



ELECTIONS BC

A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

Annual Report **2015/16**
and Service Plan **2016/17 - 2018/19**

Annual Report 2015/16
and Service Plan 2016/17 - 2018/19





ELECTIONS BC
Province of British Columbia

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August 25, 2016

Honourable Linda Reid
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
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Dear Madame Speaker:

I have the pleasure to submit Elections BC's Annual Report for the 2015/16 fiscal year and Service Plan for the 2016/17 – 2018/19 fiscal years. This document reports on the activities Elections BC undertook between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016 in support of Elections BC's Service Plan and establishes Elections BC's goals and planned activities for the next three years. This report is filed in accordance with section 13(1)(a) of the *Election Act*.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Archer'.

Keith Archer, Ph.D.
Chief Electoral Officer
British Columbia



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Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

I am pleased to present Elections BC's Annual Report for 2015/16 and Service Plan for 2016/17 – 2018/2019 to the Legislative Assembly.

The focus at Elections BC for the past year has been on scheduled and on-demand event preparation for both provincial and local elections.

The *Election Amendment Act* resulted in changes to provincial election administration procedures. Elections BC developed a new computer application for voter-lookup as well as new technology to automate aspects of advance and absentee voting. The February 2016 by-elections in Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant provided an opportunity to test these administrative and technological changes and, following positive stakeholder reviews, they will be carried forward to the 2017 Provincial General Election and 2017 Enumeration.



Elections BC staff have also redeveloped the training program for district electoral officers (DEOs) and deputy district electoral officers (DDEOs). The new, blended training model comprises online training modules followed by smaller, regional-focused learning sessions. The first session using this training model has received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with future sessions scheduled to use a similar approach.

Following passage of the *Electoral Districts Act* in November 2015, a series of projects related to implementing 87 new electoral districts began at Elections BC. One such project is the work to amend voting area boundaries to reflect the new electoral districts, changes in population distribution since the last election, and new business rules for the maximum population of a voting area. Following this boundary redistribution, staff will also work to produce updated geographic materials in advance of the election. Staff have also begun to deregister all registered constituency associations as required by the *Election Act*. Constituency associations may then register under the new electoral districts.

Legislative changes will see local election expense limits implemented for the first time in British Columbia in the 2018 General Local Elections. Staff have been revising all published materials to reflect this change while also concurrently administering campaign finance rules for on-demand, local election events. This year, staff have administered these rules for 29 local election events in addition to the 22 events completed in 2015/16.

In April 2016, the Attorney General asked me, as the independent officer responsible for electoral finance oversight, to “undertake a process of evaluating the requirements for more frequent contribution reporting” for provincial political contributions. In May 2016, my office published a discussion paper in response to that request.

Looking forward, the Service Plan for 2016/17 – 2018/2019 highlights the planning culture at Elections BC with the framework developed for delivering future, scheduled events while accommodating the possibility of unscheduled, on-demand events.

In fall 2016 I will also submit to the legislature my report on modernization of the voting process in B.C. This report will focus on current voting model challenges, and opportunities for improving service to voters, candidates and parties in the 2021 Provincial General Election. I hope that this report will begin the process to develop an improved, made-in-B.C. voting model for the future.

I am confident that the work outlined in this plan will enable Elections BC to successfully meet the mandate of this office while ensuring we deliver professional, independent and non-partisan electoral administration.



Keith Archer, Ph.D.
Chief Electoral Officer
British Columbia
August 2016

The organization

Elections BC is the independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for administering provincial general elections, by-elections, referenda, initiative petitions and recall petitions, and for overseeing the campaign financing and third party advertising rules for local elections, by-elections and non-election assent voting.

For operational purposes, the organization is divided into three streams comprising five program areas and seven work units.

Chief Electoral Officer

The Chief Electoral Officer has overall responsibility for Elections BC and is the head of the Executive Services program area.

Executive Services

The Executive Services program area provides operational support to the Chief Electoral Officer, policy analysis and development, research and communications services to the organization, and is responsible for inter-jurisdictional liaison and collaboration, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, voter outreach and public education programs regarding voter registration and the electoral process.

Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure, has overall responsibility for two program areas: Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration, and Information Technology.

Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration

Provincial Electoral Finance

The Provincial Electoral Finance work unit is responsible for interpreting legislation and ensuring compliance and enforcement of electoral financing law established by the *Election Act* and the *Recall and Initiative Act*. This includes the registration of political parties, constituency associations and third party advertisers and the review and audit of the financial reporting of political parties, constituency associations, candidates, leadership contestants, proponents and opponents, MLAs and third party advertisers.

Local Elections Campaign Financing

The Local Elections Campaign Financing work unit is responsible for planning and administering the campaign financing and third party advertising provisions for local elections and non-election assent voting, including ensuring compliance and enforcement of those provisions. This includes: registering third party advertising sponsors; creating and providing disclosure statement forms and educational material for candidates, elector organizations and third party advertising sponsors; receiving, reviewing, and publishing disclosure statements; and providing support and advice to local election participants, administrators and the public.

Corporate Administration

The Corporate Administration work unit is responsible for the provision of financial and administration services to Elections BC including budget development, revenue and expenditure forecasting, financial accounting and control, financial reporting, contract administration, accounts processing, administrative services, and payroll for Elections BC's core group of public service employees and more than 33,000 temporary staff and election officials during a provincial general election. The work unit also manages Elections BC's warehouse and the warehouse's Inventory Distribution System.

Human Resources and Development Services

Human Resources and Development Services provides human resource services for Elections BC's public service employees, 87 district electoral officers and their deputies, as well as temporary staff and election officials. Responsibilities include the recruitment and selection of human resources, employee relations, training and development, occupational health and safety and all related human resource activities.

Investigations

The Investigations work unit is responsible for Elections BC's compliance and enforcement framework. This includes leading and conducting investigations and other enforcement activities.

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 projects and performs systems operations, administration, security and maintenance for 22 key computer applications, encompassing all aspects of electoral administration.

Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations, has overall responsibility for two program areas: Corporate Planning and Event Management, and Voter Registration and Boundaries.

Corporate Planning and Event Management

Corporate Planning and Event Leadership

The Corporate Planning and Event Leadership work unit is responsible for effectively planning and leading electoral events, both scheduled and on-demand. This includes coordinating support activities across the organization and leading post-event reporting and evaluation. The work unit also has overall responsibility for strategic planning, performance measurement and risk management.

Electoral Operations

This work unit is responsible for administering electoral operations for all provincial events including general elections, by-elections, referenda, plebiscites, recall petitions, and initiative petitions and initiative votes. Electoral Operations manages Elections BC's 87 district electoral officers (DEOs) and their deputies, who in turn administer elections in the field across the province. Electoral Operations leads the training of DEOs and deputies, and oversees the administration of candidate nominations, accessible voting, ballot counting and reporting of results.

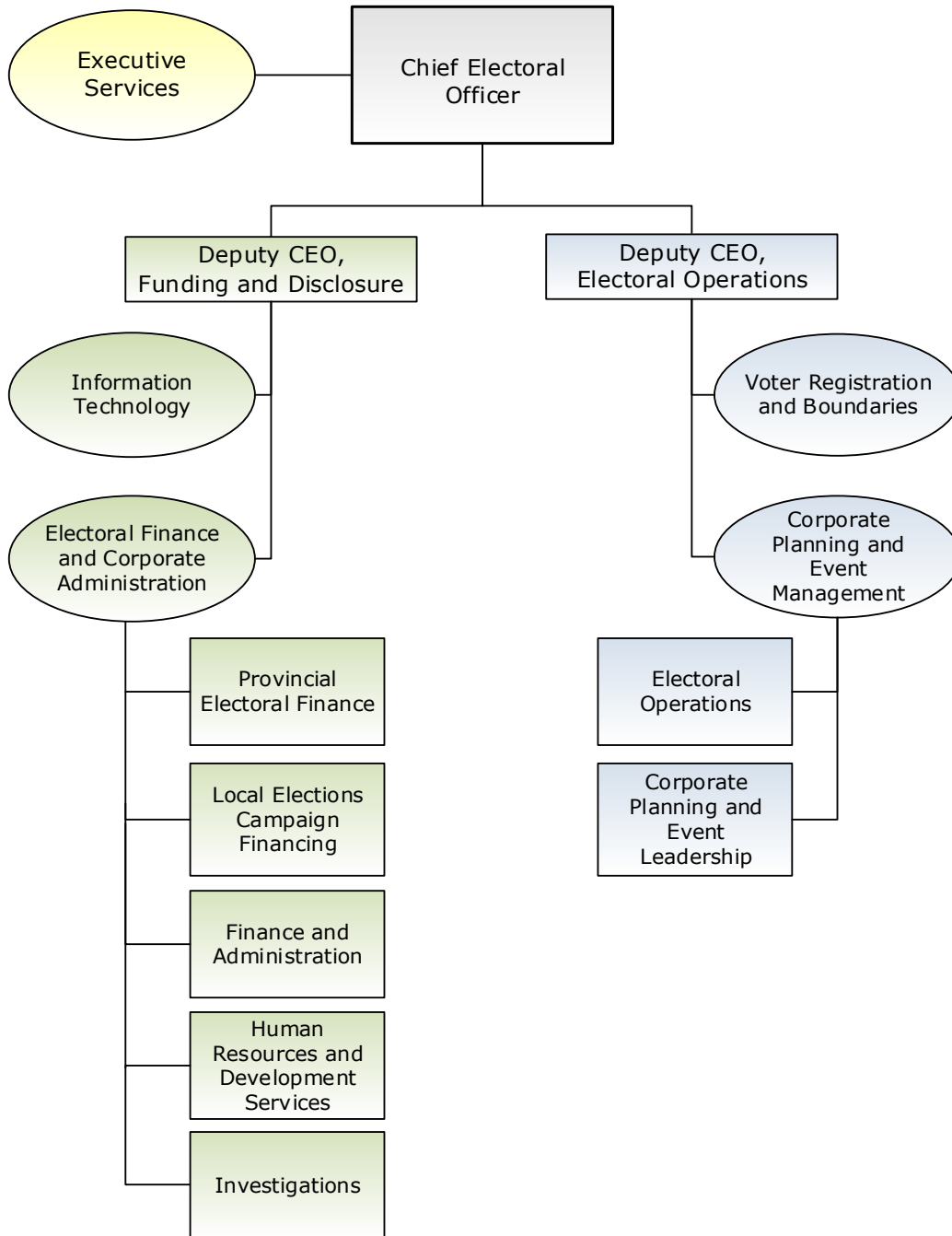
The Electoral Operations work unit is also responsible for the training of all election officials, from district electoral officers responsible for delivering an election in an electoral district, to election officials who serve voters directly in the voting place. The training model uses a variety of formats, including online modules for contextual information and in-class sessions for demonstrating processes and hands-on learning.

