



Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

2008–2009 Estimates

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

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Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
and Minister for Democratic Reform

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Section I – Overview

The Chief Electoral Officer's Message

Since my appointment as Chief Electoral Officer of Canada by the House of Commons in February 2007, I have overseen an organization of dedicated professionals efficiently administering all aspects of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Despite the challenges posed by unpredictable election cycles and significant ongoing legislative reform, at Elections Canada we have worked diligently to ensure that we continue to deliver our statutory mandate fairly, transparently and effectively.

To meet the challenges, we have recently adopted a five-year strategic plan. It sets out three strategic objectives: *Trust, Accessibility and Engagement*; these will focus our efforts to ensure that Canadians continue to have confidence in their electoral process and are provided with increased opportunity to participate actively in the selection of their representatives. The plan also identifies four enablers: *Human Resources, Information Technology, Governance and Communications*; these are essential for delivering our mandate and meeting our strategic objectives.

In 2008–09, we will continue to maintain readiness in the situation of a minority government, carry out regulatory activities, support the process of electoral reform, and implement our new strategic plan. We will also pay special attention to two key enablers: *Information Technology* and *Human Resources*.

I and the team at Elections Canada look forward to working closely with all electors, parliamentarians, political parties and other stakeholders to further enhance the electoral process, increase accessibility of electoral services for Canadians and build their trust in our electoral framework.

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Management Representation Statement

I submit, for tabling in Parliament, the *2008–09 Report on Plans and Priorities* for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide to the Preparation of Part III of the 2008–09 Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports*:

- it adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in the Treasury Board Secretariat guidance;
- it is based on the agency's strategic outcome and program activities that were approved by the Treasury Board;
- it presents consistent, comprehensive, balanced and reliable information;
- it provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to the agency; and
- it reports finances based on approved planned spending numbers from the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

About Elections Canada

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, commonly known as Elections Canada, is an independent, non-partisan agency set up by Parliament. Its mandate is to:

- be prepared at all times to conduct a federal general election, by-election or referendum
- administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*
- monitor compliance and enforce electoral legislation
- conduct voter education and information programs
- provide support to the independent commissions in charge of adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts following each decennial census
- carry out studies on alternative voting methods and, with the approval of Parliament, test electronic voting processes for future use during electoral events

In fulfillment of this mandate, the agency strives to ensure that all voters have access to the electoral process, provides information and education programs to citizens about the electoral system, maintains the National Register of Electors, monitors compliance with electoral law and enforces the legislation, and maintains readiness to conduct electoral events.

Elections Canada appoints, trains and supports 308 returning officers across Canada, as well as other election officers and temporary election staff in Ottawa. It develops and maintains electoral geography information that provides the basis for preparing maps and other geographic products used during electoral events.

The agency also:

- registers political entities, including political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, leadership contestants, third parties that engage in election advertising and referendum committees
- administers the allowances, reimbursements and subsidies paid to eligible candidates, registered political parties and auditors
- monitors compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*
- discloses information on registered parties and electoral district associations, nomination contestants and leadership contestants of registered parties, candidates, third parties, and referendum committees, including their financial returns

In addition, the agency recommends to Parliament amendments for the better administration of the *Canada Elections Act*. It does this through the statutory reports of the Chief Electoral Officer after electoral events, as well as through the provision of expert advice when Parliament studies electoral reform.

Mission

Ensuring that Canadians can exercise their democratic rights to vote and be a candidate.

Vision

An accessible electoral framework that Canadians trust and use.

Organizational Information

Elections Canada's Organization and Accountability

Elections Canada is headed by the Chief Electoral Officer, who is appointed by resolution of the House of Commons. Reporting directly to Parliament, the Chief Electoral Officer is independent of the federal government and political parties.

The *Canada Elections Act* gives the Chief Electoral Officer authority to appoint:

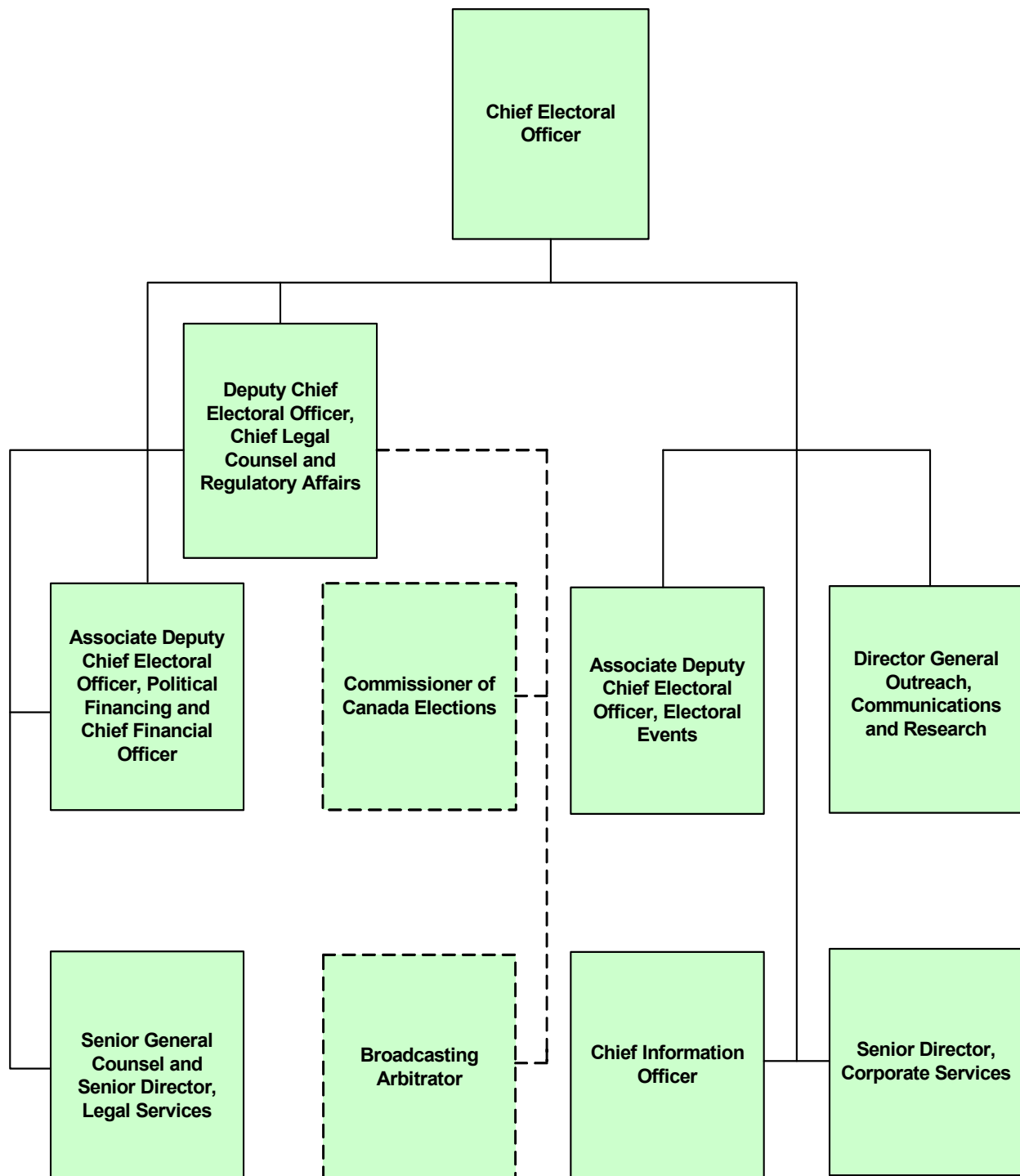
- the Commissioner of Canada Elections
- the Broadcasting Arbitrator
- a returning officer for each federal electoral district

The Act provides the statutory framework for the activities of all these office-holders, under the general authority of the Chief Electoral Officer. In the case of returning officers, it also authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to provide them with instructions as required for the administration of the Act.

In addition, Elections Canada retains the services of 30 field liaison officers. They support the work of returning officers in the field, acting as functional leaders, quality enhancers and troubleshooters.

The diagram on the next page presents the agency's organizational structure and reporting relationships.

Elections Canada's Organizational Structure



Governance Structure

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) – The CEO oversees and is accountable for the whole of Elections Canada. The CEO provides leadership for our internal and external governance, and focuses on maintaining awareness of stakeholders’ needs, issues and concerns.

The Chief Electoral Officer’s current responsibilities include:

- conducting federal electoral events (by-elections, general elections and referendums)
- making sure that all voters have access to the electoral process through public education and information programs, as well as accessible physical facilities
- maintaining the National Register of Electors
- providing legal, technical, financial and administrative support to the independent commissions that periodically readjust electoral district boundaries
- registering political parties and their electoral district associations, party leadership contestants and third parties
- administering the legislated controls on the financing sources and election expenses of candidates, nomination contestants (those competing for endorsement as a party’s candidate in an electoral district), party leadership contestants, registered parties, registered electoral district associations and third parties engaged in election advertising; and examining and disclosing their financial reports
- authorizing the payment of allowances to registered parties, and reimbursing the election expenses of candidates and parties according to formulas set out in the *Canada Elections Act*
- appointing and training returning officers, and ensuring that they provide competent and efficient services in administering the electoral process in each electoral district
- appointing the Commissioner of Canada Elections, who is tasked with enforcing electoral legislation
- appointing the Broadcasting Arbitrator, who is tasked with allocating broadcasting time among registered political parties during general elections

Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Chief Legal Counsel and Regulatory Affairs (DCEO) – The Chief Electoral Officer is assisted by the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and Chief Legal Counsel. The DCEO oversees and is accountable for our regulatory activities, programs and policies, in accordance with electoral law.

The Chief Electoral Officer is supported by four senior committees:

- The **Executive Committee (EXCOM)** provides overall strategic direction, sets corporate policies, ensures a coherent approach to corporate priorities and monitors organizational performance. EXCOM is the main committee that oversees and directs the conduct of general elections.
- The **Regulatory and Compliance Committee (RCC)** develops and maintains the regulatory framework, and monitors and advises on related initiatives, programs and emerging issues.

- The **Electoral Readiness Committee** (ERC) provides directions and decides on matters related to electoral readiness and the conduct of electoral events.
- The **Information Management and Technology Committee** (IMTC) ensures that Elections Canada's longer-term direction and strategic objectives are supported by an adequate information technology (IT) infrastructure, including telephony, informatics systems and an information management framework.

Funding

As an independent agency of Parliament, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is funded by an annual appropriation that provides for the salaries of permanent full-time staff, and by the statutory authority contained in the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Referendum Act* and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*. The statutory authority provides for all other expenditures, including the costs of electoral events, maintenance of the National Register of Electors, quarterly allowances for eligible registered political parties, redistribution of electoral boundaries, and continuing public information and education programs. There are two further statutory items: the salary of the Chief Electoral Officer and contributions to employee benefit plans.

The statutory authority ensures that Elections Canada has the capacity to be ready at all times to conduct an electoral event. It also serves to recognize Elections Canada's independence from the government and from the influence of political parties. It is a critical component in maintaining the integrity of the democratic process in Canada.

Voted and Statutory Items Listed in Main Estimates

Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	2008–09 Main Estimates (\$ thousands)	Previous Main Estimates (\$ thousands)
15	Program Expenditures	22,062	21,766
(S)	Salary of the Chief Electoral Officer	260	231
(S)	Expenses of Elections	84,318	78,398
(S)	Contributions to Employee Benefit Plans	3,861	4,027
	Total Agency	110,501	104,422

Agency Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Spending 2007–08	Planned Spending 2008–09	Planned Spending 2009–10*	Planned Spending 2010–11*
Program Activity: Elections	104,422	110,501	110,501	110,501
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	104,422	110,501	110,501	110,501
Less: Respendable revenue	—	—	—	—
Total Main Estimates	104,422	110,501	110,501	110,501
Adjustments	—	—	—	—
Supplementary Estimates	21,125	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—
Total Adjustments	21,125	—	—	—
Total Planned Spending	125,547	110,501	110,501	110,501
Total Planned Spending	125,547	110,501	110,501	110,501
Less: Non-respendable revenue	—	—	—	—
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	6,369	7,077	7,104	7,132
Total Agency Spending	131,916	117,578	117,605	117,633
Full-Time Equivalents**	408	388	388	388

* The agency's planned spending provided for each fiscal period beyond 2008–09 is an indicator of statutory expenditures that the agency may incur during the year under the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Referendum Act* or the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*. These and additional funds needed to carry out the agency's statutory responsibilities will be drawn under the statutory authority, if necessary.

** Includes both indeterminate and term employees.

Summary Information

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
110,501	110,501	110,501

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
388	388	388

Agency Priorities for 2008–11

Elections Canada has four priorities that are linked to the agency's mandate and concern the enduring benefits we provide to Canadians. In addition to these mandated priorities, it has three strategic objectives set out in its *Strategic Plan 2008–13*; these concern changes sought by the agency to better deliver its mandate.

Mandated Priorities	Type
1. Electoral Event Delivery, Political Financing, and Compliance and Enforcement To deliver federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process, and to administer the political financing provisions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> .	Ongoing
2. Electoral Event Readiness and Improvements To achieve and maintain a state of readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called, and to improve the delivery of electoral events.	Ongoing
3. Public Education, Information and Support for Stakeholders To provide timely and high-quality public education and information programs, and assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public, parliamentarians, political entities and other stakeholders.	Ongoing
4. Electoral Boundaries Redistribution (required every 10 years) To readjust representation in the House of Commons after each decennial (10-year) census to reflect changes and movements in Canada's population. Readjustment of federal electoral boundaries is carried out by independent commissions in each province, with the support of Elections Canada. This activity was last completed in 2003–04. Once we receive the 2011 Census return, redistribution will begin again. However, we will start planning activities for this priority in 2008–09.	Ongoing
Strategic Objectives	
5. Trust To maintain and strengthen the recognition among Canadians, whether they are electors or other participants in the electoral process, that we administer the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> in a fair, consistent, effective and transparent manner.	New
6. Accessibility To increase accessibility of the electoral process by testing innovative ways to vote and offering electors additional ways to register.	New
7. Engagement (a) To increase young Canadians' understanding of the importance of voting and becoming candidates in elections. (b) To work more collaboratively with parliamentarians and political parties in further strengthening the electoral process.	New

The agency also recognizes four “enablers” that are essential to the delivery of its priorities: *Human Resources, Information Technology, Governance and Communications*. Elections Canada is committed to ensuring that these have the resources required to carry out their strategic role in our operations.

Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

The following chart summarizes Elections Canada’s four key programs (mandated priorities) that complement our single strategic outcome.

Mandated Priority	Expected Results	Planned Spending (\$ thousands)		
		2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
1. Electoral Event Delivery, Political Financing, and Compliance and Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of high-quality elections, by-elections and referendums • Fair, efficient and transparent administration of the political financing provisions • Effective compliance and enforcement programs and electoral events, in accordance with legal requirements 	\$36,245	\$36,245	\$36,245
2. Electoral Event Readiness and Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called 	62,799	62,799	62,799
3. Public Education, Information and Support for Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely and high-quality public education and information programs on electoral matters 	11,457	11,457	11,457
4. Electoral Boundaries Redistribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient and non-partisan administration of the <i>Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act</i> 	–	–	–

Achievement of the strategic outcome is supported by specific activities and initiatives undertaken within each of the areas listed.

Elections Canada’s Plans and Priorities for 2008–09

Elections Canada’s plans and priorities for 2008–09 are driven by its four main mandated priorities and its *Strategic Plan 2008–13*.

The agency’s plans and priorities are also influenced by Parliament’s legislative initiatives, as well as any requirements to conduct federal elections, by-elections or referendums. In all cases, the agency must strive for continuous improvement and delivery of high-quality service to Canadians.

What's New

1. Implementation of the Strategic Plan

In fall 2007, Elections Canada completed the development of a strategic plan to guide its activities through 2013. The purpose of this plan is to:

- establish our strategic objectives – *Trust, Accessibility and Engagement*
- set measurable targets
- focus our efforts across the agency
- manage organizational capacity by choosing the long-term initiatives we will support
- communicate our direction and activities to stakeholders
- respond to current and future opportunities and challenges

The strategic plan identifies four enablers that will support achievement of our strategic objectives: *Human Resources, Information Technology, Governance and Communications*. The enablers will each be the focus of long-term action plans. The start of the implementation of these plans will also be a high priority in 2008–09.

2. New Legislation

Elections Canada must be ready at all times to deliver an electoral event, whether it is a general election, by-election or referendum. At the same time, we seek to improve the management and administration of the electoral process. Our planning takes into account proposed amendments to electoral legislation under consideration by Parliament. For many of these bills, the Chief Electoral Officer is called to appear before the relevant committee of the House of Commons and/or Senate. The agency prepares an analysis of the proposed changes, and plans for their implementation if the bills are adopted.

A number of significant legislative changes have recently been adopted by Parliament, or are being considered by the House of Commons or Senate. The legislation, both enacted and proposed, is expected to have an impact on the current electoral process and the administration of electoral events. We will continue to monitor the changes that enacted bills bring to the electoral process; inform the Advisory Committee of Political Parties and report to Parliament and other stakeholders; and make recommendations as required to strengthen and facilitate the electoral process.

Recently enacted legislation with an impact on our business

Bill C-2, *Federal Accountability Act* (S.C. 2006, c. 9)

This bill received royal assent on December 12, 2006. It has had a number of impacts on the operations of Elections Canada. As of January 1, 2007, contribution limits have been reduced from \$5,000 to \$1,000, and only individuals are now authorized to make contributions to political entities governed by the *Canada Elections Act*. Candidates are also now required to file a new report regarding certain gifts. The Chief Electoral Officer is now responsible for the appointment and removal of returning officers and since April 1, 2007, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is subject to the *Access to Information Act*. Finally, the responsibility for prosecuting offences under the *Canada Elections Act* has been transferred to the newly established office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Bill C-16, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act* (S.C. 2007, c. 10)

Fixed election dates: This bill received royal assent in May 2007. It provides that, unless the House of Commons is dissolved earlier, a general election must be held on the third Monday in October in the fourth calendar year following polling day for the previous general election. Accordingly, unless the House of Commons is dissolved earlier, the date of the next general election would be Monday, October 19, 2009.

