

PUBLIC (ELECTIONS) DEPARTMENT

1.5 Preparation of Electors' Photo Identity Card and update of Photo Electoral Roll

Highlights

The preparation and updation of electoral database is the responsibility of Chief Electoral Officer. The Public (Elections) Department introduced the concept of photo electoral roll in July 2006 in the entire State of Tamil Nadu. Audit examination revealed unwarranted deletion of voters from the roll, non-issuance of Electors' Photo Identity Card to eligible voters, shortfall in coverage of fresh electors, errors in the database due to inadequate validation controls in the system leading to chances for bogus voting.

↘ **The Department is yet to formulate an Information Technology policy, even though computerisation of electoral rolls is about a decade old.**

(Paragraph 1.5.7.1)

↘ **Documentation exists neither for old software nor for the present Electoral Roll Management System software.**

(Paragraph 1.5.7.2)

↘ **No proper back up storage exists; consequently the data of earlier years may not be available.**

(Paragraph 1.5.7.3)

↘ **Central Server is still to be connected with District Servers.**

(Paragraph 1.5.7.4)

↘ **The Department did not have backup of 73 lakh eligible voters who were deleted for want of photographs in 2006.**

(Paragraph 1.5.9.1)

↘ **55 lakh eligible electors were not issued Electors' Photo Identity Card as of August 2009.**

(Paragraph 1.5.9.2)

↘ **More than six lakh fresh eligible voters were not included in the roll during 2007 to 2009.**

(Paragraph 1.5.9.3)

↘ **Errors in the database due to inadequate validation controls in the system may contribute to bogus voting.**

(Paragraph 1.5.10)

↘ **Failure to negotiate with the vendors led to huge financial outgo in printing of Electors' Photo Identity Card during 2006 and 2007.**

(Paragraph 1.5.13.1)

1.5.1 Introduction

Article 324 of the Constitution of India, empowers the Election Commission of India the superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the Electoral rolls and the conduct of all elections to the Parliament, Legislature of every State and to the offices of the President and Vice-President. At the State level, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) is an officer of the Government in the cadre of Secretary designated or nominated by the Election Commission under Section 13AA of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 in consultation with the State Government.

1.5.2 Organisational structure

The Election Commission of India is assisted by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) at the State Headquarters and by the District Election Officers (DEOs) being the Collectors at the District level except in Chennai District, where the Commissioner of Chennai Corporation is the DEO. The Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) function under the District Collectors in the Taluks.

The Electoral rolls are prepared and maintained by the EROs under whose orders any inclusion, modification or deletion to the existing electoral rolls are carried out. The database in the District Server in the DEO's office is updated on the basis of these orders.

1.5.3 Overview of the system

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has been endeavoring to improve the fidelity of Electoral Rolls. The electoral roll is a list of people registered to vote in the public elections organised and conducted by ECI. The electoral roll is normally revised every year to include the names of those who attained 18 years as on 1st January of that year, voters who have migrated from other constituencies and to delete the names of those who have either died or moved out of the Constituency. The updating of electoral roll is a continuous process.

The issue of Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) was taken up in 1993 so as to check the identity of the electors and also to prevent impersonation at the time of poll. An EPIC issued to an elector is a permanent document valid for his life time and has a unique number. In 1997, the ECI decided to computerise the electoral rolls. As a further improvement, the ECI embarked upon a new initiative of inserting photographs in the Electoral Rolls for identifying the electors at the Polling Stations. In Tamil Nadu, the exercise of preparation of Photo Electoral Rolls began in July 2006 soon after the elections to the State Legislative Assembly.

During 2006 and 2007, the execution of work relating to issue of EPICs and printing of Photo Electoral Rolls was entrusted to ten vendors dividing the State into 14 regions. The Department appointed M/s CMC Ltd., as the State Level Agency (SLA) (January 2008) and entrusted with them all Information Systems (IS) related functions (both hardware and software) for a contractual period of six years. EPIC centres were established one for each Assembly Constituency (May 2008) to cater to the needs of the electors to generate new EPICs/duplicate EPICs.

The electoral roll database was earlier maintained in “MS-Access” till June 2009 and then migrated into SQL in August 2009 to facilitate a centralised State level database. The “Electoral Roll Management System” (ERMS), software developed by the SLA is being used by the Department from the summary revision, 2010. The data entries made at EPIC centres are stored at the District Servers at DEO’s office and interconnected through Tamil Nadu State Wide Area Network (TNSWAN). There were about 4.25 crore registered voters in Tamil Nadu spread over 30 districts, 234 assembly constituencies and 54,542 polling stations as on 1st January 2010.

1.5.4 Audit Objectives

The main objective of the IT audit of the Electoral Roll system was to see whether the primary objective of the Department to have an error-free electoral roll and issue of EPIC to all eligible voters has been achieved.

For this purpose, audit verified whether -

- sufficient controls existed to ensure completeness, correctness and reliability of the database;
- the system had adequate IT security controls to ensure that data was safeguarded against accidental or wilful manipulation;
- the department had adequate backup policy and business continuity plan;
- the benefits derived were proportionate to the investments made and
- the expenditure towards the generation of EPICs/photo rolls was properly monitored.

1.5.5 Audit criteria

Audit used the guidelines and instructions issued by ECI to CEO from time to time and the instructions issued by the CEO to DEOs for conducting the revisions, issue of EPICs and printing of rolls etc.

1.5.6 Audit scope and methodology

The data and related records pertaining to the period 2006 to 2009 in respect of ten districts⁵¹ out of 30 districts were studied and analysed in audit. Computer assisted auditing methods were used to analyse the data and the related manual records. The data in respect of ten districts were downloaded and analysed using Computer Assisted Audit Techniques (CAATs). The audit commenced with an entry conference with CEO in January 2010 and concluded with exit conferences in two stages in July/October 2010.

The major findings of IT audit are summarised in the succeeding paragraphs.

1.5.7 General controls

1.5.7.1 IT Policy

Even after 12 years of computerisation of electoral roll, the department is yet to frame an IT policy

The Department computerised its activities in 1997. It had invested a sum of ` 92 crore (2006 to 2009) towards creation of IT infrastructure and printing of electoral rolls/EPICs but is yet to formulate an IT policy and strategy for proper governance and control of its IT related activities. The Department replied (July 2010) that since the basic purpose of computerisation was to print the rolls rather than to have a database management system the objective was limited. Hence, the need for developing a full-fledged IT policy was not felt essential and there were no directions from ECI in this regard.

However, it is reiterated that formulating an IT policy and IT strategy would be essential in the light of the department having moved towards a database management system since 2009.

1.5.7.2 Documentation

The department was using the software developed in MS-Access through outsourcing for more than a decade, for printing of EPICs and generation of Photo Electoral Roll. After migration of the database to SQL (August 2009) from summary revision, 2010, a new software called Electoral Rolls Management System (ERMS) is being used.

Documentation for the old and the present software was not available

It was observed that the User requirement specifications (URS), System requirement specifications (SRS) were not available with the department for the earlier software. In respect of the new software, ERMS also, they remain to be documented. Further, it was noticed that frequent changes were being

⁵¹ Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Madurai, Namakkal, The Nilgiris, Thiruvallur and Villupuram

made to the ERMS software during implementation, indicating the absence of user acceptance test (UAT) before its implementation.

The department replied (January 2010) that it has followed the data structure as per the guidelines received from the ECI in 2008 and System requirement specification and User Requirement Specification based on the directions received from time to time from ECI.

However, it is suggested that such instructions and guidelines need to be documented for future reference.

1.5.7.3 Storage of backup

The Department is yet to have a proper backup policy for its database

The backup of the database was periodically taken up at the District level in CDs and a copy of the same was regularly sent to CEO. However, such backup CDs were not properly stored and hence were not readily traceable at CEO office and at DEO offices. For instance, the backup CD for Chennai district for 2007 was not readily traceable by the department (July 2010) during the period of audit.

1.5.7.4 Centralised database

Central Server at CEO's office yet to be connected with District Servers

One of the main objectives of the Department is to maintain a centralised database at CEO's office. It was planned to provide connectivity using TNSWAN⁵² for the EPIC centres, District server at DEOs office and also with the central server located at CEOs office. Towards this objective, 266 numbers of network switches were procured and installed (May 2008) at an expenditure of ` 20.38 lakh.

However, the centralised database concept was yet to take off due to non-connectivity of the Servers at the Districts with the Central server at the CEO's office. It was observed by comparing the database of one district with another in the test checked districts that instances of same records available in both the districts were noticed which would ultimately give room for bogus voting, in addition to boosting up of the size of the electoral roll. Centralised database would assist in identifying and elimination of duplicate records and in updating records owing to shifting of residence.