Voter Registration and Boundaries

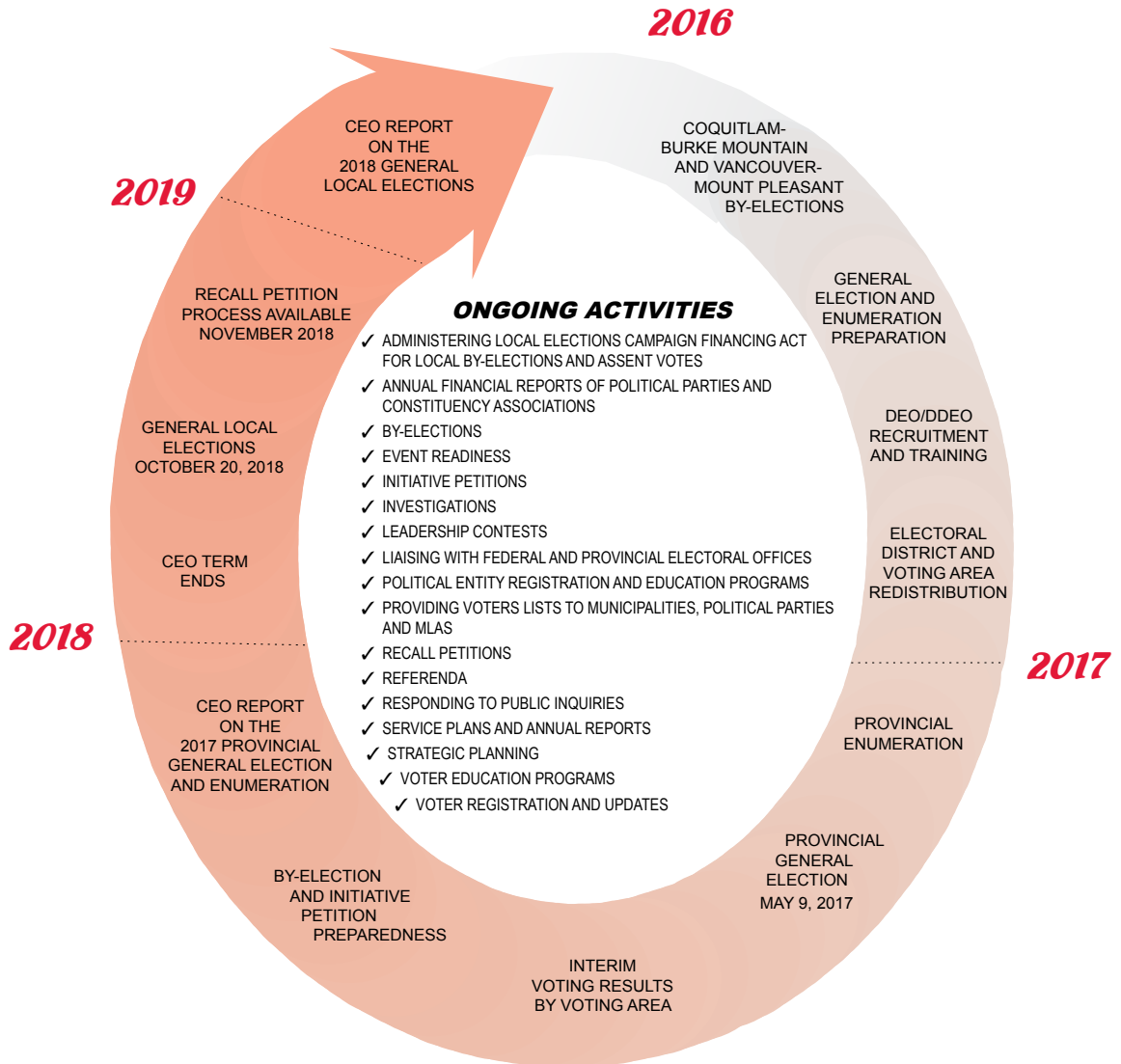
The Voter Registration and Boundaries (VRB) program area is responsible for the provincial register of voters and for provincial electoral and administrative boundaries. VRB manages all voter registration services and coordinates voter data integration from external agencies including Elections Canada, BC Vital Statistics, and the Insurance Corporation of BC. VRB manages voters list improvement activities including voter registration drives and enumerations, and produces and distributes the provincial voters list to Members of the Legislative Assembly, political parties, and candidates during an election and to local governments for electoral administration during local elections.

VRB produces and distributes a full suite of electoral geography products, including provincial electoral boundary maps, voting area maps and voting place maps. VRB is responsible for the maintenance and distribution of a provincial address registry and an electoral street index used to ensure voters are assigned to their correct electoral district and voting area.

ORGANIZATION CHART



BUSINESS CYCLE 2016-2019



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Elections BC's vision is to be leaders in electoral administration. Our culture is one of continuous improvement aimed at better serving the needs of voters and other participants in the political process. Elections BC has earned a reputation among electoral agencies in Canada for its ability to innovate within the boundaries of current legislation to meet the changing needs of voters and improve compliance with legislated procedures. As professional election experts, our staff understand the importance of rigorously following established and often legislated procedures, but also to question the necessity or wisdom of those procedures in changing circumstances and to ask how we might do things differently to improve service and efficiency.

Those questions are being asked with greater intensity within Elections BC, and in electoral agencies across Canada, as we face a changing electoral environment.

- **Declining turnout:** smaller percentages of voters are turning out, and engagement levels are strikingly low among young people and First Nations voters.
- **Shifting demand:** the electoral experience is changing as more and more voters take advantage of what were once considered "alternative" forms of voting, such as advance and absentee.
- **Privacy and security:** a changing regulatory environment and growing awareness of the privacy rights of citizens means that electoral agencies must adapt their approach to handling information to ensure that personal information in their possession is adequately protected.
- **Technology advances:** as technology continues to advance and costs of adoption come down, incorporating technology into the administration of voting becomes an ever-more viable option and one that holds great promise for addressing compliance, efficiency and service challenges.

In response to this changing environment, electoral agencies across Canada are exploring opportunities to modernize their service delivery models. Whether it is through accessible websites, electronic filing of financial reports from political participants, or the modernization of voting processes, technology is playing a growing role in electoral service delivery. Elections BC will be making recommendations to the Legislative Assembly in the fall of 2016 on a technology-supported voting model (Vision 2021). This model will significantly improve service to voters and the timeliness of results, while protecting the accessibility and integrity of the electoral process that are essential for public trust.

Planning and performance

These statements and priorities from our 2015-2021 Strategic Plan will guide our work for the period 2015/16-2018/19.

VISION

To be leaders in electoral administration.

We realize our vision by:

- Respecting stakeholders – continuously striving to better respond to the diverse needs of our stakeholders
- Earning trust – administering processes in a professional and trustworthy manner
- Sharing and learning – sharing our expertise and collaborating to learn from others

MISSION

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

We realize our mission by:

- Upholding the fundamental principles of democracy in all that we do
- Ensuring equitable access to the democratic process

MANDATE

Elections BC is the independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for administering electoral processes in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act*, *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act*, and *Referendum Act*.

VALUES

Accountability	We take responsibility for our actions and decisions
Impartiality	We treat all voters, candidates, political parties, elector organizations and other stakeholders fairly
Innovation	We explore new ways to both improve service levels and make effective use of public funds
Transparency	We are open about how we work and communicate issues that may impact our stakeholders
Service Orientation	We strive to anticipate and meet the diverse needs of our stakeholders
Independence	We operate free from the influence of government and politics as we deliver our mandated responsibilities
Integrity	We are honest, and our decisions and actions are consistent with our values

By staying true to these values, we will earn and maintain the trust of British Columbians.

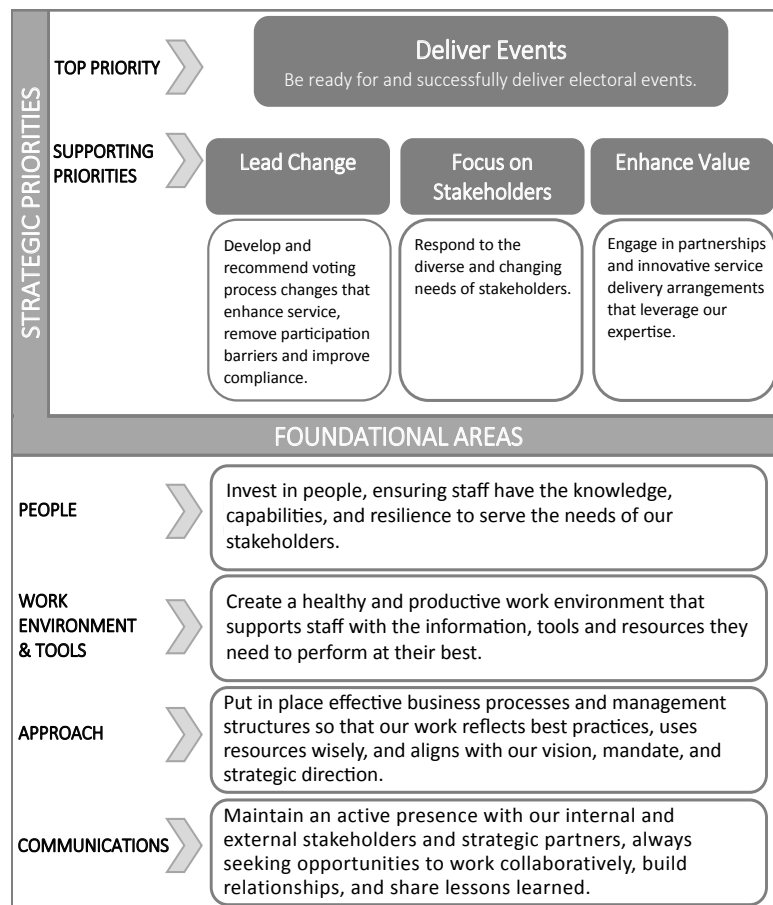
PRIORITIES

Elections BC is guided by four strategic priorities as it pursues its vision.

Being ready for and successfully delivering electoral events is Elections BC's top priority. The remaining three supporting priorities are considered to be equally important to one another in terms of achieving our mission. Together, these four priorities reflect who we are, the environment in which we operate and what we plan to achieve.

Elections BC has identified four foundational areas that are central to the successful pursuit of our strategic priorities. These foundational areas reflect an understanding that, to achieve our strategic priorities, our house must be in order. To be leaders in electoral administration, for example, we must first develop, and support our staff with the training and tools they need to be successful, apply best practices in our approach to work and communicate effectively both internally and externally.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND FOUNDATIONAL AREAS



Elections BC is pursuing a number of strategies to achieve its priorities. To ensure that we stay on track, we set targets by fiscal year and measure and report on our performance annually against those targets. A unique characteristic of Elections BC is that there is always a degree of uncertainty about the type and number of events that we will deliver in any given year. Progress against some of our performance measures can only be reported when we are called upon to deliver particular types of events. In any given year, we may not be able to report against targets on all measures.

TOP PRIORITY

DELIVER EVENTS: Be ready for, and successfully deliver, electoral events

Delivering electoral events is the core business of Elections BC and our top priority. Everyone in the organization has a role to play in event delivery:

- Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration supports stakeholders to comply with contribution, spending and advertising rules and supports field staff in recruiting and paying temporary employees and election officials
- Information Technology develops and deploys information systems
- Corporate Planning and Event Management administers nominations, voting, counting and reporting of results
- Voter Registration and Boundaries manages voter registration, geographic activities and the provincial voters list
- Executive Services develops and implements public information programs and communications strategies

Fixed-date legislation for local and provincial general elections has made it easier for Elections BC to plan and stage the delivery of preparation activities for electoral events.

Elections BC is also responsible for on-demand events, the timing and number of which, during a given business cycle, are unpredictable. Examples of on-demand events include provincial by-elections, recall and initiative petitions, initiative votes, referenda and plebiscites, as well as local by-elections and assent voting.

Strategies:

- Develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff
- Strive to maintain a high quality voters list throughout the business cycle
- Support political participants to understand filing requirements and promote compliance

Key performance indicators: Develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff

Planning effectiveness: Percentage of event readiness and performance goals achieved during the reference period

Stress and workload: Percentile score relative to the BC Public Service on the Stress and Workload indicator from the Work Environment Survey

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Planning effectiveness*	85%	90.9%	85%	86%	86%
Stress and workload**	85th percentile	65th percentile	N/A	85th percentile	N/A

* The planning effectiveness indicator is calculated by comparing actual to planned completion dates in our event plans.

** The stress and workload indicator comes from the BC Public Service's Work Environment Survey, which is conducted every two years.

The planning effectiveness and the stress and workload indicators are viewed as joint performance indicators because both are necessary to assess progress toward the strategy to "develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff". A planning culture was first introduced to Elections BC prior to the 2005 Provincial General Election and our maturity as a planning organization has grown steadily since then. We are focusing now on improving our planning processes so that event plans are effective and achievable given our resource and time constraints and without overworking staff.

