



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

Annual Report

2008 - 2009

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ELECTIONS BC
Province of British Columbia

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

Phone: 250-387-5305
Toll-free: 1-800-661-8683/ TTY 1-888-456-5448
Fax: 250-387-3578
Toll-free Fax: 1-866-466-0665
Email: electionsbc@elections.bc.ca
Website: www.elections.bc.ca

September 8, 2009

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
V8V 1X4

Honourable Speaker:

I have the pleasure to submit Elections BC's Annual Report for the 2008/09 fiscal year. This document reports on the activities Elections BC has undertaken between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009 in support of Elections BC's 2008/09 – 2010/11 Service Plan. This report is filed in accordance with section 13 (1) (a) of the *Election Act*.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Neufeld
Chief Electoral Officer

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Harry Neufeld

Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

Over the course of the 2008/09 fiscal year, Elections BC continued work on a detailed and complex suite of activities arising from its mandate to administer the provincial electoral process in British Columbia. This report compares the actual results of these activities to the Elections BC 2008/09 – 2010/11 Service Plan.

The 12-month period covered in this report included the final preparations for the 39th General Election and the 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform. It does not include the campaign period itself, which occurred during the following fiscal year. During this fiscal year Elections BC implemented major legislative changes to the *Election Act*, completed the electoral boundary redistribution process arising from a new *Electoral Districts Act*, administered two by-elections resulting from MLA resignations, conducted the mail-based portion of a comprehensive enumeration of eligible voters, and undertook organizational restructuring necessary as a result of newly-imposed budgetary restrictions and legislative changes.

Within this ambitious and demanding period of our four-year electoral business cycle, the benefits of Elections BC's strengthened planning culture were realized. A solid training program for the 32,000+ staff to be recruited to administer the electoral events, an excellent response rate to our mail-based enumeration, improved electoral map products depicting new electoral district and voting area boundaries, and an integrated public awareness strategy put Elections BC in an excellent position to successfully deliver the 2009 General Election and Referendum on Electoral Reform.

I am proud of the excellent work my staff has performed and know that their commitment and expertise will allow my office to continue to be a leader among electoral administration management bodies.

Harry Neufeld
Chief Electoral Officer

The organization

Elections BC is an independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for conducting provincial general elections, by-elections and referenda, and administering the recall and initiative process as detailed in provincial legislation.

Vision

To be leaders in electoral administration.

Mission

To serve democracy in British Columbia through the fair and impartial administration of the provincial electoral process.

Mandate

To administer the provincial electoral process in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act* and *Constitutional Amendment Approval Act*.

CORE PROGRAM AREAS

For operational purposes, Elections BC is divided into five program areas.

Executive

The Executive program area provides organizational leadership and is responsible for legislation, Orders and Regulations, compliance, enforcement and investigations, partnerships, inter-jurisdictional liaison and collaboration, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, communications and voter outreach, and public education programs regarding voter registration and the electoral process.

Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration

The Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration program area is responsible for political party and constituency association registration, campaign finance reporting, advertising sponsor registration and financial disclosure as well as conducting financial compliance reviews of political parties, constituency associations, candidates, advertising sponsors, leadership contestants and recall and initiative participants.

The program area is also responsible for corporate administration and human resource services for Elections BC's core group of 44 public service employees and up to 32,000 temporary staff and election officials during major electoral events.

Corporate Planning and Event Management

The Corporate Planning and Event Management program area is responsible for the effective and efficient planning and administration of provincial electoral events, including general elections, by-elections, referenda and recall and initiative petitions. This includes ensuring Elections BC is in a constant state of readiness for non-scheduled events, as well as leading the planning and preparation of scheduled events.

Corporate Planning and Event Management also manages Elections BC's District Electoral Officers, coordinates event support activities across other program areas and leads post-event evaluation and assessment.

Corporate Planning and Event Management is also responsible for the organization's strategic planning and development and maintenance of Elections BC's planning framework, risk management and performance measurement programs.

Voter Registration and Boundaries

Voter Registration and Boundaries is responsible for voter registration, maintenance of the provincial register of voters, maintenance of electoral district and voting area boundaries, as well as both scheduled and on-demand production of high-quality electoral data reports and maps.

The Voter Registration and Boundaries program area is also responsible for providing a variety of products necessary for the administration of electoral events including the provincial voters list, an address register, the Integrated Digital Electoral Atlas, electoral maps, street indexes and the Location Index.

Information Technology

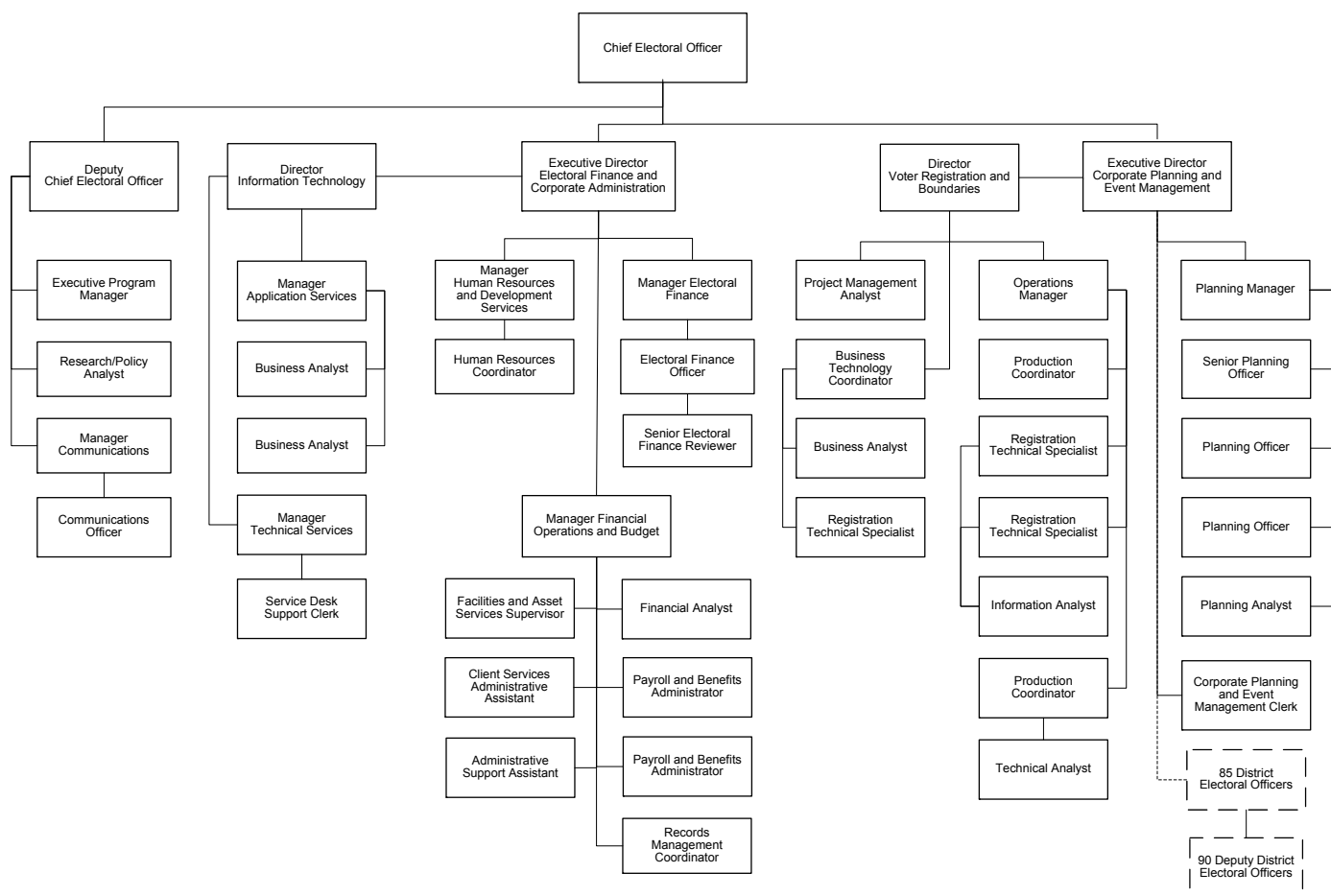
The Information Technology (IT) program area provides information management systems, computer infrastructure and technical services for Elections BC. The program area leads IT planning, develops and implements IT policies, procedures and standards, implements corporate IT initiatives and manages systems operations, administration, security and maintenance.

MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURING

As a result of operating budget constraints set for the 2009/10 – 2011/12 fiscal years, and a mandate enlarged by legislative amendments, Elections BC undertook changes to its management structure during the final months of the fiscal year.

Senior management responsibilities and reporting relationships were adjusted, allowing the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer to take on the newly enlarged role of ensuring compliance with, and enforcement of, the provincial framework of electoral laws and regulations. An Executive Committee was formed, comprised of the Chief Electoral Officer, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Executive Director of Corporate Planning and Event Management, and Executive Director of Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration, to deal with significant issues related to the effects of budget restrictions and new legislation.

ORGANIZATION CHART



Report on performance

Elections BC's four corporate goals serve as the basis upon which organizational performance is measured.

The four goals are:

1. Ensure ongoing support and enhancement of the electoral process.
2. Ensure effective and efficient administration of electoral events.
3. Provide an inclusive and accessible electoral process.
4. Be a learning organization that develops and shares best practices.

These goals, which are strategically aligned with the organization's vision and mission, reflect the four key performance areas in which Elections BC must be successful to effectively deliver on its mandate. In 2008/09, Elections BC established objectives and implemented strategies to achieve these goals and prepare the organization for the province's 2009 General Election and Referendum on Electoral Reform, as well as any unscheduled electoral events. Elections BC's performance in achieving these goals is assessed against specific performance measures established for each goal.

GOAL 1: ENSURE ONGOING SUPPORT AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Maintaining organizational and systems readiness for planned or unplanned electoral events requires cross-program coordination and integration between electoral events and throughout the business cycle. Keeping the electoral and other information systems up to date, maintaining the policy and legislative framework, making ongoing investments in voter registration and ensuring human resource capacity is fulfilled are critical to the success of Elections BC.

Objectives:

Elections BC's 2008/09 objectives were to:

- 1.1 Produce quality and timely electoral information.
- 1.2 Develop and maintain policy and legislative frameworks that permit innovation and facilitate compliance.
- 1.3 Maintain a sound infrastructure that meets our organizational needs.

Strategies:

Elections BC intended to:

- Maintain and improve the voters list and address register through:
 - implementing data-quality standards and regular measuring of list quality against those standards
 - expanding and enhancing data access agreements
 - reviewing, analyzing and improving data exchange and integration processes, and
 - voter contact and mailings.
- Work cooperatively with policy and legislative specialists to shape the development of legislation to improve clarity and simplify processes and services for voters and clients.
- Monitor compliance and evaluate legislation and policy changes to address issues.
- Maintain a legislative interpretation compendium.
- Implement and maintain the corporate risk management program.
- Research requirements and investigate options for electoral technology renewal.

Elections BC exceeded the performance targets set for maintaining a high-quality voters list in 2008/09. The mail-based provincial enumeration was very successful, proving both the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of that approach. Having a high-quality voters list positioned Elections BC to better deliver services to voters during the 2009 provincial election and referendum.

Key performance measure for Goal 1 - Elections BC will maintain a high-quality voters list measured through coverage, currency and net currency¹		
Performance Measure	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Coverage	87%	92.6%
Currency	78%	87.8%
Net currency	68%	81.3%

¹ Coverage is the percentage of voters on the list compared to the number of eligible voters in the province. Currency is the percentage of voters on the list at the right address. Net currency is the percentage of eligible voters on the list at the right address.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008/09

Objective 1.1

Voters list quality

- A comprehensive mail-based enumeration was conducted in February 2009.
- Over two million enumeration letters were sent to every residential address in the province calling on voters to take action.
- The response rate to our 1-800 call centre far exceeded our expectations.
- Introduction of voter registration by telephone enhanced the enumeration process.
- The success of the mail-out enumeration positioned Elections BC to provide better service to voters in the 2009 electoral events.

Objective 1.2

Legislative change

- *Election Amendment Act, 2008* substantially altered the *Election Act*, making changes to more than 100 sections. The key areas of change were those governing:
 - election advertisers
 - voter identification
 - hours for voting
 - voter registration
 - election financing procedures.

- Legislative changes required Elections BC to reassess its ongoing processes and all of its event delivery plans and fundamentally alter its model for the administration of provincial electoral events less than a year prior to the general election and referendum.
- Elections BC was consulted in the development of the Electoral Reform Referendum 2009 Act Regulation.

Facilitating compliance

- Conducted five investigations of the financial affairs of political entities and reviewed more than 250 electoral finance reports.

Objective 1.3

Electoral Information System (EIS)

- Due to significant budgetary constraints, the planned redevelopment of the EIS outlined in the 2008/09-2010/11 Service Plan was cancelled.
- A review of strategies for maintaining the current EIS for the 2013 General Election was started.

GOAL 2: ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTORAL EVENTS

Electoral events give British Columbians the opportunity to participate in the democracy of their province. As custodian of that right, Elections BC must ensure the efficient and effective administration of electoral events through the implementation of redistributed electoral boundaries, the development of voters lists, organizational readiness and providing optimum opportunities for eligible voters to participate in events.

