
Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada
on the 39th General Election of January 23, 2006

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Foreword

What follows is a report on an interesting period of my tenure as Chief Electoral Officer. The time frame it covers – from the wrap-up for the 38th general election of June 28, 2004, through part of the wrap-up for the 39th general election of January 23, 2006 – was marked by unique challenges and distinct opportunities. The recent federal election was the most successful one for Elections Canada in the past 15 years, in terms of smooth delivery and an increase in voter participation. I wish to express my thanks to the tens of thousands of election officers and staff who took up the challenge once again and ensured the best service possible to Canadians in the exercise of their fundamental democratic right.

The June 2004 election had, for the first time in 25 years, placed a minority government in the House of Commons. Most of Elections Canada's resources, over the ensuing months, focused on immediately building up and maintaining constant readiness for the next election call, possible at any time. When the writs were issued, in November 2005, they commenced one of the longest campaigns in recent history – stretching over 55 days instead of the more usual 36 – as well as the first winter election in a quarter-century. In addition to planning around the December holiday season and potentially adverse weather that could interfere with voting, we had to accommodate the needs of a larger than usual number of “snowbirds” – the Canadians who spend their winters in warmer climates.

At the same time, the late January date for election day presented several opportunities. Young people studying at the country's colleges and universities were easier to reach than during the June election of 2004, and early statistics show that youth may have participated in the 39th general election in higher numbers. Meanwhile, the longer campaign, though demanding for Elections Canada staff, gave us extra flexibility for setting up returning offices, allocating resources and putting essential elements of the electoral machinery in place earlier than usual.

Before the election, Elections Canada was also able to conclude landmark agreements with various Aboriginal organizations, to generate stronger interest and participation in the election among First Nations, Métis and Inuit electors.

A number of milestones that have occurred in the year and a half since our last statutory report bear mention here as well.

At my invitation and in accordance with her legal mandate, Auditor General Sheila Fraser conducted a performance audit of our agency in 2005. I am pleased to report that Elections Canada received a clean bill of health – the Auditor General concluded that “through good planning and regular updating of its geographic and voter information databases, Elections Canada stays prepared for an election that can be called at any time.” We have already sent a response to the Auditor General's Office outlining our plans to implement the five recommendations she made, such as the need to enhance further our reporting to Parliament and our human resources planning practices. Our plans, over the

next few years, include continuing advances in a number of areas in which we are already seen globally as leaders, including information technology, voter registration, political financing and enforcement, civic education, and outreach.

On September 29, 2005, I submitted a report to the Speaker for tabling in Parliament. *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms* outlined recommendations for improved administration of the *Canada Elections Act*, building on my previous work as augmented by the experience of the 38th general election. As the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs did not have the chance to review the report before the dissolution of Parliament, there was no opportunity for any of the legislative recommendations to be acted on before the 39th general election.

This document, my statutory report for the 39th general election, is divided into four chapters. The first two describe activities following the 38th general election and preparations for the 39th; the third presents key developments during the 39th general election; the last reviews the results and wrap-up activities for the 39th general election, and also outlines our plans and priorities for the 40th. Given the result of a second consecutive minority government, preparations for the next election are already underway.

Our federal electoral process thrives from the input and participation of a broad range of stakeholders: electors, parties, candidates, other political entities and the media. I am committed to preserving and improving this process and at all times welcome your comments and suggestions.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

1. Activities Following the 38th General Election of June 2004

Introduction

On June 28, 2004, Canadians voted in the 38th federal general election since Confederation. For Elections Canada, this election remained a focal point of activity well beyond polling day.

This chapter recounts how Elections Canada reviewed its performance in administering the 38th general election. We also summarize the tasks carried out after the election related to political financing and updating the National Register of Electors, as well as the work of the Commissioner of Canada Elections in enforcing the *Canada Elections Act*. Finally, we review a number of key activities following the June 2004 election that were not related to a specific electoral event.

1.1 Lessons Learned from the 38th General Election

This section looks at how analyses of our performance during the 38th general election have contributed to Elections Canada's continuous improvement efforts.

1.1.1 Post-election Evaluation Studies

Following the June 2004 election, Elections Canada participated in public opinion surveys to assist in evaluating and refining our services to the electorate and to develop the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations to Parliament. These surveys provided valuable information on the performance of new programs and helped identify opportunities for improvement.

The implementation of many "real-time" monitoring and reporting tools streamlined the overall evaluation effort. We focused on corporate themes and subjects essential for external and agency reports. Post-event evaluations included:

- the General Survey of Electors
- the Canadian Election Study, in partnership with the academic community
- an analysis of voter turnout by age groups
- the returning officers' reports of proceedings

Additionally, each directorate embarked on internal reviews of activities related to the 38th general election – including new initiatives introduced since the 2000 election, such as our Field Liaison Officer Program and some new outreach programs. More than 40 evaluations examined how we were doing business, what worked well and what needs to be improved for future electoral events.

These assessments produced recommendations for numerous short- and long-term enhancements to our service delivery and election management, such as:

- increasing the number of field liaison officers, as well as their overall responsibilities

- improving polling site locations, based on our consultations with members of Parliament, returning officers and political parties following the election
- developing better ways to handle voter information requests by phone – for example, adding more automated answers and routing calls more efficiently to handle a higher volume of queries from electors wishing to register or become election workers
- assigning critical pre-event planning tasks to returning officers on a regular basis before an election, so that they can be ready to conduct the election within a 36-day time frame
- strengthening Elections Canada’s ability to manage information at the national, provincial and territorial, and electoral district levels, by improving statistics for revision targets, projections and thresholds

General Survey of Electors

Immediately after the 2004 election, Elections Canada commissioned a survey of public opinions, attitudes, knowledge of Elections Canada’s services and various aspects of the electoral process, and individual experiences during the election.¹

¹The survey was carried out between June 29 and July 12, 2004, with a representative sample of 2,822 electors across Canada, providing a margin of error of ± 1.9 percent, 19 times out of 20. In keeping with our research objectives, a representative over-sample of 500 Aboriginal respondents was added to the 160 obtained at random, for a total of 660. This was made up of both on- and off-reserve residents, including urban dwellers. An over-sample of 200 electors aged 18 to 24 was also added to the 211 obtained at random, for a total of 411 electors aged 18 to 24.

Findings from the 2004 General Survey of Electors

- Nearly 85 percent of respondents said they received their voter information card. (The percentage was slightly lower among young and Aboriginal electors.)
- Of the respondents who received a voter information card, 95 percent did not report any error in their personal information, such as registration status or address. (The percentage was slightly lower among young and Aboriginal electors.)
- The advertising campaign made a strong impression: one respondent in two recalled seeing or hearing a non-partisan ad encouraging people to vote.
- Some 56 percent of respondents recalled hearing the slogan “Why not speak up when everyone is listening?” The slogan was remembered better by young electors.
- The vast majority of respondents thought that voting procedures were easy. Young and Aboriginal electors found voting methods slightly less easy.
- More than 90 percent of respondents who voted said that they were satisfied with the distance they had to travel to the polling station and with the information they received there; 96 percent said they were satisfied with the language spoken at the polling station.
- The main reasons mentioned for not voting were lack of interest, not knowing for whom to vote and lack of time. Very few respondents mentioned administrative reasons for not voting.

2004 Canadian Election Study

Elections Canada also contributed to the 2004 Canadian Election Study (CES), an academic study of Canadian federal elections. We have partnered with the CES since the 1997 general election.

The CES conducted three successive surveys of a single group of respondents:

1. **Campaign period survey:** 30-minute telephone interviews with an initial sampling of 4,325 Canadian electors, conducted throughout the campaign period (May 23 to June 28, 2004).
2. **Post-election survey:** 30-minute telephone interviews with 3,138 of the campaign survey respondents, conducted in the three weeks following election day.
3. **Mail-back questionnaire:** a printed questionnaire sent to everyone who responded to the post-election survey; of this group, 1,674 returned a completed questionnaire.

Findings from the 2004 Canadian Election Study

- One third to one half of all respondents said that they had no opinion on matters related to political financing. Those who had an opinion were mostly in favour of the new financial provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*, including the ceiling on contributions, the ceiling on nomination expenses, the ban on contributions by corporations and unions directly to parties, and the registration of electoral district associations.
- Some 82 percent of all respondents favoured a ban on buying large quantities of party memberships for distribution.
- Some 97 percent of all respondents thought that party membership should be open only to electors – Canadian citizens aged 18 or over – rather than citizens aged 14 or over or non-citizens.
- While 44 percent of all respondents did not find the under-representation of women in the House of Commons to be problematic, some 27 percent were concerned, and 20 percent were in favour of legislation specifying steps that parties must take to increase the proportion of women candidates in elections.
- Some 78 percent of respondents – particularly older electors – saw the low turnout of young electors as a problem.
- Families and schools were perceived to have the main responsibility for educating young electors about the democratic process, ahead of political entities, youth organizations and Elections Canada. On a 1–5 scale where 1 equalled “none” and 5 equalled “a lot,” respondents considered that parents (4.4) and schools/teachers (4.0) had the most responsibility for encouraging teenagers to learn about elections, before youth organizations (3.6), Elections Canada (3.6) and political parties/candidates (3.4).
- Some 83 percent of all respondents were opposed to lowering the minimum voting age for federal elections.

A link to the report of the 2004 Canadian Election Study is available at www.elections.ca, under Electoral Law, Policy and Research > Policy and Research. The Canadian Election Study database for the 38th general election is available at www.ces-ec.umontreal.ca.

Youth Turnout Analysis

After the 2000 general election, the CES identified a declining trend in turnout among the youngest voters. In 2002, Elections Canada commissioned a major study by professors Jon Pammett, of Carleton University, and Lawrence LeDuc, of the University of Toronto. Their research found that just over 25 percent of 18–24-year-olds had voted in the 2000 federal election.

Further studies in partnership with Pammett and LeDuc, as well as with the CES, revealed that the decrease in turnout among Canada’s youngest electors was having an effect on the overall voter participation level within Canada. The studies also showed that, while youth were less likely to vote, they were not necessarily cynical about the electoral process.

Following the June 2004 election, Elections Canada began a unique study to determine actual voter turnout among different age groups by analyzing samples of voters lists. Our findings showed that first-time voters (those between 18 and 21½ years of age) had a 39 percent voter turnout.² This made them about 4 percent more likely to vote than those voting for their second time (those between 21½ and 24 years of age).

As indicated in Chapter 4, Elections Canada is conducting a similar study after the 39th general election to find out if any clear trends emerge.

The 2004 report on youth participation can be found at www.elections.ca, under Electoral Law, Policy and Research > Policy and Research > Estimation of Voter Turnout by Age Group at the 38th Federal General Election.

Returning Officers' Reports of Proceedings

Under section 314 of the *Canada Elections Act*, every returning officer (RO) must send a report on the election in his or her riding to the Chief Electoral Officer soon after the return of the writ. These reports help identify where improvements to procedures are needed – a starting point in preparing for the next general election.

Highlights of the 2004 Returning Officers' Reports of Proceedings

- Overall, ROs reported the 2004 general election (and polling day, specifically) as a positive experience.
- ROs were relatively satisfied with the support available to them.
- ROs were most satisfied with the services provided by Canada Post and IBM, but they were less satisfied with the services performed by phone companies, particularly with the installation of telephone systems.
- Over three quarters of ROs agreed that the pre-event planning assignments they carried out helped them prepare for the election.
- A significant proportion of ROs felt that more training time was needed for staff, and some suggested improvements in the geographic products they received.
- Satisfaction with training kits and other manuals provided by Elections Canada was generally high.
- ROs were satisfied with the availability of the field liaison officers who assisted them during the election.

²The denominator used to calculate this figure is the estimated electoral population, not the number of registered electors, which Elections Canada normally uses. This is done for consistency with the Pammett and LeDuc study that was commissioned by Elections Canada, and with international studies on youth voting behaviour.

Field Liaison Officer Program

In 2003, the Chief Electoral Officer created a new position – that of field liaison officer (FLO) – to provide local support to ROs and their staff. The 24 new FLOs would report directly to the Chief Electoral Officer and the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, while working with ROs to improve service quality and help solve problems.

Following the 2004 general election, evaluation of the new Field Liaison Officer Program demonstrated that it was a clear asset in supporting ROs during and between election periods. FLOs were also able to provide on-the-ground feedback and analysis to assist Elections Canada's Executive Committee in managing the election.

Questionnaires Sent to Members of Parliament

On November 15, 2004, the Chief Electoral Officer wrote to all members of Parliament to seek their comments on the administration of the 38th general election. MPs were also invited to report any problems they encountered with polling site and electoral office locations and to propose solutions.