Looking back

Event readiness and performance goals for 2015/16 included those related to the 2014 General Local Elections, the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite, the 2015 Burnaby North and Maple Ridge-Mission Recall Petitions, the 2016 Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant By-elections, and local by-elections and assent voting during the reference period. Of the 33 goals, Elections BC achieved 30 by the planned date, or 90.9%.

In the 2015 Work Environment Survey, Elections BC achieved a score of 63 points on the stress and workload indicator, which ranked in the 65th percentile across all BC Public Service agencies. This performance exceeded the BC Public Service average, but fell short of the 85th percentile target that Elections BC achieved in the 2013 survey. This indicator measures the level of staff agreement with the statement that workloads and work-related stress are manageable. Work-life balance is a priority for Elections BC and efforts are being made to ensure that all work is well-planned, communicated and appropriately allocated across employees.

Looking forward

Next year, Elections BC will report on planning effectiveness related to preparations for the 2017 Provincial General Election, Enumeration and Electoral Boundaries Redistribution. The indicator will also reflect planning performance on local by-elections and assent votes administered under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Should Elections BC be called upon to administer on-demand provincial events during this period, the planning effectiveness result will also reflect Elections BC's performance on those events.

It is expected that the next Work Environment Survey will be conducted in 2017/18.

Key performance indicators: Strive to maintain a high quality voters list throughout the business cycle

Coverage: Percentage of voters on the list compared to the number of eligible voters in the province

Currency: Percentage of voters on the list at their current address

Net currency: Percentage of eligible voters on the list at their current address

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Coverage*	93%	90.8%	92%	94%	91%
Currency*	N/A**	N/A**	83%	89%	N/A**
Net currency*	N/A**	N/A**	76%	84%	N/A**

*All voters list quality indicators are based on population projections or surveys conducted on behalf of Elections BC by an independent third party.

**Voters list quality surveys are conducted in conjunction with province-wide electoral events.

The provincial voters list is a list of the names and residential addresses of the voters registered in each electoral district. A high-quality voters list increases the effectiveness of Elections BC's voter information campaigns (e.g. Where to Vote cards) and improves the voter's experience by providing a streamlined voting process at the voting place. Voters list quality is a key performance indicator because a high-quality voters list is vital to the needs of Elections BC and its stakeholders.

Looking back

The 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite resulted in a net increase of 11,000 voters on the provincial list and updates to over 7,000 voter records. Ongoing quality improvements to the provincial list of voters were made by incorporating monthly address updates from the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia and information on deceased voters from the British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency. New registrations and updates were also processed based on data provided by local governments. The October 2015 federal

general election delayed the availability of the National Register of Electors (NRoE), which is a significant source of new voter registrations. This delay contributed to the lower than expected list coverage result in 2015/16.

Voter registrations and updates processed in conjunction with voting during by-elections in Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant further improved the quality of the list of voters. These by-elections also allowed the voter registration team to trial electronic registration procedures in the voting place in advance of their roll-out in the 2017 Provincial General Election.

Looking forward

The 2017 Provincial Enumeration is the voter registration focus of the 2016/17 fiscal year. Elections BC will send a notice to all residential addresses across the province in February 2017. Field staff will supplement this mail-out with targeted registration activities in March, including door-to-door visits and community outreach. In preparation for the enumeration, voters list quality will be enhanced by the incorporation of NRoE data, the purging of long-time inactive records, and the processing of other secondary registration data sources. BC Stats will conduct a Voters List Quality Study after the 2017 Provincial General Election to report on the success of these activities, providing coverage and currency figures for 2017.

Key performance indicators: Support political participants to understand filing requirements and promote compliance

Provincial filing compliance: Percentage of total provincial financing reports (such as annual reports and event-related reports) filed by the legislated filing deadline compared to the total number of reports due in the reference fiscal year

Local filing compliance: Percentage of total local financing reports (disclosure statements for candidates, elector organizations, and third party advertising sponsors) filed by the legislated filing deadline compared to the total number of reports due in the reference fiscal year

Filing requirements understanding: Percentage of training participants who agreed that the Electoral Finance information session helped them to understand the legislated filing requirements

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Provincial filing compliance*	95%	100%	98%	98%	98%
Local filing compliance*	95%	100%	98%	98%	98%
Filing requirements understanding**	85%	N/A	85%	85%	85%

* Filing compliance indicators are calculated based on Elections BC administrative records.

** Data for the filing requirements understanding indicator comes from surveys conducted with participants in Electoral Finance information sessions.

The number of reports filed by the deadline in the filing compliance indicators includes reports that were filed by the late filing deadline. Entities that were granted extensions by Order of the Chief Electoral Officer to the filing deadlines for extenuating circumstances are considered to have filed on time if they file by the extended deadline.

To support political participants to understand their filing requirements, Elections BC conducts information sessions at various locations around the province in the lead-up to a major event or filing deadline. No such sessions were held in 2015/16.

Looking back

Of the 134 provincial financing reports required to be filed by the applicable deadlines during 2015/16, 132 clients filed their reports by the initial deadline. The remaining two clients filed their reports by the late filing deadline.

Of the 71 local financing disclosure statements required to be filed by the applicable deadlines during 2015/16, all clients filed statements by the deadline. Elections BC continued enforcement activities related to four candidates who failed to file their required disclosure statements in relation to the 2014 General Local Elections.

Looking forward

Based on historical trends, Elections BC expects provincial and local filing compliance ratios of at least 98% in each of the next three fiscal years, although a slight decrease in the ratio in the year of a general election may be anticipated. Elections BC will continue efforts to support clients to comply with the filing of financial reports by the legislated deadlines.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

LEAD CHANGE: Develop voting model changes that enhance service, remove participation barriers and improve compliance

Elections BC is responding to the emerging challenges with the current voting model as a result of changing voting behaviour. Our focus is on improving service to voters, candidates and political parties, reducing barriers to participation and simplifying procedures to improve compliance. We are pursuing this priority within the current legislative framework and through the development of a proposed new voting model and proposals for legislative change.

Strategies:

- Revise voting process to enhance service and improve compliance
- Improve voting place accessibility
- Develop a new voting model for 2021

Key performance indicators: Improve compliance with provincial voting procedures

Unopened certification envelopes: Percentage of certification envelopes that remain unopened at final count

Write-in ballots rejected: Percentage of write-in ballots rejected

Performance Indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Unopened certification envelopes*	3%	0.8%	3%	3%	3%
Write-in ballots rejected*	2%	0.0%	N/A	2%	N/A

*Data for these indicators is sourced from administrative records.

Elections BC is focusing its efforts to improve compliance on absentee voting because this is the most procedurally complex part of the voting process and presents the greatest training challenge. Errors on the part of election officials or voters can result in votes being set aside prior to counting, or in ballots being rejected, in order to protect the integrity of the election.

The rate of unopened certification envelopes as an indicator of compliance with absentee voting procedures is growing in importance as the popularity of absentee voting increases. In 2005, 5.0% of certification envelopes remained unopened due to election official or voter error; in 2009, the rate was 6.8%, and in 2013, 6.9% remained unopened. Election officials administering absentee voting must confirm the voter's registration is correct and recorded

accurately on the certification envelope. They must then ensure the voter signs the required declaration in order for the envelope to be accepted for counting. This performance indicator does not include certification envelopes used for vote-by-mail, as these are completed entirely by the voter with no assistance from an election official.

Another key indicator of compliance with absentee voting procedures is the proportion of write-in ballots rejected. A higher proportion of write-in ballots are rejected than ordinary ballots.¹ Election officials work with voters to identify their electoral district of residence and to provide them with the correct list of candidates to use when marking a write-in ballot. In 2013, 4.0% of write-in ballots were rejected. Only 1.1% of ordinary ballots issued for absentee voting, and 0.4% of ordinary ballots issued for non-absentee voting were rejected.

Looking back

For the 2016 Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant By-elections, Elections BC trialed the use of new technology in voting places for absentee voting. These technology innovations guided election officials through the more complex procedural decisions. The result was a dramatic decrease in non-compliance related to certification envelopes: from 6.9% in the 2013 Provincial General Election to less than 1%. As well, none of the write-in ballots used for absentee voting were rejected. These results surpassed both of the targets established for voting compliance and represent a significant improvement over previous elections.

Looking forward

For the 2017 Provincial General Election, Elections BC will implement the technology innovations for absentee voting that were successfully trialed in the 2016 by-elections. Elections BC expects that the significant improvements in voting compliance observed in the by-elections will carry over to the general election.

Key performance indicator: Improve voting place accessibility

Accessibility: Percentage of core accessibility criteria met by general voting places

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Accessibility	85%	N/A	85%	85%	85%

¹ Ordinary ballots list the names of the candidates in the electoral district and voters mark the ballot with a cross or a tick mark beside the candidate's name. Write-in ballots provide a blank space for voters to print the name of the candidate or political party of their choice.

The accessibility indicator will measure the extent to which general voting places used in a given election satisfy a set of core accessibility criteria. Elections BC is currently consulting with the BC Government's Accessibility Secretariat and other electoral agencies to finalize a set of criteria that are essential to a building being considered "accessible". The criteria will encompass external features of the building, such as the approach to the entrance and the width of the entrance itself, and internal features, such as the width of hallways and doors, the presence of accessible washrooms, etc.

Elections BC's practice is to ensure that district electoral offices and advance voting places meet all of the accessibility criteria. In a provincial election, Elections BC establishes approximately 1,500 general voting places and, in some areas, there are limited options. The accessibility score target is set at 85% for general voting places and this target will be revisited when the accessibility criteria are finalized and an inventory of structures to be used as general voting places is completed in preparation for the 2017 Provincial General Election.

Looking back

Elections BC is unable to report performance related to the accessibility score for the 24 general voting places used in the Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant by-elections because these elections were administered before the accessibility criteria have been finalized.

Looking forward

Elections BC is finalizing the criteria to be used to assess accessibility in the future. The forms used to record information about the features of each voting place and its surroundings are being revised to ensure that Elections BC can assess accessibility in the future using consistent and accurate information. In the upcoming provincial general election, district electoral officers will receive training on the importance of selecting accessible voting places and collecting accurate data about the accessibility features of voting places used in provincial events.

Key performance indicator: Develop a new voting model for 2021

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target
New voting model recommendations submitted to Legislature	Complete	In progress	Complete

Elections BC plans to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly proposing a new voting model for the 2021 General Election. The goal is to develop a voting model that is sustainable over the long term and one that addresses pressure points in the current model related to procedural complexity, efficiency, timeliness of results and the ability to continue to meet stakeholder expectations for quality and speed of service.

The target is to submit this report to the Legislative Assembly by the end of 2016.

Looking back

The Vision 2021 voting model was further refined in 2015/16 and progress was made on drafting the recommendations report.

Looking forward

Elections BC looks forward to submitting Vision 2021 to the Legislative Assembly for consideration by the end of 2016.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

FOCUS ON STAKEHOLDERS: Respond to the diverse and changing needs of stakeholders

Elections BC will actively engage with stakeholders to identify and respond to their needs. We are committed to developing services that meet stakeholder needs while respecting our mandate and budgetary constraints. Technological advancements and changing service models outside the electoral arena have fueled changes in stakeholders' expectations regarding the quality, speed and types of service an electoral agency should provide.

Strategies:

- Enhance the range of online self-service options available to stakeholders
- Put stakeholder needs first when designing services

Key performance indicator: Enhance the range of online self-service options available to stakeholders

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Increased online services	Expanded eligibility for use of online voter registration	Achieved	Local campaign contributions searchable in FRPC Secure voters list download service available	Candidate e-filing option in place	N/A

Elections BC will continue to develop and enhance the range of services it offers online. This work responds to stakeholder needs and is made possible by advancements in technology, digital authentication, and growing rates of computer and mobile device ownership.

