INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 15 December 1999 the Municipal Demarcation Board finalized its determinations of Category B (Local) Municipalities. This final piece in the building blocks which will create the framework around which new institutions of local government will be built means that the Municipal Demarcation Board has now determined Category A, B and C municipalities for the whole territory of the Republic of South Africa.

The Board has determined that there will be six metropolitan areas in South Africa: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, East Rand and Port Elizabeth. Collectively, they comprise some 41% of all presently registered voters.

The Board has determined about 47 District Councils in South Africa, a number which may vary depending on whether or not affected provincial governments agree with the Board’s recommendations that some areas should form Cross Boundary Municipalities. Unlike the existing District/Regional Councils, the new District Councils will have a range of functions and powers making them far more important vehicles for the overall economic, social, administrative and financial development of people than the local municipalities.
While the major developmental powers will go to the District Councils, the Municipal Demarcation Board will make recommendations on how the remaining functions and powers will be split between each District Council and each of the local municipalities within that council’s jurisdiction.

The Board has rationalized the number of local municipalities suggesting that around 235 municipalities best serve the national interest that:

- **There is geographical contiguity**: The presently fragmented geography of municipal governance will change and instead each municipality will be come a single entity, thereby allowing the building of a local, developmental identity and sense of common civic purpose.
- **There is greater scope for the development of capacity**: The Board’s rationalization will allow each municipality to at least develop a minimum ‘critical mass’ of municipal capacity (staff, assets, finances). Very small municipalities lack the potential to develop the specialised and dedicated capacity that is necessary to effect good town planning, engineering and development management, and general service delivery, in a country which is undergoing significant modernisation and change in its settlement systems. Moreover, accessing capital markets, and the ability to provide ‘higher order’ services (such as libraries) is considerably weakened especially in small town and rural contexts where municipalities are too small.
- **There is a greater sharing of resources**: The Board has endeavoured to ensure the realization of fiscally sustainable units, with ‘weaker’ areas being paired with ‘stronger’ areas so as to achieve a sharing of existing or potential resources. Unless this is done there is every possibility that many of the smaller or weaker authorities will collapse; or ‘islands, of exclusive development may emerge, up against which under-serviced and unplanned settlements are likely to emerge. Neither the likely waste of the infrastructure of collapsed local authority areas, nor the preservation of islands of privilege abutted by under-serviced areas, will contribute towards a rational settlement landscape and use of scarce national development resources.
- **Municipalities are more manageable in size**: The Board has tried to ensure that there is a more rational municipal system: dense urban settlements on the one hand (large populations in relatively small areas) to sparsely settled rural/small town municipalities (fewer people on larger areas).
- **There is greater functionality**: Finally, the Board has tried to create municipalities with significant internal functional linkages, evident in shopping and work travel patterns, patterns of social interaction, economic interdependencies, and shared transportation networks amongst other considerations.

The Greater East London District Council will consist of eight local councils. Presently, registered within the area are some 712207 voters, served by 444 councillors elected in 1995 until the democratic elections in November 2000.

Brief descriptions of the new municipalities are as follows:

**EC121**: The proposed local municipality encompasses a relatively densely settled sub-region situated on the Wild Coast and includes the three towns of Idutywa, Willowvale and Elliotdale. 58 councillors presently serve the 76182 registered voters in the area. This local municipality will be faced with challenges as basic as providing services such as libraries let alone the broader developmental issues of improved infrastructure and economic development.

**EC122**: This local municipality is on the eastern side of the Great Kei River Valley and stretches from the coastal plain to the upper reaches of the Tsomo River...
Valley, including the towns of Butterworth, Kentani and Nqamakwe. Small scale agricultural, industrial and residential uses are found in the area. 77 councillors presently serve the 102161 registered voters living in the area. Significant developmental challenges will have to be faced in the area.

EC123: Situated between the agricultural midlands straddling the N2 and the coast, this municipal area encompasses Komga, Kei Mouth, Haga-Haga, Morgans Bay and Cintsa. 25 councillors presently serve the 17093 registered voters in the area. While primarily an agricultural region, significant opportunities exist for developing its leisure and tourism potential.

EC124: This is centrally positioned municipality between the Greater Kei River in the east and Keiskammahoek River in the West and includes Cathcart, Kei Road, Keiskammahoek and Stutterheim. 53 councillors presently serve the 59225 registered voters living in the area. The municipality has a reasonable level of human and financial resources to better serve the urban, agricultural and forestry pursuits of the sub-region.

EC125: This municipality includes East London and Kingwilliamstown, Dimbaza and Debe Nek, as well as a number of coastal resorts. Clearly this municipality is one of South Africa's major secondary cities with great potential to be declared as a Metropolitan Municipality. 95 councillors presently serve the 328459 registered voters living in the area. The major focus will be to improve the municipality's productive potential.

EC126: This municipality is to the west of East London and includes the towns of Peddie and Hamburg. 34 councillors presently serve the 52544 registered voters living in the area. The limited financial and administrative capacity of the municipality will mean significant involvement by the District Council in building its capacity.

EC127: This municipality is situated beneath the Winterberg Mountain range in the north straddling Hogsback and Katbergt Mountains in the East. 77 councillors presently serve the 64799 registered voters living in the area. Significant developmental challenges face this municipality in order to achieve its obvious potential.

EC128: This predominantly agricultural and rural municipality presently contains two towns: Bedford and Adelaide. 25 councillors presently serve the 11744 registered voters living in the area.

Any person aggrieved by the Board’s determination may submit motivated objections in writing to the Board. Objections must be submitted before or on 31 January 2000 and must be addressed to:

The Municipal Demarcation Board
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More information can be obtained from internet: www.demarcation.org.za or by calling 0800-111-006 or from Dataworld in Durban. Fax:031- 3036395 or e-mail: mdb@dataworld.co.za.