

Theme 6 – Polling party and Poll Day Arrangements

Guidance Plan

1. For ease of reference & understanding the sub-thematic of Poll Day Arrangements is time lined primarily w.e.f “silence period” i.e. **S 126 RPA 1951** i.e. 48 hrs. prior to the hour fixed for close of poll.
2. Therefore, by the time RO reaches this stage, the RO has successfully crossed:
 - (a) Nomination process & Symbol allotment
 - (b) Ballot Paper printing & EVM Commissioning and 2nd Randomization etc. over.
 - (c) Polling Station have been approved by ECI & notified (including Auxiliary)
 - (d) Electoral Roll addition/deletion have frozen (**S 23 of RPA 1950**)
 - (e) Material mobilization –printing of Statutory and non-statutory FORMs; Vehicles; personnel, including police personnel, etc. all in place.
 - (f) Poll Parties, Sector Officer, Micro Observer, Police personnel - accumulated with reserves.
 - (g) Training to Polling Parties over & their voting at facilitation centre completed.
 - (h) Postal Ballot/Home voting over for 80+ & PwD, & ETBPS transmitted and voting arrangement for notified essential services completed
 - (i) MCC & complaints etc. dealt with
 - (j) No Court cases & restraint in play
3. Accordingly, in this PPT, RO is first given a bird’s eye view of the Poll day (- 48 hrs.) which though is focused on a Polling Station, but cumulatively requires a much wider perspective.

Guidance Plan – contd.

4. PPT then proceeds to check list for the RO, the wider physical arrangements required
5. PPT then deals with the PS & its physical set up, special arrangements, to respond to different elector types & requirement and, access to PS
6. Thereafter, the PPT focuses on the time Point at which the Polling Party reaches its designated Polling Station & sets it up
7. Then the PPT moves to the day of the poll and the initial hours of the Poll Day at Polling Station & priority check list of task which Polling Party is to do and up to Mock poll
8. The actual polling process, i.e., Post mock poll and various possible situations which PrO must be ready to deal with
9. The PPT then will take Presiding Officer in terms of periodicity of various reports to be filled & record/form to be maintained
10. The PPT then will familiarize the Presiding Officer in terms of end of poll step/process at the Polling Station
11. The departure from Polling Station and, the Polling Party reaching the Reception Centre and, process to be undertaken is then listed out
12. RE-poll/Adjourned Poll/Simultaneous poll

Separate Note for guidance for Presiding Officer for sub-thematic of Polling station, Polling Party and Poll Day Arrangements

1. PrO's responsibilities are statutory in nature.
2. The PrO ***leads*** the polling party whose composition, role and, designation are once again statutorily prescribed.
3. After due training, the PrO should have the knowledge and confidence to account for the entire poll material which the Polling Party receives from dispatch centre under the supervision of the RO/ARO.
4. The Poll Materials are broadly categorised in terms of a) EVM & VVPAT, b) indelible ink, c) seals and markers, d) statutory Forms e) non-statutory forms and f) other material. For ease of process, the documentary material is colour coded differently which the RO is expected to fully understand

Guidance Plan – contd.

5. There is a designated route and assignment of transportation along with protective personnel which will transport the polling party to its exact location. PrO would be made aware of the timeline of departure from the dispatch centre depending on the distance and other criteria.
6. The PrO is expected to understand that a series of instructions and provisions have already been made by the RO, covering the polling area at large and specifying restrains and permissible activities around the polling station location. These also include distance criteria, no. of vehicles, congregation of persons, security parameters, public disclosure of relevant signage and information, etc.
7. PrO should be assured that lot of systematic effort and planning has already gone in to ensure AMF and other related infrastructure at their designated polling station.
8. PrO is also expected to understand his tasks to be undertaken before the poll timing, primarily, setting up of polling station as per prescribed layout plan, making available the relevant documents, registers and materials to PO1, 2 and 3
9. PrO then has to be clear about the Mock Poll process and the reports to be generated thereafter.
10. The PrO will then commence the Poll Process and to this end the sub-thematic will familiarize the PrO of persons entitled to be in the polling station; identity of the elector and processing of the elector within the booth; the importance of the secrecy of the vote; different situations and manner of voting such as tendered vote, assisted vote, etc.
11. The Pro in particular, should be familiar with the special facilitation that would be required to be provided to PwD, the elderly and women and third gender.
12. The various reports which PrO is required to send during the entire day and the maintenance of the PrO diary is explained, including the specific instances that the PrO is expected to record during the Poll process
13. The eventualities of EVM malfunction during mock poll or during poll process are explained in the sub-theme of EVM VVPAT which the PrO and the Polling team would be trained for.
14. The tasks to close the poll and systematically deposit poll material in designated envelopes and designated tables/counters at Reception centre has also been explained.
15. Along with these PPTs, PrOs may also link to the Dos and DONTs, risk factor and FAQs regarding their roles and responsibilities which are accordingly linked to the PPTs.

