



Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

*Following the
Port Moody–Coquitlam
By-Election*





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The Chief Electoral Officer • Le directeur général des élections

June 8, 1998

The Honourable Gilbert Parent
Speaker of the House of Commons
Centre Block, House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to submit my report, which covers the administration of my Office since the publication of my last report, and, more specifically, the administration of the Port Moody–Coquitlam by-election held on March 30, 1998. My report is submitted in accordance with subsection 195(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, R.S.C., c. E-2, within sixty days after the return to the writ of by-election.

Preliminary information has been included on the results of the by-election, together with an account of the events. The official voting results will be published at the end of the year, in accordance with paragraph 193(b) of the Act.

Yours truly,

Jean-Pierre Kingsley

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Foreword

This report to the Speaker of the House of Commons, following the March 30, 1998 by-election in the electoral district of Port Moody–Coquitlam, in British Columbia, provides details of that by-election, and of Elections Canada’s activities since the statutory report on the June 2, 1997 general election. It also enables me to provide readers with a glimpse of our future challenges.

As I indicated in my last report, the June 1997 election was truly a departure for Canadians, not least because it featured, in close succession, the last national enumeration for a federal election and the establishment and first use of the National Register of Electors. Among other changes, it marked the inauguration of the 36-day election calendar.

We at Elections Canada have spent considerable time over the past year assessing what worked well in that election and where improvements could be made. The details of this process are found in the pages of this report. I am particularly pleased with the way Elections Canada is using new developments in technology to automate and streamline practices and processes that help to maintain a constant state of election readiness.

We continue to see progress in the maintenance of the National Register of Electors. Through agreements reached with Revenue Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, as well as with the provinces and territories, we have access to up-to-date and accurate data on electors as they move, reach voting age, become Canadian citizens, or die. The National Register of Electors is increasingly becoming a resource, not only for federal elections, but also for provincial and municipal elections. We have already entered into several partnership agreements to share data for this purpose, and I continue to place a high priority on our work with other levels of government to further develop these partnerships, given the very significant advantages such partnerships can bring to Canadian electors.

Looking to the future, Elections Canada is exploring ways to make it easier for all Canadians to cast their ballots. New developments in technology, in particular the World Wide Web, have enabled us to provide a wide range of information to electors. We are now considering whether and how technology can be applied to the act of casting a ballot. We recently commissioned a study to examine what types of technology exist, and how these can be adapted for federal elections, as well as what other countries are doing to bring their voting systems into the electronic age.

Our responsibility is to understand the full range of options, with all the attendant advantages and disadvantages each would bring, so that we can provide the best possible advice to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which is responsible for reviewing and reporting on all matters relating to the election of members of Parliament. Throughout, our emphasis has to be on protecting the main tenets of the democratic system while attempting to ensure increased accessibility to the process for all Canadians.

We recognize that, as with the National Register of Electors when it was first considered, the introduction of electronic voting could raise a number of concerns for many Canadians, particularly related to privacy and security. We will recommend that Parliament proceed with such a radical change to the way Canadians cast their votes only after we have paid full attention to these concerns and with due regard to all of the other principles inherent in our current process. As part of our study of electronic voting, we worked with the Public Policy Forum to hold round-table discussions with key stakeholders, in part to identify these concerns. A common thread throughout, and one to which we will attach great importance, was the very clear desire, on the part of the electorate, to see changes in voting methods introduced as a supplement

to, rather than a replacement of, traditional methods.

Considering the implications of the possible introduction of a system of electronic voting will form part of Elections Canada's second strategic planning exercise. Our first strategic plan was developed and published in 1994. As we come to the end of its intended life span, I am pleased to note that we have achieved what we set out to accomplish. The plan was absolutely essential to our being able to plot the course that would best enable us to carry out our statutory obligations, and provided us with a sense of direction for the changes that were required.

Among the challenges we have to consider in developing our second strategic plan is maximizing

the opportunities for sharing the National Register of Electors, so that Canadian electors can enjoy the advantages of sharing the system, while respecting the confidentiality of Register information and restricting its use to electoral purposes only. Further, we must ensure that returning officers have the knowledge and training they need to operate in an increasingly automated environment. Above all, we must maintain a sense of direction so that we can determine and shape the changes that we will be faced with, rather than simply reacting to them.

As we prepare to enter the new millennium, I remain confident that Canada's electoral system is one of the finest in the world, and that it continues to protect and extend our democratic heritage.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley

From there to here: Elections Canada, June 2, 1997 – March 30, 1998

Closing the books on the 36th general election

Evaluating the election

One of the most important activities following a general election is the process of examining how the election was conducted, in order to improve the administration of future electoral events. Such a process was particularly important following the 36th general election, as it was the first ever national electoral event to use a preliminary list of electors generated from the National Register of Electors and to be conducted in a 36-day period.

As happens after every general election, a representative group of returning officers, assistant returning officers, automation co-ordinators, and others involved in the electoral process were brought together by Elections Canada to identify issues and problems faced during the election and to identify possible solutions and strategies for future electoral events. As well, more than 100 Elections Canada staff participated in an internal post-mortem process, the most exhaustive Elections Canada has undertaken following a general election.

The post-mortem process did reveal shortcomings, most of them related to the need to have systems operational within a very short time frame, and it resulted in several suggestions for improvements. They will be analyzed over the coming months, coincident with Elections Canada's second strategic planning exercise. Together, they will lay the groundwork for improvements to Elections Canada's procedures and processes before the next major electoral event.

Review of candidates' and political parties' returns and reimbursements

Elections Canada has also audited the candidates' financial returns for the 1672 candidates who ran for

office in the general election to ensure compliance with the *Canada Elections Act* and to determine the amount of reimbursement owed to those who qualify. Candidates are required to file election expenses returns within four months of election day. Reimbursements of election expenses for registered political parties that qualified were issued. Registered political parties are required to fill their election expenses returns within six months of election day.

Publishing election reports

Over the coming months, Elections Canada will publish the campaign contributions and expenses of registered political parties and candidates. It has already published *Official Voting Results* and *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 36th General Election*. Reflecting the transition from print to electronic communication where feasible, Elections Canada for the first time has published the official voting results on CD-ROM as well as in print form and on diskette.

Complaints of alleged offences under the Act

A total of 290 complaints related to the 36th general election alleging an offence to the *Canada Elections Act* have been brought to the attention of the Commissioner of Canada Elections, of which 223 were closed by March 30, 1998. These data do not take into account all the complaints that may be related to election financing. Written complaints must be submitted within six months of the date of the alleged offence; where the evidence is sufficient, and an intervention would be in the public interest, prosecution must commence within 18 months from the date the offence was allegedly committed.

Elector registration

The 1997 general election marked the first use of the National Register of Electors. Since that time,

Elections Canada has been updating each of the 301 databases that make up the Register (one for each electoral district).

On October 15, 1997, each member of Parliament was sent a list of electors, generated from the National Register of Electors, for his or her electoral district. Each registered political party that presented a candidate in that electoral district could also request a copy of the list. This distribution will occur each year, as required by the *Canada Elections Act*, and will include all revisions to the Register since the previous October.

The National Register of Electors

The Register is maintained on a regular basis, so that a preliminary list of electors can be generated whenever an electoral event is called. Elections Canada has concluded agreements to obtain data for the ongoing maintenance of the Register from the Permanent List of Electors in Quebec, and from the majority of provincial and territorial registrars of motor vehicles and registrars of vital statistics. Negotiations are ongoing with motor vehicle registries in Manitoba and the Yukon and with Alberta Registries for the provision of both motor vehicle and vital statistics information. Government officials have confirmed their intention to conclude these agreements in late spring 1998. As well, an agreement has been concluded with the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in British Columbia to obtain data from its permanent list of electors.

