

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND
ACTION NOTE: Friday 5 April 2013, 2:00pm
 Boardroom, City of Edinburgh Council Headquarters
 Waverley Court, East Market Street, Edinburgh ([map](#))

Present:

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), Brian Byrne (BB ERO, SAA rep), Douglas Gillespie (DG ERO), Stuart Galloway (SG DRO) Malcolm Burr, (MB RO via video conference), Joan Hewton (JH ERO),
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- **Advisers:** Andy O’Neill (AON Electoral Commission) David Freeland (DF Electoral Commission), Gordon Blair, (GB, DRO SOLAR representative) David Miller (DM DRO AEA Rep)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO)

| | | NOTE | ACTION / RESPONSIBLE |
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| 1 | Apologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Anderson (DA RO) note that the Convener is initiating a process among ROs to replace David • Bob Jack (BJ RO), • Sue Bruce (SB RO) • Roddy Angus (RA Scotland Office) • Steve Sadler (SS Scottish Government) • Gillian Cross (GC Scottish Government), • Jaime Neal (JN Scottish Government) | Noted |
| 2 | Note of Previous Meeting (22 February 2012) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted as an accurate record | Noted |

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| 3 | <p>Preparation for European Parliamentary Elections 2014 (briefing from Cabinet Office) <i>(circulated)</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers from the Cabinet Office and Scotland Office were noted. • It was noted in the meeting that despite the profile of the Referendum and the role of the CCO, full attention and planning needs to be given to the EPE. • The Convener was to be appointed as Regional Returning Officer for Scotland, although these appointments are yet to be confirmed, pending interviews in some parts of the UK <p>RRO support (nominations, result collation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Convener has written to the Chief Executive of The City of Edinburgh Council requesting that support is provided to her in her role as RRO, with Edinburgh taking nominations and collating the Regional result for Scotland. • In terms of the Regional result, there have been discussions with the Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission and there is no indication of a UK wide process being required, which would allow the use of a system similar to that used by Edinburgh in 2009, which was popular with the RO s in Scotland | |
| 4 | <p>Scottish Referendum on Independence</p> | <p>Referendum Bill – initial comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government had circulated the proposed timetable for the Scrutiny of the bills. This was noted • ACTION GB to organise a meeting of the SOLAR Elections Working Group, for 19 April, to discuss and compile initial comments on the proposed legislation to be submitted to the EMB and the Government. • The SAA would also be considering the proposed legislation and offering comment. • One factor that had been noted by several people was the absence of a | <p>GB</p> |

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| | | <p>timetable in the legislation. The Electoral Commission and the Forms Group were drafting one in response.</p> <p>Franchise Bill & other registration issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along with the Electoral Commission and a representative from ADES (the Association of Directors of Education) the Convener and Secretary of the EMB had attended a meeting of the Referendum (Scotland) Bill Committee on 21 March. MP will meet with the ADES rep again on 23 April following the PPP • There is also particular sensitivity around the need to maintain consistency and objectivity in regards to the work undertaken to promote participation among young people. Pre-Referendum / Purdah style guidance will be needed to address much of this. • There was particular attention given to the issues around the creation, maintenance and use of the Register of Young Voters. • EROs have noted another issue with respect to the elector numbers and how these will be affected by the integration of 16/17 year olds onto the register. Work is underway with the Scottish Government and the Software suppliers to identify a solution. ACTION – to be noted at the PPP on 23 April <p>Date (18 September 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final clarity on the date of the referendum was welcomed. It was noted that the date means that there will be an immediate progression from the European Elections into the Referendum, with the 16 week Referendum | <p>MP CH</p> <p>CH</p> |