Part – A

Poll Day - RO Level overview and preparations

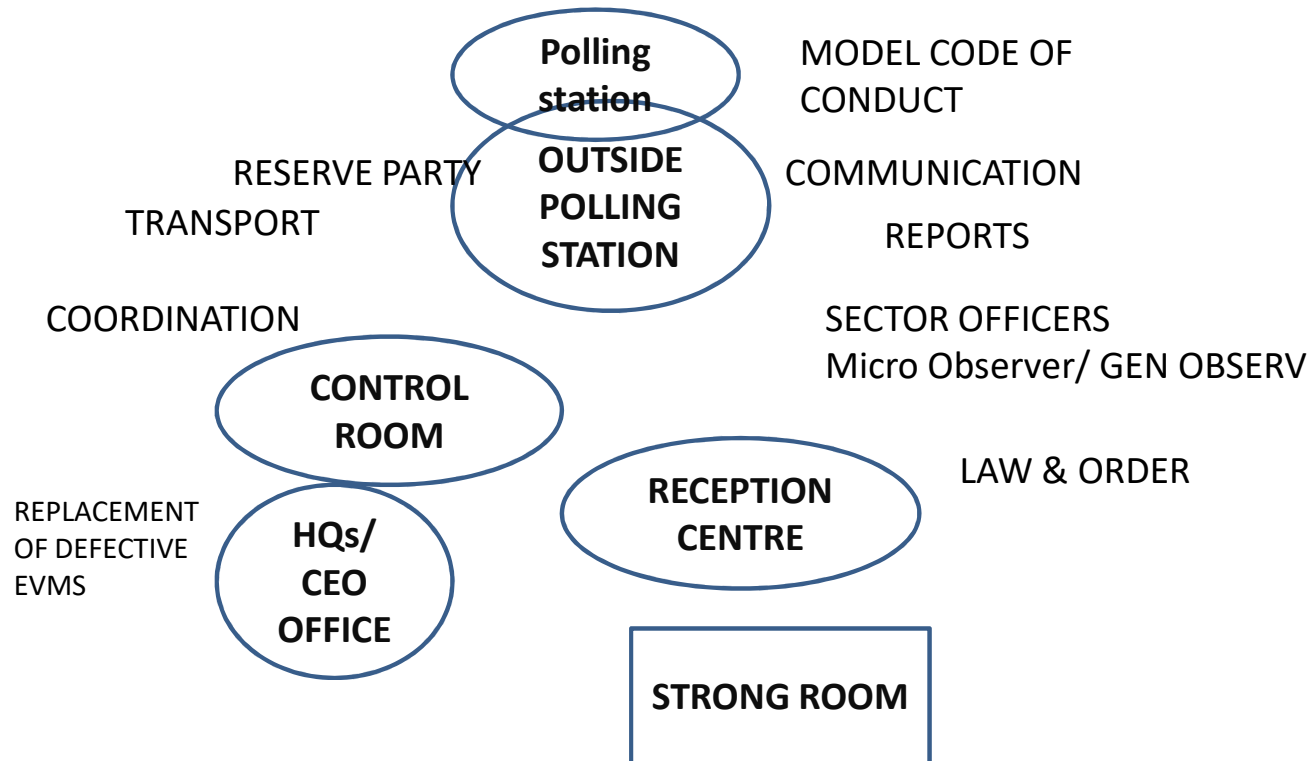
POLL DAY

Personnel and Jurisdiction – RO's perspective/priority

- At polling station – Presiding Officer and Polling Party
- Cluster of Polling Stations – Sector Magistrate Jurisdiction
- At the constituency level – RO and his team
 - law and order
 - model code of conduct.
- At the constituency level – General Observer/Police Observer/Expenditure Observer
- At control room – RO and team
- At Dispatch/Reception center - RO and team
- At Strong room - RO and team

Contd...

POLL DAY – Graphic – contd.



Poll Day events – overview for RO



- To ensure reaching of poll material and polling parties.
- reserve parties and replacement of defective EVMs.
- Polling process at the polling station.
- Monitoring law and order.
- Model code of conduct issues.
- Poll-related situations.
- Reception of polling material and EVMs.
- Safe custody of EVMs & VVPATs in the strong room.
- Collecting and sending reports.
- Communication and coordination.

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Polling Day Preparations – RO Level – contd.

- The beginning : at the level of RO:
 - Dispatch center arrangements -
 - proper arrangements for joining of polling parties
 - police and vehicle tagging with polling parties
 - distribution of EVMs, Marked Copies of ER, green paper seals, pink paper seals, special tags, address tags, tendered ballot papers, etc. to the Polling Parties/Sector Officers.
 - Ensure delivery of the respective EVMs & VVPATs and Marked Copy of ER to the corresponding polling parties only
 - Ensure that polling parties don't have to wait unduly long at the Dispatch Centre
 - Ensure due arrangements for meal/refreshment for polling personnel
 - Confirm reaching of polling parties at the PS (through sector officers)

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POLLING DAY PREPARATIONS – RO Level –contd.

- Station the replacement parties for EVMs and reserved parties before the start of the poll at various locations in the assembly so that they can reach within a short time (1/2 hour)at the place of the problem
- Check the law and order arrangements and actual security deployment
- Special attention on critical polling stations and vulnerable pockets

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POLLING DAY PREPARATIONS – RO Level
- GOING ARMED TO / NEAR A POLLING STATION - contd.
S 134B RPA 1951 and ECI No. 464/INST/2007 PLN-I dt. 24.2.2007

- Security personnel attached to any person not to be allowed - Except in case of person covered under Z+ security (one security person in plain Clothes with concealed weapon is allowed)
- Prohibition for Minister/MP/MLA to be an election agent, COUNTING AGENT, POLLING AGENT, etc., (ECI's No. 437/ INST/2008-EPS dt. 14.10.2008)
 - Any person having security cover will not be allowed to surrender his security cover to act as such agent.

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POLLING DAY PREPARATIONS – RO Level - PREVENTIVE MEASURES NEAR POLLING BOOTH - contd.

(ECI LETTER 464/INST/2007/PLN-1 DATED 12/01/2007 & ECI LETTER NO.464/INST/2008/EPS DATED 16/01/2009)

Prohibition of canvassing within PS neighbourhood and conditions to be followed for setting up candidates booth:

- No booth to be set up by political parties/candidates within a distance of 200 m from the polling station.
- Valid permission from local authority should be obtained Only one table and two chairs at each candidate booth for two occupants who have to be voters in the same polling station area having an EPIC. Persons should not have a criminal record.
- Prior permission in writing is to be obtained from the RO.
- Such booths can only issue unofficial identity slips.
- Only one banner of approved size to display the candidate's name and party symbol.

