

GOVERNMENT OF WALES ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

DETAILED COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS IN PART 6

Crown status

Schedule 6: Referendums on Commencement of Assembly Act Provisions

Paragraph 8: Provision of information to voters

714. The effect of section 108 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 is that, in a referendum on the coming into force of the Assembly Act provisions, the Electoral Commission can designate two persons or organisations, which meet certain criteria, as eligible to receive financial and other assistance to assist with their campaigns – one which will be campaigning *for* the Assembly Act provisions to come into force, and one which will be campaigning against them coming into force.
715. The purpose of this provision is to help to ensure that voters in a referendum have adequate information about the issue on which they are to vote and about the arguments *for* and *against* the possible outcomes.
716. [Paragraph 8 \(2\)](#) says that if the Electoral Commission has not, by the appropriate day (see note to [paragraph 8 \(4\)](#)), made a designation of a person or organisation campaigning *for* the Assembly Act provisions coming into force, and one campaigning *against* them coming in to force, then it can itself take steps to ensure that voters are adequately informed about both sides of the argument.
717. [Paragraph 8\(4\)](#) : Under section 109(6) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, the Secretary of State can make an order varying the deadline by which a person or organisation can apply to be designated to receive assistance, and the deadline by which the Electoral Commission has to decide their application.
718. [Paragraph 8 \(4\)](#) says that if the Secretary of State has made such an order, then the day that the order specifies is the appropriate day.
719. If the Secretary of State does not make an order, and the Electoral Commission has received, by the 29th day of the referendum period:
- a) at least one application from a person/organisation campaigning *for* the Assembly Act provisions coming into force; and
 - b) at least one application from a person/organisation campaigning *against* the Assembly Act provisions coming into force, then the appropriate day is the 43rd day of the referendum period.
720. Otherwise, the appropriate day *is* the 29th day of the referendum period.