

CHAPTER 6

ON THE POLLING DAY OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE SUBSECTOR ORDINARY ELECTIONS

Section 1 – Command Centre and Support

6.1 The REO set up the CCC at its office in the KITEC to oversee electoral arrangements on the polling day in order to provide a wide range of services to voters, candidates/agents, ROs, PROs and the public. The REO and the relevant sections of the bureaux/departments concerned operated in the CCC to facilitate communication and co-ordination for swift response to various election-related matters on the polling day. The CCC was under the direct supervision of the CEO, with the deputy of the Principal Electoral Officer.

6.2 The CCC comprised 1 Command Desk, 8 Helpdesks and 1 group of Enquiry Hotlines. The Command Desk was tasked with overseeing the overall conduct of the poll. The Helpdesks handled enquiries about polling matters made by the polling staff. The Enquiry Hotlines dealt with enquiries about the poll from the public and LEAs and provided assistance to visually-impaired voters in apprehending the contents of the Introduction to Candidates. A dedicated interactive voice system was also installed in this election to handle enquiries from polling staff on voters' particulars and the names and codes of the polling stations assigned to voters. The CCC was equipped with an Incident Logging System for parties concerned to share information and keep track of major incidents.

6.3 Apart from control at the central level, District Liaison Officers of each District Office were appointed to carry out liaison work at the district level between the PROs of polling stations and the respective ROs as well as the CCC. Staff of District Offices were also appointed as polling staff to station at District

Offices for removal of unauthorised EAs and handling of other election-related complaints.

6.4 In addition, the REO provided separate working areas for the EAC, CMAB, ROs, DoJ, Information Services Department (“ISD”), Hong Kong Police Force (“Police”), Fire Services Department (“FSD”) and Auxiliary Medical Service (“AMS”) in the CCS at the AWE to facilitate the performance of their respective roles in the conduct of the election.

6.5 The Police and the Civil Aid Service (“CAS”) rendered assistance in maintaining order in the OPSs (including relevant NCZs and NSZs) and CCS. Police officers and CSD officers were also stationed at the DPSs at the police stations and the penal institutions of the CSD respectively to provide support to the PROs.

Statistical Information Centre

6.6 1 SIC was set up at each of the CCC and the CCS. The SIC at the CCC was responsible for compiling and collating the hourly voter turnout statistics whereas the one at the CCS was responsible for consolidating the counting results collected from the CCS. Both the hourly voter turnout statistics and the election results were released to the public through press releases and the election website. The collection and compilation of the hourly voter turnout statistics and the counting results were, in general, smoothly conducted on the polling day.

6.7 A total of 194 telephone lines and 97 fax lines were set up for the SIC and Helpdesks at the CCC to collect hourly voter turnout statistics from polling stations and handle enquiries.

Section 2 – The Complaints Centre

6.8 A Complaints Centre (“CC”) was set up at the REO’s office in the Harbour Centre to handle complaints from the public.

6.9 Complainants could lodge complaints by telephone, fax or e-mail. The CC was manned by staff of the EAC Secretariat and operated throughout the polling hours. Details on the work of the CC and the complaints received on the polling day and during the complaints-handling period are set out in **Chapter 13**.

Section 3 – The Poll

6.10 On the polling day, there were 110 OPSs in operation. All of the polling stations were accessible to voters with mobility difficulty or those who used wheelchairs. Apart from the OPSs, the REO set up 7 DPSs at the penal institutions of the CSD for voters imprisoned or remanded under the custody of the CSD and two DPSs at police stations for voters remanded or detained by the LEAs other than the CSD to cast their votes. Same as the OPSs, polling hours were from 7:30 am to 10:30 pm for the DPSs set up at the police stations. Owing to security reasons, polling hours for DPSs set up at the penal institutions of the CSD were from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. In general, the poll was smoothly conducted on the polling day.

6.11 On the voter turnout, a total of 107 841 voters cast their votes, which represented 46.53% of the 231 769 voters of contested subsectors. The turnout rate was higher than that of 27.60% in the 2011 ECSS Ordinary Elections. A breakdown of the turnout rate by subsector is shown at **Appendix VII**.

