



**PRESS BRIEFING SPEECH BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION ON THE FINALISATION OF
VOTER TRANSFERS AND CONDUCT OF INSPECTION AND
VERIFICATION OF THE VOTERS' REGISTER FOR THE 2025
GENERAL ELECTION**

8th April 2025
Lilongwe

- Commissioners of the Malawi Electoral Commission
- The Chief Elections Officer, Mr Andrew Mpesi
- Deputy Chief Elections Officer, Mr Andrew Kamkwala and all staff from MEC
- Members of the Press
- Ladies and gentlemen

Greetings

On behalf of the Malawi Electoral Commission, I extend sincere gratitude to all of you members of the press present here and to all Malawians who are watching or listening right now. The Commission today wishes to give an update to the nation on three things:

- (i) Transfer of voters
- (ii) Preparation for inspection and verification of the Voters' Register exercise
- (iii) Revised electoral calendar for the 2025 General Election

Transfer of Voters.

The Malawi Electoral Commission wishes to report that it successfully conducted the nationwide voter transfer exercise in accordance with the provisions of the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Elections Act, 2023.

The voter transfer exercise was undertaken pursuant to Section 8 of the Act, which provides that:

(1) A person eligible to register shall be registered as a voter in the area where he or she ordinarily resides or was born or is employed or carries on business.

(2) A person may, before the verification of the voters' register by the Commission, transfer to another registration centre, and upon such transfer, his or her name shall be deleted from the roll of the registered voters at the original registration centre.

The objective of the voter transfer exercise was to facilitate the relocation of voters to registration centres that reflect their current or anticipated place of residence, employment, or business. The law makes this a necessary activity to ensure that all voters are able to cast their ballots with ease on polling day, which is 16th September 2025.

The exercise was implemented in three phases, each lasting three days.

The eligibility criteria for transferring voter registration remained consistent with Section 8(1) of the Act. Voters were only permitted to transfer to centres in areas where they are ordinarily resident, employed, carry on business, or were born. Transfers to centres without a qualifying connection were not permitted.

All voter transfers were conducted in person at the preferred registration centre, which is the location where the voter intends to vote. Transfers by proxy were not permitted. Fingerprint verification was used to confirm the identity of the voter prior to transfer. Upon successful transfer, voters were issued a new voter registration certificate indicating their updated registration centre.

In line with established practice, political parties and aspiring independent candidates were entitled to place representatives to monitor the voter transfer exercise at all centres.

Voter Transfer Participation

The Commission wishes to report that during the exercise, a total of **60,761** voters participated in the exercise by having their voter transfer applications processed by the Commission to registration centres that reflect their current or anticipated place of residence, employment, or business. This means that the names of these voters will not appear in the voters registers for the centres where they initially registered but will appear in the voters registers for the centres where they have been transferred to.

Voter Transfer Challenges

Further, the Commission wishes to report that the exercise was not without challenges. On 14th March 2025, the Commission, issued a press statement informing the public that in the course of the voter transfer process, it received reports that some voter transfer applications had failed to be processed. The initial reason cited was that the records of the applicants could not be found in the preliminary voters' register.

You will recall further that in the statement, the Commission—

- (1) assured all registered voters that their records are intact, and that no record of duly registered voter was lost or missing;
- (2) made an undertaking that it would conduct an inquiry into the failed voter transfers and that it would rectify the problem to allow

all those that presented themselves for transfers to have their respective transfer applications completed.

The Commission instituted a voter registration data quality assurance exercise to obtain assurance on the completeness of the voter registration data before making the voters register available for the inspection by stakeholders.

The Commission, therefore, wishes to report that—

- (i) A total of **6,288 registration centres** out of the total **6,331** registration centres recorded zero variance. This is an indication that the manually compiled voter registration statistics using the End-of-Phase Cumulative Voter Registration Statistics Slips matched the voter registration data in the database and the preliminary voter register published by the Commission. Therefore, there are no issues that require further action in these centres.
- (ii) Only **43 registration centres** recorded variances. These 43 centres recorded a cumulative positive variance of **2,563 voter records**. A positive variance arises when the manually compiled voter registration statistics—based on the End-of-Phase Cumulative Voter Registration Statistics Slips—exceed the voter registration data stored in the database and published by the Commission.
- (iii) This variance occurred because the 2,563 records were not uploaded onto the database and, therefore, did not form part of the preliminary voter registration statistics published by the Commission.
- (iv) A **total of 19 Cases** were reported during the voter transfer exercise where voter transfer requests could not be processed at

the centre due to the fact that their records could not be found in the system. We wish to inform the nation that all these records were traced and confirmed to be available.