Most of the 64 responses to our invitation warranted a follow-up by the ROs in those electoral districts. As a result of this exercise, ROs provided Elections Canada with a summary of the concerns identified, their subsequent discussions with MPs and an appropriate plan of action for the next election. This plan was then sent to MPs for confirmation that it addressed the matters reported.

1.1.2 Lists of Electors

The National Register of Electors is a database with the names, addresses, genders and birthdates of some 22.7 million Canadians who are eligible to vote. The Register is continuously updated from federal, provincial and territorial data sources to reflect changes in the Canadian electorate. Elections Canada produces updated lists of electors from the Register in October of each year for MPs and political parties, as required by the *Canada Elections Act*.

At the issue of the writs for an election, the Register is used to produce the preliminary lists of electors, which are shared with every confirmed candidate. Every elector appearing on the preliminary lists receives a voter information card. ROs print revised lists for advance voting and official lists for use on election day. Both lists are again shared with candidates. Electors registering on polling day are added to the official lists to create the final lists of electors. These lists are distributed to MPs and to parties after the election and used to update the Register.

More than 2 million changes from the final lists of the 38th general election, including registrations, corrections and removals, were entered into the Register.

In less than 18 months, between the integration of the 38th general election changes and the start of the 39th general election, some 760,000 electors, mostly aged 18 to 24, were added to the Register. Another 302,000 deceased electors were removed from the lists, while over 4.5 million changes were made to reflect elector moves and address improvements, consistent with Statistics Canada's estimates of demographic change for this period. This reflects the intensive Register maintenance program required to ensure

Better Service for Electors: The Income Tax Consent Box

Before someone can be added to the Register, that person's citizenship must be confirmed. The consent box on the income tax form – used by electors to consent to their information being added to or updated in the Register – currently consists of one sentence. It states that the person is a Canadian citizen and consents to his or her information being sent to Elections Canada.

Seeing both statements in one sentence has confused some non-citizen taxpayers, who check the box, intending to consent to their information being shared, without realizing that they are also certifying their citizenship. This happens frequently enough that Elections Canada does not rely on the consent box to add electors to the Register without first verifying citizenship in other ways.

In 2005, we mailed some 621,000 confirmation forms to potential electors who either had checked the box on the tax form or were youths identified from driver's licence files. Over 105,000 people confirmed that they were Canadian citizens and requested to be added to the Register, while another 21,000 indicated they were not citizens and were not added.

We continue to work with the Canada Revenue Agency towards modifying the income tax form to include a separate check box for confirming citizenship, to allow the addition of new electors directly. This would be especially useful for registering youths and other first-time voters, and it would generally provide better service to electors with considerable savings in registration costs.

readiness in a minority government situation. Our usual administrative sources were augmented with updates from provincial elections in both Alberta and British Columbia before the 39th general election.

Partnerships

Maintaining the Register is becoming an ever more collaborative effort. Political parties and MPs share responsibility with ROs for assisting us in keeping it accurate and up to date; however, there are opportunities for further improvement in this area. We also have ongoing partnerships with federal agencies, and we are increasingly sharing the Register with provinces, territories and municipalities to help them produce lists of electors for their own elections.

Partnering with Federal Agencies

Elections Canada has established long-term partnerships with two key federal agencies for the purpose of acquiring vital information to update the Register.

From Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), we receive lists of new Canadians who, upon being granted citizenship, consent to being added to the Register – in 2005, some 94 percent of new citizens did so, up 1 percent from the previous year.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), meanwhile, remains one of the most important sources of data for the Register, providing information volunteered on tax returns by tax filers; in 2004, some 84 percent consented to have their names, addresses and dates of birth transmitted to the Register, an increase of 1 percent over the previous year.

New agreements concluded with the CRA and CIC came into effect on July 1 and October 1, 2005, respectively. They allow information to be sent to the Register on a monthly basis, helping to increase its currency.

Partnering with Provincial and Territorial Agencies

Collaboration with provincial, territorial and municipal electoral agencies remains a core component of the Register program – particularly as more provinces are working closely with Elections Canada to establish permanent registers for their jurisdictions. These partners are an important source of elector information for the Register. Elections Canada currently holds some 40 agreements with various federal, provincial, territorial and municipal agencies to support voter registration (data-sharing partnerships that have resulted in significant savings for Canadians over the past decade). The agreements are listed in Appendix I of this report.

In 2005, Elections Canada provided data and assistance to the electoral agencies of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Prince Edward Island. For example, once the final lists of electors for the 38th general election were integrated into the Register, Elections BC used the data to prepare for the 2005 provincial election and add more than 600,000 new electors to the provincial register; this enabled them to forgo a province-wide enumeration, resulting in a cost savings to British Columbia of some \$11 million. The

provincial lists, further revised during the B.C. election, were subsequently returned to Elections Canada to update the Register once more. Sharing electoral information not only provides cost savings but also improves coverage and currency of elector information, and hence customer service.

We have continued to work with Elections Ontario and the province's Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) on developing a single source of elector information for Ontario. This collaboration enables Elections Canada to benefit from the close working relationship between MPAC and municipalities and their timely information on property and address changes. Revisions from the 39th general election will reduce the number of households MPAC needs to contact in its municipal mail-out enumeration, resulting in further cost savings for taxpayers. Over the years, knowledge- and data-sharing through this co-operative relationship has helped each partner to enhance the quality of its electoral lists, reduce duplication of effort and improve administrative efficiency. The tripartite work demonstrates Elections Canada's commitment to fostering leadership in electoral initiatives.

The Register advisory committee, with representation from provincial, territorial and municipal partners, meets twice annually. Discussions focus on how we can continue to co-operate on voter registration. Together we are continually improving the Register – in particular, to ensure that youth are registered, that addressing is improved, especially in rural areas, and that the Register is up to date.

Cost Savings Through the Register

The National Register of Electors saves taxpayers a significant amount of money. Estimates indicate that \$30 million net was again saved during the 39th general election, compared with the cost of door-to-door enumeration. At the federal level, the cumulative cost avoidance attributable to use of the Register, as of March 31, 2006, is estimated to be some \$110 million. An additional \$42 million in savings has been generated at the provincial and municipal levels. The total combined savings to date are estimated at over \$150 million.

Register Data Quality Measurement Program

In January 2005, Elections Canada initiated a review of the Register Data Quality Measurement Program. The purpose was to improve the model used to calculate the quality of the Register, to obtain a more accurate assessment of the quality of the lists and to provide information that meets stakeholder needs.

The process consisted of a review of documentation and quality management methods used by other organizations, and academic consultation. Interviews were conducted with internal and external stakeholders, including FLOs, ROs, provincial and territorial electoral agencies and directorates within Elections Canada.

As a result of this exercise, we were able to make plans to improve the quality measurement process, including automating the quality model and incorporating an annual benchmarking study to validate the measures it produced. One change made

immediately was to incorporate an adjustment from Statistics Canada's Census of Population to take into account electors missed during the Census (referred to as the "Census net undercount"). This resulted in an increase of 2.5 percent to the national electoral population, which was reflected in an equivalent decrease in both coverage and currency – a more accurate, and therefore more useful, assessment of Register quality.

Voter Registration Review

To continue to improve voter registration services, we examined the broader requirements of voter registration since the Register was created in 1997, as well as the opportunities afforded by the evolution of technology and business practices. Elections Canada launched the Voter Registration Review in June 2005. This strategic initiative covers both the updating of the Register between elections and the revision of lists of electors during elections, and is ongoing. Please see Chapter 4 for further details.

1.2 Legal Affairs

1.2.1 Enforcing the *Canada Elections Act*

By April 5, 2006, the Commissioner of Canada Elections had received 1,574 complaints stemming from the June 2004 general election. Of these, 1,321 cases have been resolved, while 253 remain open. In settling some cases, the Commissioner has, to date, concluded a total of 17 compliance agreements with contracting parties. Additionally, one prosecution arising from the 37th general election (for failure to register as a third party and to file an election advertising report) ended with a conviction, on January 6, 2006.

The new financial provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* brought about by Bill C-24 accounted for 675 complaints in 2004–2005, most dealing with failure to provide the nomination contest report or registered association financial transactions return within the prescribed time limit. Of these cases, 670 have been resolved, while 5 remain open.

The Commissioner is continuing to review all open cases and may conclude further compliance agreements or initiate prosecutions, as necessary.

Details of convictions and compliance agreements are published at www.elections.ca, under Electoral Law, Policy and Research > Commissioner of Canada Elections.

1.2.2 Civil Suits

Seven civil suits were brought against Elections Canada by various parties for matters related to the 38th general election. Details of these cases, including their outcomes, are documented in Appendix II of this report.

1.3 Political Entities

1.3.1 Registered Parties

At the conclusion of the 38th general election, there were 12 federally registered political parties in Canada.

A registered party is required to file up to three financial disclosure returns – one for expenses incurred in a general election, an annual financial transactions return for each fiscal year and (since January 2005) quarterly returns on contributions and transfers for parties in receipt of the quarterly allowance under section 435.01 of the *Canada Elections Act*. All returns are posted at www.elections.ca, under Election Financing.

Election Expenses Returns

The 12 registered parties at the 38th general election were required to file their election expenses returns by December 28, 2004. Ten parties filed on time, with the other two requesting and receiving extensions under the Act. The extended deadlines were met in both cases.

Election Expenses Reimbursements

The Act provides for reimbursement of a percentage of the election expenses incurred by registered parties in a general election. For the 38th general election, which closely followed the coming into force of the new political financing regime on January 1, 2004, this percentage was set at 60 percent; later elections have a 50 percent entitlement. Only registered parties that have filed their election campaign returns and that received at least 2 percent of all votes cast in the general election, or 5 percent of those cast in electoral districts where they ran candidates, are eligible.

**Table 1.1 Reimbursements to Registered Political Parties
38th General Election, 2004**

Registered Political Party	Reimbursement
Bloc Québécois	\$2,704,518.67
Conservative	\$10,370,554.15
Green Party	\$298,907.63
Liberal	\$9,962,716.92
N.D.P.	\$7,211,358.75
Total	\$30,548,056.12

Based on the election expenses reported, five eligible parties received election expenses reimbursements totalling \$30,548,056.

Annual Financial Transactions Returns

Registered parties were required to file their fiscal returns for 2003 by June 30, 2004. Of the 12 registered parties in 2003, 7 filed within the deadline, 4 requested extended filing deadlines and 1 was not required to file. On December 7, 2003, the Conservative Party of Canada was formed by merging the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada. The newly formed party was not required to submit a return for 2003. However, both the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada filed their respective final fiscal returns, up to the date of the merger, on June 7, 2004. The first fiscal return as a merged party was due on June 30, 2005. All 11 registered parties that were required to file met the original or extended deadline for 2003.

The 2004 fiscal return was due on June 30, 2005. Thirteen registered parties were required to file an annual return for 2004. Eight filed within the deadline, one party voluntarily deregistered on January 23, 2004, and four parties requested extended filing deadlines. All 13 parties filed within their original or extended filing deadlines.

Quarterly Returns

Registered parties that received 2 percent of the valid votes cast, or 5 percent of the number of valid votes cast in the electoral districts in which they endorsed a candidate, are also eligible to receive quarterly allowances. As of January 1, 2005, registered parties receiving a quarterly allowance must file quarterly returns on contributions and transfers that they received in the previous quarter. The five registered parties receiving the allowance were required to submit the first three quarterly returns for 2005 before the 39th general election was called.

All quarterly returns to date have been filed within the deadline of 30 days after the end of the quarter. Quarterly allowances paid totalled \$23,196,401 in 2004 and \$24,425,091 in 2005.

Table 1.2 Quarterly Allowances Paid to Registered Political Parties (2004)

Registered Political Party	Advance Paid in Jan. 2004* (Jan.–Dec. 2004)	3rd Quarter** (July–Sept. 2004) Payable or (Receivable)	4th Quarter** (Oct.–Dec. 2004) Payable Jan. 2005
Bloc Québécois	\$2,411,022	\$0	\$322,846
Conservative	\$8,476,872	(\$563,360)	\$0
Green Party	\$0	\$261,847	\$261,847
Liberal	\$9,191,054	(\$49,646)	\$0
N.D.P.	\$1,914,269	\$12,958	\$956,692

*Based on 37th general election of 2000.

