

13 OFFICIAL COUNT OF SPECIAL VOTES

13.1 HOW ALLOWED VOTES ARE COUNTED

All special votes that are allowed (that is, valid and either 'Qualified' or 'Party Vote only' qualified) are included in the count as follows:

Count	Valid – Qualified	Valid – Party Vote Only Qualified
Party	Yes	Yes
Candidate		No

13.2 SPECIAL VOTE COUNTS

The special vote processing team will provide the official count team with four counts:

- Advance
- Election Day
- Overseas
- Party Vote Only (includes ordinary party vote only ballot papers)

Each of these counts will have the total number of envelopes contained written on the top of the ballot box.

Take care to keep each count separate. Results for each of these counts will be entered into EMS separately.

13.3 TIMING

Time	Count	EMS entry
Tuesday 7pm (E+10)	The remainder of all special votes received before 7pm.	By 8pm, Tuesday E+10

The count can be completed, as long as you are satisfied that no further "on time" votes will arrive before 7pm on Tuesday E+10. To be satisfied, you will need to check with National Office that all overseas votes have been forwarded to you. Overseas votes can arrive in National Office at any time as the post can take time to get to New Zealand.

13.4 PREPARING THE COUNTS

Who	Administrative Assistant
What	<p>Prepare for the count of special votes by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparing the forms and envelopes required for each count. 2. Counting the sealed declaration/envelopes. 3. Separating the envelopes from the declarations and depositing them into ballot boxes.
When	Before undertaking the official count of special votes

13.5 INSTRUCTIONS: PREPARE FORMS AND ENVELOPES FOR EACH COUNT

For each count:

1	Print the Headquarters Official Count Worksheet (EMS81-WKSHEET) from EMS.
2	Print a set of preliminary count marker cards (EMS11-MARKER) from EMS (you will only need the Party marker cards).
3	Print a set of official count marker cards (EMS81-MARKER) from EMS.
4	<p>Prepare an Envelope P3 Parliamentary Ordinary Counted Votes and Marker Cards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross out the word 'Ordinary' and write 'Special' instead.
5	Prepare an Envelope P4 (Parliamentary Reconciliations and Results).

13.6 EXTRACTING SPECIAL VOTES FROM ENVELOPES

Who	Administrative Assistant and Returning Officer
What	<p>Before a special vote can be counted, the Ballot Paper must be extracted from the envelope. This must be done away from the declarations in order to preserve the secrecy of vote.</p> <p>The “ballot and/or voting papers” side of each special vote envelope should contain the special vote ballot paper. Instructions are provided below if this is not the case.</p> <p>The extraction and count should be conducted by a team of staff familiar with the official count process.</p>
When	Monday E+9 and Tuesday E+10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Count the Party Vote Only count last • Do not dispose of voting envelopes until the official count is complete. 	

13.7 INSTRUCTIONS – EXTRACT BALLOT PAPER

One count at a time:

1	<p>Get the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballot boxes for this count. • Print the EMS81-WKSHEET for the count.
2	Write the total number of Ballot Papers for the count on the EMS81-WKSHEET in the “Number of ballot papers issued to voters” space
3	Remove all of the envelopes from the ballot box (check the ballot box thoroughly to ensure you have all the ballot papers).
4	Open the ballot paper side of each envelope and extract the contents.
5	<p>Follow the below procedures if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ballot paper side of the envelope is empty (Section 13.8) 2. The ballot paper is for the wrong electorate (Section 13.9) 3. The declaration is in the ballot paper side of the envelope (Section 13.10) 4. There is more than one ballot paper in the ballot paper side of the envelope. (Section 13.11) <p>If none of the above apply, go to Step 6.</p>
6	Put the ballot papers in the ballot box.

13.8 INSTRUCTIONS – BALLOT PAPER SIDE OF ENVELOPE IS EMPTY

If there is no ballot paper in the ballot paper side of the envelope:

- 1 Write on the envelope, "Ballot paper missing".
- 2 Give the envelope to the Special Vote Processing Manager, who will:
 1. Find the declaration that corresponds to the envelope (using ERSA, search on the declaration number in the 'Edit Special Votes' screen to find the batch number).
 2. Have the Returning Officer write on the declaration with the "Disallowed by Returning Officer – Ballot paper missing" and sign the declaration.
 3. In the 'Edit Special Votes' screen find the voter and click on the declaration number. In the 'Edit Special Vote' dialog box select 'No ballot paper enclosed' and click update.
 4. Place the declaration/envelope back into its batch in the E206-Clerk box.

13.9 INSTRUCTIONS – BALLOT PAPER FOR WRONG ELECTORATE

If a ballot paper for another electorate is found in any count **other** than the Party Vote Only count:

- 1 Find the declaration that corresponds to the envelope (using ERSA, search on the declaration number from the 'Edit Special Votes' screen to find the voter's surname).

If the declaration is made out for your electorate:

- 2 Give the declaration to the Returning Officer, who will write on the declaration, "Ballot paper issued for [electorate on ballot paper] electorate, instead of [your electorate] as per declaration. Ballot paper counted for Party Vote Only".
- 3 RO signs the declaration.
- 4 File the declaration in E206-Clerk box 'Qualified/Party Vote Only'

Put the envelope, (containing the ballot paper) in the Party Vote Only count ballot box. Then adjust the count total on:

- PV Only ballot box
- The count the envelope came from – ballot box and EMS81-WKSHEET

Instructions continue on next page

If the declaration is made out for another electorate:

If there **is** time to forward (only to local electorates) the declaration/envelope to the other electorate:

- 6
1. Reseal the declaration and the ballot paper inside the appropriate sides of the envelope
 2. Correct the electorate name and number on the front of the envelope
 3. Enter the vote into the EMS Sent Votes screen
 4. Contact the Returning Office to say a further envelope is being forwarded to them
 5. Send the envelope to the appropriate electorate.

If there is **not** time to forward the declaration to the other electorate:

- 7
1. RO writes on the declaration, "Declaration for [electorate on declaration] discovered too late to forward. Ballot paper counted for Party Vote Only"
 2. Sign the declaration
 3. File the declaration in the E206-Clerk box 'Qualified/Party Vote Only'
 4. Put the envelope, (containing the Ballot Paper) in the party Vote Only count ballot box.
 5. Then adjust the count on the:
 - PV Only ballot box
 - The count the envelope came from – ballot box and EMS81-WKSHEET

13.10 INSTRUCTIONS – DECLARATION IN BALLOT PAPER SIDE

If a declaration is found in the ballot paper side of a special vote envelope:

- 1
- Compare the declaration number with the numbers on the envelope and the ballot paper (or ballot papers – there may be more than one, as the declaration for this ballot paper should have already been separated from the envelope).

You will need to lift the black sticker on the ballot paper to do this.

For the additional declaration, and the matching ballot paper if there is one:

- 2
1. Get a fresh envelope
 2. Write the number of the declaration on the fresh envelope
 3. Seal the ballot paper (if there is one) in the ballot paper side of the envelope
 4. Staple the declaration to the front of the fresh envelope
 5. Give the Declaration/envelope to the Special Vote Processing Manager for processing

If the special vote is found to be allowed, and the count has already been completed, adjust the numbers on the EMS81-WKSHEET accordingly.

- 3
- Process any other ballot paper as if the declaration (and further ballot paper, if applicable) wasn't there.

13.11 INSTRUCTIONS – MORE THAN ONE BALLOT PAPER

If you find more than one ballot paper in one envelope:

1	Check the declaration numbers on the ballot papers against the envelope. You will need to lift the black sticker on the ballot paper to do this.
2	Check the declaration/envelope against the below table.

Situation	Action
More than one ballot paper matches the envelope of an overseas vote and the ballot papers are identical fax or email copies (i.e. an overseas duplicate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seal the extra paper in a plain envelope • Write on the envelope, "Duplicate overseas vote(s) transmitted by fax – excluded from the official count" and sign • Put the envelope in special vote filing BOX 1.
More than one ballot paper matches the envelope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seal the ballot papers back in the ballot paper side of the envelope • Find the declaration that corresponds to the envelope (using ERSA to find the voter's name) • Staple the declaration to the front of the envelope • Give to the Dual Vote Investigations team and get them to call the National Support Team.
One ballot paper matches the envelope and the other(s) doesn't	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put the matching ballot paper in the ballot box • Process the remaining papers as below.
Any other ballot paper(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check BOX 1 for any declarations missing a ballot paper • If it is found – process the declaration as normal • If it is not found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write the declaration number from the paper on a fresh envelope (use separate envelopes for more than one declaration number) ○ Seal the remaining ballot paper(s) in the envelope(s) ○ Copy the issuing point stamp information onto the fresh envelope(s) ○ Write or stamp on the envelope(s), "Disallowed – Declaration Missing" and sign ○ Enter the information on the envelope(s) into ERSA ○ Put the envelope(s) in BOX 10.

14 COUNTING THE SPECIAL VOTES

Who	Administrative Assistant
What	<p>The official count of special votes is similar, but not identical, to the official count of ordinary votes. Unlike ordinary votes, special votes have not been previously sorted and counted. Therefore special votes must first be sorted into party order, and then counted in the same way as ordinary votes. The sort process is described here. The rest of the count process is the same as for ordinary votes (see section 8).</p> <p>Party Vote Only Qualified votes are counted in the same way, except that only the party votes are counted. EMS will warn of balancing errors when the results are entered. You should ignore the warnings in this case.</p>
When	Tuesday E+10

Process one at a time

- 1 Put the preliminary count party marker cards around the table in front of the counters, in alphabetical order, anticlockwise around the table.
- 2 Put the **Party – Informal** marker card in the middle of the table.
- 3 Distribute the votes evenly amongst the counters.

Instruct counters on how to sort the Party votes:
Process the ballot papers in front of you one at a time and proceed as per the table below.

If	Then
the Party vote is for a party whose marker card is in front of you	place the ballot paper on the marker card, face up
it is for another party	place it face down to your right
the voter's intention is not clear	place it on the Party – Informal marker in the middle of the table, face up
Note: Do not put ballot papers on other counters' marker cards	

Look to your left for more ballot papers
Continue until all the ballot papers for this **Party** have been sorted.
Note: For more information on informal votes, see Chapter 19, Section 9.

- 5 Continue by following the instructions in ordinary vote counting process – starting from 'Conduct the Party Vote Count'.
Note: For the Party Vote Only count, skip Section 8.7, 9.1, and 9.2 and proceed directly to 9.3.

15 FINALISING OFFICIAL RESULTS

15.1 INTRODUCTION

You will not complete your final certificate of results until:

- Dual vote investigations (including the National Office Duplicate Check) are complete;
- Returning Officers and National Office reasonableness checks are complete;
- The final late overseas votes (sent to arrive at headquarters on Tuesday (E+10)) are processed. Some electorates may receive further smaller dispatches of votes received at National Office in the second week post-election;
- You receive clearance from National Office to certify your count. This may not be until Thursday or Friday (E+12 or 13).

15.2 NOTIFICATION BY NATIONAL OFFICE TO COMMENCE

You must not complete partial or final results certificates until instructed to do so by National Office. If you do this task before being instructed to, you will be asked to do it again.

When all Returning Officers have confirmed in EMS Task Confirmation that they have completed special vote processing, National Office will conduct reasonableness checks, including comparing EMS special vote and post-writ deletion records between electorates to identify any apparent dual votes (the “National Office Duplicate Check”). It is important that you complete special vote processing on time so that this process can be completed promptly and other Returning Officers are not delayed.

When National Office is satisfied that your results are in order, you will be instructed by E-text to certify your final results.

15.3 SIGN-OFF OF RESULTS

Each certificate must be signed by the Returning Officer and by the Justice of the Peace present while the votes were counted.

Māori electorate Returning Officers will receive results certificates from General Returning Officers and will need to sign off based on these certificates.

15.4 DECLARING THE RESULTS

The Chief Electoral Officer will formally declare the results of the official counts by publishing them in the Gazette and will make any comments required about progress and the results.

Returning officers and their staff must not make any public statements or comments to media or others about the progress of the official count or official count results.

