

**立法會**  
*Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(1) 462/98-99

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting on 13 November 1998**

**Committee on Rules of Procedure**

**Report on the Consultation Exercise  
on the Timing for Commencement of Legislative Sessions**

**Purpose**

This paper informs members of the House Committee the views of Members of the Legislative Council expressed in a recent consultation exercise on the timing for the commencement of legislative sessions in the current and subsequent terms.

**Background**

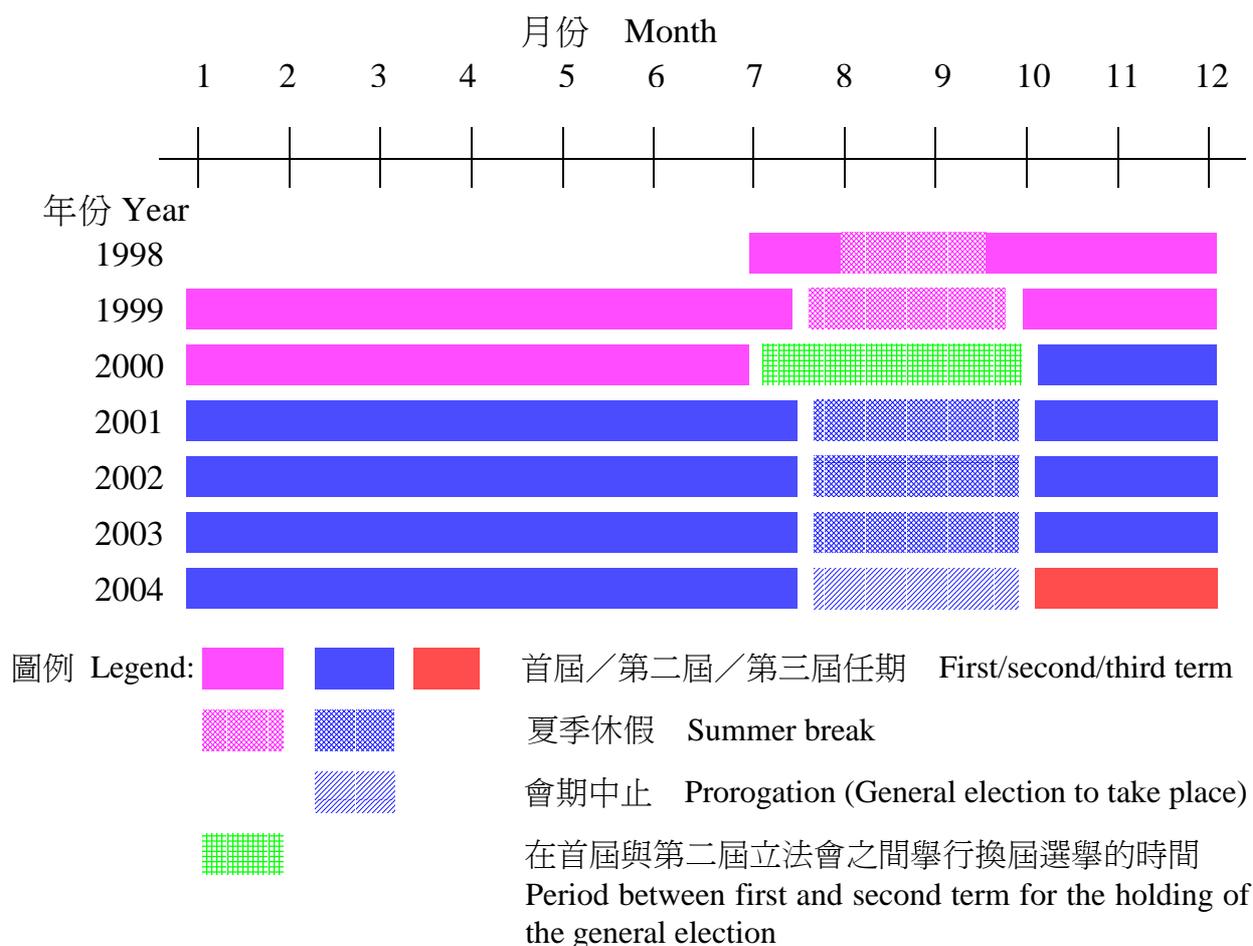
2. In October 1998, the Committee on Rules of Procedure (the Committee) consulted Members on the timing for the commencement of sessions in a Legislative Council term, in order that Members' views could be made known to the Administration before it determines the timing for the commencement of sessions and for general elections. The Committee issued a consultation paper to all Members on 9 October 1998 (LC Paper No. CB(1) 294/98-99) and invited Members to indicate their preference on the options proposed in the paper.

**Outcome of the consultation**

3. A total of 58 Members responded. Their views on the options are summarized as follows:

- (a) The first meeting of a session to tie in with the delivery of the Policy Address
- (i) Support 32 Members
  - (ii) Do not support 2 Members
  - (iii) No strong views 6 Members
  - (iv) No particular preference 18 Members
- (b) Legislative sessions in current term
- (i) **Option 1A:** 3 Members  
1998-99 session to end in June 1999 and 1999-2000 session to commence in July 1999 (and the term to end on 30 June 2000)
  - (ii) **Option 1B:** 53 Members  
1998-99 session to end in July 1999 and 1999-2000 session to commence in October 1999 (and the term to end on 30 June 2000)
  - (iii) No particular preference 2 Members
- (c) Legislative sessions in subsequent terms
- (i) **Option 2A:** 1 Members  
All sessions to commence in July and end on 30 June the following year, with a summer break of six weeks in August/September
  - (ii) **Option 2B:** 17 Members  
First session to commence in July and end in the following July, and subsequent sessions to commence in October and end in July the following year except the last session which is to end on 30 June
  - (iii) **Option 2C:** 38 Members  
All sessions to commence in October and end in July the following year, except the last session which is to end in September the following year
  - (iv) No particular preference 2 Members

4. The results of the consultation exercise indicate that most Members are in favour of a new session commencing in October to tie in with the delivery of the Policy Address, and the session ending in July of the following year, allowing a break of not more than three months between sessions. Under this arrangement, the first term of the Legislative Council will end on 30 June 2000, after which a general election will take place. The second term will commence in October 2000 and end in September 2004, and the Council will be prorogued in July/August 2004 to enable the general election to take place. An illustration of the arrangement is given below:



### Follow-up actions

5. As the decision on the commencement and ending of a legislative session rests with the Chief Executive (section 9 of the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542) refers), the Committee will inform the Administration of Members' preferences. The outcome of the consultation exercise will also facilitate the Administration in deciding on the timing for general elections.

6. Subject to the Administration's views in this respect, the Committee will examine what amendments should be made to the Rules of Procedure and report to the Council in due course.

### **Acknowledgement**

7. The Committee wishes to record its appreciation of the prompt response of Members of the Council in the consultation exercise.

Legislative Council Secretariat

11 November 1998