Objectives:

Elections BC's 2008/09 objectives were to:

- 2.1** Maintain an appropriate level of readiness to administer all electoral events.
- 2.2** Administer electoral events using detailed event plans created and delivered by Elections BC staff.

Strategies:

Elections BC intended to:

- Administer the redistribution, enumeration, election and referendum on electoral reform according to the approved event plans including:
 - recruiting and training District Electoral Officers for 85 electoral districts

- redrawing and gazetting over 10,000 new voting areas
 - producing and distributing new electoral maps
 - updating and testing election information systems
 - communicating extensively with voters to inform them about electoral activities and encourage registration and voting
 - conducting targeted voter outreach to improve list quality prior to the election
 - establishing DEO offices across the province
 - hiring and training over 30,000 election and voter registration officials
 - conducting voting and counting
 - publishing elections results, and
 - reviewing legislated electoral finance disclosure and expense reports.
- Conduct quarterly reviews to confirm by-election, recall, referendum and initiative petition event readiness.

Elections BC achieved the performance measure for this goal during 2008/09, under highly challenging conditions of significant organizational stress resulting from significant legislative change and the administration of two by-elections within a year of a general election and referendum. Both Elections BC's strong planning culture as well as tremendous dedication by staff enabled the achievement of this measure.

Key performance measure for Goal 2 - Elections BC will establish and achieve event-readiness milestones		
Performance Measure	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Percentage event-readiness milestones achieved on time	100%	100%

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008/09

Objective 2.1

Event readiness

- 2008/09 was a critical year for election and referendum readiness. Key preparation activities included:
 - re-design of voting procedures to incorporate legislative change
 - District Electoral Officer (DEO) / Deputy District Electoral Officer (DDEO) training, including training of DEO office managers and election official trainers
 - development and implementation of a procurement strategy for election supplies
 - development of a comprehensive multi-event communications strategy and plan
 - rental of 90 offices across B.C.
 - identification of 1,700+ voting places
 - 87 tonnes of supplies shipped to electoral districts in 383 monotainers
 - design and production of:
 - a comprehensive DEO manual
 - all necessary forms, guides and other election and referendum-related materials.
- Funding was distributed to referendum opponent and proponent groups as required by the Electoral Reform Referendum 2009 Act Regulation.

- More than 800 full colour maps and map products were designed, created and distributed digitally to registered political parties and MLAs and made available on the Elections BC website.
- Deregistered and registered over 200 constituency associations.

Vancouver-Burrard (VBU) and Vancouver-Fairview (VFA) by-elections

- Two concurrent by-elections were administered on October 29, 2008, triggered by the resignations of MLAs Gregor Robertson and Lorne Mayencourt.
- As the by-elections were conducted within six months of amendment to the *Election Act*, only the amendments affecting Elections BC's ongoing operations were in effect. Amendments specifically applying to elections were not in effect for the by-elections.
- The by-elections provided an opportunity to test new election communications material and new procedures ahead of the general election:
 - a new computer application intended to improve the rate at which election results are processed and made public was implemented
 - experienced DEOs from neighbouring electoral districts were hired to test a new approach to election official training.
- Total cost for both events was \$852,047.
- Voter turnout was low – 23.2% in VBU and 26.9% in VFA, potentially the result of voter fatigue, as the by-elections were immediately preceded by a federal election, and a municipal election followed within weeks.

Objective 2.2

Electoral district and voting area redistribution

- Over 10,000 voting areas were redistributed and mapped.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTORAL PROCESS

This goal recognizes the need for the province's electoral processes to be inclusive and accessible for all of British Columbia's voters. Ensuring the organization has information and services that meet voters' needs is fundamental to the success of Elections BC and the province's democracy.

Objectives:

Elections BC's 2008/09 objectives were to:

- 3.1** Provide high-quality services to clients in a manner that is responsive to their needs.
- 3.2** Provide the public with easy-to-understand information and engaging materials about the electoral process.

Strategies:

Elections BC intended to:

- Consult with voters and other clients to identify ways to improve their experience with the electoral process.
- Develop and implement long-term public education strategies to engage voters and improve democratic participation.
- Hold structured annual meetings with all registered political parties to provide information, reinforce roles and gather feedback.
- Investigate options for electronic filing of financial reports.
- Examine and improve the absentee voting process.
- Investigate options for developing new voting, counting and voting place technologies to increase efficiency and provide better service to voters.

Elections BC participated in developing a client survey of B.C. municipalities. Due to issues within the organization administering the survey, the survey has been delayed and results were not available at the time of publication of this report. The results of this year's client survey will be included in the 2009/10 Annual Report.

Key performance measure for Goal 3 - Elections BC will conduct an annual survey of selected client groups to evaluate client response to specific programs or services. *The 2009/09 survey is of selected B.C. municipalities based on their use of the provincial voters list.*

Performance Measure	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Percentage average annual satisfaction score	80%	N/A

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008/09

Objective 3.1

Political party information session

- Second annual session was held in November 2008 and attended by 21 representatives of 12 registered political parties (all registered political parties received invitations).
- The focus of this year's session was on changes to the *Election Act*, redistribution of electoral district boundaries and information about the upcoming general election and referendum.

Supporting clients through periods of significant change

- Elections BC provided information and assistance regarding the upcoming electoral district redistribution, changes to legislation and legislative requirements to political parties, constituency associations, referendum opponents and proponents, candidate representatives, and election and referendum advertising sponsors by:
 - producing information newsletters
 - conducting small group training sessions
 - providing ongoing one-on-one phone support.

"I have been very impressed by the professional, kind, courteous, timely and respectful assistance I have received from all your staff – all the way from reception to all the different financial reviewers I have dealt with.... They were always very patient with me...explaining issues and changes very well."

Financial Agent, 2005-2009

Objective 3.2

Helping voters with special needs

- Improved accessibility tools were developed for voting places.
- Election and voter registration materials were translated into sixteen languages.
- A video entitled "Meeting Your Needs" to advise voters with disabilities of their voting options was posted to the Elections BC website.

UN International Day of Democracy

- Promoted "Democracy Day" through a media campaign and voter registration drives at university campuses.

"Think Choose VOTE"

- A Grade 11 Social Studies resource package was developed by Elections BC and provided to over 500 schools across the province.

"I like what I have seen so far – clear outcomes, related to the students' experience, lessons well structured... backgrounder for teachers....[A] lot of it will be very useful! It would have been marvellous to receive this at the beginning of my career. Thanks a lot for your initiative."

*Social Studies teacher,
West Vancouver*

GOAL 4: BE A LEARNING ORGANIZATION THAT DEVELOPS AND SHARES BEST PRACTICES

Elections BC is a highly focused and dynamic organization that maintains flexibility to respond to scheduled and on-demand electoral events. The organization is committed to the development and implementation of sound business and human resource activities that encourage best practices, partnerships with external clients and support for the organization's staff.

