ANALYSING THE OPEN LIST SYSTEM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN FIJI’S 2014 GENERAL ELECTION:

A Perspective from the Fiji Electoral Commission

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INTRODUCTION

The general verdict on Fiji’s 2014 September elections is certainly positive. There were those, obviously, who would have preferred a different result and there were no doubt hitches or irregularities here or there which should be eradicated in the future, but the basic process of the election was well received. Speaking as an Electoral Commissioner, this came as a great relief. Confronted with an entirely new electoral system to be implemented within a short period of time, the Commission’s overriding concern was to ensure that the people of Fiji would understand it and be able to operate it. Again, although there were glitches also in the voter education program, the basic job got done and the people went confidently to the polls. The Electoral Commission is very grateful to the Elections Office and all those associated with it, and to all the people of Fiji for their cooperative attitude in bringing off these elections.

This paper is not about the entire electoral process but precisely about the PR (proportional representation) and Open List electoral system and its ramifications.