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POLLING DAY PREPARATIONS – RO Level

- Prohibition of Canvassing, **Loudspeakers, Mega phones** etc. and **disorderly conduct** within 100 mtrs of a PS (**S. 131 RPA 1951**) - **Use of cell phones**

- No canvassing within PS or any public or private place within a distance of 100 meters of a PS (**s. 130**)
- Amplifying or reproducing the human voice by any apparatus not allowed.
- In case of contravention such apparatus to be seized.
- Shouting or otherwise acting in disorderly manner not allowed.
- Penal action also to be taken.
- Use of Cell phones, cordless phone etc., not to be allowed except by the officers on duty in the 100 meters of a PS. [**ECI No. 464/INST/2007-PLN-1 dt. 12.1.2007**]
- During polling, the PRO and other staff shall keep their mobile "switch off" in the PS. If required they can talk from outside the polling booth.

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POLLING DAY PREPARATIONS – RO Level

- REGULATION OF PLYING OF VEHICLES ON POLL DAY - contd.

[ECI's No. 437/6/96-PLN-III dt. 16.01.1996 & dated 24.3.2007 and No. 437/6/2006 - PLN-III dt. 23.11.2007]

- One vehicle each for candidate, election agent and candidate's workers/party workers to be allowed - not more than 5 persons including drivers to be allowed.
- If a candidate is absent from the constituency no other person is allowed to use the vehicle allotted to him - No other vehicle should be allowed to be used by any leader.
- Permits to be issued by DEO - Permits to be displayed on the windscreen of vehicles
- Carrying of voters by these vehicles - Corrupt practice u/s 133 and penal action u/s 123(5) of RP Act, 1951.

There is no prohibition in the following cases:

- *Govt. Servant on duty, transportation of patient / old / infirm persons, EMERGENCY DUTY VANS AND VEHICLES voters in their own vehicle, public transport and other genuine bona-fide use other than election.*
- *Private vehicles used by owners for themselves/ family members for going to polling booth to vote (not to be allowed within a radius of 200 meter of PS).*

SECTOR MANAGEMENT BY SECTOR OFFICER

- Sector Officers deployed to manage 5 to 10 polling stations located in vicinity.
- Before poll they should ensure AMF, vulnerability mapping, route chart of the PS.
- Sector officer to ensure the reaching of the polling team and the polling material at the polling station and about law and order arrangements
- On the polling day report about the mock poll, the commencement of polling within 1 hour and all other reports.
- Ensure the replacement of defective EVMs within 1/2 hour
- Sector officer to keep moving between assigned polling stations for ensuring free and fair elections and for proper reporting of the events
- Sector officers will escort and get deposited the polled EVMs , materials and reports at the designated counters at the reception center.

NB 1 – The custody of reserve EVMs is a sacrosanct responsibility and any violation of the SOP of transport, custody, etc. will have serious consequences for the Sector Officer and therefore, the ECI's Dos and DONTs and related instructions must be thoroughly studied.

NB 2: - The cumulative previous experience reflects typical mistakes by Sector officers of deviating from the assigned routes, leaving the vehicle and the machines unattended for reasons such as for lunch, visiting relatives, losing contact with the mandatory police escort, etc.

FORCE MULTIPLIERS

Additional measures for critical PS

- **Critical booths** to be covered by CAPF or force multipliers like micro observers, live **webcasting**, video cameras or still cameras.
- **Cameras** shall be **placed** in such manner that they can record the voters in the queue proceedings in the polling station including positioning of voting compartment, mock poll, sealing of EVMs, presence of polling agents, visit of sector officers etc. should be recorded. Any untoward incident at the polling station must also be recorded.
- It must be ensured that the **secrecy of voting** is not violated by the camera in any manner.

NB: All video photography (with the date and time stamp) remains in the custody of the DEO.

APPOINTMENT OF MICRO OBSERVERS

ECI – LETTER NO. 464/INST/2008/EPIC DATED 24/10/2008.

Micro Observer – Appointment and duties:

- To be appointed for critical, vulnerable , sensitive, low PER / EPIC PS as approved and randomized by the General Observer.
- At multiple polling stations bldg. Each location will have one Micro-Observer.
- Nodal officer to be identified by the DEO for Micro Observers to handle logistics and deployment-related tasks.
- Micro Observers to be trained.
- On the day of the poll Micro Observers to observe and note in the format that the election process is being carried out in a free and fair manner.
- They will reach the reception center along with the polling party and will provide their report to the Observer alone.

CONTROL ROOM & COMMUNICATION ARRANGEMENTS

Setting up/functions of District control room:

District Control Room should have -

- telephone, fax, internet
- List of contact numbers of functionaries – communication plan
- Coordination between the office of CEO, DEO, RO, ARO, Police, Sector- Officers, Health Officials, Reserve Parties, Transport in- charge, Observers, Teams for replacing EVMs.
- Sending all required reports related to reaching of polling parties to the PS, mock poll, start of the poll, polling percentage, law and order, EVMs and other poll day matters
- Allocation of duties to handle information, and complaints on the poll day.

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CONTROL ROOM & COMMUNICATION ARRANGEMENTS - contd

Coordination functions of District Control Room:

- Coordinating with officials deputed in fields, block level control rooms, poll percentage collection, complaint redressal, in case of any issue in any PS, EVM & VVPAT non-functioning and replacement, getting information about voters in the queue before the end of the poll, moving of polling party and reaching the reception center.
- Allocation of duties to handle information, resolving all complaints on the poll day itself, monitoring the media reports and also sending 2 hourly reports to the Election Media Monitoring Center etc.

Part – B

Polling Stations - arrangements; special facilities; setting up of Polling Stations & access - RO + PrO perspective

SPECIAL FACILITIES FOR WOMEN ELECTORS

(ECI ORDER NO 576/11/ESO 24/94-JS II DATED 21/10/1994.)

Facilitating women electors:

- Separate polling stations may be made for women voters.
- Women polling officer for identifying women electors specially Purdanasheen women.
- Separate queues for Males and Females.
- Wide publicity about special arrangement for women voters.

