

**Item #:** 23.05-07  
**Item:** **Oversight arrangements for GE2023 delivery**  
**To:** Electoral Commission  
**For:** Board meeting, 15 June 2023  
**Prepared by:** Anusha Guler, DCE Operations

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## Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

1. **note** that oversight arrangements for the General Election 2023 (GE2023) have been developed including a General Election Delivery Taskforce (GEDT)
2. **provide** feedback on the proposed oversight arrangements for GE2023 and the draft GEDT Terms of Reference

## Purpose

1. This report seeks the Board's feedback on the proposed oversight arrangement structure for GE2023 delivery and the draft GEDT Terms of Reference (ToR).

## Background

### Purpose of General Election Delivery Taskforce

2. The purpose of the GEDT is to provide regular updates to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on the day-to-day delivery across the regions by Regional Managers (RMs) closer to the election date. GEDT will be a forum for decision makers to inform and raise issues and risks that may affect election delivery.
3. The secondary purpose of GEDT is to provide trust and confidence that the organisation is well prepared and ready to mitigate any real-time issues and risks whilst it is delivering the election on the ground. GEDT is a point of coordination and advice to support the RMs and ELT.

### Oversight arrangement structure

4. The proposed structure consists of five groups/levels:
  - Electoral Commission Board
  - ELT
  - GEDT
  - Managers reporting to GEDT – managing their teams and delivery
  - External partners – through the NZ Strategic Crisis Management System (ODESC) and Risk and Security Working Group.

#### **i. Electoral Commission Board**

Key focus areas for the Board are:

- Assure overall delivery of GE2023
- Monitor overall delivery of GE2023 against statutory requirements

- Make decisions reserved to the Board
- Provide direction and/or decisions on the most significant risks and issues
- Brief Prime Minister, Ministers and leaders of parties as required
- Support and advise the Chief Electoral Officer/Chief Executive (CEO) on exercise of his delegations.

## ii. Executive Leadership Team

Key focus areas for ELT are:

- Support and advise the Board and CEO on achieving their GE2023 accountabilities and any other matters as required
- Provide strategic leadership, management and/or advice on significant issues as determined by CEO or DCE, Operations
- Ensure operational delivery and resolution of significant issues are adequately resourced and supported.

## iii. General Election Delivery Taskforce

Key focus areas for GEDT are:

- Oversight and management of operational delivery of GE2023 from writ day to return of writ
- Monitor, assure and allocate resources to support successful delivery
- Support decision-making delegated to DCE Operations, Directors, RMs, etc
- Escalate significant issues to CEO, ELT and/or Board
- Advise CEO, ELT and Board on delivery progress and resolution of issues
- Support and coordinate field delivery by RMs.

## iv. Managers and field staff

- Each member of GEDT will have “Daily Stand-Ups” prior to attending GEDT meetings to provide ‘live’ input to GEDT on key relevant topics/events whilst delivering the election.
- An example of this is, the five RMs and Overseas Operations Manager receive updates from Electorate Managers on any issues/risks within each region. This is escalated and discussed at GEDT.

## v. External partners

- The Commission has partnered with other agencies across government to support the Electoral Commission (EC) on any security and safety risk, major events, crisis and possible threat to GE2023.
- The NZ Strategic Crisis Management System (ODESC) is responsible for developing plans specific for the hazards and threats they manage, and for acting as the ‘Lead Agency’ responsible for coordinating the all-of-government planning and response to any disruptive event, with other agencies acting in ‘support’.
- The CEO chairs Officials Committee which provides advice on planning (from an election perspective) for responses to disruptive events that may impact the GE. The Committee includes representation from Ministry of Justice, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (including National Emergency Management Agency), Government Communications Security Bureau, New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and New Zealand Police.
- EC has also established a Risk and Security Working Group to support the delivery of GE2023. This includes representatives from agencies on the Senior Officials Committee and staff from the Commission.

