



## **DRAFT TALKING POINTS**

### **NBC Radio**

### **The Limited Preferential Voting (LPV) System and Procedure and Voting Process**

**16 June 2022**

#### **Opening Remarks**

- ◆ Thank you for inviting me to your program.
- ◆ In this session, I will discuss the voting system used during our national election, which is called LPV or the Limited Preferential Voting System.
- ◆ I will explain how LPV works, the important things that the voters should remember so that their votes do not become invalid because of errors or failure to follow the correct procedure for voting.
- ◆ Finally, I will also explain how ballots are scrutinized and votes are counted under the LPV system.
- ◆ I will also discuss what people can expect at the polling booth and how men and women will have their own voting lines at the polling booths.

#### **The LPV System**

- ◆ The LPV system is just one of the many voting systems used by other democratic countries in the world.
- ◆ The Electoral Law prescribed the use of the LPV in the election of the members of the National Parliament starting in the 2007 national election.
- ◆ The LPV system allows voters to choose up to three (3) of their preferred candidates if there are more than three candidates in an election.
- ◆ The LPV system has advantages over other voting systems.
- ◆ It ensures that a successful candidate has the support of the majority of the voters (50% + 1). For example, if there are six (6) candidates and there are

100 voters in an election, the successful candidate is the one who will receive at least 51 out of the possible 100 votes.

- ◆ In the previous voting system, which is called “first-past-the-post”, a candidate may win even if they receive less than 50% of the votes as long as they get the highest number, or the plurality, of votes.
- ◆ Because the voters are given more than one choice under the LPV system, their votes have more value.
- ◆ The LPV system also promotes unity among candidates, parties, clans and tribal groups because the LPV system requires candidates to have broader community support.

### **How to Vote under the LPV System**

- ◆ If there are three or more candidates, voters must indicate their three preferred candidates on their ballots when casting their vote. If they do not vote for three candidates, their ballots become informal and their votes will not be counted during scrutiny.
- ◆ This means the voters must choose the three candidates they are voting for by writing on their ballots:
  1. the candidate number **or** name of their first choice beside number 1
  2. the candidate number **or** name of their second choice beside number 2
  3. the candidate number **or** name of their third choice beside number 3.
- ◆ Voters must remember that when they cast their votes, they are also indicating their preferences. These preferences are indicated by the numbers “1”, “2” and “3” where:
  - The number “1” indicates the first preference;
  - The number “2” indicates the second preference and;
  - The number “3” indicates the third preference.
- ◆ All the votes are important, but the preferences indicated by the voters on their ballots effect the way the votes are counted during the scrutiny.

- ◆ The ballot paper must also be initialled on the back by the Presiding Officer or Assistant Presiding Officer. If it is not initialled, it will be informal and not be counted. Scrutineers are encouraged to ensure ballots are duly signed.
- ◆ Formal ballot papers are also referred to as admitted or allowable ballot papers.

### **How are votes counted during scrutiny?**

- ◆ After end of polling in the electorate, all the ballot boxes are brought to a counting centre.
- ◆ All the ballot boxes will be opened one at a time to identify which among ballot papers are formal (valid) and informal (invalid) according to the rules set by the Electoral Law. Only the ballot papers that are declared formal will be counted.
- ◆ Once the total numbers of formal and informal ballot papers is determined, the first preference votes are then allocated to each individual candidate.
- ◆ When the allocation of first preference votes is completed, then counting of the first preference vote for each candidate takes place.
- ◆ If no candidate secures an absolute majority of the first preference votes, then the candidate with the lowest (least) number of votes is “eliminated” from the count. This process continues until a candidate obtains an absolute majority. This process is called the Distribution of Preferences.
- ◆ Any candidate who receives an absolute majority at any stage of the count, is declared elected after the consent of the Electoral Commission.

### **The Polling Period**

- ◆ I will now discuss some key parts of the 2022 National Election.
- ◆ The PNGEC prepares and publishes the polling schedule, which includes the dates and places where polling will take place. It also identifies the assigned polling villages for each polling place.
- ◆ PNGEC will soon gazette the polling schedule. Listen out for more information about the polling schedule.
- ◆ The polling schedule has been developed in close collaboration with the provincial election offices, and in consultation the Royal Papua New Guinea

Constabulary, taking into account movement, logistics, and security considerations.

