

## EAB RECOMMENDATIONS MATRIX, GUYANA 2006 GENERAL & REGIONAL ELECTIONS

Nb. This matrix should be used in conjunction with the substantive recommendations section (Section 7) in the EAB Final Report: General and Regional Elections, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006, Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Category/ Sub- Category	Issue	Recommendation	Date First Recomm- ended
<b>ELECTORAL STRUCTURE</b>			
<b>Constitutional &amp; Legal Framework</b>	<b>Flexible election dates</b> as opposed to fixed dates remain a cause of concern, if only that they introduce a level of uncertainty into an electoral process that would benefit most from fixed dates.	1. Legislate fixed Election Dates	1997
	<b>There are various pieces of legislation governing the elections process.</b>	2. Update election and election-related legislation and consolidate into a single piece of legislation.	2007
	<b>The tradition of holding General and Regional elections simultaneously, which has not been made into law.</b>	3. Legislate simultaneous General and Regional Elections	1997
<b>Administrative Structure</b>	<b>Need for improved policy-making and administrative systems and structure</b>	4. The EAB recommends that an independent, non-partisan, professional multi-stakeholder Task Force (hereinafter referred to as the Task Force) be established to review the operations of GECOM and the Secretariat for the purpose of recommending the organisational structure, management systems, human resource strategy and policies and principles that will ensure efficient, transparent, and professionally run elections that conform to national, regional and international standards.	2007
	<b>Financial independence</b>	5. So as to further guarantee its independence GECOM should submit its budget for the requisite financial resources to satisfactorily carry out its constitutional mandate directly to the parliament and such funds should be appropriated by parliament and given directly to GECOM, whose financial decision-making and management systems will continue to be audited by the Auditor General. In this regard, GECOM should be accountable to Parliament directly.	2007
<b>Formation of the Elections Commission</b>	<b>De-politicisation of the Commission</b> The Commission's purpose for existence is to administer the electoral process. While it is recognised that the Commission has to be sensitive to and relate to political realities, its independence and impartiality must be protected.	6. The EAB therefore recommends that the Commission be comprised of technocrats and non-political persons, who should be chosen by an appropriate mechanism that involves all national stakeholders so as to ensure broad support for and confidence in the appointees. In this regard, it recommends that this also be referred to the Task Force for consideration.	1997
<b>Accreditation of Local and International Observers</b>	<b>Differential status for local and international observers</b>	7. The EAB recommends that the laws governing local and international elections observers be reviewed by an independent body, with relevant international input, to ensure that a common status applies to local and international observers and to assure that all observers will have the maximum positive impact upon the electoral process. Elections observers' law should guarantee the rights necessary to preserve the independence of observers, while ensuring that observers' responsibilities are upheld.	2007
<b>Voting Procedures</b>	<b>Need for greater accountability of ballot papers, ballot boxes, and other "sensitive" materials.</b>	8. The established voting procedures appear to prevent systematic voter fraud. However, a more transparent system for monitoring and auditing the distribution and use of ballot papers and other material used in the balloting process, especially the "sensitive" materials should be considered.	2007
	<b>While it has been generally accepted that, by and large, Polling officials performed creditably, it would be worthwhile to place more emphasis on the need for polling (and other GECOM)</b>	9. The EAB recommends that training focus specifically on the importance of going all out to ensure that everyone who is eligible to vote is able to exercise his or her franchise on Election Day, notwithstanding any apparent delinquency	2007

	<b>officials to understand their critical role as facilitators' of the peoples' elections process.</b>	on the voters' part.  10. In this regard, EAB also recommends that a register be kept for Tendered Ballots at each Polling Station and a record made of the reasons for issue of Tendered Ballots.	
