

Gmb/017/0119/2

## ELECTION APRIL 1994: FOREIGN VOTING STATIONS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As indicated in SRA0109 of 19940203 the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is in the process of establishing where voting stations should be located outside the borders of South Africa to facilitate special foreign voting on 26 April 1994. Only after this decision has been made can the IEC proceed to coordinate advertising and the administration of these stations. This document should be read together with the Electoral Act no 202 of 1993, chapter iv no 25.
  - 1.2 Although the new Electoral Act (1993) addresses these issues, the legislation leaves some scope for interpretation by the Independent Electoral Commission and it was therefore pressed upon the IEC that Missions are awaiting clear guidelines re voting at foreign voting stations during the April 1994 election.
  - 1.3 The Interim Party Liaison Committee (IPLC), has been established to decide where voting stations are to be positioned outside the borders of South Africa, on whose recommendations the IEC will base its decision. The IEC has not yet reached any conclusion on the location of foreign voting stations and in order to facilitate its decision, the IEC has requested an urgent input by the Department of Foreign Affairs. All primary Missions are therefore requested to respond urgently to the survey as set out in Par.4.
  - 1.4 After a decision on the location of polling stations has been taken, the IPLC will apply its mind to the appointment of coordinators in every country where voting will take place, and to the identification of presiding officers at the individual voting stations. These officials may be drawn selectively but not exclusively from Mission personnel. Missions will be approached to provide an input on these appointments only after clarity has been obtained on the polling stations.
- ### 2. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE APRIL 1994 ELECTION
- 2.1 Missions will be aware that the date of the election has been shifted back to its original position, i.e. 27 April. Voting will take place over two days (27 and 28 April) and the first of the two days, Wednesday 27 April, will be a national holiday.
  - 2.2 Special votes (for the aged and infirm and for prisoners) will be collected on 26 April. As stipulated by the Electoral Act, no postal votes will be allowed.
  - 2.3 The number of polling stations which are to be made available, is still increasing. At this stage it is envisaged that there



will be more than 9 000, even as many as 11 000, polling stations in South Africa on 27 and 28 April 1994.

- 2.4 Counting of the votes will start at 08h00 on Friday, 29 April 1993. Counting will take place at 1 200 points. As determined by law, results may only be announced a minimum of 48 hours after closure of the polls, i.e. not before 19h00 on Saturday, 30 April.

### 3. VOTING OUTSIDE THE BORDERS OF SOUTH AFRICA

- 3.1 Voting at foreign voting stations will take place on 26 April 1994 only, from 07h00 to 19h00 (Local time)
- 3.2 One of the various identity documents which are listed in the Electoral Act OR a South African passport will be required to vote at a foreign voting station. If potential voters have no South African identification documents but feel that they are entitled to vote, they should contact the IEC to apply for a temporary voter's card. (The IEC will start issuing these documents as from next week)
- 3.3 As in the case of domestic voting, voters at foreign voting stations will be marked on a finger with indelible ink to prevent them from voting more than once.
- 3.4 The IEC still has to decide where voting stations are to be positioned outside the borders of South Africa. For this purpose, submissions are awaited from political parties. An Interim Party Liaison Committee has been established to decide inter alia on this matter. Proposals in this regard which have been received from Missions have also been submitted to the IEC.
- 3.5 Voting will possibly BUT NOT NECESSARILY take place at all our Missions. Additional voting stations in areas where there are concentrations of South Africans, may also be considered. Practical as well as political considerations will guide the IEC in deciding where foreign voting stations are to be established. If Missions are approached by communities of South Africans who feel strongly that their geographic area should be supplied with a voting station, they may be advised to appeal directly to the IEC's Chief Directorate: Administration. It should however be stressed that the number of foreign voting stations are likely to be limited rather than expanded for reasons of security and administration.
- 3.6 It is not necessary for voters abroad to register beforehand in order to vote. (By the same token, voters rolls will not be used domestically because of the new proportional system of voting)
- 3.7 All voters will be required to complete a sworn affidavit which will name the province they are voting for.



(Within the borders of South Africa, the vote will count where it is cast)

- 3.8 Voters will be required to include in the sworn affidavit particulars of their personal status abroad, in order to determine their eligibility to vote. (e.g. how long they had been away from SA etc) Dual nationality will NOT impede voter eligibility.

4. DEPARTMENTAL SURVEY ON LOCATION OF FOREIGN VOTING STATIONS (for action by 08h00 19940218)

- 4.1 The information presently required is as follows: Where do Missions suggest that the IEC establish voting stations in their countries of accreditation, based on the estimated number and geographic distribution of eligible voters?

- 4.2 This information is awaited from all bilateral Missions (only Embassies in cases of more than one Mission per country) and should reach MA841 not later than 08h00 SA time on Friday, 19940218. Nil returns should also be forwarded. Kindly send all the information electronically to prevent further delay in processing, unless the only available communication channel is per facsimile.

- 4.3 Missions' proposals need not take into account available staff and other resources, as the IEC will also base its final decision on its ability to augment and sponsor available resources.

- 4.4 Missions may wish to consult with any interested parties, in particular foreign representatives of South African political parties, and if so, are requested to indicate in their responses the details of any incorporated advice and the name of the individual(s) consulted.

- 4.5 The information provided by Missions in response to SRA6221 of 19931221 (Enquiry by Route BA44 re number of South African citizens abroad) may be used as a point of departure, but Heads of Mission may wish to reassess those figures. New Missions will be relied on to provide an input hitherto not available. Missions in Africa are requested to take special care in assessing the number of eligible voters in their countries of accreditation.

- 4.6 The Department has, as from 19940214, seconded to the Administration Directorate of the IEC an official who will assist the Commission with the administration of the election abroad. He is Mr Robert Matthee, head of the Consular Division in the Administration Branch. Mr Oscar van Oordt (Route HDEP) will be responsible for Departmental communication on the election abroad and he will be assisted by Miss Yolanda Kemp (Route MA841). Missions are requested not to contact Mr Matthee directly but to direct all enquiries in this regard



to route MA841.

- 4.7 Missions will be supplied with any available information on a regular and methodical basis. Although all proposals, enquiries etc. are welcome and will be submitted to the IEC for its attention, a step-by-step approach is called for, in response to decisions and requests made by the IEC. Election kits (including finer interpretation of the Electoral Act, maps of the new provinces etc.) will soon be forwarded by freight bag.

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