The department replied (February 2010) that action would be taken to have a centralised database server early with the newly developed software.

⁵² Tamil Nadu State Wide Area Network

1.5.8 Logical Access Control

It was observed during current summary revision, 2010 that in one of the test checked districts⁵³, access to the system was done using same user id and same password by both data entry operators and programmers indicating absence of segregation of duties among users. However, in respect of other test checked districts, the access was made with different passwords.

1.5.9 Incomplete Database

1.5.9.1 Large scale deletion of voters from voter list

73 lakh eligible voters were deleted by the department in 2006 without maintaining any backup

Immediately after the State Assembly Elections (2006), during the preparation of photo electoral rolls, the department issued notices to voters to either submit photographs or appear in person for taking photographs at the Designated Photo Locations (DPL). In this process, the department deleted the data relating to around 73 lakh voters, from whom photos could not be captured/ collected, however, without maintaining a backup for such deleted records. Since updating of photo electoral rolls is an ongoing process, deletion of 73 lakh voters from the database without any backup is irregular.

The Department replied (July 2010) that they did not have the backup of such large scale deletions because of its volume.

The reply could not be accepted because the deleted records were approximately 2.5 lakh per district and could have been stored in a CD/DVD.

1.5.9.2 Failure in issuance of EPIC to eligible fresh / residual voters

Fifty five lakh eligible fresh/residual voters were not issued EPIC

One of the main objectives of the department during each revision was to bring down the number of “Residual Electors”⁵⁴, in addition to identifying the fresh electors (18 years) and issue EPICs to them. The residual electors as on 1 January 2006 were 200 lakh. During 2006 to 2009, the fresh inclusions made by the department (after considering all the deletions made during 2006-2009) worked out to 40 lakh. The department declared (June 2010) that they were nearing cent *per cent* photo coverage. Hence, EPICs should have been issued to 240 lakh eligible voters. However, the department has so far issued only 185 lakh EPICs resulting in a shortfall of 55 lakh. Further 185 lakh EPICs issued included duplicate/replacement cards, the break up details of which were not available with the Department.

Hence, the declaration of the department (June 2010) that they are nearing cent *per cent* photo coverage was incorrect.

1.5.9.3 Shortfall in enrolment of the fresh electors in the age group of 18 plus

⁵³ Thiruvallur District

⁵⁴ Residual Electors – whose details are available in the electoral database without photo / incorrect photo

The Department failed to cover six lakh eligible fresh voters during 2007 to 2009

A comparison of the year-wise/district-wise manual statements relating to new inclusions and deletions furnished by Elections Department with the estimated child population⁵⁵ as on 30 September 2002 revealed that the shortfall in coverage of eligible fresh electors during 2007, 2008 and 2009 were 3.6 lakh, 2.3 lakh and 0.6 lakh respectively.

However, analysis of data as furnished by the department in respect of seven sample districts showed that such shortfall ranged from 63 to 78 per cent during 2009 as detailed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Shortfall in enrolment of fresh voters

District	Estimated Population (18 plus)	Actual Inclusion			Total	Shortfall	Percentage
		18 yrs	19 yrs	20yrs			
Chennai	79,824	Nil	6,709	18,728	25,437	54,387	68
Thiruvallur	54,498	Nil	5,593	12,442	18,035	36,463	67
Coimbatore	68,615	99	5,170	12,474	17,743	50,872	74
Namakkal	24,993	Nil	2,862	5,815	8,677	16,316	65
Villupuram	64,210	Nil	7,732	16,192	23,924	40,286	63
The Nilgiris	15,059	Nil	1,161	2,160	3,321	11,738	78
Cuddalore	47,243	Nil	5,842	11,107	16,949	30,294	64
Total	3,54,442	99	35,069	78,918	1,14,086	2,40,356	68

The Department replied (June 2010) that it was not possible to cover all the fresh eligible voters, as there was no system of inclusion of a person's name in the electoral roll automatically and the onus rests with the individual only.

The reply is not acceptable as one of the main objectives of conducting door to door verification is to identify fresh electors and include them in the roll as reiterated by ECI time and again. It is stated that such shortfall in the inclusion of fresh electors reflected the quality of door to door verifications done by Government officials who acted as Booth Level Officers (BLOs) with a meager honorarium of only ` 1,500 per year.

