



# PAPUA NEW GUINEA CORRECTIONAL SERVICE



Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023

**Honorable Allan Bird, MP**  
Chairman & Governor for East Sepik  
Special Parliamentary Committee on 2022 General Elections  
National Parliament  
WAIGANI  
National Capital District

Dear Chairman and your Esteem Committee Members.

I am humbled with this privilege to present Correctional Service's operational perspective into the conduct of the Papua New Guinea General Election conducted in 2022.

This report is not based on legal discussions, nor, it is structured according to current policies and current standard procedures to conduct national general elections in Papua New Guinea.

This report is solely based on the experiences and lessons learnt, through informed views from Correctional Service Team and Co-Team Leaders who took part in the NGE 2022.

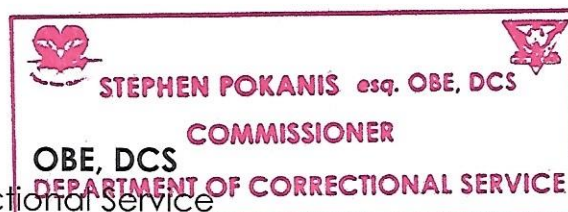
I pray that good leaders shall one day become great leaders and visionaries, who, with the zeal of God placed inside them, will fight for and will lead for the greater good of our people.

Your esteemed Committee is on this position to help.

I, pray that our loving and eternal God Yahweh will give you and your esteemed Committee, the wisdom, to help re-build our people with the best systems to guide future elections.

Yours faithfully,

  
**STEPHEN POKANIS,**  
Commissioner – Correctional Service



## A. Introduction and Background

1. Papua New Guinea Correctional Service has participated in many National General Elections. Members of Correctional Service play a small but a significant role, together with Members of Police and Defence Force, to bring confidence and respect to our people that they are secured and should conduct their democratic rights to vote for their candidates, without fear and without intimidation.
2. Members of Discipline Forces in which Correctional Officers are part to, have continued to support our Government and our people to provide security to our people, protect the election processes and to ensure that elections are conducted in a peace-full manner.
3. Having participated in many general elections in the past, the National General Elections (NATEL) 2022 Security Operation was very unique and more challenging.
4. While planning and consultation to prepare for the national general election was ongoing for 12 months, the actual facilitation of the NGE 2022 was done in haste. It was done in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.
5. These challenges were due to a lot of factors; external factors and internal factors.

### A1. External Factors:

1. There was no National and Sub-National Election Planning and Steering Committee in place to plan for every election in the first 4 years that requires such structured and organized planning and preparation, leading to election eve.
2. IDEC was not active in the first 4 years prior to the eve of the NGE.
3. Joint Intelligence Committee/Group was not in place.
4. National Intelligence Organization was not at the capacity to bring real-time intelligence to the IDEC Committee for assessment and for actions-to-take in the six months prior to the NGE 2022.
5. A One-Election Budget was not done for all leading Agencies at National and Sub-National Level, Instead, every agency had to work-out its own budget. There was no proper diligent checks carried out to critique the budget and agree on high-budget items/critical budget by urgency and by priority.
6. The Electoral Commission was working in silo, and trying to run the election on its own without considering the support from the Discipline Forces.
7. Logistics and mobilization for big-ticket-items were not in place because there was no National Election Plan in place to put equitable budget for leading agencies to prepare themselves from Year 1, 2, 3, 4, and Year 5 which is the election time.

8. Absence of Joint-Election Preparation Training and Mobilization
9. No approved and validated Common Roll to guide eligible voters to exercise their democratic rights to vote for their preferred Member of Parliament.

## **A2. Internal Factors**

1. Election planning at CS level was dis-jointed with more-than one line of instructions, and from different leading agencies and coordinating team creating confusion.
2. Poor budget allocated to CS for election expenses.
3. Poor facilitation and delay on deployment.
4. Unprepared logistics because no money available to secure vehicles, communications, accommodations, food-rations, others.
5. Officers were not physically and mentally prepared to participate in election duties.
6. Logistics and mobility resources not available to support the Officers on election duties.
7. Liabilities and risks anticipated were not covered by insurance, or, by ready-available health facilities, including evacuation.
8. Serious liabilities leading to demise of Officers on election duties not covered.

