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Ms. Joanne MAK
Clerk to Panel on Constitutional Affairs,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central,
Hong Kong

9 March 2018

Dear Ms. MAK,

**Panel on Constitutional Affairs Meeting on 4 January 2018
Supplementary Information from the Registration and Electoral Office**

At the above-mentioned meeting, the Hon Tanya CHAN requested the Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) to provide supplementary information in writing on the improvement measures to be implemented in light of the computer theft incident last year. The REO now provides the following supplementary information –

On 13 June 2017, the Task Force on the Computer Theft Incident of the Registration and Electoral Office (“the Task Force”) set up by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (“CMAB”) published a report putting forward a series of observations and recommendations regarding the REO’s handling of personal data, information technology (“IT”) security, general security of election venues, as well as on aspects pertaining to the permanent establishment of the department. The REO has implemented the majority of the recommendations made by the Task Force. Such measures will be implemented in the 2018 Legislative Council (“LegCo”) By-election to be held on 11 March 2018.

Handling of Personal Data

On handling of personal data, the REO has updated the relevant internal guidelines and procedures, which will be circulated among staff on a regular basis, stipulating that personal data should only be made available for access or use on a “need-to-use” and “need-to-know” basis. In addition, in protection of personal data privacy, only staff authorised to handle personal data are allowed to retrieve or access to the relevant personal data. The REO will also take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent personal data from unauthorised or accidental access, disclosure, processing, deletion or other use.

The REO will arrange briefing sessions before every major election in future to enhance staff’s awareness on personal data protection. In this regard, the briefing for the LegCo By-election to be held on 11 March has already been held in January 2018.

At the same time, the REO is now working in parallel on the formulation of a long-term Privacy Management Programme, including commissioning a suitable consultant through tender to assist in the development and implementation of the system.

IT Security

In respect of IT security, all members of the REO are prohibited from using the Electors Information Enquiry System (the system was installed on one of the notebook computers suspected to be stolen during the 2017 Chief Executive Election) in election venues, including those for this LegCo By-election, for the purpose of verifying voters’ identity and handling enquires. The REO has also updated its internal guidelines on IT security, and will ensure that its IT systems are in keeping with the latest requirements of the Government’s IT security policies, procedures and guidelines.

General Security of Election Venues

As for the general security of election venues, the REO will formulate a venue security plan for each election (including the coming By-election), and seek comments from the Police and the Electoral Affairs Commission on the

relevant security arrangements. The arrangements for the usage of personal data, together with the security arrangements, will be personally endorsed by the Chief Electoral Officer. The REO will also avoid storing any personal data in fallback sites before their actual activation.

Permanent Establishment of the REO

As regards the establishment, the CMAB has already submitted a proposal to the LegCo for converting the time-limited supernumerary Principal Electoral Officer post of the department into a permanent one, so that the planning and operational aspects of electoral activities can be overseen effectively, and that valuable experiences can be retained for sustainable review and improvement of the electoral system. A number of permanent posts will also be created under the REO to retain part of the core staff with electoral experience at the end of an election cycle to enable a detailed review of the electoral arrangements and the exploration of feasible improvement measures, so that electoral work will be better organised in the next election cycle. The REO will also assign civil servants occupying permanent posts to take up key planning and supervisory duties as far as possible.

Members are invited to note the above.



(Ms. Canny LEE)

for Chief Electoral Officer

c.c. Secretary for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
(Attn: Mr. Carlton MAN)