Similar agreements have been reached with the two federal data suppliers (Revenue Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada). As part of the agreement with Revenue Canada, income tax returns now include a consent box to allow taxfilers to authorize Revenue Canada to forward their names, addresses, and dates of birth to Elections Canada for updating their existing listing in the National Register of Electors. Because the National Register of Electors is still new to many Canadians, Elections Canada has established a temporary unit in its Enquiry Centre to deal with Register-related requests. The unit received 9 604 calls between January and April 1998 alone.

As well, Citizenship and Immigration Canada has modified the Application for Canadian Citizenship form to include a consent box to allow prospective citizens to indicate their authorization for Elections Canada to add their names to the Register once citizenship is granted.

While the Register is designed to be updated from existing administrative data, minimizing elector responsibility for keeping listings up-to-date, electors can also submit registrations, corrections, and opt-out requests. Elections Canada has received and processed approximately 1 000 such transactions since June 1997.

Partnerships and sharing agreements

The National Register of Electors constitutes a valuable resource not only for federal electoral events, but for elections in all jurisdictions. Since its inception, in April 1997, Elections Canada has received 57 requests for Register data from 48 jurisdictions at the provincial, territorial, and municipal levels. In addition, in the fall of 1997, the first partnership agreement was concluded with the City of Winnipeg to exchange electoral data in connection with the city's fall 1998 municipal election. By using data from the National Register of Electors, the City of Winnipeg will save approximately \$600 000 by eliminating its door-to-door enumeration. Another such agreement was concluded with the province of New Brunswick in March 1998, to provide elector data for use in its May 1998 municipal elections.

The Chief Electoral Officer continues to work with his provincial and territorial counterparts, through a federal-provincial working group, to encourage further data sharing.

Amendments to legislation

Now that the National Register of Electors has been established and is being regularly maintained, an enumeration is no longer necessary as part of each federal electoral event. As provided for in subsection 94(3) of *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act, the Parliament of Canada Act and the Referendum Act* (S.C. 1996, c. 35), the sections of the *Canada Elections*

Act regarding enumeration (sections 63–71 and 71.001–71.003) were therefore repealed as of December 1, 1997. On December 19, 1997, the Chief Electoral Officer adapted these amendments for the purpose of referendums.

Public outreach

During and between electoral events, Elections Canada runs programs to better inform Canadians about the electoral process and their democratic rights.

In keeping with the increasingly electronic world in which we live, Elections Canada's Web site continues to develop as a resource for information, not only about specific electoral events, but about elections and democracy in Canada. Elections Canada reports are made available on the Web site, which is updated regularly. E-mail from the Web site also provides a convenient means of communication between electors and Elections Canada. In addition, the agency operates a toll-free telephone enquiry line for the public, which is available in Canada, the United States and, since early 1998, Mexico (1 800 INFO-VOTE).

Reaching out to students

Elections Canada is also reaching out to future electors, with the recent launch of "Choosing Our Mascot." This election simulation kit is designed to teach children in kindergarten to Grade 4 how elections work by having them choose a classroom mascot from four animal candidates, all native to the Northwest Territories. The kit was launched at Nakasuk School in Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, on November 13, 1997, where more than 300 students elected Neevee the Caribou as their mascot. The kit, which was developed in partnership with Elections Northwest Territories, is available to all schools across Canada.

Older students will enjoy *Exploring Canada's Electoral System*, an interactive CD-ROM developed by Elections Canada. This dynamic multi-media program allows students aged 13–24 to explore different aspects of the electoral system, including a polling station, a campaign hall, and the House of Commons. It also includes a game which sends players to ten federal

electoral districts to answer questions based on what they have learned.

The vote in Canadian history

Canadians of all ages will be interested in *A History of the Vote in Canada*, a new book published by Elections Canada recounting how the right to vote has evolved over the past 250 years. The book was launched by the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, Governor General of Canada, on December 8, 1997. *A History of the Vote in Canada* is both an educational resource and a lasting reminder for Canadians of the evolution and significance of the right to vote.

Maintaining election readiness

As part of its mandate, Elections Canada is required to maintain a state of readiness for an electoral event at all times. Most of its activities between electoral events are geared toward this requirement.

Returning officers

An important part of maintaining election readiness is having returning officers in place in each of the country's 301 electoral districts. Since the June 1997 general election, seven returning officers have resigned, while another has died. Four new returning officers have been appointed, and another four positions are in the process of being filled. Plans are under way to provide training to the newly appointed returning officers, so that they are able to assume their duties at a moment's notice.

Elector registration system

Elections Canada is also in the process of redeveloping the field application it has been using to produce lists of electors (ECAPLE – Elections Canada Automated Production of the Lists of Electors). The system is now used primarily to revise the preliminary list of electors which is produced from the National Register of Electors. The redesign has been necessitated by the arrival of the Register, the elimination of enumeration, and the necessity to integrate the elector registration system more closely with other field activities and systems, such as the Election Results

System, the Event Management System, and the processes related to the Special Voting Rules.

Electoral maps

The electoral maps used during the last general election were lacking information. Accurate, up-to-date, and detailed maps are important tools for the effective administration of an electoral event. As part of Elections Canada's continuing effort to increase the accuracy and quality of its mapping products, it has initiated, together with Statistics Canada, a joint project to build a national geocartographic database which will permit both agencies to revise and produce maps to meet the needs of electoral and census events. It will convert the agencies' existing geography databases into a format for ongoing maintenance and use. To maintain the currency of the National Geocartographic Database, Elections Canada and Statistics Canada will seek data from external sources on an ongoing basis. By pursuing this initiative jointly, Elections Canada and Statistics Canada are reducing their developmental costs; improving the currency and accuracy of the database; sharing, rather than competing for, scarce technical and operational resources; and taking the necessary steps towards potential longer-term co-operation for ongoing maintenance of the geocartographic database.

Registration of political parties

As part of maintaining a state of election readiness, Elections Canada ensures that the registration status of political parties is kept up-to-date. Following the June 1997 general election, there were 10 registered political parties in Canada. The only party to apply for registered status since that election was the Communist Party of Canada, which was accepted for registration on October 17, 1997.

Information technology

The efficient administration of elections has become increasingly dependent upon information technology over the past several years. For activities ranging from preparing the preliminary list of electors to posting election results on the Web, to reporting on and

checking candidate expenses, computers have become an integral part of every step.

Elections Canada is in the process of ensuring that all of its computer systems will be ready for the Year 2000, so that it can respond to an electoral event before, during and after 2000, without disruption. Although Elections Canada is well prepared, there is still a great deal of work to be done to ensure an efficient transition. Over the past several months, Elections Canada staff have been reviewing key areas; following their report, work will begin on converting all systems diagnosed as having problems to a state of Year 2000 readiness.

Elections Canada will have successfully redeveloped the last of the four legacy systems residing on the VAX computer and deployed all four to the Oracle and Powerbuilder production environment by May 1998. These systems are the List of Candidates System (LOC), Control of Authorizations System (COA), Supplies Management System (SMS), and the Candidates' Returns Management System (CRMS).

As these systems were converted, a new function was added to enhance productivity. For instance, the LOC electronically exports candidate information to the Enquiries Unit System to answer public enquiries about candidates. It also electronically imports official election results from the Elections Results System, to better process candidates' expense reports after an electoral event. The official list of candidates is also produced electronically for submission to the Department of National Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Finally, the list is now put on the Internet, to allow the public another way to access information about candidates.

All these systems are Year 2000-ready, and will be available for use during future electoral events.

Electronic voting

To ensure it remains at the forefront of electoral management, Elections Canada is conducting a study of technology as it applies to the act of voting, to consider various approaches that may be considered for implementing new procedures at the federal level. The goal of such procedures would be to increase the accessibility of the electoral process by providing more alternatives for all electors.

