ELECTORAL COMMISSION

<u>AMENDED</u> STRATEGIC PLAN

For the fiscal years

2014/15 – 2018/19

IEC

SOUTH AFRICA

FOREWORD

This document describes the Electoral Commission's strategic goals for the years 2014/15 to 2018/19. The Commission has taken overall responsibility for developing strategic priorities for the five year period covered in this Strategic Plan.

The Electoral Commission is a constitutional institution reporting directly to Parliament. In line with its mandate, the Electoral Commission manages the national, provincial and municipal elections, ensures that those elections are free and fair, and declares the results within a prescribed period.

The Electoral Commission was established in terms of the Electoral Commission Act (51 of 1996), which sets out the composition, powers, functions and duties of the Electoral Commission.

The Commission aims to continuously entrench the Electoral Commission as the focal point in the delivery of cost effective, free and fair elections. This is not only the core of its constitutional mandate, but also an important factor in its interaction with other Chapter 9 and associated institutions and other election management bodies.

The Commission endorses this Strategic Plan and commits to ensuring its implementation.

Mr Glen Mashinini
Chairperson: Electoral Commission

OFFICIAL SIGN-OFF

It is hereby certified that this strategic plan:

- was developed by the management of the Electoral Commission under the guidance of the Commission;

- takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which the Electoral Commission is responsible; and

- accurately reflects the strategic outcome oriented goals and objectives which the Electoral Commission will endeavour to achieve over the period 2014/15 to 2018/19.

Ester De Wet
Acting Chief Financial Officer

Mr Simon P Mamabolo
Chief Electoral Officer

It is hereby certified that this Strategic Plan was approved by the Commission.

Mr Glen Mashinini
Chairperson: Electoral Commission

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PART A: STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

1. VISION

To be a pre-eminent leader in electoral democracy.

2. MISSION

The Electoral Commission is an independent constitutional body which manages free and fair elections of legislative bodies and institutions through the participation of citizens, political parties and civil society in deepening electoral democracy.

3. VALUES

To enable the Electoral Commission to serve the needs of stakeholders, including the electorate, political parties, the media and permanent and temporary staff, the organisation subscribes to the following values, namely:

(a)   impartiality;

(b)   integrity;

(c)   accountability;

(d)   transparency;

(e)   participation;

(f)   responsiveness; and

(g)   respect.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER MANDATES

4.1 Constitutional mandate

In terms of Section 190 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (108 of 1996), the Electoral Commission must -

(a)   manage elections of national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies in accordance with national legislation;

(b)   ensure that those elections are free and fair; and

(c)   declare the results of those elections within a period that is prescribed by national legislation and that is as short as reasonably possible.

4.2 Legislative mandates

The duties and functions of the Electoral Commission are defined in section 5 of the Electoral Commission Act1998 (Act 51 of 1996.) These include to –

(a)   manage any election;

(b)   ensure that any election is free and fair;

(c)   promote conditions conducive to free and fair elections;

(d)   promote knowledge of sound and democratic electoral processes;

(e)   compile and maintain a voters' roll by means of a system of registering eligible voters by utilising data available from government sources and information furnished by voters;

(f)   compile and maintain a register of parties;

(g)   establish and maintain liaison and co-operation with parties;

(h)   undertake and promote research into electoral matters;

(i)   develop and promote the development of electoral expertise and technology in all spheres of government;

(j)   continuously review electoral legislation and proposed electoral legislation, and to make recommendations in connection therewith;

(k)   promote voter education;

(l)   promote co-operation with and between persons, institutions, governments and administrations for the achievement of its objects;

(m)   declare the results of elections for national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies within seven days after such elections;

(n)   adjudicate disputes which may arise from the organisation, administration or conducting of elections and which are of an administrative nature; and

(o)   appoint appropriate public administrations in any sphere of government to conduct elections when necessary.

The duties and functions of the Electoral Commission in respect of national and provincial elections are also defined in the Electoral Act 1998 (Act 73 of 1998). This Act includes among other things the requirements for registration as a voter. It provides for the administration of elections, election timetables, procedures for voting, counting and determining results, the accreditation of observers, and voter education. Regulations have been published in terms of the Electoral Act.

In addition to the provisions in the Electoral Act; the Municipal Electoral Act 2000 (Act 24 of 2000), deals with the specific nature of local government elections. It provides for the administration of parties and candidates and all other related voting and counting issues. As in the case of the Electoral Act, appropriate regulations have been published in support of the provisions of this Act. The most notable amendment of the Act has been the recent addition of special votes for persons who require home visits owing to infirmity or disability or who are not able to visit their voting stations on Election Day.

The Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998), deals with the establishment, management and functions of the various municipalities, as well as seat calculation formulas (i.e. the conversion of votes into seats). This legislation is required to conclude the results process in respect of local government elections.

4.3 Policy mandates

The Electoral Commission undertakes its work within the Republic of South Africa independently, but is often requested by the government of South Africa to assist it with the implementation of its foreign policy through undertaking electoral assistance to other countries. Where this happens, funding is provided by the government of South Africa and the Electoral Commission in partnership assumes a role of a technical agent to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

4.4 Relevant legislation and court rulings

The ruling by the Constitutional Court in June 2016 (Electoral Commission v Mhlope and Others) had significant implications for the Electoral Commission. Two aspects of the judgment especially continue to have a very significant impact on the operational and strategic imperatives for the period covered by this Strategic Plan, they are:

a)   That the Electoral Commission must by 30 June 2018 have obtained and recorded on the national common voters' roll all addresses of voters that were reasonably available as at 17 December 2003; and

b)   The Electoral Commission must obtain and record all available addresses on the voters' roll for the relevant ward segments of the voters' roll for purposes of municipal by-elections.

