

**3 March 2025**

## **CHANGES TO POSTAL VOTING SYSTEM TO INCREASE PERCENTAGE OF POSTAL BALLOTS FOR UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION**

**Ms Hazel Poa** asked the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance (a) whether the Elections Department (ELD) has completed studies on where and how the postal voting system can be improved after the 2023 Presidential Election; and (b) if so, whether ELD will be implementing any changes to the postal voting system in the upcoming General Election with a view to increase the percentage of postal ballots received that are accepted for counting.

**Mr Chan Chun Sing (for the Prime Minister):**

Postal voting was first introduced in Presidential Election 2023 (PE2023) to enable more overseas Singaporeans to cast their votes. At PE2023, about 60% of the postal ballot papers which reached the Returning Officer (RO) in time (i.e. by the 10th day after Polling Day) were accepted for counting. The remaining 40% were rejected mainly due to faint, illegible, missing or late postmarks. Under the law, these postal ballot papers cannot be accepted for counting as the RO must be satisfied that the return envelopes were posted before Polling Day.

2 Hence, for the upcoming General Election, the Elections Department (ELD) will be sending more reminders to postal voters to encourage them to mail their return envelopes back to Singapore early, to have the best chance of reaching Singapore by the deadline to be accepted for counting. If the return envelopes are received by the RO before Polling Day, they will be accepted for counting even if the postmark is faint, illegible or missing as the return envelopes would have certainly been posted before Polling Day.

3 In addition, for postal voters residing in countries where the postal voting pre-paid return envelopes are typically not postmarked, ELD will advise them to affix their own postage stamps to better ensure that the return envelopes are postmarked. ELD will send regular reminders to these postal voters during the election period.

4 ELD will also continue to work with Singapore Post to reach out to foreign postal operators to seek their assistance to postmark the return envelopes even if there are no postage stamps affixed.