Bill C-31, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Public Service Employment Act* (S.C. 2007, c. 21)

This bill received royal assent in June 2007. It requires electors to prove their identity and address before voting. It also amends the *Canada Elections Act* to, among other things, make operational changes that will improve the accuracy of the National Register of Electors, facilitate voting and enhance communications with the electorate. It amends the *Public Service Employment Act* to permit the appointment of casual workers by the Chief Electoral Officer on the occasion of an election for up to 165 working days in a calendar year.

Bill C-18, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (verification of residence)* (S.C. 2007, c. 37)

This bill received royal assent in December 2007. It allows an elector or person vouching for an elector who provides a piece of identification that does not prove his or her residence to use that piece of identification for proving residence provided that the address on the piece of identification is consistent with information related to the elector or vouching person found in the list of electors.

Government bills currently before Parliament with a potential impact on our business

Bill C-6, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (visual identification of voters)*

This bill would require that electors have their faces uncovered before voting or registering to vote in person, and would increase the authority of Elections Canada to appoint sufficient personnel to manage the conduct of the vote at the polls.

Bill C-16, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (expanded voting opportunities) and to make a consequential amendment to the Referendum Act* (amended by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs)

This bill would increase the number of advance voting days.

Bill C-20, *An Act to provide for consultations with electors on their preferences for appointments to the Senate*

This bill provides for the consultation of electors in a province to determine their preferences for the appointment of senators to represent their province.

Bill C-22, *An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (Democratic representation)*

This bill would amend the rules in the *Constitution Act, 1867* for readjusting the number of members of the House of Commons and the representation of the provinces in the House.

Bill C-29, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans)*

This bill would amend the *Canada Elections Act* provisions concerning loans, guarantees and suretyships provided to registered parties, registered associations, candidates, leadership contestants and nomination contestants.

Private members' bills currently before Parliament with a potential impact on our business
<p>Bill C-203, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (telephone, fax and Internet service to campaign offices)</i></p> <p>This bill calls for telephone, fax and Internet service to be provided in a timely manner to the campaign offices of each and every candidate in all federal elections and in all parties.</p>
<p>Bill C-318, <i>An Act to provide for a House of Commons committee to study proportional representation in federal elections</i></p> <p>This bill calls for the consideration of proportional representation in elections to the House of Commons.</p>
<p>Bill C-329, <i>An Act to amend the Referendum Act (reform of the electoral system of Canada)</i></p> <p>This bill would amend the <i>Referendum Act</i> to allow the holding of a referendum on any question relating to the reform of Canada's electoral system.</p>
<p>Bill C-341, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (military dependants)</i></p> <p>This bill would allow dependants of a member of the Canadian Forces who have reached voting age to choose where they want to vote in elections and to indicate their intention to vote by completing a statement of ordinary residence.</p>
<p>Bill C-353, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (date of general election)</i></p> <p>This bill would provide that, unless the House of Commons is dissolved earlier, a general election must be held on the third Monday in September in the fourth calendar year following polling day for the previous general election. Accordingly, the date of the next general election would be Monday, September 21, 2009. The bill also calls for the Chief Electoral Officer to recommend a different day if the day set for voting is not suitable.</p>
<p>Bill C-419, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (closed captioning)</i></p> <p>This bill would prohibit any person from transmitting an election advertising message to the public by means of a television or Internet broadcast unless the broadcast contains closed captioning for the hearing impaired.</p>
<p>Bill C-465, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (identity of electors)</i></p> <p>This bill would require every elector to identify himself or herself with his or her face uncovered before voting.</p>

In addition, there are 10 private members' bills currently before Parliament that would amend the names of certain electoral districts.

3. Judicial Decisions and Proceedings

In its electoral planning and delivery, the agency must also take into account judicial decisions and proceedings that may affect electoral legislation.

Recent decision
<p><i>Longley v. Canada (Attorney General)</i></p> <p>In October 2006, The Ontario Superior Court of Justice struck down paragraphs 435.01(1)(a) and (b) of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>, which limit the payment of a quarterly allowance to registered parties that achieve a minimum threshold of votes during general elections. The Court ruled that the provisions contravened the right to vote guaranteed by section 3 of the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> and were discriminatory under section 15 of the Charter. The Court also granted a retroactive remedy to the applicant parties, ordering that they be paid the quarterly allowance effective from January 1, 2004.</p> <p>The Ontario Court of Appeal heard this case on June 27, 2007, and rendered its decision on December 6, 2007. It allowed the government's appeal, finding that the thresholds specified in the Act are constitutional. Moreover, it concluded that the respondent political parties did not have the standing to bring the application. An application for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada was filed on February 1, 2008.</p>

Ongoing proceedings

Sa Tan v. Her Majesty The Queen

In the Federal Court of Canada, the applicant filed a challenge to the constitutionality of the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* that require a person who seeks nomination as a candidate to provide a \$1,000 deposit, appoint a qualified auditor and obtain the signatures of a specified number of electors (either 50 or 100). These requirements are set out in subsection 66(1) and paragraph 67(4)(a) of the Act. The application was filed and served in August 2007; no hearing date has yet been scheduled.

Rose Henry et al. v. Canada (Attorney General)

On January 30, 2008, an action was filed in the Supreme Court of British Columbia by individuals and groups challenging the constitutionality of the new identification and vouching requirements in the *Canada Elections Act*. The applicants assert that the amendments will prevent electors from exercising their right to vote, as guaranteed by section 3 of the Charter.

Risks and Challenges

Until recently, Canada's parliamentary system did not specify the length of time between federal general elections.¹ On May 3, 2007, Bill C-16, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act*, received royal assent. The legislation provides that, unless the House of Commons is dissolved earlier, an election must be held on the third Monday in October every four years. Despite this new provision, the length of Elections Canada's business cycle continues to vary in the ongoing situation of minority governments. The uncertainty makes planning a challenge. We must continually monitor parliamentary and political events and trends; this is necessary for us to take into account circumstances that might affect our electoral readiness and preparations for electoral events.

Maintaining a constant state of heightened readiness imposes a strain on the organization. The pressure has been greater because of the succession of minority governments, the increased volume of work resulting from closely spaced general elections, recent far-reaching electoral reform and further proposed significant changes to the electoral process.

For the present, Elections Canada has responded to increased requirements by using temporary personnel and contractors and by making greater demands of its core staff. While these measures provide short-term solutions, they are not sustainable strategies over time. Already the agency faces challenges in attracting and retaining employees, and allowing sufficient time for their training. We are also concerned about the turnover of personnel in key positions. These factors limit our capacity to take on additional work resulting from electoral events and further electoral reforms.

We are therefore looking at ways to augment our organizational capacity – especially in areas where we rely on temporary employees and contractors – so that we can offer political entities responsive service, continue meeting statutory deadlines and provide for timely enforcement of the Act.

¹ However, under the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the House of Commons cannot sit for longer than five years except in times of real or apprehended war, invasion or insurrection.

Investments are also needed now to renew our information technology infrastructure; we had no choice but to stretch its lifespan to meet our ongoing readiness goals in the situation of minority governments. The existing IT environment has reached the limits of its capability and cannot be augmented further to meet new requirements. This affects every aspect of the IT environment. To address this risk, an IT renewal project has begun and will, over a period of years, replace our current infrastructure with one better suited to our needs. The project will:

- centralize all information and systems
- Web-enable our systems to provide additional accessibility for our employees, partners and clients
- implement a robust IT security model to protect clients' data and information
- update the telecommunications networks to provide secure high-speed access from our field offices
- provide an IT environment that responds quickly to new business or legislative demands

The timely renewal of IT infrastructure is also essential to our organizational capacity and our ability to meet the future service demands of our employees, the Canadian public, Parliament and other stakeholders.

Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Introduction

Elections Canada operates under a Program Activity Architecture (PAA) that contains one main strategic outcome:

An electoral process that contributes to fairness, transparency and accessibility for all participants, in compliance with the legislative framework.

The PAA contains one program activity: Elections.

Elections Canada is committed to providing four key results that are beneficial to Canadians:

- delivering federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process, and administering the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*
- achieving and maintaining a state of readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called, and improving the delivery of electoral events
- providing timely and high-quality public education and information programs, as well as assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public, parliamentarians, political entities and other stakeholders
- administering the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, under which readjustment of federal electoral boundaries is carried out by independent commissions after each decennial census to reflect changes and movements in Canada's population

These correspond to our mandated priorities. We have also identified major initiatives to improve our internal services and operations. The initiatives will increase our efficiency and ultimately our ability to deliver our strategic outcome to Canadians more effectively. The initiatives planned for 2008–09 are discussed later in this section under Corporate Services/Program Enablers.

Key Program 1: Electoral Event Delivery, Political Financing, and Compliance and Enforcement

Expected Results:

- Delivery of high-quality elections, by-elections and referendums at all times.
- Fair, efficient and transparent administration of the political financing provisions.
- Effective compliance and enforcement programs and electoral events, in accordance with legal requirements.

Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
36,245	36,245	36,245

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
47	47	47

Sub-Programs

This key program is delivered through three sub-programs:

- *Event Delivery* – When required by Parliament, delivers federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process.
- *Political Financing* – Administers the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* related to political financing.
- *Compliance and Enforcement* – Deals with complaints and referrals about contraventions of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Plans for 2008–09

Elections Canada will focus on the following initiatives for the three sub-programs during the current planning period.

Plans	Expected Results
Event Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver federal elections, by-elections and referendums, as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the electoral process prescribed in the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>.
Political Financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the provisions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> related to political financing. Includes reviewing files to verify compliance with the financing provisions; determining the reimbursement or subsidy amount to be paid to a political entity and/or its auditor; publishing financial returns; assisting political entities with compliance through filing extensions and return amendments; and maintaining a state of readiness for future electoral events. <i>Political Entity Training and Education Program</i> – Train and educate political entities on the rules of political financing. <i>Audit and Systems Enhancements</i> – Improve the processes related to the administration of the financing provisions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> through reviewing political entity audit programs, conducting quality assurance reviews of the audit process, and further automation of audit and related business processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial provisions of the Act are administered fairly, efficiently and transparently. <p><i>Political Entity Training and Education Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased accessibility of training materials. Client satisfaction with training program <p><i>Audit and Systems Enhancements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved timeliness in the publication of political entity financial returns. Improved efficiency and effectiveness of administrative functions. Increased ability to detect potential non-compliance issues. Increased efficiency and effectiveness of political entity financial return audit processes.
Compliance and Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with complaints and referrals about contraventions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> and address alleged violations. Focus in 2008–09 will be on building the capacity to deal with political financing files and improving capacity in the field to respond to complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality of investigations. More timely resolution of complaints and referrals. Improved capacity to deal with the number and complexity of complaints and referrals.

Additional Information About the Sub-Programs

Political Financing

Political Entity Training and Education Program – Elections Canada plans to expand the training and education of political entities. The objectives of this program are to facilitate compliance with the *Canada Elections Act* and enhance relations with political entities by engaging them through our training programs, communicating the rules for political financing, and making the process as transparent as possible.

The agency will accomplish this by providing its staff with formal instruction in training delivery techniques, developing on-line training materials and tutorials, producing self-directed learning materials, and consulting with political entities on new products and services.

Compliance and Enforcement

The focus in 2008–09 will be on building the capacity to deal with political financing files and improving in-the-field capacity to respond to complaints. The agency will achieve this by using all available enforcement tools; increasing the level of available, qualified human resources; and conducting or participating in regular consultations and information sessions within Elections Canada.