<b>ELECTORAL PREPARATIONS</b>			
<b>Voters' List</b>	<b>National register system</b>	11. The EAB once again urges that immediate steps be taken to create a single, national database of all citizens. This recommendation envisages the linking of information from the Births and Deaths Registry, a registration exercise, and perhaps even immigration and tax records, so that every citizen will be listed in the National Register. Thus, the National Register would become a permanent, regularly updated list of citizens.  The Register could be used for the extraction of voters' lists, the production of National ID cards, as well as use by the National Insurance Scheme, the Inland Revenue Department, the Guyana Police Force, other state agencies, the business community and civil society.	1997
	<b>Need for clear, unambiguous regulations for the timely production of the Voters' Lists</b> The general procedures for the production of the national register and the voters' lists are set out in several pieces of legislation which vest the responsibility for some functions related thereto in public officials who are not under the control of GECOM. As previously discussed, in the EAB's view, the existing arrangements do not provide for the most effective and timely means of undertaking this very critical aspect of free and fair elections.	12. The EAB recommends that the Task Force review the existing systems with a view to making proposals to bring the full responsibility for and control over the entire elections process under GECOM and for ensuring that clear procedures, in keeping with widely accepted standards, are regulated by law.  13. Specifically, the EAB recommends that the regulations set out procedures that address the concerns raised with regard to the claims and objections process, independent testing of the lists, the period cycle for production of a new list, residency requirements for the purposes of registration.	2007
	<b>Need for new voters' list for Local Government Elections</b> Now that continuous registration has been legislated, consideration ought to be given to producing a fresh voters' list based on a national registration exercise.	14. As recommend before, the voters' list database should be linked to an integrated digital system for the registration of births and deaths. The issue of residency should be determined and, if necessary, the national database would be kept up-to-date though the GRA database. A person's call name (also known as) should also be recorded in the new registration exercise, as this can be an important piece of data in locating that person.  15. The EAB further recommends that the system for maintaining the new voters list should provide for internal and independent external testing, checking and auditing.	2001/2007
	<b>List of disciplined services voters</b> The procedures for extracting the list of disciplined services voters have led to some amount of confusion. Enough members of the disciplined services made claims of not being on the list to warrant a review of these procedures. Additionally, it was unclear if the names of disciplined services members which were extracted also appeared on the OLE on Election Day. If they were on the OLE, it was unclear what procedures were in place to prevent multiple voting.	16. EAB recommends that clear regulations should be set out for the production of the list of disciplined services members to guard against disenfranchisement and multiple voting.	2007
<b>Media Coverage</b>	<b>Fair access to the media, including state owned media</b>	17. For the most part, the media acted responsibly in the 2006 election period. In order to build upon this healthy development, the EAB recommends that	2001

		urgent steps be taken to get broad national consensus on the draft Broadcast Legislation and to enact it without much further delay. This will also address the concern raised about the advantageous position of the governing party with respect to the state owned media.	
	<b>Code of conduct for the media</b>	18. The EAB is also of the view that the laws and regulations governing the conduct of the media should be modernized, and a code of conduct for media practitioners established and enforced.	2001
	<b>Promotion of debates among candidates</b>	19. To encourage more issue-related campaigning, GECOM, the Media and civil society should consider sponsoring debates among election candidates at the national and regional levels, and for facilitating citizen participation in the debates. A methodology will have to be worked out to fairly decide on the issues/subjects that should be debated.	2007
<b>Campaign period and Election Related Incidents</b>	<b>Code of conduct for political parties</b> In the 2006 elections the IRO sponsored Code of Conduct and Peace Pact appeared to have a positive effect on the conduct of persons campaigning and spokespersons and agents of political parties.	20. The EAB recommends that Parliament legislate a Code of Conduct to cover campaigning and assign an appropriate agency to supervise its implementation. This Code must necessarily demonstrate its paramountcy over the parties by effecting sanctions and penalties that serve as deterrents, and all candidates and political parties should be required, by law, to abide by the tenets of a code of conduct.	1997
