

TECHNIQUES TO EFFECTIVE ELECTION MANAGEMENT

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The first thing an election commissioner or administrator learns upon assuming office is that elections are not created out of thin air. Administering an election is a highly complex task involving hundreds of subtasks, complicated scheduling, and intricate monitoring of activities. It is also a political activity that must be above the political fray and remain sensitive to the political processes at work in the country.

How the administrative structure of an election system is organized can have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of an election administrator to carry out the election mandate. The most honest and well-intentioned election administrator will ultimately fail in his or her mission if they lack a sound administrative structure for effectively managing the conduct of elections. Every election administrator has at least one horror story of how an election administrative oversight (e.g. ballots delivered to the wrong polling station or unauthorized person; an action by a poorly trained presiding officer) turned into a mammoth political headache. This paper will discuss the role of the election administrator in managing the election process and offers some concrete steps to management of the chaos that surrounds elections.

Election commissions fall in to two basic types. Those that are organized as an oversight body where the commission acts as a policy making/regulatory authority with a strong administrative staff and those where the election commissioners themselves take an active role in the day-to-day administration of an election. The first type of commission rarely becomes involved in the day-to-day operations of an election. It is usually characterized by a strong civil servant component within the commission. The second type of commission plays a much more active role in the day-to-day operations and administrator stake an active part in the management of the election system.

Regardless of whether organized as an oversight body or as actively involved in the management of the system, all election commissions must strive to exhibit three fundamental characteristics. These are:

Independence: It is generally agreed that an election commission that is free to act in the interests of all voters and not of any particular party or candidate is essential to build the trust needed so that political parties will respect the process and the results of the election.

Impartiality: Like independence, impartiality is an essential element in building trust. Generally, election commissions are made up of individuals who are perceived by the major political parties and the public as impartial and who enjoy their confidence. If not made up of individuals who are perceived to be impartial, election commissions are often composed of representatives of the major political

Annex A: Sample Election Calendar

Task Name	Start	Finish	Resource Names
Design of Voter Registration/Voting System	9/1/94	10/12/94	Administration/Education
Deadline for Delivery of Registration Materials to Sites	9/1/94	9/1/94	Logistics
Development of Overall Logistic Plan	10/3/94	10/7/94	Logistics
Development of Security Plan	10/10/94	10/27/94	Administration/Logistics
Development of Population Survey	10/10/94	11/18/94	Administration
Obtain Vehicles for Delivery of Materials	10/10/94	11/18/94	Logistics/Procurement
Period for Party Registration	10/10/94	6/16/95	Administration
Procurement of VR Equipment and Supplies	10/13/94	2/16/95	Procurement
Development of Voter Registration and Polling Officials Training Materials	10/13/94	1/4/95	Administration/Training
Development of Voter Registration Logistic Plans	10/13/94	11/23/94	Administration/Logistics
Development of Voter Registration Security Plan	10/13/94	11/1/94	Administration/Logistics
Development of Voter Registrar Employment Criteria	10/13/94	10/13/94	Administration/Legal
Development of Voter Education Program	10/13/94	10/13/94	Education
Procure Materials Transfer Forms	11/21/94	11/25/94	Procurement
Development of Ballot Counting Procedures	11/24/94	12/2/94	Administration/Operations
Arrange for Security for Materials	11/28/94	12/6/94	Logistics
Arrange for Secure Storage of Materials	11/28/94	12/6/94	Logistics
Obtain Fuel for Vehicles	3/1/95	4/11/95	Logistics/Procurement
Hire Drivers for Vehicles	3/1/95	3/20/95	Personnel/Logistics
Procurement of Voter Registration Materials	4/3/95	8/11/95	Procurement/Printing
Deadline for submission of candidate lists	6/19/95	6/19/95	Operations
Deadline for NEC to review party registration documents	6/19/95	9/8/95	Operations
Period for printing absentee ballots	6/20/95	7/7/95	Operations/Printing
Campaign Period	6/20/95	8/21/95	Operations
Recruitment of Registration Officials	7/3/95	7/3/95	Administration/Training
Training of Voter Registration Officials	8/1/95	8/1/95	Training
Period for procurement of election day commodities	8/1/95	9/11/95	Procurement
Voter Registration Period	9/4/95	10/12/95	Administration/Operations
Deadline for appeal of NEC denial of party registration	9/11/95	9/11/95	Legal
Period for Compilation of Preliminary Registration List	10/13/95	10/20/95	Data Processing
Period for Public View of Preliminary List	10/23/95	11/9/95	Administration
Deadline for Compilation of FINAL Registration List	11/10/95	11/29/95	Data Processing
Period for absentee voting	11/30/95	12/8/95	Operations
Period for Final Ballot Printing	12/11/95	12/19/95	Operations/Printing
Period for Delivery of ballots to polling stations	12/18/95	12/20/95	Logistics

