



SOUTH AFRICA

# Vision 2018



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## The Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission is established by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Commission is independent, and subject only to the constitution and the law. It must be impartial in exercising its powers and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice. The Commission is accountable to the National Assembly.

Commissioners are appointed for a term of seven years, which is renewable only once through a public process, culminating in an appointment by the President of the Republic of South Africa. Three of the Commissioners appointed in 1997, and reappointed in 2004, had served two terms by October 2011 and, having gallantly served the Commission and the country, retired at that date.



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## Appointment of a new Commission

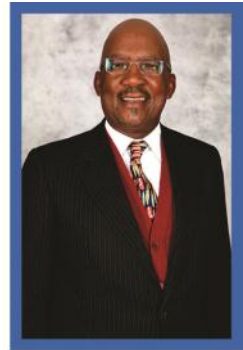
A new Commission was constituted on 4 November 2011. The Electoral Commission consists of five members, one of whom is a judge. The details of the Commissioners are as follows:



**Adv. FDP Tlakula  
Chairperson**



**Mr IT Tselane  
Vice Chairperson**



**Judge GM Makhanya  
Commissioner**



**Rev. BB Finca  
Commissioner**



**Ms R Taljaard  
Commissioner**



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## Review

Political and organisational maturity amongst registered political parties has greatly advanced since the first democratic elections in 1994. The expectations that political parties have of an electoral administration have in this time also changed significantly. In response, the administration of elections has also become more structured and efficient since 1999. As an organisation the Electoral Commission has distinguished itself over the years and leading with constant improvements in the service and facilities it offers to all its stakeholders. In the quest to reinforce this trend it was appropriate for the new Commission to once again reflect on its legal mandate, obligations and the strategic objectives for its term of office.

## The legal framework

### The Constitution

In terms of Section 181 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), the Electoral Commission is one of the institutions that strengthens constitutional democracy.

It is independent, and subject only to the Constitution and the law, and must be impartial and exercise its powers and perform its functions without fear, favour or prejudice.



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Other organs of state, through legislative and other measures, must assist and protect the Electoral Commission to ensure the independence, impartiality, dignity and effectiveness of the institution.

No person or organ of state may interfere with the functioning of the Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission is accountable to the National Assembly, and must report on its activities and the performance of its functions to the Assembly at least once a year.

In terms of Section 190 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 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 must be prescribed by national legislation and that is as short as reasonably possible.



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## Electoral Commission Act

The *objects* of the Commission, as defined in section 4 of the Electoral Commission Act, 1996, are to strengthen constitutional democracy and promote democratic electoral processes.

The *duties and functions* of the Electoral Commission are further defined in section 5 of the Electoral Commission Act, 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;



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- 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

Section 2 of the Electoral Commission Act, 1996, includes the holding of a referendum as one of the mandates of the Commission.



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## Vision, Mission and Values

Having considered its legal mandate and obligations, the Commission outlines the vision and the values it holds and will advance, and the mission it will embark on. It firmly believes that these statements of commitment will enable it to realise its legal mandate.

### Vision

To be a pre-eminent leader in electoral democracy.

### 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.





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## 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 organisational values:

1. Impartiality
2. Integrity
3. Accountability
4. Transparency
5. Participation
6. Responsiveness
7. Respect



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## Strategic priorities of the Commission

To give effect to its vision and the quest for continuous development and improvements in its actions and operations the Commission, over the term of its office, will give priority to the following strategic objectives.

### 1. Achieving pre-eminence in the area of managing elections and referenda

- Increasing innovation
- Leveraging cutting-edge technology
- Ensuring accessibility and suitability of voting facilities and processes
- Increasing voter participation
- Identifying and incorporating best practice in the area of elections (including the area of electoral justice)
- Enhancing the credibility of the voters' roll
- Improving compliance with legal prescripts
- Continuously improving the legislative framework



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## 2. Strengthening electoral democracy

- Encouraging citizen participation
- Providing strategic and thought leadership
- Broadening our research agenda and issuing publications
- Increasing visibility through proactive consultation, effective communication and presence
- Providing continuous education
- Facilitating platforms for political dialogue
- Cultivating an environment for free and fair elections
- Constantly engaging the media

## 3. Strengthening a cooperative relationship with political parties

- Deepening interactions with represented political parties
- Convening consultative forums with registered political parties



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## 4. Strengthening institutional excellence and professionalism at all levels of the organisation

- Striving for excellence at voting station level
- Building institutional capacity
- Strengthening our presence and effectiveness at local level
- Expanding human capital development
- Adhering to performance standards
- Becoming people-centred
- Managing financial and human resources well and strengthening risk management
- Maintaining sound industrial relations
- Striving to comply with national climate change policies (preserving the environment)
- Building institutional memory



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## 5. Strengthening institutional governance

- Refining institutional governance arrangements (including the Commission's structures and committees)
- Delineating the powers, roles and functions between the Commissioners and the Administration
- Exercising oversight: monitoring, evaluation and support



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