15.5 PRINCIPLES OF CERTIFICATION

The principles of certification are that the Returning Officer who counts the votes must certify that the results entered into EMS are correct, and each Returning Officer must certify the complete and final result for their own electorate. You cannot certify the final result for your electorate until all of the results that contribute to it are finalised and certified.

15.6 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Once the individual official counts of votes from each advance voting place (AVP), voting place and special vote processing unit (including party vote only votes) are completed, the final results totals for your electorate must be certified.

The certification process involves three main steps.

Step	Who	Does what
1	National Office	Performs reasonableness and duplicate checks
2	General electorate Returning Officers	Certify official ordinary counts for Māori electorates (EMS82-MAORI)
3	All Returning Officers	Certify final official results (EMS82-FINAL)

These steps involve co-ordination with Justices of the Peace, other Returning Officers and/or National Office. It is important that all the steps are followed in order and at the right time. If you try to rush the certification process it is likely that you will have to repeat steps.

15.7 CHANGES TO A COUNT AFTER IT HAS BEEN CERTIFIED

If a change is made to any count in EMS after it has been certified, the result must be certified again. This must only be done with express permission from National Office. For votes counted in one electorate for another electorate, the result must be recertified by the Returning Officer and Justice of the Peace in both electorates.

15.8 RESOURCES

For certifying the count you will use:

- Official Count and Election Night Votes Comparison Report
- The Electorate Detail Report
- EMS82-FINAL Official Results Notification Form
- EMS82-MAORI Partial Official Results Notification for Māori Electorate Form

16 CERTIFYING PARTIAL RESULTS FOR MĀORI ELECTORATES

16.1 OVERVIEW

The result of the home General and Māori electorate counts must be certified by the General electorate Returning Officer and by the Justice of the Peace present during the count.

General electorate Returning Officers should have completed the:

- Partial official count of Māori electorate votes by Wednesday (E+4)
 - Reasonableness checking and task confirmation in EMS by noon on Thursday (E+5).
- Note:** If this deadline is missed, you will hold up other Returning Officers.

16.2 DUAL VOTES INVESTIGATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED FIRST

Because dual vote investigations may impact on the ordinary vote counts of votes, you may not be instructed to certify these counts until after all votes have been received and all dual vote investigations (including the National Office duplicate check) have been completed on Tuesday (E+10).

16.3 PROCEDURE – CERTIFY PARTIAL RESULTS FOR MĀORI ELECTORATES

The table below details instructions for the General electorate **Returning Officer** to certify the partial results for Māori electorates.

Step	Instruction
By noon on Thursday E+5	
1	Complete all Māori electorate ordinary vote counts
2	Conduct reasonableness checks, investigate any unusual results and correct any errors.
3	When you are satisfied that the results are correct, confirm that the partial official count of Māori votes is complete in EMS Task Confirmation by noon on Thursday (E+5).
When instructed by National Office	
4	Print the Partial Official Results for Māori Electorate (EMS82-MAORI) for votes taken in your electorate, for the Māori electorate.
5	Sign the certificate.
6	Have the Justice of the Peace who was present during the count sign the certificate.
7	Scan the certificate.
8	Email a copy of the certificate to the Returning Officer for the Māori electorate.
9	Attach a copy of the certificate to the appropriate task in EMS Task Confirmation.

16.4 PROCEDURE FOR CERTIFYING FINAL RESULTS

The table below details instructions for Returning Officers to finalise their counts.

Note Māori electorate Returning Officers will need to do this for both their General and Māori electorates.

Step	Instruction for certifying final results
1	Complete all ordinary vote counts.
2	Complete all dual vote investigations.
3	Complete all special vote counts.
4	Conduct reasonableness checks, investigate any unusual results and correct any errors.
5	When you are satisfied that the results are correct, confirm that your official counts are complete in EMS Task Confirmation.
6	National Office completes Duplicate Check, if they find a dual vote, you will be contacted on Wednesday morning (E+11) to discuss what needs to happen.
When instructed by National Office	
7	Print the Official Results Certificate (EMS82-FINAL) for your electorate.
8	Sign the Certificate.
9	Have the Justice of the Peace who was present during the count sign the certificate.
10	Scan the certificate.
11	Attach a copy of the certificate to the appropriate task in EMS Task Confirmation.