

# THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



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## ELECTORAL OFFICE INTRODUCES NEW CHECKS TO PREVENT POSTAL VOTING FRAUD

The Electoral Office has announced that it has introduced a range of measures aimed at detecting anyone who fraudulently attempts to obtain a postal or proxy vote for the European Parliamentary elections on 4 June.

While not disclosing the full range of measures, Douglas Bain, Chief Electoral Officer said: **“Around 20,000 people regularly vote by post or proxy, but some people attempt to abuse the facility.**

**“To help protect the service for those who genuinely require it and to detect those who think that they are above the law I have introduced a number of measures. These include a more rigorous system for checking applications and the use of an expert document examiner.**

**“I will not hesitate to refer to the police anyone I believe has been involved in electoral fraud.”**

Anyone who needs any information about Electoral Registration can contact the EONI Helpline on 0800 4320 712 (textphone 0800 3284 502) or visit [www.eoni.org.uk](http://www.eoni.org.uk)

### Notes to Editors

The Electoral Office has taken a number of measures to reduce the risk of electoral fraud in Northern Ireland and these include:

The introduction, in 2002, of individual registration with a requirement to provide date of birth, national insurance number and signature.

The need, from January 2008, to produce documentation to vouch information provided on the registration application form unless it had been previously checked by the Electoral Office.

The checking of national insurance numbers given on application forms and the removal from the register of all those who are found to have given an incorrect number (nearly 700 individuals have been removed from the register since the start of this year).

EONI participation in the National Fraud Initiative which sees the names and addresses held by the Electoral Office being matched against a huge number of public sector

databases in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. All miss-matches will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Adoption of a zero tolerance approach to suspected breaches of electoral law. In the last 5 months 7 individuals have been referred to the police for investigation of 8 offences. The next case is due for trial at Antrim Magistrates Court on 3 March.