



PRESS RELEASE:

IEC COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT PROCESS KICKS OFF

19 March 2018

The Office of the Chief Justice has initiated the process to fill the vacancies for three Electoral Commissioners during 2018. A call for nominations has been published with a closing date of 31 March 2018. The three vacancies will be created by the end of terms of Judge Thami Makhanya, Rev Bongani Finca and Mr Terry Tselane. The first two are eligible for re-appointment if they are nominated again, while Mr Tselane will complete the second of his permitted two seven terms. The two remaining members of the Commission are Chairperson, Mr Glen Mashini and Ms Janet Love.

The process of appointing Commissioners to the Electoral Commission (IEC) is different to that of other Chapter Nine institutions. The panel for the IEC is convened by the Chief Justice and comprises representatives of the Human Rights Commission, the Commission on Gender Equality and the Public Protector. This panel screens and interviews nominees. After nominations are received the panel will compile a shortlist of candidates to be interviewed. These interviews are conducted in public.

The panel will forward the names of at least eight recommended candidates to the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs in the National Assembly. This Committee will consider this list of candidates and recommend three candidates for endorsement by the National Assembly. Once endorsed by the National Assembly the recommendation is sent to the President for appointment.

Commissioners are required to be men and women who are South African citizens, are fit and proper persons to hold that office and do not hold a high profile party-political position. One member of the Commission must be a judge of the High Court.

While the appointment process of IEC Commissioners is always important, this current process is particularly critical as it takes place in the year preceding what is likely to be the most contested general elections that South Africa has seen since 1994. If neither Judge Makhanya nor Rev Finca are re-appointed, none of the Commissioners holding office in 2019 will have experience of overseeing a National and Provincial election.

With a new CEO, Mr Sy Mamabolo, in place, as well as vacancies in other senior positions (two Deputy CEOs and a CFO), it is vital that the IEC has the necessary capacity, skills and experience to prepare for and manage elections.

CASAC and MVC therefore believe that it is important that the public and interested organisations monitor, participate in and engage with these appointment processes to ensure that candidates appointed will strengthen the independence and integrity of this critical institution

We encourage members of the public to nominate South Africans, who are independent, and have knowledge of electoral matters who will ensure that the IEC continues to deliver free and fair elections and thereby strengthen our democracy.

For Media Enquiries:

For MVC

Farai Savanhu

Researcher

farai@myvotecounts.org.za

+27 71 345 1522

For CASAC

Lawson Naidoo

Executive Secretary

lawson@casac.org.za

+27 73 158 5763

Janine Ogle

National Coordinator

janine@myvotecounts.org.za

+27 71 345 1522