

Priority	High
Event specific	2011 Annual canvass & 2010/11 financial year
Action required	Yes
Area	Great Britain
Retain	16 December 2011
Circular reference	EC20(2011)

Direction to Report under Section 9B (1) Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act 2000 – Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain & Financial Information Survey 2010/11

14 September 2011

Purpose

1. This circular:
 - is a Direction to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) in Great Britain to report against the performance standards
 - requests supplementary data to support the performance standards for EROs
 - is a Direction to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) to complete the financial information survey for 2010/11 and the deadline for it to be returned (Friday 14 October)

Direction to Report for EROs

1. Section 67 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 inserted Sections 9A, 9B and 9C into PPERA. These sections give the Commission powers to set and monitor performance standards for electoral services and to collect information on the costs of electoral services from EROs, ROs and Counting Officers.

2. This Direction to Report is issued by the Electoral Commission under section 9B (1) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 ('PPERA'). It requires you to provide the Electoral Commission with a report regarding your performance against the standards for Electoral Registration Officers published on 21 July 2008 under section 9A (1) PERA.
3. In order to comply with this Direction you should complete the form headed 'Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers – self-assessment form' (attached to this Direction as Appendix A), in accordance with the guidance manual (Part J of '*Managing electoral registration in Great Britain: Guidance for Electoral Registration officers*') and **return the completed Appendix A form to the Electoral Commission contact point (see below) no later than 5pm on Friday 16 December 2011**. We would like to remind EROs that they can complete their assessment in advance of the completion of the annual canvass.
4. The form can also be downloaded from our website at:
www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards
5. I would like to draw your attention to two changes from last year's form. It is now compulsory to complete the free text boxes with an explanation for the chosen level of performance. Where the box has not been completed, Commission staff will make follow up enquiries.
6. Also, there is an additional question under '*Standard 3 – house to House enquiries*'. The question asks the ERO to say whether or not they carry out a personal canvass of all non-responders. We have previously identified this as an issue, and are seeking to collect further information of scale across Great Britain. Again, where this section has not been completed, we will make follow up enquiries.

Request for supplementary information

7. Alongside the provision of your self-assessment against the performance standards required by the Direction to Report, EROs are also requested to complete and return the electoral registration data collection spreadsheet attached at Appendix B. This data request follows the same format as the previous year and will not be used as part of any formal assessment against the performance standards but will provide context to support the assessments that have been submitted. **The Appendix B form should also be returned to the Electoral Commission contact point no later than 5pm on 16 December 2011.**
8. The form can also be downloaded from our website at:
www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards

Financial survey 2010/11

9. Since September 2007, the Commission has been working with consultants from CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) to firstly develop a robust financial information survey and secondly collect and

analyse the financial data. We have collected data from EROs and ROs covering the 2007/08 – 2009/10 financial years and have reported on two of the three years of data. The reports can be downloaded from the Commission's website at:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards/financial-information

10. By collecting this information we have been able to analyse the costs required to deliver core electoral administration functions across Great Britain. Although funding for some elections is provided by the UK Government, details of the costs of those elections are not routinely published, and no information about the costs of local elections have ever been collated or published.
11. In carrying out this analysis, we aim to provide a better understanding of current expenditure and levels of funding for electoral services across Great Britain and help identify any funding barriers to the completeness and accuracy of electoral registers and to well-run elections. We will publish a joint report into the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years at the end of 2011.
12. EROs and ROs should complete the survey headed 'Financial information survey 2010/11 actuals' (attached to this circular as Appendix C) and **return the completed survey to your Electoral Commission contact point no later than Friday 14 October 2011** (in five weeks' time).
13. The form can also be downloaded from our website at:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards/financial-information

Contact

Your Electoral Commission contact points for the return of the self-assessment and data return forms, or for any further information, are:

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This circular is for the attention of:

The Electoral Registration Officer

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

Unitary authorities in England and Wales

Unitary authorities and joint boards in Scotland

The Acting Returning Officer

Parliamentary constituencies in England and Wales

The Returning Officer

Parliamentary constituencies in Scotland

The Returning Officer

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

Unitary authorities in England, Scotland and Wales

The Chief Electoral Officer

Northern Ireland

This document was approved and issued by Peter Wardle, Chief Executive of the Electoral Commission.