Objectives:

Elections BC's 2008/09 objectives were to:

- 4.1 Participate in, encourage and support partnerships and inter-jurisdictional cooperation.
- 4.2 Encourage and support staff in professional development.
- 4.3 Establish a learning culture that fosters innovation.

Strategies:

Elections BC intended to:

- Expand and enhance partnerships with key stakeholders including municipalities, data providers and other electoral jurisdictions.
- Observe and learn from electoral events in other jurisdictions.
- Participate in Canadian electoral conferences.
- Refine and maintain employee planning and development.
- Maintain and enhance the staff training program.

Event readiness preparation, two by-elections, and pressures brought about by changes to legislation meant fewer training courses were taken by staff and fewer workshops were conducted in-house this year. Other aspects of the learning index, such as staff recognition and percentage of EPDP training goals achieved, met or exceeded previous years' scores.

Key performance measure for Goal 4 - Elections BC will encourage staff participation in a variety of education activities		
Performance Measure	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Percentage calculated learning index* score for EBC's permanent staff	80%	75.6%

* The learning index is an aggregate measure of Elections BC staff participation in workshops, conferences, the CCEO Electoral Technology Committee, partnership agreements, inter-jurisdictional sharing and employee training.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008/09

Objective 4.1

Staff participation in 40th federal general election

- Many EBC staff worked as voting officials or observed activities during the October 2008 federal general election.
- From this experience, a better understanding was gained of how different federal policies and procedures might work in B.C. provincial elections, and how to avoid confusion between procedures unique to each jurisdiction.

Inter-jurisdictional cooperation

- Nola Western, Executive Director of Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration, was selected as President-Elect of the international Council on Governmental Ethics and Laws (COGEL).

Objective 4.2

Professional development

- Staff attended courses, workshops and conferences on topics such as: training facilitation, electoral finance, developments in electoral law, writing skills, supervisory skills, emergency preparedness and public sector innovation.
- Elections BC 101 training was provided in-house to 47 temporary staff hired to support redistribution, enumeration, election and referendum administration.
- 16 informal noon-hour sessions were held for staff covering various topics with a focus on health and wellness.

Objective 4.3

New Brunswick local government election observation

- The Chief Electoral Officer and Bob Jasperse, Director of Information Technology visited Elections New Brunswick and observed the trial of an alternative service delivery model in the New Brunswick May 2008 local government elections. Elections BC intends to further investigate the applicability of the “bank teller” approach to B.C. elections, as the model can potentially reduce staffing levels and costs at a voting place.

Financial report

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has the responsibility for considering and making recommendations on the budgets of Elections BC.

The Committee meets with all Officers of the Legislature to review their budget requirements. The Chief Electoral Officer, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Executive Director of Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration and Executive Director of Corporate Planning and Event Management met with the Committee on December 1, 2008. Elections BC provided the Committee with a comprehensive review of Election BC's financial results for the previous fiscal year and the budget requirements for ongoing operations and preparations for upcoming electoral events.

The ongoing (non-event) operating budget established for Elections BC by the Committee for fiscal years 2009/10 through 2011/12 is essentially 'frozen' at 2008/09 levels of \$7.7M. A small increase was allocated to allow for salary level adjustments of public servants that had already been negotiated government-wide.

Operating budget

	2008/09 Budget	2008/09 Actual	Variance
	\$	\$	\$
Funding			
Estimates	19,693,000	19,693,000	-
Total Funding	<u>19,693,000</u>	<u>19,693,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Expenses (Note 1)			
Salaries of permanent and temporary employees	5,711,000	5,450,870	260,130
Employee benefits	1,122,000	850,888	271,112
	<u>6,833,000</u>	<u>6,301,758</u>	<u>531,242</u>
Travel	582,000	112,171	469,829
Centralized management support services	1,331,000	942,055	388,945
Professional services	619,000	1,588,914	(969,914)
Information systems	3,762,000	3,589,721	172,279
Office and business expenses	4,157,000	3,665,312	491,688
Advertising and publications	545,000	1,157,148	(612,148)
Utilities, materials and supplies	36,000	21,740	14,260
Amortization	928,000	714,716	213,284
Building occupancy - Short-term Non-ARES	10,000	169,929	(159,929)
Transfers/grants (Note 2)	870,000	870,000	-
Other expenses	20,000	8,036	11,964
Total Expenses (Note 3)	<u>19,693,000</u>	<u>19,141,500</u>	<u>551,500</u>
Funding Returned	<u>-</u>	<u>551,500</u>	

Note 1 - This budget is the Estimates budget based upon anticipated activities at the beginning of the year and does not include reallocations of budget made during the fiscal year.

Note 2 - Transfers/grants is funding for the registered opponent and proponent groups for the 2009 Referendum on Electoral Reform.

Note 3 - The budget includes additional funding for the redistribution of electoral districts, the 2009 General Election and Referendum on Electoral Reform and enumeration. The ongoing (non-event) operating budget is \$7,659,000.

Appendices

Appendix A: Political party registrations and deregistrations

Appendix B: Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

Appendix C: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Appendix D: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee

Appendix A - Political party registrations and deregistrations

The following political party registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009.

Changes to the *Election Act* in May 2008 established thresholds for mandatory audits of deregistration financing reports. This lowered the cost of deregistration for some political parties, which accounts for the increased deregistration activity during the fiscal year.

As of March 31, 2009, there were 34 political parties registered in B.C.

Political party registrations

- No political parties registered during the 2008/09 fiscal year

Voluntary political party deregistrations

- BC Youth Coalition
- British Columbia Labour Party
- British Columbia Unity Party
- Feminist Initiative of BC
- Free Canadian Party
- Freedom Party of British Columbia, The
- Renewal Party of British Columbia

Appendix B - Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

The following constituency association registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009.

The high level of registration and deregistration was prompted by the pending electoral boundary redistribution, which results in the mandatory deregistration of all constituency associations. New constituency associations could be registered for the future 85 electoral districts as established in the *Electoral Districts Act*.

As of March 31, 2009, there were 128 constituency associations registered in B.C.

Constituency association registrations

BC NDP:

- Abbotsford South Constituency Association BC NDP
- Abbotsford West Constituency Association BC NDP
- Alberni-Pacific Rim Constituency Association BC NDP
- Boundary-Similkameen Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby-Deer Lake Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby-Edmonds Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby-Lougheed Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Cariboo-Chilcotin Constituency Association BC NDP
- Cariboo North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Chilliwack Constituency Association BC NDP
- Chilliwack-Hope Constituency Association BC NDP
- Columbia River-Revelstoke Constituency Association BC NDP
- Comox Valley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Coquitlam-Burke Mountain Constituency Association BC NDP
- Coquitlam-Maillardville Constituency Association BC NDP
- Cowichan Valley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Delta North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Delta South Constituency Association BC NDP
- Esquimalt-Royal Roads Constituency Association BC NDP
- Fraser-Nicola Constituency Association BC NDP
- Juan de Fuca Constituency Association BC NDP
- Kamloops-North Thompson Constituency Association BC NDP
- Kamloops-South Thompson Constituency Association BC NDP

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- Kelowna-Lake Country Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Kelowna-Mission Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Kootenay East Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Kootenay West Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Langley Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Nanaimo Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Nanaimo-North Cowichan Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Nechako Lakes Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Nelson-Creston Constituency Association BC NDP
 - New Westminster Constituency Association BC NDP
 - North Coast Constituency Association BC NDP
 - North Island Constituency Association BC NDP
 - North Vancouver-Lonsdale Constituency Association BC NDP
 - North Vancouver-Seymour Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Oak Bay-Gordon Head Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Parksville-Qualicum Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Peace River North Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Peace River South Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Penticton Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Port Coquitlam Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Port Moody-Coquitlam Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Powell River-Sunshine Coast Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Prince George-Mackenzie Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Prince George-Valemount Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Richmond Centre Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Richmond East Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Richmond-Steveston Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Saanich North and the Islands Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Saanich South Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Shuswap Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Skeena Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Stikine Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Surrey-Cloverdale Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Surrey-Fleetwood Constituency Association BC NDP
 - Surrey-Green Timbers Constituency Association BC NDP

- Surrey-Newton Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Panorama Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Tynehead Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Whalley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-White Rock Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Fairview Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-False Creek Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Fraserview Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Hastings Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Kensington Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Kingsway Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Langara Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Mount Pleasant Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Point Grey Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Quilchena Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-West End Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vernon-Monashee Constituency Association BC NDP
- Victoria-Beacon Hill Constituency Association BC NDP
- Victoria-Swan Lake Constituency Association BC NDP
- West Vancouver-Capilano Constituency Association BC NDP
- West Vancouver-Sea to Sky Constituency Association BC NDP
- Westside-Kelowna Constituency Association BC NDP

British Columbia Conservative Party:

- Shuswap Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia:

- Comox Valley Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Esquimalt-Royal Roads Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Nanaimo-North Cowichan Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Nelson-Creston Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Constituency association deregistrations

BC NDP:

- Alberni-Qualicum Constituency Association BC NDP
- Bulkley Valley-Stikine Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby-Edmonds Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burnaby-Willingdon Constituency Association BC NDP
- Burquitlam Constituency Association BC NDP
- Cariboo North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Cariboo South Constituency Association BC NDP
- Columbia River-Revelstoke Constituency Association BC NDP
- Comox Valley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Coquitlam-Maillardville Constituency Association BC NDP
- Delta North Constituency Association BC NDP
- Delta South Constituency Association BC NDP
- East Kootenay Constituency Association BC NDP
- Esquimalt-Metchosin Constituency Association BC NDP
- Kamloops-North Thompson Constituency Association BC NDP
- Kelowna-Lake Country Constituency Association BC NDP
- Langley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Malahat-Juan de Fuca Constituency Association BC NDP
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Constituency Association BC NDP
- Nanaimo Constituency Association BC NDP
- Nanaimo-Parksville Constituency Association BC NDP
- Nelson-Creston Constituency Association BC NDP
- North Coast Constituency Association BC NDP
- North Island Constituency Association BC NDP
- North Vancouver-Seymour Constituency Association BC NDP
- Oak Bay-Gordon Head Constituency Association BC NDP
- Okanagan-Vernon Constituency Association BC NDP
- Okanagan-Westside Constituency Association BC NDP
- Penticton-Okanagan Valley Constituency Association BC NDP
- Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain Constituency Association BC NDP
- Powell River-Sunshine Coast Constituency Association BC NDP
- Prince George-Mount Robson Constituency Association BC NDP

- Prince George-Omineca Constituency Association BC NDP
- Richmond Centre Constituency Association BC NDP
- Richmond East Constituency Association BC NDP
- Richmond-Steveston Constituency Association BC NDP
- Saanich North and the Islands Constituency Association BC NDP
- Saanich South Constituency Association BC NDP
- Shuswap Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Green Timbers Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Newton Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-Panorama Constituency Association BC NDP
- Surrey-White Rock Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Fraserview Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Kensington Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Point Grey Constituency Association BC NDP
- Vancouver-Quilchena Constituency Association BC NDP
- Victoria-Beacon Hill Constituency Association BC NDP
- Victoria-Hillside Constituency Association BC NDP
- West Kootenay-Boundary Constituency Association BC NDP
- West Vancouver-Capilano Constituency Association BC NDP
- Yale-Lillooet Constituency Association BC NDP

BC Youth Coalition:

- Delta North Constituency Association BC Youth Coalition

British Columbia Conservative Party:

- Cariboo North Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party
- Shuswap Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party

British Columbia Party:

- North Vancouver-Lonsdale Constituency Association British Columbia Party
- North Vancouver-Seymour Constituency Association British Columbia Party
- West Vancouver-Capilano Constituency Association British Columbia Party
- West Vancouver-Garibaldi Constituency Association British Columbia Party

British Columbia Social Credit Party:

- Burnaby-Edmonds Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Burquitlam Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Coquitlam-Maillardville Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Delta North Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Delta South Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Kelowna-Mission Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Maple Ridge-Mission Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- New Westminster Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- North Vancouver-Lonsdale Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Okanagan-Vernon Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Penticton-Okanagan Valley Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Port Moody-Westwood Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Richmond Centre Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Richmond East Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Richmond-Steveston Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Skeena Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Surrey-Whalley Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Surrey-White Rock Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Burrard Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Fairview Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Fraserview Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Kensington Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Kingsway Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Langara Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Mount Pleasant Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Point Grey Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party
- Vancouver-Quilchena Constituency Association British Columbia Social Credit Party

British Columbia Unity Party:

- Maple Ridge-Mission Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party
- Nelson-Creston Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party
- Surrey-Cloverdale Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party
- Surrey-Whalley Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party
- Surrey-White Rock Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia:

- Bulkley Valley-Stikine Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Burnaby-Willingdon Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Comox Valley Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Coquitlam-Maillardville Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Cowichan-Ladysmith Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Esquimalt-Metchosin Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Kamloops Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Kamloops-North Thompson Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Kelowna-Lake Country Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Malahat-Juan de Fuca Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- New Westminster Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- North Coast Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- North Island Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Oak Bay-Gordon Head Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
- Okanagan-Vernon Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

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- Penticton-Okanagan Valley Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Prince George North Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Saanich North and the Islands Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Saanich South Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Vancouver-Burrard Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Vancouver-Hastings Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Vancouver-Point Grey Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Victoria-Beacon-Hill Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - West Kootenay-Boundary Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - West Vancouver-Capilano Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - West Vancouver-Garibaldi Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia
 - Yale-Lillooet Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

The Moderate Democratic Movement:

- Chilliwack-Kent Constituency Association The Moderate Democratic Movement
- Chilliwack-Sumas Constituency Association The Moderate Democratic Movement

Appendix C: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Section 280 of the *Election Act* establishes the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to make specific or general Orders under certain circumstances. Between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, one Order was made by the Chief Electoral Officer. The Order is summarized below:

ORD001-2008

October 16, 2008

Registered political parties are required to provide a written endorsement of candidates representing the party in an election. The endorsement must be signed by two principal officers of the party and must be received by the close of nominations.

In the October 29, 2008 by-elections in the electoral districts of Vancouver-Burrard and Vancouver-Fairview, endorsements by the BC Liberal Party were received and accepted by Elections BC on October 10, 2008. On October 16, 2008, the date set for the close of nominations, it was discovered that the endorsement document was not signed by two principal officers of the party as required by s. 60 of the *Election Act*. The political party had not been advised by Elections BC of the error until the time of the close of nominations.

An extension of one day was granted to the political party so the necessary signatures could be obtained and submitted to Elections BC.

Appendix D: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee

Tuesday, November 18, 2008
1:00-4:00 pm

Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel
de Havilland Room

Present

Committee Members (alphabetically by political party name)

BC Liberal Party: R. Hector MacKay-Dunn, Kelly Reichert

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia: Douglas Gook (designate)

New Democratic Party of British Columbia: Nikki Hill, Laura Nichols

Elections BC Staff

Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer (Chair)

Linda Johnson, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer

Nola Western, Director of Electoral Finance & Corporate Administration

Kevin Atcheson, Research/Policy Analyst

Jennifer Horvath, Executive Program Manager (Minutes)

Regrets

British Columbia Marijuana Party: Michelle Rainey

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia: Sven Biggs

1. Welcome and Introductions

Harry Neufeld welcomed committee members and designates to the 21st meeting of the Election Advisory Committee. Elections BC staff present were introduced.

The composition of the committee as legislated in the *Election Act* was described, and its legislated responsibilities were reviewed.

Harry Neufeld explained that the Election Advisory Committee meeting earlier planned for Spring 2008 was postponed to assess implementation issues arising out of Bill 42, the Election Amendment Act, 2008, some of which require Election Advisory Committee review and input.

Harry Neufeld led the committee through the meeting agenda and introduced the first topic.

2. Changes to Legislation

Linda Johnson noted that the "Cole's notes" document provided as a handout has been developed as a quick reference to the amendments to the *Election Act* arising out of Bill 42, and expressed that the committee might find it useful.

Bill 42 was introduced and first read on April 30, and was amended by Order paper and passed in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2008. Section 3 of the *Election Act* establishes that amendments do not apply to elections called within six months of their enactment. Most of the amendments to the Act as a result of Bill 42 took effect upon Royal Assent, but did not apply to the by-elections in Vancouver-Burrard and Vancouver-Fairview. The amendments to Parts 9 and 10 of the Act took effect on November 1, 2008. Elections BC is prepared to publish a notice in the B.C Gazette on November 27th indicating that those amendments will apply for the general election scheduled for May 12, 2009. Enumeration amendments as described in section 42 will not come into effect until September 1, 2009.

Linda Johnson further explained the changes to the *Election Act* in detail for the benefit of the committee, highlighting the following points:

Part 1 – Interpretation and Application

- Government, Crowns, and Members of the Legislative Assembly have been exempted from some of the provisions of the *Election Act* to ensure that regular and necessary MLA and government activities are not considered election activities for the purposes of determining election expenses during the 60 day pre-campaign period

Part 2 – Election and Other Officials

- A new clause established that the Chief Electoral Officer has the duty to ensure the *Election Act* is enforced; this was previously implied in the Act, but is now explicit
- Where more than one Deputy District Electoral Officer is appointed in an electoral district, only one must be designated to perform the duties of the District Electoral Officer should they be incapable of fulfilling their duties

Part 3 – Calling an Election

- The publication of the notice of election has been moved up in the calendar because of fixed dates for general elections

Part 4 - Voters

- Previous ID requirements for registering in conjunction with voting have been replaced with the requirement to provide certain government-issued ID, a native status card, or two pieces of other ID as authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer
- If ID is not available, the voter can be vouched for
- B.C. vouching rules are much more generous than federal rules
- A qualified voter, who has the necessary documents and lives in same electoral district, can vouch for a voter who does not have the necessary ID
- Vouchers can also be a spouse or family member, or someone who is in a legal position to make personal care decisions for a voter

-
- Scrutineers can now be present at the voter registration station, and can challenge registration applicants
 - Voter registration can now be done orally over the telephone, which requires a Regulation to ensure safeguards are in place
 - Door-to-door enumeration will apply to the 2013 election

Hector MacKay-Dunn asked whether types of acceptable ID have been decided upon. Harry Neufeld replied that many hours have gone into creating a list of acceptable types of ID. Linda Johnson added that a list will be included in newspaper advertisements published in the coming weeks, and that Elections BC has adopted many of the same ID rules as set by Elections Canada. Elections BC is learning from the many challenges faced by Elections Canada in the recent federal election, has expanded upon their rules, and has added more items such as hospital bracelets and letters of attestation. A householder will also be distributed in April including information about voter ID and vouching.

Harry Neufeld noted that Elections Canada found the biggest group disfranchised by the new ID rules were the elderly. He stated that this was not the intent of the Act, and that Elections BC is taking steps for this not to happen in British Columbia.

Part 5 - Candidates

- Candidate nominations used to require 25 signatures from eligible voters resident in the electoral district, now that number is 75
- Candidate nominations used to require a deposit of \$100, now the amount is \$250
- The criteria for the return of the nomination deposit is still the same, at 15% of the popular vote
- The nomination period ends on Day 10 instead of Day 15
- Braille lists of candidates will be available in all voting places
- In the case of a by-election or unscheduled general election, the ordinary nomination period is Day 6 to Day 10. For fixed-date elections, the ordinary nomination period begins when the writs are issued.
- April 14, 2009 will be the last day for standing nominations and the first day for ordinary nominations
- All documents for a standing nomination can now be filed at the same time
- Certificates of candidacy for all standing nominations will be issued shortly after the election is called
- District Electoral Offices will be sent public inspection copies of necessary documents; original nomination documents will be retained at Elections BC

Part 6 - Voting

- Advance voting hours have been expanded to 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. for all four days of advance voting to allow for greater access for voters
- Special voting areas such as at long-term care facilities where residents are listed in their own pre-printed voting book are now called “site-based” voting areas
- District Electoral Officers have looked at new developments in their electoral districts to assist in identifying site-based voting areas
- Correctional facilities and work camps are not considered site-based voting areas as they are not permanent residences

Douglas Gook expressed concern for tree-planting camps. Linda Johnson explained that as work camps are temporary and are not permanent homes, teams could be sent to those camps to administer voting, but the process is treated as absentee voting. Those voters could also vote by mail through the District Electoral Office.

