

These are excerpts from the "Handbook for Calculators." It was prepared -- presumably by the Electoral Commission -- for use by the persons who were employed to count the ballots at the central counting hall, in the general election of 1996.

GENERAL ELECTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS TO CALCULATORS

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I. DECLARATION OF SECRECY

1. Every person entrusted with a duty in connection with the counting of the votes, must take before one of the Electoral Commissioners the Oath of Office. This oath which includes a declaration of secrecy must be taken before assuming duties.
2. The Commission may authorise any one or more of its members or any other person or persons appointed by it to do anything on its behalf in connection with the receipt and storage of ballot boxes and the counting

and transfer of votes.

3. Anything done by virtue of the authority referred to in paragraph 2 shall be deemed to have been done by the Commission.

II. GENERAL

4. Calculators must be conversant with the General Elections Act (1991), particularly the Counting procedures, as well as with the instructions issued to Supervisors and Counting Assistants. Calculators are reminded that they are the nerve centre of the organisation dealing with the counting of the votes as all instructions emanate from them and they are in a position to control and check the flow of work.

III. PREPARATORY WORK

5. Calculators shall ensure that the forms to be used during the counting of the votes pretyped with the names of the candidates contesting the elections are available in their tray i.e.:

- (a) Form G E 42 -- six copies for each electoral division;
- (b) Form G Ec 43 -- twenty copies for each electoral division;
- (c) Form G Eo 44 -- twenty copies for each electoral division;
- (d) Form G E 45 -- twenty copies for each electoral division;
- (e) Form G Ec 49 -- six copies for each electoral division.

6. In addition, Calculators shall ensure that one set of labels containing polling place number and four sets of labels for each Electoral Division containing names of candidates contesting the elections are available.

IV. SETTING UP OF COUNTING HALL

7. The counting of the ballot papers will be carried out by Counting Assistants and Supervisors working round the clock in three shifts. Each shift will consist of 13 teams.

8. The Sketch at Appendix 1 gives an idea of the layout of the hall. In addition to sorting racks and Supervisors' stacks, there will be Calculator's tables and a Commissioner's table in the hall, and another table and a sufficient number of chairs in the pen reserved for discussing invalid ballot papers with candidates and their agents.

9. Calculators shall ensure that there is a result board for the Electoral Division assigned to them. Each board shall contain the Electoral Division number, the words "Count No...." and the names of the candidates contesting the elections.

10. Calculators shall ensure that each pigeon hole in the Counting Assistants' sorting racks has a tray and each tray has the name of a candidate inserted in the name plate. In addition there shall be three further trays, one labeled "Dubjuzi", one "Invalidi" and another "Mhux trasferibbli". All the pigeon holes not in use must be

blocked by a shutter provided for the purpose. On the sorting racks, there must be enough shutters so that the Counting Assistants will be able to block the pigeon holes of candidates elected or otherwise excluded from the poll.

11. The pigeon holes at the Supervisors' stacks shall be labeled with the polling place number of the Electoral Divisions) under their supervision. In addition Calculators shall have a set of labels bearing the candidates' names, a sufficient number of forms G.E. 41, 46, 47 and 48, a roll of adhesive tape, labels G.E. 51, 52 and 53, paper bands, red tape, Forms G.E. 42, 43, 44 and 45 pre-typed, a set of rubber stamps giving count numbers, and stationery. On each of the Counting Assistants' sorting racks there shall be provided two dampers and two india-rubber fingers.

12. The Calculator's table shall contain sorting trays labeled with the Electoral Division number. Each tray shall contain:

1. Forms mentioned in section III above;
2. A file entitled "Ballot Paper Account"; 3. A file entitled "Statement of Voting Documents";
4. A file entitled "Counting Papers and Result Sheets";
5. A file entitled "Miscellaneous Papers and Process Verbal".

Calculators are to note that all forms, result boards, and stacks' {labels mentioned above are to be arranged in the same order as that shown on the ballot paper.

13. Every file shall have the Electoral Division number clearly marked.

14. Calculators must ensure that calculating machines are brought to the Counting Hall before counting commences.

15. The Commission's table shall contain blank stationery and rubber stamps for marking invalid and non-transferable ballot papers.

16. Calculators shall ensure that every Supervisor visits the Counting Hall prior to polling day.

V. ATTENDANCE

17. Hours of attendance shall be as follows:

Shift "A" from 9.30 p.m. to 5.00 a.m.

