

Section 4 – The Count

Commencement of count

4.1 The first ballot box arrived at the counting station in Hall 7B on Level 7 of the HKCEC at about 11 pm after the close of poll. This box was opened by the Secretary for Constitutional Affairs (“SCA”) and the three EAC Members. The EAC Chairman and Members met the media after the SCA had done the same. At the same time, ballot boxes arriving from other polling stations were immediately directed by staff at the entrance of the station to be sent to the relevant counting zones. This proved to be a faster process as compared with that adopted for the general election, when the ballot boxes were first deposited in the “ballot box deposit area” before being dispersed to the relevant counting zones. When ballot papers from two polling stations were available on one counting table, the ballot papers were mixed and the counting of the votes marked on them commenced.

Other facilities inside the counting station

4.2 Adjacent to the counting station was the press area where the press and other media staff assembled to cover the count. The electoral information system, once used in the general election, was also installed on the premises, keeping those present posted with the relevant information regarding the by-election. There was also the public area where the candidates, their agents and members of the general public could stay during the count. Candidates and their agents were allowed to be present around the counting tables to observe the count at a close distance.

Questionable ballot papers

4.3 The RO, in the presence of the relevant parties, determined the questionable ballot papers as and when they were identified. Examples of valid and invalid ballot papers were displayed at conspicuous spots in the counting hall to help candidates and their agents better understand the yardstick for determining the validity of questionable ballot papers. Of the 208,709 ballot papers cast, 685 were determined not valid. A breakdown

of the rejected ballot papers is at **Appendix II**.

Result

4.4 The count took approximately five and a half hours to complete.

The first segment count result was announced at about 12.45 am on 11

December. At about 4.25 am the election result was announced. Ms

Audrey EU Yuet-mee was elected, with 108,401 votes (representing about

52% of the total number of valid votes cast). The election result was

published in the Gazette on 13 December 2000. It is shown in **Appendix**

III.