

CHAPTER 12

THE COUNT FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ELECTION

Section 1 – Set up of the Central Counting Station cum Media Centre

12.1 The counting of votes was conducted at the CCS-cum-MC situated at Halls 3B to 3E on Level 3 of the HKCEC. The CCS-cum-MC comprised a counting zone for counting of votes and a media centre for announcement of election result. Designated areas were also set up inside the CCS-cum-MC for use by the candidate, his agents and electioneering personnel, EC members, the media and members of the public. To enable those not sitting near the counting zone to observe the count clearly, large screens and televisions were set up to broadcast live the whole counting process. Moreover, a Meet-the-Press Area was set up in the CCS-cum-MC for the CE-elect and the EAC Chairman to meet with the press after the declaration of the election result. Apart from the CE-elect and the press, electioneering personnel of the CE-elect could also enter the Meet-the-Press Area to participate in the relevant session.

12.2 The REO had adopted a series of security measures at the CCS-cum-MC to ensure that the counting of votes could be conducted smoothly without interruption. To maintain order, the REO displayed the House Rules at different locations inside the CCS-cum-MC as a reminder to those who were observing the count that it was an offence to display publicity materials relating to candidate or election inside the venue. Before entering the CCS-cum-MC, the candidate, his agents and electioneering personnel, EC members, the media and members of the public, were all required to go through security check in order to be 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. Members of the public and the media were also required to wear a designated wristband for identification purpose. All those who had left the CCS-cum-MC and wished to re-enter the venue were required to go through the relevant security check again.

Section 2 – The Counting Arrangements

12.3 After the close of poll, the PRO of the main polling station, together with the SCMA and the RO, delivered the 5 ballot boxes containing the ballot papers to the CCS-cum-MC under police escort. The ballot boxes from the DPS at the Happy Valley Police Station and the PBPS¹⁵ were also delivered under the escort of the respective PROs and police officers to the CCS-cum-MC for opening.

12.4 The count was conducted under the supervision of the RO. The candidate, his election agent and counting agents could observe the count in the designated area of the counting zone. The count commenced after ballot boxes from all polling stations were delivered to the counting zone. After the RO and two AROs had unsealed and opened the ballot boxes on the counting table, the Chairman and Members of the EAC, the SCMA, the Permanent Secretary for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs and the RO emptied the ballot boxes together.

12.5 After verifying the number of ballot papers from the DPS and the PBPS, ballot papers from all polling stations were mixed together to ensure the

¹⁵ Staff at the PBPS would disinfect the ballot papers in an ultraviolet light chamber before delivering them to the CCS-cum-MC.

secrecy of votes. Counting Officers then placed the valid ballot papers in transparent plastic boxes labelled as “SUPPORT” and “NOT SUPPORT” respectively on the counting table according to the choice marked by the EC members. During the process, any clearly invalid or questionable ballot papers spotted would be passed to the Assistant Counting Supervisors and be placed in the corresponding transparent plastic boxes on the counting table. The RO and the ARO (Legal) then checked and confirmed the classification of each of the invalid and questionable ballot papers. After the Counting Officers counted the number of valid “SUPPORT” and “NOT SUPPORT” votes, they proceeded to count the number of clearly invalid and questionable ballot papers. There was no questionable ballot paper in this CE Election and a total of 4 clearly invalid ballot papers which were all unmarked. These 4 clearly invalid ballot papers were not counted. The count was under the witness of all those present and was broadcast live by the media on television or online platforms.

12.6 The count commenced at 11:57 am and ended at 12:20 pm. It took 23 minutes to complete the count and the process was very smooth.

Section 3 – The Result of the Count

12.7 At the end of the count, the counting staff compared the number of valid “SUPPORT” and “NOT SUPPORT” votes obtained by the candidate and the total number of invalid ballot papers, with the ballot paper account of the main polling station so as to verify the number of ballot papers from the main polling station. After the number of ballot papers was verified, the RO informed the candidate and his agents of the following counting result:

<u>The Sole Candidate</u>	<u>No. of Valid “SUPPORT” Vote</u>
Mr John LEE Ka-chiu	1 416

12.8 With no request for a re-count from the candidate, the RO announced the election result at 12:28 pm. As Mr John LEE Ka-chiu had obtained more than 750 valid “SUPPORT” votes (i.e. 1 416), the RO announced that Mr John LEE Ka-chiu was elected as the sixth-term CE. The election result was published in the Gazette on 8 May 2022.

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

12.10 After completion of counting of votes and declaration of the election result, the RO immediately made up all the ballot papers into separate sealed packets. The sealed packets, together with other election documents, had been delivered to the CEO for safe custody according to the law.

Section 4 – EAC Visits

12.11 As in other elections, the Chairman and Members of the EAC visited the main polling station and the CCS-cum-MC to observe the polling and counting process. Before the commencement of the voting, the Chairman and Members of the EAC arrived at the main polling station at around 7:30 am to ensure that preparatory work for the poll was in order. They then met with the media. At 9:00 am, they visited the main polling station again to observe the commencement of the poll.

12.12 After the conclusion of the election, the CE-elect met with the media. The Chairman and Members of the EAC met with the media at around 1:45 pm at the Meet-the-Press Area inside the CCS-cum-MC. The EAC Chairman expressed satisfaction that the election had been conducted in a fair, open and honest manner in accordance with the law, and thanked all parties concerned for their joint efforts that made the smooth completion of the poll and count of the election.