These orders of the court have major implications for the current work and resources of the Electoral Commission requiring significant additional address harvesting and capture initiatives to meet the requirements and deadlines set by the Court.

Other relevant court rulings during the previous and current financial year which have implications for the Electoral Commission and its work include:

a)   The setting aside by the Electoral Court on 23 September 2016 of the results of the 2016 Municipal Elections for the Namakwa District Municipality. The Electoral Commission has appealed the judgment in the Supreme Court of Appeal and the appeal was successful.

b)   The order by the Electoral Court to conduct a recount of the votes in ward 191000069 in the Cape Metro, VD 978401210 in ward 10103005 Bergrivier Municipality and the entire Swartland Municipality. The Electoral Commission has appealed the judgment in the Supreme Court of Appeal and the appeal was successful.

c)   The dismissal by the Pretoria High Court of the matter between the Electoral Commission and Abland Consortium to set aside the lease agreement for Riverside Office Park. The Electoral Commission has sought relief from the court in line with the recommendations of the Public Protector's report of 2013. The dismissal of this matter concludes the rectification steps recommended by the Public Protector.

The Electoral Commission is in the process of drafting a range of amendments to the Electoral Act (73 of 1998) ahead of the National and Provincial Elections scheduled for 2019 to address a number of issues which have emerged due to modernisation, the Constitutional Court ruling and other strategic changes.

These include:

a)   Campaigning on election day: Section 75 of the Municipal Electoral Act and 108 of the Electoral Act provides a dispensation wherein, on election day, only organised events such as rallies and marches are outlawed anywhere in the Republic. The Electoral Commission is considering amendments to clarify the scope of this provision including providing further clarity on what activities are prohibited under this provision.

b)   Mental health voters: Consideration is being given to redrafting Section 8 of the Electoral Act to bring it in line with the Mental Health Care Act following questions raised by disability NGOs regarding the Constitutionality of the provisions which exclude voters on the basis of mental health.

c) Candidate qualifications: Section 30 of the Electoral Act provides for the CEO to object to candidates standing for election where they do not meet certain criteria – including if a person has certain categories of criminal records. At issue here is that we currently do not have the capacity or resources to check every candidate – especially for municipal elections where there are over 60 000 candidates. The Electoral Commission is proposing making this the responsibility of the nominating political party.

d) Electronic submission: Changes to regulations to allow for the electronic registration of voters and updating of voter registration details as well as the electronic submission of candidate lists for national and provincial elections.

e) Overseas voting: Amendments are being considered to allow for potential changes to the process of overseas voting by registered voters.

f) Addresses for voters: Amendments are being considered to broaden the current requirement that voters are registered in the correct voting district to require that they are registered in the correct ward. This will have no impact on the election process or outcomes but will reduce the degree of accuracy required for address information.

g) Party funding: In 2017 Parliament established an Ad Hoc Committee to review legislation, regulations and current practice regarding public and private funding of political parties. This review process is currently underway and may include new legislation and associated regulations regarding both public and private funding. It is anticipated that the Electoral Commission will be given the responsibility and mandate to manage this new legislation which will have significant operational, structural, financial and strategic implications for the organisation.

h) The Electoral Commission is preparing for these additional responsibilities but will only be able to finalise its plans once the legislation has been finalised which is expected to be during 2018.

i) Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI): The Electoral Commission has reviewed current electoral legislation and regulations to ensure they meet the requirements of the new Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI). Legal opinion obtained by the Electoral Commission confirms that the current legislation is not in conflict with POPI but the Electoral Commission is in consultations with the Information Regulator to explore in more detail how better to ensure that any personal information of voters does not fall into the wrong hands or get abused.

The new party funding legislation and regulations which is currently before Parliament and which mandates the Electoral Commission to manage both public and private funding to political parties, is posing financial challenges as the current Bill constitutes a mandate without commensurate funding. Ongoing discussions with National Treasury in this regard are currently taking place.

4.5 Planned policy initiatives

The continuous development and improvement in technology increasingly pose opportunities and challenges to all electoral management bodies including the Electoral Commission.

In the immediate period covered by this Strategic Plan technology initiatives will be implemented to enhance voter registration including the procurement of new generation electronic registration devices to replace the aging "zip-zip" machines which have been in use since 1999.

Enhancements to the registration process include providing for online registration and re-registrations along with expanding the electronic offering of services to political parties and candidates such as submissions of candidates, objections and other interactions.

Technology opportunities are also being investigated to streamline and enhance the recruitment and training of election staff ahead of NPE 2019.

The increasing use of new technology in the areas of voter registration, training and staff development may require changes in policies, procedures and recruitment criteria for staff. These aspects are currently under consideration and review.

The Electoral Commission continues its research to establish what the implications of e-voting on the Electoral Commission are likely to be, while being mindful of the recent concerns internationally regarding cyber-attacks on electoral processes.

5. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Over the past four to five years South Africa has witnessed a significant shift in the political landscape with the emergence of a number of new political parties which have gained representation at national and provincial level during the 2014 elections and at municipal level in 2016.

During this period the political contestation between the represented political parties has intensified along with a narrowing of the gap between the governing party and opposition parties at all levels.

In the lead-up to the 2016 Municipal Elections the country experienced some of the highest levels of political intolerance and violence seen since 1994. This included both inter-party as well as intra-party disputes – the latter especially over candidate nominates for the 2016 Municipal Elections.

The outcome of the election resulted in the highest number of "hung councils" in South Africa's democratic history, including many of the metropolitan councils. The result of this was the establishment of coalition governments in more than 25 councils.