Section 4 – The Count

6.12 The counting of votes for the 25 contested subsectors/sub-subsectors was held at the CCS located at Halls 6, 8, and 10 of the AWE. 1 RO was designated as the Chief RO to supervise the overall operation of the CCS. There were 25 counting zones and each of them was supervised by the respective RO.

6.13 After the close of poll at 10:30 pm (4:00 pm for DPSs at the penal institutions of the CSD), all ballot boxes and electoral documents were delivered to the CCS by the PRO of each OPS and DPS under the escort of police officers and also candidates/agents arranged by the PRO. The first ballot box was opened by the RO at the CCS at around 12:45 am on 12 December 2016, and was emptied by the EAC Chairman and Members and the SCMA. Arrangements were made to sort the ballot papers by individual subsector/sub-subsector, then verify the actual number of ballot papers of each subsector/sub-subsector against the number in respective ballot paper account, deliver the sorted ballot papers to the counting zones of the relevant subsectors/sub-subsectors, and conduct initial screening to separate ballot papers to be scanned by OMR machines and those to be processed manually (i.e. those clearly invalid ballot papers and questionable ballot papers). Actual counting of each candidate's vote on the ballot papers was conducted at the OMR zone in the presence of the candidates and their agents.

6.14 Of the 107 841 ballot papers cast, 205 ballot papers were unmarked and, therefore, were clearly invalid and not to be counted pursuant to sections 74A(b) and 77(1)(f) of the EAC (EP) (EC) Reg. In addition, 886 ballot papers were identified by the ROs as questionable. In the presence of the candidates and their agents, the ROs concerned, with the assistance of the AROs (Legal), examined carefully the questionable ballot papers to determine their validity.

In the end, 551 questionable ballot papers were determined as invalid by the ROs and were not counted, including 153 ballot papers with writing or a mark by which the voter could possibly be identified, 348 ballot papers not marked in the manner as stipulated in section 56 of the EAC (EP) (EC) Reg⁶ and 50 ballot papers being void for uncertainty. The remaining 335 questionable ballot papers were determined as valid. These ballot papers were processed manually and counted as the relevant candidates' valid votes. An analysis of the ballot papers not counted is shown at **Appendix VIII**.

Section 5 – The Results

6.15 The completion time for counting of votes for each subsector/sub-subsector varied. The election result for the first subsector (i.e. the Hotel subsector) was announced at around 9:15 am on 12 December 2016 (the day following the polling day) while that for the last subsector (i.e. the Education subsector) was announced at around 2:45 pm on the same day. All election results were announced before 3:10 pm on 12 December 2016 and uploaded onto the election website. The entire counting process (from opening of the first ballot box up to the announcement of all results) took about 14 hours 25 minutes to complete. The election results of the 25 contested subsectors/sub-subsectors were published in the Gazette on 15 December 2016 which are reproduced at **Appendix IX** for easy reference.

Section 6 – EAC Visits

6.16 On the polling day, the Chairman and two Members of the EAC visited the polling stations in different districts respectively and proceeded to the

⁶ In accordance with section 56 of the EAC (EP) (EC) Reg, a voter or AR voting at a subsector ordinary election must mark the ballot paper by shading the ovals against the names of the candidates of his or her choice. A voter or AR may vote up to the number of EC members allocated to the subsector concerned.

CCC to closely monitor the progress and situation of the poll. Moreover, they met the media together at the polling station in the Quarry Bay Community Hall at around 11:20 am and the polling station in the Tung Tau Community Hall at around 5:30 pm to provide electoral statistics and answer questions from the media.

6.17 The Chairman and Members of the EAC monitored the opening of the first ballot box at the CCS and then emptied it with the SCMA. The EAC then met the media to provide the overall voter turnout and answer questions from the media. After completion of all counting work, the EAC met the media again to conclude the election. The EAC considered that both the poll and the count of the election were conducted and concluded smoothly in an open, fair and honest manner.