

Counting of votes for District Council Ordinary Election completed (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Electoral Affairs Commission:

The counting of votes of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election was completed at 7.58am today (December 11). The count for both District Committees constituencies (DCCs) and District Council geographical constituencies (DCGCs) commenced after the close of poll of DCGCs at midnight on December 10. The counting of about 2 454 DCC ballot papers and about 1 193 DCGC ballot papers was completed in about eight hours.

"Despite failure of the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system during polling which causes an extension of polling hours accordingly, the election was finally completed in a smooth manner with the concerted efforts by the electoral staff. The system error of the EPR system does not impact on the safe and orderly conduct of the election in an open, honest and fair manner. The EAC is satisfied with the arrangements," the Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC), Mr Justice David Lok, said on conclusion of the election.

"The Chief Executive has instructed the EAC to establish a dedicated investigation team led by the EAC member Mr Bernard Man, SC, and comprised of members from the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force and the Information Technology Management Division of the Registration and Electoral Office. Experienced personnel will also be invited to the team to undergo investigation and thorough review to prevent reoccurrence of a similar incident."

The EAC will conduct a detailed review of various electoral arrangements including the failure incident involving the EPR system. A report will be submitted to the Chief Executive within three months as prescribed by the law.

Mr Justice Lok said, "The Chief Electoral Officer is required by the law to retain in his custody the ballot papers and election documents for six months. Unless otherwise directed by an order of court, no person is allowed to inspect any ballot paper. The ballot papers and relevant documents shall be destroyed immediately after the deadline."

The EAC is very thankful to the bureaux/departments which participated in the election, especially the members of the Crisis Management Committee including the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, the Security Bureau, the Registration and Electoral Office, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, the Police, the Home

Affairs Department, the Information Services Department and the Department of Justice for their various support. In addition, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Correctional Services Department and other law enforcement agencies made appropriate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the election.

Mr Justice Lok said, despite of the incident, we should not overlook that the election is a result of the concerted efforts of colleagues who performed their duties professionally. A number of polling stations and counting stations were set up for the election this time with a huge amount of resources and manpower involved. The Commission extends special thanks to staff of the Registration and Electoral Office and polling and counting stations for their contributions and efforts to handle a large amount of work in their respective positions.

Last but not least, the EAC would like to thank all electors for casting their votes and understanding, media reporting the electoral affairs, candidates and their agents for their co-operation so that the polling and counting processes were conducted openly, honestly and fairly, and in a safe and orderly manner.