As part of the study, Elections Canada will examine existing technologies to determine their suitability for adaptation to voting purposes. The study also reviewed trends in other countries, and assessed the challenges new ways of voting might bring. An essential part of the study was the conduct of round-table discussions with groups of key stakeholders, including parliamentarians, opinion-leaders, and representatives of various segments of the electorate, including people with disabilities and ethnocultural groups. Once completed, the study's findings will be shared with members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Northwest Territories elections

On November 10, 1997, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories completed an elections agreement. The agreement allows the Government of Canada to provide financial assistance to the Territories to fund the election of members to the Legislative Assembly. It also provides for a one-time payment to allow the Territories to prepare and administer the first elections in 1999 for members of the Legislative Assembly for Nunavut and remaining Northwest Territories. Until that agreement, the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada was also the Chief Electoral Officer of the Northwest Territories. This agreement also includes the administration of elections in the Nunavut Territory, which will be created from the eastern part of the existing Northwest Territories, in 1999.

International activities

Elections Canada maintains contact with similar organizations in jurisdictions around the world, to exchange information, and learn from each others' experience in electoral matters. As well, Elections Canada works with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to provide technical and professional assistance to other countries.

As part of these activities, a team of Canadians and other international advisors helped to plan and carry out municipal elections in Bosnia in September

1997. Three Canadians stayed on to help organize the national assembly elections in Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 1997; two remain on site today, providing support for the Provisional Election Commission, on which one serves as vice-president.

Other areas of international involvement for Elections Canada include an ongoing partnership with the Russian Central Electoral Commission, designed to strengthen the Commission's managerial and technical capacity to manage electoral events. The focus of activities is on improving the Commission's legislation pertaining to the participation of Russian citizens travelling or living abroad and to the registration of electors.

As well, Elections Canada continues work within its five-year bilateral technical co-operation agreement with Mexico's Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), which came into effect in June 1996. The purpose of the agreement is to identify and promote projects and programs in the fields of exchange, consultation, co-operation, and technical assistance at the bilateral and international levels, relating to the subject matter of electoral administration, so as to consolidate institutional links between IFE and Elections Canada and assist both in achieving their respective aims.

Elections Canada also provided two Canadian electoral experts to prepare and conduct a training workshop for the Independent Electoral Commission of Gambia. The objectives of the workshop were to enhance the national capacity to administer elections in Gambia, as well as to educate personnel of agencies whose functions are related to elections and to provide a forum within which to discuss solutions to problems that arise in election management.

In addition, as part of its role on the international scene, Elections Canada often welcomes delegations to its offices in Ottawa, to provide information and presentations about Canada's electoral system. Since June 1997, we have hosted 13 visits from 12 countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Mexico, Slovakia, Sweden, Togo, Russia and Yugoslavia.

The Port Moody–Coquitlam by-election

On October 1, 1997, Sharon Hayes, Reform Member of Parliament for Port Moody–Coquitlam, resigned her seat in the House of Commons. On February 22, 1998, the Governor in Council announced that the by-election to replace Ms. Hayes would be held on March 30, 1998.

As a result, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a writ to the returning officer for Port Moody–Coquitlam, directing her to hold a by-election. Table 1 provides an overview of the important milestones between the calling of the by-election and the return to the writ.

Table 1
Key dates for the by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam

Dates	Election Calendar Day	Event
October 1, 1997		Member of Parliament for Port Moody–Coquitlam, Sharon Hayes, resigns
February 22, 1998	Day 36	Issue of the writ; preparations made to open the office of the returning officer
February 22 to March 1	Days 36 to 29	Advertising blackout period for political parties
February 25	Day 33	Preliminary list of electors produced from the National Register of Electors
February 25	Day 33	Revision of list of electors begins
February 26	Day 32	Proclamation published – candidates may file nominations
March 2	Day 28	Targeted revision begins
March 4 to 6	Days 26-24	Mailing of notices of Confirmation of Registration to all registered electors
March 9	Day 21 (2 p.m.)	Close of nomination of candidates
March 19	Day 11	Revised list of electors distributed
March 20, 21 and 23	Days 10, 9 and 7	Advance polls
March 24	Day 6 (6 p.m.)	Revision and special ballot registration ends
March 27	Day 3	Official list of electors distributed
March 28 to 30	Days 2 to 0	Ban on opinion polls
March 29 to 30	Days 1 and 0	Advertising blackout period for political parties
March 30	Day 0	Election day
April 1		Official addition of the votes
April 8		Return to the writ

Communicating with electors

As in all electoral events, Elections Canada worked to create awareness among the general public in the electoral district, as well as among political parties, candidates, and the media, of the by-election and of the key dates in the election period.

