AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' GUILD (INDIA)

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER, CEC ELECTION 2026

EC/ATCGI/CEC-ELEC-2026/133 Date: 20/04/2026

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR VOTE COUNTING MANAGEMENT

1. SECURITY PROTOCOLS

The sanctity and credibility of the electoral process shall be upheld through stringent security measures governing the handling, transportation, and custody of all election materials:

1.1 Receipt and Documentation

All ballot packets received from stations & voters on leave shall be duly recorded in the designated *Receipt Register* immediately upon arrival at the CATC, Prayagraj .All required measures are already in place.

1.2 Secured Transportation

Movement of election materials from the strong room to the counting hall shall be conducted strictly under the supervision of designated Counting Officers.

1.3 Integrity of Sealed Envelopes/Boxes

Under no circumstances shall the sealed ballot packets be tampered with or opened prior to the officially authorized time of counting.

1.4 Strong Room Management

Access to strong rooms shall be strictly controlled and restricted to authorized personnel only. A robust double-lock system shall be implemented, with keys held by two independent Election Officers to ensure accountability.

1.5 Surveillance and Monitoring

All election materials shall remain under continuous surveillance through CCTV systems to prevent any unauthorized access or interference.

20/4/26

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2. INFRASTRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Branch Secretary, ATC Guild, CATC shall:

- Obtain formal authorization from the Principal, CATC for utilization of premises as the designated counting centre.
- Ensure availability of facilities beyond office hours, if required.
- Coordinate with Electrical, Civil, and Housekeeping departments to guarantee uninterrupted logistical support.
- Arrange for backup power supply (generators) to ensure seamless continuity of counting operations under all circumstances.
- Coordinate with GM (ATM), CATC for requisite manpower for counting process.

3. COUNTING AGENTS

- Candidates intending to nominate **Counting Agents (to monitor the process)** must submit their details at least **four (04) days prior** to the counting date for approval by the Election Commission.
- At no point more than four **(04) Counting Agents** shall be permitted inside the counting hall.
- All Counting Agents must maintain a silence and observe the counting process from a designated place without disturbing the counting process. Any irregularities may be brought to the notice of Election Commissioner.

4. RESTRICTIONS ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND RECORDING

- The use of **cameras, video equipment, or any form of photography**, including CCTV, is strictly prohibited inside the counting hall.
- No individual, except authorized Officers on duty, shall be permitted to carry **mobile phones** within the counting premises.

20/4/26

5. SIGNATURE AND VERIFICATION PROTOCOL

- A designated register shall be maintained to record the presence of Counting Agents.

6. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

Entry into the counting hall shall be strictly limited to the following categories:

- Counting Officers
- Officers authorized by the Election Commission
- Approved Counting Agents

No unauthorized individual shall be permitted entry under any circumstances.

7. COUNTING CENTRE MANAGEMENT

7.1 Layout and Arrangement

- The counting process shall be conducted in a designated counting hall comprising one or more counting desks.
- Each counting desk shall have a unique identification number.
- Adequate spacing shall be ensured between desks to eliminate any possibility of material exchange or interference.

7.2 Pre-Counting Protocol

- Prior to commencement, the Election Commission shall ensure that only authorized personnel are present within the counting hall.

7.3 Opening of Ballot Materials

- The sealed envelopes/ballot boxes shall be opened strictly at the **notified date and time**, in the presence of:
  - Election Commissioner
  - Counting Officers
  - Approved Counting Agents

7.4 Transparency and Integrity

- The entire process shall be conducted in a transparent, orderly, and strictly regulated manner to uphold the highest standards of electoral integrity and institutional credibility.

8. COMPLIANCE

Any breach of the above procedures shall be viewed with utmost seriousness and may attract disciplinary and/or legal action as deemed appropriate by the Election Commission

20/4/26

(Ankur Singh)
Chief Election Commissioner
ATC GUILD (I), CATC Prayagraj