**Based on 38th general election of 2004.

Table 1.3 Quarterly Allowances Paid to Registered Political Parties (2005)

Registered Political Party	1st Quarter* (Jan.–Mar. 2005) Payable Apr. 2005	2nd Quarter** (Apr.–June 2005) Payable July 2005	3rd Quarter** (July–Sept. 2005) Payable Oct. 2005	4th Quarter** (Oct.–Dec. 2005) Payable Jan. 2006
Bloc Québécois	\$755,740	\$769,708	\$769,708	\$769,708
Conservative	\$1,807,734	\$1,841,146	\$1,841,146	\$1,841,146
Green Party	\$261,847	\$266,686	\$266,686	\$266,686
Liberal	\$2,240,772	\$2,282,187	\$2,282,187	\$2,282,187
N.D.P.	\$956,692	\$974,375	\$974,375	\$974,375

*With inflation adjustment as of April 1, 2004; based on 38th general election of 2004.

**With inflation adjustment as of April 1, 2005; based on 38th general election of 2004.

1.3.2 Nomination Contestants

As of January 1, 2004, nomination contests are regulated under the *Canada Elections Act*. This means that registered parties, or their registered electoral district associations, must report any nomination contest they hold. Between the 38th and 39th general elections, Elections Canada received 651 reports of nomination contests, naming 959 contestants.

Table 1.4 shows the number of reports submitted by registered parties for nomination contests held between the 38th and 39th general elections.

Table 1.4 Nomination Contests by Registered Party

Registered Party	No. of Contests
Bloc Québécois	73
Christian Heritage Party	13
Conservative	176
Green Party	33
Liberal	223
N.D.P.	132
PC Party	1
Total	651

Nomination Contestant Returns

Nomination contestants are required, as of January 1, 2004, to file a financial transactions return if either their contributions or nomination contest expenses are \$1,000 or more. Contestants' returns are due four months after the selection date for the contest (unless that date falls within 30 days preceding an election period in that electoral district, in which case the due date is four months after election day).

In all, 114 contestants filed returns related to contests held between the 38th and 39th general elections. Of those 114 returns, 93 were filed on time, while 21 were filed late.

1.3.3 Candidates in the 38th General Election

Filing of Election Campaign Returns

The deadline by which candidates were to have filed their election campaign returns for contributions, expenses and other financial transactions related to the 38th general election was October 28, 2004. Out of a total of 1,686 confirmed candidates,³ Elections Canada had received 1,673 complete candidate returns as of March 13, 2006. These returns were received either by the original filing deadline or within an authorized extension deadline.

The remaining 13 candidates (0.8 percent) did not file their returns and either did not seek an extension or missed the extended deadline granted by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Auditor Eligibility

All candidate returns must be accompanied by an auditor's report to be considered complete. Section 85 of the Act allows only persons or partnerships that are members in good standing of a corporation, association or institute of professional accountants to be auditors of accounts.⁴ Since candidates whose returns are not accompanied by a valid audit report are ineligible to run in future elections until the failing is corrected, those who found themselves in this situation often sought a judicial extension to have their returns reviewed by properly qualified auditors.

Reimbursement of Election Expenses

The *Canada Elections Act* provides for reimbursing the combined paid election and personal expenses incurred by eligible candidates, to a maximum of 60 percent of the spending limit in that riding. Elected candidates, and those receiving at least 10 percent of the valid votes in an election, are eligible, with initial reimbursements to be paid without delay after the return of the writs. For the 38th general election, 837 candidates were eligible for the initial reimbursement of 15 percent of the election expenses limit in their electoral districts. Initial reimbursements were issued on July 20, 2004, and totalled \$9,845,291.

Final reimbursements are paid out, under section 465 of the Act, to candidates who meet the vote percentage criteria, have filed their election campaign returns on time and have unqualified audit reports. As well, the Chief Electoral Officer must be satisfied that the

³In 2004, 1,686 candidates were confirmed, but one withdrew after confirmation, leaving 1,685 active candidates.

⁴This interpretation is reflected in the Ontario Court of Appeal in *R. ex. rel. Steeds v. Lewis*, (1997), 36 O.R. (3d) 688 (C.A.).

candidate and his or her official agent have complied with all requirements of subsection 447(2) and sections 451 to 462 and that the amounts reported are election expenses.

Elections Canada has completed reviews of the 1,673 complete candidate returns received. All reimbursements and audit subsidy payments have been processed for those files that satisfied the requirements for receipt of the payments.

Final election expenses reimbursements paid to candidates to date total \$14,990,087 (this amount is net of any repayments related to initial reimbursement overpayments); when combined with the initial reimbursements, the total election expenses reimbursements paid to date are \$24,835,377. Audit subsidy payments total \$1,296,637.

A significant number of campaigns were required to file amended financial returns. For instance, 399 candidates were required to file an amendment due to errors or omissions, and 338 candidates paid claims after filing their returns and were required to file an amendment to reflect those payments.

1.3.4 Registered Electoral District Associations

At the conclusion of the 38th general election, there were 1,019 registered electoral district associations (EDAs) in Canada.

**Table 1.5 Registered Electoral District Associations
38th General Election, 2004**

Party	No. of EDAs
Bloc Québécois	48
Conservative	305
Green Party	87
Liberal	308
N.D.P.	271
Total	1,019

An additional 121 associations were registered, and 7 deregistered, between the 38th and 39th general elections. Of the deregistrations, four were requested by the association and one by the party, while the others resulted from, respectively, a failure to file a required report and an electoral district boundary change.

Financial Returns for Deregistered Associations

On May 23, 2004, 20 EDAs were deregistered as a result of the change in electoral boundaries. These associations were required, by section 403.26 of the *Canada Elections Act*, to file final financial returns by November 23, 2004. Of these associations, 6 filed on time, 10 filed late and 4 have not filed returns.

At the call of the 39th general election, four associations still had not filed.

Financial Returns for Fiscal Year 2004

Associations registered before July 1, 2004, were required to complete and submit a financial transactions return by May 31, 2005, for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2004. An EDA that accepted contributions or incurred expenses of \$5,000 or more during this fiscal period had to submit an auditor's report with the return. A total of 1,019 associations were required to submit a return: 591 met the May 31 deadline and 399 filed after that deadline. As of April 29, 2006, 21 associations had failed to file altogether and 8 had not filed an essential part of their report. Of those that failed to file altogether, four have been deregistered.

Failing to file a financial return as required by the *Canada Elections Act* is an offence and can also lead to the association being deregistered. An association that is unable to comply can request an extension to the filing deadline under section 403.41. Up to the end of five months after the related fiscal year, such requests are made to the Chief Electoral Officer; thereafter, they must be made to a court.

Training Sessions

In February 2005, Elections Canada presented 21 training sessions in major centres across the country for registered EDAs, to prepare them for the first filing under the new regulatory scheme. Attendance at these sessions is summarized in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6 Electoral District Association Financial Training Sessions (2005)

Political Affiliation	Attendees
Bloc Québécois	42
Canadian Action	4
Christian Heritage Party	7
Conservative	170
Green Party	36
Liberal	132
Marxist-Leninist	2
N.D.P.	59
PC Party	5
Independent/No affiliation	85
Total	542

The objectives of the sessions were to help participants understand the obligations of an EDA, to show them how to navigate the Elections Canada Web site to locate information of interest and to help them become familiar with the Electronic Financial Return (EFR) software. Based on evaluation forms completed by attendees, the sessions were well received, with the majority of respondents suggesting a need for further training and information sessions. Of the respondents, 96 percent indicated that the sessions met the objectives and 88 percent were satisfied with the support given by Elections Canada.

1.3.5 Leadership Contests

Between the 38th and 39th general elections, two parties filed notices of leadership contests.

The Green Party of Canada held a leadership contest that ran from June 29 through August 28, 2004. Three contestants registered with Elections Canada. Each was required to file six financial reports: one on registration, four in the last month of the contest and one six months after the contest. Two contestants provided all of the required reports, with the third filing the initial and final returns only. The Libertarian Party of Canada held a leadership contest that ran from March 15 through May 22, 2005; no contestants registered with Elections Canada. Only a person who accepts contributions for, or incurs expenses in relation to, his or her leadership contest is required to register.

1.3.6 Third Parties

Third parties are groups or persons other than candidates, registered political parties and their EDAs. A total of 63 third parties were registered for the 38th general election. Each was required to file a return for election advertising expenses and related contributions with Elections Canada by October 28, 2004. Of these, 43 filed on time, 16 filed late and 2 should not have registered since they did not spend \$500 or more on election advertising. The remaining two had still not filed their returns by the time the 39th general election was called. The total election advertising expenses reported were \$717,979.

No third parties registered for the Labrador by-election of May 24, 2005. This was the only by-election to take place between the 38th and 39th general elections.

1.4 Other Activities

In addition to preparing for and administering federal general elections and referendums, Elections Canada fulfills many other responsibilities – some mandated by statute, others deriving from the agency’s manifest duty as a focal point of democracy.

Among these responsibilities are the requirement to administer by-elections, to maintain relations with Parliament and political parties, to extend our electoral experience to the international community and to seek continuous improvement in our own operations.

This section looks at our activities in each of these areas in the period following the 38th general election.

1.4.1 By-elections

Between the 38th and 39th general elections, only one federal by-election was held in Canada. Elections Canada published the *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada Following the May 24, 2005, By-election Held in Labrador*, in April 2006.

1.4.2 Relations with Parliament and Political Parties

Reports and Appearances

Official Reports

In the period between the 38th and 39th general elections (June 2004 through November 2005), the Chief Electoral Officer produced five official reports for Parliament. Three were informational reports following elections, as required by the *Canada Elections Act*, and two contained recommendations for legislative amendments.

Informational Reports

- *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 38th General Election Held on June 28, 2004* (October 2004)
- *Thirty-eighth General Election 2004: Official Voting Results* (November 2004)
- *Official Voting Results Following the May 24, 2005 By-election Held in Labrador* (August 2005)

Recommendations Reports

- *Enhancing the Values of Redistribution* (May 2005) – This set out recommendations for the improvement of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.
- *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms* (September 2005) – This set out recommendations for amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* that the Chief Electoral Officer considered desirable for its better administration, as required under section 535 of the Act. The report focused on voter registration, operational matters and some political financing matters.

Neither of these recommendations reports has yet been considered by the parliamentary committees responsible for electoral matters.

Estimates Reports

Elections Canada also produced three reports required by Treasury Board:

- *2003–2004 Departmental Performance Report* (October 2004) – This annual report summarizes the agency's performance in achieving the goals set out in the previous *Report on Plans and Priorities*.
- *2005–2006 Estimates: Report on Plans and Priorities* (March 2005) – This annual report forms the basis for the agency's accountability for results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.
- *2004–2005 Departmental Performance Report* (October 2005) – This annual report summarizes the agency's performance in achieving the goals set out in the previous *Report on Plans and Priorities*.

All of the Chief Electoral Officer's official reports are available at www.elections.ca, under General Information > Official Reports.

Appearances Before Parliamentary Committees

Elections Canada has the duty not only to administer the electoral legislation but also to maintain transparency and accountability in how we go about it. As an officer of Parliament, the Chief Electoral Officer makes himself freely available to parliamentarians, each year making many appearances before committees of the House and Senate.

During the 18 months of the 38th Parliament, the Chief Electoral Officer made seven appearances before parliamentary committees. Please see Appendix III for details.

Advisory Committee of Political Parties

The Advisory Committee of Political Parties exists as a unique forum through which Elections Canada and registered political parties can share information, foster good working relationships, consult on legislative change and resolve administrative matters that may affect parties and candidates. Members include registered political parties represented in the House of Commons as well as registered parties without representation; the committee gives each party an equal voice.

Since the 38th general election, Elections Canada has held four meetings with members of the registered political parties represented on the committee. Among other topics, the committee has discussed the new political financing regime, the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations to Parliament and the main findings of the 2004 Canadian Election Study, including declining turnout among young voters.

Amendments to the Electoral Legislation

Elections Canada must continuously adapt to an evolving legal framework that affects the conduct of federal electoral events. Since the 38th general election in 2004, there have been 20 proposed amendments to electoral law. Of these, 4 were adopted and came into effect at or before the start of the 39th general election, while the remaining 16 were either defeated or died on the Order Paper at the dissolution of Parliament on November 29, 2005.

A complete list of amendments proposed between the 38th and 39th general elections is provided in Appendix IV.

1.4.3 Outreach Initiatives

Elections Canada pursues outreach activities on an ongoing basis. While some occur during election periods, others are undertaken between elections.

Aboriginal Peoples

Assembly of First Nations and Voter Education Campaign

In December 2004, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) adopted a resolution mandating a voter education campaign for First Nations peoples. Elections Canada and the AFN entered into a partnership, engaging in a number of co-operative efforts.

On September 20 and 21, 2005, the AFN held a national forum in Winnipeg – co-chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer and Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the AFN. Held to discuss First Nations voter turnout, the forum was attended by AFN regional representatives from across Canada, members of the AFN Executive Committee, former First Nations politicians, government officials and members of the media. For details on collaboration with the AFN during the election, see Chapter 3.

New Web Page

Elections Canada created a page for Aboriginal electors on its Web site. The page presents voter information in 11 Aboriginal languages and includes research and analysis, communications and educational products, operational initiatives and links to national Aboriginal organizations.

Information Kiosk

An information kiosk for First Nations about their participation in the Canadian electoral system was developed for display at various events. It informs Aboriginal peoples of the voter information assistance that is available to them by contacting Elections Canada.

“Seekers” Episode and DVD

Elections Canada also helped produce a special episode on voting for the youth-oriented TV show “Seekers,” which aired on April 13, 2005, on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network.

As well, a DVD version of the episode was developed in both English and French. Some 3,000 copies have been distributed to date to such diverse groups as national Aboriginal organizations, provincial and territorial chief electoral officers, members of the Advisory Committee of Political Parties, returning officers, community relations officers, field liaison officers, band administrators, Inuit hamlets, Métis governments and Aboriginal media.

Youth

YouthLinks – Voices: Getting the Vote

Elections Canada worked with the Historica Foundation to develop a module on voting as part of the YouthLinks collaborative on-line learning program. The program links high school students in Canada and around the world in discussion of important concerns. The Voices: Getting the Vote module was launched in the fall of 2004 and is devoted to Canadian citizenship and democracy. The module includes lesson plans for teachers and

activities for students and was profiled by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Historical Foundation at the Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy in the fall of 2005.

1.4.4 The Voter Information Service

To deal with the increasing volume of calls for the 38th general election, Elections Canada, in partnership with Bell Canada, developed the Voter Information Service (VIS) – a comprehensive information system consisting of an automated Web-based and speech-enabled Voice Response System, a call centre for callers needing to speak to an agent and a self-service facility on our Web site.

On October 3, 2005, the VIS was the recipient of a GTEC award, recognizing meritorious efforts related to technology in government. Competing against many much larger organizations and departments, the VIS project was awarded a bronze medal in “GROUP I – Federal Awards B – Enhancing Government Operations” – a testament to the excellent work and dedication of the development team, whose efforts led to the first public sector use of advanced computer telephony.

1.4.5 International Activities: Missions and Meetings

As a world leader in holding fair and transparent electoral events, Canada is in a position to share electoral knowledge with emerging and established democracies, and to offer technical support to help plan and conduct fair elections in countries that request advice and assistance. In doing so, we help to build democratic institutions abroad while also expanding our own areas of knowledge and experience.

Below are some of the international events in which Elections Canada has played a key role over the past two years.

Sharing Experience with Developing Democracies

As part of Elections Canada’s involvement in international missions, the Chief Electoral Officer has participated in various meetings with international organizations that promote democracy, such as IFES, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Organization of American States, the Council of Europe, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials, the Commonwealth and La Francophonie.

At the same time, representatives of other countries, including Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Romania, the Republic of Yemen, Burundi, South Korea, Mali, Latvia and Angola have travelled to Canada to consult our experts.

International Mission for Iraqi Elections

The International Mission for Iraqi Elections (IMIE) was made up of 12 independent electoral management bodies from around the world chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.

The mission was established in December 2004 as a result of the Iraq Election Monitoring Forum organized by Elections Canada in Ottawa, with the encouragement of the United Nations and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) and the financial support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

In 2005, the IMIE followed the January 30 elections, the October 15 referendum and the December 15 elections in Iraq, in addition to monitoring registration and voting by Iraqi electors living abroad.

The IMIE shared its assessments with the IECI, the United Nations and the international community, and published reports and press releases on its Web site at www.imie.ca.

International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections

At an international forum held in Montréal in June 2005 – at the request of CIDA and Foreign Affairs Canada, and under the auspices of Elections Canada – the heads of eight independent electoral management bodies agreed to establish the International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections (IMMHE) to follow and assess the 2005–2006 presidential, legislative and municipal elections.

Chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, the mission established a secretariat in Port-au-Prince, deployed long- and short-term observers to monitor Haiti's electoral process and provided advice to Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council, the Conseil électoral provisoire.

Reports and press releases are available on the IMMHE Web site at www.miech-immhe.ca.

1.4.6 Office of the Auditor General Report

To succeed as a public institution, Elections Canada must not only do what it does well, it must inspire public confidence that it does so. Accountable to Canadians, we must seek continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations. For this reason, the Chief Electoral Officer extended an invitation in 2004 to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to conduct a performance audit of all of Elections Canada's activities.

The Auditor General of Canada, Sheila Fraser, tabled her 2005 report in the House of Commons on November 22. Chapter 6 of the report is entitled Elections Canada – Administering the Federal Electoral Process. The Auditor General observed that the electoral process is well managed and that “through good planning and regular updating of its geographic and voter information databases, Elections Canada stays prepared for an election that can be called at any time. It ensures that eligible voters can vote by helping them get their name on the lists of electors; by communicating how, when, and where to vote; and by providing flexible voting opportunities. It also provides considerable support to returning officers and their staff in delivering elections.”

The report also acknowledges that we play a key role in supporting the fairness and transparency of elections by registering political entities and monitoring their financial

activities, supporting and monitoring the activities of returning officers and election staff, and ensuring compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*. Furthermore, we deliver public education and information programs to enhance understanding of the federal electoral process and increase the participation rate of targeted groups of electors. We were also found to work effectively with Parliament and other stakeholders to identify ways of improving the electoral process.

The OAG commends the fact that we have set performance targets and developed indicators to assess how well we carry out our key activities. At the same time, it is important that we continue to improve the quality of our performance measures, particularly for communication and public education programs. We also need to enhance our reporting to Parliament on strategic directions and on progress toward our objectives. Additionally, some improvements in human resources planning practices and information systems will benefit our current operations and help us plan more effectively for the future.

Conclusion

The Chief Electoral Officer has responded to the five recommendations in the Auditor General's report and has already started to address them. (Please see Appendix V for details.) This work will continue in 2006–2007, as outlined in further sections of this report. In general, the audit has highlighted opportunities to pursue our current efforts more effectively – to explore additional methods or improve efficiency in certain aspects of our activities.

The full text of the chapter in the November 2005 OAG report concerning Elections Canada can be found on the OAG Web site at www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20051106ce.html.

This completes the chapter on Elections Canada's activities following the 38th general election. The following chapter describes our preparations for the main subject of this report – the 39th general election.

2. Build-up to the 39th General Election

Introduction

With a minority government in power after the general election of June 2004, the political landscape in 2005 was marked by the imminence of the 39th federal general election.

In this chapter, we look at the steps taken by Elections Canada to prepare electors, political entities and election field staff for the drop of the writs. We also recount events leading up to the election call and their impact on Elections Canada's operations.

2.1 Effect of the Minority Government

Knowledge that the next election could come at any time strongly influenced all of Elections Canada's operations between the 38th and 39th general elections. When a number of confidence votes took place in the House of Commons in the spring of 2005, Elections Canada prepared itself for an election call. Returning officers completed preliminary activities; staff were hired and trained; data for the lists of electors were refreshed; materials were procured, assembled and made ready to ship; and all our private sector partners were put on high alert.

Maintaining such a heightened state of election readiness significantly affects the agency's ability to further longer-term projects, such as developing a new multi-year strategic plan and renewing our information technology infrastructure. The agency is restricted to managing projects with shorter development cycles.

A minority government context also imposes the significant challenge of restocking election materials in the shortest possible time. Printing and assembling these materials, including manuals, voter information, paper for printing ballots and the like, typically takes about eight months, not counting any time that may be needed for reviewing, rewriting and editing documents. As well, returning officers and assistant returning officers must carry out continual planning assignments to ensure that office facilities and staff will be available.

Planning to Be Ready

Because our parliamentary system makes it impossible to predict the precise date of an election call, Elections Canada has developed a flexible planning framework to ensure timely delivery of all the necessary services under virtually any conditions. Through a series of customized planning and decision-making tools, the agency monitors its operational capacity with precision and carefully manages resource deployment to match the prevailing political climate.

Essentially, this is a risk management process, and the risks must be managed proactively. Deploying resources too early could significantly increase the costs of an election, but delays could cause gaps to ripple through the election calendar, when thousands of activities must dovetail closely. In a period such as the one between the 38th and 39th general elections, when an election seems imminent, the risks are reviewed constantly by the Chief Electoral Officer.

2.2 Preparing Field Staff

Field staff are the individuals who work in the 308 electoral districts across the country to organize and run a federal election or by-election. They are returning officers (ROs), who are appointed by Governor in Council, and the staff they hire, including assistant returning officers (AROs), additional assistant returning officers (AAROs), administrative staff in each office, community relations officers, revising agents, deputy returning officers and poll clerks at polling stations, central poll supervisors, registration officers, etc. Also included are 28 field liaison officers (FLOs), who act as Elections Canada's regional representatives to assist ROs.

In this section, we review Elections Canada's initiatives to prepare field staff for the 39th general election.

2.2.1 Field Liaison Officers

The Field Liaison Officer Program was first introduced to support field staff in 2003, in preparation for the 38th general election. Elections Canada built on its success to improve the program for the 39th general election.

Two new FLO positions were added to ensure that no FLO had to support more than 14 electoral districts. As well, two backup positions were added to assist other FLOs in their work or to replace any FLO who was unable to act. This brought the total number of FLO positions to 28 across Canada.

FLOs attended an orientation session in Ottawa in September 2005 to prepare for meetings with their regional teams. The FLOs then held regional briefings, one and a half days in duration, with the ROs, AROs and AAROs in their regions between September 26 and October 4, 2005. Field staff were briefed on procedures and materials that had been updated since the 2004 general election, and they discussed matters affecting their regions as they prepared for the 39th general election. These briefings were held in 13 cities across Canada and were attended by 28 FLOs, 295 of the 308 ROs, 284 of the 308 AROs and 108 of the 111 AAROs.

Participants found these meetings a useful way to ensure that they were fully briefed and ready to carry out their duties. The addition of key staff to the meetings this time around (only ROs had been invited to the first regional briefings held in March 2004) was also very beneficial, according to FLOs and participants, in building a solid foundation and strong teams ready to tackle the next election.

Throughout the fall of 2004 and in 2005, FLOs assisted Elections Canada in helping ROs and their key staff carry out pre-election assignments, and they provided coaching as necessary. Their weekly status reports on the progress made by ROs helped ensure everyone met their deadlines.

2.2.2 Returning Officers

Under the general direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, each RO is responsible for conducting the election of the member of Parliament for a given electoral district, serving electors, candidates and parties in that riding directly. ROs deliver the election in all 308 electoral districts.

Upon an election call, the returning office must be made fully operational in short order. This entails, in each electoral district, leasing one or more offices; hiring and training staff; organizing supplies received from Elections Canada; setting up and connecting telephones, computers and other equipment; leasing voting facilities and mailing voter information cards; and then revising the preliminary lists of electors. ROs also oversee the candidate nomination process, the training of hundreds of election officials, advance voting, special ballot voting and, of course, election day and wrap-up activities. Completing all of these tasks involves managing, on average, 500–600 employees in every riding.

Clearly, ROs must be very versatile. Their extensive duties call for the use of a wide range of modern management techniques, including financial planning, contract negotiation, public relations, office automation, and material, human and financial resources management. ROs must be both skilled and efficient to complete their tasks within the short periods of time allowed by the election calendar.

Appointment of New Returning Officers

ROs are appointed by the Governor in Council but are trained by Elections Canada. Hence, one of the challenges Elections Canada faces is lack of control over the timing of the appointments of these key field staff. A case in point was the critical situation we faced in the early months of 2005, when up to 24 RO positions were vacant, leaving the agency in a vulnerable situation. Contingency plans had to be made in the event that RO positions were not filled in time for the incumbents to be fully trained for a possible election call.

From July 2004 to November 2005, 59 new ROs were appointed. The length of time each position was vacant varied from 6 days to 176 days. Subsection 28(4) of the *Canada Elections Act* states that appointments will be made by the Governor in Council within 60 days of a vacancy. However, the late appointment of an RO does not affect the legal validity of that appointment.

At the issue of the writs for the 39th general election, two positions remained vacant. In both cases, the ARO acted in the RO's capacity throughout the election period and appointed an acting ARO to take her position.

Returning Officer Training

Most new ROs receive a one-day orientation session from their FLO before attending a six-day training session in Ottawa on the fundamentals of administering a federal election in an electoral district. The length of the training period is necessarily reduced for last-minute appointments. The training sessions use interactive techniques to help maximize retention. When there is a by-election, the RO, the ARO and the automation coordinator of that electoral district attend a training session that brings them up to date on the latest changes. The FLOs also hold periodic regional briefings to deliver updated information in preparation for an election.

A total of 48 of 59 new ROs appointed following the 38th general election participated in a one-on-one, daylong orientation session with their FLOs once this new program was instituted. FLOs also provided on-the-job training to seven other ROs who had been appointed too late to come to Ottawa for training before the election, and they prepared to offer them additional support as required. Additionally, for the first time, new AROs received training. As second-in-command, an ARO requires the same knowledge as an RO so as to be prepared to replace the RO if necessary. A total of 83 AROs were trained in Ottawa in 2005.

2.2.3 Pre-election Assignments: February to November 2005

To ensure full readiness for the coming election, Elections Canada undertook numerous preparatory activities during 2005.

All ROs across the country were required to participate in a series of planning assignments. These involved finding suitable office space for the returning office and any satellite office; identifying key office staff, local printers, furniture and equipment suppliers; and preparing plans for targeted revision (the door-to-door confirmation of the lists of electors) in parts of their electoral districts with highly mobile populations.

ROs were asked to prepare outreach action plans that targeted youth, Aboriginal and ethnocultural communities, and homeless electors and to include activities that would inform these groups and promote their participation during an election. ROs were instructed to hire community relations officers, as warranted, to establish the needs of target groups in the electoral district. ROs were also asked to identify polling divisions in which they wanted to put in place the Aboriginal Elder and

Youth Program, an initiative that encourages the hiring of elders and youths at polling stations serving mainly Aboriginal electors. Communications materials were readied so that they could be shipped quickly after the election call, enabling ROs to make contacts in the community as soon as possible.

Each RO whose electoral district included two or more institutions where elderly or disabled persons resided was asked to ensure that residents in these facilities would have the opportunity to vote at a mobile poll.

The Community Relations Officer Program

ROs could appoint community relations officers, where appropriate, to help identify and address the needs of individual communities and encourage their participation in the electoral process.

Generally, a riding was eligible for a community relations officer if any of the following were present in sufficient numbers:

- **Aboriginal community** – A Métis settlement, at least one First Nations reserve, an Inuit hamlet or a friendship centre, or a riding population of which at least 5 percent were Aboriginal people.
- **Youth community** – If at least 10 percent of the riding population was between 18 and 24 years of age.
- **Ethnocultural community** – If at least 10 percent of the riding population had origins in China, India or the Philippines.
- **Homeless elector community** – Any riding for which the RO submitted a written justification and received approval from the Chief Electoral Officer.

In preparation for providing special ballot services to electors hospitalized during the election, ROs validated the information about acute care hospitals in Elections Canada's database; this would ensure that materials could be assembled and shipped promptly when needed and adequate resources allocated. The accuracy of information on numbers of beds, civic and mailing addresses, and contact persons was verified for 799 hospitals.

Verifying Telephone Service Availability for Proposed Returning Offices

The uncertain date for the upcoming election call presented a significant challenge to the preparations for opening returning offices in every riding. Not only must office space for 308 ROs be found in short order after an election call, but adequate telephone service and IT connectivity must be verified for all potential offices. These facilities are essential, not just for service to the public, but also for election management. ROs must be able to download data and instructions from Elections Canada, and send back daily reports on their activities, through the Event Management System.

As happened in previous elections, a number of factors combined to cause significant delays in getting telephone systems up and running. Some ROs had trouble locating, on very short notice, an office that could accommodate the current telecommunications infrastructure; the various telephone companies responsible for verifying phone line capacity for offices across the country were unable to complete this process before the election call; and in a number of cases, office space that had been verified became unavailable at the last minute.

Despite these challenges, 237 offices were functional within seven days of the election call, although problems with suppliers delayed the remainder for another three days to a week. While our telephone company agreements specify that phone systems must be operational within 48 hours of an address being provided, final installations for this election were not completed until December 12 – two weeks after the issue of the writs. Returning offices cannot be managed without telephones and computers, and Elections Canada is exploring options that will prevent or reduce similar problems and delays in future elections.

2.2.4 Systems and Information Technology

The use of information and communications technology has increased significantly and become more centralized in the last few general elections. Not only has Elections Canada had to “retrofit” our systems but, more importantly, we have had to plan for and invest in new, more efficient and more appropriate communications and information systems.

The period from July 2004 to November 2005 was used to correct deficiencies in functionality or performance in Elections Canada's software and hardware detected during the 2004 election. Some 150 improvements to the suite of systems used by returning office staff were completed by March 1, 2005, permitting the standard six months of extensive testing required to minimize the risk of software problems arising during an election.

In the fall of 2005, Elections Canada prepared various data sets for delivery to the field servers for use in the upcoming election. These included, for each of the 308 electoral districts, the preliminary lists of electors for that district, the full national lists of electors (to allow for electors moving between electoral districts), polling site locations and landlord contact information, election worker data from the previous election and election budgets.

Additionally, our suite of 34 electronic operational manuals (ECDocs), designed for use by election officers and office staff, was updated – and provided on CD-ROM, a convenience to which users responded favourably in 2004. The most recent version of ECDocs was made available on November 29 – the day the writs were issued – allowing updated copies to be printed locally as needed.

2.3 Electoral Geography

Central to a successful election is assigning electors to their electoral districts and polling divisions. The electoral district determines the candidates for whom electors can vote; the polling division determines the site where they vote. This work relies on two geographic databases, which are also the foundation for many of Elections Canada's publications and computerized systems.

The first is the National Geographic Database, which contains streets and geographical features, such as rivers. Developed and maintained jointly with Statistics Canada, this database was central to our preparations for the 39th general election, and it will also benefit Statistics Canada during the 2006 census.

The second is the Electoral Geography Database, which contains cartographic representations of Canada's 308 electoral districts, with 58,202 polling division boundaries and 3,379 advance polling districts. With its digitized boundary information, this database is essential for electoral mapping and the process of linking electors through their residential addresses to an electoral district and a polling division, also known as geocoding. Ongoing improvements to the currency and accuracy of street names, and urban and rural address ranges, significantly facilitated this process in our election preparations.

The two databases were also used to produce 69,752 original maps, plus various geographic documents, more than a half million copies of which were distributed to ROs and candidates during the election. All political parties received national map sets in electronic format on a single DVD, thereby greatly reducing paper copy requirements.

A new tool called GeoExplore gave access to both databases throughout the agency, to ROs and field liaison officers, and to political parties. This Web-based application allows users to locate civic addresses, streets, municipalities, postal codes, electoral districts, polling divisions and polling sites anywhere in the country. It also provides access to the latest maps and reports produced by our Electoral Geography Division.

Boundary Redistribution for Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi

On February 24, 2005, Parliament passed Bill C-36, *An Act to change the boundaries of the Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi electoral districts*. An electoral boundaries commission was established to readjust the boundaries between these two ridings. It ultimately moved 15 polling divisions from Miramichi to Acadie–Bathurst, affecting some 5,200 electors. On May 2, 2005, the Chief Electoral Officer published a notice in the *Canada Gazette* indicating that Elections Canada had completed the necessary preparations to accommodate these changes when they came into force at the start of the 39th general election.

Electoral District Name Changes

Name changes to 38 electoral districts came into force on September 1, 2004, with the passage of Bill C-20, *An Act to change the names of certain electoral districts*. In addition, Bill C-302, *An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Kitchener–Wilmot–Wellesley–Woolwich*, and Bill C-304, *An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Battle River*, received royal assent on February 24, 2005.

In each case, Elections Canada completed the necessary administrative work to accommodate the changes. In May 2005, given that 40 electoral district names had been changed since the Representation Order of 2003 came into effect, and due to the boundary change in New Brunswick, the Chief Electoral Officer reprinted and distributed provincial atlases, official federal electoral district maps of Canada and the provinces, street indexes and the *Guide to Federal Electoral Districts: Excerpts* – at a cost of some \$200,000.

2.4 Voter Registration

Before Canadians can vote, they must be registered on the list of electors for the polling division in which they reside. Preliminary lists of electors for each electoral district in Canada are based on data from the National Register of Electors, which Elections Canada updates regularly with information from federal, provincial and municipal sources. An elector who has recently moved, turned 18 or acquired Canadian citizenship, however, might not be listed or may be listed at a former address. Electors finding themselves in such a situation can register during an election by contacting their local returning office. They can also register before voting at the advance polls or on election day.

Register and List Quality Initiatives

Improving Address Accuracy

In 2005, Elections Canada made it a priority to achieve more complete and geographically precise addresses for electors in rural areas.

Voters lists received from our electoral partners in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta enabled us to add detailed legal land descriptions (including section, township, range and meridian information) for more than 305,000 electors – a tenfold increase since the

2004 general election. Similarly, over 53,000 electors in rural Ontario were given detailed lot- and concession-type addresses in our database; we took them from driver's licence files received from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

In each case, geocoding, the means of assigning electors to the correct electoral district and polling division, has proved extremely accurate, and it has contributed significantly to improving the overall accuracy of the lists. These improvements were reflected in the annual lists of electors sent to members of the House of Commons and political parties on October 15, 2005.

Addresses are linked – or georeferenced – to the cartographic street network of the National Geographic Database, which provides precise geographic coordinates. Since 2000, improvements in how addresses and digital maps are validated and corrected have raised the georeferencing rate from 65 percent to over 91 percent of all addresses. This in turn allows electors at these addresses to be more accurately assigned to the correct electoral district and polling division.

Direct Mail

In the summer of 2005, Elections Canada removed duplicate entries from the Register, a task done periodically between elections. Duplicate entries in the Register can be created when a data source indicates a new elector at a certain address and we are unable to match to an elector already in the Register. Often these cases are caused by elector records with missing or incomplete dates of birth. Records identified as being a definite duplicate to another elector record are removed from the Register. When records are identified as being likely duplicates, but we lack certainty, they are not removed immediately; rather, we write to those electors to obtain confirmation of the correct address.

In November 2005, Elections Canada wrote to some 196,000 electors to confirm their information in the Register. Under subsection 52(2) of the *Canada Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer may remove the record of any elector to whom he has written and who does not respond within 60 days. Some 45,000 of these letters came back undeliverable, indicating that a true duplicate pair existed and that the elector no longer lived at the address to which we had written. Such records were removed from the Register and subsequent lists of electors during the 39th general election. Analysis of the remaining 151,000 elector records will be resumed later in 2006 and any records for which no reply was received, and which were not updated during the 39th general election, will be removed from the Register.

Targeted Revision

Targeted revision is the process of going door to door early in the election period, in areas where a high percentage of voters may not have been included on preliminary lists or may be listed at a former address, and registering these electors. We identify target areas for revision through an analysis of the Register to compile a list of addresses to and from which residents have moved frequently in the past. Assignments completed by returning officers (ROs) help to identify additional areas to target, including new housing

developments and institutions with a high turnover of residents. Address lists are assembled before the issue of the writs so that ROs can plan for the resources they will need to conduct targeted revision during the election.

In preparation for the election, Elections Canada continued to work with ROs to create a detailed targeted revision strategy. ROs had two separate opportunities, in April and September 2005, to review and suggest changes to their data for the targeted revision CD-ROM tool. Elections Canada's central database was updated with the revised lists of addresses to target, then used to establish targeted revision forecasts. These in turn were used for Event Management System reporting, for the Statement of Quality documents used by ROs and shared with candidates, and finally for targeted revision budgets.

Initiatives to Register Target Groups

Included in voter registration initiatives are specific groups of electors whose voting rate has been historically lower than that of the general electorate. This section reviews Elections Canada's efforts to ensure registration among electors in these groups.

Youth

From January to March 2005, Elections Canada wrote to potential new electors aged 18 to 24, who were identified from Canada Revenue Agency and driver's licence records, reminding them of their right to vote and recommending that they take steps to ensure they were registered for voting in upcoming federal elections. The recipients of the mailing were some 186,000 young electors who were not in the Register. A registration kit was included in their mail packages. A similar mailing was done between June and August 2005 to another 135,000 youths who were not in the Register. Some 78,000 young people responded to these two mailings and requested to be added to the Register; an additional 72,000 were later confirmed to be eligible using provincial lists and were added in time to appear on the preliminary lists of electors. As was done at the 2004 election, youths who had not responded before the issue of the writs (171,000 in total) were sent a notice soon after the election started, encouraging them to register locally to vote.

Homeless Persons

As an assignment in 2005, ROs were asked to confirm the telephone numbers and addresses of shelters for the homeless in their electoral districts and to validate the information provided. This involved, among other things, confirming the number of beds and making arrangements for shelters to provide proof of address to help homeless electors register to vote. See section 3.3.1, *Informing Electors*, for further details.

Incarcerated Electors

Elections Canada also developed new strategies to strengthen the voting process in correctional institutions. A number of support network personnel were assigned to answer questions specifically from correctional facility liaison officers, who are appointed by the responsible provincial and federal ministers for each such facility in Canada. We asked corrections officials to provide us with updated lists of correctional

centres and names of liaison officers. Facilities with more than 250 inmates were asked to appoint multiple liaison officers to ensure that each inmate had the opportunity to register and vote.

2.5 The Voter Information Service

For the 38th general election, Elections Canada added a new component to the Voter Information Service: an automated Voice Response System (VRS). It has the ability to greet people calling our national toll-free number, recognize what they are asking for and produce the answers from a comprehensive database.

A pre-election study of the VRS and practical experience gained during the 2004 election indicated the need for numerous usability improvements and a greater diversity of system commands.

We prepared to implement many of these improvements for the 39th general election. Main menus were reworked, and the system was configured to provide key hiring information for election workers and to allow job applicants to apply for positions through the Internet. In addition, reporting was improved to provide more detailed statistics on VRS usage.

2.6 Preparations for Political Financing

In preparing for the 39th general election, we applied annual adjustments to the electoral contributions and expenses limits, and we ensured that all political entities were informed through the publication of this information on Elections Canada's Web site.

The limits on political contributions are adjusted before April 1 of each year to factor in inflation figures published by Statistics Canada. Elections Canada published the contribution limits in the *Canada Gazette* on March 26, 2005.

On October 15 of each year, the Chief Electoral Officer calculates the maximum candidate election expenses limits as if an election were to be held. These limits are sent to each member of Parliament, to each party that endorsed a candidate in the last general election and to anyone else upon request.

Third-party spending limits are adjusted for inflation by April 1 of each year, based on inflation figures published by Statistics Canada. Third-party spending limits, published at www.elections.ca, were in effect for any election called between April 1, 2005, and March 31, 2006.

Elections Canada maintains a number of tools and guidance materials to assist political entities in completing their financial transactions returns in compliance with the finance provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. Based on comments and experience from the 38th general election and 2004 reporting, the Electronic Financial Return software application that we provide to registered political entities was updated, and a revised version was distributed on February 25, 2005.

All tools and guidance materials were distributed to registered political entities in electronic format (CD-ROM or DVD) and were also made available on-line at www.elections.ca.

2.7 The 39th General Election Is Launched

The minority government continued to hold throughout the fall of 2005, until November 28, when it failed to win a vote of confidence. On November 29, the 38th Parliament of Canada was dissolved by Governor General Michaëlle Jean.

On December 2, 2005, the Chief Electoral Officer, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, appeared at a press conference to launch the 39th general election. He assured electors that Elections Canada would do everything possible to make it easy for Canadians to vote and highlighted the voting options available to electors away from home. After a brief review of the election calendar and mention of the voter information card, Elections Canada's Web site and the Voter Information Service, Mr. Kingsley ended with the pronouncement: "My fellow Canadians, Elections Canada is open for service!"

3. Conducting the 39th General Election of January 2006

Introduction

As the starting point of democracy, elections must be administered with strict deference to the basic values of fairness, transparency and participation. In this chapter, we look at Elections Canada's efforts to administer the 39th general election in a manner that would serve the needs of electors, candidates, parties and election officials according to these values of democratic tradition.

3.1 Managing the Election

While administrators face significant tests at every election, two challenges in particular characterized the 39th general election – both related to its timing. The first was the extended duration of the election calendar, which included the holiday season; the second, the fact that voting would take place, for the first time in 25 years, in the heart of a Canadian winter.

Both of these factors were anticipated in Elections Canada's planning scenarios. Extensive preparations were made by Elections Canada and returning officers (ROs) so that all necessary adjustments to the agency's management process could be efficiently applied upon the issue of the writs.

3.1.1 The Election Management Process

Delivering an election imposes a demanding schedule – the master plan for a general election outlines thousands of tasks to be accomplished within tight, specific time frames. It takes tested procedures and expert staff to meet the many deadlines set out in the calendar, much of which is specifically prescribed in the *Canada Elections Act*.

Nevertheless, during every general election, unexpected events occur. Elections Canada has a management process in place to assess such events and produce a fast response.

Event Management Framework

For the 39th general election, we once again used the Event Management Framework (EMF), a governance model proven in the 2004 election. Management information was supplied by three primary sources: the Event Management System (EMS), the field liaison officers (FLOs) and specialized task forces.

Central to managing an election is the EMS. This sophisticated executive information system monitors our performance of all key election activities, both at Elections Canada and in the field, providing a comprehensive daily report. Each morning throughout the election, the Executive Committee, chaired by the Chief Electoral Officer, met to review the EMS presentation.

The EMS draws data overnight from numerous Elections Canada systems, external systems and the returning offices. Results are compared with performance targets and forecasts, and exceptions are flagged for information and management action. Statistics are plotted against previous elections to facilitate decision making and planning. The

EMS tracks all aspects of the election, including activity milestones, revision and targeted revision, the performance and statistics of communication systems (telephone and Web), public inquiries and the Elections Canada Support Network, among others. While the primary output of the EMS is the daily report to the Executive Committee, it also provides daily information to managers, ROs and FLOs.

In addition to the information provided by the EMS, the Executive Committee considered and acted upon various “alerts,” which often arose from our analyses of emerging news stories, media trends or reports from FLOs. The Executive Committee also received briefings when necessary from task forces specializing in field applications, data integrity and voter information services. Drawn from experts across the agency, these teams were responsible for detecting problems, identifying solutions, analyzing for feasibility, impact and risk, and taking all the relevant information to the Executive Committee for consideration and decisions.

The Role of Field Liaison Officers

This network of experienced election practitioners, who live in or near the ridings they support, provided the Executive Committee with insight into the progress of the election at the local level, complementing the statistical data from the EMS.

A team of five advisors and three analysts worked at Elections Canada in Ottawa to support FLOs in their daily activities. FLOs reported on the status of activities in their regions to the analysts through four conference calls a day (one each with the Atlantic, Ontario, Quebec and West regions), six days a week. A total of 169 (compared with 164 in 2004) risks and problems were reported to the Executive Committee during the election at its daily briefings. All were resolved quickly.

Once again, the Field Liaison Officer Program proved to be an asset, providing the Executive Committee with useful qualitative assessments. FLOs were able to provide local support to all their ROs and follow up, as directed by the Executive Committee, where situations required their leadership, troubleshooting and coaching skills.

In addition, FLOs helped support regional and local media, in co-operation with regional media relations advisors contracted by Elections Canada. They responded to 327 media requests during the election.

3.1.2 Longer Election Calendar

The *Canada Elections Act* sets a minimum period of 36 days for an election, but does not specify a maximum length. With the election being called at the end of November and polling day falling on January 23, 2006, the 39th general election would cover 55 days, spanning holiday dates for most Canadians. This had a number of consequences.

Impact on Planning

The major events of an election – the opening of returning offices, distribution of the lists of electors, nomination of candidates, advance voting and so forth – are fixed, by law, to occur a specific number of days after the election call or before polling day, regardless of how long the election period is. A number of other administrative tasks, however, can be carried out at any appropriate point in the election calendar. With this election's 55-day calendar, Elections Canada had to plan the best time for each task – which could only be done once the writs were issued – taking into account the need to reach electors during the holidays and the related busy season for the mail system.

The many interdependent tasks that make up an election are mapped out in aides-mémoire identifying key activities that must occur, at Elections Canada and in the 308 ridings, on each day of the normal 36-day election period. These calendars of events, also embedded in the EMS, are used to track and report performance. The RO's, automation coordinator's and financial officer's aides-mémoire are checklists they use to plan and deliver the election in their ridings. Consequently, it was critical to adjust and distribute revised aides-mémoire to reflect the 55-day calendar immediately after the election call.

The extended election period also necessitated revision of the RO budgets to reflect the increased resources required to serve electors and candidates for a longer period of time. Elections Canada staff reviewed the expanded requirements for each position in the RO office and augmented the budgets as appropriate.

Modified Tariff of Fees

Under subsection 542(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, the Governor in Council may make a tariff, on the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendation, to set the allowable fees, costs, allowances and expenses to be paid to ROs and other persons employed in an election.

Before the election, the Governor in Council approved adjustments recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer to the tariff of fees for all election officers and workers to compensate for inflation since the previous adjustments of March 2004.

In accordance with paragraph 4(b) of the *Federal Elections Fees Tariff*, the Chief Electoral Officer authorized the payment of an additional sum during the election to compensate certain election officers and workers affected by the longer election calendar. He also authorized a rate increase for certain election officers and workers in the three Northern territories.

3.1.3 Conducting a Winter Election

The general election of January 23, 2006, was Canada's first in some 25 years to be held in the winter months; this presented Elections Canada with challenges we rarely face. To ensure that Canadians could exercise their democratic right regardless of weather conditions, the agency revised existing plans and implemented new ones.

Planning

Throughout the winter election period, Elections Canada closely monitored weather alerts from Environment Canada to ensure that we could provide uninterrupted service. ROs and FLOs also negotiated with school boards and office owners to make sure that buildings would remain accessible to electors in stormy weather.

Given that the uncertainty of weather conditions would increase the likelihood that more voters would turn up at advance polls, the Chief Electoral Officer used his power to adapt the *Canada Elections Act* to increase the number of election officers staffing those polls.

Extra efforts were made to reach out to the potential 200,000 snowbirds temporarily outside the country and ensure that they could vote by mail-in ballot. (See section 3.3.1, Informing Electors.)

The holiday season presented certain opportunities, such as the typical increase in movie theatre patronage. Elections Canada took advantage of this by advertising in cinemas across the country throughout the campaign, optimizing the visibility of our messages at relatively low cost.

Preparing for Major Incidents

The timing of the election spurred Elections Canada to establish a Major Incidents Task Force. While it focused largely on dealing with weather-related problems, the task force also prepared to respond to any major incident that might affect the electoral process. To monitor events across the country, we obtained the assistance of organizations such as Environment Canada, Canada Post Corporation, and Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada.

On election day, the Major Incidents Task Force monitored and coordinated our response to the power outage in the electoral district of Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River (Saskatchewan). (See section 3.6.3, Voting on Election Day, for details.) The task force initiative was found to be useful, and it will be repeated for the 40th general election.

In the Event of a Disaster

As part of its major incident readiness activities, Elections Canada posted a notice on its Web site explaining the operation of section 59 of the *Canada Elections Act*. This provision addresses situations in which, by reason of flood, fire or other disaster, it is impracticable to carry on an election. The Web site also had a collection of video interviews with the Chief Electoral Officer, discussing the challenges of a winter election.

Cancelling an election in any electoral district is only a very last resort, when continuing the proceedings is clearly impossible. If the Chief Electoral Officer concludes that voting cannot take place, he signs a certificate to this effect and sends it to the Governor in Council (the Governor General acting on the advice of Cabinet). If this body concurs, it withdraws the writ for the electoral district or districts in question. A news release advises the public of the decision; parties and ROs are notified as well.

Within the next three months, the Chief Electoral Officer must issue a new writ for the affected district or districts, with a new election day no later than three months following the issue of the new writ. Such a situation constitutes a new election in the affected districts; it must therefore last a minimum of 36 days, with new spending limits allocated for candidates and parties.

3.2 Field Staff in Action

Field staff are the hands-on facilitators of an election. It is their front-line efforts in each riding that most concretely define the electoral experience for both electors and candidates. This section recounts the steps taken, under the guidance of Elections Canada, to open returning offices, establish polling sites and hire additional staff to manage the 39th general election at the electoral district level. We also examine certain problems that arose as a first step toward improving field procedures in future elections.

3.2.1 Opening Returning Offices

Section 6 of the *Canada Elections Act* presumes that ROs will not open their offices until after the drop of the writ. However, an operational returning office must meet demanding technological requirements and provide level access. If ROs are to open their offices promptly, they must locate appropriate facilities, and have them certified by telephone companies to ensure they meet our requirements, well before the election call. (Please see section 2.2.3, Pre-election Assignments, for more detail.)

ROs in 74 ridings must also establish offices for between one and four additional assistant returning officers (AAROs). These additional satellite offices are set up in key population centres within geographically large ridings that have several concentrations of electors. While the requirements for AARO offices are less stringent than for RO offices – requiring just 4 telephone lines rather than the average of 25 lines that are normal for RO offices – they tend to be located in more remote areas and are consequently a challenge for shipping and installation. For the 2006 election, 111 AARO offices were needed in addition to the 308 RO offices.