5. GEDT will comprise of three Directors of the Operations Group (Enrolment, Voting Services and Strategic Engagement and Partnerships), ICT, People & Culture, Comms & Education, Legal & Policy, Data Insights, Overseas Operations Manager, Security, Principal Advisor Voting Services and the five RMs. GEDT will provide regular updates to the ELT Stand-Up with actions and mitigations and escalate any risks/issues to the CEO or the ELT for decision.

6. GEDT is chaired by the DCE Operations. The Deputy Chair will be the Director of Voting Services.
7. The ELT Stand-Up consists of members of the ELT and will be chaired by the CEO.
8. The CEO will provide updates to the Electoral Commission Board as and when required.
9. The proposed oversight arrangement structure for GE2023 is included as **Appendix A** and a draft GEDT Terms of Reference is included (**Appendix B**) for the purpose of transparency and clarity of the function of the model.



## Roles and responsibilities

10. The table below provides a summary of roles, membership and key purpose:

Group	Who is responsible	Members	Purpose:
EC Board	Chairperson of EC Board	Chairperson Deputy Chair CEO	Overall accountability for delivery of GE2023.
Chief Electoral Officer/Chief Executive (CEO)	CEO of EC	CEO	Escalation of risks and issues to Board, as appropriate. Decision-making within delegations. Keeps Board informed.
Executive Leadership Team Stand-Up	CEO	Full Membership of ELT Chair: CEO	Provide support to the organisation. Support CEO and the Board on achieving all GE accountabilities. Provide strategic leadership to GEDT.
General Election Delivery Taskforce (GEDT)	DCE Operations	Three Directors of the Operations Group, ICT, People & Culture, Comms & Education, Legal & Policy, Data Insights, Overseas Ops Manager, Security, Principal Advisor Voting Services, and five Regional Managers	Provide operational and tactical support to GEDT. Escalate significant issues to ELT Stand-Up for decision making. 10 Sep - 26 Sep – Meets 3 times a week 27 Sep – 30 Oct – Meets daily
Management Stand-ups	Members of GEDT	Each member of GEDT will have “Daily Stand-Ups” prior to attending GEDT to provide ‘live’ input to GEDT on key relevant topics/events whilst delivering the election	Provide operational support to Electorate Managers across the region. Meets daily from 10 Sep – 30 Oct
NZ Strategic Crisis Management System (ODESC system)	DPMC	NZ Police, NZSIS, GCSB, DPMC, other agencies as required, EC staff (CE, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer)	Provide all government support to EC on any risk, major events and crisis and possible threat. Will provide information on security and safety. ODESC system is only activated when a threat or incident threshold is reached

Group	Who is responsible	Members	Purpose:
Senior Officials Committee (SOC)	CEO	DPMC, Ministry of Justice, Te Puni Kokiri, NZSIS, GCSB, NZ Police, NEMA, Ministry of Health, MFAT Leigh Deuchars, Mark Lawson from EC	The SOC will provide advice on planning (from an elections perspective) for responses to disruptive events that may impact the GE process. The CEO is the chair of this committee.
Risk & Security Working Group	Chief Electoral Advisor	DPMC, Ministry of Justice, NZ Police, Ministry of Health, MFAT, NEMA, GCSB, NZSIS, Waka Kotahi - NZ transport Agency, Sarah [REDACTED], Martin Rogers, Suzanne Knight-Tinirau, Shane Whitfield, Lucy Hickman from EC	The overall purpose of the Risk and Security Working Group is to support the successful delivery of the 2023 General Election, where integrity and security of the electoral system and public and political confidence is maintained.

## Discussion

### How will GEDT work?

11. GEDT is a strategic advisory and decision-making forum and provides updates to the ELT Stand-Ups to assist the CEO and ELT in delivering the Commission's day-to-day operations of the General Election.
12. The proposed cadence for GEDT is:

Cadence for GEDT:	Notes:
<b>ELT Stand Up</b> – Led by CEO - 9am (15m)  <b>GEDT</b> – Led by DCE Operations - 1pm (30m)  <b>ELT Stand Up</b> – Led by CEO – 4.30pm (15m)	GEDT commences at 1.00pm daily and receives current information and actions. ELT is kept abreast with current information. The morning stand-up allows ELT to discuss actions/updates from the previous day and the afternoon stand-up is to check-in on the actions.  The CEO provides updates to the Electoral Commission Board

