

CHAPTER 12

THE COUNT FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ELECTION

Section 1 – Set up of the Central Counting Station

12.1 The counting of votes was conducted at the CCS situated at Halls F and G on Level 5 of the HKCEC. The CCS comprised a counting zone and a MC with designated areas respectively for use by candidates, their election/counting agents and electioneering personnel, EC members, and the media. There was also a public area in the CCS for members of the public to observe the count and the RO's announcement of the election result. In order that those who did not sit near the counting zone could also observe the count clearly, large projector screens and TV monitors were set up to broadcast live the whole counting process. Moreover, a Meet-the-Press Area was set up for the CE-elect, the other two candidates, the EAC Chairman and Members to meet the press after the declaration of election result.

12.2 The REO adopted a series of security measures at the CCS to ensure that the counting of votes was conducted smoothly without any interruptions. To maintain order, House Rules were displayed at different locations inside the CCS as a reminder to those who were observing the count that it was an offence to display publicity materials relating to the candidates or election at the venue. As in the past, when entering the CCS, the candidates, their agents and electioneering personnel, EC members, etc. were all required to go through a bag search outside the entrance of the counting station before they were admitted into the designated areas. In case potentially dangerous items were found or items that were being carried into the venue could affect the count, impede the observation of the count or constitute a nuisance or danger to those

present, security guards would demand that the related items be deposited in the cloakrooms. As for members of the public and the media, they were required to go through both the bag search and metal detector scan at Hall F on Level 3 or on Level 4 before being arranged to enter the CCS on Level 5. Members of the public were also required to wear a designated wristband for identification purpose. All those who left the CCS were required to go through the relevant security check again before re-entering the CCS.

Section 2 – The Counting Arrangements

12.3 After the close of poll, the PRO of the main polling station delivered the two ballot boxes containing the ballot papers cast to the CCS under police escort. The ballot boxes at the DPSs at the Happy Valley Police Station and Pik Uk Correctional Institution were also delivered under police escort to the CCS for opening.

12.4 The count was conducted under the supervision of the RO. The candidates and their election/counting agents could observe the count outside the restricted zone surrounding the counting table. The ballot boxes were unsealed and opened by the RO on the counting table and the process was witnessed by all those present in the counting zone as well as broadcast live by the media through television or online platforms.

12.5 Counting staff placed the valid ballot papers in plastic transparent boxes labelled with the candidate number concerned on the counting table according to the choice marked by the EC members. They passed the clearly invalid ballot papers and questionable ballot papers to the CS (the CS also assumed the role of the PRO of the main polling station). The CS then placed these ballot papers in the corresponding plastic transparent boxes. There were

a total of 19 unmarked ballot papers in the ballot boxes. All these clearly invalid ballot papers were not counted.

Section 3 – Determination of Questionable Ballot Papers

12.6 Among the ballot papers cast in this CE Election, a total of 5 were identified as questionable. The RO, accompanied by the ARO (Legal), determined the validity of the questionable ballot papers in the presence of the candidates and their election/counting agents gathered in front of the questionable ballot paper determination table (“Q-Table”). During the process, for reasons of transparency and ease of inspection, the questionable ballot papers were projected onto a large screen individually with the aid of a visualiser. 4 ballot papers were determined as not valid and not to be counted, while 1 was determined as valid and was included in the number of votes obtained by the candidate concerned.

Section 4 – The Result of the Count

12.7 The count commenced at 12:00 noon and ended at about 1:10 pm. At the end of the count, the counting staff verified the ballot paper account by checking against the summation of all valid votes cast for individual candidates, as well as invalid ballot papers. After the ballot paper account was verified, the RO made known the following counting result to the candidates or their agents:

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>No. of valid votes obtained</u>
Candidate No. 1 – Mr TSANG Chun-wah, John	365
Candidate No. 2 – Mrs LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, Carrie	777
Candidate No. 3 – Mr WOO Kwok-hing	21

12.8 As no candidate had requested a re-count, the RO officially announced the election result at 1:25 pm. As Mrs LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, Carrie had obtained more than 600 valid votes (i.e. 777), the RO announced that Mrs LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, Carrie was elected as the fifth-term CE. The result was published in the Gazette on 26 March 2017.

12.9 A breakdown of the ballot papers (including valid, invalid and questionable ones) in the election is at **Appendix X**.

12.10 After completion of counting of votes and declaration of the election results, the RO immediately made up all the ballot papers into separate sealed packets in the presence of candidates, election agents/counting agents and EAC Members. The sealed packets, together with other election documents, were then sent to the CEO for safe custody according to the law.

Section 5 – EAC Visits

12.11 As in the other elections, the EAC Chairman and Members visited the main polling station and CCS to observe the polling and counting process. Before the commencement of the first round of voting, the EAC Chairman and Members arrived at the main polling station at around 8:00 am to ensure that preparatory work for the poll was in order. They then met the media. At

about 10:25 am, the EAC Chairman and Members visited the main polling station again to observe the conduct of the poll. After the close of the poll, at 12:00 noon, the RO opened and emptied the ballot boxes with the help of the EAC Chairman and Members, the SCMA and the Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs before the start of the count.

12.12 After the conclusion of the election, the candidates separately met the media. The EAC Chairman and Members subsequently met the media at around 4:10 pm at the Meet-the-Press Area inside the CCS. The Chairman expressed the EAC's satisfaction that the CE Election had been conducted in an open, fair and honest manner in accordance with the law. The Chairman also expressed his gratitude to all the parties concerned for the smooth conduct of the election.