Annex B: Voter Registration Process Task List

Task Name	Start	Finish	Resource Names
Voter Registration Process	9/1/94	11/3/95	Administration
<i>Design of Voter Registration/Voting System</i>	9/1/94	10/12/94	Administration/Education
<i>Obtain Vehicles for Delivery of Materials</i>	10/10/94	11/18/94	Logistics/Procurement
<i>Obtain Fuel for Vehicles</i>	3/1/95	4/11/95	Logistics/Procurement
<i>Hire Drivers for Vehicles</i>	3/1/95	3/21/95	Personnel/Logistics
<i>Arrange for Security for Materials</i>	11/28/94	12/6/94	Logistics
<i>Arrange for Secure Storage of Materials</i>	11/28/94	12/6/94	Logistics
<i>Procure Materials Transfer Forms</i>	4/3/95	8/4/95	Procurement
<i>Procurement of VR Equipment and Supplies</i>	10/13/94	2/15/95	Procurement
<i>Development of Official's Training Materials</i>	10/13/94	1/4/95	Administration/Training
<i>Development of Voter Registration Logistic Plans</i>	10/13/94	11/23/94	Administration/Logistics
<i>Development of Voter Registration Security Plan</i>	10/13/94	11/1/94	Administration/Logistics
<i>Development of Voter Registrar Employment Criteria</i>	10/13/94	10/19/94	Administration/Legal
<i>Development of Voter Education Program</i>	10/13/94	1/4/95	Education
<i>Recruitment of Registration Officials</i>	10/20/94	11/17/94	Administration/Training
<i>Training of Voter Registration Officials</i>	11/18/94	12/29/94	Training
<i>Procurement of Voter Registration Materials</i>	4/3/95	8/11/95	Procurement/Printing
Indelible Ink	4/3/95	8/4/95	Procurement
Stamp Pads	4/3/95	8/4/95	Procurement
Supply Boxes	4/3/95	8/4/95	Procurement
Supply Box Seals	4/3/95	8/4/95	Procurement
Registration Forms	4/3/95	8/4/95	Printing
Pens	5/1/95	5/30/95	Procurement
Stamps	7/3/95	8/11/95	Procurement
Registration Activity Reporting Forms	7/3/95	8/11/95	Printing
Challenge To Registration Forms	7/3/95	8/11/95	Printing
Denial of Registration Forms	7/3/95	8/11/95	Printing
Deadline for Delivery of Registration Materials to Sites	8/31/95	8/31/95	Logistics
Voter Registration Period	9/1/95	10/11/95	Administration/Operations
Period for Compilation of Preliminary Registration List	10/15/95	11/2/95	Data Processing
Period for Public View of Preliminary List	10/16/95	11/3/95	Administration
Deadline for Compilation of FINAL Registration List	11/3/95	11/3/95	Data Processing

The Annex C: Sample Assignment Sheet

Voter Registration Materials Procurement Assignment Sheet

9/1/94	Procure Indelible Ink	John Woo	6/1/95	10/1/94	12/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Stamp Pads	J. Jones	6/1/95	10/1/94	1/1/95	4/1/95	5/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Supply Boxes	M. Taylor	6/1/95	10/1/94	12/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Supply Box Seals	M. Taylor	6/1/95	10/1/94	12/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Registration Forms	K. Kanga	6/1/95	10/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95	5/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Pens	J. Jones	6/1/95	10/1/94			5/1/95		
9/1/94	Procure Stamps	J. Jones	6/1/95	1/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95	5/15/95		
9/1/94	Procure Reporting Forms	K. Kanga	6/1/95	1/1/94	2/1/95	4/1/95			
9/1/94	Procure Challenae Forms	K. Kanga	6/1/95	1/1/94		4/1/95			
9/1/94	Procure Denial Forms	K. Kanga	11/1/94			4/1/95			

The table shows how the procurement department manager can assign staff specific subtasks, give deadline dates for completion of the subtask, and schedule specific dates that the staff member is expected to report on the progress of completing the subtask. The assignment chart also helps the procurement department manager schedule his or her time since it is know well in advance when meetings with specific staff members are scheduled. This frees the manager to deal with other issues and not be concerned about this aspect of the procurement process until the appropriate time. If the staff member is experiencing problems with completing the assignment, by scheduling several reporting dates (milestones) the manager can know well in advance of the deadline date and address the problem.