

Election coverage by SABC

The SABC has announced its readiness to supply election and results information in 12 languages across its traditional radio and television platforms, as well as enhancing its coverage by using its online services, a mobisite and a news on-phone service for the 2011 local government elections.



"Twelve hundred SABC staff members are involved in the television and radio coverage. The public service broadcaster has identified twenty six outside broadcast points and 100 cameras will be deployed across the country. The TV production will be end-to-end digital with conversion to analogue only at the point of transmission to air.

"The organisation will have nine OB points at the IEC centres in all nine provinces, as well as a new, state of the art, HD Unit in Pretoria. It will also deploy 17 remote mobile units across South Africa and will be receiving news feeds from all 12 of its regional offices," says Kenneth Makatees, TV elections editor.

"Over the last two months, extensive election and results system training was conducted at offices across the country, to equip all staff. The news research department compiled a comprehensive election handbook for editorial staff, which will be available at the click of a mouse.

"The organisation has invested in a new digital graphic programme of the highest international standard. On-screen graphics were specially designed to complement the styling of the elections logo and the custom made studio set. Each graphic type's layout was individually designed by a production team to ensure that information is complete and easy to understand."

IEC link

The SABC's results system will be connected to the IEC's, so that results are instantaneously available. In addition to reflecting the results, as released by the IEC, the broadcaster will be able to provide comparisons with previous elections, pick up on results trends as they develop and do predictions of expected outcomes in conjunction with experts from the CSIR, using their scientific forecast model specifically developed for the elections. The results and predictions will be broadcast from Wednesday evening on all radio, TV and digital news services.

Pre-election shows

Sunday 15 May will see the last pre-election debate broadcast live from the elections centre in Pretoria. From Monday 16 May, Morning Live will be presented from the IEC centre in Pretoria. The evening Election Show (6-6.30pm) will be broadcast from Pretoria and focus on the IEC's final preparations and readiness to facilitate the 2011 local government elections.

On Tuesday 17 May, Morning Live will once more be presented from the IEC centre in Pretoria, with crossings to the Regions. The Evening Election Show (18:00 -18:30) will focus on the SABC's readiness to bring the elections and results

"live and clear" to South African citizens.

Voting day coverage

Voting day coverage, on Wednesday 18 May will be in live segments on SABC2 throughout the day: 6-8am, 12-3pm, 6-6.30pm, with the last broadcast starting at 8pm. From 8pm, viewers can expect minute by minute updates as the unofficial results start coming in. The broadcast will continue until 9am Thursday morning. There will be regular crossings to the various provincial contributing points. The election show will also be on SABC3 from 1-2pm on this day.

On results day, Thursday, 19th of May, broadcasts will continue throughout the day, starting with Morning Live, 6-9pm, then again from 12-2pm, 6-6.30pm and again at 9-10pm. SABC2 will carry more results programming on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Anchors, analysts

There will be six television anchor presenters presenting from the IEC in Pretoria - Vuyo Mbuli, Leane Manas, Xolani Gwala, Nothemba Madumo, Vuyo Mvoko, Lynette Francis, Eusebius McKaiser and Tsepiso Makwetla, will ensure that viewers are kept updated throughout the day.

A panel of thirty election analysts will offer analysis of election issues, as the IEC releases the results, to inform, contextualize and explain the results to the citizens of South Africa.

These include Prof Adam Habib, Jabulani Sithole, Katlego Phutiagae, Lucas Nemutanzhela, Precious Lugayeni, Prof Robert Cameron, Prof Robert Schrire, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu, Prof Susan Booysen, Prof Tinyiko Maluleke, Zamikhaya Maseti, Mari Harris, Dr Joleen Steyn Kotze, Zitha Skhosana, Michael O'Donovan, Ralph Mathekga, Dr Zacheus Matebesi, Dr Fanie Cloete and Zweli Mncube.

Radio coverage

"More than 400 editorial staff and almost 100 technical and support staff will be involved in the SABC radio coverage. Teams will be deployed at all IEC Centres countrywide and roving journalists will be covering various voting stations to inform the listeners about developments on both election day and results day. The deployment of journalists will start on Friday 13 May, when political parties are expected to wrap up their electioneering or campaigns," said Solly Phetoe, national editor: Radio Current Affairs.

The radio broadcast facilities (RBF) commissioned broadcast facilities at all IEC centres will enable news programmes to broadcast live from these centres. The main IEC centre in Pretoria will be equipped to cater for all 15 SABC PBS stations.

Almost 100 roving journalists have been allocated portable recorders and advanced laptops to write and file stories remotely. "These laptops are connected directly to the radio news system, through 3G cards and satellite connectivity

where necessary. This technology enables the radio journalists to file stories anywhere in the country. Technicians will be using the latest state of the art technology in Pretoria to link all the SABC regions. ATM technology will enable the Pretoria broadcast hub to connect digitally with the rest of the country.

Radio stations will carry voting and election results by means of special programmes and 24-hour news bulletins during the election week and will make use of outside broadcast facilities.

Shows will include voting coverage and updates in live segments throughout the day, results and analysis and crossings to live OB points. Radio stations will broadcast extended election programmes. Election broadcast schedules will differ from station to station.

Radio presenters

The radio stations will use their own presenters. Some of the seasoned journalists include SAfm Current Affairs presenter Xolani Gwala, who will be co-anchoring the morning elections special slot on 18-19 May 2011 from Pretoria and Glenn Lewington from SAfm's afternoon drive show. He'll also be presenting a special elections slot from 8pm on Wednesday and Thursday. Other radio presenters are Tsepiso Makwetla (SAfm), Krivani Pillay (SAfm), Cobus Bester (RSG), Matlakala Motabogi and Suzanne Paxton (RSG).

Website, mobisite

The broadcaster has created a special website (www.sabc.co.za/elections) or citizens can access the latest elections news through the existing news website www.sabcnews.com.

Audiences can call NewsBreak on 082152, select option 6 and follow the prompts for additional news.

The Digital News Unit has also launched an elections mobisite, www.sabcnews.mobi.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>