Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Design of ballot papers for Legislative Council elections

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the existing design of ballot papers for Legislative Council ("LegCo") elections and the problems that have emerged in recent years, and seek Members' views on different options in adjusting the design of ballot papers.

Existing design of ballot papers for LegCo elections

- 2. The basic design of ballot papers for LegCo elections is prescribed in a Regulation under the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance (Cap. 541). According to the forms of ballot papers (at **Annex A**) prescribed in Schedule 3 to the Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Legislative Council) Regulation (Cap. 541D), the names of candidates, the assigned numbers or letters of the alphabet of candidates/lists of candidate, and certain particulars of the candidates as per the candidates' requests to the Electoral Affairs Commission ("EAC") are printed on the ballot paper.
- 3. Under sections 3 and 4 and the Schedule to the Particulars Relating to Candidates on Ballot Papers (Legislative Council and District Councils) Regulation (Cap. 541M), candidates may request that the following particulars relating to the candidates be printed on the ballot paper:
 - (a) personal photographs of the candidates; and
 - (b) (i) the registered Chinese name(s) and/or English name(s) and/or registered emblem(s) relating to not more than three prescribed bodies; or
 - (ii) the registered emblem(s) of prescribed person(s) relating to not more than three candidates; or
 - (iii) the registered Chinese name(s) and/or English name(s) and/or registered emblem(s) relating to the prescribed body

(bodies) and the registered emblem(s) of prescribed person(s) relating to the candidate(s), provided that the total number of such prescribed body (bodies) and candidate(s) is not more than three; and/or

(c) the words "Independent Candidate 獨立候選人" or the words "Non-affiliated Candidate 無黨派候選人".

Under section 49 of Cap. 541D, the Chief Electoral Officer may modify the layout of the form of any ballot paper prescribed in Schedule 3 to that Regulation to incorporate particulars relating to candidates to be printed on a ballot paper in accordance with Cap. 541M.

4. For LegCo elections in early years, only the names of candidates and the numbers or the letters of the alphabet allocated to the candidates/lists of candidates were printed on the ballot paper. The arrangement of adding particulars of candidates on the ballot paper as mentioned in paragraph 3 above was introduced in the 2004 LegCo election, with the aim of enabling electors to recognise candidates and decide which candidate to vote for on the polling day. Since the arrangement highlighted candidates and their supporting bodies, it was considered as facilitating the development of political parties in Hong Kong in the long run.

Problems emerged in recent years

- 5. With the increase in number of seats in the LegCo, the number of candidate lists for geographical constituencies ("GCs") has also shown a gradual increasing trend in recent LegCo elections. While there were at most 14 candidate lists in a GC in the 2008 LegCo election (New Territories West GC), the number increased to 19 in the 2012 LegCo election (New Territories East GC), and even climbed to 22 in the 2016 LegCo election (New Territories East GC).
- 6. The EAC expressed in the Report on the 2016 LegCo General Election ("the Report") that with the growing number of candidates in recent elections, the sizes of ballot papers for GCs became exceedingly large. In respect of the 2016 LegCo election, the largest size of ballot papers for GCs was 440 mm (in width) x 458 mm (in length).
- 7. The content and the size of ballot papers will impact on the printing, production, checking, delivery as well as the polling and counting workflows. The large size of ballot papers will reduce the

number of ballot papers that can be placed within a ballot box, resulting in the need for more ballot boxes at each polling station. This has posed practical difficulties to some polling stations with limited space for holding more ballot boxes. Besides, staff at the ballot paper issuing desks have to be extra careful when tearing off the ballot papers in order not to damage them, therefore increasing the time required for issuing the ballot papers. Moreover, as counting staff has to unfold the ballot papers before counting, more time is also required in counting larger ballot papers.

- More importantly, if the maximum size of ballot papers for GCs is to be kept at 440 mm (in width) x 458 mm (in length) as in the 2016 LegCo election without any change to candidates' particulars that may be printed thereon, a ballot paper can only contain the information of no more than 24 candidate lists for GCs. If the number of candidate lists for a GC election increases to more than 24 in the future, further reducing the font size of the content of a ballot paper will make it extremely difficult to read, whereas the printing and production of a larger ballot paper will add to the difficulties mentioned in paragraph 7 above. view of this, the EAC appealed in the Report to the community to take note of the problem and consider the possibility of reducing the particulars of candidates currently printed on a ballot paper for the LegCo elections, e.g., by deleting the photos of candidates. The EAC is of the view that if mainstream opinion in the community agrees with the need for adjustment, the Government should propose legislative amendments accordingly.
- 9. Besides, it is mentioned in the EAC Report that the Registration and Electoral Office should continue to carry out comprehensive and in-depth feasibility studies to assess the use of information technology in different aspects of the election process. In fact, there have been suggestions in the community for introducing electronic counting of votes However, it must be noted that the size of a ballot in LegCo elections. paper has a bearing on the feasibility of electronic counting of votes. present, vote counting in the Election Committee subsector elections is conducted in an automated mode with the aid of computer devices. instance, in the 2016 Election Committee subsector ordinary elections, the maximum size of a ballot paper that could be read by the computer devices was only 210 mm (in width) x 660 mm (in length). Hence, if the existing ballot paper design for GCs remains unchanged, there would be little feasibility of introducing electronic counting of votes.

Options for consideration

10. In view of the abovementioned issues, we believe consideration should be given to simplify the design of the ballot paper as well as to explore the feasibility of using other effective measures to achieve the goal set out in paragraph 4 above.

LegCo elections

11. As regards LegCo GC elections, we suggest that the following options may be considered.

Option 1: Deleting photos of candidates from the ballot paper

- 12. Taking the ballot paper for the New Territories East GC in the 2016 LegCo general election as an example, the size of the ballot paper is 440 mm (in width) x 458 mm (in length). If all photos of the candidates are deleted, the size of the ballot paper will be reduced by 30% to about 308 mm (in width) x 458 mm (in length). A specimen of the ballot paper design under this option is at **Annex B**.
- 13. Deleting the photos of candidates will not only reduce the size of ballot paper but also speed up the work process such as the checking and delivery of ballot papers mentioned in paragraph 7 above. As regards the printing and production of the ballot paper, since the photos are printed in full colour, more ink is used. Consequently, longer time is required for the ink to dry completely before the next work step could be started to ensure good printing quality. As such, deleting the photos of candidates will not only streamline the printing process but also help protect the environment as less paper and ink will be used. We will explore displaying information of the candidates, including their photos, at an appropriate place inside the voting compartment for electors' reference when they cast the votes.
- 14. However, it has been a long-standing practice to have the photos of candidates printed on ballot paper for electors to identify candidates. Hence, the support of the mainstream opinion in the community must be secured before the option can be put into practice.

- Option 2: Deleting from the ballot paper the particulars requested by candidates, including the registered names and emblems of prescribed bodies, the registered emblems of prescribed persons relating to candidates, and the words "Independent Candidate 獨立候選人" or the words "Non-affiliated Candidate 無黨派候選人" (hereinafter referred to as "particulars other than photos")
- 15. Taking the ballot paper for the New Territories East GC in the 2016 LegCo general election as an example, if particulars other than photos are deleted and the layout is re-organised, the size of the ballot paper can be reduced by about 21% to around 330 mm (in width) x 480 mm (in length). A specimen of the ballot paper design under this option is at **Annex C**.
- 16. Under this option, the photos of candidates are retained on the ballot paper to facilitate ease of identification by electors. We will also explore displaying information of candidates, including particulars other than photos, at an appropriate place inside the voting compartment for electors' reference when they cast the votes. Since the photos of candidates still have to be printed on the ballot paper under this option, the reduction in the size of ballot paper is limited.
- Option 3: Only names of candidates and their allocated numbers or letters of the alphabet are retained on the ballot paper
- 17. As per the aforementioned two options and taking the ballot paper for the New Territories East GC in the 2016 LegCo general election as an example, if photos of candidates and particulars other than photos are deleted at the same time, the size of the ballot paper can be reduced by about 43% to around 245 mm (in width) x 465 mm (in length).
- 18. To ensure that electors can identify candidates clearly, we will explore displaying information of candidates, including their photos and particulars other than photos, at an appropriate place inside the voting compartment for electors' reference when they cast the votes.
- 19. Deleting photos of candidates and particulars other than photos from the ballot paper at the same time can greatly reduce the size of the ballot paper. Not only can this speed up the processes of printing, checking and delivery, etc. of ballot papers and reduce paper and ink consumption, but it will also increase the operational efficiency of ballot paper issuing desks and reduce the chance of damaging the ballot papers when they are torn from the ballot paper book. The ballot box will also

have capacity for more ballot papers as the ballot papers are smaller in size, thereby reducing the need for reserve ballot boxes and allowing the polling stations to have more space to facilitate their operation. Moreover, reducing the size of the ballot paper can also facilitate the casting of votes by electors. A specimen of the ballot paper design under this option is at **Annex D**.

- 20. The design and the size of the ballot paper set out in each of the three options above are preliminary drafts only and adjustment may need to be made in accordance with actual circumstances and printing considerations. A detailed study on the feasibility of the design and other corresponding supporting measures is also required. The size of the ballot papers as revised under the three options set out above will be smaller than the existing ones. If any of these options is adopted, we will further study the feasibility of implementing electronic counting based on the revised design.
- 21. With respect to functional constituencies ("FCs"), including traditional FCs and District Council (Second) FC ("DC (Second) FC")¹, since the number of candidates/candidate lists are relatively smaller, we are of the view that the relevant ballot paper design may remain unchanged. This notwithstanding, we keep an open mind if Members consider that the above options of reducing candidates' particulars should apply to all ballot papers used in the LegCo elections, including those for GCs, traditional FCs and DC (Second) FC, so as to avoid confusion and to maintain overall consistency in the election.

Other elections

22.

candidates, as well as photos and particulars other than photos as requested by candidates are printed on the ballot paper. As the "single seat, single vote" system is adopted for DC elections, and that the number of candidates for each DC constituency in the past was relatively smaller, we are of the view that the ballot paper design may remain unchanged for DC elections. As for the ballot papers for Chief Executive elections and Election Committee subsector elections, as only names and allocated numbers of candidates are printed on the ballot papers, we do not plan to change their design.

With regard to the DC elections, names and allocated numbers of

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In the 2016 LegCo election, the largest number of candidates for traditional FCs was five (social welfare FC) and the largest size of the ballot papers was 146 mm (in width) x 298 mm (in length), while the number of candidate lists for DC (Second) FC was nine and the size of the ballot paper was 220 mm (in width) x 322 mm (in length).

Advice Sought

23. Members are invited to give views on the options set out in paragraphs 11 to 22 above. The Government will consider Members' views before exploring with the EAC whether it is necessary to revise the existing legislation.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau Registration and Electoral Office June 2017

Design of ballot papers for Legislative Council elections

(Schedule 3 to Electoral Affairs Commission (Electoral Procedure) (Legislative Council) Regulation (Cap. 541D))

Ballot Paper for a Geographical Constituency

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《選舉管理委員會(選舉程序)(立法會)規例》 ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (ELECTORAL PROCEDURE)(LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL) REGULATION 立法會申換品選舉/補選 代地方選逐名稱》 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL *GENERAL ELECTION BY-ELECTION *NAME OF GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCY) *(選舉日期》 *(date of election)	選 界 BALLOT PAPER スマ技業返一名草 VOTE FORC 遠用投票地製性的印章在所還名草内的園 Use the chop provided at the polling station circle of the list of your choice.	DNE LIST ONLY 图盖上"√" 號-
* 行助層性的登记系統及登記機構及 市明人士的登记機構。 Registered names and registered emblems of prescribed bedies and registered emblems of prescribed bedies and registered emblems of #	4	
2	5	
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Ballot Paper for a Special Functional Constituency

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* 訂明團體的登記名稱及登記標誌及 訂明人士的登記標誌 * Registered names and registered emblems of prescribed bodies and registered emblem of prescribed person * 獨立便選人 * Independent Candidate * 無業派候選人 * Non-affiliated Candidate	@D
** (候選人提名公告上類 系的候選人址名) ** (Name of candidate as shown in Notice of Nominations)	
@B	@ E
@C	@ F

Ballot Paper for the

District Council (Second) Functional Constituency

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【選舉管理委員會(選舉程序)(立法會)規例》 ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (ELECTORAL PROCEDURE)(LEGISLATIVE COUNCI 立法會*株品選舉/補選 電機會(第二)効能系別 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL *GENERAL ELECTION/BY-ELECTI DISTRICT COUNCIL (SECOND) FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUEN *(選単日期) *(date of election)	ON		選票 BALLOT PAPER 只可投票返一名京VOIEFOR O 請用投票站提供的印章在所選名早內的關 Use the chop provided at the polling station to circle of the list of your choice.	8盖上"✓"號
** 竹明夏健岭登北北県北京松博地及 竹明人士的参記博覧 ** Registered names and registered emblems of prescribed books and registered emblems of prescribed posses ** 日本 純 本 ** 日本 純 本 ** Non-affiliated Candidates ** 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本 大 本		[®] XXX		
一体性性人名平上的他名之外) トサイ(Surse of candidates as shown in Notice of Nominations in order of priority)	報 優人 用.有 Photographs of Castificates			
XXX		®XXX		
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Ballot Paper for an Ordinary Functional Constituency (other than the District Council (Second) Functional Constituency)

存 COUNTI	根 ERFOIL (編號) (Serial Number)
《選舉管理委員會(選舉程序)(立法會)規例》 ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (ELECTORAL PROCEDURE)(LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL) R	BALLOT #(code)
立法會*換尾選舉/補選 *(功能界別名稱) LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL*GENERAL ELECTION/BY-ELECTIO *(NAME OF FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY) *(選舉日期) *(date of election)	ス可選择一名候選人 VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE ONLY 請用投票站提供的印章在所選择的候選人姓名左邊的 園園內蓋上 "√" 競 Use the chop provided at the polling station to stamp "√" in the circle opposite the name of candidate of your choice.
*打明團體的登記名稱及登記標誌及 打明人士的登記標誌 *Registered names and registered emblems of prescribed bodies and registered emblem of prescribed person *獨立候逐人 *Independent Candidate *無套添樣逐人 *Non-affiliated Candidate	@ 4
対(後遅人提名公告上頭 示的後遅入灶名) 対 (Name of candidate as shown in Notice of Nominations)	
@ 2	@5
@ 3	@ 6

Ballot Paper for an Ordinary Functional Constituency (other than the District Council (Second) Functional Constituency) (More than One Vacancy)

存 COUNTI	根 ERFOIL (編號) (Serial Number)
《選舉管理委員會(選舉程序)(立法會)規例 ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (ELECTORAL PROCEDURE)(LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL) R 立法會*換层選舉/補選 *(功能界別名稱) LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL*GENERAL ELECTION/BY-ELECTIO *(NAME OF FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY) *(選舉日期) *(date of election)	BALLOT #(code) EGULATION #(code) A 可核素受験をよる検送人 NOTE FOR UP TO TIMESE CANDIDATES ONLY
* 订明團體的登記名稱及登記標誌及	@ 4
** (转逐人提名公告上類 示的候逐人也名) ** (Name of candidate as shown in Notice of Nominations)	
@ 2	© 5
@ 3	@6

《選舉管理委員會(選舉程序)(立法會)規例》 ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION (ELECTORAL PROCEDURE) BEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BEQULATION 立法會換屆選舉 新界東地方選區 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL GENERAL ELECTION NEW TERRITORIES EAST GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCY 2016年9月4日

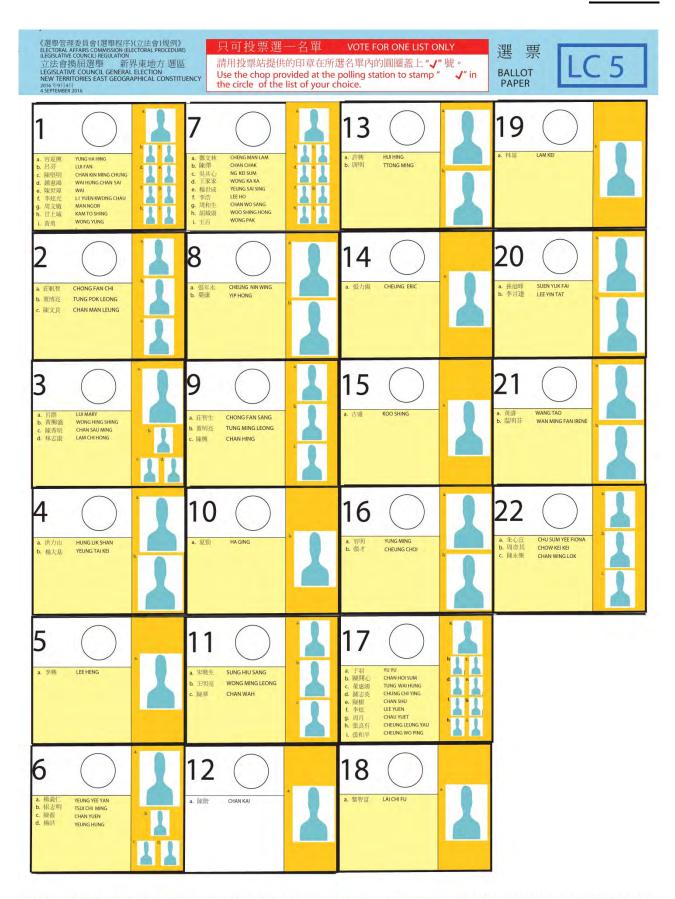
只可投票選一名單 VOTE FOR ONE LIST ONLY

請用投票站提供的印章在所選名單內的圓圈蓋上"**√"** 號。 Use the chop provided at the polling station to stamp " **√**" in the circle of the list of your choice.

