



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: THE INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION MEDIA COMMISSION

What is the Media Commission and what is its role in elections?

Established on 4 December 2013, in accord with Article 61 of the Electoral Law, the Media Commission is a temporary body and an arm of Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC). Its role is to supervise fair and impartial reporting and broadcasting of the electoral campaigns. Specifically, the Media Commission enforces IEC regulations to guide the media in their coverage of campaigns, communicating these regulations to the media; monitoring media coverage of electoral candidates; and investigating complaints regarding violations of regulations. In this way, the Media Commission enhances the transparency and credibility of elections through equitable media coverage for all candidates.

Where can Media Commission regulations be accessed?

All Media Commission regulations are available to the public and can be accessed via the IEC website.

How are violations of media regulation brought to the attention of the Media Commission?

Every 15 days, throughout the duration of the Presidential and Provincial Council campaign periods respectively, media must report to the Commission with regard to their coverage of activities; messages and images of candidates; broadcast/publication volume; nature of coverage; and the amount of money that candidates have spent to broadcast/publish their campaign messages.

The Media Commission also receives substantive information from an external third-party media monitoring initiative that observes all national and regional media reporting – including radio, television and print publications. Employing methodology based on internationally recognized standards, the media monitoring initiative seeks to ensure equitable access of candidates to media, accuracy and impartiality of reporting, and compliance of media to relevant laws and regulations. The results of media monitoring are compiled in regular statistical reports, detailing the allocation of time and space to candidates and their teams – including gender disaggregated comparisons; compliance with legal framework governing media coverage; and the type of treatment received by candidates (for example, whether reporting was biased or unbiased).

According to the Electoral Law (Article 61), Afghan citizens may also lodge complaints directly to the Media Commission, provided that they do so within 72 hours of a breach of law or regulation having occurred. Official complaints should be put forward in writing, and complaint forms may be accessed at the IEC website or at Provincial IEC offices.

What happens in the case that Media Commission regulations are transgressed?

If a complaint is found to be valid, the Media Commission may issue a warning (requesting the correction of misinformation); impose a fine; or refer the case to the relevant authority for trial and prosecution.

How is the Media Commission structured and how are Commissioners selected?

The Media Commission consists of five members, who are Afghan citizens and media professionals with substantive higher education in the fields of journalism, law and literature; and who will have no



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:
THE INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION MEDIA COMMISSION**

affiliation with political parties, while serving in this capacity. They are appointed on a temporary basis by the IEC, based on a short list prepared by a selection committee (comprising three IEC representatives and two representatives of journalists' associations and the Ministry of Information and Culture). The Chairperson is chosen through an internal election amongst the five members.

To whom is the Media Commission accountable?

All Media Commission activities are supervised by the IEC and organized through the IEC Secretariat. Media Commission activities will be concluded 45 days after the announcement of final election results. The Media Commission is then obliged to provide the IEC with a final report of all its activities, and all of its affairs will be transferred to the IEC.