

Coverage and Currency  
Audit of the Elections BC and  
Elections Canada Voters Lists  
as at  
March 1, 2003

# Objectives

- ❁ Measure the quality of the EBC and EC lists as at March 1, 2003.
- ❁ Assess findings and develop improved strategies, explore combined list.
- ❁ Enumeration 2004?

# Terminology

**Quality =**

1. Coverage (Registered versus Eligibles) and
2. Currency (Registered at present address)  
and
3. Accuracy (Voter data entered correctly)

# Measuring Coverage

- ❁ Compared lists to Census 2001 with estimates to March 1, 2003.
- ❁ Matched voter records and compared the combined list to the March 1, 2003 figures.

# Measuring Currency

- ✿ Matched data was organized into sets depending on whether the records:
  - matched exactly on both files,
  - matched on voter but not address
  - were unique to one file
- ✿ 4,000 records from the sets were randomly sampled.

# The survey approach

3 Steps:

✿ Letters to 4000 voters

– Phone Call to non-respondents

- Doorstep interviews or registered letters to those not available by phone.



Mailing Address:  
PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9J6

Phone: (250) 387-5305  
Toll-free: 1-800-661-8683 / TTY 1-8  
Facsimile: (250) 387-3578

Location:  
1075 Pendergast Street, Victoria

Email: electionsbc@gems3.gov.bc.ca  
Web site: www.elections.bc.ca

**Personal and Confidential**

Mailing Address and Voter Name in Full

Residential address if different

[Document# as a Code 39 barcode]

[Document#]

[First] [Middle] [Last]  
[Mailing Address]  
[City], [Prov] [Postal]

[Res Address if different]  
[Res City, Prov if different]

Date of Birth: [Month] [Day], [Year]  
Citizenship: [Citizenship]

June 2, 2003

[Dear First Name]:

Elections BC is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature, responsible for administering the *Election Act*. We are measuring the quality of the voters list and your registration record has been selected for confirmation.

We would appreciate your help in advising us whether the personal information above is correct (your full name, address, date of birth, and citizenship). If it is correct, check 'My record is correct' in the **Yes** box below, or if you have any corrections, check the **No** box, write in changes and we will update your registration record. **Whether or not the record is correct, please complete and return your letter in the enclosed pre-paid postage envelope by June 13, 2003.**

The information that you provide is important and will guide us in improving the ways that we maintain the voters list. Thank you for your assistance. If you would like more information about this survey, please see our Web site at [www.elections.bc.ca/reg/survey.htm](http://www.elections.bc.ca/reg/survey.htm) or you can call Jennifer Miller at 1-800-661-8683.

Sincerely,

Harry Neufeld  
Chief Electoral Officer

My record is correct **Yes** (  ) **No**, my record is **not** correct (  ) and here are my changes:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Surname or Last Name First Given Name Second Given Name (s)

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

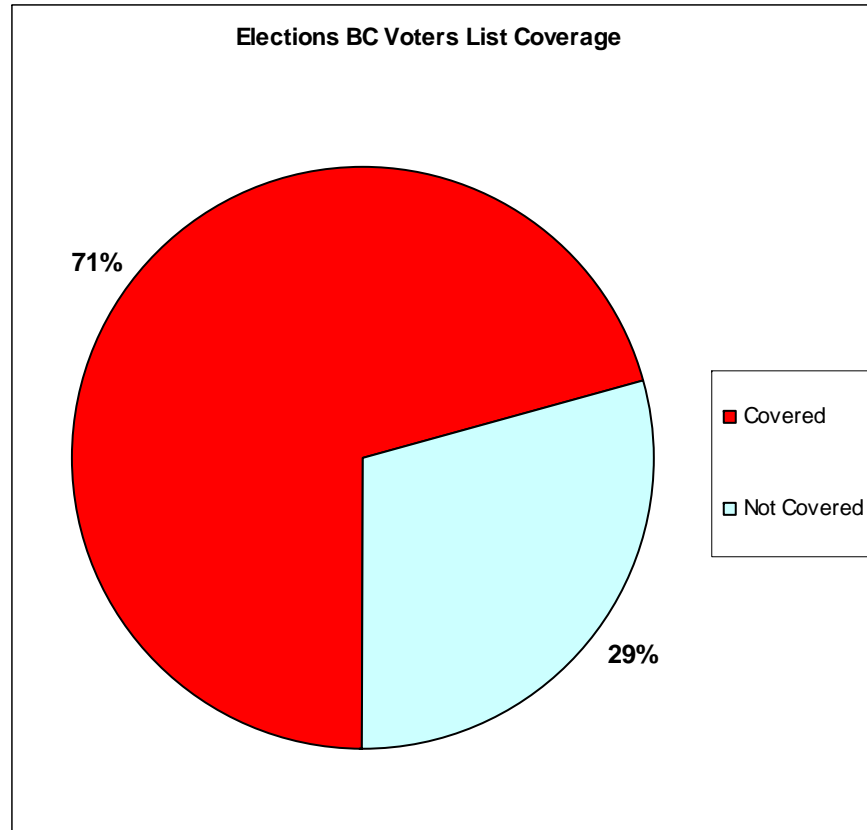
Residential Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

and approximately how long have you lived at this address? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ I am **Not** a Canadian Citizen (  )  
Month Day Year

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO ELECTIONS BC NO LATER THAN JUNE 13, 2003 - THANK YOU!**

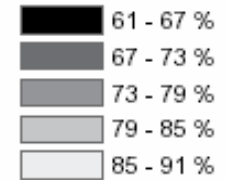
# Results – EBC Coverage



2.11 million voters are registered of an estimated 2.98 million eligible voters.



