

**For discussion on
30 September 2015**

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Issues Concerning Voter Registration

Introduction

This paper briefs Members on (a) the existing voter registration (VR) system; (b) the checking measures taken in the 2015 VR cycle; (c) the follow-up actions taken by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) on the objections and complaints lodged during the 2015 VR cycle; (d) the statistics relating to the 2015 registers of electors; and (e) the concerns expressed recently by the members of the public on matters relating to VR and the relevant directions of review.

Voter Registration System

2. In Hong Kong, voting right¹ is a fundamental right safeguarded by the Basic Law and VR is voluntary. Persons fulfilling the relevant criteria² may apply for registration as electors for the geographical constituency (GC) according to their only or principal residence in Hong Kong. Registered GC electors may vote at the respective District Council (DC) constituency and Legislative Council (LegCo) GC. On the other hand, GC electors eligible for registration in the respective functional constituency (FC) and/or Election Committee subsector (ECSS)

1 According to Article 26 of the Basic Law, permanent residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall have the right to vote and the right to stand for election in accordance with law. Article 21 of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights (HKBOR) under the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance (Cap. 383) (HKBORO) recognises and protects the right and opportunity of every permanent resident to take part in the conduct of public affairs, the right to vote and to be elected, and the right to have access to public service, without discrimination and unreasonable restrictions.

2 Under sections 27 to 31 of the Legislative Council Ordinance (Cap. 542), a person is qualified for registration as an elector and is entitled to vote at the DC and LegCo elections only if he fulfills the following conditions that he:

- (a) is aged 18 or above;
- (b) is a permanent resident of Hong Kong;
- (c) at the time of applying for registration, ordinarily resides in Hong Kong and the residential address in his application for registration is his only or principal residence in Hong Kong;
- (d) holds an identity document; and
- (e) is not subject to any disqualification from registration.

may also apply for registration and vote at the respective FC and/or ECSS election. The VR system and arrangements stated in this paper is applicable to the VR work for DC, LegCo GC and FC, as well as ECSS.

3. The Government all along attaches great importance to the integrity, impartiality, fairness and openness of the electoral system. In order to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the registers of electors, the existing design of VR system comprises the following components and flow of work:

(a) **Applicants' declaration:** The existing VR system is based on the principles of honest reporting and facilitation for electors. When an applicant applies for registration as an elector or when a registered elector applies for change of his registration particulars, he must declare in the application form that the particulars he provided are true and accurate;

(b) **REO's verification procedures:** When processing an application, appropriate checking and verification processes will be taken by the REO to ensure that the registration particulars are accurate³. In addition, the REO has since 2012 implemented a number of enhanced checking measures. These measures include conducting cross-matching exercises with other Government departments; conducting random sampling checks on all electors in Hong Kong; and conducting checks on multiple electors or multiple surnames of electors at the same registered residential address so as to enhance the credibility of the VR system and the accuracy of the information in the registers of electors; and

3 Upon receipt of the application forms, the REO will check if the information (including Hong Kong identity card number, name and residential address) provided is complete before entering the relevant information into the computer system. If the information provided in the application form is incomplete, e.g., the address is incomplete, staff members of the REO will contact the applicant concerned for clarification or request him to provide supplementary information. After completing the data input, the REO will pass the identity card number of the applicant to the Immigration Department for checking of the important personal particulars such as the applicant's permanent resident status and name to further verify his eligibility to be registered as an elector. A registration notice will be issued to the applicant once the above checking and verification processes are completed. The arrangements will facilitate electors to check their own registration particulars and notify the REO for correction as soon as possible if the entries are found inaccurate.

- (c) **Transparent public inspection and mechanism for making claims and objections:** Every year before the publication of the final registers (FR), the REO will make available the provisional registers (PR) and the omissions lists (OL) for public inspection by the statutory deadlines. The launch of the Online Voter Information Enquiry System (OVIES) in September 2014 has further provided electors with a simple and quick means to check their registration particulars. In addition to the OVIES, electors may also ascertain their registration status or particulars through the REO's telephone hotline (2891 1001). The public may lodge claims and objections against the entries in the PR or the OL before the statutory deadlines. In accordance with the law, all cases of claims and objections shall be referred to an independent Revising Officer (RO) for ruling. The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) will correct, add or delete entries in compiling the FR according to the rulings by the RO.

The above VR system aims to strike a right balance between the need to ensure the fairness, credibility and accuracy of the electoral system, and the need to enable and facilitate eligible persons to register as electors and exercise their rights to vote.

4. After the 2011 DC Election, there were complaints and media reports on suspected cases of electors using false addresses for VR. To address public concerns about the accuracy of electors' registered addresses, the Government conducted a review on the VR system between late 2011 and March 2012 and sought views from the LegCo as well as the public on the matter. The REO started implementing the enhanced checking measures⁴ from early 2012 onwards so as to maintain the credibility of the VR system and enhance the accuracy of the particulars contained in the registers of electors. In addition, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau issued the Consultation Paper on Improvement Measures of the Voter Registration System⁵ on 16 January 2012 to consult the public on the proposed further

4 The enhancement measures for VR included:

- (a) enhanced checking performed by the REO;
- (b) strengthening of publicity measures;
- (c) additional checks on lists of buildings already or to be demolished; and
- (d) enhanced cross-matching with other Government departments on the registered addresses of electors.