These facts, combined with pending confidence motions in the House, prompted the Chief Electoral Officer to instruct ROs to prepare to take possession of their offices and be ready to sign leases for December 1, 2005, upon notification from Elections Canada. This date was subsequently advanced to November 21.

By the end of the day on November 29, 2005, following the issue of the writs, all 308 ROs were able to send confirmation of readiness to Elections Canada and open their offices to the public. Some did not yet have computer and telephone installations, but staff were on hand to assist electors who came to the office to obtain registration or special ballot voting services.

Nonetheless, locating, certifying and leasing 308 RO offices and 111 AARO offices for a two- to three-month period immediately following the election call presented a significant logistical and operational challenge for Elections Canada and our private sector partners. It was especially difficult in some urban centres where office vacancy rates were near zero. Elections Canada is exploring different approaches to address this challenge prior to the next election.

Computer and Telephone Systems

Computer delivery and installation was completed by December 7. Our equipment, which has served us through three elections since its purchase in 1998, will require attention as we upgrade our information technology infrastructure. Hardware replacement planning has begun, along with an initiative to upgrade all field applications to work on a new platform by June 2007.

Elections Canada's main systems became active, from the public's perspective, on November 29, 2005, when the Voter Information Service's Web and telephony components went live, allowing electors to get critical information about the election.

Returning Office Hours of Operation

In accordance with the *Canada Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer specifies when ROs and staff must be present in the returning office, based on scheduled activities. During an election period, ROs must be in their offices Monday through Friday, and be able to return to the office quickly on Saturdays, to conduct planning, deal with financial matters and serve the public, political parties and candidates. In the RO's absence, the assistant returning officer (ARO) must be present. Each returning office must be open for a minimum number of hours each day – typically 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Saturdays and noon through 4:00 p.m., Sundays, with a few extended hours for specific statutory obligations.

Electors can register for the special ballot at the office of the returning officer (in person, by fax or by mail) until 6:00 p.m. on the sixth day before election day, with completed ballots due by 6:00 p.m. on election day. Hence, the *Canada Elections Act* does not allow returning offices to be closed on any day during an election, including statutory holidays. For this reason, during the 39th general election, returning offices were open to the public on the statutory holidays of December 25 and 26, 2005, and January 1, 2006, with

Sunday hours in effect. Throughout these holiday shifts, the RO or ARO remained available by telephone when not in the office.

Many electors chose to vote at the returning office before departing on vacation, when it was more convenient for them, and electors across Canada made extensive use of returning office services during the holidays. On December 25, returning offices processed 9,275 registrations and address changes, an additional 779 on December 26 and 10,758 on January 1, 2006. As well, returning offices answered phone inquiries from electors who called returning offices directly. On December 25, ROs fielded 763 telephone inquiries. The ROs dealt with 1,495 calls on December 26 and with 2,569 more calls on January 1, 2006.

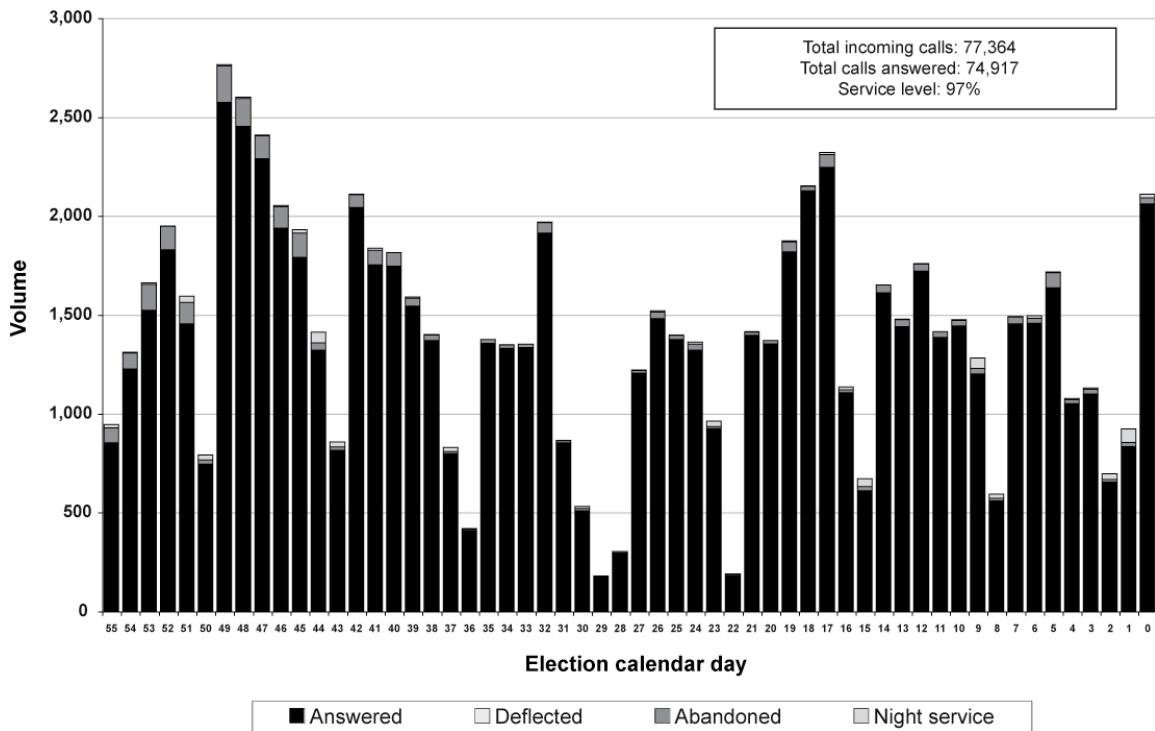
The Elections Canada Support Network

The Elections Canada Support Network (ECSN) in Ottawa assists ROs and their staff with the day-to-day administration of an election. Network agents were available during field office hours across time zones throughout the election. Field staff could contact the ECSN by telephone, e-mail or fax – or by forwarding a request through a computerized call-tracking system. Approximately 120 advisors provided three levels of expertise, up to 17 hours a day, seven days a week. ECSN staff received training in customer service, telephone systems and HelpVisiion (the ECSN's call-tracking application), as well as an overview of Elections Canada's policies and procedures. Advisors also received comprehensive, content-specific training for their particular Help desk. For example, those working at the Revision Systems Help desk learned the software applications used for revision at Elections Canada and in the field.

To augment these resources, Elections Canada had established partnerships in 2000 with provincial electoral offices, which could provide experienced, knowledgeable staff. Once again in 2005, we recruited staff, many of whom had prior experience working at the ECSN, from the provincial electoral offices. Additional, temporary front-line advisors were recruited from a pool of former federal ROs or AROs across Canada, or from the National Capital Region using a competitive process, through the Public Service Commission, to fill the remaining vacancies at the ECSN.

The ECSN dealt with 77,364 phone calls and e-mails during the election, compared with 82,158 in 2004, a decrease of some 4,000, despite the fact that the electoral period was 19 days longer in 2006. Of the 2006 total, 74,917 were answered immediately, yielding a response rate of 97 percent – 12 percent above the general service standard of 85 percent, and a 4 percent improvement over 2004. The support network answered an average of 1,294 queries a day, representing a 37 percent reduction from the 2,067 calls averaged daily during the June 2004 election – likely resulting from a combination of improved field staff training, the close proximity of the previous election and the extended electoral calendar. The greatest number of calls came on the 49th day before election day, December 5, which was the first Monday following the election call; on that day, a total of 2,758 calls were received, with a response rate of 81 percent within the first 18 seconds.

Figure 3.1 Call Traffic Analysis – 39th General Election, 2006



Extracted from Event Management System

Establishing Polling Sites

During their pre-election assignments, ROs had access to Elections Canada’s national inventory of polling facilities. They identified suitable locations for polling sites in their ridings and entered them into computers provided for home use by Elections Canada. Once the writs were issued, the data became available on-line. Returning office staff contacted landlords to verify the availability of each polling location. They then confirmed the chosen sites in the computer application and assigned polling stations to each of the sites. Leases were then signed. Once polling sites had been confirmed, the data became available through the Elections Canada Voter Information Service on the Web, and was used to produce the artwork of the voter information card for each polling station.

For the 39th general election, ROs set up 60,795 polls at 14,917 polling locations on election day, in addition to the 1,311 mobile polls set up to serve 3,719 individual institutions where disabled or elderly electors resided. As well, 3,371 advance polls were established in 2,767 poll locations. Each poll served an average of 352 electors.

Table 3.1 Polls and Poll Locations

Type of Poll	38th General Election, 2004		39th General Election, 2006	
	Poll Locations	Polls	Poll Locations	Polls
Ordinary	14,925	59,514	14,917	60,795
Advance	2,702	3,235	2,767	3,371
Mobile	3,172	1,110	3,719	1,311

Table 3.2 Polling Stations – Facility Types

Facility Type	Ordinary Polls		Advance Polls	
	2004	2006	2004	2006
Apartment building	2.4%	6.1%	2.0%	2.1%
Band office	0.2%	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%
Church hall	13.1%	12.3%	17.1%	18.8%
Commercial site	2.1%	2.2%	5.7%	5.4%
Community centre	25.7%	28.8%	33.8%	33.6%
Educational facility	40.1%	27.9%	15.4%	15.1%
Federal building	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
Fire hall	1.2%	2.1%	1.5%	1.5%
Hospital	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Municipal or township hall	3.4%	5.4%	8.0%	7.3%
Other	3.3%	3.2%	4.8%	4.5%
Post office	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Private home	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Recreation centre	3.5%	2.6%	4.5%	4.2%
Royal Canadian Legion	1.5%	1.8%	2.1%	3.3%
Seniors residence	3.2%	6.3%	4.3%	3.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Challenges Associated with Setting Up Polling Stations in Schools

Schools have traditionally been used as polling stations. They are centrally located and well known within residential communities, have suitable facilities and are often the only public buildings available. However, gaining access to schools during the academic year has grown more difficult in recent years. As shown in Table 3.2, the percentage of ordinary polls in educational facilities dropped from 40.1 percent in the 38th general election to 27.9 percent in the 39th. The most common reasons include concerns for student security and the fact that space is already used at maximum capacity during the school year.

For these reasons, the Chief Electoral Officer, as in 2004, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Toronto District and Toronto Catholic District school boards, giving 23 ROs access to nearly 400 schools for polling stations in the Greater Toronto Area. Once again, however, a number of difficulties arose in other regions while attempting to secure polling stations in schools.

Commission scolaire de Montréal – Before the election, the school board informed the ROs and Elections Canada that it would refuse to make rooms available in schools on election day, because students had already missed many school days due to an ongoing labour dispute. The field liaison officer for the area was able to negotiate security arrangements so that polls could open while students were in school.

Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île – Some 30 schools in northeast Montréal indicated that they would not make their facilities available on election day, despite having signed leases. The school board's executive director was ultimately successful in convincing most of his principals to comply; only a small number of polling stations had to be moved. Again, the field liaison officer was able to negotiate security arrangements so that polls could open while students were in school.

Province of Manitoba – The election fell on a provincial exam day, and this led to concerns about limited access to polling stations. However, ROs reported no major problems, as the school boards were very co-operative in identifying suitable accommodations for polling stations, as needed.

Poll Initiatives at Colleges and Universities

Elections Canada mandated all ROs to examine the possibility of establishing polling stations on or near university and college campuses, where feasible. As a result, ROs reported that some 350 polling stations had been set up either on or within one kilometre of a campus.

Poll Initiatives in Aboriginal Communities

ROs were encouraged to seek the approval of local First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders – such as chiefs and band councils – where appropriate, to place polls in Aboriginal communities and friendship centres. Of the 117 friendship centres in Canada, 21 were used for a total of 98 ordinary and advance polls (7 hosted 9 advance polls, and 18 hosted 89 ordinary polls). First Nations reserves, Inuit communities and Métis

settlements accounted for a total of some 600 polls. In 85 electoral districts, there was at least one poll in an Aboriginal community.

Misinformation About Polling Days and Locations

During the election, we received reports of an e-mail in circulation, bearing the Elections Canada logo and the Chief Electoral Officer's name and title, telling electors that they could vote over a two-day period. A news release was issued and posted on our Web site, advising the public that this was an illegal message; it had not come from Elections Canada, and anyone having information about its source should contact the Commissioner of Canada Elections.

Unrelated reports indicated that several candidates' materials also published incorrect information about voting procedures and locations. In the same news release, we reminded electors that Monday, January 23, 2006, was the only polling day and that Elections Canada was the official source of all voting information. The release pointed out that the polling station address and voting hours were shown on each elector's voter information card, mailed to him or her in late December, and that this information could also be obtained from the local returning office or through Elections Canada's Web site or toll-free telephone service.