Over the past year these loose coalitions have presented councils with challenges in terms of reaching agreement on key positions, budgets and policy priorities. In at least two municipalities (Nquthu and Metsimaholo) the coalitions have collapsed leading to dissolution of the council and municipal-wide by-elections.

In many others there have been changes in allegiance and loyalty which, along with a disturbing continuation of political violence especially in KwaZulu-Natal, has led to a significant increase in by-elections.

At the same time the Electoral Commission has been faced with the imperative to meet the ruling of the Constitutional Court with regards to the rectification of the voters' roll in respect of voters' addresses.

This has significantly increased the workload for the Electoral Commission ahead of by-elections and in pursuit of the court deadline for the completion of the review of the voters' roll by June 2018.

The deficiencies in the current voters' roll along with the increased political contestation has also resulted in an increase in objections to the voters' roll for by-elections and resulted in a number of postponements of by-elections.

Together, these factors have led to an increase in demand on the resources of the Electoral Commission at a time it is seeking to prepare for the 2019 National and Provincial Elections.

Such preparations include the scheduled replacement of key technology systems in the Electoral Commission ahead of NPE 2019 – including the replacement of the aging and unsupported "zip zip" registration devices.

Unfortunately, the timing of these resource-intensive initiatives comes during a period of considerable economic and fiscal pressure for the country when public resources are significantly stretched.

Service delivery protests and continuing demarcation disputes in some areas may serve to impact on the environment leading up to the 2019 elections – as was evident during the address harvesting initiative and registration drive which took place on 10 and 11 March 2018.

The Party Liaison Committees continue to provide a critical engagement and consultation forum with represented political parties at national, provincial and municipal level for the Electoral Commission and will be a crucial part of preparations for NPE 2019.

The following are some of the key challenges facing the Electoral Commission in the 2018/19 year:

a) Voters' roll clean up: At the mid-way point of the grace period, there remain over 3 million registered voters without a recorded address on the voters' roll of which almost 60% first registered as voters after December 2003 when the requirement for addresses was first introduced and the balance of 40% before December 2003 (42%).

The Electoral Commission has drawn up plans to further narrow this gap in the current financial year, including a proposed voters' roll clean-up campaign wherein voters' can check and provide their up-to-date addresses.

The success of these initiatives is however reliant on, amongst others:

(i)   the provision of adequate funding and resources for comprehensive initiatives to obtain and verify addresses;
(ii) the support and assistance of stakeholders including political parties, communities, municipalities and voters themselves in providing information, and
(iii) the availability of accurate address information for all voters to ensure they are registered in the correct voting district.

b) Funding shortages: The current fiscal challenges and austerity measures could not come at a more difficult time for the Electoral Commission which is facing its most significant budget demands since inception. Among the funding requirements facing the Electoral Commission in the medium term are:

(i)   the technology refresh including replacement of the zip-zip machines;
(ii) enhanced institutional capability to investigate and monitor electoral offences and breaches of the Code of Conduct;

(iii) managing legislation for the public and private funding of political parties;

(iv) enhanced training requirements for election staff and party agents; and

(v) address harvesting and voters' roll maintenance.

c) In the proposed draft legislation that is currently being considered by the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on Party Funding the Electoral Commission's responsibilities will been expanded to also manage party funding. This legislation will give the Electoral Commission the role and responsibility to oversee the disbursement of public funding and the disclosure of private funding for political parties. Depending on the scope of the proposed new legislation and regulations, this will require significant additional resources, skills and expertise for the Electoral Commission.

d) Increasing political violence: This could lead to a higher demand for resources to fulfil the role of the Electoral Commission in ensuring conditions conducive to free and fair elections including monitoring political violence and breaches of the Code of Conduct in by-elections and general elections.

e) Organisational renewal: The Electoral Commission is currently conducting an organisational review to ensure it remains a competent and efficient organisation able to deliver on its mandate, especially in the current financially challenged environment. The scope of this human resources review is to document business processes at a high level, undertake the organisational review and design process, review and update job profiles and job grading, and develop a remuneration strategy liaising with the national office Human Resources Department. This human resources review is being executed at all levels of the organisation in a phased approach and is expected to be concluded by 31 March 2018.

As with any organisational review this process presents challenges to the organisation in particular managing staff uncertainty and expectations. To help reduce risks and to ensure buy-in and understanding, the process includes significant engagement with the trade union representatives within the organisation.

5.1 Performance environment

To satisfactorily resolve or cope with the situations described above, it was and is essential for the Electoral Commission to, inter alia, attend to the following in preparation of the address harvesting, registration drives and the elections to be held in 2019, namely to:

a) streamline address harvesting and capturing processes;

b) strengthen its temporary human and infrastructural capacity to avoid logistical difficulties;

c) pay tariffs commensurate with the realities of attracting a more mature and experienced election day staff complement;

d) substantially improve on and increase the amount of training provided to such electoral staff to equip them to deal with the increasingly litigious environment and new registration processes and technologies,

e) adjust its capacity and programmes to be able to deal with complaints, objections, disputes and court cases as well as conflict resolution management;

f) sensitise permanent and temporary staff about the dangers and complications of electoral fraud in order to protect the integrity and credibility of electoral processes;

g) further increase the focus on democracy and voter education as well as the dissemination of information through civil society and the media;

h) deal with the cost escalations in the logistical field, especially with regards to printing and the increased cost of diminishing municipal support;

i) expand on the erecting of prefabricated offices (park homes) which had been piloted as alternative for the accommodation previously provided by municipalities;

j) replace the stock of zip-zips in the MTEF period as these will be reaching the end of their useful lives;

k) carry out an IT hardware refresh and platform upgrade on a 5 year cycle; and

l) maintain the measures aimed at transparency with elections that were introduced with the national and municipal elections in respect of ICT systems.