### EBC Voters List Coverage



Registered as % of eligible voters.  
CC Audit, March 1st, 2003

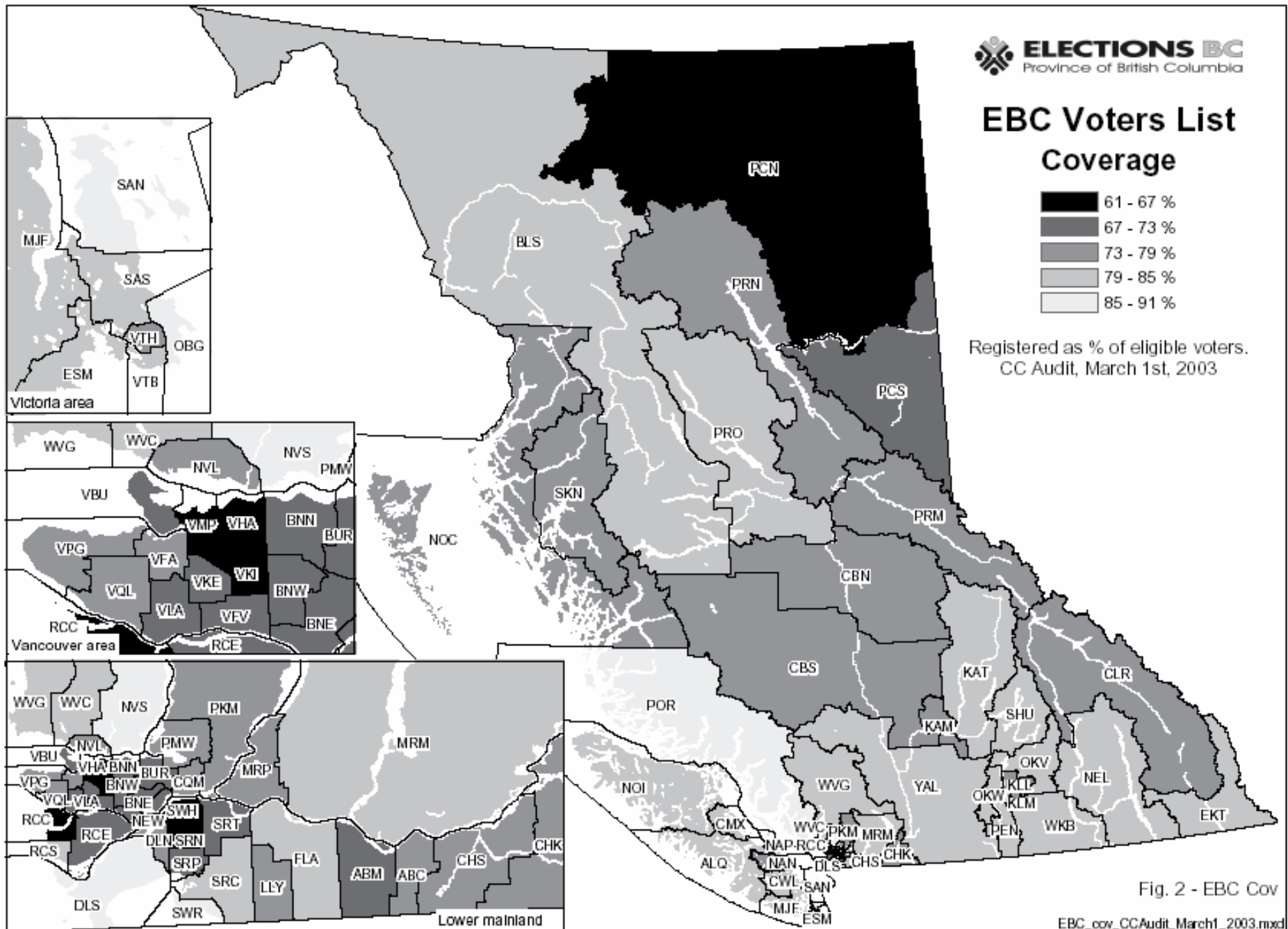
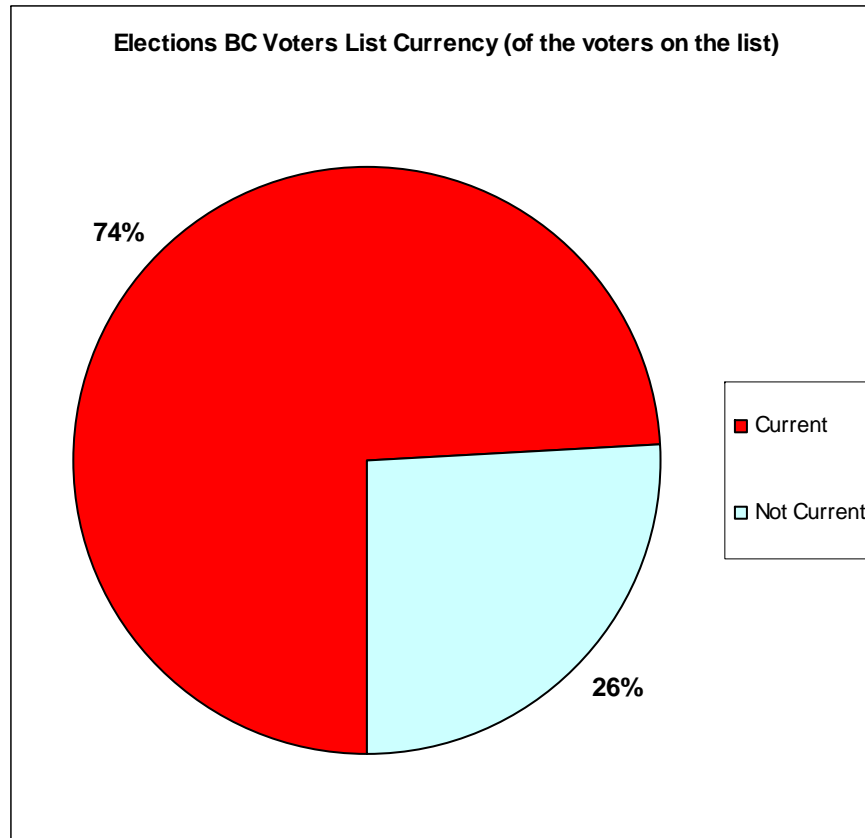