Within days of the issue of the writ, each residence in the electoral district received a householder, or pamphlet, with the name and phone number for the office of the returning officer, information on the National Register of Electors, and details regarding how to have names added to, or corrected on, the list of electors. It also gave information on deadlines for the return of special ballot applications, key dates for advance polls, registering and voting on election day, and the residency requirements for voting in a by-election.

A few days later, registered electors received the notice of Confirmation of Registration. This card provided details of where and when electors could vote, including the many alternatives that Elections Canada provides for electors unable to get to their local polling station on election day. Both the householder and the notice of Confirmation of Registration stressed the importance of keeping the notice until election day.

All material required to inform the electorate was produced in both official languages. According to the 1996 census, some 10 825 people in Port Moody–Coquitlam (8.5 percent of the electoral district’s population) speak Chinese as their home language, making them the most significant minority language group to exist in the electoral district. Basic information was therefore also made available in Chinese through community associations to better enable members of the community to exercise their democratic right to cast a ballot.

A week before the by-election, Elections Canada ran advertisements in community newspapers, including Chinese-language newspapers, providing electors with election day information. The advertisement was developed based on the “Step Right Up/C’est sur mon chemin” campaign used in the last general election.

Elections Canada also worked closely with local media to help provide residents with necessary information. The agency provided media with an information kit containing news releases, the householder, an electoral district profile, and a calendar of key dates. In addition, the kit contained background information on a variety of topics, ranging from the electoral process and the role of Elections Canada, to Special Voting Rules (i.e., voting by special ballot), the National Register of Electors, and election expenses and contributions. Over the course of the 36-day campaign, Elections Canada issued 11 news releases highlighting key deadlines, election day reminders, and clarification of what the media could and could not report on the weekend preceding election day.

All of these materials, as well as information for residents of the Port Moody–Coquitlam electoral district, were available on the special by-election segment of Elections Canada’s Web site. The list of official candidates, a profile of the electoral district, and the address and telephone number of the office of the returning officer were also available on the Web site, along with information on voting by those temporarily absent from the electoral district. On election night, election results were posted on the Web site as they became available. As well, Elections Canada’s Enquiries Unit operated on extended hours throughout the campaign to ensure that electors could ask questions and receive information.

The list of electors

For the first time, data from the National Register of Electors were used to prepare the preliminary list of electors for a by-election. Prior to generation of the preliminary list, the portion of the Register applicable to the Port Moody–Coquitlam electoral district was updated to remove duplicate registrations and the records of deceased electors, to add new electors, and to modify existing elector information.

Residents of Port Moody–Coquitlam who were eligible to vote but whose names were not on the preliminary list of electors, and those whose name and/or address were incorrect, were advised to contact

the office of the returning officer to correct the error or to obtain a registration application form.

Those wishing to be added to the list of electors for the by-election were asked to provide their name, address, sex, signature, previous address, and date of birth. If this information could not be corroborated with information already in the National Register of Electors, electors were also asked to provide satisfactory proof of identity, with their name, address, and signature, before they could be added to the list of electors.

In addition, Elections Canada undertook a targeted revision to add the names of electors from new housing developments and in residential institutions to the preliminary list of electors. Six institutions, including nursing homes, were visited by revising agents, and 1652 kits were distributed in new developments.

Please see Figure 1 for the percentage of electors registered by each method of registration.

The period for revision of the preliminary list of electors lasted from February 25, three days after the issuance of the writ, until March 24, six days before election day. Changes to the list of electors during this 28-day period and the number of electors on the final list of electors, including those who registered at their polling stations on election day, are recorded in Table 2.