5.2 Organisational environment

ELECTOAL COMMISSION STRUCTURAL ORGANOGRAM
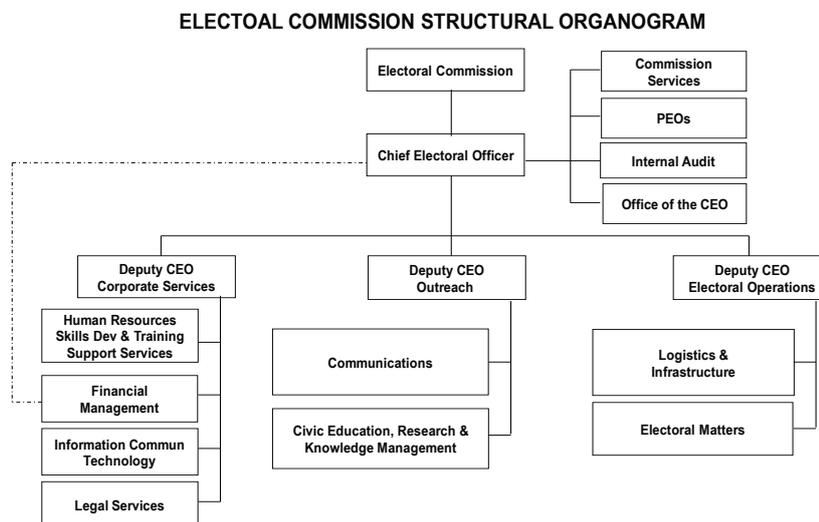
The Commission comprises five members appointed by the President, one of whom shall be a judge. The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission are designated by the President from amongst members of the Commission.

The Commission appoints the Chief Electoral Officer, who must be suitably qualified and experienced for the position. The Chief Electoral Officer is the head of administration and accounting officer of the Electoral Commission. The Chief Electoral Officer also performs other duties and functions assigned to him or her by the Commission, the Electoral Commission Act, or any other law. The Chief Electoral Officer appoints officers and employees of the Electoral Commission in consultation with the Commission.

The current organogram of the Electoral Commission provides for 1,033 positions. The staffing establishment provides for three Deputy CEOs – one each for Corporate Services, Outreach and Electoral Operations. There is one Provincial Electoral Officer for each provincial office of the Electoral Commission. The staff turnaround has remained stable but certain key personnel either resigned or retired. The Electoral Commission is in the process of filling these vacancies and a negative impact on service delivery is not envisaged.

5.3 Description of the strategic planning process

In November 2011, new members of the Commission were appointed, and a re-visioning exercise (Vision 2018) was undertaken in the early part of 2012 to refocus the Commission and to identify the most pressing actions going forward. Officials from all levels of the organisation were consulted as part of this process and it was determined that increasing innovation and the leveraging of cutting-edge technology should be key drivers for the organisation.

A task team was established to draft the current five-year strategic plan, taking cognizance of Vision 2018 while aligning the plan with the MTEF budget structure.

While this original five-year strategic plan (expiring in 2018/19) remains the foundation for this current Strategic plan, the management of the Electoral Commission meets each year in around August to review the Strategic Plan based on, among others, the previous year's performance, the current environment, emerging and changing priorities and challenges, and other critical factors.

A revised draft Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan is then presented to the Executive Committee and ultimately to the Commission for approval prior to tabling in Parliament.

In June 2018 the Commission and key management from the administration will embark on a new five-year strategic re-visioning exercise which will form the foundation of the Strategic Plan for the next five year period.

6. MAIN STRATEGIC OUTCOME ORIENTED PROGRAMME GOALS OF THE COMMISSION

Strategic Outcome Oriented Goal, linked to Programme 1	**Strengthening governance, institutional excellence, professionalism and enabling business processes, at all levels of the organisation**
Goal statement	Provide strategic direction; monitor the implementation of, and adherence to organisational policies, and achievement of goals and objectives, and to improve efficiency and effectiveness for the period covered by this plan. Provide enabling business processes and systems in respect of the financial management, information and communication technology, human resource management, facilities management and legal services to efficiently and effectively support the core business of the Electoral Commission.
Strategic Outcome Oriented Goal, linked to Programme 2	**Achieving pre-eminence in the area of managing elections and referenda, including the strengthening of a cooperative relationship with political parties.**
Goal statement	Organise and manage regular elections through the participation of voters and political parties (including independent candidates) and declare results thereof within seven days.
Strategic Outcome Oriented Goal, linked to Programme 3	**Strengthening electoral democracy**
Goal statement	Inform and educate the public on electoral democracy with a view to strengthening participation in electoral processes. Engage and liaise with relevant stakeholders nationally and internationally in order to promote knowledge of and adherence to democratic electoral principles and promote collaboration with the same when necessary.

These goals are executed within three programmes, i.e. Administration, Electoral Operations and Outreach.

PART B: PROGRAMMES, SUB-PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

7. PROGRAMME 1: ADMINISTRATION

7.1 Programme Purpose

The purpose of Programme 1 is to provide the overall strategic management of the Electoral Commission as well as centralised support services.

7.2 Sub-programmes

There are two sub-programmes under Programme 1, namely:

1.1 Management focusses on strengthening governance by refining institutional governance arrangements (including the Commission's committees and structures), exercising oversight, monitoring, evaluation and support.

In this sub-programme Commissioners provide oversight in respect of the activities of the organisation, and facilitate the promotion of the principles of peaceful, free and fair elections.

