Appendix 8
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Notes for Broadcasters on Producing Television Programmes Introducing Candidates' Election Platforms

1. A candidate of the 2010 Legislative Council By-election made an election petition relating to a television programme which introduced the election platforms of all candidates. That television programme is multi-episode. Due to the airtime constraint, only four candidates were introduced in each episode and the time allocated to each candidate was more or less the same.

2. There were five candidates in the constituency in which the aforesaid candidate contested and the candidate number allocated to him was 5. According to the candidate number, the broadcaster of the television programme mentioned above introduced the first four candidates of that constituency in the same episode, while the aforesaid candidate was covered in the next episode. However, there was no mention in the episode introducing the first four candidates that there was a remaining candidate in that constituency who would be introduced in the next episode. The Court considered that it was possible that such arrangement might cause misunderstanding to the audience who only watched the former episode that there were only four candidates in the constituency concerned.

3. The Electoral Affairs Commission considers that the broadcaster should let the audience know: (a) the total number of candidates and the names of all candidates in the same Rural Area in each relevant episode (except for Kaifong Representative elections); and (b) the episode which will cover or has covered the candidate(s) who is/are not introduced in the current episode. Such an arrangement will ensure that the audience will be fully aware of the total number of candidates in the same Rural Area even if they watch only one single episode instead of all episodes on the same Rural Area and that equal treatment will be given to all candidates concerned.

4. Where appropriate, broadcasters are advised to follow the arrangement set out in para. 3 of this appendix when producing multi-episode programmes which are election-related.