

These notes refer to the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (c.13) which received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014 (c.13) which received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014

NORTHERN IRELAND (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT (C.13) WHICH RECEIVED ROYAL ASSENT ON 13 MARCH 2014

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Section 19: Chief Electoral Officer: Performance Standards

97. In Northern Ireland, the Chief Electoral Officer is appointed by the Secretary of State and must prepare a report each year for the Secretary of State on how he has discharged his functions. The Secretary of State then lays a copy of the report before each House of Parliament.
98. In Great Britain, local authorities are responsible for the appointment of registration officers. The standards of performance of registration officers in Great Britain are set by the Electoral Commission. Sections 9A-9C of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 give the Electoral Commission the power to publish standards of performance for registration officers, returning officers and counting officers and to publish assessments of relevant officers against the standards.
99. In its 2011 report, the Electoral Commission recommended that the performance standards framework be extended to Northern Ireland. Following that report, the Chief Electoral Officer has worked with the Electoral Commission to pilot a set of registration performance standards in Northern Ireland. The initial pilot concluded at the end of March 2013.
100. Subsection (1) gives the Secretary of State the power to make provision about performance standards, including the setting of performance standards and reporting and assessment against those standards.
101. Subsection (2) clarifies that the Order may modify or remove a function of the Secretary of State, the Chief Electoral Officer or the Electoral Commission. This allows the Secretary of State to amend the current reporting framework in parallel with introducing a new assessment framework being introduced, so avoiding two overlapping performance management frameworks.
102. Subsection (6) makes any amendment to make provision on performance standards subject to the affirmative resolution procedure.