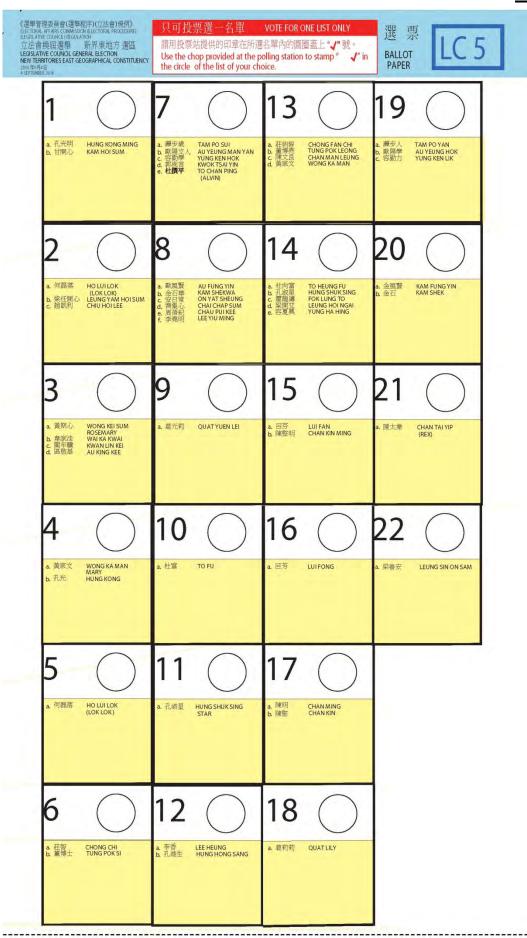




1 無黨派候選人 NON-AFFILIATED CANDIDATE a. 普爾亞 KAM HOISUM HAPPY	7 香港進步黨 HONG KONG PROGRESSIVE PARTY a. 黄朝心 WONG KEISUM ROSEMARY	13 演藝文化推廣聯會 PERFORMING ARTS PROMOTION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ATE (b) INDEPENDENT CANDID ATE (b) a. 羅龍壽 FOKLUNG TO b. 梁開艾 LEUNG HOI NGAI	19 線色自然協會 NATURAL GREEN ASSOCIATION a. 梁善安 LEUNG SIN ON SAM LI NGAN LEI
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3 獨立候選人 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE a. 莊帆智 CHONG FAN CHI b. 董博雅 TUNG POKLEONG c. 陳文县 CHAN MAN LEUNG	9 獨立候選人 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE a. 關年職 KWANLINKEI ANDREW	15 獨立候選人 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE a 關效彬 KWAN YU BUN THOMAS	21 a. 容健新 YUNG KIN SUN
4 香港進步黨 HONG KONG PROGRESSIVE PARTY a. 養家文 WONG KAMAN (MAN WONG) b. 孔光明 HUNG KONG MING MARCO	a. 區數基 AU KING KEE b. 歐區警 AU FUNG KEE AU FUNG KAM SHEKWA C. 全日常 CHAI CHAP SUM CHAI CHAU PUI KEE	16 獨立候選人 INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE a. 黃鳳傳 WONG SZEYIK	22 a 陳芷凊 b 胡嫩盤 CLAN CHEE CHING C 乾大吉 d 黃常開 e 医任斑 f, 管字信 TSANG NING SHUN
HONG KONG PROGRESSIVE PARTY a. 漢家文 WONG KA MAN (MAN WONG) b. 孔光明 HUNG KONG MING	10 a. 區數基 AU KING KEE b. 數區屬 AU FING KEE AU FING KAM SHEKWA C. 全日常 C. FAI CHAP SUM CHAI CHAP SUM CHA		a 陳芷膚 b 胡歌盤 CHAN CHEE CHING WOO KAI CHUNG CLEMENT C 終大吉 d. 黃常開 WONG SHEUNG HOI e 胜任其 LAM YAM KEI



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