13. The role of the GEDT Chairperson is to lead GEDT and facilitate the effective contribution of all members to update GEDT on events, reach robust decisions and ensure outcomes and actions are linked to a staff with timeframes. GEDT will be supported with a secretariat to provide administrative support.
14. The key role of the Chairperson is to work closely with the Programme Director and ELT on any significant issues that are raised at GEDT.
15. Each member and their respective team are expected to have their own stand-up meetings to identify and raise issues/incidents and oversee issue resolution. This will provide senior managers with the information they need to report into the Situation Report (SitRep).
16. A SitRep will be captured daily including decisions and action register. SitRep will include confirmation of any actions, due date, accountable member and the person responsible for implementation of the action item.
17. A SitRep with outcomes will be provided to ELT Stand-Up.
18. The suggested inputs that GEDT will be seeking are as follows:
  - Trends from dashboards
  - Risks
  - Staffing challenges across the regions
  - Health and safety
  - Media (including other channels e.g. social media trends, issues)
  - Call Centre stats
  - Supply chain issues/updates
  - Roothing and transportation issues
  - Materials update
  - IT issues
  - Security and safety.
19. The above is not an exhaustive list as it is dependent on events and timeline of the election and some of the above items may no longer be relevant closer to the election date.

### What happens when there is a security crisis or a major incident?

20. If there is major security crisis, critical risk, national event or crisis that requires all-government response (e.g. national security risk, cyber-attack, riot, terrorism, etc), this is managed by the NZ Strategic Crisis Management System (ODESC) which is run by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) with other relevant government agencies in supporting the delivery of the General Election.
21. Any risk or event that can/may contribute to a disruption of delivering the General Election, or affect the reputation of EC and trust in democracy, or critical information that is relevant to GE, e.g. loss of ballot boxes within an electorate, problems with voting place/s that can affect a site (security, roof leaks, entire staff safety etc), negative social media trend, constant negative behaviour of a certain group of people, break-in of a location, spread of Covid 19 within a team, major weather event, etc will be managed by GEDT.
22. ODESC provides the governance and response architecture to mitigate and manage hazards and threats which have the potential to disrupt the electoral process. Within the ODESC system, individual government agencies are responsible for developing plans specific for the hazards and threats they manage, and for acting as the 'Lead Agency' responsible for coordinating the all-of-government planning and response to any disruptive event created by that hazard or threat, with other agencies acting in 'support'.
23. ODESC system will support the EC as the parliamentary electoral events meets the threshold for central government and inter-agency support through the National Security System (NSS).
24. The ODESC System will be triggered when Lead Agencies escalate concerns about emerging national security risk/events for appropriate consideration and possible activation. If the threat could impact the GE2023 process, the Lead Agency will contact the EC to discuss that the situation warrants the activation of ODESC System.
25. The Senior Officials Committee (SOC) and Risk & Security Working Group provide support for the delivery of the GE2023 process. The chairs of these two bodies report into the National Security System governance system.
26. The SOC will provide advice on planning (from an election perspective) for responses to disruptive events that may impact the GE2023 process. The SOC also ensures the EC and government agencies are clear on their individual and shared responsibilities for the management of, and response to, disruptive events.
27. The Risk & Security Working Group keeps the SOC, wider ODESC system and other required agencies/entities informed of the risk profile and inter-agency preparedness for the election. Through the Working Group, the EC will work with other government agencies to understand current threshold, authorities, freedoms, limitations and constraints granted by legislation.

### When will GEDT take place?

28. The CEO receives the writ from the Governor-General on Sunday, 10 September 2023. The suggested timeline to activate GEDT is from Sunday, 10 September to Saturday, 27 September. GEDT will meet three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday). If required, depending on current event, we can change this to a daily event.
29. Closer to the election, from Saturday, 27 September to Friday, 20 October, GEDT will meet daily.

