



27 January 2026.

OFFICIAL MEDIA STATEMENT

RE: ELECTIONS MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTING AGENCY OF AFRICA (EMCA) STATEMENT ON ALLEGATIONS ON THE DISCOVERY OF ANC ELECTION BALLOT PAPERS FOR THE GREATER JOHANNESBURG REGIONAL ELECTIONS

The Elections Management and Consulting Agency of Africa (EMCA) is an independent electoral management company established in 2011, with a proven track record in the administration of free, fair, and credible elections. Since its inception, EMCA has consistently upheld the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and professionalism in all electoral processes entrusted to it.

Between 20 and 24 January 2026, following a formal complaint submitted by Mr Dada Morero to the African National Congress (ANC) Gauteng Provincial Task Team and the Secretary-General of the ANC, alleging a conflict of interest and procedural irregularities relating to the Greater Johannesburg Regional Conference held in December 2025, various media houses, including Mail & Guardian and Sunday Times, formally requested comment from EMCA. All questions posed were responded to openly and comprehensively in order to provide clarity regarding the electoral process and EMCA's limited and technical role in the conference.

On 25 January 2026, shortly after the passing of our presiding officer, events of serious concern unfolded at the private residence of Ms Lulu White, a former director of EMCA.

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On that day, two (2) members of the South African Police Service (SAPS), accompanied by two (2) individuals who identified themselves as ANC personnel from Luthuli House, were observed unlawfully accessing the property by scaling the boundary wall. None of the individuals displayed visible identification, name tags, or credentials.

The group had earlier demanded access to the premises, alleging that they had received a “lead” that ANC ballot papers would be found on the property, and asserting that they were entitled to enter any location where such ballot papers were allegedly present. When requested to produce a valid search-and-seizure warrant, official identification, written authorisation from a competent authority, or any documentation establishing lawful grounds for their presence, no such documentation was provided.

While Ms White was consulting with her legal representatives, it was observed that the same SAPS officers, accompanied by the ANC representatives, unlawfully accessed a neighbouring property via the rear boundary wall, proceeded through that property, and then entered Ms White’s premises without engaging the property owner and without any warrant authorising such a search.

Upon confrontation, the SAPS officers produced a small black plastic bag containing ballot papers, which they alleged had been found in a corner of the garden. Further, they claimed that the papers were intended to be concealed or tampered with. When questioned regarding the circumstances of this alleged discovery, there was a physical confrontation involving members of the household, which is now part of the criminal complaint. They then exit the premises by scaling the same boundary wall through which they had entered, taking the “discovered plastic bag with ballots” with them.

Subsequently, ballot papers were discarded outside the property and later presented to the media and forensic personnel as purported evidence.

It is important to place on record that Ms White would not have objected to a lawful search conducted in accordance with due process and the law. However, the manner in which these actions were carried out raises serious concerns regarding legality, procedural compliance, and intent. A criminal case of trespassing was accordingly opened at Garsfontein Police Station on 25 January 2026.

EMCA further categorically rejects allegations that Ms White resigned from the company in July 2025 and was subsequently replaced by her child in preparation for the Johannesburg regional elections. These claims are factually incorrect, misleading, and defamatory, and appear designed to improperly implicate EMCA in matters unrelated to its mandate or operations.

The current director of EMCA is Ms Nonkululeko White, who assumed directorship in 2021, following Ms Lulu White's resignation from the company due to other professional commitments entirely unrelated to the matters currently being reported. Ms Lulu White has not been involved in the operations, management, or business activities of EMCA for approximately five (5) years.

It is further necessary to clarify that Ms Lulu White commenced employment with the City of Johannesburg in 2020, during the mayoral term of the late Mayor Geoff Makhubo, within the Community Development Department as a Media Specialist. She was subsequently re-appointed in February 2024 within the Supply Chain Management Department, where she remains employed to date.

EMCA emphasises that up until the day in question, all ballot papers remained in its custody sealed in transparent ballot boxes, secured with five (5) tamper-evident seals, and stored in a secure, locked location. Access to such materials has only strictly limited to the designated presiding officer in accordance with established chain-of-custody protocols. The alleged discovery of ballot papers in a freshly looking black plastic bag, purportedly found in a private garden, is therefore highly irregular, deeply concerning, and wholly inconsistent with EMCA's ballot handling procedures.

It is further notable that the same individuals who arrived at the premises without lawful authority, claiming to have received a “lead” regarding the location of concealed ballot papers, are the very individuals who later purported to have “discovered” such materials.

EMCA reiterates that the continued publication of inaccurate, speculative, and unverified claims, particularly those relating to the alleged discovery of ballot papers at a private residence in Pretoria, serves only to misinform the public and undermine confidence in lawful electoral processes.

The company categorically denies any involvement in, or knowledge of, any unlawful activity, including the tampering with or concealment of ballot materials. EMCA remains committed to transparency and lawful conduct, will cooperate fully with any legitimate investigation, and reserves all its rights in respect of any false, misleading, or defamatory reporting that seeks to undermine its reputation and the integrity of its work.

For any enquiries and questions related to this matter, you may write to EMCA’s attorneys on record, in the following details:

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