5 LegCo Panel on Constitutional Affairs held a special meeting to discuss the "Consultation Paper on Improvement Measures of the Voter Registration System" on 17 February 2012 and met with the representatives from the relevant groups and Government officials.

enhancement measures. The consultation ended on 2 March 2012. In light of the reservation expressed by the public and the LegCo Members, the Government decided not to pursue some of the proposed measures, including the proposed requirement for address proof and the proposed penalty concerning address updating. The relevant decision has struck a balance between the need for maintaining the accuracy of the registers of electors and avoiding causing too much inconvenience to the electors. The proposal of setting out electors in the registers according to their principal residential addresses was implemented in 2012. The proposed amendment of statutory deadlines for VR and making offences of providing false information on VR as indictable offences were implemented through the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2014 which was enacted by the LegCo on 10 July 2014. The results of the public consultation in 2012, the final position of Government on the proposed measures and the follow-up actions are set out in **Annex 1**. Apart from the measures above, the REO launched the OVIES on 1 September 2014 to facilitate the public to check whether they are registered electors and accuracy of their registration particulars. The public may log on to the system (www.voterinfo.gov.hk) anytime to check whether they are registered as electors and their latest registration particulars including registered addresses and respective constituencies.

Statutory deadlines for the VR cycle

5. In accordance with the relevant electoral laws, the statutory deadlines for the VR cycle are as follows:

	Non-DC election year	DC election year
Statutory deadline for the public to submit new VR applications or registered electors to submit applications for de-registration	2 May	2 July
The ERO's publication of the PR and OL	1 June	1 August
Statutory deadline for the public to make claims and objections; statutory deadline for electors to apply for change of registration particulars	25 June	25 August
Hearing and ruling of the claims and objections by the RO (including review of the ruling)	11 July	11 September
The ERO's publication of the FR	25 July	25 September

6. Taking the 2015 VR cycle (2015 is a DC election year) as an example, eligible persons who would like to register as electors but have yet to do so must submit their applications on or before 2 July 2015 so that their registration particulars can be included in the FR to be published in September 2015, and that they can vote in elections conducted thereafter. As for registered electors, there is no need for registration again. In case where there is any change, such as residential address, in the registration particulars, the elector concerned should report the change to the REO on or before 25 August 2015 so that their updated particulars can be included in the FR to be published on or before 25 September 2015.

7. The REO will, in accordance with the law, process any application for new registration lodged after 2 July or any change of registration particulars lodged after 25 August in the next cycle. In other words, the relevant VR information will not be included in the FR to be published in September this year.

Checking measures taken in the 2015 VR cycle

8. To address public concerns about the accuracy of electors' registered addresses, the REO has since 2012 implemented a number of enhanced checking measures and to continue to enforce the inquiry process so as to enhance both the accuracy and integrity of the particulars contained in the registers of electors. The details of the checking measures are set out in **Annex 2**.

9. In the 2015 VR cycle, the number of GC electors covered by various checking measures implemented by the REO totaled about 1.6 million. Based on the checking results and in accordance with the relevant electoral laws, the REO initiated the inquiry process for about 82 600 electors because the REO had reasonable grounds to believe that their registered addresses were no longer their only or principal residence in Hong Kong. The inquiry letters⁶ were issued to them by registered mail. The REO has received replies from about 40 500 electors under inquiry, representing a response rate of about 49%. Amongst these electors, about 25 300 and 15 200 have confirmed and updated their residential addresses respectively in response to the REO's inquiry process. After deducting around 500 electors who have passed away recently, about 41 600 electors' registration status has ultimately been removed due to their failure to respond to the REO's inquiry process.

6 In the 2012, 2013 and 2014 VR cycles, the REO issued 296 590, 35 335 and 24 242 inquiry letters respectively.

10. In carrying out the checking process, the REO also contacted the electors under inquiry by phone, email or fax as appropriate according to other communication means provided by the electors (if any), reminding them to confirm or update their registered addresses by the statutory deadline so that they could remain as registered electors and be able to vote in the subsequent elections.

11. Among those electors who had yet to respond to the inquiry letters, some did not provide contact information apart from their residential addresses. The REO collaborated with the Home Affairs Department this year to try reaching these electors. Voter Registration Supervisors/Assistants employed by the District Offices conducted household visits during the period from early June to 2 July to remind the electors concerned that they should respond to the inquiry letters as soon as possible.

Mechanism for making claims and objections

12. The REO publishes the PR, OL and FR each year for public inspection to facilitate public supervision and to ensure that a highly transparent VR system is maintained. During the public inspection period, the public may make objections or claims to the ERO against the entries on the PR and OL. The public inspection period for the 2015 VR cycle ended on 25 August. From 31 July to 25 August 2015, 49 notices of objection, involving a total of 2 001 electors, were received by the REO. As 6 objectors withdrew their objections to 550 electors after lodging their notices, the total number of electors in respect of whom an objection has been made is 1 451. No notice of claim has been received this year. According to the statutory procedures, the ERO must deliver copies of notices of objection to the RO for hearing and ruling.

13. During the 2015 VR cycle, there was a substantial increase in the number of notices of objection received by the REO. The number of claims/objections received during the 2011 to 2015 VR cycles and the number of electors involved are given below:

VR Cycle	Claims		Objections	
	No. of cases	No. of electors involved	No. of cases	No. of electors involved
2011	0	0	3	86
2012	8	8	1	1
2013	1	1	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	49	1 451

The breakdown of objections received during the public inspection period of the PR in the 2015 VR cycle and the number of electors involved are set out in **Annex 3**.

14. According to the electoral laws, the RO will inform the objector and the elector being objected to of the date, time and place for holding a hearing. The persons concerned may choose whether they would (a) appear at the hearing in person, or (b) be represented by a legal practitioner or any other person authorised by him at the hearing, or (c) make written representations to the RO before the date of the hearing.

15. It should be noted that, as a matter of general legal principle and under the standard of proof based on “balance of probabilities”, a claimant or objector is required to submit proof in respect of the allegations specified in the notice of claim or objection he/she has filed. While the objector has the responsibility to explain at the hearing why the person being objected to is not qualified as an elector, there is no need for the ERO to prove beyond reasonable doubt the eligibility of that person in respect of the objection raised. However, as it is the responsibility of the ERO to ensure the accuracy of the register of electors and in order to facilitate the RO to arrive at a ruling, the REO will, if time and circumstances allow, initiate investigation (including cross-matching the relevant entries with relevant departments such as the Housing Department and the Buildings Department) and render assistance to the RO as far as possible in terms of making clarifications and verifications of the relevant registration particulars. Therefore, upon receiving a notice of objection, the REO will contact the elector being objected to by telephone (if a phone number is provided) and by mail, requesting him/her to confirm in writing that the registered address is his/her only or principal residence in Hong Kong, or to provide an address proof to the REO. If a reply is received before the hearing, even if the elector concerned chooses not to attend the hearing, the ERO would still submit the findings to the RO at the hearing. The RO will make a ruling after considering the grounds in support of the objection and the relevant

evidence.

Follow-up Actions in Response to Notices of Objection and Other Complaints

16. The REO has conducted detailed investigation in response to the notices of objection and other complaints received (including complaint letters received by the REO and cases reported by the media) during the public inspection period of the PR this year (ending on 25 August). As for other complaints, the REO will, in accordance with the established checking mechanism, verify the address information of the electors concerned based on the specific information provided by the complainants. For suspected cases of false information, the REO will refer them to the relevant law enforcement agencies for investigation and follow-up.

17. Among the 1 451 electors involved in the notices of objection, after the hearing, the RO ruled that objections against 299 electors were allowed and those electors were deleted from the register of electors, while the rest of the objections against 1 152 electors were dismissed and their registration was maintained. As for the complaints received by the REO, according to REO's investigation results, 1750 electors have confirmed or updated their residential addresses, while 107 electors are not included in the 2015 FR as they cannot confirm their registration particulars. The REO has corrected, added or deleted entries in the FR released on 25 September this year according to the RO's rulings.

Statistics on the 2015 FR

18. Regarding the 2015 VR cycle, statutory deadlines for VR and updating of registration particulars were 2 July and 25 August 2015 respectively. The REO released the 2015 FR on 25 September for public inspection. The major statistics are set out in the following paragraphs.

Geographical Constituencies

19. The 2015 FR contains about 3.69 million electors for GCs, a net increase of about 186 000 electors compared to last year, after taking into account 262 000 who are newly registered and removing the names of about 34 000 and 42 000 electors who have been put on the OL due to death or as a result of the inquiry process respectively. The registration rate of GCs hits a record high of 77.3%. Besides, the REO processed about 415 000 requests for updating the registration particulars of electors,

representing an increase compared to the 300 000 requests and 310 000 requests in 2011 and 2012 respectively. Details of the age and sex profile of registered electors of different age groups by districts in 2015 are set out in **Annex 4**.

Functional Constituencies

20. For the 2015 FR for traditional FCs, the number of registered electors is about 230 000, of which about 2 600 are newly registered. On the other hand, some 2 100 electors have changed to register under the DC (second) FC and about 3 700 electors have been deleted. The number of electors for traditional FCs has reduced by about 3 200 compared to that in last year's FR.

21. The number of electors of the DC (second) FC in the 2015 FR is about 3.41 million, a net increase of around 160 000 electors against last year, having taken into account about 246 000 newly registered electors, around 73 000 electors who have been deleted (mainly deceased electors or GC electors who have been deleted as a result of the inquiry process), and around 13 000 electors who have chosen not to be registered as electors in DC (second) FC or chosen to switch to other FCs.

22. The distribution of electors by FCs (other than DC (second) FC) in 2015 is set out in **Annex 5**. Please refer to the VR website for other statistical information (www.voterregistration.gov.hk).

Concerns regarding VR Matters and Review Directions

23. We notice that the public has expressed concerns over the following VR matters.

Deadline for Updating Registration Particulars of Electors

24. It is an established practice that electors may still request to update their particulars after the deadline for new registration and before the deadline for updating registration particulars every year (relevant deadlines in paragraph 5 refer). This arrangement ensures that the particulars in the registers of electors are up-to-date as far as possible and the time lag between the deadline for updating of the particulars and the election is kept to the shortest possible. However, there are views that the current arrangement may render the public being unable to view the updated particulars of all electors in the PR. Criminals may make use of this period of time to impersonate electors and update their registration particulars with malice, without being easily discovered. It is suggested

that the deadline for applying for updating the registration particulars should be advanced to a time before the PR is released. By doing so, all requests for updating registration particulars filed in that VR cycle will be reflected in the PR for public inspection.

Submission of Registration Particulars of Electors by Suspected Bogus Electors

25. The REO have received complaints from certain electors who suspected that a third party had impersonated them and submitted forms for new registration/updating registration particulars to the REO, as they themselves had never done so. Some commented that the REO should review applications more prudently (including enhancing measures to verify the identity of the applicants and contacting the electors concerned in case of doubts) while some suggested that newly registered electors and existing electors must submit address proofs simultaneously when submitting new applications or updating residential addresses.

Inaccurate Registration Particulars

26. During the public inspection period of the PR, some members of the public raised that part of the registration particulars might be incorrect. For example, the registered addresses do not exist (e.g., such buildings do not have the floor levels as shown in the registered addresses), registered addresses in buildings that have already been demolished or that have already been vacated pending demolition, and registered addresses with incomplete information, etc. Some are of the view that the REO should enhance cross-matching on registered addresses with other Government departments, including strengthening the verification of registration particulars when handling VR applications, so as to ensure that the registration particulars are accurate. There are also cases where staff of REO made erroneous entries and there are views that the REO should improve and enhance the data entry work.

Cases Involving Institutions

27. There were complaints alleging that certain elderlies living in elderly institutions might have been impersonated in VR without their consent. According to the REO's established checking mechanism, cases of elderly institutions are dealt with under the category of having multiple electors or multiple surnames of electors at one registered residential address. In the past cycles, the REO did check against those electors who had reported elderly institutions as their residential address and require them to confirm in writing relevant address was their only

and principal residence. Some are of the view that the REO should enhance checking by proactively paying home visits regarding suspicious cases to verify the genuineness of the relevant registered address.

Penalties for Provision of False Information for VR

28. According to the subsidiary legislation under the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance (Cap. 541), penalties regarding provision of false statement in making VR are \$5 000 and imprisonment for 6 months. Some are of the view that the penalties should be raised in order to achieve a higher deterrent effect against provision of false information.

Time Needed for Handling VR Applications and Cases of Claims and Objections

29. At present, the REO has only 29 days to process new VR applications before the PR is published. There are views that the above-mentioned period should be extended in order to allow more time for the REO to conduct checking work as necessary. Besides, starting from the 2015 VR cycle, the Government has extended the period for the public to inspect the PR and the OL and to lodge claims and objections from 14 days to 24 days, and the period for the RO to conduct hearings from 13 days to 17 days (in DC election year⁷). Nevertheless, as there is a substantial increase in the number of objections this year, some are of the view that the current period between the objection is made and the completion of the hearing is still not long enough and should be further extended to allow sufficient time for REO to investigate appeal cases as well as for the RO to conduct hearings and handle reviews.

Suspected abuse of the objection mechanism

30. Some members of the public consider that some objectors abuse the objection mechanism by making an objection without sound justification and not attending the hearing to make representations. This has caused annoyance and inconvenience to the electors being objected to. Some are of the view that the Government should take measures to prevent abuse of the objection mechanism. Besides, some suggested that for cases where the electors' registered addresses are confirmed to be correct after investigation by the REO, they might not need to be passed to the RO for hearing so as to minimise impact on the relevant electors.

⁷ Starting from the 2015 VR cycle, the public inspection of the PR and the OL and the deadline for lodging claims and objection in non-DC election year have been extended from 14 days to 24 days, and the period for the RO to conduct hearing from 12 days to 16 days.

31. Given public concerns over the VR issues above, we may consider ways to improve the current mechanism and arrangements from the following directions:

- (a) **Statutory deadlines of the VR cycle:** We can look into whether to change the deadline for updating of registration particulars to allow sufficient time for the ERO to go through the verification procedures before publishing the PR; and whether to further extend the period for handling claims and objections to allow sufficient time for the REO to review the cases of objections as well as for the RO to conduct hearings and handle reviews.
- (b) **Arrangements of submitting new applications, applying for change of particulars by electors and polling:** We can explore how to strike an appropriate balance between enhancing the accuracy of electors' particulars and facilitating the electors, including whether it is necessary to reconsider introducing the requirement of address proof, penalties for electors who fail to update their addresses and the requirement for electors to produce their polls card when voting.
- (c) **Checking arrangements:** We can explore how to further improve the checking arrangements, including reviewing the scope and frequency of various checking measures and enhancing cross-matching with other Government departments so as to minimise the chance of having inaccurate registered particulars, thereby enhancing the accuracy and completeness of the registration particulars and striking a balance between making effective use of resources and safeguarding the privacy of personal data, etc.
- (d) **Mechanism for lodging claims and objections:** We can look into whether to modify the mechanism for lodging claims and objections in order to avoid abuse of the mechanism and help the officers concerned handle the cases with greater efficiency. For example, we may require that unless the objectors attend the hearings and provide concrete evidence, the RO needs not deal with relevant objection cases.
- (e) **Penalties:** The Government introduced amendments to the subsidiary legislation under the Electoral Affairs Commission

Ordinance⁸ (Cap. 541) in 2014 to make offences of providing false information on VR as indictable offences so as to remove the six-month time bar for prosecution in order to enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement and deterrent effect. We can consider whether to increase the penalty for offences relating to VR to reinforce the deterrent effect against offences involving provision of false information.

- (f) **Public education:** We would examine how to strengthen publicity on VR, especially with regard to electors' submission and checking of their registered particulars. For example, we can further promote the OVIES and REO's hotline (2891 1001) to encourage electors to check their registration particulars and submit applications to update their registration particulars in a timely manner where necessary. This will be conducive to enhancing the accuracy of the registers of electors.

⁸ At present, there are two sets of offences related to VR. One is under the Electoral Affairs Commission (Registration of Electors) (Legislative Council Geographical Constituencies) (District Council Constituencies) Regulation (Cap. 541A) and the Electoral Affairs Commission (Registration) (Electors for Legislative Council Functional Constituencies) (Voters for Election Committee Subsectors) (Members of Election Committee) Regulation (Cap. 541B). The other is under the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554). Under Section 22 of Cap. 541A and section 42 of Cap. 541B, it is an offence for a person to make any statement which the person knows to be false in a material particular or recklessly make any statement which is incorrect in a material particular or knowingly omit any material particular from such an application in VR. It is also an offence for a person to cause another person to make such a false statement or to provide information which the first-mentioned person knows to be wrong in a material particular in VR. These provisions are enforced by the Hong Kong Police Force. According to section 7(5) of the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance (Cap. 541), the maximum penalty is a fine at level 2 (\$5,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Besides, under section 16 of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554), a person engages in corrupt conduct at an election if the person votes at the election knowing that the person is not entitled to do so, or after having knowingly or recklessly given to an electoral officer information that was materially false or misleading, or knowingly omitted to give material information to an electoral officer. A person engages in corrupt conduct at an election if the person invites or induces another person to vote at the election knowing that the other person is not entitled to do so, or has given to an electoral officer information that was materially false or misleading, or omitted to give material information to an electoral officer. These provisions are enforced by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. According to section 6(1) of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554), the maximum penalty is \$500,000 and imprisonment for 7 years.

Advice Sought

32. Members' views are sought on the way forward in further improving the VR system as set out in paragraph 31.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
Registration and Electoral Office
September 2015

Annex 1

“Consultation Report on the Improvement Measures of the Voter Registration System” published on 16 April 2012

Consultation results on the proposals, final positions of the Government on the proposals and follow-up work

Proposed measures	Consultation results	Final positions of the Government on the proposals and follow-up work
<p><i>(1) Proposed requirement for address proof -</i> Address proof should be provided as supporting evidence at the same time when a person applies for registration as a geographical constituency elector or when a registered elector applies for change of his registered address after he has moved.</p>	<p>About 60% of submissions were against the proposed requirement as the proposal was considered cumbersome and it would deter the public from registering. The proposal could be replaced by enhancing the checking performed by the REO instead.</p>	<p>In light of the views received, the Government decided not to pursue the proposal at that time. However, starting from 2012, the Government has stepped up efforts in enhancing the accuracy of the registers by increasing the extent of checks including using a more targeted approach, as well as random checks on new applications.</p>
<p><i>(2) Proposed penalty concerning update of addresses -</i> To introduce penalty for registered electors who fail to report change of addresses or to introduce penalty for registered electors who fail to report change of addresses before the statutory deadline for reporting change of registration particulars and vote in an election afterwards.</p>	<p>About 65% of submissions were against the proposal as it would cause excessive nuisance to electors and affect the public’s desire to register as electors.</p>	<p>In light of the views received, the Government decided not to pursue the proposal at that time.</p>

<p>(3) Proposed amendment to the statutory deadlines - Statutory deadlines for VR should be advanced to allow sufficient time to complete the checking and the verification processes, and for the public to inspect the registers and to lodge claims and objections.</p>	<p>Only a small number of submissions had views on this proposal. Although about 62% of submissions inclined towards the proposal to advance the deadlines, some were of the view that the proposal might affect the desire to register as electors and the voter turnout rates at elections.</p>	<p>The Government proposed to extend the deadline for the public to inspect the provisional registers and omissions lists, lodge claims and objections from 14 days to 24 days and to extend the time for the Revising Officer to handle a hearing from 13 days to 17 days (for a District Council election year¹). The amendment proposal concerned has been implemented through the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2014 enacted by the Legislative Council in July 2014.</p>
<p>(4) Proposed amendment to the register format - Registers of electors for public inspection should set out electors in accordance with principal residential addresses so as to show the relevant electors' names in the same address, which will facilitate the public to identify irregularities in respect of residential addresses.</p>	<p>About 60% of submissions supported the proposal.</p>	<p>The Government has implemented the proposal in the 2012 voter registration cycle.</p>

¹ Starting from the 2015 voter registration cycle, the public inspection of the provisional registers and the omissions lists and the deadline for lodging claims and objection in non-District Council election year have been extended from 14 days to 24 days, and the period for the Revising Officer to conduct hearing from 12 days to 16 days.

<p>(5) Proposed requirement to produce poll cards - An elector has to produce the poll card at the polling station before he or she can cast vote.</p>	<p>About 73% of submissions were against the proposal. They generally considered that this would cause unreasonable inconvenience to the electors and might infringe upon the voting rights of the permanent residents of Hong Kong.</p>	<p>In light of the views received, the Government decided not to pursue the proposal at that time.</p>
<p>(6) Proposed transfer of offence to the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance – The existing offences on false declaration under the Electoral Affairs Commission Regulations should be transferred to the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554) as corrupt conduct or illegal conduct and enforced by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (“ICAC”), and whether the existing penalty level for such offences should be raised.</p>	<p>Only a small number of submissions had views on this proposal. Although the majority of these submissions supported the proposal as it would enhance the deterrent effect and enforcement efficiency, these submissions did not indicate clearly to what extent the existing penalty level should be raised.</p>	<p>The Government proposed to change the existing offences on false declaration under the Electoral Affairs Commission Regulations to indictable offences in order to remove the six-month time bar for prosecution. The amendment proposal concerned has been implemented through the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2014 enacted by the Legislative Council in July 2014.</p>

Checking Measures Conducted by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO)

According to the relevant electoral laws, REO would carry out appropriate inquiries every year to confirm if the address of an elector recorded in the current final registers is still his principal address so as to maintain the correctness of the registers. The relevant checking measures include:

- (a) inquiries on undelivered and returned poll cards and letters;
- (b) cross-checking of electors' registered addresses with Housing Department, Hong Kong Housing Society and Home Affairs Department;
- (c) checks on multiple electors or multiple surnames of electors registered with the same residential address;
- (d) random sampling checks against registered and newly registered electors;
- (e) checks on incomplete or suspected non-residential registered addresses; and
- (f) checks on cases of buildings already demolished or vacant buildings pending demolition.

Moreover, during election year, the REO would conduct a full scale checking of electors' registered addresses at public housing with the Housing Department and Hong Kong Housing Society

Annex 3

The Number of Electors involved in Objections received during the Public Inspection Period of the Provisional Register in the 2015 Voter Registration Cycle

Grounds for objection	Number of electors involved
(a) Electors not residing in the registered address	307
(b) Information on the registered address incorrect	156
(c) Incomplete, commercial or suspected non-residential addresses	117
(d) Same residential address with multiple electors or electors with multiple surnames	649
(e) Buildings already demolished or vacant buildings pending demolition	160
(f) Others (e.g. the elector was suspected to be registered without his consent, suspected duplicated registration or elector already deceased, etc.)	62
Total number of electors	1 451

Annex 4

2015 Final Register Age and Sex Profile of Registered Electors by Legislative Council Constituencies

Age Range	Sex	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon West	Kowloon East	New Territories West	New Territories East	Grand Total
18-20	M	7,434	6,629	8,895	17,895	16,477	57,330
	F	7,118	6,289	8,783	16,721	15,765	54,676
18-20 Sub-Total		14,552	12,918	17,678	34,616	32,242	112,006
21-25	M	17,642	14,991	22,285	43,993	39,529	138,440
	F	16,927	14,134	20,743	40,886	37,009	129,699
21-25 Sub-Total		34,569	29,125	43,028	84,879	76,538	268,139
26-30	M	17,061	13,865	17,851	37,907	34,933	121,617
	F	17,268	13,687	16,922	35,203	33,535	116,615
26-30 Sub-Total		34,329	27,552	34,773	73,110	68,468	238,232
31-35	M	19,253	15,336	18,498	38,993	36,664	128,744
	F	19,556	15,160	17,316	37,347	35,697	125,076
31-35 Sub-Total		38,809	30,496	35,814	76,340	72,361	253,820
36-40	M	21,813	17,746	19,295	41,072	34,263	134,189
	F	22,786	18,315	19,017	39,840	34,136	134,094
36-40 Sub-Total		44,599	36,061	38,312	80,912	68,399	268,283
41-45	M	24,609	20,350	21,373	41,278	33,681	141,291
	F	27,478	22,030	23,745	45,479	38,690	157,422
41-45 Sub-Total		52,087	42,380	45,118	86,757	72,371	298,713
46-50	M	26,486	20,390	24,954	44,670	37,758	154,258
	F	30,808	22,452	27,790	52,560	46,008	179,618
46-50 Sub-Total		57,294	42,842	52,744	97,230	83,766	333,876
51-55	M	34,282	24,262	32,005	61,074	54,315	205,938
	F	38,210	25,880	34,380	66,020	62,304	226,794
51-55 Sub-Total		72,492	50,142	66,385	127,094	116,619	432,732
56-60	M	34,498	24,342	30,830	61,282	57,396	208,348
	F	36,689	25,339	32,153	61,504	58,614	214,299
56-60 Sub-Total		71,187	49,681	62,983	122,786	116,010	422,647
61-65	M	29,749	21,272	24,583	48,253	43,990	167,847
	F	31,270	22,172	26,636	46,992	42,413	169,483
61-65 Sub-Total		61,019	43,444	51,219	95,245	86,403	337,330
66-70	M	23,353	16,810	19,128	34,099	29,245	122,635
	F	24,047	17,825	21,217	31,461	25,991	120,541
66-70 Sub-Total		47,400	34,635	40,345	65,560	55,236	243,176
71 or above	M	45,013	38,635	48,384	58,563	45,321	235,916
	F	50,124	40,969	55,419	55,954	46,606	249,072
71 or above Sub-Total		95,137	79,604	103,803	114,517	91,927	484,988
Total	M	301,193	234,628	288,081	529,079	463,572	1,816,553
	F	322,281	244,252	304,121	529,967	476,768	1,877,389
Grand Total		623,474	478,880	592,202	1,059,046	940,340	3,693,942

2015 Final Register
Age and Sex Profile of Registered Electors by Districts

Age Range	Sex	HK Island					Kowloon West				Kowloon East			New Territories West						New Territories East					Grand Total
		Central & Western	Wan Chai	Eastern	Southern	Total	Yau Tsim Mong	Sham Shui Po	Kowloon City	Total	Wong Tai Sin	Kwun Tong	Total	Tsuen Wan	Tuen Mun	Yuen Long	Kwai Tsing	Islands	Total	North	Tai Po	Sai Kung	Sha Tin	Total	
18-20	M	1,206	663	3,806	1,759	7,434	1,539	2,597	2,493	6,629	3,630	5,265	8,895	2,482	4,025	5,892	4,252	1,244	17,895	3,324	2,824	4,152	6,177	16,477	57,330
	F	1,101	607	3,664	1,746	7,118	1,411	2,461	2,417	6,289	3,598	5,185	8,783	2,265	3,756	5,528	4,009	1,163	16,721	3,180	2,592	4,088	5,905	15,765	54,676
18-20 Sub-total		2,307	1,270	7,470	3,505	14,552	2,950	5,058	4,910	12,918	7,228	10,450	17,678	4,747	7,781	11,420	8,261	2,407	34,616	6,504	5,416	8,240	12,082	32,242	112,006
21-25	M	2,882	1,585	9,066	4,109	17,642	3,515	5,930	5,546	14,991	9,285	13,000	22,285	5,175	11,000	14,627	10,469	2,722	43,993	8,219	7,635	9,578	14,097	39,529	138,440
	F	2,654	1,532	8,615	4,126	16,927	3,255	5,636	5,243	14,134	8,760	11,983	20,743	4,907	9,854	13,664	9,947	2,514	40,886	7,712	7,138	8,989	13,170	37,009	129,699
21-25 Sub-total		5,536	3,117	17,681	8,235	34,569	6,770	11,566	10,789	29,125	18,045	24,983	43,028	10,082	20,854	28,291	20,416	5,236	84,879	15,931	14,773	18,567	27,267	76,538	268,139
26-30	M	2,820	1,606	8,549	4,086	17,061	3,345	5,519	5,001	13,865	7,500	10,351	17,851	4,409	10,091	11,846	9,458	2,103	37,907	7,139	7,180	8,276	12,338	34,933	121,617
	F	2,924	1,639	8,572	4,133	17,268	3,275	5,395	5,017	13,687	7,091	9,831	16,922	4,169	9,402	10,774	8,991	1,867	35,203	6,716	6,772	7,966	12,081	33,535	116,615
26-30 Sub-total		5,744	3,245	17,121	8,219	34,329	6,620	10,914	10,018	27,552	14,591	20,182	34,773	8,578	19,493	22,620	18,449	3,970	73,110	13,855	13,952	16,242	24,419	68,468	238,232
31-35	M	3,267	2,007	9,285	4,694	19,253	4,052	5,810	5,474	15,336	7,362	11,136	18,498	5,077	11,226	11,368	9,348	1,974	38,993	6,852	7,258	8,111	14,443	36,664	128,744
	F	3,490	2,108	9,318	4,640	19,556	3,959	5,574	5,627	15,160	7,057	10,259	17,316	5,253	10,455	10,606	9,062	1,971	37,347	6,377	6,950	8,151	14,219	35,697	125,076
31-35 Sub-total		6,757	4,115	18,603	9,334	38,809	8,011	11,384	11,101	30,496	14,419	21,395	35,814	10,330	21,681	21,974	18,410	3,945	76,340	13,229	14,208	16,262	28,662	72,361	253,820
36-40	M	3,942	2,475	10,663	4,733	21,813	5,075	5,927	6,744	17,746	7,372	11,923	19,295	6,442	11,193	11,077	10,140	2,220	41,072	5,156	5,489	8,924	14,694	34,263	134,189
	F	4,166	2,787	11,012	4,821	22,786	5,078	6,121	7,116	18,315	7,342	11,675	19,017	6,691	10,246	10,809	9,689	2,405	39,840	5,080	5,211	9,543	14,302	34,136	134,094
36-40 Sub-total		8,108	5,262	21,675	9,554	44,599	10,153	12,048	13,860	36,061	14,714	23,598	38,312	13,133	21,439	21,886	19,829	4,625	80,912	10,236	10,700	18,467	28,996	68,399	268,283
41-45	M	4,342	3,044	11,841	5,382	24,609	5,859	6,420	8,071	20,350	8,300	13,073	21,373	6,897	8,632	11,479	11,553	2,717	41,278	5,152	4,840	10,819	12,870	33,681	141,291
	F	5,070	3,318	13,163	5,927	27,478	6,084	7,245	8,701	22,030	9,463	14,282	23,745	7,541	9,354	13,476	11,627	3,481	45,479	6,343	5,489	12,515	14,343	38,690	157,422
41-45 Sub-total		9,412	6,362	25,004	11,309	52,087	11,943	13,665	16,772	42,380	17,763	27,355	45,118	14,438	17,986	24,955	23,180	6,198	86,757	11,495	10,329	23,334	27,213	72,371	298,713
46-50	M	4,589	3,001	12,593	6,303	26,486	5,356	6,994	8,040	20,390	10,331	14,623	24,954	6,861	9,857	13,217	11,467	3,268	44,670	6,864	5,793	11,642	13,459	37,758	154,258
	F	5,219	3,428	14,886	7,275	30,808	5,621	7,985	8,846	22,452	11,708	16,082	27,790	7,847	12,132	16,152	12,504	3,925	52,560	8,685	7,477	13,280	16,566	46,008	179,618
46-50 Sub-total		9,808	6,429	27,479	13,578	57,294	10,977	14,979	16,886	42,842	22,039	30,705	52,744	14,708	21,989	29,369	23,971	7,193	97,230	15,549	13,270	24,922	30,025	83,766	333,876
51-55	M	5,737	3,566	16,838	8,141	34,282	5,939	8,826	9,497	24,262	14,373	17,632	32,005	8,692	15,108	19,002	14,029	4,243	61,074	10,559	9,738	14,497	19,521	54,315	205,938
	F	6,446	3,952	18,896	8,916	38,210	6,149	9,554	10,177	25,880	15,293	19,087	34,380	9,076	17,584	19,515	15,446	4,399	66,020	11,620	12,333	15,655	22,696	62,304	226,794
51-55 Sub-total		12,183	7,518	35,734	17,057	72,492	12,088	18,380	19,674	50,142	29,666	36,719	66,385	17,768	32,692	38,517	29,475	8,642	127,094	22,179	22,071	30,152	42,217	116,619	432,732
56-60	M	5,947	3,676	16,820	8,055	34,498	5,578	9,711	9,053	24,342	13,597	17,233	30,830	7,825	16,375	18,408	14,523	4,151	61,282	11,046	11,518	13,797	21,035	57,396	208,348
	F	6,046	3,996	17,988	8,659	36,689	5,718	10,064	9,557	25,339	13,934	18,219	32,153	7,934	17,977	16,286	15,529	3,778	61,504	10,800	11,890	13,189	22,735	58,614	214,299
56-60 Sub-total		11,993	7,672	34,808	16,714	71,187	11,296	19,775	18,610	49,681	27,531	35,452	62,983	15,759	34,352	34,694	30,052	7,929	122,786	21,846	23,408	26,986	43,770	116,010	422,647
61-65	M	5,085	3,548	14,325	6,791	29,749	5,197	8,226	7,849	21,272	10,151	14,432	24,583	6,033	14,210	12,758	12,002	3,250	48,253	8,255	8,597	9,659	17,479	43,990	167,847
	F	5,172	3,830	15,310	6,958	31,270	5,176	8,174	8,822	22,172	10,672	15,964	26,636	6,224	14,170	10,820	13,003	2,775	46,992	6,749	7,916	9,079	18,669	42,413	169,483
61-65 Sub-total		10,257	7,378	29,635	13,749	61,019	10,373	16,400	16,671	43,444	20,823	30,396	51,219	12,257	28,380	23,578	25,005	6,025	95,245	15,004	16,513	18,738	36,148	86,403	337,330
66-70	M	3,984	3,012	11,413	4,944	23,353	4,032	6,079	6,699	16,810	7,395	11,733	19,128	4,648	9,525	8,021	9,682	2,223	34,099	4,829	5,233	6,532	12,651	29,245	122,635
	F	3,838	3,222	11,762	5,225	24,047	4,348	6,117	7,360	17,825	8,212	13,005	21,217	4,740	7,647	6,348	11,012	1,714	31,461	3,738	4,169	6,065	12,019	25,991	120,541
66-70 Sub-total		7,822	6,234	23,175	10,169	47,400	8,380	12,196	14,059	34,635	15,607	24,738	40,345	9,388	17,172	14,369	20,694	3,937	65,560	8,567	9,402	12,597	24,670	55,236	243,176
71 or above	M	7,153	6,393	21,532	9,935	45,013	9,196	14,691	14,748	38,635	19,025	29,359	48,384	8,762	12,671	12,999	20,659	3,472	58,563	7,991	7,671	10,059	19,600	45,321	235,916
	F	7,467	6,792	24,586	11,279	50,124	9,124	15,650	16,195	40,969	24,404	31,015	55,419	8,627	11,114	12,285	20,454	3,474	55,954	8,514	8,116	10,534	19,442	46,606	249,072
71 or above Sub-total		14,620	13,185	46,118	21,214	95,137	18,320	30,341	30,943	79,604	43,429	60,374	103,803	17,389	23,785	25,284	41,113	6,946	114,517	16,505	15,787	20,593	39,042	91,927	484,988
Total	M	50,954	34,576	146,731	68,932	301,193	58,683	86,730	89,215	234,628	118,321	169,760	288,081	73,303	133,913	150,694	137,582	33,587	529,079	85,386	83,776	116,046	178,364	463,572	1,816,553
	F	53,593	37,211	157,772	73,705	322,281	59,198	89,976	95,078	244,252	127,534	176,587	304,121	75,274	133,691	146,263	141,273	33,466	529,967	85,514	86,053	119,054	186,147	476,768	1,877,389
Grand Total		104,547	71,787	304,503	142,637	623,474	117,881	176,706	184,293	478,880	245,855	346,347	592,202	148,577	267,604	296,957	278,855	67,053	1,059,046	170,900	169,829	235,100	364,511	940,340	3,693,942

