



NEWS RELEASE

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SCF ENCOURAGES CROFTERS TO SEIZE HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

Anyone intending to be a candidate in the election to the new Crofting Commission must be nominated before the end of this month and the Scottish Crofting Federation is encouraging crofters to consider standing for the new body.

Until this year all members of the existing Crofters Commission have been appointed by Government. However, the new body, which takes up its responsibilities in April, will for the first time have representatives who have been elected by crofters themselves.

SCF chief executive, Patrick Krause, said: "The Scottish Government has stated that the establishment of an elected Crofting Commission is an historic moment in the Highlands and Islands, which recognises the vital ongoing role that crofting has in retaining population, and cultural and agricultural activity here. The SCF has campaigned for years for democratisation of the commission and we are happy that government has listened to our arguments.

"It is very important that the new commission has a strong elected voice that enables it to fulfil its remit to regulate, reorganise and promote the interests of crofting – so that crofting can continue to support the society and environment of the Highlands and Islands.

"The closing date for nominations to the election will soon be upon us and so we would encourage crofters to think about standing and to encourage others to stand if they think these people would strengthen the commission in its work."

The deadline for nominations to stand for the six elected posts is on Thursday 26th January. Nominations must be made to the local authorities who are organising the election and more information about the nomination process can be found on the Highland Council website at:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections/croftingcommission/>

Information can also be obtained from John Bruce, the Highland Council's elections manager, on 01349868524 or Cheryl MacIver on 01463 702945.

The three ministerial appointments to the new Commission were announced earlier this month. Patrick Krause added: "We congratulate the appointed commissioners and look forward to working with them to strengthen and promote the crofting system in the years ahead.

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