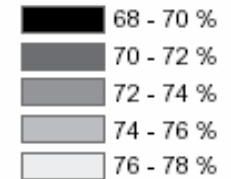
Fig. 2 - EBC Cov

# Results – EBC Currency



74% of the 2.11 million registered voters have up-to-date addresses

## EBC Voters List Currency



Current as % of registered voters.

CC Audit, March 1st, 2003

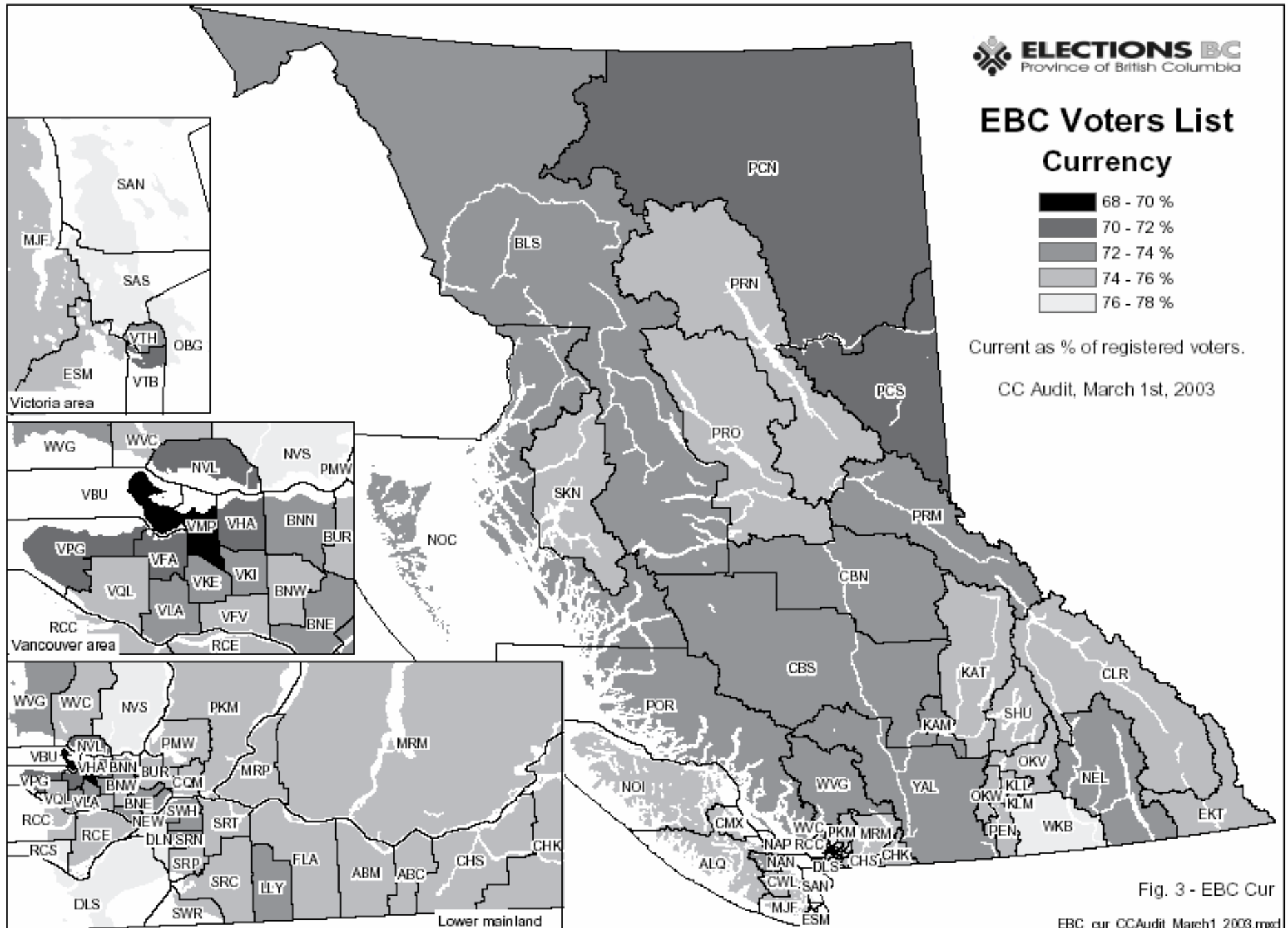
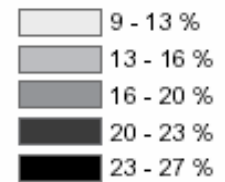


Fig. 3 - EBC Cur

## EBC Voters List Mobility



Moves within last year  
as per 2001 Census.