Looking back

During the past year, Elections BC continued to develop an e-filing system to allow candidates to file their election financing reports online in the 2017 Provincial General Election. Elections BC also amended the Voter Registration Regulation to expand the types of acceptable credentials that voters may use for online and telephone registration.

Looking forward

Elections BC is working on a number of projects to increase the range of services available online:

In 2016/17

- An expansion of the Financial Reports and Political Contributions system (FRPC) to include local campaign contributions.
- A secure portal to allow candidates and political parties to access voters list data files online.

In 2017/18

- An e-filing system for candidates to submit their election financing reports for the 2017 Provincial General Election.
- A web-based, mobile-friendly service to assist voters in identifying the most convenient voting place during the general election.
- An online form to allow local governments to request use of the provincial voters list as their register of resident electors.

Key performance indicator: Put stakeholder needs first when designing services

Satisfaction: Percentage of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with Elections BC service

Performance indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Satisfaction	80%	85.1%	80%	80%	80%

* Data for this indicator was sourced from a survey of provincial financial agents conducted by Elections BC.

We are developing services and products that are shaped more by stakeholder needs and less by the administrative needs of Elections BC. Feedback from voters and other stakeholders is the ultimate indicator of our success in this area. Following a provincial general election, Elections BC surveys voters and non-voters. In the other three years of the business cycle, we survey other stakeholders, such as financial agents and users of our online voter registration system. Elections BC looks for improvement relative to the previous year or the previous time a given stakeholder group was surveyed.

Looking back

In 2015/16, Elections BC surveyed financial agents appointed for provincial political parties and constituency associations to determine their satisfaction with the services provided by Elections BC.

Looking forward

In 2016/17, Elections BC will survey two different stakeholder groups: local election officers for local governments that have held by-elections or non-election assent voting since 2014, and nominees for the 2017 Provincial General Election who file standing nominations by March 31, 2017.

Client satisfaction

“I want to say your patience and diligence is appreciated.” — Local candidate/financial agent

“Thank you very much! You are always very fast and helpful.” — Researcher

“This is fantastic, thank you very much for your help! I really appreciate it.” — Blogger

“Thank you for your assistance. Out of all the organizations I had to contact today, you were the most helpful and provided me with some good information.” — Voter reporting a family member’s death

“Thank you, Kevin for your excellent customer support.” — Capital Regional District

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

ENHANCE VALUE: Generate value for British Columbians by engaging in partnerships and innovative service delivery arrangements that leverage our expertise

Elections BC is the province's window into the world of election administration. We are engaged to think about these issues every day; to understand current research, trends and best practices in other jurisdictions; and, to ensure that this expertise benefits voters and provides the best advice possible to policy makers. We are committed to partnering with other organizations or stakeholder groups to achieve efficiencies and enhance the contribution we make to the promotion of democracy in B.C.

Strategies:

- Partner with post-secondary institutions to develop strategies to engage youth
- Develop closer ties with secondary schools in B.C. to enhance voter registration and promote participation in elections
- Participate in and facilitate discussions about democracy and electoral administration

Key performance indicator: Partner with post-secondary institutions to develop strategies to engage youth.

Elections BC is always interested in developing strategies to encourage young voters to register and to vote, and particularly so in the lead up to a provincial enumeration and general election. The idea behind the Youth Participation through Post-Secondary Engagement project was to engage the experts in this demographic — the youth themselves — in generating meaningful strategies to reach young voters.

The project worked on two levels. First, Elections BC received advice and innovative ideas from youth that it can incorporate into its advertising campaign for the upcoming provincial events. On a second level, the project, which involved six post-secondary institutions, gets youth talking about and researching the issues that affect youth engagement.

Institutions were invited to submit proposals for a project that would address the issue of youth engagement in democracy. Guidelines for the ultimate deliverable were kept fairly general to allow scope for each institution to develop a novel approach.

With a modest grant to each institution, the deliverables ranged from curriculum for courses on youth participation that will be offered on an on-going basis, survey research to better understand the specific factors affecting youth turnout, applications to track youth participation and advice on how to develop an effective social media campaign.

Key performance indicator: Develop closer ties with post-secondary and secondary schools in B.C. to enhance voter registration and promote participation in elections

Performance Indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Student Vote participation	N/A	N/A	N/A	Higher participation than 2013	N/A

Elections BC believes that engaging young people in civic life early on is important to sustaining life-long interest and participation in the democratic process. Since 2005, Elections BC has partnered with CIVIX to deliver the Student Vote parallel election program to elementary, middle, and high schools throughout B.C., providing students under the voting age with an opportunity to experience the voting process firsthand. In 2013, 766 schools in B.C. and more than 100,000 students participated in the Student Vote program.

Looking forward

Once again, Elections BC will partner with CIVIX to deliver the Student Vote program in conjunction with the 2017 Provincial General Election and expects to see even more schools and students participating in the program than in 2013.

Key performance indicator: Participate in and facilitate discussions about democracy and electoral administration

Number of presentations: Number of presentations made by senior staff to external audiences

Performance Indicator	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Number of presentations	20	30	20	20	20

Elections BC is committed to participating in and facilitating discussions about democracy and electoral administration. Presentations are on topics relating to our core mandate, specific electoral events, and electoral administration more broadly. These discussions are facilitated by senior staff who make a number of presentations to outside groups each year. Our staff are often invited back to the same event or organization on a recurring basis.

Looking back

Thirty presentations were made this past year, including presentations to B.C. post-secondary institutions on engaging young voters, a presentation to Elections BC visitor's program attendees on the new technology used in the 2016 by-elections, and presentations

on electoral administration topics at professional conferences and inter-jurisdictional meetings both within Canada and abroad.

Looking forward

We will continue to look for and engage in opportunities to share our expertise, and to collaborate with and learn from others.

Elections BC finances

Looking back (2015/16)

ELECTIONS BC BUDGET PROCESS

The mandate of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services includes considering and making recommendations on the annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and budgets of Elections BC. During the budget process each fall, Elections BC meets with the Committee and presents our budget proposal for the next fiscal year and the following two fiscal years.

As part of the annual budget development process, the Chief Electoral Officer, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure, and Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations met with the Committee on November 16, 2015. Elections BC provided the Committee with a comprehensive review of the financial results for the previous fiscal year and a budget proposal for fiscal years 2016/17 to 2018/19. The proposal detailed the budget requirements for ongoing operations and capital investments and event funding needed for preparations for the next electoral boundaries redistribution, enumeration and provincial general election. During this budget presentation, the Chief Electoral Officer advised the Committee that supplementary funding for fiscal year 2015/16 would be required for by-elections in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant and Coquitlam-Burke Mountain.

In its report of January 20, 2016, the Committee recommended that Elections BC's ongoing (non-event) operating budget for fiscal year 2016/17 be \$9,385,000. The recommended capital budget for 2016/17 was \$700,000 and the event funding recommendation was \$16,094,000.

The activities of Elections BC are driven by the legislation it administers and the associated actions of its clients. The timing of by-elections, recall petitions, initiative petitions and other electoral events are not controlled by Elections BC. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services recognizes that the budget needs of Elections BC are demand driven and has established a process whereby the Chief Electoral Officer advises the chair of the Committee in writing when additional funds are required to administer on-demand electoral events. This process has been followed for all electoral events since 2002.

As part of this process, on April 22, 2015 the Chief Electoral Officer and deputies met with the Committee to follow up on a previous request for supplementary funding to administer the Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite as well as funding for recall petitions for 2015/16. The Committee recommended the following supplementary funding for 2015/16: \$2,740,500 to administer the Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite, \$25,000 to cover initial expenditures to administer the Maple Ridge-Mission Recall Petition, \$24,000 to cover initial expenditures to administer the Burnaby North Recall Petition, and an additional \$142,000 for each recall petition if they were to proceed to the verification stage.

On January 6, 2016 the Chief Electoral Officer wrote to the chair of the Committee requesting supplementary funding for the two by-elections in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant and Coquitlam-Burke Mountain. The anticipated costs for the two by-elections was \$1,315,000, however as there was a surplus in other events of \$800,000, additional supplementary funding of only \$515,000 was required. On January 18, 2016 the Chief Electoral Officer and his deputies met with the Committee again to review the supplementary funding request of \$515,000 for the two by-elections. The Committee approved the request.

The ongoing operating and event funding (page 31) shows Elections BC's budget for fiscal 2015/16 and the actual expenditures for that year. These amounts include funding and expenditures for ongoing work and for events conducted in 2015/16.

The summary ongoing financial outlook (page 35) illustrates the budgets and planned budgets for ongoing work for each of the three fiscal years beginning in 2016/17. The Select Standing Committee has approved these amounts. Funding for electoral events is not included here.

Ongoing operating and event funding

	2015/16 Budget \$	2015/16 Actual \$	Variance \$
Funding			
Estimates (Note 1)	11,080,000	11,080,000	-
Other authorizations (Note 2)	2,823,213	2,823,213	-
Total funding	<u>13,903,213</u>	<u>13,903,213</u>	-
Expenses (Note 3)			
Salaries and benefits	4,819,000	4,595,952	223,048
Amortization	786,000	650,359	135,641
Building occupancy charges	1,183,000	1,327,127	(144,127)
Office expenses and telecommunications	606,000	439,704	166,296
Corporate information systems	1,191,000	1,037,481	153,519
Event readiness	10,000	4,143	5,857
Address and boundary maintenance	74,000	42,809	31,191
Voters list maintenance	124,000	62,368	61,632
Political entity reporting	203,000	161,519	41,481
Officer salary and benefits	337,000	354,953	(17,953)
Voter education	52,000	60,483	(8,483)
2017 Provincial General Election	549,000	562,282	(13,282)
2014 General Local Elections campaign financing	784,000	522,853	261,147
2017 Enumeration	62,000	376,297	(314,297)
2016 Electoral Boundaries Redistribution	300,000	213,541	86,459
Other authorizations for unscheduled events	2,823,213	-	2,823,213
2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite	-	2,357,941	(2,357,941)
Coquitlam-Burke Mountain & Vancouver-Mount Pleasant By-Elections	-	1,123,715	(1,123,715)
Burnaby North & Maple Ridge-Mission Recall Petitions	-	9,686	(9,686)
Total expenses	<u>13,903,213</u>	<u>13,903,213</u>	-

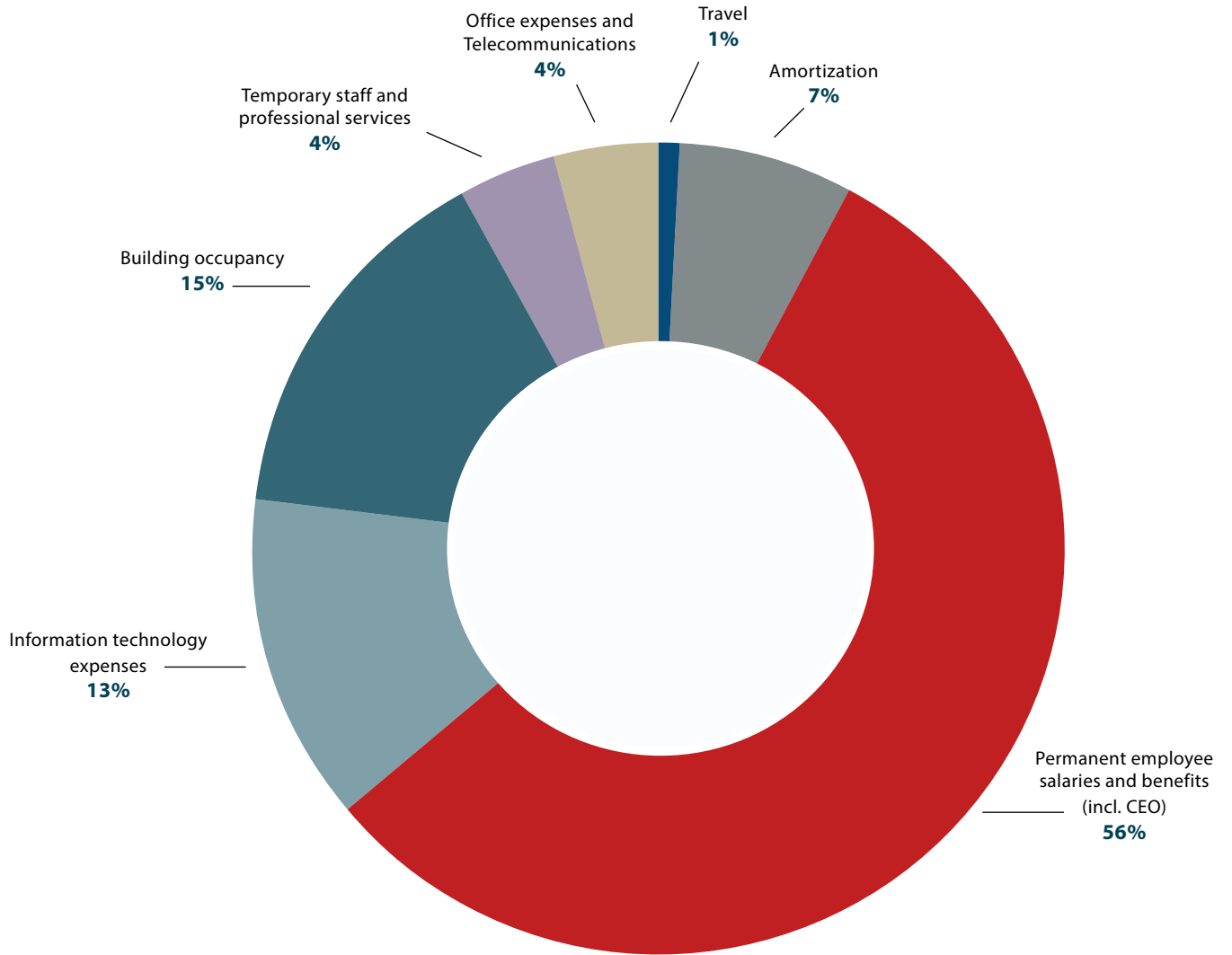
See the following page for detailed information on notes 1 - 3.

Note 1 - The ongoing (non-event) operating budget for 2015/16 was \$9,385,000. Additional funding (event) was approved for general election, campaign financing for the 2014 General Local Elections, enumeration and redistribution.

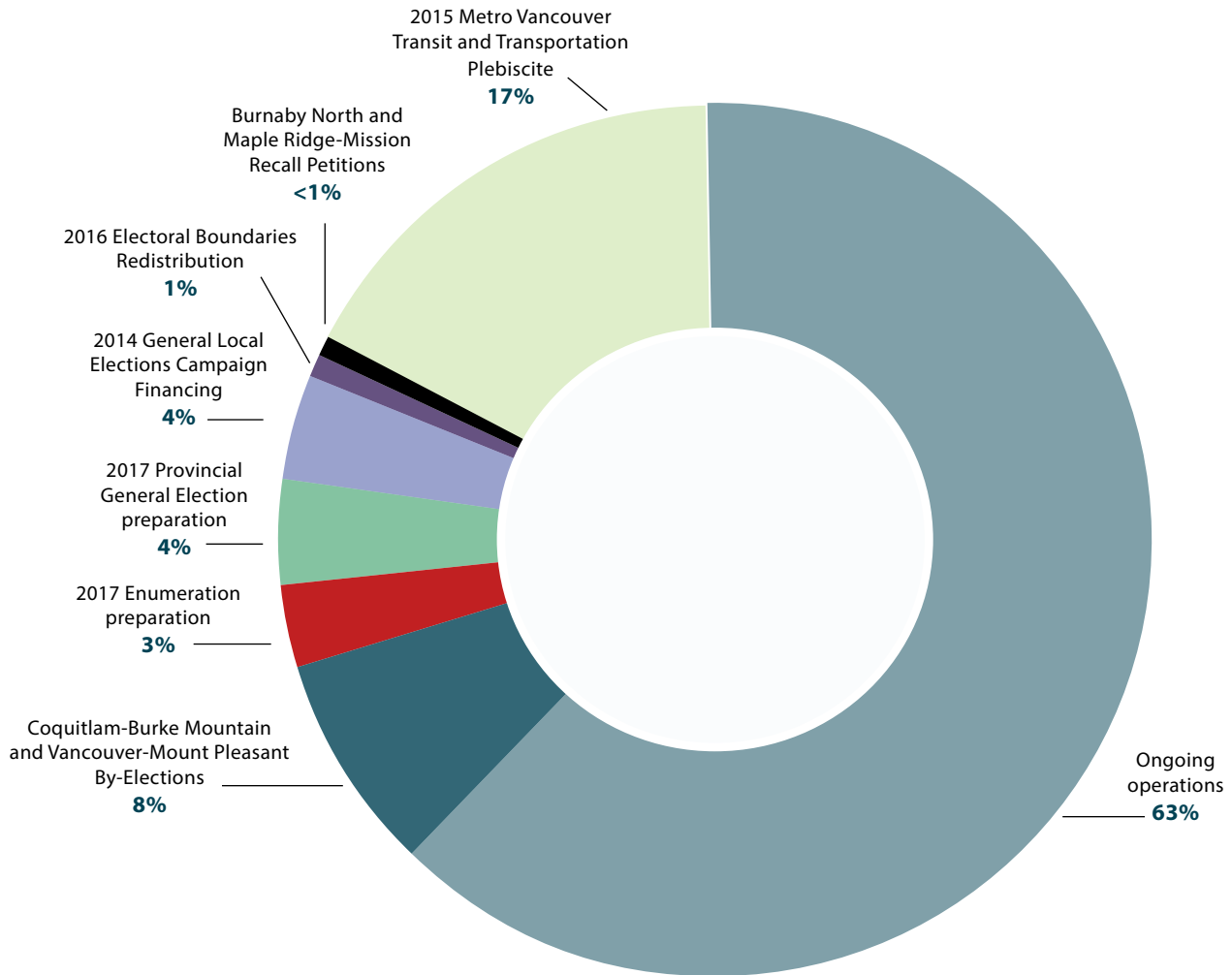
Note 2 - Other authorizations represents Election BC's Statutory Appropriation (within Vote) for administering the following unscheduled events: 2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite, Coquitlam-Burke Mountain & Vancouver-Mount Pleasant by-elections, and Burnaby North & Maple Ridge-Mission Recall Petitions.

Note 3 - The budget is based upon anticipated activities at the beginning of the year and does not include reallocations of budget made during the fiscal year, hence actual expenses differ from the budget.

2015/16 Ongoing operating actual expenditures by type



2015/16 Actual expenditures for ongoing operations and events



Looking forward (2016/17 - 2018/19)

The summary ongoing financial outlook illustrates the operating and capital budgets for 2016/17 and planned budgets for 2017/18 and 2018/19. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS) has approved these amounts. Funding for electoral events is not included here.

Summary ongoing financial outlook

	2016/17 (budget) \$	2017/18 (planned) \$	2018/19 (planned) \$
ONGOING OPERATING COSTS			
Approved budget by SSCFGS	9,385,000	9,385,000	9,385,000
Total funding for ongoing operating costs	<u>9,385,000</u>	<u>9,385,000</u>	<u>9,385,000</u>
Expenses for ongoing core services			
Salaries and benefits for permanent employees and the Chief Electoral Officer (Note 1)	5,179,000	5,225,000	5,277,000
Amortization (Note 2)	816,000	855,000	852,000
Building occupancy charges (Note 3)	1,323,000	1,327,000	1,327,000
Office expenses and telecommunications (Note 4)	511,000	435,000	368,000
Corporate information systems (Note 5)	1,079,000	1,084,000	1,084,000
Event readiness (Note 6)	10,000	10,000	10,000
Address and boundary maintenance (Note 7)	79,000	81,000	81,000
Voters list maintenance (Note 8)	109,000	97,000	97,000
Political entity reporting (Note 9)	220,000	212,000	230,000
Voter education (Note 10)	59,000	59,000	59,000
Total expenses for ongoing operating costs	<u>9,385,000</u>	<u>9,385,000</u>	<u>9,385,000</u>

See the following pages for detailed information on notes 1 - 10.

	2016/17 (budget) \$	2017/18 (planned) \$	2018/19 (planned) \$
CAPITAL ASSETS			
Approved budget by SSCFGS			
Computer hardware and software	700,000	700,000	700,000
Total funding for capital assets	<u>700,000</u>	<u>700,000</u>	<u>700,000</u>
Expenditures for capital assets			
Computer hardware and software	700,000	700,000	700,000
Total expenditures for capital assets	<u>700,000</u>	<u>700,000</u>	<u>700,000</u>

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- Note 1 - The salaries and benefits line includes salaries and benefits for Elections BC's permanent employees and the Chief Electoral Officer. Employees are paid in accordance with policies established by the BC Public Service Agency.
- Note 2 - Amortization is the allocation of the cost of a capital asset over its estimated useful life, and it is closely tied to capital spending. The major contributors to amortization are capital investments made in the Electoral Information System (EIS), Financial Reports and Political Contributions System (FRPC) and other information systems. For example, the figure in the capital budget represents the actual cost for 2016/17; however, that actual cost must also be paid for out of the operating budgets over a number of years. Amortization rates are government policy established by the Office of the Comptroller General, and Elections BC does not have flexibility to change them.
- Note 3 - Building occupancy charges are rental charges for the main office and warehouse space.
- Note 4 - Office expenses and telecommunications include telephones, supplies, equipment, postage, courier, bank charges, permanent staff training, travel, legal fees and statutory advertising.
- Note 5 - Corporate information systems include technology services which are provided through a contract with Fujitsu Consulting (Canada), such as support of EBC's servers and applications; maintenance and minor improvements to applications such as the Electoral Information System, the Online Voter Registration System, the Financial Reports and Political Contributions System and the Recall and Initiative Verification System; and support for technical infrastructure such as shared file storage, printing, firewalls, servers, workstations, local area networks, backup and recovery, and office automation software. Also included in this budget line is the cost of email accounts; a portion of network costs; licensing and maintenance fees for various software and hardware in use at EBC; costs for purchasing software and repairing hardware; and fees for the Internet service on which the Elections BC website is hosted.
- Note 6 - Event readiness includes expenses necessary to ensure that EBC maintains a constant state of readiness to administer unscheduled electoral events such as initiative petitions, recall petitions and by-elections. Expenses include the development, updating and printing of forms and guides.
- Note 7 - Address and boundary maintenance involves the upkeep of voting area boundaries to satisfy legislative requirements and to enhance the accessibility of voting places to voters. It also includes the production of high quality electoral data and information through the continual custodianship of a geo-spatial database containing B.C.'s electoral boundaries, road network and address data. This means to accurately and efficiently derive physical addresses from provided addresses and assign physical addresses to electoral districts and voting areas; to maintain a current and complete register of physical addresses for residential and non-residential properties, along with their electoral district and voting area assignments; and to communicate this electoral information through map products and web tools.