	<b>Elections Expenses</b> The Representation of the People Act, Part XIII, Elections Expenses, mandates the maximum sum which can be legally expended on campaigning. The non-enforcement of this law ensures that smaller parties are at a disadvantage in the electoral contest. While the maximum sum and the penalties stipulated may be in need of updating, the law clearly seeks to establish a level playing field for contesting parties.	21. The EAB recommends that the existing legislation be brought in line with reality and the enforcement mechanisms be reviewed.	1997
	<b>Abuse of State resources</b> There have been justifiable claims by opposition parties of abuse of state resources.	22. To avoid any perception of advantage there is need for the legislation of campaign regulations governing the use of state resources by candidates and political parties during an election period.  23. An earlier recommendation to set a fixed election calendar also speaks to this issue.	2007
	<b>Violence-free Elections</b> The EAB/IFES Election Violence Education and Resolution Project offers worthwhile recommendations to key national stakeholders for violence-free elections. The recommendations are the result of field work and stakeholder involvement.	24. Implement EVER recommendations	2007
<b>QUALITY OF ELECTORAL PROCESS</b>			
<b>GECOM's Preparations for elections</b>	<b>Need for systems review</b> Every aspect of the elections process, especially those which allow for independent external checking and verification should be adhered to and further promoted.	25. The EAB recommends that a broad-based review of the current systems should be conducted with the objective of identifying mechanisms that can be implemented to facilitate independent checks, verification and audit.	2007
	<b>Staff selection and taining</b>	26. As recommended above, a strategic human resource development and management plan should be put in place to ensure the availability of requisite personnel. The EAB is of the view that this would necessarily involve a thorough analysis of the key success factors associated with the various staff positions and a review of the performance of GECOM Returning Officers and	1997/2001/ 2007

		<p>other polling day officials at the 2006 elections. It is also of the view that the retention of competent staff will assist in the institutionalisation of high-quality elections.</p> <p>27. Permanent Elections Commission staff should be continuously trained, and their skills updated. In addition, training courses should be mounted at regular intervals for those members of civil society who express an interest in assisting in the elections process. The ultimate objective should be the building-up of a critical mass of trained personnel to perform the tasks demanded by an election.</p>	
	<p><b>Elections manual</b> A great amount of experience in running elections should by now have been accumulated in Guyana.</p>	<p>28. This experience should be carefully analysed, and a manual produced which would not only serve as a management tool for future elections, but would also provide the basis for a series of continuous training courses. If this were done, Guyana would be providing itself with the electoral institutional memory, which it now seems to lack.</p>	2001
	<p><b>System of accountability for packed ballot boxes, ballot paper and sensitive material</b> The EAB was not provided with information about the system of accounting for ballot boxes and ballot paper. However, the EAB views accountability for materials, especially sensitive items such as ballot paper, as critical to ensuring free and fair elections.</p>	<p>29. A transparent system, which can withstand public scrutiny, should be put in place to account for all election material from the placing of orders, through acquisition and up to after the announcement of results and storage of unused material.</p>	2007
	<p><b>Broaden voter education programme input</b></p>	<p>30. The Commission must involve agencies outside of itself to participate in the development of a widespread, community based Voter Education Programme. This will better ensure that the voters, especially those registered for the first time and the young voters are aware of their civic responsibility, the purpose of elections and the electoral process.</p> <p>31. The infrastructure by which the programme is supported must include full-time, qualified staff who are not distracted by other responsibilities.</p>	2007
	<p><b>Communication strategy</b></p>	<p>32. GECOM should develop and implement an ongoing communication strategy geared to address the information needs of each and every stakeholder in the elections process, especially the key stakeholders such as the political parties.</p> <p>33. The strategy should also provide for regular interaction and exchange of information with the key stakeholders.</p>	2007
<p><b>The Conduct of the Poll The Count</b></p>	<p><b>Revise voter load</b></p>	<p>34. EAB recommends that the voter load per polling place be increased, based on time-and-motion studies, in order to maximise efficiencies while minimising queuing.</p> <p>35. EAB is also of the opinion that with greater attention being paid to the training of staff, considerably more voters could be processed comfortably.</p>	1997
