



BROADCASTING CODE

BY MARIA UUSHONA

ACTING EXECUTIVE LEGAL &
REGULATORY SERVICES



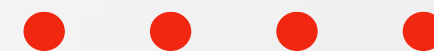


INTRODUCTION

- The purpose of the Broadcasting Code is to prescribe the conduct of broadcasters, specifically during the election periods.
- The Broadcasting Code has been established in terms of section 89 of Communications Act and was published in 2018.
- Subsequently amended in 2019 to reduce local content quota for subscription television broadcasters.
- The Code is applicable to all radio and television broadcasting service licensees.



PART C COVERAGE OF ELECTIONS AND REFERENDUMS





PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS

- Rule 1 of the Broadcasting Code defines party election broadcasting as any *program, whether pre-recorded or a live event which is broadcasted free of charge or for a fee determined by licensees or intended or calculated to advance the interests, beliefs or objects of any political party or candidate.*
- Party election broadcast may only be broadcasted during the election period (26 September-24 November 2024).
- Such broadcast opportunity should be allowed for all political parties.
- Broadcasters cannot be held liable for content of the party election broadcast.
- Authorized representation of the Political party should provide the broadcaster with a signed indemnity against any liability.
- Broadcasting licensee may refuse to broadcast any content without the signed indemnity.
- No broadcasting shall occur without the explicit consent of the political party's authorized representative.



NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS DURING ELECTIONS

- News coverage of elections and referendums is at the discretion of the news editor of the broadcasting licensee.
- Must apply proper balance and fairness to all current affairs programs dealing with elections or referendums.



BALANCE & IMPARTIALITY

- Broadcasters must ensure fairness (balance & impartiality) in its reporting.
- No candidate or political party should receive preferential treatment and the broadcaster should allow for the discussion of conflicting views.
- Where any criticism is levelled against any political party or candidate during a broadcasting service, that party should be afforded an opportunity to respond.
- In allocating timeslots to the political parties and/or candidates, same should be done without prejudice to any other party.
- Where a political party forfeits its timeslot, broadcaster should utilise that slot for their regular programs. The scheduling for the other political parties should not be amended.



ALLOCATION OF FREE AIRTIME BY THE NBC

- NBC is required to allot free airtime in accordance with Rules 21 and 22 of the Code.
- Political parties must provide party election broadcast to the NBC at least 96 hours prior to broadcast
- Failure to adhere to same shall result in forfeiture.
- Broadcasters are indemnified by political parties against any liabilities for publishing or failing to publish the party election broadcast as provided to them.



PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS

- Political parties are to provide their party election broadcast 96 hours prior to broadcast.
- Party election broadcast to be accompanied by a script in English or a local language with translation in English.
- Broadcasters should ensure the content of the party election broadcast conforms to the requirements of the Broadcasting Code.
- Broadcaster may not edit a political party's content.
- Broadcaster may not reject a political party's party election broadcast without good cause and needs to inform the political party within the prescribed time and afford them an opportunity for amendment of the content.
- Broadcasters should:
 - avail four 2-minute slots everyday to the political parties for their party election broadcast not exceeding five minutes in duration.
 - ensure that all party election broadcasts are clearly identified & similarly announced.
 - not broadcast one political party's party election broadcast right after the other.



POLITICAL ADVERTISING

- Political party advertisements may only be broadcasted during election period.
- Same cannot be edited by Broadcasters and cannot be reject without good cause shown.
- Political party to be afforded an opportunity to alter or edit their advert.
- Should a Broadcaster reject a political advertisement and the political party has confirmed it will not amend or re-submit the advert. The Broadcaster should notify the Authority in writing of such rejection which notification must be accompanied by the written reasons given to the relevant political party for the rejection.
- Political parties have the opportunity to refer a rejection of their political advertisement to the Authority within 24 hours. Political parties are also obligated to ensure their content is legal and does not incite violence.
- Broadcasters are deemed indemnified by the political parties against any liabilities for publishing or failing to publish the party election broadcast as provided to them.



BROADCASTING ON POLLING DAY

- No party election broadcast, political advertisement or any material canvassing for support of any political party or candidate may be advertised on polling day.
- Coverage on the polling day must report on the progress of voting and information pertaining to voting schedules and location of polling stations.
- A broadcasting licensee may not broadcast election results until after the polls are declared closed and official results are announced or published by the relevant officials of the Electoral Commission of Namibia in accordance with the Electoral Act.



CRAN
Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION