

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs
1998/99 Voter Registration Exercise

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the arrangements for the 1998/99 voter registration (VR) exercise.

Background

2. The general electoral roll has to be updated annually in accordance with the requirements in the Legislative Council Ordinance (“LCO”) and the relevant Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) Regulation^{Note 1}. At present, the general electoral roll stands at 2.795 million, representing a registration rate of 70%. For 1999, the final register should be published on or before 31 March 1999 to reflect the updated electors’ information and new entries up to 16 January 1999.

The VR Exercise

3. A VR exercise will be conducted in mid-December 1998 to January 1999 to register new electors and update electors’ information on the general electoral roll. The publicity activities will target mainly at young people and residents of newly completed residential development. The final registers to be published in March 1999 should form the basis for the compilation of voter registers for future elections including the District Council elections to be held in late 1999.

^{Note 1} Electoral Affairs Commission (Registration of Electors)(Geographical Constituencies) (Legislative Council) Regulation

4. The VR exercise will be launched at a special TV programme to be broadcast on 18 December 1998 and last until the close of registration period on 16 January 1999. A host of publicity activities will be held during the period at both the central and district levels.

5. At the **central level**, there will be a variety of publicity items such as special television/radio programmes, announcements in the public interest (APIs), advertisements, posters and banners. To target at young people at the age group of 18 to 24 which is the group with the lowest registration rate, more innovative publicity channels will also be used e.g. interactive computer games, advertising on the internet and promotion through government homepages on the internet. A promotion kit containing information relating to the VR will be distributed to young people. In addition, a hotline service will be provided by the Registration and Electoral Office to answer public enquiries concerning VR.

6. At the **district level**, household visits will be conducted in areas with newly completed residential development. Temporary registration counters will be set up in places frequented by young people, e.g. major shopping arcades, tertiary education institutions and youth centres. Special appeal would be made to community leaders, persons-in-charge of youth centres, and heads of tertiary education institutions to rally their support for the VR exercise. A slogan competition will be organised to invite members of the public to submit slogans relating to voter registration and elections.

Constitutional Affairs Bureau

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