- To register in conjunction with voting by mail, a notary would be necessary to witness the solemn declarations if copies of ID are not available, but if the voter is already on the voters list, then ID would not be required to vote by mail
- ID exemptions are made for armed forces voting in certain circumstances

Part 7 – Counting of the Vote

- New amendment establishes that recount requests be made on the same grounds as a judicial recount and establishes a deadline for making the request

Part 8 – Invalid Elections

- No amendments

Nola Western noted that many of the changes to Parts 9, 10 and 11 of the *Election Act* have been previously discussed with the committee and have been included as recommendations in the Chief Electoral Officer’s reports to the Legislative Assembly. As well, political parties and constituency associations have been advised of many of the changes via newsletters and letters.

Nola Western described changes to Parts 9, 10 and 11, highlighting the following points:

Part 9 – Registration of Political Parties and Constituency Associations

- Registered political parties and registered constituency associations must now provide Elections BC with a contact name, bank account numbers, and addresses of each principal officer
- The Chief Electoral Officer is able to suspend the registration of a political party or constituency association that has failed to meet the deadline of 60 days to advise the Chief Electoral Officer of any changes to registration information
- While suspended, an organization cannot issue tax receipts, be named on a ballot, incur election expenses or make political contributions. Income tax receipts cannot be issued after a period of suspension for contributions received during the suspension period.
- Deregistered political parties and constituency associations have been required to file audited financial reports, unless a constituency association was deregistered due to electoral boundary changes
- The Act now allows for filing of unaudited deregistration financial reports if the political party or constituency association has incurred \$5,000 or less in expenses and received \$5,000 or less in political contributions since their last report
- The Chief Electoral Officer can still require an audit of any report if Elections BC feels it is warranted
- Deregistered organizations now have six months to file the deregistration report and transfer any surplus funds to the Chief Electoral Officer

Part 10 – Election Financing

Nola Western noted that many of the changes to Part 10 are minor administrative changes that have been recommended for quite some time.

- A 60-day deadline has been established for appointing a new financial agent or auditor
- Separate bank accounts are required for each candidate, political party and constituency association
- Deputy financial agents are allowed to file financial reports if the financial agent is absent or incapable
- Lateral transfers of money, goods and services between candidates, and vertical transfers between political parties, constituency associations and leadership contestants is allowed
- The definition of election expenses has been changed to expand the period to which election expenses apply, now identifying the relevant period to start 60 days before the start of the campaign period
- Political contributions over \$100 are allowed to be made via the internet, EFT, or debit, as long as the political contribution is made with a credit card in the name of the contributor or from the contributor's bank account

- Provincial entities are now prohibited from accepting political contributions from federal political parties or their electoral district associations
- Financial agents must now retain tax receipts for ineligible political contributions rather than destroy such receipts
- Financial agents must report the due date for loans
- Political parties may incur leadership contestant expenses on behalf of their leadership contestants
- Financial agents are now allowed to reimburse campaign workers for election expenses paid out of their own pocket
- The number of candidates a political party fields, the number of registered voters and the geography of the electoral district no longer have any impact on the election expenses limits of candidates or political parties
- Each political party and each candidate now have two election expenses limits; one beginning 60 days before the start of the campaign period, and one during the campaign period itself
- The 60 day pre-campaign period does not apply to by-elections or non-fixed date general elections
- For a scheduled general election the limits are:
 - Parties: \$1.1 million in the 60 day pre-campaign period and \$4.4 million in the campaign period
 - Candidates: \$70,000 in the 60 day pre-campaign period and \$70,000 in the campaign period
- Limits and time periods are separate and distinct, and unused portions cannot be carried forward
- Limits will be adjusted for changes to the CPI for elections called after January 1, 2010
- Expenses incurred in holding a fundraising function are not subject to the election expenses limits
- Transactions of primarily controlled entities such as clubs or other organizations must be included in the financial reports of parties or constituency associations
- Loan due dates, transfers of goods and services and transfers to/from leadership contestants must be reported
- The Chief Electoral Officer may issue a Regulation establishing a basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles, although there is no intention to do so at this time

Part 11 – Election Communications

- The definition of election advertising has been expanded specifying that advertising taking a position on an issue associated with a political party or candidate is election advertising
- Time period for which election advertising is applicable is increased by including the 60 days before the campaign period and the campaign period itself
- The new definition specifically exempts certain things from being election advertising including: sending a document directly to the sponsor's members, employees or shareholders; or, a transmission by an individual of their personal political views on a non-commercial basis via the internet or by phone or text
- Tenants and strata residents have been given the right to post election advertising on their premises, but landlords and strata councils may set reasonable limits on the size or type of election advertising
- Election advertising is required to have an authorization statement which identifies the sponsor or financial agent
- Candidate election advertising is now allowed to identify the political party financial agent rather than the candidate's financial agent
- Certain types of election advertising set by Regulation are not required to have an authorization statement
- The Chief Electoral Officer and his representatives are allowed to remove and destroy election advertising that does not have the required authorization statement
- Certain types of election advertising are exempt from the advertising prohibition on General Voting Day: notice of an event that the political party leader intends to attend or invitations to meet or hear a political party leader; a message on the internet that was there before General Voting Day and not changed before the close of voting; and, distribution of pamphlets or the posting of signs or banners (the no-campaigning 100 metre zone around voting places continues)
- Publication of new election opinion surveys on General Voting Day is prohibited
- Spending limits on third-party election advertising sponsors established
 - During the period beginning 60 days before the campaign period and ending at the close of general voting, election advertising sponsors are limited to sponsoring election advertising with a total value of \$3,000 in relation to a single electoral district, and \$150,000 overall
- Limits will be adjusted for CPI after January 1, 2010
- The 60 day pre-campaign period does not apply to by-elections or non-fixed date general elections
- Penalties have been established for exceeding the third-party spending limits
- Third parties may apply for court relief if they did overspend

- Third parties are required to be independent of registered political parties, registered constituency associations, candidates and agents and are prohibited from sponsoring election advertising on behalf of or together with any of these entities
- The reporting period for third parties is extended to encompass the 60 day pre-campaign period

Linda Johnson described changes to Parts 12 and 13, highlighting the following points:

Part 12 - Offences

- The Chief Electoral Officer may refer matters to the Criminal Justice Branch if the Act is contravened
- All monetary fines have doubled
- Jail time is still one or two years

Part 13 - General

- Requirement for general notices has been expanded
- Public notices must be available online and notices of election and election by voting must be cited on television and radio
- The authority of the Chief Electoral Officer is expanded to regulate ID documents, accounting method, and exempting specific classes of advertising

Recall and Initiative Act

- The *Recall and Initiative Act* has been amended for continuity between it and the *Election Act*

Linda Johnson reiterated that all but Parts 9 and 10 came into effect on May 29, 2008, and that Elections BC intends to publish a notice of readiness in the B.C. Gazette on November 27, 2008 to enable the amendments to Parts 9 and 10 to apply to any election called after the Gazette date.