FACILITIES FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED ELECTORS

(ECI's No. 509/110/2004-JS-I dt. 26.10.2007)

Special arrangements at PS for Senior citizens/PwD, women with small children:

- Senior citizens/ differently abled electors, women with small children should be given priority for entering PS without having to wait in queue- GREEN CHANNEL.
- Full facility including ramp to be provided to take wheelchairs inside the PS.
- PRO should follow the provisions of **R 49N** - regarding the companion for blind/infirm voters.
- Wide publicity about the facilities to be given to such voters e.g.- PWD APP, POSTAL BALLOT facilities to 80+ senior citizens, PWD etc

ENTRY/identification at the POLLING STATION

Persons authorized to enter PS:

- Electors
- Candidate, his election agent and one polling agent of each candidate at a time.
- Public servant on duty – ministers not included nor police officers and no PSO inside the PS.
- Person accompanying blind or infirm .
- Persons allowed by PRO to identify a voter or to assist him.
- Person allowed by Commission
- Only those media persons who are carrying authority letters issued by the election authorities.
No photograph of the electors exercising their vote.
- Identification of voters - through EPIC or alternative documents approved by ECI - Minor discrepancies can be overlooked.

Part – C

PrO perspective - Poll day; arrival at PS, Mock
Poll, conduct of poll

POLLING PARTIES

Polling personnel and their duties:

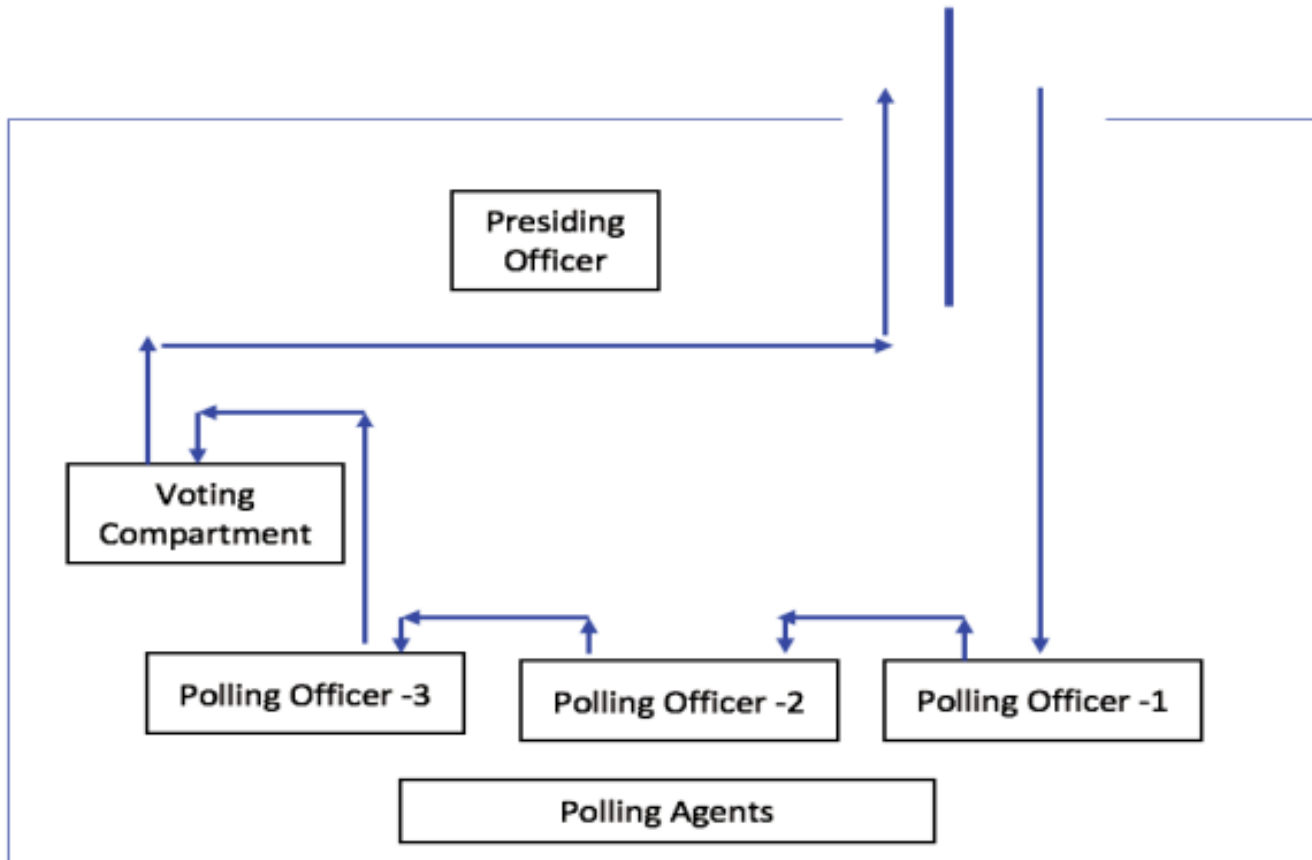
- Polling parties consist of 4 Polling Officers
- Presiding Officers –PRO: overall in charge.
- 1st PO: in charge of identification of electors and the marked copy of the electoral roll.
- 2nd PO: application of indelible ink and maintenance of Register Voters- 17A
- 3rd PO: in charge of the control unit.
- Supervisory visit - Sector Officers – other Senior Officers- visit sheet at PS.

