

## CHAPTER 2

### THE DEMARCATION EXERCISE

#### *Before Public Consultation*

#### **Section 1 : Statutory Criteria for Demarcation**

2.1 The Commission adopted a set of criteria, as stipulated by section 20 of the EACO, as the basis for making its recommendations.

These criteria are –

- (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 DCs 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, development, etc) of the area.

- (d) 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 (Cap 547).
- (e) The EAC may depart from strict adherence to (a) and (b) only where it appears that considerations referred to in (c) justify such departure.

2.2 After the increase of ten elected seats for the second term DCs, the number of constituencies to be delineated for the 2003 DCs ordinary election is 400. A list of DCCs is at **Appendix I**.

2.3 For this demarcation exercise, the population quota was 17,635 before the increase in the number of elected seats, ie 6,877,553 (the projected population of Hong Kong as at 30 June 2003 provided by the Administration (see paragraph 2.6)) divided by 390 (the total number of elected members to be returned to DCs in the 2003 ordinary election). After the increase in the number of elected seats, the population quota is 17,194, ie  $6,877,553 \div 400$ . Consequently the permissible range of deviation referred to in paragraph 2.1 (b) above of the population of a DCCA from the population quota is 12,896 - 21,493 while it was previously 13,226 - 22,044.

## **Section 2 : Working Principles**

2.4 The Commission also adopted a set of working principles for the demarcation exercise –

- (a) For those existing DCCAs where the population falls within the permissible range of 12,896 - 21,493, their boundaries will not be changed.
- (b) For those existing DCCAs where the population falls outside the permissible range, but the situation was allowed for the 1999 ordinary election and the justifications have remained valid, their boundaries will not be changed.
- (c) For those existing DCCAs other than those in (b) where the population falls outside the permissible range, their boundaries will be adjusted for compliance with the population quota requirement. This may necessitate revising the boundaries of the adjoining DCCAs. 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, or the one with the least departure from the population quota will be adopted.
- (d) Factors with political implications will not be taken into consideration.

- (e) The names of the new DCCAs to be formed are coined by making reference to major landmarks, roads or residential settlements in the DCCAs after consultation with the relevant District Officers (“DOs”).
  
- (f) The Commission’s provisional recommendations on the code references of districts and constituency areas were 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 on Hong Kong Island, followed by the districts in Kowloon and the New Territories. The numbering of constituency areas in a district was to be prefixed by the alphabet reference for the district and started from the first numeral. “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 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 Commission hoped that by adopting this system, any one who consults the maps would find it easier to understand them and locate the constituency areas. These methods were employed since 1994 and the public should be generally familiar with them.

- (g) When constituency boundaries had to continue into the sea, the DCCA boundary lines were, as far as possible, drawn perpendicular to the district boundary lines on the sea.
- (h) Suggestions and comments from members of the public received since the last demarcation exercise will be taken into consideration and, where appropriate, accepted.

The criteria and working principles mentioned above were also adopted for the demarcation exercise for the 1999 DCs election.

### **Section 3 : Working Partners**

2.5 The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”), being the executive arm of the Commission, provided the manpower required for carrying out the exercise.

2.6 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 a number of bureaux and departments, including the Constitutional Affairs Bureau (“CAB”), Financial Services and the

Treasury Bureau, Census and Statistics Department, Home Affairs Department (“HAD”), Housing Department (“HD”), Lands Department (“LandsD”), Marine Department, Rating and Valuation Department and the REO. To enhance the accuracy of the result produced, the AHSG was requested to project the population distribution figures as at a date as close to the election date as practicable. The AHSG provided a population forecast as at 30 June 2003, assuming that the DCs ordinary election would be held in November 2003.

2.7 The LandsD rendered assistance in producing maps for the Commission, including the base maps (maps with street blocks, population figure in each block, existing DCCA boundaries and district boundaries) and maps with the proposed DCCA boundaries, and boundary descriptions. The LandsD also helped by making films of the maps for printing purposes.

2.8 The District Offices of the HAD provided strong support in the demarcation exercise. Input from the DOs was sought in view of their local knowledge about the community identities, local ties, and physical developments in the DCCAs in their districts.

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

## **Section 4 : The Work Process**

### ***Start of work***

2.10 The AHSG held its first meeting in early January 2002 to work out the method to be adopted for compiling the data and the work schedule. In mid-April 2002 the forecast population figures were made available, on the basis of which the LandsD prepared the base maps. When these base maps were ready, the REO staff proceeded to work on the preliminary proposed delineation of the boundaries.

### ***EAC meetings with the DOs***

2.11 When the REO staff had finalised their preliminary recommendations on the boundaries and names of the DCCAs, they presented them to the Commission for consideration. The Commission invited all the DOs, who are familiar with the local circumstances, to attend a series of meetings in mid-June 2002 to discuss the proposals relating to their district.

### ***Revising the initial proposal***

2.12 On the basis of the Commission's decisions on the initial demarcation proposals, the REO staff proceeded to prepare for the public consultation exercise, which was originally scheduled for September - October 2002. However, as a result of the addition of ten elected seats

for three districts the population quota was lowered from 17,635 to 17,194. This resulted in many DCCAs having their population deviating beyond the permissible range referred to in paragraph 2.3 and therefore the initial demarcation proposals had to be revised.

2.13 The REO staff went through the initial proposals and noted that those relating to six districts could remain unchanged because their population deviations were still within the new permissible limits, despite the new population quota. These six districts were: Wan Chai, Eastern, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po, Tsuen Wan and Tai Po. The staff then proceeded to work on the other 12 districts and consulted the DOs on the revised proposals. Thereafter the proposals were presented to the Commission for consideration. In mid-November 2002 the Commission invited the 12 DOs concerned again to a series of meetings to discuss the revised proposals relating to their district.

2.14 After the EAC had come up with the provisional recommendations, the REO staff started to make the necessary preparation for the public consultation exercise, launched for a period of 30 days, from 6 January to 4 February 2003.

2.15 In the provisional recommendations, the boundaries of 182 DCCAs had to be changed and 47 DCCAs were renamed. The EAC allowed the permissible limits of the population quota to be exceeded in 16 DCCAs for one reason or the other. The names of these DCCAs, the percentages of deviation and the reasons for allowing the



permissible limits to be exceeded are shown in **Appendix II**. Details of the provisional recommendations were contained in two volumes published for the public consultation exercise.