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[2025

Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION, by virtue of the powers conferred by Section 18 (Delegate) and 20 (Assistant Returning Officers) of the Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Election (“Electoral Law”), hereby delegates specific powers, functions listed below and appoints the persons listed in the Schedules to be the Assistant Returning Officers (ARO) for the National Parliament Elections during the 2025 National By-Elections.

Their appointments are set from 24th April until 22nd August 2025.

1. DELEGATION OF POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

Upon acceptance of their appointment, the Assistant Returning Officers shall ensure that the conduct of polling and scrutiny in their assigned Electorate are performed in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law and the Electoral Law (National Elections) Regulation 2007 (“Electoral Regulation”) and under the direction of the Electoral Commission and supervision of the Returning Officer (RO) of the Provincial or Open Electorates. The AROs are bound by and shall abide by the Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission (PNGEC) Code of Conduct for electoral officials.

The AROs shall assist their assigned Ros in the resolution of election-related disputes that may arise during nomination, campaigning, polling, and scrutiny in their area of responsibility and in accordance with the applicable electoral law and regulation.

A. Nominations

1. The Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) shall ensure the following tasks and functions are completed in a timely manner and/or performed according to the applicable Electoral Law and Regulation:

Appointment of Assistant Returning Officers—*continued*

- a. Assist the Returning Officer (RO) in duties related to the Candidates Nomination Process
- b. Before the nominations, set up convenient venue (free of charge) identify office space in the LLG Office. To avoid inconvenience intending candidates must be fully aware where to nominate and how to nominate.
- c. Ensure office safety and security
- d. Work within the Organic Law on National and Local-level Government Election and Regulations.
- e. Effective and efficient safety of Nomination Forms and relevant documentations.
- f. Ensure relevant forms relating to candidate's nominations are clearly filled out on the nomination form, including appropriate photographs and nomination deposit slip.
- g. Review and verify nomination forms and documentations prior to submitting them to Provincial Electoral Office and PNGEC Headquarters.
- h. Management of funds, ensure funds available are acquitted in line with the *Finance Management Act*.

B. Polling

1. The Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) shall ensure the following tasks and functions are completed in timely manner and/or performed according to the applicable Electoral Law and Regulation:
 - i. Assist the RO in the preparation, publication and implementation of a polling schedule for the assigned Electorate, showing the anticipated dates and times within the polling period in accordance with directions from the Electoral Commission.
 - j. Assist the RO in engaging and supervising Presiding Officers, Assistant Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks, Queue Controllers, Ballot Box Guards, and other polling officials.
 - k. Before the start of polling, arrange for the setting up and finishing of necessary polling equipment and materials, including ballot papers, and the certified list of voters and Presiding Officer's Journal.
 - l. Make a daily report to the RO on the progress of polling and counting, and strive to immediately notify the RO of any incidents or disruptions to polling or counting.
 - m. At the end of polling, work closely with the Presiding Officers (PO) to ensure the integrity of ballot boxes, Presiding Officials Journals, certified lists of voters, ballot paper accounting, security seal tracking forms, and other election documents used in polling, and coordinate the transport of these documents and materials to the designated location for the electorate count Centre's for the conduct of scrutiny.
 - n. At the designated location for the electorate count Centre's receive and take custody of the Polling Team ballot boxes for the Provincial and Open Electorate and Open Electorate and polling documents and material from the Presiding Officer (PO) or Assistant Presiding Officer (APO)
 - o. Ensure that the PO and APO have fully correctly completed the Presiding Officer Journals, including the Used Certificate List of Voters and if there are any errors, omissions, or disputes, then the ARO must endeavor to have these remedied by the PO prior to the commencement of the Scrutiny.

Appointment of Assistant Returning Officers—*continued***C. SCRUTINY AND COUNT**

The AROs shall:

- a. Preside over the conduct of scrutiny of the ballot at the District or counting centre as assigned by the RO.
- b. Determine the formality or informality of ballots during the scrutiny process, and inform the Returning officer (RO) of the determination.
- c. With the assistance of the police or other security forces, enforce order and discipline in the counting Centre's.
- d. Perform verification of the requisite scrutiny and count forms and candidate boxes, sign the count forms when validated, and deliver the same to the Returning Officer (RO) as directed.