Annex 5

2015 Final Register of Electors for Functional Constituencies (Excluding District Council (Second) Functional Constituency)

Functional Constituencies		No. of Registered Electors		
		Bodies (i)	Individuals (ii)	Total (i)+(ii)
1	Heung Yee Kuk	---	149	149
2	Agriculture and Fisheries	157	---	157
3	Insurance	128	---	128
4	Transport	195	---	195
5	Education	---	88,517	88,517
6	Legal	---	6,452	6,452
7	Accountancy	---	25,069	25,069
8	Medical	---	10,899	10,899
9	Health Services	---	36,481	36,481
10	Engineering	---	9,111	9,111
11	Architectural, Surveying, Planning and Landscape	---	6,917	6,917
12	Labour	642	---	642
13	Social Welfare	---	13,576	13,576
14	Real Estate and Construction	473	223	696
15	Tourism	1,282	---	1,282
16	Commercial (First)	849	---	849
17	Commercial (Second)	614	920	1,534
18	Industrial (First)	512	0	512
19	Industrial (Second)	732	---	732
20	Finance	121	---	121
21	Financial Services	551	---	551
22	Sports, Performing Arts, Culture and Publication	2,268	324	2,592
23	Import and Export	788	543	1,331
24	Textiles and Garment	2,509	57	2,566
25	Wholesale and Retail	1,685	5,008	6,693
26	Information Technology	343	5,307	5,650
27	Catering	752	4,875	5,627
28	District Council (First)	---	412	412
Total		14,601	214,840	229,441