SETTING UP OF POLLING STATION BY POLLING PARTY

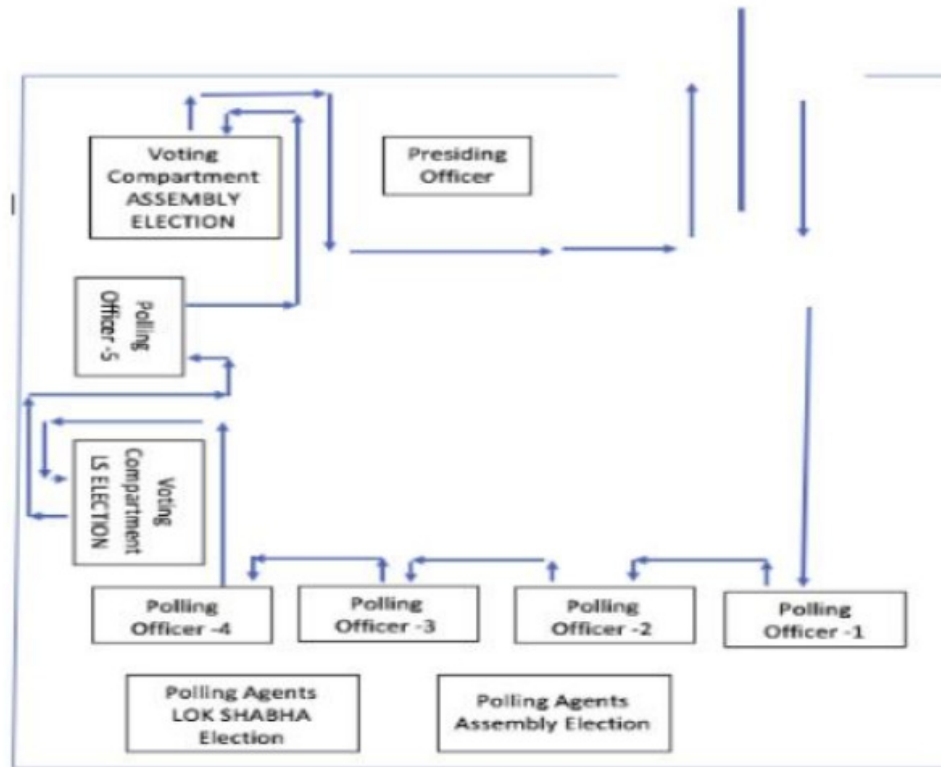
Points to be ensured while setting up PS:

- Voting compartment as per the model layout.
- EVM & VVPAT not to be near the window and no direct light above the voting compartment.
- Control unit on the table of the 3rd Polling Officer
- Display a list of the contesting candidates and details of polling station areas outside the PS.

Model Layout of PS – single election



Model Layout of PS – simultaneous election



**Polling Station – polling location instructions - ELECTORAL ROLLS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER
AND VOTER ASSISTANCE BOOTH**

Assistance to locate PS and ER particulars of electors in premises having multiple PSs:

- To sort out difficulties in locating the name of electors in the electoral rolls.
- For each premises/ building location where 3 or more polling stations are located a team of officials will be appointed to facilitate the voters to locate his/her particular polling station and the serial no. of that voter in that part of the Electoral Roll.
- Necessary arrangements for seating of the teams with proper signage indicating voter assistance booth.
- In case one or two PSs in premises, this list (in addition to marked copies) be given to PrO for easy identification.

POLLING PROCESS - PREPERATION BY PrO BEFORE COMENCEMENT OF POLL – MOCK POLL

Mock Poll protocol – Mock Poll certificate:

- Check the BU , CU and demonstrate marked copy of roll, register of voters.
- Conduct the mock poll in the presence of polling agents of candidates 90 mins before poll start time
- After the mock poll, **clear the mock poll result from CU and remove all printed paper slips of mock poll from VVPAT**
- PrO to prepare mock poll certificate after mock poll recording therein the total number of mock poll and clear the result of mock poll. CONTROL UNIT AND VVPAT TO BE SEALED PROPERLY.
- Special attention where mock poll had to be conducted in the absence of agents [ECI's No. 464/INST/2008-EPS dt. 18.12.2008]
- RO to take confirmation of mock poll and poll commencement through sector officers within 30 minutes.
- **RO to keep list of Polling Station where mock poll was conducted in the absence of polling agents or with one polling agent.**

NB 1 : Details and steps w.r.t Mock Poll are self-contained in the sub-theme of EVM VVPAT

NB 2 - Any lapse in the Mock Poll process or clearing the result of Mock Poll both from CU and VVPAT will vitiate the poll

POLLING PROCESS – Post-Mock Poll

(Ensure clearing the result of mock poll from the CU before start of actual poll)

Activities before start of actual poll – replacement of EVM during poll – declaration by PrO:

- Fixing the green paper seal to secure the inner compartment of the result section.
- Closing and sealing of outer cover of the result section.
- Keeping account of green paper seal.
- Declaration about commencement of poll in part 1 of the Declaration of PrO
- Warning about secrecy of votes – **S 128 RPA 1951.**
- PRO to regulate the voters, and maintain the purity of election - To deal with tendered votes, challenged votes, etc., - Overall supervision on the poll process.
- if BU or CU is found defective during actual poll, complete set of BU+CU+VVPAT will be changed. Mock poll by casting one vote to all candidate including NOTA will be done with the new set. Part-I and Part-V of the Presiding Officer's Report will be prepared and Part-V will be given to Sector Officer.
- If VVPAT does not work properly, replace VVPAT only, no mock poll is required in this case. Part-V of the Presiding Officer's Report will be prepared and given to Sector Officer.

SITUATIONS AT THE POLLING STATIONS

- Voting by blind and infirm: under **R 49N COER 1961** companion not less than 18 years allowed by the PrO after obtaining a declaration about the secrecy of the vote.
- Allowing proxy voters on behalf of CSV.
- Electors deciding not to vote
- Tendered votes – **R 49 P COER 1961** (**Form 17B** to be filled up and signed by the voter, tendered ballot paper to be issued and envelop shall be duly sealed)
- Voters not allowed to vote on account of non-maintenance of secrecy – **R 49 M COER 1961** (PrO will disallow the voter to vote, take back voter slip issued, write 'Not allowed to vote- voting procedure violated' in **Form 17A**)
- In the case of an ASD voter, PRO will verify his or her identity, LTI has to be taken in addition to the signature in **Form 17A**

REPORTS OF PRESIDING OFFICER

1) PRESIDING OFFICER' S DIARY

–The PRO is required to record the relevant events/proceedings as & when they occur in a diary as per format given in Annexure 7 of Handbook for PrO (September 2022)

2) VISIT SHEET

–Fill up the information in the visit sheet as & when any officers visit the Polling Station

3) ADDITIONAL REPORT by PrO (16 points) is to be submitted to the observer/RO [Annexure 12 of Handbook for PrO (September 2022)]

4) FILLING UP OF REGISTER OF VOTERS- Form 17A

NB: The PrO should make required entries in the relevant columns of the above 4 documents at regular intervals and complete them before departure.