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer which also resides under this sub-programme monitors the implementation of, and adherence to the Commission's strategic priorities and organisational policies. Furthermore, this office ensures the achievement of goals and objectives and works to improve the effective and efficient functioning of the Electoral Commission.

1.2 Corporate Services focuses on the strategic goal of strengthening institutional excellence and professionalism at all levels of the organisation; building institutional capacity; expanding human capital development; adhering to performance standards; becoming people-centred; managing financial and human resources well; strengthening risk management; maintaining sound industrial relations; striving to comply with national climate change policies (preserving the environment); and building institutional memory.

This sub-programme provides enabling business processes and systems in respect of financial management and information and communication technology, legal services, human resources management and facilities management to efficiently and effectively support the core business of the Electoral Commission.

7.3 Strategic Objectives linked to Programme 1

Strategic Objective 1.1	Exercise oversight (monitoring, evaluation and leadership) to ensure the effective implementation of the Electoral Commission's core mandate, strategic goals and objectives, aligned with the corresponding budget allocation.
Strategic objective statement	Monitor: (a) the exercising of leadership and good corporate governance as well as delivery on mandate; (b) the achievement of strategic objectives as set out in this plan on a quarterly and annual basis as aligned to the budget; and (c) compliance with all applicable legislation; during each year covered by this strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	Annual and quarterly performance reports prepared and reviewed.
Justification	To ensure achievement of mandate and strategic objectives.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 1.2	Exercise efficient oversight (monitoring, evaluation and support) by the provisioning of assurance and risk management services.
Strategic objective statement	Provide independent, objective assurance and value adding advisory services by implementing the approved risk-based annual internal audit plan and by managing risks as identified during each year covered by this strategic plan.

Audited baseline (2012/13)	1 Risk-Based Annual Internal Audit Plan, 4 quarterly progress reports; and an annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit. Strategic risk register reviewed quarterly.
Justification	To ensure independent and objective assurance to those charged with oversight.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 1.3	Build institutional capacity to enable the Electoral Commission to deliver on its constitutional mandate.
Strategic objective statement	Recruit, develop and retain a permanent staff complement as per the approved organogram that would meet the operational requirements as well as constitutional obligations of the Electoral Commission for the period covered by this strategic plan.
Expected baseline (2013/14)	835 filled posts
Justification	Ensuring the provision, development and retention of competent and skilled human resources.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 1.4	Manage financial resources efficiently to protect the public image of the Electoral Commission as an accountable institution.
Objective statement	Achieve an unqualified audit report each year for the period covered by this strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	Unqualified audit
Justification	To retain the image of the Electoral Commission as an organisation that is accountable.

Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 1.5	Provide and maintain a stable, secure and scalable ICT environment that meets the functional needs of the Electoral Commission to ensure the credibility of electronic electoral processes.
Strategic objective statement	Annually review the ICT strategy and plan and achieve a minimum average of 97% up time on network and application systems in each year covering the period of the strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	97% up time achieved
Justification	To ensure the cost effectiveness and technology efficiency of the ICT infrastructure which plays a crucial role in the delivery of free and fair elections
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

7.4 Resource considerations

Over the 2018 MTEF R1.37 billion has been allocated in total to this programme in respect of goods and services and R592.3 million in respect of compensation of employees and R139.3 million for assets.

Expenditure under sub-programme 1.1 peaks during an election year when workshops are conducted by the Commissioners and the CEO to assess the organisation's readiness to conduct elections and to intervene where necessary. Debriefing workshops are also conducted within three to four months after an election to ensure that lessons learned are fully recorded in order that corrective action is taken before the next round of elections.

Budget allocation under sub-programme 1.2 is directed at supporting the core business of the Electoral Commission. For the 2018 MTEF period, over and above the normal inflationary adjustments, goods and services under this programme increase during election periods, mainly as a result of the sourcing of professional services in the ICT unit and additional warehousing accommodation on local level. The increase in baseline allocations in respect of the compensation of permanent employees is mainly due to annual salary increases. Costing of remuneration of employees includes salary packages, reimbursive travel claims, cell phone allowance, overtime and employer contributions.

Trends in numbers of key staff

There are three full-time Commissioners and two part-time Commissioners who are responsible for oversight, monitoring evaluation and support.

There are 184 full-time staff members, inclusive of the CEO and his office staff, responsible for performance delivery and providing of support in achieving the strategic goal and objectives of this programme.

Trends in the supply of key inputs

The vision of the Commission (Vision 2018) has been incorporated not only in this programme but also in the strategic plan as a whole. This, coupled with the need for ICT systems which continue to facilitate transparency in electoral processes, will have an impact on the activities and resources of this programme.

7.5 Risk management

Risks relating to this programme have been identified and captured on the divisional risk registers.

Progress on internal and external audit programmes is monitored and reported on at the Executive Management Committee (EXCO) and findings identified are considered by the Executive Risk Management Committee (ERMC) to identify existing and emerging risks in order for corrective action to be taken as appropriate.

The risk of a breakdown in labour relations is addressed through a structured communication forum with the trade union and staff, as well as a contingency plan in an event of unforeseen industrial relations developments.

Timeous delivery of services from key state owned enterprises such as ESKOM and Telkom especially when these are required in an emergency are a risk. This is mitigated with the installation of generators and ongoing liaison with ESKOM and Telkom.

Possible adverse external audit findings are a risk that is addressed by enhanced training on financial prescripts and the in-sourcing of additional financial capacity as and when required. Up to date functional Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that are developed or reviewed where appropriate and implemented also address this risk, as will the implementation of a comprehensive induction and orientation programme and communication and awareness sessions on policies and procedures.