1.5.9.4 Comparison of electoral database with Civil Supplies Department

The electoral database were not consistent with Civil Supplies database

A comparative study of Election data with Civil Supplies Department data, with particular reference to Thiruvallur District (Poonamallee Assembly Constituency) revealed that many of the names which appear in the Ration Cards issued by the Civil Supplies Department do not appear in the Electoral roll and *vice versa*.

The main reason for such inconsistency in the electoral database is due to shifting of individuals from one place to another. In the case of ration card, if there is a shifting of residence, the responsibility for obtaining fresh ration

⁵⁵ As per the seventh All India Educational Survey data as available in the web site <http://www.schools.tn.nic.in/SV/SV5.pdf>

card in the new place rests with the individual by getting his name deleted in the old place. No such procedure is in existence in the case of EPIC/Photo electoral roll. Unless the importance of the EPIC is made on par with that of the ration card, by enforcing proper methodology in the case of “shifting” of residence, the situation would remain the same leading to possession of more than one EPIC by individual and duplicate entries in the photo rolls.

1.5.10 Input/validation checks

Despite series of summary revisions taken up through 100 *per cent* field verifications (as claimed by the Department), there were numerous cases of invalid and incorrect data due to poor input and validation controls in the system. The data furnished by the department in selected ten districts were analysed using CAATs and the following types of errors were detected in the database maintained in MS-Access.

- As per Representation of the People Act, 1950, no person is entitled to be registered in more than one constituency and for any constituency more than once. The ID number allocated to an individual voter is a unique number and no two persons should have the same number. During 2006, 9.34 lakh duplicate ID cards (in 26 Districts) were generated and issued to electors. The above error was identified by the Department through de-duplication software at a later stage and such duplicate records were removed from the data. This has resulted in a wasteful expenditure of ` 1.28 crore incurred in printing of such cards. Further data analysis showed that such duplicate IDs still existed (10,457 records) in test checked eight⁵⁶ districts. This indicated absence of proper validations in this regard.
- There is no proper validation even in the present ERMS software as well. The new system also permitted generation of another ID for the same set of data.
- The ID card number should have a prefix indicating the Assembly Constituency. There were cases of ID card numbers without such indication.
- The system accepted values upto 999 and less than 18 years against age of voters.
- The voter name and the relationship name were identical in 28,865 records indicating data entry error.
- The voter name is left blank in 14,339 records and the relationship name is left blank in 14,208 records. Even in the present ERMS software, there are no mandatory fields.

⁵⁶ Chennai, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, Madurai, Namakkal, Thiruvallur and Villupuram

- If the voter is a “Male”, then the relationship cannot be ‘husband’. It was observed that in respect of 2,437 records, incorrect gender was fed
- The photograph of an individual voter in an EPIC should be unique and pertain to the concerned individual. In respect of 46,451 records, there were duplicate photo images.
- The photo image field was blank in 1.34 lakh records and the combination of ID card number and photo image fields were blank in 1.10 lakh records.
- The photo mismatch errors/incorrect relationship/gender/age etc. which were existing in 2006 database were not rectified till date in respect of certain records.

The Department accepted (May 2010) the audit observations and replied that action would be taken to rectify the defects in the current system.

1.5.11 Micro Analysis

Data of three districts⁵⁷ where bye elections were conducted in 2009/2010 were analysed in-depth. The data analysis showed the existence of the following types of errors:

Lack of validation controls in the system led to room for bogus voting in General Election 2009

- Records which were deleted due to death, continued to appear in the live electoral roll, which denotes that the database was not duly updated.
- Before General Elections 2009, two supplementary electoral rolls were prepared by the department to update the original electoral roll. The Supplementary roll - 2 contained only fresh electors identified before elections. However, it was observed that, none of the records in all the three districts contain ID Number / Photo Image (36,149 records). Due to the absence of photos in the roll, the main objective of preparation of photo roll to act as a deterrent against impersonation, bogus voting and even against inclusion of bogus persons in electoral roll is lost.
- If an elector shifts his residence within the Assembly Constituency, his record should be modified with change of residence. However, in many of the cases a fresh inclusion is made instead of modification, resulting in inclusion of the same voter in two different places (268 records).
- Though there were no changes in the existing details of the voter, they are included in the supplementary rolls with “modified status” resulting in his existence in two different places (1,782 records).