CC Audit, March 1st, 2003

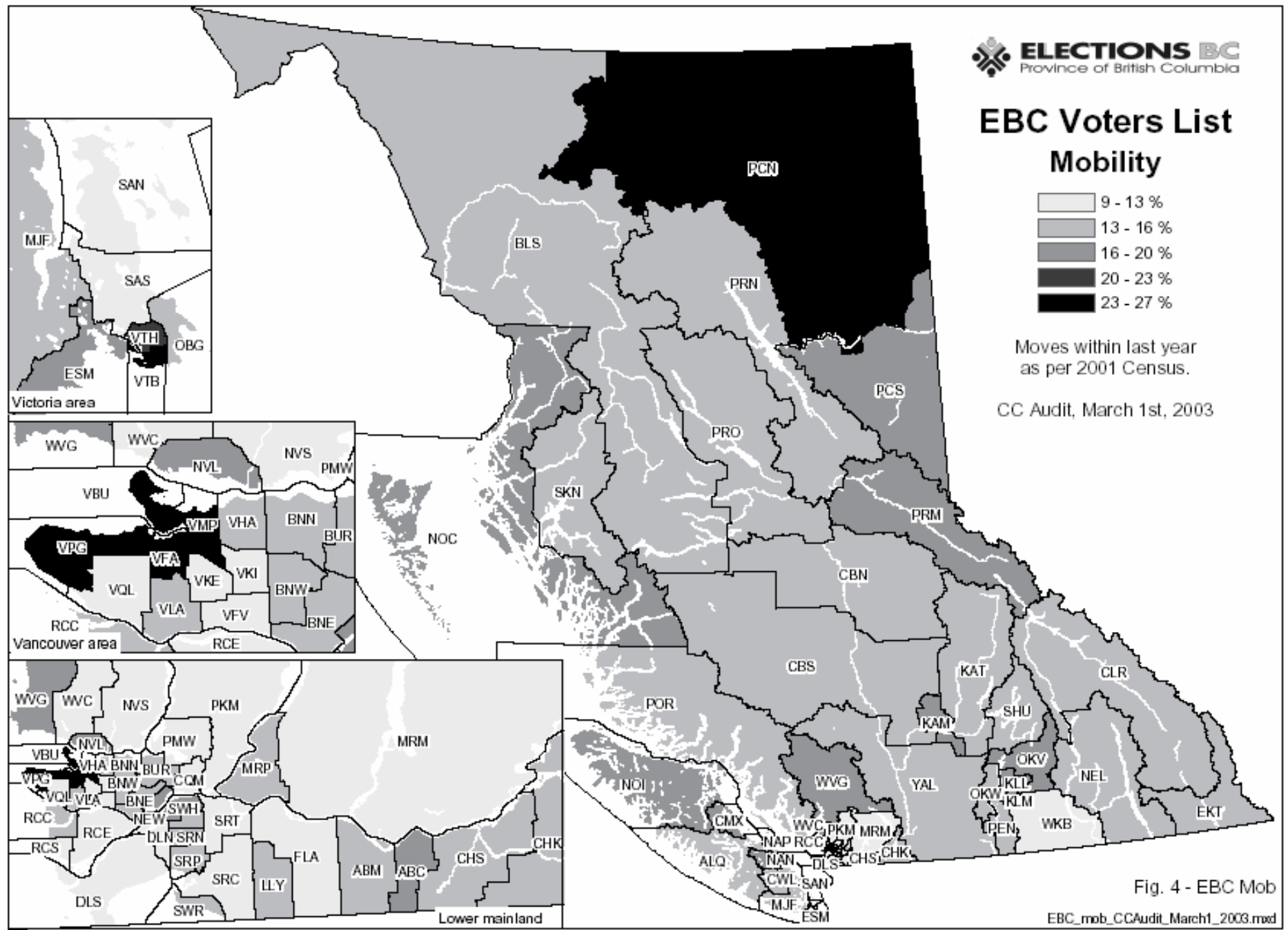
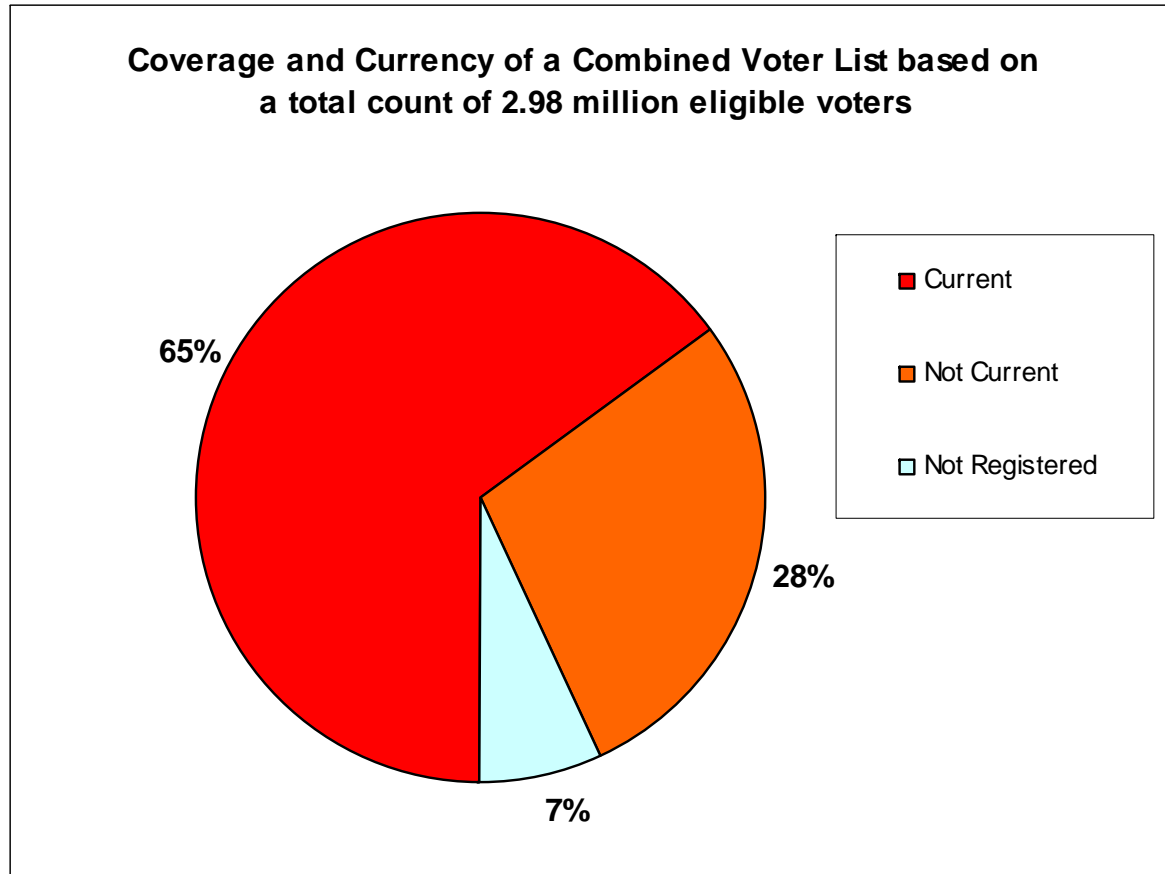


