

16 February 2005

Dear

### **Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your email of 2 February 2005 in which you requested the following information:

“The names of all substitutes nominated by Assembly members after the elections held in 1998 and 2003 and the dates those substitutes were nominated.”

The position in respect of 1998 is that the Electoral Office has not retained the notices (or records of the notices) given to the Chief Electoral Officer by candidates for the 1998 Northern Ireland Assembly election setting out the names and addresses of the persons to act as substitutes.

The notices of substitutes given by candidates for the 1998 Northern Ireland Assembly election to the Chief Electoral Officer were received during the time for delivery of nominations for that election. The statutory dates for nominations were 1, 2 and 3 June 1998.

The position in respect of 2003 is that the notices of substitutes given to the Chief Electoral Officer by candidates for the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly election setting out the names and addresses of the persons to act as substitutes were received during the time for delivery of nominations for that election. The statutory dates for nominations were 3 and 4 November 2003.

The Electoral Office, however, considers that information held about the identity of substitutes nominated by candidates for the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly election is exempt information under Section 40(2) and (3)(a)(i) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You can, of course, approach individual MLAs to ask that they provide the information you seek.

I hope this explains the position, but please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything I can usefully add.

Yours sincerely

Information Officer