

CHAPTER 2

THE DELINEATION EXERCISE

Section 1 : Statutory Criteria for Delineation

2.1 The Commission drew up its recommendations in accordance with the criteria stipulated under section 20 of the EACO. These criteria are recapitulated below:

- (a) The EAC shall ensure that the population in each proposed DCCA is as near the population quota as practicable. “Population quota” means the figure arrived at by dividing the total population of Hong Kong by the total number of elected members to be returned in the DC ordinary election.
- (b) Where it is not practicable to comply with (a) in a certain proposed DCCA, the EAC shall ensure that the population in that DCCA does not exceed or fall short of the population quota by more than 25%.
- (c) The EAC shall have regard to the community identities, preservation of local ties, and the physical features (such as the size, shape, accessibility and development) of the area.

- (d) The EAC may depart from strict application of (a) and (b) above only where it appears that one or more of the considerations in (c) above render such a departure necessary or desirable.

- (e) The EAC must follow the existing boundaries of the districts and the number of elected members to be returned to a DC as specified in Schedules 1 and 3 of the District Councils Ordinance (“DCO”) (Cap. 547) respectively.

2.2 For this delineation exercise, the population quota was 16,964 (7,311,300, being the projected population of Hong Kong as at 30 June 2015 provided by the Administration (see paragraph 2.5 below) divided by 431, being the total number of elected members to be returned to DCs in the 2015 DC ordinary election after the addition of 19 elected seats, i.e. $7,311,300 \div 431$). Consequently, the permissible range of deviation from the population quota (referred to in paragraph 2.1 (b) above) of a DCCA is from 12,723 to 21,205.

Section 2 : Working Principles

2.3 The Commission also adopted a set of working principles for the delineation exercise:

- (a) For existing DCCAs where the population falls within the

permissible range of 12,723 to 21,205, their boundaries will be maintained as far as possible.

- (b) For existing DCCAs where the population falls outside the permissible range, but the situation was allowed for the 2011 DC election and the justifications continue to be valid, their boundaries will be maintained as far as possible.
- (c) Other than (b) above, for existing DCCAs where the population falls outside the permissible range, adjustments will be made to their boundaries (unless there are justifications for maintaining their boundaries on grounds of community identities, preservation of local ties and/or physical features) and also those of adjacent DCCAs so that their populations stay within the permissible range. Where there is more than one way to adjust the boundaries of the DCCAs concerned, the one which affects the least number of existing DCCAs will be adopted, otherwise the one with the least departure from the population quota will be used.
- (d) Factors with political implications will not be taken into consideration.
- (e) The names of the new DCCAs to be formed are proposed by reference to major features, roads or residential settlements in the DCCAs after consultation with the relevant District

Officers (“DOs”) of the Home Affairs Department (“HAD”).

- (f) The Commission’s provisional recommendations on the code references of districts and constituency areas are that the districts should be given the alphabetical reference from “A” onwards, with the omission of “I” and “O” to prevent confusion, starting from Central and Western District and other districts on Hong Kong Island, followed by the districts in Kowloon and the New Territories. The numbering of constituency areas in a district is to be prefixed by the alphabetical reference for the district and starts from the first numeral. The number “01” should be allocated to the most densely populated area, or the area traditionally considered most important or prominent or the centre of the district, and the number be proceeded consecutively in a clockwise direction so that as far as possible, two consecutive numbers should be found in two areas contiguous to each other. The code reference does not have any bearing on the delineation of DCCA boundaries but, with the adoption of this system, it is hoped that any one who consults the maps would find it easier to understand them and locate the constituency areas. These methods have been adopted since 1994 and the public should be generally familiar with them.
- (g) Where the constituency boundaries have to continue into the sea to align with the district boundary, the DCCA boundary

lines are, as far as possible, drawn perpendicular to the district boundary lines on the sea.

Section 3 : Working Partners

2.4 The EAC Secretariat, staffed by designated personnel of the Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”), assisted the Commission in carrying out the exercise.

2.5 As in the past, an Ad Hoc Subgroup (“AHSB”), formed under the Working Group on Population Distribution Projections set up in the Planning Department (“PlanD”), took up the primary task of providing the Commission with the necessary population forecasts, the most essential information required for the conduct of the exercise. The AHSB was chaired by an Assistant Director of the PlanD and comprised representatives from Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (“CMAB”), Census and Statistics Department, Housing Department (“HD”), Lands Department (“LandsD”), Rating and Valuation Department, the HAD and REO. To ensure that the forecasts can cater for the 2015 DC ordinary election, the AHSB was requested to project the population distribution figures as at a date as close to the election date as practicable. For this reason, AHSB drew reference to the practice in past exercises and provided a population forecast as at 30 June 2015, assuming that the DC ordinary election would be held in November 2015.

2.6 The LandsD rendered assistance in producing maps showing projected population figures and district and DCCA boundaries and the boundary descriptions for use by the Commission in the boundary delineation exercise.

2.7 According to the statutory criteria, the EAC needs to have regard to the community identities, preservation of local ties, and the physical features (such as the size, shape, accessibility and development) of the relevant areas when formulating its recommendations on the boundaries of DCCAs. In order to have a better understanding of the community characteristics and local features, where necessary, the EAC invited the DOs to provide factual information in relation to community identities, local ties, and physical features and developments in the DCCAs based on their knowledge about their respective districts. The information was taken into consideration when formulating proposals for delineation of boundaries.

2.8 The Information Services Department (“ISD”) gave expert advice for mapping out the publicity strategy and ideas for designing the publicity programmes and materials for the consultation exercise.

Section 4 : The Work Process

Start of work

2.9 The AHSB held its first meeting in May 2013 to work out the

method to be adopted for compiling the data and the work schedule. In late December 2013 the forecast population figures were made available, on the basis of which the LandsD prepared the maps for each district. When these maps were ready, the EAC Secretariat proceeded to work on the preliminary proposals for delineation of boundaries.

Site visits

2.10 Since physical features such as the size, shape, accessibility and development of an area were important considerations in the delineation work, in order to gain first-hand information on areas where the geographical situations might impact on the delineation of constituency boundaries, the staff of the EAC Secretariat conducted site visits as required to identify the unique physical features, transport facilities and accessibility of the DCCAs concerned. Relevant information and topographical facts so gathered were analysed and taken into account in drawing up the preliminary proposals.

Meetings to deliberate and formulate proposals

2.11 When the staff of the EAC Secretariat had finalised their preliminary recommendations on the boundaries and names of the DCCAs, meetings were convened to present the proposals to the Commission for consideration with the aid of maps and photographs to facilitate better understanding of the local features and the environment of

the DCCAs concerned. Information gathered from site visits and provided by DOs was also submitted to the Commission for reference.

Provisional proposal

2.12 In the EAC's provisional recommendations, the boundaries of 111 DCCAs had to be changed and 24 DCCAs were renamed. The EAC allowed 21 DCCAs to exceed the permissible limits of the population quota for one reason or the other. The proposed boundaries and names of the DCCAs requiring adjustments and those allowed to exceed the permissible limits as well as the EAC's relevant considerations were set out in the consultative documents.

2.13 After the EAC had come up with the provisional recommendations on the boundaries of the DCCAs, the EAC Secretariat started to prepare for the launch of a public consultation exercise on the EAC's provisional proposal for the period from 26 June 2014 to 25 July 2014. Details of the provisional recommendations were contained in two volumes published for the public consultation exercise.