

Information Note

**Electoral Affairs Commission's Draft Guidelines
for the District Council Elections in 1999**

To help the public understand the electoral procedures in the District Council elections to be held in late 1999, the Electoral Affairs Commission ("EAC") will, as usual, issue Guidelines that cover all practical aspects of the elections. In accordance with the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance, EAC is required to consult the public on these guidelines. Based on feedback from the public, EAC will make the Electoral Procedure Regulation (the "Regulation") to provide the legal framework to regulate the practical procedures of the elections.

2. To ensure that the Regulation can go through negative vetting by the Legislative Council before the Council goes into recess after 14 July, the Regulation must be published in the Gazette not later than early June. Working backward, EAC has to publish the draft Guidelines in mid April 1999 so that there can be a one-month public consultation period. EAC will then draft the Regulation based on the feedback collected.

3. We believe members of the Bills Committee on Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Bill would agree in principle that the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Bill should, if possible, apply to the District Council Elections to be held in late 1999. As a result, EAC will reflect in the draft Guidelines (to be published in mid April 1999) various provisions of the Bill in addition to the existing Corrupt and Illegal Practices Ordinance. Nevertheless, it will be explained clearly in the draft Guidelines that the Bill is being scrutinized by the Bills Committee and has yet to be enacted and its provisions are subject to amendments by the Legislative Council. EAC plans to publish the finalized Guidelines in early September so that prospective candidates can have sufficient time to study them.

Constitutional Affairs Bureau
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