Shift "B" from 4.30 a.m to 1.00 p.m.

Shift "C" from 12.30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

18. Calculators must be at the Counting Hall at least fifteen minutes before they are due to start work.

19. On Saturday, the day of the poll, Calculators on Shift "A" shall be at the Counting Hall at 9.30 p.m.

VI. RECEIPT OF BALLOT BOXES

20. The receipt of Ballot Boxes shall be carried out in two stages

(a) the receipt of Ballot Boxes at the Reconciliation Hall where the checking of the Ballot Paper Account is to be carried out.

(b) the conveyance of the Ballot Boxes to the Counting Hall and of other Documents to the Documents Room.

21. There shall be a number of tables for the receipt of ballot boxes, documents and packets by the Counting Assistants detailed for that duty. There shall also be a number of persons engaged in the conveyance of the Ballot Boxes to the Strongroom and of Parcels A & B and Voting Documents Boxes to the Documents Room.

22. Counting Assistants will be handed the Ballot Paper Account (G.E. 26 and G.E. 26A), the Statement of Voting Documents (G.E. 25), as well as the Reconciliation Statement forms (G.E. 59/60). Counting Assistants shall check the arithmetic correctness of the first two forms. Another Assistant, after ensuring that the seals on both Parcels A & B are intact, shall pass both parcels to the person detailed to take charge of them.

23. As soon as it has been ascertained to the Commission's satisfaction that both statements are arithmetically correct, the seals on the Ballot Box are inspected and the boxes are conveyed to the Strongroom.

24. (a) Representatives of Political Parties are being given full facilities in order to ascertain to their satisfaction the correctness of all documents.

(b) Moreover, Political Parties have also the right to demand that the Commissioners open packets containing Voting Documents, in order to ascertain that the number of Voting Documents in it tallies with the Ballot Paper Account resumed by the Assistant Commissioners. Such a demand shall ONLY be dealt with as directed by the Electoral Commissioners.

25. Two supervisors shall be present during the receipt of the Ballot Boxes at the Counting Hall and shall observe the stacking of the Ballot Boxes in the Strongroom. There shall be representatives from each political party to supervise the conveyance and stacking of Ballot Boxes. These representatives shall be given facilities to inspect the seals on the Ballot Boxes.

26. A Supervisor shall be responsible for the stacking of the Ballot Boxes while the other shall ensure the smooth flow, inward and outward of the staff engaged in the conveyance of the Ballot Boxes and shall supervise the efficiency of all the other work described hereunder. The Supervisor in charge of the Strongroom shall ascertain that the boxes are stacked as indicated by the Electoral Commissioners

27. When all Ballot Boxes have been received the Supervisor in charge of the Strongroom shall await further instructions from the Electoral Commissioners. The other Supervisors, will personally check all entries on Form G.E. 40 and cause a total to be worked out for each Electoral Division as well as an overall total. They shall then sort out all statements by Electoral Division and prepare Forms G.E. 40(a) and (b).

VII. ISSUE OF BALLOT BOXES

28. There will be persons responsible for carrying Ballot Boxes from the strongroom to the team opening the boxes and later for removing the empty boxes to another room.
29. The Supervisor in charge of the strongroom shall, together with an Electoral Commissioner, start issuing Ballot Boxes at about 11.30 p.m. or as directed by the Electoral Commission.
30. One of the office attendants detailed with the task of carrying Ballot Boxes will have a list of all Ballot Box numbers and the Supervisor shall strike out every Ballot Box number issued.
31. The Supervisor shall ensure that all Ballot Paper Accounts, Statements of Voting Documents, Keys of Ballot Boxes and Forms 40(a) and (b) have been passed to the pertinent Supervisors before the actual opening of Ballot Boxes.

VII. OPENING OF BALLOT BOXES

32. The Supervisor in charge of each Electoral Division will be responsible for the opening of all ballot boxes for the relevant division. The number of ballot boxes in each division is as follows -

Division	No. of Ballot Boxes
1	44 + 2
2	42 + 2
3	41 + 2
4	43 + 2
5	43 + 2
6	46 + 2
7	44 + 2
8	41 + 2
9	41 + 2
10	43 + 2
11	43 + 2
12	45 + 2
13	47 + 2

33. As soon as the Counting Assistants have checked the contents of a ballot box the Supervisor shall deliver the Ballot Paper Account and the statement of Voting Documents to the Calculator who shall personally check each Ballot Paper Account against the relative entry in Form G.E. 40, ascertain that it is signed by at least 2 Counting Assistants and file it in the pertinent file in polling place order. The statement of Voting Documents will also be filed in its pertinent file in polling place order. Empty Ballot Boxes shall be immediately taken out of the counting hall and stored in another room.

