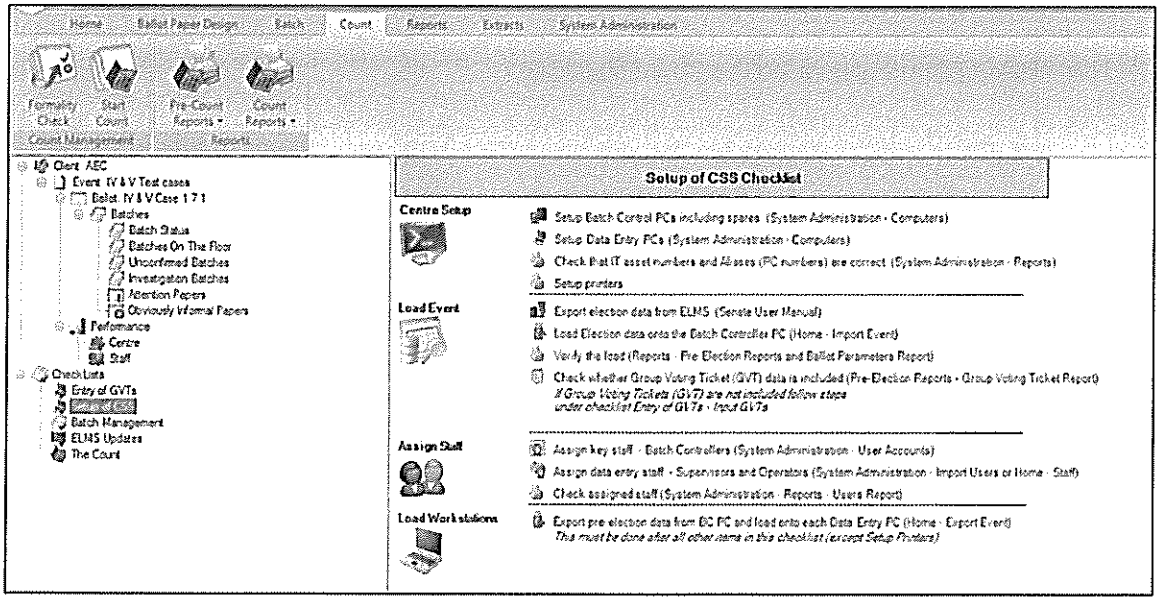
3.4 Checklists

The Client: Senate menu also contains checklists that can be used to check that all required activities have been undertaken. The checklists are broken down into five categories; Entry of GVTs, Setup of CSS, Batch Management, ELMS Updates and The Count. The checklists outline for each category the steps that must be done and links to the required screens that need action.

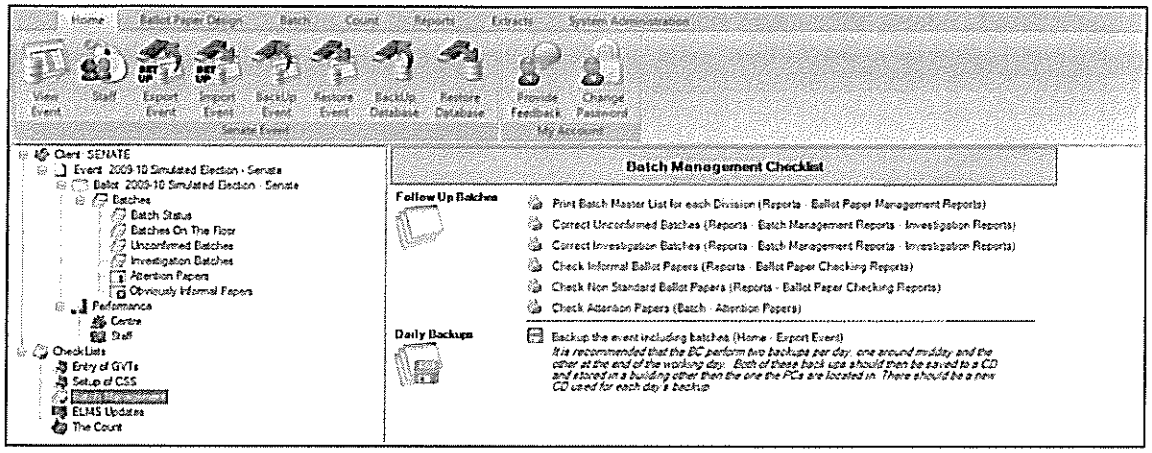
The following items appear on the Entry of GVTs Checklist:



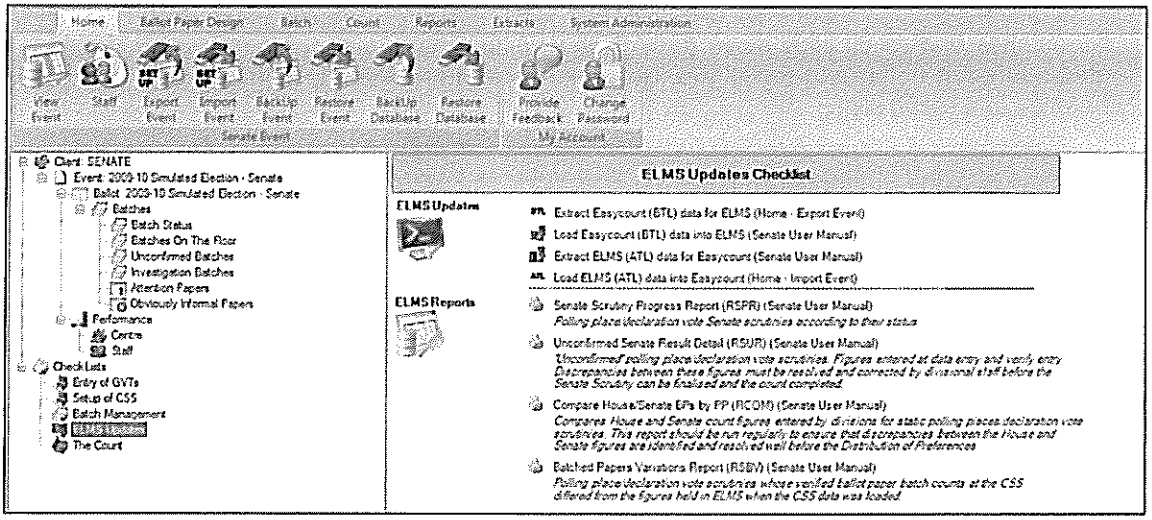
The following items appear on the Setup of CSS Checklist:



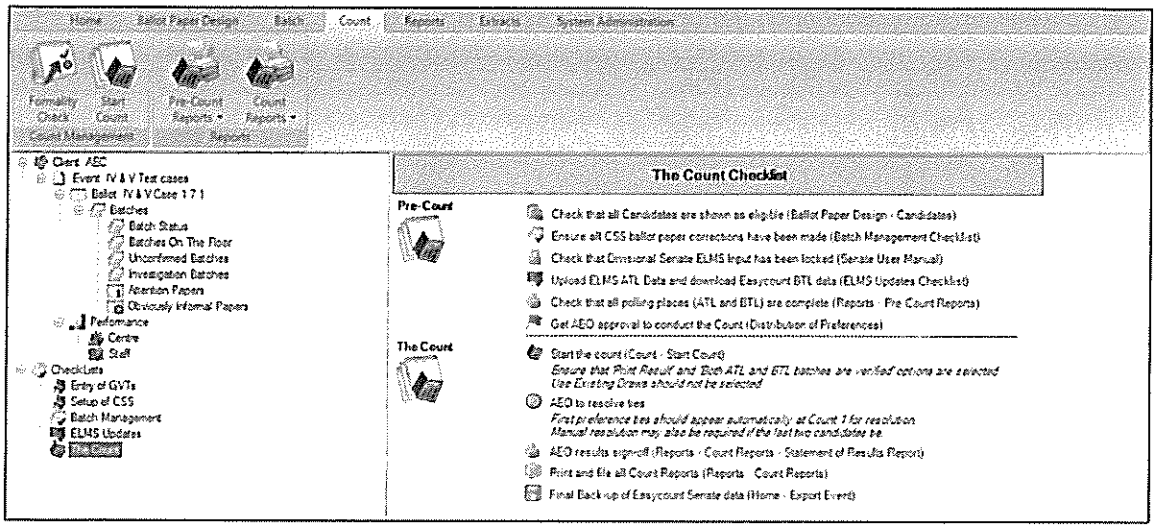
The following items appear on the Batch Management checklist:



The following items appear on the ELMS Updates checklist:



The following items appear on the Count checklist:



3.5 Status Codes

As batches and result slips move through the system they receive a code which identifies the status of each batch and result slip. Below is the status codes used to assist you in tracking batches and result slips.

Status Code	Batch Type
Blank	Unregistered
R	Registered (awaiting data entry)
C	Confirmed (data entry complete, awaiting verification) - When saving a batch, if the number of papers entered for the batch corresponds with the number of papers registered for that batch, the batch will be saved as Confirmed.
U	Unconfirmed (data entry complete, awaiting correction prior to verification) - If the number of papers you enter for a particular batch does not correspond with the number of papers registered for that batch, the batch can either be corrected at the data entry laptop before the batch is saved OR saved as an unconfirmed batch
I	Batches for Investigation (partially verified due to problem)
V	Verified (completed)