

Guidance Note on Safe Conduct of Election-related Activities

Introduction

1. This guidance note serves to provide general advice to candidates and organisers of election-related activities, for the safe conduct of such activities.

Election Meetings

2. The Public Order Ordinance (Cap. 245) and Part III of Chapter 9 of the “Guidelines on Election-related Activities in respect of the Rural Representative Election” (“the Guidelines”) provide direction on when a meeting, to be held in a public place, is to be notified to the Police and the procedures to be followed.

3. For the sake of safety and to minimise the potential confrontation with and/or harassment of candidates, irrespective of whether or not the meeting is required to be notified to the Police, candidates should be mindful of the reactions of those attending the election meeting. In this regard, consideration should be given to making appropriate arrangements with the relevant management office (if any) to facilitate the smooth conduct of the meeting. Should a candidate have any concerns over his/her own safety, consideration should be given to seeking advice from the local police station of the district concerned, before the meeting.

Election Forums

4. In addition to the provisions of Part III of Chapter 10 of the Guidelines, organisers of election forums should be aware of the possible instances of harassment of candidates.

5. In order to ensure that order, fairness and impartiality are maintained throughout the event and to avoid any embarrassing situation, where a forum is held at a private premise, the organiser should arrange in advance with the owner, occupier, owners’ corporation, building management or the

mutual aid committee of the premise for precautionary measures to ensure the safety of all participants and the orderly conduct of the forum. Where necessary, security guards should be employed and stationed on-site.

Electioneering at Living or Working Places of Electors

6. Chapter 8 of the Guidelines gives details regarding the conduct of electioneering activities at the living or working places of electors.

7. If owners or owners' corporations decide to allow electioneering by candidates, they may also set out the time of access allowed for the event and impose other conditions. These conditions help minimise the potential confrontation with and harassment of candidates.

8. Related to this, candidates should be sensitive to the feelings of tenants, occupiers and owners in planning and carrying out electioneering activities. By doing so, they will ensure that such activities can be carried out in a safe and orderly manner.

9. In addition to obtaining the formal approval or consent of the owner or owners' corporation having the right to control or manage the common parts of the building for the conduct of electioneering activities, candidates are advised to inform the management office when the electioneering activities are about to start.

General

10. Should any safety issues be of particular concern, consideration should be given to seeking advice from the local police station of the district concerned, before conducting the activity.