

EAC Chairman inspects simulated activities for counting staff at central counting station

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

The Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC), Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, said after his visit to the central counting station at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) today (December 16) that most of the preparatory work for the 2021 Legislative Council General Election (LCGE) is nearing completion and that staff members would continue their work to ensure that the poll and vote count this Sunday (December 19) would be carried out smoothly.

Mr Justice Fung inspected the training sessions with practical sessions and simulated activities for counting staff at the central counting station. He thanked colleagues for their hard work and appealed to registered electors to vote on the polling day.

"The 2021 LCGE, which will be held this Sunday, is the largest public election after the Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Ordinance 2021 came into effect. There are more than 4 470 000 registered electors. Hong Kong is divided into 10 geographical constituencies (GCs) and there are 28 functional constituencies (FCs) and the newly added Election Committee constituency (ECC). On the polling day, about 630 polling stations will be set up and about 39 000 civil servants from different bureaux/departments will discharge electoral duties at different posts," Mr Justice Fung said.

"When it comes to public elections, openness, fairness and honesty are the most basic principles. Accuracy and efficiency are also required, so that the election results can be announced as soon as possible. The EAC encourages all electoral staff to make their best efforts to achieve accuracy and efficiency in the conduct of the election."

Mr Justice Fung also spoke on the new polling arrangement for staff. He said, "All along, the Presiding Officers will arrange as far as practicable and release polling staff to vote at their assigned polling stations. However, if a polling staff member goes to vote at the assigned polling station and finds a long queue waiting for admission, it will take him or her a longer period of time to do his or her voting. As a result, the operation of the polling station may still be affected anyhow. In this regard, an initiative is now in place to facilitate their early resumption of work to serve electors. If a polling staff member or a public officer who has to be on duty for the election during the polling hours, though not directly involved in polling, finds a long queue at his or her assigned polling station, he or she may present his or her staff identification or the

approval letter issued by the relevant government department to the staff on duty there and be permitted to enter the polling station for priority queuing to collect ballot papers and carry out his or her voting."

Once the polls are closed, the ballot boxes of FCs and the ECC will be delivered to the central counting station at the HKCEC, where counting of votes will take place. The ordinary polling stations (except small polling stations, dedicated polling stations, the ECC polling station and the polling station at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre) will be converted to counting stations for the counting of GC votes.

The Registration and Electoral Office has arranged a number of training sessions with practical sessions and simulated activities for polling and counting staff so that they can familiarise themselves with the procedures for making comprehensive preparations for the LCGE.