



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

CIB/ 2/1/16

Constitution Group

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Eric Syddique
Chief Executive
Electoral Reform Society
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SE1 0UU

6 June 1997

Dear Mr Syddique

REFERENDUM IN SCOTLAND

As you will be aware the House of Commons stage of the Referendums (Scotland and Wales) Bill has now been completed. We are now considering the initial steps in the appointment of a Chief Counting Officer and I am writing to your Society for any views which you might have on suitable candidates which we could put forward to the Secretary of State for his consideration.

Based on the experience of the 1979 Referendum we do not expect the duties of the Chief Counting Officer (CCO) to be particularly time consuming probably taking up about 3 or 4 weeks of the appointees time. However, it will obviously be a high profile post particularly in the run-up to the poll and on the day of the referendum with intense media interest likely. Any candidate will therefore have to be someone who is, of course, impartial; of high standing with the ability to command respect and be able to deal with the media in a communicative way. Ideally, we would expect the candidate to be based in Scotland.

As might probably know the main duties of a CCO will involve the appointment of local counting officers and to issue directions to these counting officers about the conduct of the count and on the day of the referendum itself to decide on whether a recount is necessary and to certify each result.

As your Society has a wide range of experience on electoral matters we would appreciate any views you might have on suitable candidates for this appointment. We have also written to the Association of Electoral Administrators in Scotland for any thoughts which they might have and we are also considering candidates from our own experiences.

I should apologise for the short notice but it would be helpful to have any views which you might have by 13 June.

Yours sincerely
John Grice

P E GRICE



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Gavin Anderson Esq
Chairman
Association of Electoral Administrators (Scotland)
c/o The City of Edinburgh Council
Legal Services Department
City Chambers
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Edinburgh
EH1 1YG

6 June 1997

Dear Gavin

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As you probably know from our recent correspondence the main duties will involve the appointment of local counting officers and to issue directions to these counting officers about the conduct of the count and on the day of the referendum itself to decide on whether a recount is necessary and to certify each result.

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Yours sincerely

Janet
P E GRICE