D. SPECIAL FUNCTIONS

- a. Set up establish, and operate a Provincial or Open Electorate counting Centre, consisting of different District or LLG counting stations, within the province or district. This functions shall be instead of or in addition to the functions enumerated above.
- b. Exercise the functions and responsibilities of the RO, if the RO fails or is unable to perform his/her function. Under the written instruction of the Electoral Commissioner, the ARO staff exercise the functions of the RO until such order from the Electoral Commissioner is revoked.
- c. Conduct an inventory and complete a check-list receipt of all polling and counting electoral returns. Used Certified List of Voters, Presiding Officer's Journal, Gender Tally Sheets (male/female), Form 66A/B (etc.) and Polling Schedules.

II. LIMITATIONS TO THE POWERS OF RETURNING OFFICERS

The ARO shall not perform any other function not listed above unless specifically instructed by the RO and confirmed by the Electoral Commission.

The ARO shall not set aside any ballot boxes for dispute during the conduct of the scrutiny and count process within the designated Electorate counting Centre unless a candidate or scrutineer lodges a written objection with a statutory declaration of the facts for review by the Electoral Commission in line with the applicable laws and regulations and the Electoral Commission directs him or her to do so.

Furthermore, the ARO shall not enter into any financial contract or commitment for goods and/or services in the name of the PNGEC, without the express written permission of the Electoral Commission or his duly designated representative.

Appointment of Assistant Returning Officers—*continued***III. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICERS****SCHEDULE 1**

The following schedule contains the appointment of Returning Officers for Provincial Electorates in line with Section 20 (Assistant Returning Officer) of the Electoral Law.

Column 1 Returning Officers	Column 2 Electorates
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MOMASE REGION**MADANG**

Terence Baiyo

Usino Bundi Open

MOROBE

James Neapukali

Kabwum Open

WEST SEPIK

John Awas

Aitape Lumi Open

HIGHLANDS REGION**ENGA**

Kennedy Peter

Porgera Paiela Open

IV. APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS**SCHEDULE 2**

The following schedule contains the appointment of Assistant Returning Officers for Provincial Electorates in line with Section 20 (Assistant Returning Officer) of the Electoral Law.

Column 1 Assistant Returning Officers	Column 2 Electorates
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MOMASE REGION**WEST SEPIK**

Paul Mirin

Aitape Lumi Open

HIGHLANDS REGION**ENGA**

Mark Petrus

Porgera Paiela Open

Appointment of Assistant Returning Officers—*continued*

V. APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT RETURNING OFFICERS

SCHEDULE 3

The following schedule contains the appointment of Returning Officers for Provincial Electorates in line with Section 20 (Assistant Returning Officer) of the Electoral Law.

Column 1 Assistant Returning Officer	Column 2 Electorates	Column 3 Local Level Governments
MOMASE REGION		
MADANG		
Robert Homisa	Usino Bindi Open	Bundi Rural
Abraham Gene	Usino Bindi Open	Gama Rural
Barnabas Miukmang	Usino Bindi Open	Usino Rural
MOROBE		
Sama Mefore	Kabwum Open	Deyamos Rural
Aron Simberong	Kabwum Open	Komba Rural
Albert Horick	Kabwum Open	Selepet Rural
Andrew Zuhukepe	Kabwum Open	Yus Rural
WEST SEPIK		
Michael Williebert	Aitape Lumi Open	East Aitape Rural
Eugene Nivani	Aitape Lumi Open	Aitape Central Rural
Mathias Kembol	Aitape Lumi Open	Aitape Lumi Urban
Gibson Sauye	Aitape Lumi Open	East Wapei Rural
Tobias Arorai	Aitape Lumi Open	West Aitape Rural
Jackson Teklam	Aitape Lumi Open	West Wapei Rural
HIGHLANDS REGION		
ENGA		
Robin Poko	Porgera-Paiela Open	East Aitape Rural
Mark Petrus	Porgera-Paiela Open	Paiela/Hewa Rural
Ben Pinale	Porgera-Paiela Open	Porgera Rural
Kelly Talia	Porgera-Paiela Open	Porgera Urban

Dated this 22nd day of April, 2025.

S. SINAI, ML,
Electoral Commissioner.