The candidates and by-election results

March 9 at 2 p.m., Pacific time, was the deadline for filing candidates' nominations; 5 p.m. was the deadline for withdrawal or for making corrections to information on the candidates' nomination papers. A total of eight candidates were registered for the by-election, six representing various political parties. There was one independent candidate, and one with no party affiliation. Once nominations were closed, the list of candidates was posted on Elections Canada's Web site as well as transmitted to Canadian diplomatic missions and consular posts and to Canadian Forces bases by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Department of National Defence respectively. The official list

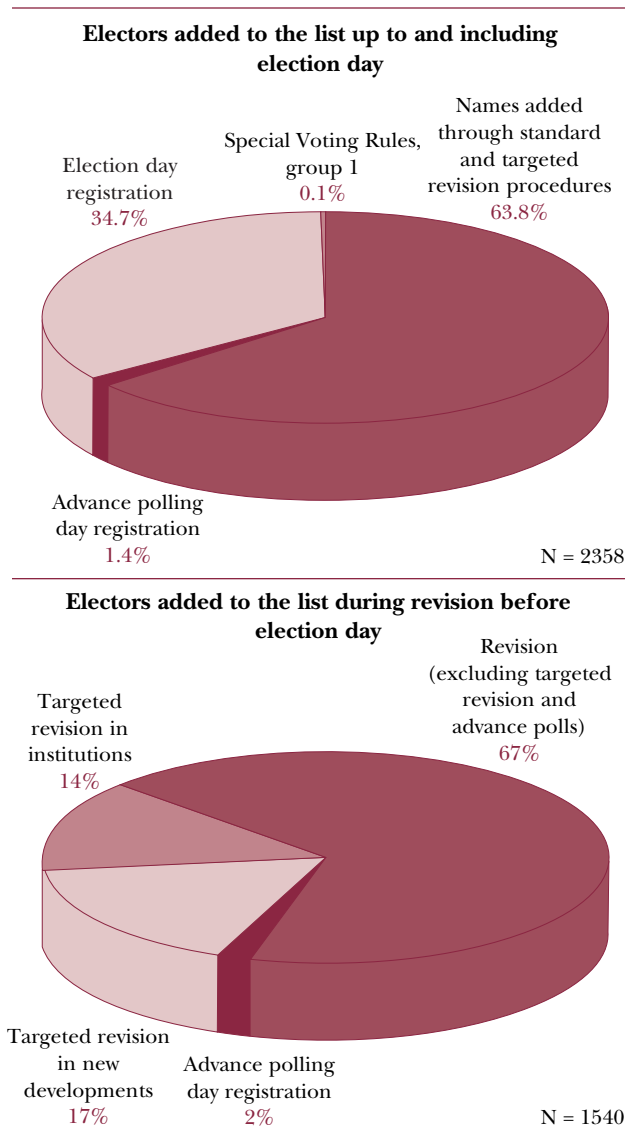
was also announced in a press release issued on March 10, 1998.

A total of 28 756 electors cast their vote in the Port Moody–Coquitlam by-election. The majority cast their votes on election day, March 30, 1998, at one of the 222 polling stations located throughout the electoral district (see Table 3). Polling stations were open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Pacific time.

For those unable to vote on election day, advance polls were held on March 20, 21 and 23, 1998.

Electors who were travelling or temporarily residing outside Canada were able to vote by special

Figure 1
Statistics on methods of registration,
March 1998 by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam¹



¹ These charts pertain to the statistics on added electors only. Please see Table 2 for statistics on the net revision results.

mail-in ballot under the Special Voting Rules. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade ensured that Canadians abroad were notified of their opportunity to cast a vote in the by-election through diplomatic missions and consular posts, while the Department of National Defence alerted Canadian Forces bases located both in and outside Canada of the same opportunity.

As well, persons in institutions, including hospitals and correctional facilities, were permitted to vote in the by-election under the Special Voting Rules. Registration and voting in acute care hospitals was held on March 23 and 24. To facilitate the special voting in correctional facilities, information kits were supplied to the John Howard and Elizabeth Fry societies.

Voter turnout was 36 percent, compared to 67 percent for the electoral district in the June 1997

general election. Statistics regarding the number of ballots cast by each of the different means can be found in Table 4.