- ◆ The polling schedule has been designed to ensure that all enrolled electors are given the opportunity to vote in the election.
- ◆ For the 2022 National Election, the polling period is from 2 to 22 July.
- ◆ There will be no polling on Saturdays or Sundays, and the first day of voting will be Monday, 4 July.
- ◆ There will be one-day polling, on different days, in the seven Highlands provinces, in NCD, in Madang Urban LLG, and in Lae Open Electorate.
- ◆ Almost everywhere else, there will be multi-day polling according to the polling schedule. So polling teams will move from one polling place to another in accordance with the polling schedule. The materials will be safely secured overnight in coordination with the security agencies.
- ◆ Check your local area for more information about when the polling team will be in your location.

### **Polling Administration**

- ◆ For the 2022 National Election, polling will take place at over 11,000 polling booths across over 9,600 polling places.
- ◆ Polling places are typically central locations in a city, town, or village, such as schools, markets, church yards, or other well-known locations.
- ◆ Polling opens from 8:00am and closes at 6:00pm.
- ◆ Each polling booth will have one voting stream (or “lane”) for men, and one voting stream for women, in the same booth. There will be separate voting compartments for male and female voters.
- ◆ This also means the certified lists of voters will be printed by gender with a Gender Tally Sheet to record the number of men and women who voted.
- ◆ In the voting queues, priority will be given to people with disabilities, pregnant women, and elderly persons, who are allowed to go to the front of their gender queues to enter the polling booth.

## Voting steps

- ◆ After entering the polling booth, there are five broad steps to vote:
  1. The Poll Clerk will check the voter's name in the certified list of voters. Voters are not required to present an ID to vote, however their name must appear in the certified electoral roll. The Poll Clerk will also apply indelible ink to the small finger of voters' left hand to prevent multiple voting.
  2. Each voter will receive two ballot papers: **BLUE** for provincial electorates, and **PINK** for open electorates.
    - The Presiding Officer is responsible for initialling the back of the ballot papers for male voters.
    - The Assistant Presiding Officer is responsible for initialling the back of the ballot papers for female voters.
  3. Voters will go to the voting compartments of their gender and vote freely and in secret. As I said earlier, to mark the ballot correctly, voters will:
    - Write the candidate number **or** name of their first choice candidate beside number 1.
    - Write the candidate number **or** name of their second choice candidate beside number 2.
    - Write the candidate number **or** name of their third choice candidate beside number 3.

Voters will fold their ballot papers separately so their vote cannot be seen.

  4. Voters will then cast their ballots. There will be two separate ballot boxes:
    - The **BLUE** provincial electorate ballot paper **must be** deposited in provincial ballot box.
    - The **PINK** open electorate ballot paper **must be** deposited in the open provincial ballot box.
  5. After voting, voters should follow the signs to leave the polling booth.

- ◆ Voters can ask the polling team any questions related to voting.

- ◆ If you need assistance to mark your ballot, you are allowed to bring someone with you to assist you, but it cannot be a candidate or scrutineer. The Presiding Officer can also assist you if required.
- ◆ If during polling, a voter makes a mistake on their ballot they can return the SPOILT ballot paper to the Presiding Officer or Assistant Presiding Officer to get a replacement. The SPOILT ballot paper will be taken from the voter and the word “SPOILT” will be written across the front and this will be recorded in the relevant forms of the Journal.
- ◆ Remember, voting is secret. You do not have to tell anyone how you voted and no one will be able to know how you voted either.

### **Closing the Polling Booth**

- ◆ Polling closes at 6:00 pm.
- ◆ If there is still a queue at 6:00pm, all voters in the queue are brought into the polling booth and are allowed to cast a vote. If in an outside area, a Polling Official will stand behind the last person in the queue to identify the last person who can vote – no one can join the queue after 6:00pm.
- ◆ After polling closes, the Presiding Officer will fill in the relevant forms in the Presiding Officer Journal.
- ◆ After a polling team has completed all its assigned polling, the Presiding Officer will securely transport the materials to the counting centres.

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