



24th August, 2024

RE: MAN ARRESTED IN NSAWAM WITH A BIOMETRIC VERIFICATION DEVICE (BVD)

The attention of the Electoral Commission has been drawn to an incident in Nsawam in which a man was arrested on Friday, 23rd August, 2024 in possession of a Biometric Verification Device (BVD). The Commission takes this incident of an unauthorised person in possession of a BVD very seriously. The Commission would like to assure the General Public and all Stakeholders that a stolen BVD cannot jeopardise the integrity of the 2024 Elections.

We are conducting our own internal investigations and will collaborate with the Police to bring this matter to its logical conclusion.

In the meantime, the Commission would like to address the General Public on this matter as follows:

1. The Public may recall that following the theft of five (5) Laptops which formed part of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kits from our stores in April 2024, as well as the vandalization of five (5) BVDs and theft of two (2) BVDs from Tarkwa Nsuaem District and North Tongu District respectively during the December 2023 District Level Elections (DLEs), the Commission explained that a BVD in the hands of an unauthorised person cannot be used to compromise an election. It does not affect the integrity of an election. It is nothing more than an off-the-shelf device and cannot be used to compromise an election, **without the necessary technical and security protocols.**

The Electoral Commission undertakes a deliberate process of preparing a Biometric Verification Device (BVD) for any election that ensures that **ONLY** BVDs that are prepared for a particular election can be used for that election. This process is robust and is not vulnerable to manipulation. The possession of a BVD that has not gone through **this rigorous process that is yet to happen for the 2024 Elections** does not affect the integrity of the Elections.

- a. The voter verification application is designed such that it only works with data that is prepared, audited, encrypted, and signed by a Secure Process. Access to this process is highly restricted. Without access to this Secure Process, Voter Data cannot be generated to work with the BVD. The Data that is loaded onto the BVDs are set to be activated for a particular Election Day. A stolen BVD therefore cannot work in the December 2024 Elections.
- b. The BVD, as part of its Start-Up Process, checks for the integrity of the Data that is loaded onto it. If the Voter Data on the BVD has been altered in any way, the Start-Up Process is halted and the BVD will not work.

- c. Activation of the BVDs involves the use of Activation Codes that can only be downloaded from the EC's Secure System. This system is restricted to Election Officials with the right Access Credentials. A BVD without its Activation Code cannot be used for the verification of Voters.
 - d. The Data that is loaded onto the BVD must conform with the details of Voters on the Voters Register for each Polling Station. This data is not static and changes with every Election Cycle. Since the Voters Register for various Polling Stations for the 2024 Elections will be different from previous Elections, any data on a BVD that was activated for a previous Election will not conform with the Voters Register at the particular Polling Station on December 7, 2024.
 - e. BVDs are used **ONLY** to verify voters. They are not used to vote.
 - f. Political Party Agents observe the packing of election materials, including BVDs. They record the Serial Numbers of BVDs that are deployed at each Polling Station.
 - g. Additionally, the Serial Numbers of the BVDs that are used on Election Day are recorded on the Statement of Poll (Pink Sheet) for each Polling Station. This provides further evidence as to which specific BVDs were used to verify Voters at each Polling Station.
2. The Commission urges the Police to do everything in their power to unravel the circumstances surrounding the BVD that was found in the possession of the person arrested on Friday. The Commission stands in readiness to work with the Police in its investigations.

Thank you.



Samuel Tetley
Deputy Chairman, Operations