

Municipal

Demarcation Board

Chairperson reports

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Demarcation Board

Over the past two months the Municipal Demarcation Board has focused on the following:

- Developing a framework within which the demarcation process would occur before the 2000 elections;
- Building an institutional base for the Board; and
- Developing relationships with stakeholders and roleplayers.

This report briefly outlines key aspects of each of these areas.

Framework for demarcation

In order for municipal elections to be held around 1 November 2000, the Board has set a number of target dates for the completion of its work:

Phase 1: The Board focuses on developing policy statements on rationalising municipalities and drafts frameworks for demarcation. This will end in late June 1999.

Phase 2: Finalisation of metropolitan and district boundaries. This should be completed around 31 August 1999.

Phase 3: Finalisation of municipal boundaries. This should be completed around 31 January 2000.

Phase 4: Finalisation of ward boundaries. This must end around 31 May 2000 in order for the Independent Electoral Committee (IEC) to have enough time to prepare for the elections.

Phase 5: Finalisation of functional boundaries: health, transport, magisterial districts, etc. Discussions with departments have begun, but the actual alignment process will begin around August 1999 and will be ongoing.

These phases all run concurrently with different end-points. In addition, provision is being made for the Board to ensure its advisory roles are effectively provided for. At the same time, co-operative relationships with associated institutions (IEC, Statistics SA and National Spatial Information Framework) and all departments of government are being developed.

Policy development

The Board is presently undertaking research and policy work in the following areas:

- **Developing spatial and attribute bases.** On the spatial side, work will need to be undertaken to verify the IEC

boundaries and then develop the spatial data base to be used in the demarcation process. Additional data bases are also being developed.

- **Identifying areas of traditional rural communities**, linked also to land tenure and land restitution/claims processes.
- **Policy on factors and objectives** to be used in determining boundaries.
- **Metropolitan boundaries.** A strategic framework for assessing metropolitan and other urban conurbations is being developed in order to provide input into the Minister's process of determining nodal points.
- **District council boundaries.** A strategic framework for district councils is being developed which, for the first time, properly places the functions to be performed by district councils at the centre of the process of determining district council boundaries.
- **Cross boundary areas (CBAs).** The Board is preparing a framework for utilisation by national and provincial governments in assessing CBAs and identifying whether or not there should be cross boundary district councils/metropolitan councils or cross boundary municipalities.
- **Rationalisation of municipalities.** A framework outlining the approach of the Board to the process of rationalising municipalities is being developed.

The policy development process may be summarised as follows:

- **Development of draft frameworks.** This has already begun.
- **Presentation of draft frameworks to stakeholders and roleplayers.** A workshop is being arranged for 3 May at which the Board will present its preliminary assessments on each of the policy areas. Invited to this meeting will be: National Portfolio Sub-committee, the Minister for Local Government, MECs, SALGA, Houses of Traditional Leaders, NGOs, National Departments, IEC.
- **Development of draft frameworks.** This will be done during May 1999.
- **Publication of draft frameworks.** This will be done by early June 1999.
- **Finalisation of policy frameworks.** This will be done by early July 1999.

Ad hoc demarcations

The approach adopted by the Board to deal with requests from municipalities for demarcations is as follows:

- *Ad hoc* demarcations will only be considered if they are urgent, are minor, are for developmental reasons and are unlikely to be controversial.

- The following information must generally be provided: a map of the relevant area, a point-to-point description, if a traditional authority/magisterial district is affected, details of how it is affected, letters from affected municipalities indicating the concurrence of their councils with the proposed exclusions and/or inclusions and any other information which may be useful.

Presently, the following municipalities have requested relatively minor *ad hoc* demarcations which the Board is considering:

Rustenburg District Council
Scottburgh/Umzinto
Piet Retief
Witbank
Newcastle
Greytown
Highveld Ridge
Ashton
Balfour Representative Council
Dannhauser
Ermelo
Creighton
Greytown
Newcastle

The Board's institutional base

The Board is in the process of finalising its staff complement, with headquarters being in Pretoria.

Discussions are underway with the IEC on ensuring that a co-operative relationship is established between the Demarcation Board and the IEC. This relationship will primarily revolve around the use of the existing IEC boundary shapefiles and infrastructure for the establishment of a website, although some of the other infrastructure of the IEC (such as its communication network) might also be utilised.

The Demarcation Board has already developed information and data bases in excess of those available to the IEC which will allow the interrogation and interpretation of the factors and objectives stipulated in the Municipal Demarcation

Act (ss 24 and 25).

Municipalities have again been requested to provide the Board with all available data they may have describing the factors and objectives.

The Board is in the process of identifying between 20-40 consultants in each of the provinces who will assist the Board in acting as Investigation Committees during the demarcation process. Once the investigation process begins, teams of between 2-4 consultants will be drawn from these provincial lists and utilised for investigations.

Stakeholders and roleplayers

Very useful meetings have been held with most of the following stakeholders and roleplayers:

- National Portfolio Committee;
- Minister and officials of Department of Constitutional Development;
- MECs;
- SALGA and its affiliates;
- Houses of Traditional Leaders;
- National departments;
- Political parties in the legislatures;
- Key private sector agencies;
- Key NGOs.

In almost all cases, the stakeholders and roleplayers have agreed that they would support the process as detailed by the Board, and will not pre-empt the demarcation process by encouraging the development of demarcation options outside the agreed process.

The Board has respectfully requested all stakeholders and roleplayers not to finalise and submit any proposals for municipal demarcation before the relevant notice has been published.

The strategy envisaged by the Board will, in my view, assist in preventing unnecessary expectations and conflict, and will ensure that the demarcation process is managed in an orderly and smooth manner, in a co-operative spirit and within the limited timeframe available.

This request is all the more important given our need for a national approach to the determination of boundaries, whether it be metropolitan, district or municipal boundaries.

Ad hoc demarcations will only be considered if they are urgent, are minor, are for developmental reasons and are unlikely to be controversial.