Fig. 4 - EBC Mob

# **A combined EBC and EC voters list**

- ✿ Requires legislation.
- ✿ Increases coverage to 2.77 million voters, 93% of all eligible voters.
- ✿ Enables shared maintenance activities
- ✿ Offers a single voter registration process

# A Combined List



EC had not processed the 2003 CCRA address updates by March 1, 2003. These updates would have improved the EC list currency by 8 to 10%.

# Enumeration in 2004?

- ❁ High Mobility – between 15 - 20% of BC voters will move between May 2004 and May 2005.
- ❁ A door-to-door enumeration will cost at least \$15 million.
- ❁ There is a more effective alternative...

# Enumeration 2004?

## Recommendations

- ❖ Combine lists to increase coverage.
- ❖ Work with EC to develop improved maintenance programs.
- ❖ Give special attention to under-covered groups such as the young.
- ❖ Conduct personal enumeration of the homeless.





# **ELECTIONS BC**

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature



## Recommendations for amendments to the *Election Act* – Fall 2003 session

The intent of the legislative amendments requested for Fall 2003 is to remove the requirement that a general enumeration be conducted in the third calendar year following a general election. With the introduction of fixed election dates, the enumeration of voters in the preceding year is not an efficient use of resources. The ability of the CEO to conduct targeted enumerations as required should be retained, so a focused approach may be taken to addressing under-coverage and address currency problems of certain groups or geographic areas.

The cancellation of the 2004 enumeration will not affect the ability of eligible individuals to vote in the 2005 general election. An expanded pre-election voter registration campaign is planned, which will include a targeted enumeration. Particular attention will be focussed on individuals who may not register through other means. Voters who fail to register or update their registration prior to the election may do so in conjunction with voting, and an expanded “where to vote” card is planned for the 2005 election to assist unregistered voters at that time.

Section	Description	Amendment request	Discussion
13(c)	Requires Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to present a report to the Speaker if a decision is made not to conduct a general enumeration.	Repeal subsection.	Made redundant by repeal of s.42(1)-(4). Conduct of enumerations will be at the discretion of the CEO.
16(2)(d)	Requires CEO to consult with Election Advisory Committee (EAC) before determining if a general enumeration is to be cancelled.	Repeal subsection.	Made redundant by repeal of s.42(1)-(4). Conduct of enumerations will be at the discretion of the CEO.
42(1), (2), (3) and (4)	Requires a general enumeration to be conducted during the third calendar year after a general election.	Repeal	Requirement for enumeration in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> calendar year after an election is incompatible with current fixed election dates. Targeted voter registration and updating should be conducted immediately prior to a general election to optimize completeness and currency of the list.
42(5)	Establishes authority for the CEO to direct one or more District Registrars of Voters (DRVs) to conduct enumerations.	Re-number as (1). Amend to remove reference to subsections (1) or (4).	Provision to be retained to ensure CEO can conduct enumerations as required.
42(6)	Establishes that an enumeration may be door-to-door, or by another method.	Re-number as (2).	Provision to be retained. Provides flexibility to CEO.
46(d)	Establishes authority for the CEO to remove a name from the voters list based on information obtained at a general enumeration.	Remove reference to “a general enumeration”, replace with “an enumeration”.	Retains authority for CEO to remove names and provides greater flexibility.



**ELECTIONS BC**  
Province of British Columbia

## **Recommendations for amendments to the *Election Act* – Spring 2004 session**

The intent of the legislative amendments requested for the Spring 2004 session is to address most of the recommendations in the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 37<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election, as well as establishing a legislative basis for a long-term, sustainable, and low cost solution to voter registration and voters list maintenance. The recommendations provide the Chief Electoral Officer with the ability to use the federal voters list as a source of new voters and updates to existing voter registrations. Voters on the federal voters list who meet the qualifications to vote in BC would be automatically added to the provincial voters list, eliminating a duplication of effort and facilitating registration by individuals traditionally under-represented on the voters list. The recommended legislative model is consistent with a trend across Canada of voters list synchronization between federal and provincial electoral administration agencies.

The recommendations also establish that voters who register directly with Elections BC will be required to confirm their eligibility, but no signature will be required at the time of registration. This will facilitate on-line registration and other innovations. All voters will continue to be required to sign a declaration of eligibility at the time of voting, ensuring the integrity of the electoral process is maintained.

The recommendations for amendment include several sections of the *Election Act* in relation to election financing and election administration. The amendments include the recommendations from the CEO report, plus recommendations to amend s. 3 of the *Election Act* to establish a six month implementation period for all amendments, s. 22 to establish that District Registrars of Voters do not have to be public servants, and s. 32 to establish that homeless individuals may use a service provider, such as a soup kitchen or shelter, as their residential address. There are also recommendations to amend several other Acts to limit non-electoral use of the voters list and to ensure that tenants of rental properties and residents of strata properties are permitted to display campaign signs, consistent with the *Canada Elections Act*.

It has been determined that previously-sought amendments regarding juror selection, closure of schools on general voting day, provisional registration of 16 year olds, and resolution of ballot names for two candidates of the same name will not be pursued at this time.

# THE EXPRESS LANE TO VOTING

---



**ELECTIONS BC**

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

## 2004 ENUMERATION SOLUTION

# The Past – What's been done before?

---

- ❑ Last door-to-door enumeration was in 1989
- ❑ Enumeration 1994 cancelled by Bill 33/94
- ❑ In 1999 Elections BC opted for a mail enumeration and confirmation



# CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

---

- Fixed election date. Writ day is April 19, 2005
- Expected spring timing of the federal election
- The CEOs of Canada and BC have agreed to strengthen and expand their existing partnership agreement
- Electoral Information System
- Centralized administration



# ENUMERATION OPTIONS

---

Door-to-door in 2004?

Enumeration by Mail?

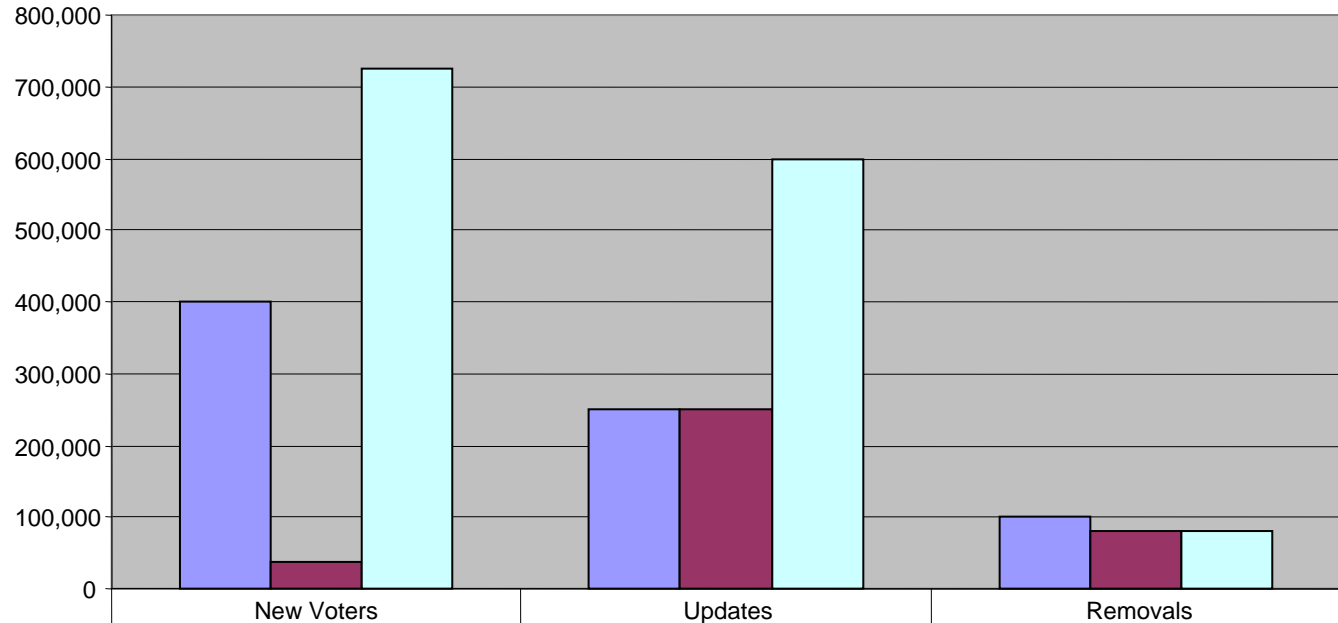
*OR*

2004 Enumeration Solution?

- Synchronized Elections Canada and Elections BC voters lists supplemented by a pre-election targeted registration campaign



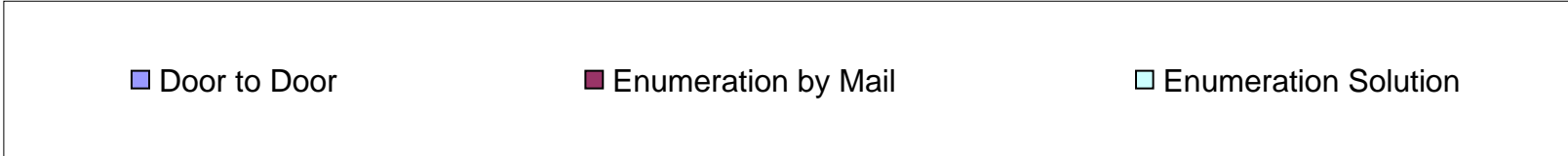
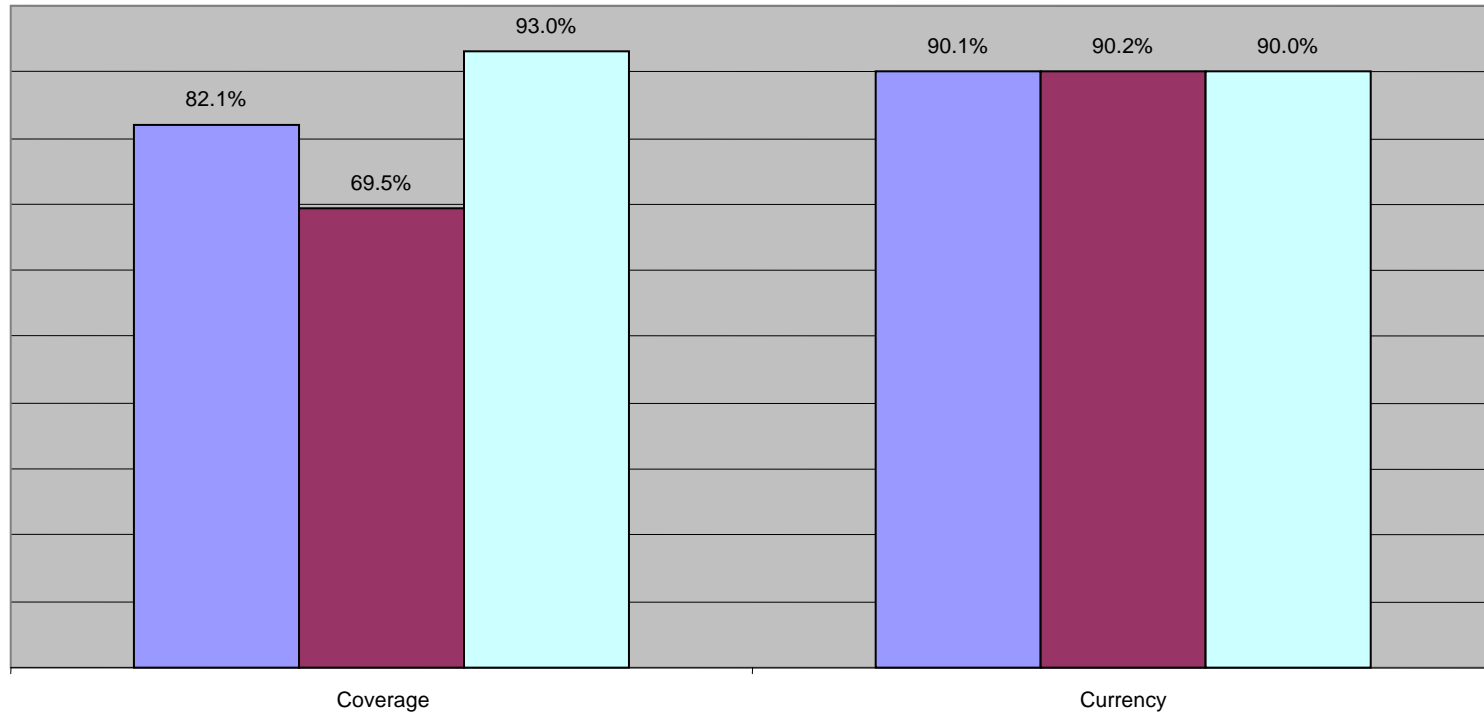
**Options - Expected Results Transactions**



	New Voters	Updates	Removals
■ Door to Door	400,000	250,000	100,000
■ Enumeration by Mail	36,300	250,000	80,000
■ Enumeration Solution	725,000	600,000	80,000

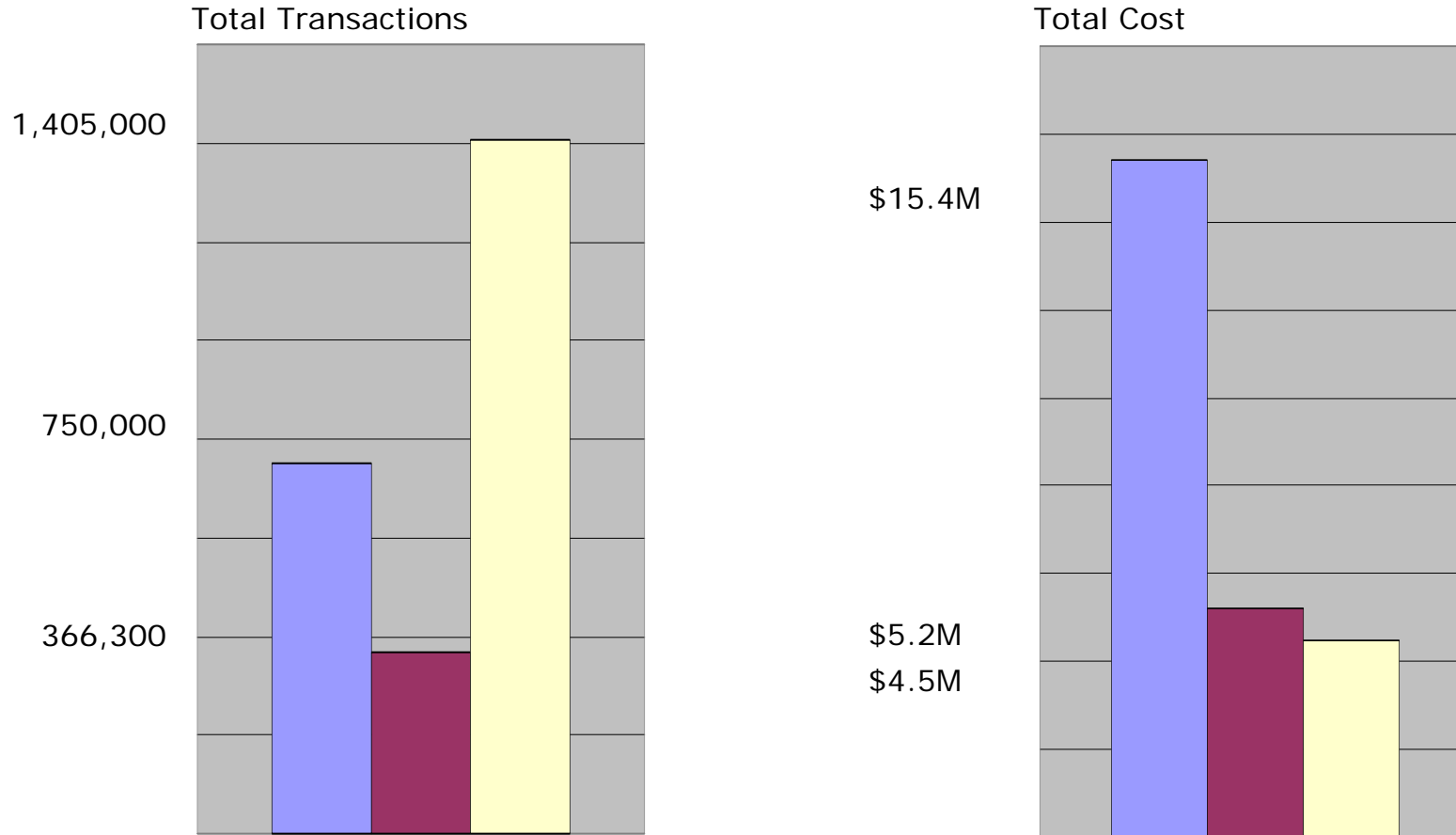


### Options - Expected Coverage/Currency Results



\* Currency of registered voter data

# How much will it cost?



## Cost per transaction

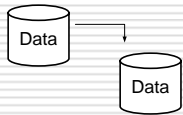
- Door-to-Door: \$20.53
- Enumeration by Mail: \$14.20
- Enumeration Solution: \$ 3.20

# 2004 ENUMERATION SOLUTION

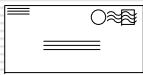
---



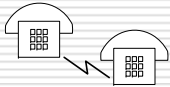
- INTERNET REGISTRATION



- SMART DATA PARTNERSHIPS



- MAIL



- TELEPHONE



- FACE-TO-FACE



# RECOMMENDED SOURCES

---

- Eligible voters from the National Register of Electors
- Pending Elections Canada registrants awaiting citizenship confirmation
- Youth voters from drivers' files
- Empty addresses
- High density, high mobility addresses
- Aboriginal and remote communities
- New residential developments



# WE NEED TO PREPARE

September 2003

March 2004

- Remove legislative barriers
- Synchronize the voter data bases
- Host best practices seminar on targeted registration
- Analyze and define the registration targets
- Develop, test and implement program infrastructure
- Forms review and revision
- Policy, procedures and documentation



# COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

July 2004

May 2005

## Message "*Express Lane to Voting*"

- Empower the voter
  - Educate, Communicate, Participate!
- On-going media campaign



**ELECTIONS BC**  
A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

# CALENDAR

September 2003

May 2005



September 2003 to March 2004 - Preparation activities and analysis



April to December 2004 – Voters list updates from external sources, e.g. Elections Canada



January 2005 – Prepare contact files



February to March 2005 – Express lane to voting campaign



April 1- 8, 2005 – Face-to-face registration



April 19, 2005 – Writ day, preliminary list



July 2004 to April 2005 – Public education and awareness



**ELECTIONS BC**  
A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

# Get Smart with Data – Going forward...

---

- Voters list synchronization
- Access to new voter information
- Optimized voter and address data processing
- Sustainable program maintenance and quality measurement





# Additional Benefits

---

- Significant reduction in voting day registration
- Minimal Day 0-7 registration activity
- Improved service delivery



# Summary

---

- ❑ Door-to-door enumeration is expensive and no longer effective
- ❑ Mail only enumerations tend to only confirm BC voters whose registrations are current
- ❑ Recommended approach is synchronized voter registers between Elections Canada and Elections BC supplemented by pre-election targeted voter registration