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- Note 8 - Voters list maintenance includes information technology costs and costs related to the transfer of voter data. The voters list contains the names and residential addresses of all individuals registered to vote in each electoral district. It is a fundamental component of all electoral events and is used to ensure only registered voters vote and to prevent voters from voting more than once. It is also used to ensure that only registered voters sign recall and initiative petitions. The voters list is used by MLAs, parties and candidates to communicate with registered voters and by the Court Services Branch to generate jury selection lists.
- Note 9 - Political entity reporting includes the costs associated with reviewing financing reports for provincial candidates and other provincial political entities; conducting investigations of political entities, candidates and election advertising sponsors in accordance with section 276 of the *Election Act*; development and delivery of guides, forms and training for political entities, financial agents and auditors; registration and updates of political parties, constituency associations and advertising sponsors. This budget line does not include costs associated with local campaign finance administration.
- Note 10 - Elections BC recognizes a key factor to youth democratic engagement and civic participation is youth voter registration and ensuring citizens take advantage of their first opportunities to vote. Developing the democratic commitment and capacity of B.C.'s educators to engage students is the focus of the Democracy Bootcamp. The Bootcamp engages and motivates practicing teachers to improve their delivery of prescribed learning outcomes and resource activities, while further developing their overall knowledge of and interest in B.C.'s electoral processes.

Appendices

Appendix A: “At-a-glance” projects and activities, 2016/17

Appendix B: Political party registrations and deregistrations

Appendix C: Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

Appendix D: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Appendix E: Activities of the Chief Electoral Officer

Appendix F: Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer

Appendix G: Local by-elections and non-election assent votes

Appendix H: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee meeting

Appendix A: “At-a-glance” projects and activities, 2016/17

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>Top priority:</p> <p>Deliver events: Be ready for and deliver successful electoral events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administer local by-elections, local assent votes, and other on-demand events as required. ▪ Complete the 2016 Electoral Boundaries Redistribution. ▪ Prepare and begin delivery of the 2017 Provincial General Election and Enumeration. ▪ Implement changes to policies, plans, and processes to ensure Elections BC is ready to administer expense limits for local elections and other changes enacted by Bill 17 – <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing (Election Expenses) Amendment Act, 2016</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update plans to ensure Elections BC is ready to administer on-demand events, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ initiative petitions ▪ recall petitions ▪ provincial by-elections ▪ provincial referenda, plebiscites, and initiative votes ▪ local by-elections ▪ local assent votes ▪ Maintain the provincial register of voters. ▪ Maintain functionality of critical information systems: Electoral Information System (EIS), Recall and Initiative Verification System (RIVERS), Online Voter Registration (OVR) system, Financial Reports and Political Contributions (FRPC) system, Integrated Digital Electoral Atlas (INDEA), Inventory Distribution System (IDS).
<p>Supporting priority:</p> <p>Lead change: Develop voting model changes that enhance service, remove participation barriers and improve compliance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to work on advancing Elections BC’s transformative vision for what voting in the 2021 Provincial General Election will look like. ▪ Expand the use of technology in the voting place to streamline the voting process for voters in the 2017 Provincial General Election, building on the successful 2016 by-elections pilot. ▪ Implement an electronic voting book for vote-by-mail and voting in the district electoral office to reduce administrative errors and provide reliable end-to-end tracking of voting packages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct strategic reviews of voter registration and voters list maintenance activities to address new uses of voter information, new channels for updating voter information, and new opportunities to enhance service to voters.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>Supporting priority:</p> <p>Focus on stakeholders: Respond to the diverse and changing needs of stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design and build a system for provincial candidates to file election financing reports electronically. ▪ Adapt the Financial Reports and Political Contributions system to accommodate the reporting of local campaign contributions. ▪ Develop a secure download service to facilitate authorized access to voters list information by district electoral officers, candidates, political parties, and other electoral stakeholders. ▪ Re-develop the Elections BC website and web applications to improve user experience and ease of access to electoral event information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update forms and information systems used to interact with voters and clients. ▪ Publish guides to legislated processes administered by Elections BC. ▪ Deliver financial agent training and political party information sessions. ▪ Receive, review, scan and post financing reports and disclosure statements. ▪ Publish political contributions data. ▪ Provide voters lists for purposes authorized under the <i>Election Act</i>. ▪ Deliver geography products and services. ▪ Maintain the Elections BC website and update public information. ▪ Manage issues and media relations. ▪ Respond to inquiries from the public and other stakeholders. ▪ Maintain and enhance public education programs. ▪ Conduct client satisfaction surveys. ▪ Liaise and consult with Election Advisory Committee. ▪ Liaise and consult with the Technical Advisory Committee established under the <i>Local Elections Campaign Financing Act</i>.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>Supporting priority:</p> <p>Enhance value: Enhance value for British Columbians by engaging in partnerships and innovative service delivery arrangements that leverage our expertise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a strategic outreach program involving community groups and service organizations to increase awareness of the 2017 Provincial General Election among voters who face the greatest barriers to electoral participation. ▪ Partner with post-secondary schools on new initiatives to encourage youth participation in the electoral process. ▪ Work with school districts to promote and support the recruitment of local high school students as election officials. ▪ Partner with other Canadian jurisdictions to establish a professional education and certification program in election administration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in research activities relevant to electoral administration. ▪ Develop and maintain partnerships. ▪ Observe electoral events taking place in other jurisdictions. ▪ Make presentations to external audiences. ▪ Participate in the Conference of Canadian Election Officials (CCEO). ▪ Participate in the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL).
FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>People: Continue to be a high-performing organization that invests in people and ensures that staff have the knowledge, capabilities, and resilience to serve the needs of our stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a blended learning approach to training district electoral officers and election officials that combines face-to-face instruction with eLearning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit, develop and retain high-performing staff. ▪ Train staff on operational frameworks, tools and processes. ▪ Manage corporate orientation program for new Elections BC employees. ▪ Renew Elections BC's corporate learning and development strategy. ▪ Maintain Employee Performance and Development Planning (EPDP) program.

FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>Work environment and tools: Create a healthy and functional work environment in which our staff are supported with the information, tools, and resources needed to perform at their best.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance the suite of information resources, communications technology, and performance management tools used by district electoral officers and field staff. ▪ Employ web-based mapping tools (iMapBC) in the delivery of geography products and services used in the field and at Elections BC headquarters. ▪ Enhance the information systems used for internal management reporting on Elections BC operations during provincial electoral events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain IT infrastructure. ▪ Manage warehouse. ▪ Maintain facilities.
<p>Approach: Put effective business processes and management structures in place, ensuring the work we do reflects best practices and is aligned with our vision, mandate, and strategic direction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop new tools and processes to electronically capture information collected by district electoral officers and used for field operations. ▪ Analyse voter participation trends and patterns to improve planning of field operations for the 2017 Provincial General Election and Enumeration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporate lessons learned from past electoral events into future event planning. ▪ Maintain and enhance the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ corporate planning framework ▪ privacy management framework ▪ legislative compliance and enforcement framework ▪ Maintain policies, procedures, and process documentation. ▪ Review legislation and legislative interpretations. ▪ Maintain risk management program.

FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
<p>Communications: Reach out to our stakeholders and strategic partners, always seeking ways to achieve our goals collaboratively and share lessons learned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a new web-based model for publishing official reports of the Chief Electoral Officer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liaise with other electoral agencies to share best practices. ▪ Engage with legislators and other stakeholders on emerging issues in the field of electoral administration. ▪ Contribute to the Canadian Electoral Resource Library (CERL). ▪ Maintain and enhance internal communications. ▪ Review and assess Elections BC's overall communications strategy.

Appendix B: Political party registrations and deregistrations

As of March 31, 2016, there were 24 political parties registered in B.C.

The following political party registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016.

Political party registrations

- Land Air Water Party
- BC Progressive Party

Voluntary political party deregistration

- New Wave

Appendix C: Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

As of March 31, 2016, there were 104 constituency associations registered in B.C.

The following constituency association registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016.

Constituency association registrations

There were no constituency association registrations in fiscal 2015/16.

Voluntary constituency association deregistrations

British Columbia Conservative Party

- Abbotsford-Mission Constituency Association
- Abbotsford West Constituency Association
- Alberni-Pacific Rim Constituency Association
- Chilliwack-Hope Constituency Association
- Esquimalt-Royal Roads Constituency Association
- Nanaimo-North Cowichan Constituency Association
- North Island Constituency Association
- Parksville-Qualicum Constituency Association
- Richmond-Steveston Constituency Association
- Saanich South Constituency Association
- Skeena Constituency Association

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

- Comox Valley Constituency Association
- Cowichan Valley Constituency Association
- Esquimalt-Royal Roads Constituency Association
- Nanaimo-North Cowichan Constituency Association
- Nelson-Creston Constituency Association
- Oak Bay-Gordon Head Constituency Association
- Saanich North and the Islands Constituency Association
- Saanich South Constituency Association
- Surrey-Green Timbers Constituency Association
- Vancouver-Mount Pleasant Constituency Association

Appendix D: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Section 280 of the *Election Act* and section 90 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* establish the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to make specific or general Orders under certain circumstances. Between April 1, 2015, and March 31, 2016, eleven Orders were made by the Chief Electoral Officer. The Orders are summarized below:

EA-ORD002-2015

June 4, 2015

The Advocational International Democratic Party was granted an extension to June 30, 2015, to file a deregistration report for the political party.

EA-ORD003-2015

May 29, 2015

In some households receiving more than one voting package for the plebiscite, two or more voters in the same household inadvertently voted using each other's voting package. Where plebiscite officials could determine that, apart from this error, the ballot packages submitted by these voters were completed as required by the Regulation, and that the voters in each case voted only once in the plebiscite, these ballot packages were considered for counting as if each individual in the household voted using the ballot package issued to them.

EA-ORD004-2015

May 29, 2015

A plebiscite voter did not complete the certification envelope as required, but did provide their date of birth and signed a handwritten declaration on the return envelope. The ballot package returned by the voter was considered for counting as if the voter completed the certification envelope as required.

EA-ORD005-2015

May 29, 2015

Due to an error by a plebiscite official or service provider, the voting package provided to a voter did not include a certification envelope. This voter could not complete the certification envelope as required, but did provide their date of birth and signed a handwritten declaration on other ballot package materials. The ballot package returned by the voter was considered for counting as if the voter completed the certification envelope as required.

EA-ORD006-2015

May 29, 2015

Some plebiscite voters provided an incomplete date of birth, or provided a date of birth that did not match their date of birth on the provincial list of voters. Where the date provided was a near match for the voter's date of birth on the provincial list of voters, or was the date they signed the certification envelope, these voters were contacted to verify their identity. When a plebiscite official could verify the identity of the voter by telephone and determine that the incomplete or inaccurate date of birth on the certification envelope was provided in error, the plebiscite official completed or corrected the date of birth on the certification envelope on the voter's behalf. These ballot packages were considered for counting as if the voter completed the certification envelope as required.

EA-ORD007-2015**May 29, 2015**

Due to an error by a plebiscite official, two voters were instructed to sign a certification envelope for another voter. The voters were subsequently instructed to sign the declaration on a blank certification envelope that was attached to the original certification envelope. These ballot packages were considered for counting as if the voter completed the certification envelope as required.

EA-ORD008-2015¹**EA-ORD009-2015****June 17, 2015**

The British Columbia Conservative Party was granted an extension to July 17, 2015, to file a deregistration report for the Vancouver-Quilchena Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party.

EA-ORD001-2016**February 2, 2016**

Election officials at some voting stations in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant erred in not having all voters sign the general voting books as required by s. 96 of the *Election Act*. The ballots were considered at initial count as if the voters had signed the necessary declaration in the voting books.

EA-ORD002-2016**February 3, 2016**

Some voters at an alternative absentee voting station in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant were issued write-in ballots instead of ordinary ballots. The ballots cast by these voters were not rejected at final count on the basis that the incorrect ballots were used.

EA-ORD003-2016**February 15, 2016**

Election officials at an advance voting opportunity in Vancouver-Mount Pleasant made an error in recording the valid vote totals by candidate on the Initial Count Reconciliation form and the error was not discovered until after the conclusion of final count. The error did not affect the election of the candidate as declared by the District Electoral Officer at the conclusion of final count. The Initial Count Reconciliation form was amended and the results for the election were adjusted accordingly.

EA-ORD004-2016**March 23, 2016**

The Shuswap Constituency Association of the BC NDP was granted an extension to April 11, 2016, to file the annual financial report for the 2015 calendar year.

