

## CHAPTER 4

### WORK OF THE COMMISSION

4.1 The Members of the Commission were appointed on 29 September 1997, and because of the statutory deadline in the submission of the report on delineation of the LegCo GCs being 31 October 1997 [s 18(3)(a)], the Commission carried out its work with the greatest expedition allowable in the circumstances. Fortunately, it has had the dedicated, efficient and rapid support of the Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) headed by the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr LI Wing.

4.2 Another thing that greatly assisted the speed of the Commission’s work on demarcation was that even before the appointment of the Commission’s Members, population forecasts in respect of Hong Kong and each of the DBCAs as at March 1998 had been prepared by the Ad Hoc Subgroup (“the Ad Hoc Subgroup”) under the Working Group on Population Distribution. The population forecasts were provided to the Commission by the Ad Hoc Subgroup which was chaired by the Assistant Director of Planning/Housing and Land Supply of the Planning Department with members who were representatives from various Government bureaux and departments, namely, Constitutional Affairs Bureau, Financial Services Bureau, REO, Census and Statistics Department, Home Affairs Department, Housing Department, Lands Department, Marine Department and Rating and Valuation Department. A copy of the population forecasts is at **Appendix I**.

4.3 The Commission was satisfied with the methodology used by the

Ad Hoc Subgroup in arriving at the population forecasts and saw no reason to differ or depart from the forecasts. The Commission therefore adopted the population forecast figures as its own estimate of the population of Hong Kong and of the DBCAs in 1998, which is the year in which the LegCo general election is to be held.

4.4 As DBCAs are the building blocks of LegCo GCs, the work of the Commission was mainly to group the DBCAs in an appropriate manner to form each of the required 5 LegCo GCs (“LCCAs”).

4.5 After due consideration of the population figures provided by the Ad Hoc Subgroup and following the statutory criteria, the Commission completed its provisional recommendations for public consultation. The Lands Department with its Survey and Mapping Office and the Government Printer were requested to prepare maps showing the boundaries of the provisionally determined LCCAs (“PDCAs”). They accomplished that task speedily and efficiently. A list of PDCAs, together with the component Districts and DBCAs of each PDCA, and a map showing the PDCA boundaries were exhibited and available for public inspection at various places for 14 days during the period from 11 to 24 October 1997, in accordance with section 19(1) and (9)(a) of the EAC Ordinance. The list was complete with the estimated population, the recommended name, the code reference numbers and the number of seats of each of the PDCAs.

4.6 On 11 October 1997, the Commission issued a press release and gave a press briefing for the purposes of informing the public that the Commission had provisionally determined its recommendations and inviting the public to make representations on the PDCAs. Also on the same day, a

notice was published in the Gazette inviting the public to make representations to the Commission on its provisional recommendations within a period of 14 days from 11 to 24 October 1997 which is the time allowed by section 19(9)(b) of the EAC Ordinance, and for public meetings to be held in the period between 14 and 21 October 1997 by prior appointment with the Commission for receiving oral and written representations. Publicity to invite public representations was also given in various media to enhance public awareness of the issue. A copy of the Gazette Notice is at **Appendix II** and a copy each of the advertisements in both Chinese and English in several local newspapers of wide circulation can be found in **Appendix III**.

4.7 The Commission decided that it was desirable to hold meetings only by prior appointment with individuals or organisations who wished to meet with the Commission for making representations, and such meetings were open to the public. The Commission felt that meetings with the public at large for receiving representations which are not by prior appointment would not, as compared with meetings by appointment, be as convenient to the public, economical or useful. As a result, only public meetings by prior appointments with those who wished to make representations were held.

4.8 Timetables were prepared from time to time based on the appointments for meetings made with the REO for the purpose of providing the same, as far as practicable, to all the persons or organisations who had made the appointments and the media, so as to facilitate all concerned if they wished to attend the meetings. This was to ensure as much transparency as circumstances permitted.

4.9 As can be seen in **Appendix III**, in the publicity materials, the

Commission appealed to the public that not only those who were dissatisfied, but also those who were satisfied, with the Commission's provisional recommendations should come forward and make their views known. This would enable the Commission to receive opposing or conflicting views and ensure that those who might be affected by any possible alteration made consequential upon a certain representation would not be so affected without having an opportunity of addressing the Commission.

4.10 Public representations, both in writing and made orally at public meetings, were submitted to the Commission by the statutory deadlines of 24 October 1997. The REO very helpfully and quickly collated, analysed, translated and summarised the representations for the Commission's use. A copy each of the written representations and the minutes of the public meetings summarising all the views expressed thereat can be found in Appendix IV.

4.11 The majority of the representations was in connection with the allocation of some DBCAs in the Yuen Long District into the New Territories East PDCA. Members of the Commission considered that it would be beneficial to pay a visit to the Yuen Long District in order to have a better understanding of the situation in the affected areas. A visit was therefore paid on 23 October 1997 during which the Commission mainly examined the following matters:

- (a) the transportation links between the affected DBCAs with the rest of the Yuen Long District;
- (b) the geographical features of the north-western boundaries of the Yuen Long District; and
- (c) the strength of the feeling of the local inhabitants about

community identities and local ties, if that could be detected.

4.12 The Commission's recommendations as set out in Chapter 6 of this report are made after it has fully taken into account and deliberated upon the representations.