

Campaign monitoring for the spring 2011 elections and referendums

As the independent regulator of party and election finance, we make sure that political parties and other regulated campaigners, including their many volunteers, understand and follow the rules. We provide support and guidance to help them do this, and assess the financial data they provide. To ensure transparency, and maintain public confidence that the law on donations, loans and spending is followed, we publish this information on our website.

This briefing note sets out our approach to campaign monitoring in the lead up to elections and referendums to be held across the UK in spring 2011.

These include:

- the elections to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland legislatures on 5 May 2011
- the referendum on the law-making powers of the National Assembly for Wales on 3 March 2011
- the UK referendum on the voting system for electing Members of Parliament on 5 May 2011

Monitoring compliance with the rules on party and candidate expenditure is part of our statutory remit. As part of our work in the lead up to the 2011 elections and referendums we intend to undertake a programme of campaign monitoring.

The purpose of this work is to promote compliance with the law by:

- raising regulated entities' awareness of the rules and our role in applying them
- obtaining information on campaign activity which the Commission may refer to when reviewing campaign spending returns

- identifying emerging issues and opportunities for us to offer advice and guidance to those we regulate.

As part of this project we will assess the level of campaigning by political parties and candidates in selected constituencies¹ at the elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as by campaigners at the referendums, including designated lead campaigners and other non-registered campaigners.

Our monitoring will cover press, broadcast and online activity, including advertising.

We started to monitor campaigning activity at the start of the regulated period for each election and referendum, and will continue until the relevant polling day. We will publish reports on campaign spending and regulatory issues after we have received the statutory spending and donation reports for each election and referendum.

¹ Constituencies are selected based on the approach set out in the Electoral Commission's policy '[Prioritising our regulatory activity](#)', December 2010.



To find out more about how we regulate campaigning at elections and referendums please call our party and election finance information line on 020 7271 0616 or email pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

Guidance for those campaigning at the elections or referendums is available on our website at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance