



## **Governorate Council Elections 2013 ANTI-FRAUD AND INTEGRITY MEASURES**

The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) is implementing a number of anti-fraud measures to protect the integrity of the election process and ensure that election results will be accepted as credible by the Iraqi people. Anti-fraud mechanisms are included at all levels and during all phases of the electoral process. Besides technical specifications designed to protect fraudulent duplication of ballot papers, another significant anti-fraud measure is the production of the voter list down to the polling station level.

Furthermore, a significant safeguard against fraudulent tampering with the electoral process is observation; IHEC has comprehensive accreditation procedures to allow access to Iraqi and international observers and political party agents to observe all polling and counting procedures. All candidates and their political entities are encouraged to accredit representatives to be in the polling and counting centres and to follow transportation of ballots and sensitive materials. IHEC accredited more than 175,000 political entity agents, 45,000 local observers, 1500 local media representatives, 268 international observers, and 169 international media representatives.

### **Voter Registration and the Voter List**

- Voter List produced up to the polling station level with a voter allocated to a specific (and only one) polling station; a voter can only cast a ballot in the polling station where s/he is on the voter list;
- Voters required to produce photographic identification to vote;
- There will be no proxy voting only in person voting will be allowed;
- Voters are required to sign or leave a finger print next to their name in the voter list when issued with a ballot; without a signature/print a ballot will not be issued; consequently if a voter has cast their ballot they will be unable to vote again;
- Comprehensive reconciliation procedures established – if ballots cast exceed or are less than a 4% discrepancy of the signatures/prints in the voter list then special measures will be used to investigate the individual ballot box and its contents. This is termed the “tolerance level” and has been decided by the IHEC to be 4%; Also, abnormally high turn-out will be investigate and IHEC has decided that any polling stations which records more than 85% of the voters voting will be subject to audit.
- Voters can get information ahead of election day on exactly where to go and vote – information will be available at the IHEC national and field offices. Voters can also call free of charge the IHEC Call Centre on 5777; or check it in the website [www.ihec.iq](http://www.ihec.iq) to find their polling location.

### **Polling**

- **Ballots, boxes and stamps:** Ballots themselves have been printed by a renowned printing specialist that also print international currency; security features have been incorporated into the design of the ballot papers
- The number of ballots issued to individual polling stations has been closely monitored to ensure that any discrepancies can be easily detected; ballots are produced in pads of

50 and have a sequential serial number to enable close tracking should a pad go missing or be fraudulently used (NOTE: individual ballots issued to voters will not be tracked to ensure secrecy of the vote);

- Special Ballot Stamps (with a unique and confidential) identification stamp will be used to mark the back of ballots as they are issued to voters. Only ballots with this stamp will be counted.
- Transparent ballot boxes will be used to allow observers and political entity agents to see the ballots being cast (yet maintain the secrecy of the vote) – this will assist in detecting tampered boxes; all sealing and unsealing of ballot boxes will take place in the presence of observers and political entity agents.
- Special numbered seals are used on the ballot boxes; these seal numbers are recorded on opening and close of polling and on re-opening when the count begins – any discrepancy is recorded and an investigation initiated that can result in that ballot box and its contents being excluded from the results; observers and entity agents can also recorded these numbers and report any discrepancy;
- Tamper evident bags are used to store election sensitive information & tally sheets to ensure that misuse can be detected.
- Once the count is completed, a copy of the results for the polling station is posted at the wall of the polling center, for viewing by political entity agents, observers and the public.
- **Ink:** Voters will be inked with indelible ink to show that they have voted and to prevent multiple voting.
- **Security & Access:** A safe and secure security environment is key to instill confidence in the electorate to come out and vote. Voter intimidation and forced closure of a polling centre will not be tolerated by either the IHEC or Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). A National Security Plan has been established together with relevant institutions composing the High Electoral Security Committee to ensure that security forces deployment on election day will allow voters to vote safely, catch trouble makers and yet ensure the ISF do not interfere in the process.
- No cameras or telephones will be allowed into polling stations – except in special IHEC approved “media friendly” centres and then only if media respect the secrecy of the vote;
- Secrecy of the vote will be maintained by voting screens, behind which a voter will mark their ballot.
- **Staffing:** Only IHEC staff will be allowed access to sensitive election materials;
- Voters will be informed exactly what to expect and what to do when in a polling station by IHEC polling staff recruited from the Ministry of Education who are professional teachers and have had extensive training on polling procedures; all IHEC staff sign a Code of Conduct that if breached can result in significant professional consequences;
- **Observation:** Accredited observers and party entity agents will be allowed full access to observe the entire process from opening of polling to the final tally of results;
- All polling procedures and codes of conduct for staff and observers and entity agents have been published by the IHEC on their website – [www.ihec.iq](http://www.ihec.iq)
- IHEC deployment of 6000 monitors to follow and report on the process in all polling centers.