### **Next steps**

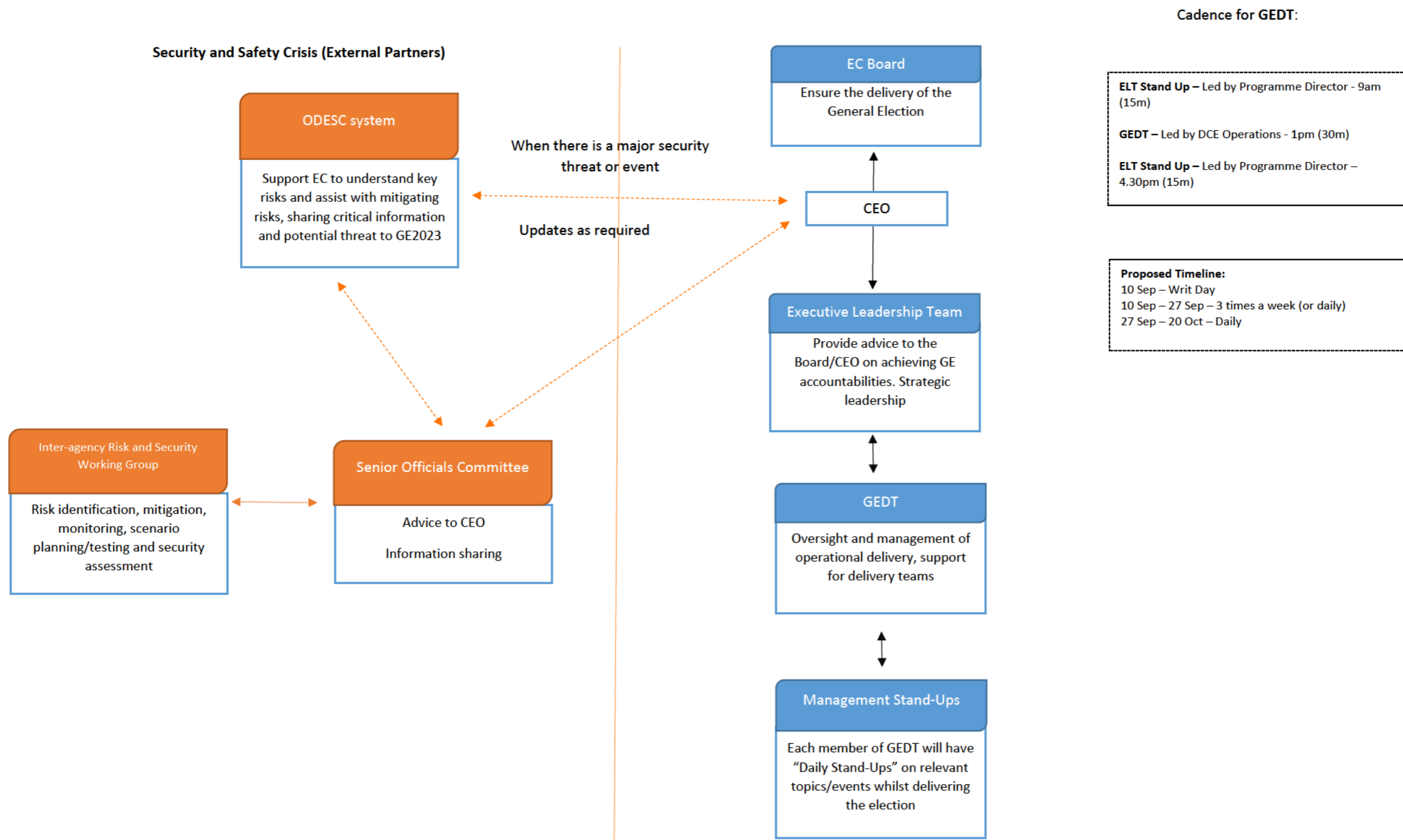
30. Once the oversight arrangement structure is finalised, the DCE Operations will socialise this with the relevant parties and set up and test the structure.