Key Program 2: Electoral Event Readiness and Improvements

Expected Result:

- Readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called.

Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
62,799	62,799	62,799

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
282	282	282

Sub-Program

This key program is delivered through one sub-program:

- *Readiness and Improvements* – Electoral processes, systems, databases and materials are up to date; staff and election officers are well trained and ready for any electoral event.

Plans for 2008–09

Elections Canada will focus on the following initiatives for this sub-program during the current planning period.

Plans	Expected Results
Readiness <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Preparing for an electoral event:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment and training of personnel.• Geography Program<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare election-ready geographic products and tools for parliamentarians, parties, returning officers, field liaison officers, candidates and the public.• Update national road network and municipal boundaries, under the joint initiative with Statistics Canada.• National Register of Electors Program<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update elector and address data, and ensure that addresses are in the right polling division. Provide the information to Operations for election readiness, to provincial and territorial electoral partners, and to members of Parliament and political parties to fulfill the November 15 statutory list provision.• <i>Implementing electoral reform:</i> Monitor and analyze legislative changes and judicial decisions, and implement resulting changes to the electoral process.	<p>Recruitment and training of personnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All 308 electoral districts staffed with qualified, trained returning officers, appointed through a merit-based process. <p>Geography Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated geographic products and tools are provided to our clients to ensure that they have all the geographic information they require during an event.• Improved road network; updated polling division boundaries, advance polling districts and sites. The updated information allows for more accurate lists and provides better voting accessibility. <p>National Register of Electors Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up-to-date and accurate elector and address information on elector lists, resulting in reduced registration rates during elections.• Met or exceeded quality targets of 92 percent of all electors listed in the Register and 80 percent of all electors listed at the correct address. The latter represents a 3 percent increase over the previous target of 77 percent. <p><i>Implementing electoral reform</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timely and effective implementation of changes to the electoral process.

Plans	Expected Results
<p>Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Register of Electors Program</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elector Quality Information System (EQUIS) – Develop and implement a system allowing the Register to process elector updates that previously could not be performed. • Bill C-31 implementation: The National Register of Electors will implement changes identified in Bill C-31, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Register data quality (e.g. include separate citizenship question on the federal income tax form). • Provide political parties and candidates with greater access to resulting lists of electors (e.g. provide updated preliminary lists of electors on Day 19 of a general election). • Provide political parties and members of Parliament with additional information by which to update their lists (e.g. unique identifiers). • <i>Special Voting Rules (SVR) System Redevelopment Project</i> – Merge three separate systems used to monitor Special Voting Rules for six classes of electors who vote by special ballot. • <i>Accessibility Project</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Registration: Conduct an environmental scan of electronic (on-line) registration initiatives in Canada. Define the business requirements and conduct the procurement process for developing the system. Align the system planning and development with the Elections Canada IT Renewal strategy. • Electronic Voting: Develop a research report on possible electronic voting options. Identify the key enablers, opportunities and challenges. Align the system planning and development with the Elections Canada IT Renewal strategy. • Other Accessibility options: Identify alternative accessibility options. Consult and engage partners and stakeholders. 	<p><i>National Register of Electors (NROE) Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQUIS: Improved capacity to process rejected records from the NROE. (The system will increase the accuracy of elector and address information in the Register so that elector lists can be edited. This will decrease the need for registration activities during elections.) • Bill C-31 implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality of the lists of electors received by federal political parties. • Federal political parties and/or candidates receive timely and accurate lists of electors more frequently. • Facilitated updating of lists by federal political parties and members of Parliament. <p><i>Special Voting Rules System</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased system integration. The system provides more accurate data and eliminates redundant data shared by various Elections Canada systems. • Increased efficiency of administrative processes. • Improved ability to handle increased volumes of requests from SVR electors. <p><i>Accessibility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Registration: An e-registration system developed, tested and implemented by 2010. • Electronic Voting: A pilot on-line voting system tested in a by-election by 2013. • Other Accessibility options: Alternative initiatives developed and implemented, improving elector access to registration and voting services.

Additional Information About the Sub-Programs

Readiness and Improvement

National Register of Electors (NRoE) – The NRoE is the database of electors and addresses that is used to produce preliminary lists of electors for any electoral event, as well as the lists of electors provided annually on November 15 to members of Parliament and political parties under section 45 of the *Canada Elections Act*. This program will provide more up-to-date and accurate lists for our partners and stakeholders; it will reduce the need for registration during elections and by-elections; and it will support our strategic objective of *Accessibility*. Our objective is to meet or exceed our quality targets of having 92 percent of all electors listed in the Register and 80 percent of all electors listed at the correct address (the latter is a 3 percent increase over the previous target of 77 percent). The program includes establishing, maintaining and enhancing operational and strategic relationships with federal partners and data suppliers, including the Canada Revenue Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Statistics Canada.

Discussions will continue on ways of sharing the collection, verification and maintenance of address and road network information between Elections Canada and other federal organizations, including Statistics Canada, Canada Post Corporation, and Natural Resources Canada.

Special Voting Rules (SVR) – To increase the accessibility (a strategic objective), efficiency, transparency and integrity of the voting process, in 2008–09 we will continue to review and update SVR systems and processes.

Accessibility Project – One of the core strategic objectives identified by Elections Canada in its *Strategic Plan 2008–13* was increasing the accessibility of the electoral process for electors by testing innovative ways to vote and offering electors additional ways to register.

This project involves researching, monitoring, testing and potentially implementing:

- Technological trials and innovations in other jurisdictions.
- Alternative registration and voting methods.
- Emerging technologies.
- A registration process that allows electors to register in person or by mail, telephone or Internet any time and anywhere.
- A secure voting process by telephone or Internet.

Key Program 3: Public Education, Information and Support for Stakeholders

Expected Results:

- Timely and high-quality public education and information programs on electoral matters.
- Electoral processes are better known to the public, particularly persons and groups most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their democratic rights.

Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
11,457	11,457	11,457

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)		
2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
59	59	59

Sub-Programs

This key program is delivered through three sub-programs:

- *Voter Education and Outreach* – *Voter Education* aims at informing and educating electors about the federal electoral process, both during an electoral event and between elections. *Outreach* aims at reaching specific groups of electors through targeted communications. Under our *Engagement* strategic objective, we seek to increase young Canadians' understanding of the importance of voting and becoming candidates in elections.
- *Corporate Research* – Plans and conducts corporate research on Canada's electoral process, and assists the agency in evaluating its key initiatives, including through the use of post-election studies. Researches and monitors international best practices and innovations in election administration, provides training, and coordinates information exchange with similar agencies in other countries.
- *Support for Stakeholders* – Includes preparing for appearances by the Chief Electoral Officer before Parliament, and liaising with the chairs and clerks of parliamentary committees.

Plans for 2008–09

Elections Canada will focus on the following initiatives for these sub-programs during the current planning period.

Plans	Expected Results
Voter Education and Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct mainstream advertising campaigns (for the general public) and targeted campaigns (for specific groups) during an election as well as between elections when the need arises to inform Canadians of major changes to the electoral process. <i>Elections Canada Web site redesign</i> – Consult with all stakeholders to organize, simplify, upgrade and modernize the feel and function of Elections Canada’s Web site (Year 1 of a two-year redesign initiative); continue to improve accessibility of on-line information for users with special needs. <i>Advertising Evaluation Framework</i> – Develop a framework for evaluating all event advertising campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater awareness of the electoral process, especially among youth. <i>Elections Canada Web site redesign</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced knowledge of user requirements. Increased accessibility of Web pages for users with special needs (persons who are blind, persons with reduced mobility, etc.) <i>Advertising Evaluation Framework</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased integration of the agency’s advertising campaigns through a better understanding of the impacts on target populations. Increased efficiency and effectiveness of the agency’s advertising campaigns.
Corporate Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and conduct corporate research related to Canada’s electoral process, and assist the agency in evaluating its key initiatives by developing qualitative and quantitative research to assess Elections Canada’s performance in delivering elections. <i>Corporate Research Framework</i> – Guide a comprehensive approach to develop and implement research and evaluations that are relevant to the strategic objectives, and consolidate Elections Canada’s knowledge base. <i>International Research and Co-operation</i> – Continue to monitor best practices in electoral administration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased agency knowledge of electoral matters. Increased knowledge of the agency’s performance in delivering electoral events. <i>Corporate Research Framework</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better support for corporate activities and legislative issues. Improved coordination of research activities and initiatives. <i>International Research and Co-operation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacity to support electoral reform and statutory mandate.

Plans	Expected Results
Support for Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a corporate framework for assisting the Chief Electoral Officer in his appearances before parliamentary committees to discuss legislative and regulatory issues. Review the mandate and composition of the Advisory Committee of Political Parties to ensure it continues to meet the needs of participants and Elections Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened co-operation with parliamentarians and political parties. More effective and better-designed channel to improve communications between political parties and Elections Canada.

Additional Information About the Sub-Programs

Public Education and Information

Advertising Evaluation Framework – Advertising campaigns play a major role in fulfilling Elections Canada’s mandated priority of providing timely and high-quality public education and information programs on electoral matters. The agency conducts mainstream campaigns (for the general public) and targeted campaigns for Aboriginal electors, ethnocultural communities and youth – not only during federal elections but also between electoral events when the need arises to inform Canadians of major changes to the electoral process. Traditionally, Elections Canada uses print, radio, television and the Internet to reach electors, but it continues to explore new channels and ways to transmit its message (e.g. cinemas, Web and electronic billboards).

The Advertising Evaluation Framework will provide a method for evaluation of all advertising streams, including short- and long-term expectations and performance indicators. Baseline performance targets and indicators need to be established to measure the success of our various advertising campaigns. The framework will also help develop an integrated assessment of the cost-effectiveness of advertising activities and will promote more efficient campaigns.

Key Program 4: Electoral Boundaries Redistribution

Expected Result:

- Efficient and non-partisan administration of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.

Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

- Full-time equivalents, salaries and operating costs for 2008–09 are included in the Geography Program under Key Program 2.

Sub-Program

This program activity is delivered through one sub-program:

- Electoral Boundaries Redistribution* – Representation in the House of Commons after each decennial (10-year) census is readjusted to reflect changes and movements in Canada’s population. Readjustment of federal electoral boundaries is carried out by independent commissions in each province, with the support of Elections Canada.

Plans for 2008–09

Elections Canada will focus on the following initiatives for this sub-program during the current planning period.

Plans	Expected Results
Electoral Boundaries Redistribution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Readjust representation in the House of Commons after each decennial census.• Planning of the next redistribution process – Prepare an updated redistricting tool to assist commissions. Coordinate and organize commission offices and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated documentation related to the next redistribution process.• Environmental scan on redistricting tools and new technology to enhance services to commissions.

Additional Information About the Sub-Program

This activity was last completed in 2003–04. Once we receive the 2011 Census return, redistribution will begin again. However, we will start planning activities for this mandated priority in 2008–09.

Corporate Services/Program Enablers

Expected Results:

- Improved support for the agency's mandated priorities and strategic objectives.
- Strengthened business and human resources planning, reporting and accountability through results-based management.

Plans for 2008–09

Elections Canada will focus on the following corporate initiatives to be launched or pursued in this reporting period.

Plans	Expected Results
Corporate Services/Program Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>IT Renewal</i> – Modernize technology infrastructure and centralize field systems.• <i>Human Resources Modernization</i> – Develop policies and guidelines to support modernization.	<i>IT Renewal</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rationalized and modern IT environment.• Revised infrastructure that will support increased on-line services for electors. <i>Human Resources Modernization</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved human resources planning.• Enhanced focus on people through capacity building and leadership.• Enhanced guidance and support for new employees.

