

18 September 2023

Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question on the incident where almost 10,000 voters in Tanjong Pagar GRC received two poll cards

Question:

Ms Joan Pereira: To ask the Prime Minister with regard to the incident where almost 10,000 voters in Tanjong Pagar GRC received two poll cards (a) what lessons have been learnt; and (b) what measures will be implemented to prevent future errors.

Oral Reply by Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister of Education, for the Prime Minister:

Mr Speaker Sir, on behalf of the Prime Minister please.

2 During the recent Presidential Election, the Elections Department's (ELD) contracted commercial printer, Toppan, had mistakenly mailed test prints of poll cards together with the actual poll cards to 4,803 households, affecting 9,822 voters in Tanjong Pagar GRC. Due to human error, test print data was pooled together with production print data during the actual printing to generate poll cards for voters in Tanjong Pagar GRC. As a result, the affected households received duplicate poll cards. However, the duplicate poll cards showed the correct polling stations and the affected voters were able to vote at their assigned polling stations even if they missed the outreach by ELD on what to do with the duplicate poll cards. Processes are also in place to ensure that voters with two poll cards can only vote once as all voters must produce their NRIC or valid passport as proof of identification, which is verified against the polling station registers.

3 ELD will be instituting new measures to prevent such errors in future. ELD will require the printer to tighten its internal quality assurance processes to ensure that the test print poll cards are not mailed out in future elections. Beyond this, ELD and the printer will conduct joint checks to ensure that all test print poll cards are destroyed before the production of actual poll cards. ELD and the printer will also perform a sampling audit to check that the details in the poll cards are accurate. This includes ensuring that the number of poll cards printed for a constituency is exactly the same as the number of registered voters in the constituency.

4 I would like to assure Members that ELD will continue to work with the printer to tighten processes and ensure that these safeguards are properly implemented in future elections.