IX. RESULT OF FIRST COUNT

34. As soon as all ballot papers for an Electoral Division are sorted, the Calculator shall receive the results of the first count from the Supervisors on Form G.E. 420 On receipt of this document the "Total Votes Posted" must be checked against Form G.E. 40, and only if these figures agree, shall the Calculator proceed to ascertain the quota as directed hereunder.

X. QUOTA

35. The quota shall be worked at the foot of Form G.E. 42, which also contains the formula, namely the total number of valid votes cast, divided by the number of seats to be filled increased by one and adding One to the result, disregarding any decimal remainder.

36. The result given on Form G.E. 42 shall be copied on the Result Sheet G.E. 49. Every result shall be copied out and communicated to the person in charge of the Result Board.

37. If at the end of any count, the number of votes credited to a candidate is equal to or greater than the quota, the candidate shall be declared elected.

38. The Calculator should refer to Appendix 2 which contains a set of forms worked out on the basis of the example given in the 13th Schedule of the General Elections Act. It is pointed out that the worked example is based on six vacancies, hence the quota is calculated by dividing the valid votes cast by 7. In actual fact, the number of seats to be filled is 5 and hence to ascertain the quota the number of valid votes are to be divided by 6.

XI. TRANSFER OF SURPLUS AFTER THE FIRST COUNT

39. Having ascertained the quota, the Calculator shall make out Form GE 43 for each candidate (if any) who has been credited with a number of votes in excess of the quota. Each form shall be clearly marked with the count number. Care must be taken that the largest surplus (i.e., the number of votes by which the total number of votes credited to any candidate exceeds the quota) shall be dealt with at the second count, the second largest at the third count and so on. If two or more candidates have an equal surplus, the Calculator shall ask an Electoral Commissioner to decide by lot which surplus shall be dealt with first.

40. On receipt of Form GE 43, the Supervisor will cause all the bundles of the elected candidate to be sorted out for next preference and shall insert the result on the same form and submit it to the Calculator.

41. The first operation on Form G.E. 43 by the Calculator is the working out of the multiplying factor. This is done by dividing the surplus by the number of transferable papers.

42. Having ascertained the multiplying factor, each result shown on Form G.E. 43 shall be multiplied by such a factor noting the whole number in column 3 and the decimal part (to four significant figures) in column 4. If, owing to the existence of such decimal parts (to four significant figures), the number of papers to be transferred is less than the surplus, so many of the decimal parts (to four significant figures) taken in the order of their magnitude, beginning with the largest, as are necessary to make the total number of papers to be transferred equal to the surplus, shall be reckoned as of the value of unity, and the remaining decimal parts (to

four significant figures) shall be ignored. (Reference to the worked example in Appendix 2 is suggested). If two or more decimal parts (to four significant figures) are of equal magnitude, that decimal part (to four significant figures) shall be deemed to be the largest which rises from the largest sub-parcel, and if the sub-parcels in question are equal in size, the decimal part (to four decimal figures) credited to the candidate with the greatest number of votes at the first count at which the candidates in question had an unequal number of votes shall be deemed to be the largest. When the number of votes credited to such candidates were equal at all counts the Calculator shall ask one of the Electoral Commissioners to determine by lot which decimal part shall be deemed to be the largest.

43. If the total number of transferable papers is not greater than the surplus, the Calculator should not work out the multiplying factor but shall insert in the last column of G.E. 43 the same figures as in the second column inserted by the Supervisor, making up the balance of the surplus by non-transferable papers (Vide count 7 of the worked example).

44. The figures in the last column of G.E. 43 constitute the number of papers to be transferred. The result should be inserted in the Result Sheet and the state of the poll ascertained. Having done this, the Calculator is in a position to fill in Form G.E. 45 which shall then be sent to the Supervisor. Form G.E. 45 will later be returned to the Calculator with the state of the poll confirmed.