Reports about progress of polling and till return of polling parties

- Mock Poll, Commencement of Poll
- Hourly/ two-hourly reports from Commencement of Poll till return of all polling parties, polling percentage, any other incidents during Poll.
- EVM replacement reports
- Media monitoring and expenditure monitoring reports
- All complaints received have to be resolved and the report sent/uploaded on the poll day itself.
- Reports by RO- 1 PM (poll day), 7PM (poll day)and 7AM (following day) [as per Annexure 44 of RO Handbook, August, 2022]
- Other statutory reports under **S 57, 58,58A RPA 1951** (format at Annexure 41, 42, 43 of RO Handbook, August, 2022)

Part – D

PrO perspective - poll day; close of poll, sealing of poll material/documents; deposit at Reception centre

CLOSE OF POLL

Close of poll protocol and SOPs:

- At the close of the poll, the PRO to press the close button of CU to record the votes polled in the machine in the PO diary, record the details in accounts of votes
- Complete the Declaration at close of poll
- complete/fill up **Form 17C** and take the signatures of polling agents present at the close of poll
- Supply one attested copy of **Form 17C** to the polling agents.
- Proper sealing of the EVM & VVPATs and election papers after the close of the poll.
- Transport the EVM & VVPATs and election papers to the designated collection centre
- The transport route is to be communicated to the contesting candidates in advance.

N.B: Signatures of polling agents to be taken during sealing of election papers and on Address Tags etc. of CU, BU and VVPATs

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**CLOSE OF POLL - PREPARATION OF ACCOUNT OF VOTE – Sealing of documents/materials –
contd.**

The EVM & VVPATs & the covers containing:-

1. The accounts of votes recorded & paper seal account (**Form-17C**). Prepare in duplicate (1 for RO for scrutiny & 2nd for keeping with EVM & VVPATs)
2. The declarations by the presiding officers to be kept with EVM
3. The PrO's Diary along with visit sheet.
4. PrO's additional report (16 points).
5. Voter turnout report in PS05
6. PrO's report (I to V as applicable)

NB: PrO to note that the colour coding and sealing must comply with the colour coding and other instructions as the same color coding will have direct bearing on the ease of deposit at the Reception center. Therefore, any mix-up may result in misplacement of vital documents

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CLOSE OF POLL - PREPARATION OF Statutory covers – Contd.

STATUTORY COVERS-GREEN

- The covers mentioned below should be sealed & kept in a large packet super scribed as “STATUTORY COVERS”:-
 - 1) Marked copy of electoral roll
 - 2) Register of voters
 - 3) Voter’ s slip
 - 4) Used Tendered Ballot Papers & list in **Form-17 B**
 - 5) Unused Tendered Ballot Papers

N.B. The Statutory Forms & covers will be of GREEN color.

Contd..

CLOSE OF POLL - PREPARATION OF non- Statutory covers – Contd.

- **SECOND PACKET** should contain the following covers & should be super scribed as “NON-STATUTORY COVERS”:-
 - 1) Copies of electoral rolls other than marked copies
 - 2) Appointment letters of polling agents in **Form-10**
 - 3) Election Duty Certificate (EDC) in **Form-12 B**
 - 4) List of challenged votes in **Form-14**
 - 5) List of blind & infirm electors in **Form-14A** & declaration of the companion
 - 6) Declaration obtained from electors as to their age & the list thereof
 - 7) The receipt book & Cash, if any challenged votes
 - 8) Unused & damaged paper seals, special tags
 - 9) Unused voter slips.

N.B. The Non-Statutory Forms & covers will be of YELLOW color.

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CLOSE OF POLL – sealing of other documents/materials – Contd.

- **Third Packet (BROWN)** – H.B. of Presiding Officer, indelible ink, inkpad, metal seal, arrow cross mark, ink holding pot, etc.
- **Fourth Packet (BLUE)** – All remaining articles
- All Video Recordings clips to be handed over at Reception Centre
- Micro Observers reports have to be received at one counter specially monitored by Observer.

Part – E

Arrangements and Layout of RECEPTION
CENTER – General guidelines – RO/ARO

Arrangements and Layout of RECEPTION CENTER – General guidelines – RO/ARO

Arrangements/logistics at Reception Centre:

- Proper arrangements for receiving of polled materials from polling personnel, strong room security, parking of vehicles, and designated shaded area for rest/ filling of incomplete reports if any, drinking water, electricity, power backup, computer with internet, telephone connections, toilet for males & females, medical facilities and stalls for food, transport arrangements to go back etc. has to be ensured.
- Adequate number of counters with reception parties be kept ready before the polling party arrives.
- Special instruction to check receipt of EVM & VVPATs and all relevant documents, particularly PrO Diary duly filled, additional reports, account in [Form 17C](#) and Register of voters.

Contd..

Arrangements and Layout of RECEPTION CENTER – General guidelines – RO/ARO – contd.

Special arrangements regarding PS with high voter turnout, violent incidents, complaints etc.:

- Separate special counter for receiving EVM & VVPATs and election materials from polling stations where serious complaints were received, where polling percentages is higher, PS where significant events such as violent incidents have taken place, where EVM/VVPAT replacement has been done, PS where mock poll was conducted in the absence of polling agent/candidate.
- Separate counter to receive the reports of Micro Observer
- Observer/RO should be present at this counter.
- The PrO and Sector Officers including Micro Observers if any are relieved only after proper verification of documents, checking of seals of EVM & VVPATs, and discussion with RO, and Observer.

