

These notes refer to the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 (c.53) which received Royal Assent on 22 November 2006

NORTHERN IRELAND (ST ANDREWS AGREEMENT) ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Part 1: Preparations for the Restoration of Devolved Government

Section 3: Next Northern Ireland Assembly election to be in March 2007 etc

29. [Section 3](#) makes provision for the election of the next Assembly. It specifies that the current Assembly (i.e. that elected on 26 November 2003) should be dissolved on 30 January 2007 and sets the date of the poll for the election to the next Assembly as 7 March 2007.
30. Subsections (2) and (3) disapply Article 7 of the [Northern Ireland Assembly \(Elections\) Order 2001](#) (“the Elections Order”) (S.I. 2001/2599). The Elections Order makes provision for cases where the Presiding Officer of the Assembly notifies the Chief Electoral Officer (“the CEO”) of a vacancy in the membership of the Assembly, or a court notifies the CEO of a successful challenge to the election of a person to the Assembly. Where the CEO receives such a notification, Article 7 would normally require him to call a by-election for the vacant seat. This requirement is disapplied by section 3 in respect of any vacancy which exists between the passing of the Act (including any vacancy that has arisen before the passing of this Act) and the date of the next Assembly election. This affects the Transitional Assembly membership because of the effect of section 1(1)(a).