

ELECTORAL LAW REFORM (P.207/98): AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 20th October 1998
by Deputy S.J. Le Cornu of St. Clement**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

175

1998

P.212 (revised)

Price code : A

ELECTORAL LAW REFORM (P.207/98):AMENDMENT

At the end of sub-paragraph (c) insert the words, except that in Recommendation 24 for the word ‘Saturday’ there shall be substituted the word ‘Wednesday’.

DEPUTY S.J. LE CORNU OF ST. CLEMENT

Report

The main objective of the Working Party was to consider whether any changes should be made to the practice and procedure of public elections, with a view to encouraging the maximum participation of the electorate.

To change polling day to Saturday from the traditional Wednesday is unlikely to achieve that objective. It is more likely to have a negative effect.

A large number of people simply will not be available to vote. Saturdays are days of recreation - especially sporting events. In the early winter months inter-insular events take place in football, rugby and hockey as well as many on the mainland. There is an increasing tendency for weekend breaks away, either to France or the United Kingdom.

For those people who work on Saturdays, it is invariably their busiest day of the week and the hours are the longest.

All these factors will make it more difficult for people to vote.

For many of the same reasons, it will be very disruptive for those who give of their time to assist in the organising of the polls - in the polling booths and outside, e.g. Honorary Police and those who administer the voters and the count. To expect these people to give up a Saturday often up to and beyond midnight is unreasonable, when it is not necessary.

There will inevitably be an additional cost, which in those Parishes with more than one polling station will be significant, and will be substantial in St. Helier.

Press coverage will be very difficult to manage. The earliest Jersey Evening Post after a Saturday poll will be Monday evening, and Channel Television will have great difficulty. To disrupt Channel Island viewers' Saturday night viewing to cover Jersey Elections will almost certainly be unacceptable.

There is nothing to indicate that all this disruption and additional cost will have any positive effect on the numbers who are likely to vote.

CORRIGENDUM

**Electoral Law Reform (P.207/98): amendment.
P.212/98 Revised**

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For the words "sub-paragraph (c)" substitute the words
"sub-paragraph (e)".