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Arrangements and Layout of RECEPTION CENTER – General guidelines – RO/ARO - safe custody of EVM & VVPAT after receiving – contd.

Arrangements in strong room, safe custody of EVMs & VVPATs:

- Preparation of a strong room should be done well in advance.
- Strong rooms should have proper security, 24x7 CAPF (2 layered security, 24x7 control room with CCTV cameras etc.)
- The floor of the strong room has squares indicating the PS numbers.
- The EVM & VVPATs received from polling parties are to be stacked in polling station-wise squares in the strong room. CU above BU,VVPAT with one copy of **Form 17C** and PrO declaration of each PS.(Duplicate copy of **Form 17C** to be kept with RO)

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Arrangements and Layout of RECEPTION CENTER – General guidelines – RO/ARO - safe custody of EVM & VVPAT after receiving – contd.

Sealing and Security arrangements for strong rooms

- After all EVM & VVPATs and other materials are safely placed, the strong room is to be sealed in the presence of contesting candidates / their election agents and Observer.
- All contesting candidates can depute their representatives to keep a close watch on the security arrangements of the strong room. They are to be allowed to stay outside the outermost perimeter in rainproof tents, built officially, with proper shade, drinking water, toilets, CCTV etc.
- A Gazetted officer along with a police officer should be put on duty round the clock for monitoring the security arrangements of strong room.
- RO/DEO to check the strong room (Inner perimeter only) log book every day.
- In case after the strong room is sealed, it needs to be reopened, the matter is to be informed to the contesting candidates and records are to be maintained in the prescribed logbook.
- Strong room keys to be kept securely with authorized person as per ECI Instructions

Part – F

Re-poll and Adjournment of Poll -
ECI/CEO/Observer/RO/PrO

Scrutiny of polled documents

SOP for scrutiny of Form 17A and other documents:

- Scrutiny of Form 17A and other documents
- RO, Observer, Candidates/agents to remain present.
- Cross Checking of entries in Form 17A, PrO Diary, Control Room complaint register, Marked copy of roll, Form 17C, visit sheet, Micro Observer report if any and videos/photos of poll process
- Scrutiny process to be Videographed.

RE-POLL (S 58 RPA 1951)

- Re-poll in PSs as per ECI orders
- EVM & VVPATs and polling parties for re-poll to be drawn from reserve list.
- Re-poll EVM sticker to be pasted on EVMs used for re-poll
- At the counting, it should be ensured that only the EVMs used for re-poll are taken up for counting in respect of the re-poll PSs

Fresh poll/Re-poll

- **S 58 RPA 1951-** any EVM VVPAT unlawfully taken away or accidentally / intentionally destroyed/ lost/ damaged/ tampered with or any error or irregularity in procedure likely to vitiate the Poll.
- **S 58A RPA 1951-** if booth capturing has taken place
- The RO to report the matter to ECI, CEO, appropriate authority and decision taken by ECI.

Adjournment of poll

- On death of candidate of a Recognized National or State (that State only) Political Party in the state before Poll- **S 52 of RPA 1951** (adjournment of poll)
- **S 57 of RPA 1951** (adjournment of poll) – due to violence, natural calamities or any other sufficient reason.
- The RO to report the matter to ECI , CEO , appropriate authority. ECI will formally fix the date, hours for recommencement of Poll. Candidates and voters of such PS will be informed and Poll will be completed

OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES - Corrupt practices, electoral offences

- Study the provisions relating to corrupt practices and electoral offences under **RPA 1951**
- Corrupt practices listed under **S 123 RPA 1951**
- Electoral Offences under **RPA 1951 and Indian Penal code-171-A to 171-I**

Part – G

Simultaneous Poll - ECI/CEO/Observer/RO/PrO

Simultaneous Poll - EVM/VVPATs arrangements

- Separate sets of EVM/VVPATs are to be used – one set for Lok Sabha election and the other set for Assembly election.
- Separate database will have to be maintained for Assembly Elections.
- First randomization is to be made among FLC Ok machines. - no need to make separate allocation for training and awareness as these will be taken care of by parliamentary EVMs.
- **Identification Stickers** -In order to clearly identify and recognize which set of EVMs belongs to Lok Sabha election and which to State Assembly Election, it is absolutely necessary to fix/paste distinct Identification Stickers on the Control Units and Ballot Units and carrying cases as well.

(a) Colour of stickers

Lok Sabha Election -The colour of the Identification Sticker shall be WHITE (same colour as that of Ballot Paper).

Legislative Assembly Election -The colour of the Identification Sticker shall be PINK (same colour as that of Ballot Paper).

(b) Size of adhesive stickers shall be 6 cm x 3 cm

Contd..

Simultaneous Poll - EVM/VVPATs arrangements – Action by RO - contd.

Preparation of EVM/VVPATs at different places

- Preparation of EVM/VVPATs for Assembly Election and Lok Sabha Election shall be done in separate rooms or halls and shall NOT be done in the same hall or room.
- All candidates of the Assembly Elections as well as Lok Sabha Elections are to be intimated well in advance about the schedule and layout of commissioning plan.

Contd..

Simultaneous Poll - EVM/VVPATs arrangements – Action by RO - contd.

Fixing of Identification Sticker and address tag

- The first task of the RO is to paste the Identification Sticker on each Unit. After pasting this sticker, he should proceed to set up the Control Unit for the required number of candidates, seal the Battery Section of the control unit and put an address tag, thereon.
- The Units prepared shall be kept in their carrying cases and the corresponding coloured Identification Stickers and address tags shall be pasted on the carrying cases also.
- An identification sticker (similar to the one used on the control unit, ballot unit and VVPAT) shall be fixed/pasted on the top of the carrying cases of Control Unit, Ballot Unit and VVPAT.