⁵⁷ Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri and Madurai

- The name of an elector appears in two different places (with same ID card) with different images (4,127 records).

Thus, the database with the above stated errors could lead to bogus voting. These discrepancies were due to non-integration of the tables relating to existing, modified and deleted records before conduct of elections. Hence, three separate rolls (mother roll, supplementary rolls 1 and 2) were used during elections, giving room for possible bogus voting. Hence, integration of data should be mandatory before conduct of each election. During the exit conference (October 2010), the department replied that it is not possible to integrate the tables at the time of elections due to paucity of time.

1.5.12 Updation of Master tables before Summary Revision 2010

The master data table of the electoral roll contains details of the Assembly Constituency numbers, booth numbers, Blocks, Sections (streets), Polling stations, Post Offices, Villages etc., with appropriate codes and hierarchical linkages which serve as critical inputs for generation of EPICs and photo rolls to identify the voter individually.

As these data captured in the master tables are crucial, these tables should be updated before start of the data entry work, when summary revision is taken up to ensure correctness of data in the electoral roll.

However, it was noticed that during the Summary Revision, 2010, instructions for updation of master data were issued (March 2010) only after near completion of the data entry process.

The department stated (June 2010) that the master data was already updated in 2009 and as there was no mandate to publish the rolls in English, the updation of fields (English) was not considered significant.

The department's reply is not acceptable in view of clear instructions to perform (September 2008) data entry in both Tamil and English as against the unilingual data entry made earlier and the rolls were to be published in English as well as in the regional language (Tamil) as mandated by ECI.

1.5.13 Financial issues

1.5.13.1 Printing of EPICs during the year 2006

Failure to negotiate with vendors led to huge additional expenditure to Government in printing of EPICs

(i) During the year 2006, ten vendors were selected covering 30 districts in the State for on-line production of EPICs and generation of photo electoral rolls involving five activities⁵⁸ (C1 to C5). The CEO negotiated with all the 10 firms and reduced the rates for selected activities in respect of four districts. The Designated Photo Locations (DPL) established for undertaking C1 activity varied according to the size of the population in a District.

It was observed in audit that though the activities carried out by the vendors were one and the same, there was huge variation (₹ 8.89 to ₹ 21.25 per card) in the rate of C1 activity. The rates approved in 14 districts out of 30 districts, where the activity was carried out in plains, were over and above ₹ 14.98 per card, the rate quoted by the vendor for the Nilgiris District, a hilly terrain and ranged from ₹ 16.70 to ₹ 21.25. Negotiation at par with the rates adopted for Nilgiris district would have saved a sum of ₹ 1.84 crore in printing of EPICs during 2006 and 2007.

(ii) When a vendor was allotted more than one region, the department should ensure to keep the rate constant in both the regions. However, department approved two different rates *viz.*, ₹ 11.57 and ₹ 9.94 per card (C1 activity) for adjacent districts⁵⁹. Failure to streamline the rate resulted in extra expenditure of ₹ 13.30 lakh⁶⁰ for printing of 8,16,058 EPICs at the rate of ₹ 11.57 per card in Kancheepuram District.

Department replied (April 2010) that as more number of vendors were required to be inducted simultaneously for extensive coverage and due to paucity of time and to avoid public criticism, different rates were settled with vendors, involving huge outgo of expenditure.

The reply is not acceptable as conduct of elections is a planned event.

(iii) Though the rates for C1 to C5 activities were negotiated and brought down in certain districts and the same were communicated to the DEOs concerned, the revised rates were not adhered to by the DEOs while making payments to the vendors. In Thiruvallur District, the revised rates were not adopted in certain cases resulting in excess payment of ₹ 4.15 lakh.

DEO, Thiruvallur accepted (May 2010) the facts and intimated that action would be taken to recover the excess payment.

1.5.13.2 Payments towards Digital cameras

⁵⁸ C1-Online production of EPICs at DPL (static units); C2- Online production of EPICs at DPL (mobile units); C3-scanning of miniatures and retrieval, numbering and resizing; C4-Linking of images and printing of draft roll and C5- Printing of final rolls

⁵⁹ Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur.