	<p><b>Early publication of schedule of polling stations</b> While the need to ensure accessibility by voters to polling stations and the difficulties associated with using privately owned properties for polling stations is understood, GECOM's inability to publish the final Schedule of Polling Stations well in advance of the elections is unacceptable. This can serve to disenfranchise voters who cannot vote because they do not know their polling station. This also does not give enough time for stakeholders to scrutinise the list properly and make objections if necessary.</p>	<p>36. EAB recommends that this matter be addressed urgently with a view to developing a plan to ensure that the public and all stakeholders will have early and full knowledge of the whereabouts of polling stations and adequate arrangements are in place to facilitate voting by all voters, including the physically challenged. Also, the Polling Station Schedule should state the number of registered voters for each ballot box for the purposes of audit and validation by independent observers.</p>	2007

	<p><b>Administration of proxies</b> It appears that a low level of importance was applied to the administration of proxy voting. Proxy voting has been the source of bitter dispute at one stage of Guyana's post-independence political history. While the use of proxy voting has not been widespread in recent elections, it can be easily misused if not properly and transparently managed. On the other hand, as a facility to promote and encourage the widest possible participation in elections, it is an important aspect of national democratic processes.</p>	37. The EAB recommends that established procedures for the administration of proxy votes should be scrupulously adhered to.	2007
	<p><b>Payment of party polling agents</b> In the 2006 Elections, the introduction of the payment of party polling agents for the ruling party and the main opposition party exclusively has caused concern.</p>	38. While the EAB firmly supports payments to party polling agents, it recommends that the method for determining whose agents will be paid be reviewed with input from all stakeholders.	2007
	<p><b>Public holiday for election day</b> The declaration of Election Day as a public holiday appears to have facilitated early voting. Evidence suggests that the majority of votes cast was done by 2:00 p.m., thus reducing the possibility for congestion at the closing time and preventing a build-up of frustration among voters waiting to vote at the normal closing time, as in past elections. However, the concern was raised about the limited availability of public transport on Election Day.</p>	39. EAB recommends that in future Election Day should be a public holiday, but that a plan is put in place to ensure adequate access to public transport for voters getting to and from their polling stations.	2007
	<p><b>Statement of poll form</b></p>	40. Major redesigning of the Statement of Poll is required in order to streamline data collection upon the completion of the count and allow for more comprehensive audit of ballot papers issued to each polling station. A revised Statement should consist of a single form to be used for recording the results of both the General and Regional Elections. Recommendations are made elsewhere to legislate that the General and Regional Elections be held simultaneously, since at present their simultaneity has been based on tradition and not on legislation.	1997
	<p><b>Use of Electronic Systems</b> The use of modern electronic systems to manage information and communication can vastly improve the quality and efficiency of the entire elections management system, provide for independent monitoring and better assure the tabulation and dissemination of accurate and timely elections results.</p>	<p>41. The EAB recommends that GECOM urgently consider introducing an integrated Management Information System connecting all of its departments and stakeholders.</p> <p>42. In similar vein, the EAB recommends that a study be undertaken to determine the feasibility of the introducing electronic voting machines. The study should not be restricted to the technical aspects, but also examine the political and social considerations.</p>	2007
<b>Declaration of Results</b>	<p><b>Need for Speedy Communication of Results</b> In these elections, the period between the close of poll and the declaration of results was relatively calm. However, potential for the building-up of tension and frustration due to the delay in the declaration of results, as in past elections, should not be discounted.</p>	43. EAB recommends that method for tabulating and declaring results be reviewed. With the availability of modern electronic computing and communication technology, systems can be designed to ensure speedy, accurate and reliable publication of results, polling station by polling station, region by region.	2007
	<p><b>Independent and Timely Dissemination of Election Results</b></p>	44. EAB also recommends that facilities be put in place to foster and encourage the timely dissemination of the information on Statements of Poll by the media, civil society organisations, and citizens' groups.	2007