Committee members did not express any concerns in this regard.

Harry Neufeld invited committee members and designates to provide introductions.

3. Proposed Revisions to Regulations

Linda Johnson and Nola Western presented the following new and amended Regulations for consideration by the committee:

Election Advertising Regulation

This new Regulation would allow an exemption to certain classes of advertising from the requirement for an authorization statement. Exempted items include clothing, novelty items and other small items of nominal value intended for personal use.

Voter Registration Regulation Amendment

This amended Regulation adds the requirement for individuals to disclose either their B.C. driver's license number or the last six digits of their social insurance number when registering to vote over the telephone. The information collected will not appear on the voters list or anywhere else that would put personal information in jeopardy. This new addition will balance accessibility and convenience with the need for an accurate voters list, and parallels existing requirements for online voter registration.

An amended Schedule of forms was presented to the committee regarding the following Regulations:

- Election Financing Regulation
- Advertising Sponsor Disclosure Report Regulation
- Leadership Contestant Financing Regulation
- Political Party and Constituency Association Financial Reports Regulation

Changes to the forms contained in the Schedules of the above Regulations were made for cosmetic reasons, such as the inclusion of a preferred date format, or to reflect new requirements as a result of Bill 42, such as the addition of loan due dates, and changes to distinguish between pre-campaign and campaign period expenses. No new forms were created.

No concerns were expressed by the Election Advisory Committee about the draft new and amended Regulations.

The Regulations will be deposited with the Registrar of Regulations in the Legislative Counsel Office of the Ministry of Attorney General on or before November 27, 2008.

4. New Voting Area Boundaries

Harry Neufeld noted that redistribution of voting area boundaries was necessary for the 2009 provincial general election. The changes in boundaries allow for population growth, especially in urban areas, and reflect the fact that British Columbia's 79 electoral districts will increase to 85 at the next election, as unanimously agreed upon by the Legislative Assembly.

Areas receiving additional electoral districts include the Okanagan, Lower Mainland, and southern Vancouver Island. Elections BC staff are required to digitally depict boundaries of electoral districts and voting areas. Voting areas will increase from the current 8,600 to 10,200. Correspondingly, this increase will also necessitate the need for more ballot boxes, and if desired by candidates, more scrutineers.

In the creation of the new voting area boundaries, Elections BC made every effort to respect municipal, regional district, and federal boundaries. As well, voter accessibility was an important factor. There is a statutory maximum of 400 registered voters designated to each voting area, although in some rural areas that number is kept substantially lower to accommodate voters who would otherwise have to travel long distances. Many urban areas will contain approximately 300 voters per voting area to allow for population growth and to ensure that the voting area boundaries will remain the same for the 2013 General Election.

Over the summer, draft voting areas maps were sent to District Electoral Officers for review and comment. The rationalization of those reviews and the summary of findings are almost complete.

Boundary sets and new maps are presently being created for presentation and readability, including the very detailed task of labelling roads and other geographical landmarks.

Some electoral districts will be contained on one map sheet; others with a more urban/rural mix will be comprised of up to 15 map sheets. The map sheets include voting area boundaries, hydrography, communities, towns, municipalities, some institutions, road names, and park information. The maps will be in colour using hill-shade to show elevation.

Linda Johnson advised that a DVD containing a provincial map, electoral district and voting area maps, and a Table of Concordance will be sent to all registered political parties, and is planned to be sent out before the end of the year. As well, all map products provided on the DVD will be available for download via the Elections BC website.

The street index, which has been provided in the past, is currently limited in distribution arising from an issue regarding intellectual property. The street index will be provided to political parties upon request and with a signed agreement that it will be used for electoral purposes only.

The maps will be in PDF format, and will be a common printable size for parties to print on plotters in-house, or at a printing company. Location Index maps are standard letter-size.

The online voter registration system, as well as the "ED Finder" application on the Elections BC website are scheduled to show both current and new electoral districts as of early December.

Elections BC's intent is to publish a Gazette notice of the voting area boundaries in December 2008. These new boundaries will not come into effect until the writs of election are issued, scheduled for April 14, 2009.

5. Political Party Information Session

Linda Johnson advised the committee that the second annual Political Party Information Session is scheduled for Friday, November 28, 2008 at the Best Western Richmond Hotel and Convention Centre.

It is a full day session intended to provide information to political parties about recent changes to the *Election Act*, as well as information about electoral district redistribution and the upcoming general election on May 12, 2009.

The focus of the meeting will be on what registered political parties need to know to be ready for the election and referendum, including information about nominations, planning and campaign financing, and Elections BC's enumeration strategy.

All registered parties have been invited to send up to three delegates. There is no registration fee, and lunch and breaks will be provided.

6. Other Business

Harry Neufeld asked for any further questions from the committee.

Douglas Gook expressed concern about seasonal workers around the province working in remote camps and their voting opportunities.

Linda Johnson stated that District Electoral Officers are encouraged to make contact with companies that have such camps or large groups of temporary workers to make arrangements for voting, including sending in mobile teams between advance voting and General Voting Day. Many companies in the past have flown workers out of remote locations to facilitate voting, or District Electoral Officers have trained camp workers as election officials, enabling voting on site. District Electoral Officers will make appropriate arrangements, and will work with camp coordinators to make them aware of voting options.

Harry Neufeld stated that mail-in voting packages are another alternative. Application can be made for a voting package, and after the writs are issued a voting package will be sent to the voter. Voting by mail is a good option for those in remote locations, especially if the company arranges for the return of the packages to the District Electoral Office by the deadline of 8:00 p.m. on General Voting Day.

Linda Johnson added that Elections BC will work directly with CFB Esquimalt to train ship personnel as election officials to administer voting when ships are overseas. Elections BC also works with CFB Comox.

Harry Neufeld stated that in the absence of any concerns being expressed by the committee with regard to the proposed Regulations, they will be deposited and Elections BC will Gazette readiness for Parts 9 and 10 as of November 27, 2008. The *Election Act* amendments in Bill 42 will be in effect for any election called after that date.

Minutes of the meeting will be distributed for review and approval in the near future, and thereafter posted on the Elections BC website.

The meeting was adjourned with thanks to the committee members for their attendance.

Mailing Address:

PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J6

Phone: (250) 387-5305

Toll-free: 1-800-661-8683 / TTY 1-888-456-5448

Fax: (250) 387-3578

Toll-free Fax: 1-866-466-0665

Email: electionsbc@elections.bc.ca

Website: www.elections.bc.ca