On election night, the returning officer's Election Results System was linked to Elections Canada's central computer; as votes were counted, they were transmitted to the Ottawa server for posting on the Elections Canada by-election Web site. Liberal candidate Lou Sekora received the most votes, and was declared to be the elected Member of Parliament for Port Moody–Coquitlam (see Table 5).

Of the eight candidates, those receiving more than 15 percent of valid votes cast (three in total) will be eligible for a partial reimbursement of their election expenses as well as half of their nomination deposit. All candidates are eligible to receive the second half of the nomination deposit if they submit their returns on time.

Table 2

Statistics on the list of electors, March 1998 by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam

Registration activities Day 36 to Day 6

Electors on the preliminary list ¹	Revision statistics			Net revision result ²	Electors on the official list	Growth with respect to the preliminary list
	Additions	Corrections	Deletions			
79 723	1 540	317	1 261	279	80 002	0.35%

Registration activities Day 0

Additions	Corrections	Deletions	Post-election day net result ³	Electors on the final list	Growth with respect to the preliminary list
818	282	234	584		
Cumulative statistics (revision)				80 586	1.08%
2 358	599	1 495	863		

¹ The preliminary list was prepared at the beginning of the electoral period with data extracted from the National Register of Electors. It includes the 124 electors registered under the Special Voting Rules (SVR), group 1 (Canadians residing outside Canada, members of the Canadian Forces and incarcerated electors).

² The net revision result is arrived at by subtracting the total number of deleted electors from the total number of added electors. This figure includes the names (3) added to SVR group 1 lists of electors (Canadians residing outside Canada and incarcerated electors).

³ Includes election day registrants, minus the number of electors deleted after election day.

Table 3**Statistics on polling sites, March 1998 by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam**

Location of polling sites			Types of polling stations			
Building types	Number of sites	Percentage	Ordinary	Mobile	Advance	Total
Community Centre	3	6%	219	3	12	234
Educational	28	58%				
Retirement Home	5	10%				
Church Hall	5	10%				
Hospital	4	8%				
Recreation Centre	1	2%				
Commercial Site	1	2%				
Municipal or Township Hall	1	2%				
Total	48	100%				

Polling station accessibility		
Total number of polling stations	Accessible polling stations	Percentage of accessible polling stations
234	233	99.6%

Table 4**Preliminary statistics on the number of ballots cast and voter turnout, March 1998 by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam**

Number of electors on final list	Ordinary polls	Advance polls	Special Voting Rules	Total votes cast	Rejected ballots	Total valid votes	Voter turnout ¹
80 586	27 201	1 405	150	28 756	84	28 672	35.7%

¹Voter turnout is the ratio (expressed as a percentage) of the total number of electors who voted to the number of electors on the final list established after election day.

Table 5**Preliminary statistics on valid votes cast, March 1998 by-election in Port Moody–Coquitlam**

Candidate	Political affiliation	Valid votes obtained	Percentage
Arlow, Will	Canadian Action Party	156	0.5%
Cunningham, Jim ¹	Reform Party of Canada	10 195	35.6%
Gluska, Joe	Progressive Conservative Party of Canada	1 381	4.8%
Keryluk, John ¹	New Democratic Party	4 869	17.0%
Nantel, François	Independent	85	0.3%
Norman, Dave	The Green Party of Canada	667	2.3%
Sekora, Lou ¹	Liberal Party of Canada	11 284	39.4%
Verrier, True Grit	No Affiliation	35	0.1%
Total		28 672	100.0%

¹These candidates are entitled to a refund since they obtained at least 15 percent of the valid votes.

Conclusion

The Commissioner's Office received only one complaint of an alleged offence to the *Canada Elections Act*, which is still under review.

As Elections Canada moves into its second strategic planning exercise, we remain committed to ensuring that Canadians continue to benefit from the exercise of their democratic rights in the most informed and accessible manner possible.

This report fulfills the statutory obligation of the Chief Electoral Officer to report on the Port Moody–Coquitlam by-election.