8. PROGRAMME 2: ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

8.1 Overall Programme Purpose

Programme 2 focuses on the strategic goal of achieving pre-eminence in the area of managing elections and referenda by striving for excellence at voting station level; ensuring accessibility and suitability of voting facilities and processes; managing results; maximising electoral justice for all stakeholders in the electoral process; enhancing the credibility of the voters' roll; ensuring compliance with legal prescripts; and continuously improving the legislative framework.

This programme also focuses on the strategic goal of strengthening a cooperative relationship with political parties by deepening interactions with represented and unrepresented political parties and independent candidates; convening consultative forums with registered political parties; processing nomination of candidates for various electoral events; administering party registration processes.

8.2 Subprogrammes

There are six subprogrammes under Programme 2, namely:

2.1 Electoral Operations Management provides the strategic management for Programme 2.

2.2 Electoral Matters facilitates the participation of voters in regular free and fair elections, using sustainable systems, people and processes. Activities included are the delimitation of boundaries, maintenance of the national voters' roll and the planning and co-ordination of activities during registration week-ends, on Election Day and special voting days, as well as for home visits.

2.3 Logistics and Infrastructure provides logistics, warehousing and distribution infrastructure such as voting stations and municipal electoral offices, electoral materials and equipment as specified in the bill of materials and voting station plans.

2.4 Political Liaison facilitates the participation of parties in regular free and fair elections, using systems, people and processes that are sustainable. This programme provides for on-going liaison platforms with registered political parties and independent candidates.

2.5 Provincial and local offices provides for the resources and decentralised support costs in provinces, excluding accommodation (rental costs).

2.6 Electoral capacity building provides for the salaries, allowances and training costs of all categories of electoral staff. The staff structure is expanded significantly during election periods when additional resources are imperative to cope with the workload and difficult logistical arrangements.

8.3 Strategic Objectives linked to Programme2

Strategic Objective 2.1	Manage free and fair elections in accordance with the applicable electoral timetables to ensure the efficient and credible execution of the mandate of the Electoral Commission.
Strategic objective statement	Maintain and improve compliance with legal prescripts by ensuring that proportional representation (PR) replacements, candidate nomination, voting and results for electoral events occur within the prescribed legislative and operational timeframes for each year covered by this strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	100% Voters' roll certification occurs on the date specified in election timetable. 100% Elections and By-elections conducted on date specified in election timetable. 100% Municipal PR seat vacancies filled within 35 calendar days. 100% Election results are announced by the Electoral Commission within 7 day period after election day. 100% Ward vacancies filled within 90 days from declaration date of ward vacancy.
Justification	To deliver regular free and fair elections as required by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 2.2	Maintain an accurate national common voters' roll to ensure the credibility of elections.
Strategic objective statement	Ensure an up to date and comprehensive national voters roll ahead of every statutory election by, inter alia, ensuring that addresses or sufficient particularities for voters without addresses are captured on the voters' roll in accordance with the Mhlophe judgment of the Constitutional Court.
Audited baseline (2011/12)	23.3 million registered voters 12 voters' roll updates/verifications of the voters' roll against the national population register per annum.
Justification	To provide, in accordance with section 5 of the Electoral Act, a mechanism for valid participation in the electoral process, and to ensure the credibility of the electoral outcome which is dependent on a comprehensive and up to date voters' roll.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 2.3	Ensure efficient election delivery by timely establishment of accessible and suitable voting facilities and processes and by applying infrastructure and logistical resources to meet operational demands for main electoral event.
Strategic objective statement	Provide and maintain infrastructural capacity commensurate with the logistics plans for each main electoral event, i.e. registration weeks-ends and elections at a national scale, within prescribed election timeless.

	Established Delivery Channel
Audited baseline (2010/11 registration weekends and 2011/12 elections)	• Warehouses = 10 (1 national; 1 in each of the 9 provinces); • Local offices and election storage facilities = 1 per municipality during main registration periods and electoral events; • Contracted distribution services = 1 fulltime national contract to support electoral events; and • Municipal Electoral Officer (MEO) in place for every electoral event. One contracted voting station per voting district for each electoral event.
Justification	The provision of infrastructure capacity necessary to enable effective day-to-day operations as well as the delivery of successful electoral events.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 2.4	Provide consultative and cooperative liaison platforms between the Electoral Commission and political parties to facilitate free and fair elections.
Strategic objective statement	Strengthen a cooperative relationship with political parties by conducting a predetermined number of liaison sessions, commensurate with the prevailing electoral phases, with political parties on national level, on provincial level, and on a municipal level and in each year covered by this strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	1325 (5 national, 49 provincial, 1271 municipal) Political Liaison Committee meetings. 4 disbursements to qualifying political parties per annum.

Justification	To create a consultative and transparent environment of engagement in furtherance of the creation of conditions for free and fair elections.
	Parties funded as per the relevant legislation to encourage citizen participation in the democratic process.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 2.5	Strive for excellence at voting station level to enhance the integrity of elections and to enable the Electoral Commission to deliver on its mandate.
Objective statement	Provide and maintain skilled electoral personnel capacity, commensurate with the demands of each electoral event for the main registration weekends, and the elections that will take place in the period covered by the strategic plan.
Audited baseline (2010/11 registration weekends and 2011/12 elections)	Trained and competent electoral staff in place as follows: 62,685 per main registration drive 195 878 in respect of the election 426 expansion staff provided at a local level for the election periods as determined in the relevant payment plan
Justification	The provision of personnel capacity necessary to enable the delivery of successful electoral events.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

8.4 Resource considerations

In total R1.5 billion has been allocated to this programme for goods and services over the 2018 MTEF period and R23.1 million for assets. Compensation of employees amounts to R1.6 billion.