- (v) All Form 1A booklets used for storage of duplicate voter registration certificates during all phases of voter registration were accounted for.

On 2nd April 2025, the Commission held a meeting and in view of the above findings, made the following resolutions—

Regarding the positive variance of 2,563 in the 43 centres:

The Commission authorized ICT Directorate to upload the identified Exported Data Files bearing the outstanding records onto the Election Management System database.

Preliminary Figures for Registered Voters

In view of the mentioned upload, the Commission reports that the preliminary total number of valid voter registration records is **7,202,756**. These figures are still preliminary and are subject to change as a result of the voter inspection and verification.

Regarding failed transfers

To assist voters who attempted to transfer but failed, the Commission will conduct a targeted voter transfer exercise to facilitate the transfers of those that failed to have their transfers processed by directly contacting and inviting them to their respective intended centers to have the transfer effected. This will only target the 19 cases that were recorded. This exercise will be carried out on 15th April 2025 and all political parties will

be provided with further details regarding the centers where this exercise will take place.

Voter Inspection and Verification

As mandated by the law, the Commission is now planning for the inspection and verification of the voters' register. In this process, the Commission will make the voters' register available for public inspection. This is to satisfy the requirement of sections 20 and 21 of the Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Elections Act, 2023 to provide electoral stakeholders—including voters, political parties, and observers—with the opportunity to review and verify all entries in the Register.

Sections 20 and 21 read as follows—

20. A voter's register shall be available for inspection during working hours at the offices of the Commission or at any place as the Commission may determine.

21.—(1) The Commission shall open for inspection the voters register, for purposes of verifying the entries therein, by voters, representatives of political parties, independent candidates and observers.

(2)The Commission shall cause to be posted a copy of the voters register for each registration centre at the registration centre where the registration took place for a period not exceeding seven days, as the Commission may determine.

It should be emphasized that the process is an opportunity to individual voters to audit and verify that their names are in the voters' register at the centre where they registered or transferred to.

This is also an opportunity for political parties to audit and verify through their party representatives that the list of voters at each and every registration centres are accurate and that all voters registered at the respective centres have been accounted for in the printed voters' registers.

The Commission will place prescribed forms at all the registration centres to be used by individual voters and political parties to lodge any complaint relating to the entries in the voters' register at that level. The Commission is mandated by law to determine every complaint or appeal relating to the registration of voters before the polling day. Therefore, the process should be fully utilized by individual voters, political parties, independent candidates and observers to bring to the attention of the Commission all observed irregularities with the voters' register.

The Commission will publish a formal notice of commencement of the period for the inspection and verification of the voters' register which will include the places and manner in which the voters register will be made available. However, at the minimum, the voters register will be available at all registration centres where registration of voters took place.

Election Calendar

Lastly, the Commission wishes to announce that the following are the major activities that will be implemented up to the commencement of the official campaign period.

Date(s)	Activity
15th April 2025	Targeted Voter Transfers
13th – 15th May 2025	1st Phase: Inspection of the Voters' Register and Verification of Names
21st – 23rd May 2025	2nd Phase: Inspection of the Voters' Register and Verification of Names
29th – 31st May 2025	3rd Phase: Inspection of the Voters' Register and Verification of Names
9th June 2025	Stakeholders' consultative meeting with political parties on nomination system and processes
10th June 2025	Consultative meeting with political parties' ICT experts on nomination system and processes
10th – 22nd June 2025	Collection of Local Government Elections nomination forms
18th – 19th June 2025	Pre-examination of Local Government Elections nomination papers
20th – 22nd June 2025	Presentation of Local Government Elections nomination papers
10th June – 5th July 2025	Collection of Parliamentary Elections nomination forms
29th – 30th June 2025	Commission meeting to consider and approve Local Government candidates
29th – 30th June 2025	Pre-examination of Parliamentary Elections nomination papers
1st – 5th July 2025	Presentation of Parliamentary Elections nomination papers
10th June – 5th July 2025	Collection of Presidential Elections nomination forms

29th – 30th June 2025	Pre-examination of Presidential Elections nomination papers
1st – 5th July 2025	Presentation of Presidential Elections nomination papers
9th – 11th July 2025	Commission meetings to consider and approve Parliamentary and Presidential candidates
12th – 14th July 2025	Publication of duly approved and nominated Parliamentary and Presidential candidates
14th July 2025	Commencement of official campaign period for the 2025 General Election

NECOF Meeting

Further to the calendar that has been presented, the Commission will be convening a NECOF meeting on dates to be advised. During this meeting the Commission will give a much broader report on the state of preparedness for the 2025 General Election.

Thank you very much for listening and watching