⁶⁰ 8,16,058 x ₹ 1.63 (11.57-9.94)

Digital video cameras/still cameras were hired and deployed at sensitive polling stations during elections. During Assembly Elections, 2006, tenders were floated centrally and the rates were finalised. However, for the General Elections, 2009, quotations were called for and the rates were finalised at the district level which varied from district to district ranging from ` 1,150 to ` 4,500 per camera. Further, the above agreed rates were also not adhered to and the settlement was made at higher revised rates based on the individual claims setting aside the already agreed rate. Settlement made at a higher revised rates led to excess payment of ` 28 lakh.

CEO replied (February 2010) that due to paucity of time, tenders could not be floated centrally and hence variation in the rates was inevitable.

The reply is not acceptable as the conduct of elections is a planned event.

1.5.13.3 Unspent balance with Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu

Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu (ELCOT) is the nodal agency for procurement of computer infrastructure and accessories. Department released ` 5.63 lakh to ELCOT during March/November 2009 for the purpose of upgradation of hardware without taking into account the unspent balance of ` 52 lakh lying with ELCOT from the earlier amounts released for the related purchases during 2007. This indicated absence of monitoring of the advances made to ELCOT.

1.5.14 Other Points of interest

1.5.14.1 Deletion of death cases registered with local bodies

According to the instructions received from ECI in 1994, it is mandatory that every local body should furnish to the respective ERO of the Constituency, the details of death cases and such cases may be deleted from the data by the concerned EROs. In Ambattur Municipality, 1,676 death cases were registered in 2009, whereas in the Electoral database only one death case was accounted for. Hence, it is evident that the instructions of ECI were not followed scrupulously.

The Department replied (June 2010) that DEOs have been instructed to get updates from local bodies in this regard.

1.5.14.2 Deletion of non-bailable warrants cases

As per ECI instructions (August 2005) the names of persons against whom non-bailable warrant (NBW) cases are pending for more than 6 months were to be removed from the electoral roll after following due procedure. However, it was noticed that as against 8,894 NBW cases included in the list, only 907 cases were deleted from the roll. Though, two major elections were conducted in Tamil Nadu i.e. 2006 (Assembly Elections) and 2009 (General Elections), no action was taken by the Department to delete the remaining in this regard.

1.5.14.3 Electors' Photo Identity Card centres

The EPIC centres were established (May 2008) in all the 234 Assembly Constituencies in Tamil Nadu with the objective of issuing new/duplicate/replacement EPIC cards. However, in the test checked districts, it was observed that fresh EPICs were not issued on a day to day basis. New cards were issued from the EPIC centres only at the time of inclusions identified during summary revision period. At present replacement/duplicate cards were only issued from the EPIC centres.

1.5.14.4 Delay in establishment of infrastructure for Tiruppur District

Government sanctioned ` 9.33 lakh in May 2009 to ELCOT for the procurement and supply of computers and peripherals, for Tiruppur District which was newly formed (October 2008). It was noticed that though the servers and other peripherals were installed (May 2010), the scanners and switches were yet to be procured and installed (August 2010), due to which the network connectivity between EPIC centres and the District server, Tiruppur was yet to be established. The database of this district is continued to be maintained at the district server at Coimbatore.

1.5.15 Conclusion

The fidelity of the electoral roll is a pre-requisite for conduct of free and fair elections. This implied that the data should be complete, correct and reliable. Though a sum of ` 92 crore was spent (2006 to 2009) for preparation/printing of EPICs and updation of Photo Electoral Roll, by conducting various summary/special summary/continuous revisions, the department is yet to achieve the said objective due to lack of input/validation checks in the system. The department is yet to achieve completeness of electoral photo roll since shortfall in issuance of EPICs was to the extent of 55 lakh (23 *per cent*) as on date despite the department's claim of near complete achievement in this regard. Department has failed to enroll all the new eligible voters and short fall was about 6 lakh indicating poor door to door campaign to add new voters. The department is not following any fool-proof method to ensure due accounting of shifted voters from one place to another and this resulted in duplicate voter ID cards for the same persons. A centralised database which would eliminate such discrepancies is still to be established.

1.5.16 Recommendations

- Establish a Centralised database with inbuilt controls to ensure fidelity of the electoral roll.
- Review and streamline the door to door campaign employed to cross verify the rolls and include fresh voters, effectively to achieve complete, correct and reliable database which would assist free and fair election process.