¹ Order number EA-ORD008-2015 was not used.

Appendix E: Activities of the Chief Electoral Officer

The Chief Electoral Officer and his senior staff meet regularly with a wide variety of stakeholders. The following are some examples of the meetings, activities or events that were held or attended in the last year.

- 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite visitors program (host)
- 2016 Coquitlam-Burke Mountain and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant by-elections visitors program and DEO office site visits (host)
- Advisory Committee of Electoral Partners (presentation and attendee)
- Association of Electoral Administrators Annual General Meeting and Conference (attendee)
- B.C. Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy (presentation)
- Canadian Conference of Election Officials (presentations and attendee)
- Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference (attendee)
- Canadian Public Policy Forum (Internet voting presentation)
- Canadian Society of Election Official Training (chair)
- Chief Electoral Officers' Committee on Professional Development (chair)
- CIVIX Democracy Bootcamp (sponsor and presentation)
- Concordia University workshop on social science research (presentation)
- Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (presentations and attendee)
- Democracy in Action (sponsor and presentation)
- Election Advisory Committee (host)
- Elections Alberta (interjurisdictional meeting and presentations)
- Elections Canada (interjurisdictional meeting and presentations)
- Elections Saskatchewan visitor's program (attendee)
- Elections Yukon (interjurisdictional support)
- Emily Carr University of Art + Design (presentation)
- Indspire 2015 Soaring Indigenous Youth Career Conference (sponsor and presentations)
- Local Government Management Association (LGMA) Lower Mainland Spring Conference (presentation)
- Political Party Information Session (host)
- Privacy and Access Conference (attendee)
- Simon Fraser University (presentation to first year political science students)
- The Electoral Commission (UK) (presentation)
- University of British Columbia – Okanagan (presentations)
- University of Northern British Columbia (presentation)
- University of the Fraser Valley (presentation)
- Vancouver Island University (presentation)

Appendix F: Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer

The following is a list of reports and publications Elections BC tabled in the last fiscal year. These reports are available on the [Elections BC website](#).

Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer

Annual report 2014/15 and Service Plan 2015/16-2017/18

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 2014 General Local Elections – November 15, 2014

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite – March 16-July 2, 2015

Appendix G: Local by-elections and non-election assent votes

Between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2016, Elections BC completed the administration of the campaign financing provisions of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* for 10 by-elections and 12 non-election assent votes. All participants in these events filed disclosure statements by the filing deadline.

Disclosure statements for by-election and non-election assent voting participants are available on the Elections BC website.

The incremental costs to our organization of administering by-elections and non-election assent voting are included in the ongoing budget of Elections BC.

By-elections

Jurisdiction	General Voting Day	Filing deadline	CAN*	EO**	TPS***	Late/ Non-filers
Pouce Coupe	March 7, 2015	June 5, 2015	3	0	0	N/A
Fraser Lake Rural (Electoral Area D of the Bulkley-Nechako Regional District)	April 25, 2015	July 24, 2015	1	0	0	N/A
Sechelt Indian Government District Advisory Council	May 9, 2015	August 7, 2015	3	0	0	N/A
Lantzville	August 8, 2015	November 6, 2015	13	0	0	N/A
Salmo	September 12, 2015	December 11, 2015	2	0	0	N/A
McBride	September 19, 2015	December 18, 2015	4	0	0	N/A
Haida Gwaii School District (SD50)	September 19, 2015	December 18, 2015	1	0	0	N/A
Pemberton	November 7, 2015	February 5, 2016	2	0	0	N/A
Fraser Lake	November 28, 2015	February 26, 2016	7	0	0	N/A
Chilliwack School District (SD33)	December 12, 2015	March 11, 2016	14	0	0	N/A

* Candidates **Elector organizations ***Third party sponsors

Non-election assent voting

Event Name	General Voting Day	Filing deadline	Non-election assent voting advertising sponsors	Late/ Non-filers
2015 Hornby Island Fire Hall	April 18, 2015	July 17, 2015	5	N/A
2015 Lake Country Okanagan Rail Corridor	April 25, 2015	July 24, 2015	7	N/A
2015 Okanagan Falls and District Parkland Acquisition	April 25, 2015	July 24, 2015	0	N/A
2015 Magic Lake Estates (North Pender Island) Wastewater System	June 27, 2015	September 25, 2015	0	N/A
2015 Ganges Wastewater System	July 25, 2015	October 23, 2015	0	N/A
2015 Cariboo Regional District Fire Protection and Highway Rescue Services	August 29, 2015	November 27, 2015	0	N/A
2015 Kamloops Parkade and Performing Arts Centre	November 7, 2015	February 5, 2016	4	N/A
2015 Topley Rural Fire Protection, Road Rescue and First Responders Services	November 7, 2015	February 5, 2016	0	N/A
2015 Peace River Domestic Sewage and Potable Water Services	November 7, 2015	February 5, 2016	0	N/A
2015 Parksville Water Treatment and Intake Facility	November 21, 2015	February 19, 2016	0	N/A
2015 Comox Valley Homelessness Supports Service	November 28, 2015	February 26, 2016	3	N/A
2015 Vernon & District Multi-Use Facility Expansion	November 28, 2015	February 26, 2016	2	N/A

Appendix H: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee meeting

Monday, October 26, 2015 9 a.m. - noon.
Fairmont Waterfront, 900 Canada Place, Vancouver, British Columbia

Present:

Committee Members (alphabetically by political party name)

Raj Sihota, BC NDP

Joan Robinson, British Columbia Conservative Party

Laura Miller, British Columbia Liberal Party

Sharon White, British Columbia Liberal Party

Bob Lorriman, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Elections BC Staff

Keith Archer, Ph.D., Chief Electoral Officer (Chair)

Nola Western, CPA, CA, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure

Anton Boegman, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations

Stephany Laverty, Executive Coordinator (minutes)

Regrets:

Michael Gardiner, BC NDP

Matt Toner, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Meeting convened at 10:01 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Keith Archer, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) welcomed attendees and described the role of the Election Advisory Committee (EAC) as established by sections 14-16 of the *Election Act*.

Keith then gave a brief overview of the agenda with the primary focus of discussion reflecting the impacts of the amendments to the *Election Act* passed in May 2015. Keith noted that he would also provide an update on the Electoral Boundaries Commission and Nola would provide an update on Electoral Finance.

Elections BC administered other unscheduled events since the last general election, which, although not discussed in detail at this meeting, serve to illustrate the need for Elections BC to be in a state of readiness to administer on-demand events. These events include:

The 2013 Westside – Kelowna by-election, the initiative petition in 2013, the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite, the 2015 recall petition in Burnaby North, the 2015 recall petition in Maple Ridge – Mission, and the receipt of warrants and preparation for two upcoming by-elections in Coquitlam – Burke Mountain and Vancouver – Mount Pleasant.

Discussion/Questions

- What was the initiative petition?
 - The initiative petition sought to amend the *Police Act*.

2. Election Act Update

Anton Boegman and Nola Western led members through a review of the changes to the *Election Act* (Bill 20) passed in May 2015.

Anton explained that under s. 3 of the *Election Act*, amendments to the *Election Act* do not apply for elections called within six months after they come into force. The Chief Electoral Officer can bring amendments into effect sooner, after consulting the Election Advisory Committee and publishing notice in the BC Gazette. Elections BC anticipates publishing such notice for these changes in early November.

Anton then provided a review of the voting administration amendments included in Bill 20.

Advance voting days

Under s. 76 of the *Election Act* there will be two extra days of advance voting, the Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding the week before General Voting Day. This change will increase the number of days of advance voting from four to six. Depending on schedules for the venues holding advance voting, the locations might need to alternate or change depending on the needs of the electoral district.

Elections BC is redesigning the provincial Where to Vote cards to provide detailed information on advance poll locations and General Voting Day locations.

Discussion/Questions

- Will moving the advance polls cause some confusion?
 - Some confusion may result but Elections BC staff will make their best efforts to communicate any changes to the public.
- Are mobile polls available as they are federally?
 - Mobile polls are provided and voters can also vote at any time after the writs are issued until General Voting Day at the DEO office.

Vouching

All individuals who vouch for the identity of another voter must first show ID, as required under s. 41.1 of the *Election Act*. The voucher then has to make and sign a solemn declaration to vouch for another individual's identity. Friends may only vouch for one person but family members may vouch for any number of immediate family members.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

General Voting Day real-time lists

S. 96 of the *Election Act* allows Elections BC to provide “bingo” sheets five times per day, at specific times, during General Voting Day to candidate representatives (scrutineers). Candidate representatives can also take a photo of the form to email to their respective parties.

Discussion/Questions

- Can any party access the information or does it have to be a candidate representative?
 - This information is only available to candidate representatives at the voting station. They can provide the information to the candidate they are representing by taking a photo and sending it or taking a hard copy of the sheet.

DEO provision of voter information

District Electoral Officers (DEOs) will have encrypted laptops to capture turnout information during advance voting. Elections BC will provide the voter turnout information to the candidates in an electoral district after each day of advanced voting, as required under s. 97 of the *Election Act*.

Discussion/Questions

- How will the information be provided?
 - Elections BC will provide the turnout information electronically to the candidate.

“Voted information”

Section 51 of the *Election Act* now requires the CEO to provide registered parties, candidates, and former candidates, upon request, a list of voters that indicates which voters on the list voted in the last election.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

Privacy and restrictions on use of Information

Section 275 of the *Election Act* establishes that the voters list and other personal information is subject to privacy provisions, including a prohibition on use for commercial purposes. This section requires that a registered political party, candidate or other individual who wishes to obtain a copy of the voters list or other records containing personal information, file an acceptable privacy policy with the Chief Electoral Officer prior to receiving the record.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

Closed period of general registration

Under s. 37 of the *Election Act*, general registration for voting closes the day after Writ Day. Elections BC will finalize the voters list as of that day and that list will be the one used for the election. Voters are still able to register or update their voter registration when they go to vote.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

Nomination period

Section 56 was amended and now requires nomination documents for a scheduled general election to be submitted by 1 p.m. on the seventh day after the election is called. For by-elections and unscheduled general elections, the nomination documents must be filed between 9 a.m. on the third day after the election is called and before 1 p.m. on the 7th day.

Discussion/Questions

- Can you write the candidate's name in for voting in advance polls such as in the federal election?
 - If voting at a DEO office or through a mail-in ballot, or out-of-district, voters can write either the candidate's name or the party name.

Nola Western then presented the following changes to the campaign financing rules resulting from the amendments to the *Election Act*.

Repeal of 60 day pre-campaign period

The 60 day pre-campaign period has been repealed so election expense limits now only apply during the campaign period. There are no longer expense limits for goods or services used prior to the campaign period but anything used in relation to the campaign, regardless of when it is used, must still be disclosed.

The Consumer Price Index adjustments for the expenses limits will be established just prior to the next general election. The adjusted amounts will be published on the Elections BC website and in the BC Gazette, and written notice will be given to all registered political parties and candidates.

Discussion/Questions

- Is there a limit on the number of days in a campaign period?

- A campaign period is 29 days total and commences on the day the election is called.

Fundraising communications

Section 203 was amended to add communications with a primary purpose of raising funds to the list of election expenses that are not subject to the spending limits.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

Leadership contestant financing reports

Contestants for the leadership of a registered political party will no longer have to file a contestant financing report if they are acclaimed and incur no financial transactions in relation to the leadership contest.

Discussion/Questions

- No discussion or questions

Advertising on General Voting Day

S. 233(3) of the *Election Act* provides some exceptions to the ban on election advertising on General Voting Day. An amendment to that section now allows messages for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote, to be posted on the internet on General Voting Day. These messages may not suggest who to vote for, or against.