### **Appendices**

#### **A: Oversight arrangement structure**

#### **B: Terms of Reference for GEDT**

# Appendix A – Oversight arrangement structure





## **Appendix B: DRAFT Terms of Reference**

### **General Election Delivery Taskforce (GEDT)**

#### **Purpose:**

The overarching purpose of the General Election Delivery Taskforce is to assist and enable the Electoral Commission to fulfil its key areas of focus:

- Provide assurance to ELT and the Board on the status of election activities across the country
- Provide trust and confidence in the General Election
- Provide a point of escalation of issues and risks
- Provide support and solutions to field staff

#### **Functions:**

The GEDT is responsible for:

- Driving, coordinating, monitoring the conduct of the electoral event/s across the country, to ensure consistent election delivery;
- Managing key operational risks and ensuring the effectiveness of the controls;
- Driving coordinated and consistent progression of activities against the Writ to Writ timetable;
- Identifying, raising and discussion issues in a timely manner;
- Exemplifying leadership and best practise in the management of GE operations and delivery;
- Ensuring fit for purpose briefings on new and emerging issues impacting on election delivery;
- Ensuring awareness of media coordination and responses; and
- Ensuring where appropriate awareness of security issues.

#### **Members**

Members of the General Election Delivery Taskforce are as follows:

- Deputy Chief Executive Operations (Chairperson),
- Director Voting Services (Deputy Chairperson)
- Director Enrolment
- Director Strategic Engagement and Partnerships
- Chief Information Officer
- Manager People and Culture
- Manager Communications and Education

- Principal Advisor Legal
- Principal Advisor Data Insights
- Manager Finance and Administration
- Overseas Operations Manager
- Senior Advisor Security
- Principal Advisor Voting Services
- 5 Regional Managers
- Secretariat - Principal Advisor Operations and Executive Assistant to DCE.

Member responsibilities are to provide updates on areas of responsibility as required and ensure the completion of relevant action items raised at meetings. Each member and their respective team are expected to have their own stand-up meetings to identify and raise issues/incidents and oversee issue resolution. This will provide members of GEDT with the information they need to report into SitRep.

Members are expected to attend all meetings and are required to send a representative if they are unable to attend.

A majority members of the GEDT forms the quorum of the meeting.

#### **Role of the Chairperson:**

The role of the Chairperson is to lead GEDT and facilitate the effective contribution of all members to update GEDT on events, reach robust decisions and ensure outcomes and actions are linked to a staff with timeframe.

The Chairperson's role includes the following:

- Hold responsibility for facilitating the effectiveness of the meeting and its outcomes
- Evaluate options, identify problems and provide the relevant resources to support the delivery of the election
- Monitor and mitigate any risks escalated to GEDT
- Assess any critical issues and escalate to CE and ELT
- Liaison between GEDT, ELT and the Programme Director
- Provide updates at ELT Stand-Up.

Post GEDT update, the Chairperson will attend the afternoon ELT Stand-Up to provide a summary update, lessons learnt, assessment of the day and urgent request/decision that has been highlighted in the Actions Register from ELT.

ELT Stand-Up will be provided with the daily SitRep and Actions Register. The focus for ELT for the Stand-Up is on (critical) risks and challenges that are beyond the scope and functions of GEDT.

The Chairperson of GEDT is the Deputy Chief Executive Operations. Deputy Chairperson is the Director of Voting Services.

GEDT will be supported with a secretariat to provide administrative support.

**Administration:**

**Meeting Frequency:**

Once the Chief Electoral Officer has received the Writ (10 September 2023), GEDT will be activated. GEDT will meet 3 times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) until 27 September 2023.

Closer to the election date, from 27 September to 20 October, GEDT will be daily at 1pm daily, including weekend meetings.

**Structure of Meetings:**

Meetings are a mix of face-to-face and virtual platform.

**Agenda:**

The secretariat will provide an agenda to all members at an agreed time.

**Situation Report (SitRep):**

A decision/actions register will be created which will document all relevant items from the daily updates. SitRep will capture the following:

- Decision and action register
- Confirmation of any actions
- Due date
- Accountable GEDT member
- The person responsible to implement the action.

The secretariat will provide the SitRep of the day and Actions Register for the afternoon ELT Stand-Up. These documents will be saved in a folder that will be accessible to all members of GEDT.