

FIJIAN ELECTIONS OFFICE

59 - 63 High Street, Toorak
P. O. Box 2528, Government Buildings, Suva

Phone : 3316 225
Fax : 3316 026

www.feo.org.fj

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Fijian Elections Office commences destruction of 2018 ballot papers

The Fijian Elections Office, this morning, began the destruction process of approximately nine tons of sensitive materials, including ballot papers, from the 2018 General Election.

With a commitment to fostering environmentally friendly practices, the FEO will be recycling ballot papers as was done for the 2014 General Election materials.

Supervisor of Elections Mohammed Saneem said the destruction of sensitive materials would be done over nine days and in the presence of Police officers.

“Under Section 153 of the Electoral Act, 2014, the Fijian Elections Office, under the direction of the Supervisor of Elections, may destroy the records in relation to an election after one year,’ Mr Saneem said.

“This process ensures that the FEO complies with legal requirements to efficiently and correctly destroy all valid, invalid, spoiled and discarded ballot papers with other materials that are available in the ballot boxes.”

He added FEO will be keeping a Destruction Register to record the documents that will be destroyed.

The pulping of all ballot papers will be done at the South Pacific Waste Recyclers plant in Laucala Beach.

“We are conscious that there are around a million sheets of paper involved in the destruction process and that is why we have again opted to engage an environmentally friendly procedure to destroy these records,” Mr Saneem said.

“Similar procedures are also practised internationally by other Election Management Bodies to destroy sensitive materials after an election, especially paper.”

Regarding the security of the warehouse and the sensitivity of materials and ballot papers, Mr Saneem said all necessary measures have been taken to ensure that the property and items are well secured.

He also emphasized that social distancing protocols are being followed throughout the nine-day process in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The team working at the warehouse will be provided with protective masks, hand gloves and sanitizers to ensure that preventative measures are strictly adhered to,” Mr Saneem said.

Political Party representatives from the National Federation Party, the Social Democratic Liberal Party and the Fiji Labour Party were also present this morning and observed the processes being carried out.

-Ends-

*Please forward all media queries to the FEO Communications team at
communications@feo.org.fj*