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### **GECOM Dispels Misinformation about House-To-House Registration**

The Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) considers it imperative to bring all stakeholders up to date with the status specifically pertaining to the **editing** and **encoding** aspects of the current House-to-House Registration exercise. This course of action is directly linked to recent media publications alleging that the editing and encoding aspects of the House-to-House Registration process is progressing at an unsatisfactory pace and cannot be concluded as planned. In so doing, we consider the media tour being conducted today to be of paramount importance in portraying the nature of the editing and encoding of applications for registration, and to dispel the misinformation contained in disparaging comments published in the media.

#### **EDITING**

The Editing Section of the registration process commenced work with a staff strength of 23 members on January 14, 2008. **This was later consciously increased to a staff strength of 65 persons on April 14, 2008, to deal with the accumulated number of completed field transactions.** The staff structure in the Editing Section is as follows:-

- Five (5) Supervisors
- Two (2) Assistants to Supervisors
- One (1) Receiving Clerk
- Twenty Nine (29) Editing Clerks
- Twenty Five (25) Verification Clerks
- Three (3) Batching Clerks

The functional responsibilities of the Staff are inherent in their job titles.

It must be emphasized that the staff strength of the Editing Section was strategically increased on April 14, 2008, i.e. 101 days from the commencement of House-to-House Registration.

GECOM wishes to emphasize that any delay in the editing of registration transactions of the registration process would be linked to the **multi-tiered quality control measures** that are being used to ensure that all of the pertinent details of applicants for registration are accurately documented. As was expected, errors were being discovered via the editing process during the initial stage of the House-to-House Registration exercise. The number of errors being discovered now is significantly reduced with the result being an acceleration of the process of editing registration transactions. The Registration Department is confident that the editing of transactions will (logically) conclude very soon after July 4, 2008, this being the conclusion date for accepting applications for registration.

#### **ENCODING**

The Encoding Section of the registration process commenced work with a **staff strength of 30 members on January 28, 2008.** This was later increased to **staff strength of 100 persons in a two shift system with 50 staff each on April 14, 2008, to accelerate the work of the Section.**

It must be noted that of the 50 persons on one shift, 12 are involved in data entry (encoding) while another 12 are involved with the separate entry of the details of registrants already inputted by the initial 12. This **doubly entry** system is geared to ensure that registrants particulars are accurately inputted. In other words, there is not only the original checking of incoming data

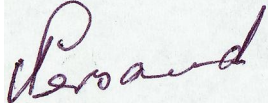
being carried out, but a second check as well, so as to add certitude to the final data entry into the system

Three persons are assigned the responsibility of taking remedial action with respect to any errors that may be detected as a result of the use of the double entry system. Six persons are involved in electronically scanning the Application for Registration Forms i.e Form RO1. 10 persons are tasked with scanning and inputting of registrants photographs, fingerprints (Form RO1, Part B) and signatures. One person is responsible for the printing of manifests for rejected transactions and queries while six staff members are responsible for receiving documents from the editing section and to carry out the required separation and verification of the various categories of information e.g. Applications for Registration, fingerprint forms, photographs etc.

**Two things need to be made abundantly clear here. Firstly, it must be emphasized that the two-shift system was introduced 101 days from the commencement of House-to-House Registration.** This was a conscious decision because we were convinced that it was not necessary to have too many editors/encoders at the beginning of the exercise. This enlightened decision turned out to be the right one as the following paragraph will substantiate. Secondly, it must be noted that, in terms of the inputting of registrants' particulars, 12 staff per shift hold this responsibility while another 12 persons carry out consecutive entries of the said particulars to promote accuracy. The other members of staff on each shift are tasked with responsibilities which are crucial to the unquestionable patency of the new National Register of Registrants Database (NRRDB)

**Incidentally, it is necessary to point out that the number of transactions edited as at 18.05.2008 is 209,151 while the number of transactions encoded stood at 130,250 on the same date. These figures indicate that number of transactions edited moved up by 130,467 in 35 days (14.04-18.05.2008.) while the number of encoded transactions moved up by 91,919 for the said period due to the implementation of the two-shift system. The pace of encoding will be further improved with the introduction of a third 8-hour shift since Monday, May 19, 2008, thereby significantly narrowing the gap between this exercise and editing.**

In conclusion, we must emphasize that the multi-tiered editing system which commences at the level of the Cluster Offices and concludes in the Encoding Section via the double entry verification system is geared specifically to ensure thoroughness pertaining to registrants' accurate data capture. Naturally, the inherent need for this to be done is aimed at the creation of a new and indisputable National Register of Registrants Database (NRRDB) from which commonly acceptable Voters' Lists for future elections could be derived. It is extremely unfortunate that, while the fundamental focus of the Commission is accuracy, this thoroughness is being willfully misconstrued as "slothfulness".



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