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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order provides for the conduct of the election of the initial members of the New Northern Ireland Assembly established under section 1 of the Northern Ireland (Elections) Act 1998 and for the conduct of any by-election.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of article 3 of the Order apply with the modifications set out in the right-hand columns of Schedules 1 and 2 to the Order the provisions of the Representation of the People Acts 1983 and 1985 and the Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 1986 which are listed in the left-hand columns of those Schedules. Section 3 (offences) of the Elections (Northern Ireland) Act 1985, the Election Petition Rules 1964 (as amended) and provisions of the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 relating to election notices have also been applied. In addition to the specific modifications in Schedules 1 and 2, general modifications are made by article 3(3).

Article 6 of this Order (together with rule 8A of the elections rules in Schedule 1 to the 1983 Act, as inserted by Schedule 1 to this Order) provides for a system of substitutes to avoid the need for a by-election where the seat of a candidate returned at the initial election of members of the Assembly falls vacant. Article 7 provides for by-elections where a seat cannot be filled by these means.