Plans	Expected Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the agency's Program Activity Architecture and develop a high-level Performance Management Framework for Electoral Events. 	<p><i>Performance Management Framework for Electoral Events</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reporting on delivery of general events, with a stronger focus on results. Improved transparency and accountability. Strengthened agency ability to evaluate and continuously enhance the quality and effectiveness of the electoral process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Stewardship – Internal Audit</i> – Implement the internal audit activities and the audit committee. 	<p><i>Stewardship – Internal Audit</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased assurance to Chief Electoral Officer, senior management, stakeholders and Canadians on controls, governance and risk management at Elections Canada.

Additional Information About the Corporate Initiatives

Information Technology Renewal – Elections Canada is conducting a multi-year initiative to modernize the IT infrastructure and the applications it uses. Modernization will provide a flexible platform facilitating business changes and upgrades required by evolving legislation and policies. It will also position the agency to better respond to legislative changes (timely response to Parliament initiatives to enhance the electoral process) and new internal initiatives such as:

- improving service to electors through on-line registration and eventually the testing of alternative voting methods
- enhancing *Trust* through the increased integrity of the electoral process

The outcome of this project will be a new IT environment for Elections Canada that is rationalized, takes full advantage of modern information and communications technology, provides improved business capability with the same high level of reliability during events as in the past, and fulfills our IT requirements for the next 5 to 10 years.

In 2008–09, the IT Renewal team will complete the technical and business architecture definitions for the new IT environment, complete procurement activities for the new data centre, and begin the centralization and development of the field application systems. The first set of new IT service management processes to support the new IT environment will be developed and implemented.

Human Resources – In 2007, Elections Canada conducted a survey of employees. While the survey results highlighted key strengths of the organization (vision and purpose; teamwork and information sharing; sense of pride and accomplishment; challenging work), other elements require our attention. Particularly needing to be addressed are employee feedback, training and development, employee recognition, and internal communications. In 2008–09, the agency intends to work closely with its employees and engage middle managers in better understanding the survey results, and in proposing and implementing initiatives that will make a genuine difference. In addition, Elections Canada intends to conduct the survey again in 2008–09 to assess the progress it has made in addressing some of the challenges that were identified.

In 2008–09, the agency will also review the current service model for internal human resources services, with the aim of ensuring efficiency, appropriate support to managers, and continued adherence to public service values, legislation and guidelines.

As well, Elections Canada intends to develop and adopt a longer-term action plan for the development of its human resources, in support of its new strategic plan. The overall action plan will build on the human resources plans currently being developed.

Performance Management Framework – Elections Canada will continue to enhance the quality of its performance measurement by developing and implementing a more comprehensive performance management framework at the corporate level for ongoing activities. In 2008–09, we will focus on the development of a performance management framework for general election delivery.

Stewardship – Internal Audit – The internal audit function is a key component of Elections Canada’s governance framework. In accordance with the 2006 internal audit policy, Elections Canada has initiated the activities required and is committed to continuing work in 2008–09 to meet the April 1, 2009, deadline for full implementation.

Section III – Supplementary Information

Financial Information

Program Activity

2008–09					
Strategic Outcome: An electoral process that contributes to fairness, transparency and accessibility for all participants, in accordance with the legislative framework.					
(\$ thousands)	Budgetary		Total Main Estimates	Adjustments (planned spending not in Main Estimates)	Total Planned Spending
	Operating	Transfer Payments			
Program Activity: Elections	80,733	29,768	110,501		110,501
Total	80,733	29,768	110,501		110,501

Table 1: Details of Transfer Payment Programs

1. Name of transfer payment program: Political entity reimbursements and subsidies	
2. Start date: Ongoing	3. End date: Ongoing
<p>4. Description: The Act allows eligible registered political parties that obtain at least 2 percent of the total valid votes cast in the most recent general election, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast in the ridings where they endorsed candidates, to be paid a quarterly allowance according to the following formula: the product of \$0.4375 and the number of valid votes cast in the most recent general election preceding that quarter, multiplied by the inflation adjustment factor in effect for that quarter. Parties that obtain at least 2 percent of the total valid votes cast in the most recent general election, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast in the ridings where they endorsed candidates, are also eligible to receive election expense reimbursements equal to 50 percent of their paid election expenses in a general election.</p> <p>The Act allows eligible candidates who are elected or obtain at least 10 percent of the total valid votes cast to receive expense reimbursements equal to 60 percent of their paid election expenses and paid candidate personal expenses.</p> <p>The Act provides for a subsidy to the auditor of a candidate equal to the lesser of \$1,500 or 3 percent of the candidate's election expenses, to a minimum of \$250.</p> <p>The Act provides for a subsidy to the auditor of a registered electoral district association, up to a maximum of \$1,500 of the expenses incurred for the audit. Registered electoral district associations that have accepted contributions or incurred expenses of \$5,000 or more in a fiscal period must submit an audit report on their annual financial transactions return.</p>	
5. Strategic outcome: Fair, efficient and transparent administration of the political financing provisions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> .	
6. Expected results: To issue accurate and timely payment in accordance with the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> .	

Table 1: Details of Transfer Payment Programs (cont.)

	7. Forecast Spending (\$ thousands) 2007–08	8. Planned Spending (\$ thousands) 2008–09	9. Planned Spending (\$ thousands) 2009–10	10. Planned Spending (\$ thousands) 2010–11
11. Program activity	Elections			
12. Total other types of transfer payments				
Allowances to eligible political parties and auditors' subsidies for electoral district associations (political financing provision, <i>Canada Elections Act</i>)	29,043	29,768	29,768	29,768
Reimbursement of candidates' and political parties' election expenses, as well as auditors' subsidies	339			
13. Total program activity	29,382	29,768	29,768	29,768

Table 2: Services Received Without Charge

(\$ thousands)	2008–09
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada	5,263
Contributions covering employer's share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures, paid by Treasury Board Secretariat (excluding revolving funds)	1,674
Worker's compensation coverage provided by Human Resources and Social Development Canada	5
Salary and associated expenditures of legal services provided by the Department of Justice	1
Audit services provided for the annual audit by the Office of the Auditor General	134
Total Agency	7,077

Please note that you can find the electronic versions of the above two tables on the Treasury Board Secretariat's Web site at www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/20082009/p3a_e.asp.

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