XII. FURTHER COUNTS(transfer of surplus with original and transferred votes)

45. If at the end of any further count the number of votes credited to any candidate is greater than the quota, the surplus shall be transferred bearing in mind that:

(a) A surplus which arises from any count shall be transferred before a surplus which arises from a subsequent count;

(b) if more than one candidate has a surplus arising from the same count, the largest surplus shall first be dealt with; and

(c) if two or more candidates have each an equal surplus arising from the same count, the surplus of the candidate with the greatest number of votes at the first count at which the candidate in question had an unequal number of votes shall first be dealt with. When the number of votes credited to such candidates were equal at all counts an Electoral Commissioner must decide by lot which surplus will be first dealt with.

46. The procedure to be adopted is identical with that described in the preceding paragraph with the difference that the Calculator shall take great care in filling the top part of Form G.E. 43 by indicating that only the papers of the last sub-parcel received shall be examined. The number of such papers can be ascertained from the Result Sheet which shows clearly the number of papers last transferred (vide Counts 4 and 7 in worked out example). Decimal parts (to four significant figures) after applying the multiplying factor shall be dealt with in the manner described in paragraph 42.

XII. FURTHER COUNTS (exclusion of candidates)

47. If at the end of any count no candidate has a surplus and one or more vacancies remain unfilled, the Calculator shall instruct the Supervisor on Form G.E. 44 to exclude from the poll the candidate credited with the lowest number of votes. As soon as the sorting operation is ended, the Supervisor will return to the

Calculator Form G.E. 44 which will also include the state of the poll. The Calculator shall insert the result on the Result Sheet and confirm the state of the poll. Form G.E. 44 is retained for filing.

48. If the total number of votes of two or more candidates lowest on the poll is less than the number of votes credited to the next highest candidate the Calculator shall fill up Form G.E. 44 stamped with the count number, instructing the Supervisor to exclude those candidates at the same count

49 If, when a candidate has to be excluded, two or more candidates have each the same number of votes and are lowest on the poll, the candidate with the lowest number of votes at the first count at which the candidates in question had an unequal number of votes shall be excluded (vide count 6 in worked example) and when the number of votes credited to those candidates were equal at all counts, the Calculator shall ask an Electoral Commissioner to decide by lot which candidate shall be excluded

XIV. LAST VACANCIES

50. If at the end of any count the number of elected candidates is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, no further transfer of votes shall be made.

51. If on the exclusion of a candidate or candidates the number of the then continuing candidates is equal to one more than the number of vacancies to be filled, the continuing candidates, except the one having the lowest number of votes, shall thereupon be elected and no further transfer of votes shall be made. If at this stage there are two or more candidates who have each the same number of votes and are lowest on the poll, the candidate or candidates with the highest number of votes at the first count at which the candidates in question had an unequal number of votes shall be declared elected. When the number of votes credited to those candidates were equal at all counts, the Calculator shall ask an Electoral Commissioner to decide by lot which candidate shall be excluded.

XV. END OF COUNTING

52. The Calculator must ensure, when the counting is terminated, that he has the following files for each Electoral Division -

1. A file containing all ballot paper accounts filed by polling place order;
2. A file containing all statements of Voting Documents filed by polling place order;
3. A file containing Forms G.E. 2, 43, 44, 45 and 49 filed in order of the count number

53. The Calculator must prepare for the signature of the Electoral Commissioners six copies of the Official Result Sheet to be utilised as follows :

Copy for insertion in file mentioned in paragraph 52 (3) above;

Copy for the President of Malta

Copy for the Prime Minister

Copy for the Permanent Secretary, OPM

Copy for the Director of Information

Copy to be retained in the parcel containing ballot papers

54. When the Supervisors have finished packing their Ballot Papers, the Calculator shall ensure that all such parcels, together with the Assistant Electoral Commissioners, parcels A and a copy of the Result Sheet duly signed by all the Electoral Commissioners are all made into one parcel duly endorsed with the electoral division number and the date of the election. This parcel will be sealed and signed by the Calculator. The endorsement will be countersigned by the Chief Electoral Commissioner who will affix his official seal.

XVI. GENERAL

55. The identification tag issued by the Commission must be worn at all times.

56. Calculators, Supervisors and Counting Assistants are not allowed to bring ANYTHING into the Hall e.g. mobile phones, transmitting apparatus, radios, bags, food, paper, books, pointed instruments, etc. Calculators must ensure strict compliance with this rule.

57. A canteen service will be available