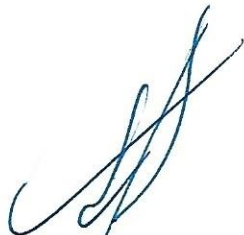
## **B. PARTICIPATION OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS TOGETHER WITH POLICE, ELECTORAL COMMISSION, DEFENCE FORCE, PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND OTHERS.**

1. Correctional Service deployed 614 Officers during the National General Election 2022.
2. Correctional Service received 21 percent (K14.6 million) of the initial overall estimated budget request of K54 million.
3. About 614 Correctional Officers were deployed in all provinces as polling contingent, to work with Police, Electoral Commission, and Provincial Administration, while intelligence officers and Quick Response Force (QRF) of 116 were deployed under the request of Commissioner of Police to Highlands Province, to work with Police, Defence Force, Electoral Commission, and Provincial Administrations.
4. The polling contingent in respective provinces where the Correctional Institutions are (Provinces) are operational assisted the Electoral Commission and the Provincial Police Commands to deliver security operations. The officers attached at CS Training College were deployed to Gulf Province to assist the Police, Electoral Commission and Provincial Administration

5. The Polling Contingent deployed operated during the polling period and in some provinces such as Central, they were involved in the counting period as well upon request from the Provincial Police Command and the Electoral Commission.
6. For the first time, Correctional Service increased the Quick Response Force operation to a company strength consisting of four (4) platoons deployed to Highlands Region and two (2) composite sections deployed to Lae Metropolitan Command, Morobe Province.
7. Overall, CS deployed 306 members as polling contingent, 150 QRF, 16 intelligence officers and 28 made up of the Officers from Correctional Service Headquarter to support the CS Officers deployed during the NGE 2022.
8. Together with all the leading agencies, CS is satisfied to have delivered its key taskings for the NATEL 2022 Security Operations, and contributed to achieve the mission of Free, Fair and Safe National General Election 2022 through:
  - Providing strong security to Key Government Installation in Highlands Region (QRF).
  - Supported the JSTF members and provide security to the polling venues (Polling Contingent).
  - Assist in information and intelligence gathering (Intelligence Unit).

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Elections are conducted every 5 Years in Papua New Guinea and that legal, policy, planning, budget, coordination and monitoring should not be done on ad-hoc basis, but should be formalized to assist IDEC, Electoral Commission, and Agencies taking the lead in leading and coordinating the national and provincial election.
2. Preparation for National Election must commence 6 months after the formation of Government.
3. National and Sub-National Election Steering and Budget Committee should be established to plan, prepare and to make budget available to fund the election – a One-Budget Election. This Committee should be in place by Year 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (Election Eve).
4. Intelligence gathering must be carried out to identify current and emerging challenges that will jeopardize the election period. This will assist the Discipline Forces to mitigate possible and probable risks and take actions to manage and reduce these risks.



5. A sunset clause legislation should be enacted by Parliament and should be activated at any National, or, Provincial Election of Leaders. This piece of legislation should govern the government and conduct of Discipline Force Members who come under the command of the Commissioner of Police
6. Refer to Additional Points raised in "External" and "Internal" which should be taken as recommendations for consideration by the Parliamentary Committee.

#### D. CONCLUSION

1. A complete review should look into the laws and the practices over the past elections, with the focus on improving and strengthening governance systems to help Citizens to participate actively in future elections without fear and without threats of intimidation by those who want to sabotage the election for their own greed and gain.
2. We as fellow Papua New Guineans must defend our DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS and to exercise these rights in a proper and right manner. Not addressing this will lead to condemnations from our own Sons and Daughters and our future generations, condemning us, for creating hell for them to fight over each other.

