

WALES ACT 2014

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS (AND SCHEDULES)

Part 1: the Assembly and Welsh Government

Section 1: Frequency of Assembly ordinary general elections

8. The Assembly passed a resolution on 16 March 2011 which called for its elections to be delayed by one year to avoid a clash with the Westminster elections. This was implemented by section 5 of the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 which moved the date of the next Assembly elections from 7 May 2015 to 5 May 2016. Under the law as it stands, the Assembly will revert to four year terms thereafter.
9. There remains the potential for scheduled Westminster and Assembly elections to take place on the same day in future. Given that currently Westminster elections operate on a fixed five year cycle from 2015 and Assembly elections operate on a fixed four year cycle from 2016, they are due to coincide in 2020 and every twenty years thereafter.
10. *Subsection (1)* of section 1 therefore amends section 3(1) of GOWA 2006 to provide for ordinary general elections to the Assembly to take place every five years, rather than every four years as at present. The next Assembly elections after 2016 would be in 2021, thus avoiding a clash with the 2020 Westminster election.
11. *Subsection (2)* repeals section 5 of the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011. It is no longer required because the effect of *subsection (1)* is that the next Assembly election will be on 5 May 2016 and every five years thereafter.