Contd..

Simultaneous Poll - EVM/VVPATs arrangements

– Action by RO - contd.

Storage for units prepared for Assembly Election

- Units prepared be stored in different rooms or halls with a board outside to indicate that Assembly EVMs are stored, therein.
- Similar board to be displayed for Assembly Segments of PC

Register for allocation EVM / VVPATs

- Separate records should be maintained after due preparation of the EVMs / VVPATS.

Training of Polling Personnel

- During the training classes for the Presiding and Polling Officers, the difference between the EVM & VVPAT for each Election shall be explained in detail, so that they do not have any doubt.

Simultaneous Elections - Election materials for PS

Assessment of requirement of materials to be made immediately particularly for those materials which will be exclusively used for Assembly Elections like Voters Slips, Identification stickers, labels of voting compartments , stationeries of postal ballot etc.

Voters' Register

- For the conduct of poll for both the elections, only **ONE** Voter's Register is to be used. The signatures of voters for both the elections shall be taken in the same register.

Voter's Slip

- After signing the Voter's Register, each voter is to be supplied with TWO Voter's slips. The Voter's Slip for Lok Sabha election be printed on WHITE paper and that for Assembly election on PINK paper.

Marked copy Electoral Roll

- There is no change in the number of working copies of the electoral roll to be supplied to each polling station. The polling officer in charge of marked copy of the electoral roll will maintain only ONE marked copy of the electoral roll for both the elections.

Simultaneous Elections - Other arrangements – contd.

Ballot Paper

- Requirement to be assessed- for service ballot, postal ballot, EVM ballot, tendered ballot and Braille ballot.
- Matter of despatch of postal ballot to be co ordinated with the DEO.

Vehicle Requirement

- To be made after taking due care of composition of the polling party.
- Vehicle permission for candidates by RO for the candidates. Similar provision in SUVIDHA.

Simultaneous Elections - Polling Parties

Composition:

- For the conduct of poll at simultaneous elections with the use of EVM/VVPATs -One Presiding Officer and 5 Polling Officers to be appointed for each Polling Station. Reserves have to be kept as well.

Duties:

- (a) First Polling Officer:** He will be identifying the electors and will be in charge of marked copy of the electoral roll.
- (b) Second Polling Officer:** He will be in charge of the indelible ink and voter's register.
- (c) Third Polling Officer:** He will be in charge of the Voter's Slips.
- (d) Fourth Polling Officer:** He will be in charge of the Control Unit for Lok Sabha election.
- (e) Fifth Polling Officer:** He will be in charge of the Control Unit for State Assembly Election.
- (f) Presiding Officer:** He will be over all in-charge of the polling station and supervise the smooth conduct of poll.

NB: Detailed process of voting, with variation from single election to be elaborated to the participants

Simultaneous Elections - Polling Parties – contd.

Important duties of 4th and 5th Polling Officer

- Their job is not only to simply press the Ballot Button to activate the Voting Machine, they have to ensure that each voter votes in his/her turn in the exact serial order as given in the Voter's Slip.
- They have also to keep a constant watch to ensure that when they direct any voter to go and vote, the voter goes into the correct Voting Compartment and votes accordingly.
- If any voter appears to be unsure of where to go and what to do after he has been allowed to vote, it is the duty of these two polling officers to ensure that the voter follows the correct procedure.
- During the first hour of poll when there is usually a lot of rush, the officers should keep their cool and see that the voting proceeds smoothly.

NB: They should check the total number of votes as per EVMs of PC and AC, voters register and voters slips of PC and AC from time to time.

Simultaneous Elections - Close of Poll

Checking identity stickers – Sealing - placing in the correct carrying case

- The Presiding Officer should ensure that the carrying cases of all the units have identity stickers of the concerned elections prominently pasted on the outside. He should also ensure that the ballot units, control units and VVPATs are placed only in their respective carrying cases with the election identity label firmly pasted.
- Presiding Officer should ensure that all the sealed Units and election records are duly handed over to the Returning Officer, at the reception centre, as per the prescribed procedure.

Contd..

Simultaneous Elections - Close of Poll - Account of Votes recorded – contd.

- After the close of poll, the Presiding Officer is required to prepare, under **R 49S COER 1961**, an account of votes recorded in the voting machine. Such account shall be prepared in **Part-I of Form-17C**. This should be prepared in duplicate. It should be noted for that accounts of votes in **Part-I of Form- 17C** shall be prepared **separately** for the Parliamentary and Assembly elections.
- Copies of **Form-17C** as prepared by him are to be given for the assembly constituency to the polling agents of the candidates contesting the assembly poll and copies of the account prepared for parliamentary constituency are to be given to the polling agents of the candidate contesting the parliamentary poll.
- Copies of the account should be furnished to every polling agent present even without his asking for it.

Simultaneous Elections - Storage Place

- BUs, CUs and VVPATs are to be stored in separate Strong room for Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections. In no case, BUs, CUs and VVPATs shall be kept separately.
- However, outside all such rooms, a notice be pasted indicating the particulars of Election and Serial Numbers of Polling Stations where the EVMs stored inside were used for taking poll.
- All relevant records and the EVMs/ VVPATs used for Lok Sabha election and State Legislative Assembly election shall be stored in separate rooms. They shall, under no circumstances stored in the same room.

Simultaneous Elections - Counting of votes

Arrangement of tables- Counting Agents – compilation of result - arrangement of separate VCBs:

In case the counting of votes is to be done for both Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly elections, then half of the counting tables in a counting hall shall be allotted for counting of votes from polled EVMs used for Lok Sabha poll and half of the tables for Assembly poll.

- Appointment of counting agents has to be made separately for LS and LA elections.
- Separate set up to be made for preparation and compilation of results.
- The arrangement of separate VCBs for mandatory counting of VVPAT paper slips for both LS and LA elections has to be made within the counting hall.