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| | | <p>period starting immediately after the European polls/count.</p> <p>Implications for IER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised dates for the introduction of IER in Scotland as applied by the Cabinet Office were welcomed positively. There will be a further meeting between EMB, EROs and Colin Dingwall of the Cabinet Office on 26 April to discuss progress. <p>Planning Tasks and Resourcing (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A paper outlining the key CCO tasks and proposals for resourcing them was tabled. It is proposed that a set of project boards are established, reporting to the EMB itself. The Referendum represents a programme of related projects. Workstreams / projects will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance for COs Project Management / Risk Management – Robust project governance arrangements are essential for this project. A Professional Project manager is required to lead on this in terms of the creation of appropriate governance structures etc. Performance Management for COs The Count Process in terms of collating the 32 tallies into a national result. The Count Event – a major media event | |

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| | | <p>the issues that are arising and of the various risks.</p> <p>EMS systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of IER and the addition of young voters to the register for the referendum pose important challenges to the various election management software systems. ACTION ROs and EROs need to recognise these challenges and should schedule full tests of the systems in the coming months. • There is a particular issue on going regarding the impact of the addition of young voters to the register and the consequences that this may have for Elector Numbers. • ACTION – these issues to be noted in a Bulletin from the EMB CH to draft <p>ERA Commencement (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper noted • ACTION – the key points from this paper to be highlighted to the RO / ERO community in a Bulletin from the EMB CH to draft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This will include the revised requirements for Polling Place Reviews <p>Forms Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the Forms Group were to begin work on a set of common consistent forms to support the electoral events of 2014. Their initial focus will be the European Parliamentary Elections and then they will commence work on the range of forms to be prepared for the Referendum | <p>ALL ROs EROS</p> <p>CH</p> <p>CH</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aileen Knudsen to coordinate the forms group It was noted that Aileen’s group have already been providing valuable support and comment to the Cabinet Office with respect to the drafting of forms for the European Elections <p>Risk Registers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that as part of the project governance arrangements there is a requirement for a risk register for the Project. ACTION to be drafted and maintained by the Project Manager | |
| 5 | Regional Returning Officers’ Group and associated meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted | |
| 6 | SOLAR Elections Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted | |
| 7 | EMB Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The web team in the City of Edinburgh Council were designing a website for the EMB. This will be ready by the end of May | |

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| 8 | Consultations / Evidence Sessions | <p>Scottish Parliament Referendum Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMB reps had attended the Committee to give evidence as witnesses with respect to the Franchise issues on 21 March. A note of the meeting is available on the Parliament website <p>Local Government and Regeneration Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Convener and Secretary are to meet informally with 2 of the members of this committee, who have been appointed as reporters, on 2 May to continue earlier discussions around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Voter Turnout and how this can be increased ○ Voter Registration and how this can be increased ○ Proxy Voting including postal voting ○ The Terminology used in and around elections ○ Reasons why people do not vote ○ Robson Rotation in respect of the ordering of the ballot paper ○ Diversity amongst voters and elected representatives including any matters associated with the eligibility to stand, donations and the nomination process | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The timing of future elections with a view to minimising clashes. <p>Scottish Parliament’s Finance Committee re Scottish Independence Referendum Bill’s Financial Memorandum (<i>circulated</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This committee has initiated a consultation on the Financial Memorandum which accompanies the Referendum Bill. The consultation questions request have been circulated to all ROs. • ACTION CH to draft an EMB response • ACTION ALL to offer any ideas for inclusion in this response to CH. Deadline is 10 May. | <p>CH</p> <p>ALL</p> |

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| 9 | Any Other Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convener noted that there is a need to progress the preparations for the eCount in the 2017 Local Government elections, particularly the tender for the eCount supplier. ACTION CH to contact SS in the Scottish Government to request that the final project close meeting for the 2012 eCount is held and that preparations for the 2017 tender, creation of a project board etc are initiated. | CH SS |
| 10 | Date of future meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting schedule in general would continue with EMB meetings on the afternoon of the COSLA Leader's meeting in Edinburgh. However, given the current work programme and the meeting schedule it was decided to delay the next meeting until 31 May | |
| Date of next meeting: 31 May 2013 at 2pm | | | |