



*Elections & Boundaries Commission
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21st February 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Elections and Boundaries Commission (Commission) hereby informs that the Government of Belize has provided funding for the redistricting exercise. As a result, the Commission has appointed a task force to set the groundwork, advise, and provide a detailed report with recommendations to the Commission on the redivision of electoral boundaries. The task force held its inaugural meeting on 21st February 2022.

The members of the task force consist of persons with technical expertise in the areas of geographical information systems, legal studies, statistical analysis, and electoral management. These members are:

- ❖ Josephine Tamai, Chief Elections Officer, Elections and Boundaries Department – Chairperson
- ❖ Paula Hender, Crown Counsel, Attorney General’s Ministry – Member
- ❖ Shirley Humes, Principal Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining – Member
- ❖ Alfred Cal, Senior Lands Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining – Member
- ❖ Martin Aldana, Statistical Analyst, Private Sector – Member

Terms of Reference for the task force are as follows:

1. Review definition, limitations, and legal interpretation of the Belize Constitution and the Representation of the People Act for the purpose of dividing Belize into electoral divisions.
2. Review geographical and statistical limitations and population density relating to re-divisioning.
3. Review in accordance with Section 90 of the Constitution for electoral divisions as presently defined to have as nearly as may be, an equal number of persons eligible to vote.
4. Set allowable deviation threshold (tolerance limit) for each electoral division.

5. Maintain, as far as possible, electoral divisions within district administrative boundaries.
6. Include complete communities, within polling areas, in areas where possible.
7. Utilize geographic and physical features such as roads, rivers, crests of hills, park and/or estate boundaries as the relevant features to define the limits of electoral boundaries and polling areas.
8. All boundaries are to be contiguous that is, next to or touching each other and where this is not possible, utilize natural boundaries, physical features, and geographic referencing.
9. Keep adjustments to the minimum: transfer adjoining polling areas; or part thereof from the division with excess to the division with deficiency.
10. If a polling area is to be moved from one electoral division to another, complete villages and communities within the polling areas must be maintained, where possible.
11. Increase/decrease electoral divisions in areas where necessary.
12. Prepare detailed written description of electoral divisions to be incorporated into the First Schedule of the ROPA in accordance with Section 17 thereof.
13. Recommendations in respect of impediments and challenges including but not limited to:
 - a. Adjusting the existing boundaries and
 - b. Adjusting the existing numbers of electoral divisions
14. Provide detailed written report(s) to the Elections and Boundaries Commission for consideration.
15. Any other recommendations which the task force may deem necessary to ensure equal representation.

Upon receipt of recommendations from the task force, the Commission, in accordance with Section 90 of the Belize Constitution, will make proposals to the National Assembly for boundary redistricting. The public is hereby assured that the Commission has placed high priority on this most critical exercise which is expected to be concluded in the year 2023.

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