



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

**Comataidh Inbhean, Dòighean-obrach is Cur-an-dreuchd
Poblach**

The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft]



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Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

The remit of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee is to consider and report on—

- (a) the practice and procedures of the Parliament in relation to its business;
- (ab) a proposal for a Bill relating to the arrangements for financial assistance to non-Government political parties represented in the Parliament;
- (b) whether a member's conduct is in accordance with these Rules and any Code of Conduct for members, matters relating to members interests, and any other matters relating to the conduct of members in carrying out their Parliamentary duties;
- (c) the adoption, amendment and application of any Code of Conduct for members; and
- (d) matters relating to public appointments in Scotland;
- (e) matters relating to the regulation of lobbying; and
- (f) matters relating to Scottish general elections falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations.



<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/standards-committee.aspx>



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Committee Membership



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Mark Ruskell
Scottish Green Party



Neil Findlay
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Scottish Conservative
and Unionist Party



Gil Paterson
Scottish National Party



Alexander Stewart
Scottish Conservative
and Unionist Party



Maureen Watt
Scottish National Party

The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft]

1. The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft] were laid before the Scottish Parliament on 3 March 2020 and referred to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee (SPPA Committee).
2. The Regulations were made in exercise of the powers in sections 9D(3) and (4), sections 53(1) and (3) and paragraphs 1(2), 1A, 1B, 3ZA, 3C, 10(1) and 13(1ZB) of schedule 2 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and section 15 of the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015.
3. The draft Regulations amend the Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (the 2001 Regulations) in order to reform and modernise the annual canvass. The purpose of the annual canvass is to gather information on potential additions, deletions and changes to the electoral register. It is currently a paper-based exercise which the Policy Note describes as expensive and complex to deliver.
4. The Regulations give electoral administrators greater discretion to target their resources at properties where additions or deletions to the register are more likely to be required. The reforms will establish a mandatory national data matching step which will allow Electoral Registration Officers to focus on households which are most likely to have experienced changes in composition
5. The objective of the reforms is also to reduce the administrative burden on Electoral Registration Officers and reduce the overall cost of the annual canvass process.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Consideration

6. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee considered the draft regulations on 10 March 2020 and indicated in its [18th Report 2020](#) that it did not need to draw the Parliament's attention to the instrument.

SPPA Committee Consideration

7. At the SPPA Committee's ninth meeting on 19 March 2020, it took evidence on the Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft] from—

Graeme Dey, Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans;

Sadif Ashraf, Deputy Director, Maria McCann, Head of Elections Team, and Kenneth Pentland, Senior Policy Officer, Scottish Government.
8. Motion S5M-21239 was lodged by Graeme Dey, Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans, and supported by Michael Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations.
9. Following the evidence session, Graeme Dey moved Motion S5M-21239 that the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee recommends that the Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft] be approved.
10. The motion was agreed to without division.
11. The evidence taken and the debate can be found in the Official Report for the SPPA Committee meeting of 19 March 2020.

The Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee recommends that the Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) Amendment (Scotland) Order 2020 [draft] be approved.

Annexe A - Extracts from Minutes

9th Meeting 2020 (Session 5), Thursday 19 March 2020

Subordinate legislation: The Committee took evidence on the Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft] from—

Graeme Dey, Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans;

Sadif Ashraf, Deputy Director, Solicitors: Local Government and Economy Division, Maria McCann, Head of Elections Team, and Kenneth Pentland, Senior Policy Officer, Elections Team, Scottish Government.

Subordinate legislation: Graeme Dey moved—S5M-21239—That the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee recommends that Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to.