Expenditure under this programme increases significantly (by approximately 200%) in an election year as compared to a non-election year. Over and above the normal inflationary adjustments, goods and services under this programme increase during election periods, mainly as a result of the cost of voting station infrastructure, logistical arrangements, as well as the recruitment, appointment and training of staff appointed at voting stations during main registration drives and elections. These temporary staff, working at voting stations during registration and election periods, are remunerated under the economic classification of goods and services for their subsistence and travel.

Trends in numbers of key staff

758 full-time staff members (of which 734 are based on provincial and municipal levels) are responsible for service delivery under this programme

Furthermore, approximately 56,850 staff are appointed at voting stations for each national registration drive and approximately 210,000 staff on Election Day. The permanent staff structure is also expanded during election periods with between 5,000 and 6,000 contract staff (including assistant project coordinators and area managers) to assist with logistical arrangements.

Trend in the supply of key inputs

The rapidly changing socio-political environment (as described in section 5) might have an impact over the five year period on resources in the following areas relating to this programme:

a)   the need to continuously scrutinise and maintain the quality of the addresses on the voters' roll;

b)   continual cost escalations in the logistical field, especially with regards to printing of ballot papers in a transparent, yet secured manner;

c)   cost implications of the expected increase in the number of registered voters;

d)   cost implications of additional assistance that political parties require as and when these are manifested;

e)   strengthening of temporary capacity at election times at municipal level to avoid logistical difficulties in view of diminishing municipal support; and

f)   paying tariffs which are commensurate with the realities of attracting a more mature and experienced Election Day staff complement.

Furthermore, training of electoral staff, especially around special voting processes and procedures has been identified as an area which needs to be substantially improved before the 2019 elections. The need to revitalise the schools outreach programme and to engage more regularly and effectively with presiding and deputy presiding officers to enhance their understanding and skills in addressing issues that may arise on Election Day and during by-elections will also receive attention. The development of modular training and ensuring that we facilitate sustainable skills development to enhance the professionalism of Election Day staff was a key outcome of Vision 2018.

8.5 Risk management

Risks relating to this programme have been identified and captured on the divisional risk register. Key risks identified include:

a) the environment has become more complex given, amongst others, the levels of service delivery protests, demarcation disputes and strike action. This situation is being monitored;

b) challenges relating to the accuracy of addresses in the voters' roll, resulting in parties and/or voters rejecting the outcome of elections as credible, free and fair, is a risk. This is mitigated by the allocation of sufficient resources to ensure an accurate, up to date and comprehensive voters' roll, the maintenance of adequate stock of voter registration devices; enhanced training of permanent and electoral staff on the implications of electoral fraud, and the effective reconciliation of voter registration data with the population register;

c) supplier failure remains a significant risk. This is mitigated by due diligence processes undertaken on significant potential service providers, as well as adequate service level agreements, contract management processes, and contingency planning.

d) the Electoral Commission has experienced an increase in requests for technical assistance which stretch the potential capacity to deliver. In mitigating this risk, the Electoral Commission will undertake careful evaluation of international requests. A framework for engagement with the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) will also be established to ensure coherence with various bilateral agreements.

e) the Electoral Commission is also experiencing an increase in domestic requests to administer elections of both statutory and non-statutory bodies which further puts a strain on existing resources of the Electoral Commission and capacity to deliver. This may require a policy review and possible legislative amendments in the near future, with specific reference to the election of Traditional Councils and Ward Committees.

f) the risk exists that losing parties may challenge the results of elections. This is mitigated by liaison and consultation with political parties and a commitment to operate in an open and transparent manner. The conflict management programme and the use of security resources to maintain security and political stability also act in mitigation.

9. PROGRAMME 3 OUTREACH

9.1 Programme Purpose

The purpose of this programme is to foster participation in electoral democracy by providing civic and democracy education on a continuous basis; voter and balloting education as may be required by each election; strategic and thought leadership on matters pertaining to electoral democracy; broadening our research agenda and issuing publications; increasing visibility through proactive consultation, effective communication, and presence amongst our stakeholders and communities; facilitating platforms for political dialogue; cultivating an environment conducive for the holding of free and fair elections; and constantly engaging the media.

9.2 Subprogrammes

There are four subprogrammes under Programme 3, namely:

3.1 Outreach Management provides the strategic management for Programme 3.

3.2 Education and Research imparts the knowledge, teaches the skills and nurtures the attitudes and values that enable as many as possible members of the population to access the opportunities presented by a participatory democracy. Research optimises available data in order to inform organisational planning and other decision making processes. It tracks emerging trends (perceptions and attitudes) in the social context that assist the Electoral Commission determine its response. It also considers latest developments in democratic elections administration.

3.3 Communications actively manages the reputation of the Electoral Commission as a trusted body for managing free, fair and credible elections. It further enhances and supports the Electoral Commission's education and research agendas through strategic communication with the Commission's stakeholders, including political parties.

3.4 Stakeholder Relations Management engages and liaises with a set of stakeholders nationally and internationally in order to promote knowledge of and adherence to democratic electoral principles and promotes collaboration with the same when necessary.