#### **Transportation of ballots and sensitive materials**

- All transportation of ballots and sensitive materials can be accompanied by observers and political entity agents;

- IHEC Staff, ISF, and in some cases MNF-I, will accompany all movements of election materials.
- All results forms and other sensitive materials are transferred to the warehouses wherein the integrity of their packaging are checked. All the tamper evident bags containing result forms for each polling station are then collected, placed in boxes, sealed and transported to the Data Entry Center, no later than 1 day after polling.

### **Counting & Tally**

- Counting will take place at the polling stations at the close of polling (except for special and absentee voting for IDPs that will occur at secure governorate count centres) in full view of observers and entity agents; additionally, regular polling stations requiring audit will be audited at the governorate count centres, and counted if the problem is resolved;
- Special procedures have been developed to count and reconcile all ballots cast, with the number of voters per station, and the total ballots accounted for, with the number of ballots issued to that station; if the discrepancy exceeds 4% then an investigation is initiated and the ballot box and its contents can be excluded from further tallying of results;
- All ballots are counted and displayed in front of observers and entity agents and are “double counted” to ensure accuracy; This double count also applies to the number of voters that have signed/printed the voter list;
- Count form and tally sheet numbers can be copied by observer and entity agents once the process is complete; All tally sheets are securely transferred to Baghdad to be data entered at the IHEC HQ, under full observation of national and international observers and entity agents;
- **Data Entry Center:** Data entry during the tally process will be under full observation; software development ensures that a duplicate reconciliation process and electronic audit are used and any anomalies automatically identified- a subsequent audit and spot checks will be used to investigate suspect results sheets; all original results sheets are scanned and archived.
- Triggers for audit are in place in the software to detect cases of abnormally high turnout, issues of discrepancies in the recorded numbers, and defects due to mistakes committed in filling up the forms.
- A special audit team is trained to undertake audit activities. There are also procedures being followed at the governorate level for quarantine and investigation of audit cases.
- IHEC aims to announce preliminary results 3-5 days after the count, dependent on the progress of the data entry and the completion of the count for special voting ballots in Governorate Count Centers.
- The UN team provided advice on the improvement of the network infrastructure and the development of the tabulation software for the Data Entry Center. However, the process is now fully IHEC owned, with UN support only provided as needed and requested by IHEC.

### **Special Voting – Military, Police**

- In accordance with the electoral law, voting by the security forces that took place on 17 April is according to a voter list prepared by IHEC, in close consultation with appropriate security institutions.
- In order to avoid double voting, the data of the members of security forces who are in the list for special voting are removed from the voter list to be used on election day. This is to avoid duplicate voting.

### **Special Voting (Conditional) for Prisons and Hospitals**

- Procedures have been developed to allow detainees, patients and workers in hospitals and prisons the opportunity to vote on 20 April. This process will be implemented by IHEC staff and in full view of observers and entity agents.
- Special Voters (conditional) will be given a secrecy envelop to place their ballot in and vote); this is then inserted into another envelop with their name, PDS/voter number and governorate details recorded on the outside; this is then placed into the ballot box; this is called “conditional balloting;”
- Eligibility of this category of voter will be confirmed during the counting process by checking voter data on the conditional ballot envelope against the voter register; if a voter is not found in the voter registry as eligible to vote for the governorate for which the voter has cast a ballot, then the vote will not be counted;

### **Complaints**

- In case of observed irregularities, the voters and political entity agents can submit complaints in a special form provided by IHEC the polling centers and all its office premises. Complaints can be submitted up to 48 hours after the event took place.
- Complaints are categorized in terms of the gravity of the allegations, with complaints marked as red indicating that it is serious enough to affect the outcome of the vote.
- Red complaints are adjudicated by the Board of Commissioners based on thorough investigation and recommendation of the IHEC Complaints Committees.
- All decisions of the Board of Commissioners are published in its website and in three daily newspapers.
- Decisions of the IHEC can be appealed at the Electoral Judicial Panel.