Question

- How is this worded in the act?
 - Section 233(3)(d) describes the permissible message as “a message that was transmitted to the public on the internet for the sole purpose of encouraging voters to vote in the election”.
- Will it be difficult to monitor internet messaging on General Voting Day?
 - Elections BC has successfully monitored activities on General Voting Day in the past and will continue to perform this task in the future.

3. Voter Registration Update

Anton Boegman provided members with an update on voter registration procedures and practices that were revised following the passage of the amendments to the *Election Act*.

Privacy policy requirement

Elections BC drafted a template based on consultation with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and privacy best practices. The privacy policy requirements and a template will be published on Elections BC's website once finalized. Either the template or a privacy policy with the required components will have to be submitted to, and accepted by, Elections BC to receive records that contain personal information, including the voters list.

The elements required in a privacy policy are:

Scope – sets out who the policy does and does not apply to and what personal information it protects

Restrictions on use – identifies who can use the information that is received but limits that use to the purposes of the *Election Act*

Security – lays out reasonable security arrangements to address standard risk and how the party would respond to risk

Disposition of personal information – sets out how to securely deal with information once it is no longer needed

Tracking of distribution – reasonable methods for tracking distribution of information and ensuring confirmation that anyone given the materials will abide by the policy

Privacy breach – sets out what the party considers a breach and what actions need to be taken in case of a breach

Compliance audit – there must be an acknowledgement that Elections BC has the right to audit compliance with the policy

Duration/termination – sets out the effective dates of the policy

Declaration/signature block – party representative must have name and contact information included and sign that the party is agreeing to the policy

Discussion/Questions

- Will Elections BC penalize breaches?
 - Breaches must be reported to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and Elections BC. Regulations of the CEO and the *Election Act* set out what will occur in case of contravention to this requirement.
- Will EBC be publishing breaches?
 - Elections BC is still working through development of response to breaches.

- Will principal officers sign the privacy policy or every member?
 - Principal officers will sign on behalf of their party.

Process to receive voters list

Anton reviewed the process, developed in response to the *Election Act* amendments, for parties to receive a copy of the voters list. The new process is very similar to the prior process for receiving the information but with two key changes:

- Parties must indicate if they want a list with or without information on whether a voter voted in the last election.
- Elections BC must receive and approve, or have on file, the party's privacy policy prior to releasing any voters list information.

Discussion/Questions

- When will these changes be implemented?
 - Elections BC intends to have these changes in place for the semi-annual distribution of the voters list to political parties at the end of November.
- A member asked for clarification on the list and what defines a political party.
 - A political party is an organization that runs candidates in an election. Only registered political parties are entitled to copies of the voters list. A party can sit out one election but must run two candidates in the next election or be deregistered. Not all registered parties request voter list information.
- Will the privacy information impact the list of donors?
 - The information available publicly on the EBC website will not be subject to the privacy policy but personal information provided by EBC that is not on the website will be subject to the policy.

4. Regulations Consultation

The Chief Electoral Officer proposes two Regulations, in addition to the amendments to the *Election Act*, as permitted under legislation. Under s. 16(2)(e) of the Act, the Chief Electoral Officer must consult with the Election Advisory Committee before putting any Regulation into effect, except during the election period of a general election. Anton Boegman led the consultation and discussion on both Regulations.

Voter Registration Regulation

The first proposed Regulation is a Voter Registration Regulation that will add BCID information and the last six digits of a person's provincial personal health number as a permissible piece of shared information between a voter and Elections BC.

This information is in addition to the two other pieces of shared information that Elections BC can collect, the BC driver's licence number and last six digits of an individual's social insurance number. This Regulation would provide Elections BC staff and the individual registering online or over the phone more ways to confirm identity.

Discussion/Questions

- A member stated that in the next few years a BC services card will have a picture.
 - The BC services card or a BC driver's licence would serve as photo ID for registering in person or voting.
- Can Elections BC cross-check the BCID, personal health number, social insurance number, or BC driver's licence number to confirm?
 - Elections BC under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) can check BC driver's licence numbers and would be able to check BC ID numbers. EBC cannot check the personal health numbers or social insurance numbers for validity.
- Could Elections BC obtain further identifying information from the BCID, personal health number, social insurance number, or BC driver's licence when it is provided, such as gender?
 - Elections BC can ask for this information but the individual is not required to provide it. However, this information can help to distinguish between members of the same household.
- Can online or telephone registration occur at the same time as other registration?
 - Online or telephone registration can occur at any time during the general registration period by contacting Elections BC on the phone or through the EBC website. When the general registration period ends on the day after an election is called (known as Day 1), only registration in conjunction with voting is available.
- Can you register at the time of voting?
 - Yes as long as you have the correct identification.

Electoral Purposes for Access and Use of Information Regulation

The second proposed Regulation provides clarity on electoral purposes under the *Election Act*. The definition of electoral purposes falls under three categories, provincial purposes, municipal purposes, and federal purposes.

Provincial purposes includes administration of the *Recall and Initiative Act* and *Referendum Act*, participation in a recall petition by a proponent or MLA, and communications with voters, soliciting campaign support and political contributions, recruiting party members by provincial political parties, constituency associations, candidates and MLAs.

Municipal purposes includes local governments' administration of municipal electoral events under applicable local election legislation.

Federal purposes includes administration of the *Canada Elections Act* and the federal *Referendum Act* by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.

Discussion/Questions

- What does this Regulation mean for parties who have an affiliation with a federal party?
 - Elections BC would expect that provincial political parties would not share this information with their federal counterparts as it would be protected under the previously discussed privacy policy.
- Will the privacy policy allow the parties to use the information for these purposes?
 - The privacy policy sets out how the party is to store the information and who has access to the information to use it for electoral purposes.

5. Electoral Boundaries Commission Update

The Chief Electoral Officer provided an update on the activities of the Electoral Boundaries Commission over the past year.

After the Preliminary Report was tabled in the Legislature on March 26, 2015, a second round of public hearings was held. The Commission's Final Report was tabled in the Legislature on September 24, 2015. The Commission's work is now complete and the Members of the Legislative Assembly will decide whether to adopt the proposals.

The proposals include creating two new electoral districts, one in Surrey and one in Richmond/New Westminster. This would increase the number of electoral districts in British Columbia from 85 to 87. Under the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act*, the Commission could not recommend reducing the number of districts in the Cariboo – Thompson Region, the Columbia – Kootenay Region, or the North Region. These regions are the only areas in the province with electoral districts below the +/- 25% permissible deviation from the average population, a standard set out in the Act.

Based upon the benefits realized by the Commission by Elections BC providing the administrative support to this Commission, the Commission recommended that Elections BC provide the administrative support for future commissions. The Commission also identified growing population inequality among electoral districts as a matter the Legislative Assembly may wish to consider.

Discussion/Questions

- What is the provincial average population for an electoral district?
 - 53 119 is the average, based on the census estimates from 2014.

-
- When can the parties expect to receive the street indexes, maps, etc.?
 - Once the Legislative Assembly passes a new *Electoral Districts Act*, Elections BC will produce the materials. (The member requested that the information be provided as soon as possible after acceptance.)
 - When will the boundaries be passed?
 - Motion 26 to approve the recommendations of the Electoral Boundaries Commission was brought forward in the Legislature on October 22, 2015 which suggests that a decision could come during the fall session.

6. Electoral Finance Update

Nola Western provided an update on provincial electoral finance and local electoral campaign financing.

Local elections campaign financing

A new workgroup was created at Elections BC to administer the requirements under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Following the 2014 General Local Elections, 3,622 disclosure statements were filed. For comparison, about 800 are filed provincially after a provincial general election.

The core group of staff was supplemented by a team of temporary staff, who have since departed Elections BC. The core group are now reviewing the few remaining files and administering campaign financing for local by-elections and non-election assent voting.

The *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 2014 General Local Elections* was tabled in September and is available on the Elections BC website. The report includes information on how the new team was set up, statistics, and contains 13 recommendations for changes to the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*.

Bill 43 – 2015, the *Local Elections Campaign Financing (Expense Limits) Amendment Act* was introduced in the Legislature on October 22, 2015. Government has indicated that it does not expect the Bill to pass but will be used as a basis for further public consultation on spending limits for local elections.

The next local general elections will be in October 2018.

Discussion/Questions

- Will the local elections candidates and elector organizations want something like the Election Advisory Committee?

There is a Technical Advisory Committee established under the *Local Election Campaign Financing Act* made up of representatives involved in local elections and local elections campaign financing.

Provincial electoral finance

The redistribution of the boundaries will occur following the Legislative Assembly's determination on the proposals of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. This decision will have an impact on registered constituency associations.

The old districts will be abolished and new districts established. Constituency associations registered under the old districts will have to deregister, either voluntarily or mandatorily, and new constituency associations can register under the new electoral districts. Once the *Electoral Districts Act* is passed, Elections BC will contact parties with constituency associations to review the process.

Discussion/Questions

- Will deregistering the constituency association require filing a deregistration report?
 - Yes a deregistration report will have to be filed with Elections BC.

7. Closing Comments and General Discussion

The Chief Electoral Officer thanked the members for attending and invited members to share any further comments or questions.

Discussion/Questions

- A member commented on the cost benefit of administering the Commission through EBC.
- A member commented on Elections BC's need to ensure that those voting are actually registered voters
 - Electoral fraud is something that Elections BC takes seriously. A generic allegation is very difficult to follow up, as opposed to a specific complaint, which is something that Elections BC staff can follow up on and investigate. Elections BC investigates all instances of apparent multiple voting.
- A member described mobile polls federally in nursing homes and asked how Elections BC ensures that elderly or disabled people who are mentally unaware have voted?
 - Mobile teams from Elections BC go into care facilities and make the offer to residents and patients. If there is no acceptance of the service, they move on to the next individual. Elections BC staff are trained in how to discreetly, and in a non-partisan manner, record the vote of the person if the individual needs assistance marking their ballot.

Attendees may forward any questions regarding this meeting to Stephany Laverty, Executive Coordinator by phone at 250-952-6226 or by email at Stephany.laverty@elections.bc.ca

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The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Glossary

Assent voting

Voting on a bylaw or other matter for which a local government is required or authorized to obtain the assent of the electors.

By-election

A local or provincial election other than one conducted as part of a general election.

Electoral district

The province is divided into electoral districts (constituencies or ridings), each returning one Member to the Legislative Assembly.

Enumeration

The registration or confirmation of registration of voters by residence-to-residence visitation or by another method directed or authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer.

General local elections

Elections for Advisory Council Members, Board of Education Trustees, Councillors, Electoral Area Directors, Islands Trust Local Trust Area Trustees, Local Community Commissioners, Mayors, Park Board Commissioners, Rural Water Councillors and Water Councillors held in the year 2014 and every fourth year after that.

Initiative petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to have a proposed law introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

Initiative vote

If the Select Standing Committee on Legislative Initiatives refers a successful initiative petition and draft Bill to the Chief Electoral Officer, the Chief Electoral Officer must hold an initiative vote under the *Recall and Initiative Act*.

Plebiscite

A plebiscite is a vote on a matter of public concern, conducted under the *Election Act*, and may be binding on government. A plebiscite is held when the Lieutenant Governor in Council (cabinet) directs the Chief Electoral Officer to determine the opinion of voters on a matter of public concern. The government establishes the threshold for success and outcomes of a successful plebiscite.

Provincial general election

Elections called on the same date for all electoral districts in the province to elect all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Provincial list of voters

The provincial list of voters is prepared and maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer and contains the names and residential addresses of registered voters in each electoral district.

Recall petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to remove a Member of the Legislative Assembly from office between elections.

Redistribution

A process to change electoral boundaries to account for population changes and other concerns regarding fair and effective representation.

Referendum

If the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers that an expression of public opinion is desirable on any matter of public interest or concern, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by Regulation, order that a referendum be conducted under the *Referendum Act*. A referendum is binding on the government that initiated it.

Voting area

An electoral district is divided into voting areas for the purpose of assigning voters to voting places.

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