9.3 Strategic Objectives linked to Programme 3

Strategic Objective 3.1	Encourage the electorate's engagement with, and participation in, electoral processes in order to facilitate the right to vote as enshrined in the Constitution.
Strategic objective statement	Achieve a voter turnout of 70% for national and provincial elections in 2019 and 60% for local government elections in 2021.
Audited baseline2009/10 and 2011/12	The voter turnout in the last national and provincial election (2009) was 77.3% and for the last municipal election (2011) was 57.6%
Justification	This is a measure of participation in electoral processes.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 3.2	Achieve a low rate of spoilt ballots as a measure of the effectiveness of balloting education.
Objective statement	Keep the rate of spoilt ballots in line with the international norm for spoilt ballots which is 1.6% in each reporting period in national, provincial, local government elections.
Unaudited baseline (2011/12)	1.89% of ballots cast in the 2011 municipal elections.
Justification	Spoilt ballots are a measure of the efficacy of balloting education. A sharp increase in spoilt ballots that cannot be attributed to a poor grasp of the correct way of marking the ballot to register a vote can however indicate a deliberate intention to spoil a ballot. The latter is typically an expression of discontent with an aspect of the voting process.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

Strategic Objective 3.3	Enhance the Electoral Commission's reputation as a credible and trustworthy Electoral Management Body.
Strategic objective statement	Within the five year period covered by this strategic plan, achieve120 engagements/collaborations with regional and international stakeholders to share and benchmark expertise and good practice.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	73 strategic partnerships and 24 meetings with international stakeholders.
Justification	To run elections effectively and efficiently, there is a need to see all South Africans (whether they are eligible to vote or not) as stakeholders in the endeavour to create an environment that is conducive to free and fair elections. The Electoral Commission needs to ensure that its stakeholders understand the measures put in place to ensure transparency.
Links	Create a better South Africa and contribute to a better and safer Africa and World.

Strategic Objective 3.4	Provide thought leadership in the field of electoral management and related fields as per Vision 2018 in order to strengthen electoral democracy.
Strategic objective statement	Within the five year period covered by this strategic plan, facilitate 20 research projects, information sharing sessions, debates or general discourses on matters pertaining to electoral democracy through lectures, seminars, conferences, publications and opinion pieces.
Audited baseline (2012/13)	5 research projects conducted.
Justification	As the Electoral Commission becomes more experienced in election management and exercise in the interpretation of the relevant laws, there is room to reflect on what practice is telling us in terms of many aspects of election management and vice versa.
Links	An efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship.

9.4 **Resource considerations**

Budget allocation under this programme is directed at informing and educating civil society on democracy and electoral processes. Over the 2018 MTEF period R470.9 million has been allocated under goods and services and R337.2 million in respect of compensation of employees and R1.7 million for assets. Some of this funding may, however, have to be re-prioritised and allocated to the compensation of employees depending on the outcome of the revised civic and democracy education model which is currently being developed and which will be implemented during the MTEF period. The increase in baseline allocations in respect of the compensation of permanent employees is mainly due to annual salary increases. Costing of remuneration of employees include salary packages, reimbursive travel claims, cell phone allowance, overtime and employer contributions.

Expenditure peaks during registration and election periods when civic education and communication programmes peak and civic education expansion staff come on board. A further factor is the international observer missions which are hosted by Commission Services during these periods.

Trends in numbers of key staff

22 full-time staff members are responsible for performance delivery on national level and 71 on provincial and local levels. A review of the service delivery model for outreach in 2012 resulted in the creation of 52 permanent SAO posts across the country and these are included in the aforementioned 92 posts. The aim of these posts is to provide permanent capacity to revitalise the outreach programme. These posts will also provide permanent training capacity to enhance the professionalism of Election Day staff, another key outcome of Vision 2018. The staff structure is expanded during election periods with contract staff and fieldworkers to assist with civic education programmes as outside of general elections, the Electoral Commission has an opportunity to strengthen electoral democracy through outreach programmes.

Trends in the supply of key inputs

The rate of registration of young voters and specifically those citizens born after 1994 ("Born Frees") represents one of the major challenges to the Electoral Commission. Resultantly increased visibility of outreach programmes, especially amongst the youth (age group 18 to 25) is one of the key components of the strategy of the Electoral Commission over the period covered by this strategic plan. In order to achieve this, the Commission revised its strategy regarding civic democracy in educational institutions.

9.5 **Risk management**

Risks relating to this programme have been identified and captured on the divisional risk register. Key risks identified include:

a) human and financial resources versus scope of work need to be managed to ensure that these remain aligned. Formalised and strengthened relationships with strategic partners for sustainable delivery will assist to address this risk.

b) the potential failure to meet the diverse expectations of various stakeholders is a risk that will be managed by on-going liaison and consultation together with stakeholder profiling and needs assessment and monitoring the state of democracy.

c) the impartiality and quality of the work undertaken by democracy education fieldworkers and civil society organisations poses risks to the Electoral Commission. These risks will be addressed by formally assessing the impact of programmes in respect of civic and democracy education.

10. CONCLUSION

The continuous development and improvement in technology increasingly pose opportunities and challenges to all electoral management bodies including the Electoral Commission. In this regard it is re-iterated that, in the immediate period covered by this Strategic Plan, technology initiatives will be implemented to enhance voter registration. This includesg the procurement of new generation electronic registration devices to replace the aging "zip-zip" machines which have been in use since 1999.

The successful implementation of the Electoral Commission's Vision 2018 programmes was and is largely dependent, not only on the quality of the organisation's permanent human capital, but also on the temporary staff employed during election periods. Although the Electoral Commission prides itself in the quality of its permanent staff, the large numbers of temporary staff which have to be appointed and trained during election periods has proven to be a challenging task. This challenge stems from the fact that temporary electoral staff are appointed for short periods of time and often have little or no relevant work experience.

It should be noted that, although the Commission is cognisant of and has already implemented some of the elements contained in Vision 2030 in the National Development Plan, other elements will only be incorporated in its future strategic and annual performance plans and might influence future strategies and decisions of the Commission.

The next re-visioning and strategic planning session for the next 5 years is scheduled to take place in June 2018.