The Chief Electoral Officer notes that the practice by candidates of including procedural and logistical details about voting on their distribution materials lends itself to confusion for electors and bears addressing.

Mobile Polls

Mobile polls serve institutions for seniors or persons with physical disabilities. The poll moves from one institution to another on election day, so that electors in each location can vote conveniently. This service was particularly important during the January 2006 election, given the possibility of bad weather on election day and the heightened potential for frail electors to slip and fall on their way to an ordinary polling site. ROs were directed to identify as many retirement homes as possible that could be served by mobile polls, if they had not already done so during their planning assignments, to allow more senior electors to vote in their places of residence.

Due largely to this initiative, the number of institutions served by mobile polls increased from 3,172 in 2004 to 3,719 in 2006. A total of 1,311 mobile polls were established in these facilities in 284 electoral districts. In all, 120,207 of the 210,158 registered electors in the institutions voted at mobile polls.

Table 3.3 Number of Mobile Polling Stations and Electors Served

Province or Territory	38th General Election, 2004			39th General Election, 2006		
	No. of Mobile Polling Stations	No. of Electors Served	Total Votes	No. of Mobile Polling Stations	No. of Electors Served	Total Votes
Newfoundland and Labrador	24	2,790	1,449	36	3,967	2,218
Prince Edward Island	8	987	651	8	1,143	776
Nova Scotia	27	4,477	2,515	34	6,072	3,170
New Brunswick	51	7,078	3,869	67	8,528	5,102
Quebec	275	39,058	21,824	333	50,311	27,133
Ontario	313	56,518	27,280	374	66,803	37,027
Manitoba	54	7,823	3,749	67	10,764	6,271
Saskatchewan	51	7,641	3,997	54	7,876	4,340
Alberta	149	23,958	15,574	162	28,140	18,817
British Columbia	157	20,517	13,155	175	26,474	15,317
Yukon	1	78	42	1	80	36
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,110	170,925	94,105	1,311	210,158	120,207

During the election, concerns about potential influence were raised when several political parties and candidates began soliciting special ballot applications in large numbers at seniors residences. This caused considerable confusion among seniors, since electors who apply to vote by special ballot are restricted from voting by any other means, even if a mobile poll visits the institution at which they reside. Elections Canada sent a letter to all political parties, advising them that mobile polls would be established where required.

ROs were apprised of the implications of running an election at a time of year when the flu index and common viral infections are typically higher. They were asked to keep abreast of any epidemics in institutions that could invoke a quarantine and so block access to the building by poll officials. In such an event, ROs had to be ready to modify procedures on election day – for example, by engaging on-site nursing staff to function as deputy returning officers and poll clerks, or by ensuring that poll officials had received a flu shot and donned the necessary protective clothing before entering the institution. Four facilities actually required such adjustments on election day – three in Ontario and one in Quebec.

Level Access

The *Canada Elections Act* requires ROs to ensure level access not only at their own offices, but also at all polling places. While more than 99 percent of the polling sites for the January 2006 general election already had level access, an additional 131 ramps were

needed and installed across Canada – 14 permanent and 117 temporary – at a cost of some \$160,000 to Elections Canada.

Under exceptional circumstances, the Chief Electoral Officer may approve the location of a polling station in premises without level access. During the 39th general election, only 43 (0.2 percent) of the 14,917 ordinary and 2,767 advance polling sites used did not provide level access, compared with 45 (also 0.2 percent) in the 2004 election. Voter information cards indicated whether an elector's polling site was accessible. An elector with a physical disability whose polling station did not provide level access could, until January 20, 2006, obtain a transfer certificate to vote at another polling station that did provide such access.

Information on polling sites is shared with provincial and municipal electoral organizations to expedite the process, reduce duplication of effort and, most important, maximize the possibility that electors will vote at the same location in all elections. Data on accessibility are collected in the software application that maintains Elections Canada's national inventory of electoral facilities. This inventory helps us identify accessibility problem areas so that corrective measures can be taken in advance. It also facilitates reusing sites that Elections Canada has previously paid to make accessible.

3.2.2 Recruiting Field Staff

ROs hire an average of 500–600 people each to conduct operations during an election. These personnel fall into two groups: office staff and election officers, with qualifications outlined in the *Canada Elections Act*. Recruiting and training staff has become one of the biggest challenges facing ROs in recent years. The Act provides a standard process for the recruitment of staff. Experience in recent years, however, has shown that these sources are not always able to fill all available positions. This leaves the ROs to fill positions from other sources and by other means.

During the election, 180,925 election workers (filling 205,932 positions) were recruited and trained to serve electors in returning offices and at polling stations, compared with approximately 170,000 in 2004 (filling 193,736 positions). The planned staff increase was caused by a number of factors:

- an increase in the number of names on the preliminary lists of electors – from 22,238,485 in 2004 to 22,699,291 in 2006
- growing voter turnout (expected and actual) at advance polls, from 3.5 percent in the 37th general election, to 5.5 percent in the 38th, to 6.8 percent in the 39th
- an increase in the number of election day polls (3,235 advance polls and 59,514 ordinary polls in 2004, but 3,371 advance polls and 60,795 ordinary polls in 2006)
- increased emphasis on contingency planning and hiring of additional standby workers
- the longer election calendar – 36 days in 2004 and 55 days in 2006

The specific field and local staff positions that were filled, and the number of workers needed in each case, are listed in Appendix VI of this report.

The holiday season timing of the election presented significant challenges for recruiting election staff, and Elections Canada developed a number of initiatives to assist ROs in this process.

Field liaison officers (FLOs) were briefed to help ROs advertise for election officers by various means, including classified and print ads, posters and public service announcements. FLOs and regional media advisors helped support the staffing process by developing advertising content with ROs and approving ad placement. To ensure that they would have enough staff to deal with calls at peak periods, ROs received statistics on reception and revision phone calls answered at the returning office in the previous election.

Additionally, anyone could submit an employment application to Elections Canada on-line, through a new feature on our Web site. The site also provided contact information for individuals wishing to seek employment with political parties. Employment forms completed on-line were forwarded to ROs for their consideration. A total of 28,822 applications for employment were received.

The *Canada Elections Act* specifies that, to be eligible for an election officer position, an individual must be a Canadian citizen 18 years of age or older. If there are insufficient applicants, however, subsection 22(5) of the Act allows the hiring of 16- and 17-year-olds, and this practice was authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer during the election. Hiring younger people might also encourage their participation in future, both as electors and as our next generation of poll officials. During the 39th general election, 248 16- and 17-year-olds were hired to fill 289 positions.

An RO's office staff are generally hired for the entire election period, and sometimes for several days afterwards. Some election officers also work for long periods of time. For example, more than 11,000 revising agents worked up to several weeks, mostly in returning offices, while additional assistant returning officers worked in their own offices under the remote supervision of the RO. The majority of election officers, however, such as poll officials, are generally hired only for the advance voting days and election day – in this case, January 13, 14, 16 and 23, 2006. All staff and election officers are required to take an oath of office confirming, among other things, that they will act impartially throughout their employment period.

ROs appointed 345 community relations officers for Aboriginal and ethnocultural communities, youth and homeless electors, based on the needs of the electoral district. (See section 3.3.1, Informing Electors, for further detail.)

ROs are directly responsible for selecting and appointing all information officers and central poll supervisors. Deputy returning officers (DROs), poll clerks and registration officers, on the other hand, are selected and appointed by ROs from lists provided by the candidates representing the parties that finished first and second locally in the previous election; revising agents are selected from lists provided by the first- and second-place

parties themselves, in accordance with section 33 of the Act. If insufficient nominations are submitted by candidates or parties within the deadlines given in the Act, ROs may solicit names from any other source.

Election officers cannot participate in partisan political activities after they commence the duties for which they have been appointed. Thus, advance poll DROs and poll clerks may not participate in partisan political activities from the first day of advance voting until they have completed the count on the evening of election day. Ordinary poll DROs and poll clerks, central poll supervisors, information officers and registration officers are restricted in their activities only on election day. The integrity of the electoral process can be assured only if these rules are closely followed.

ROs face a collective challenge when recruiting and training poll officials because, particularly in metropolitan regions, last-minute resignations are common. In remote areas, distances may render communication difficult. Indisputably, the challenge at the eleventh hour is to ensure the simultaneous opening of all polling stations in all electoral districts. This is possible only if there are enough trained poll officials on hand. The Chief Electoral Officer, therefore, instructed ROs to appoint additional poll officials as the situation warranted. As a result, 71,220 DROs were trained to work at advance, mobile and ordinary polls as well as under the Special Voting Rules (SVR). Of these workers, 3,155 were on standby to serve at ordinary polls and 602 at advance polls, as needed. If a DRO becomes unavailable, the poll clerk becomes the DRO and a new poll clerk is hired. A total of 67,886 poll clerks were trained to work at advance, mobile and ordinary polls as well as under the SVR. An additional 373 poll clerks were hired to work at advance polls only. Of the 10,388 central poll supervisors trained to work at advance and ordinary polls, 275 were on standby. Of the 14,914 election officers who were trained as registration officers, 349 were on standby. Many ROs elected to cross-train individuals so that they could work in any of these positions; this allowed greater flexibility on election day.

In recent years, Elections Canada has had difficulty recruiting election workers – particularly in areas where the unemployment rate is very low, like Fort McMurray, Alberta, where the tar sands provide high-paying jobs. We will review our strategies to find adequate numbers of suitable election workers, particularly in parts of the country where the economic situation demands specialized human resources planning.

Training Election Officers

To assist ROs in training election officers, a variety of training materials – including instruction manuals, videos and lesson plans – are provided by Elections Canada. ROs also hire one or more training officers, who are responsible for training the hundreds of officials required for the advance and ordinary polls.

This activity is time-consuming and labour-intensive. In larger electoral districts, training must take place in various locations throughout the ridings. In more urban electoral districts, the number of workers needed is extremely high. The other challenge is maintaining the workforce. Experience has shown that in some areas of the country, a significant number of workers resign before polling day, but after training. In some

ridings, up to 800 people need to be trained to retain a staff of approximately 500–600. The average electoral district provides some 160 hours of training over a 14-day period for poll officials alone – quite an undertaking in such a short period of time.

As much as possible, materials are pre-assembled by Elections Canada and shipped to ROs. Staff must then add last-minute items, such as ballots, which are printed locally, before training sessions take place. Training occurs within the last two weeks of the election period, in one or more locations in the riding. Sessions last from one to three hours and are followed by the swearing-in of poll officials and materials distribution. Once at home, DROs and poll clerks are required to inspect the materials in their ballot boxes to ensure that nothing is missing. This is particularly important in large electoral districts, where distance may prevent the distribution of additional material to the polls on voting days. These procedures require extensive planning and preparation to avoid difficulties once the polls open.

Video Conference Training

For the first time, two electoral districts made use of Web-based video conferencing to train poll officials in remote areas. This initiative came about because of concerns about potential weather disruptions for the hundreds of trainees who normally have to travel to and from the training location. The reduction in travel expenses also resulted in cost savings, without any adverse impact on the quality of the training.

Elections Canada will review the current poll official training format. The preliminary steps include formal observation and feedback from the FLOs, as well as participant evaluation forms from 31 selected electoral districts (i.e. approximately 10 percent). A report of findings will help determine how training programs can be further improved.

3.3 How We Assisted Electors

Two things must happen before electors can mark a ballot in a Canadian federal election. They must know when, where and how to vote, and they must be registered to do so. In this section, we look at how Elections Canada informed electors about exercising their right to vote and ensured that they were duly represented on the voters lists.

3.3.1 Informing Electors

Elections Canada communicates with Canadians about the electoral process both directly and through the media. For the 39th general election, our communications objectives were:

- to provide a high level of service to electors seeking information on when, where and how to vote or how to get on the voters list
- to reach all electors, especially those Canadians most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their democratic right to vote

- to improve on the results of the previous general election in processing inquiries from the public

We pursued these objectives using the voter information card and reminder card, and five additional communications tools:

1. **Voter Information Service** – Responded to queries from the public on the Web and by phone, 24 hours a day, throughout the election period.
2. **Web site** – Featured a wealth of information for the public, journalists, candidates, political parties, third parties and other political entities.
3. **Advertising campaign** – Delivered key messages to the public, and in particular youth, Aboriginal electors and Canada's ethnocultural communities, through print, television, radio and the Web.
4. **Outreach program** – Assisted targeted groups through joint initiatives and partnerships with community organizations.
5. **Media relations unit** – Handled thousands of questions from print and broadcast journalists.

In this section, we describe how Elections Canada reached Canadian electors through each of these tools.

The Voter Information Service

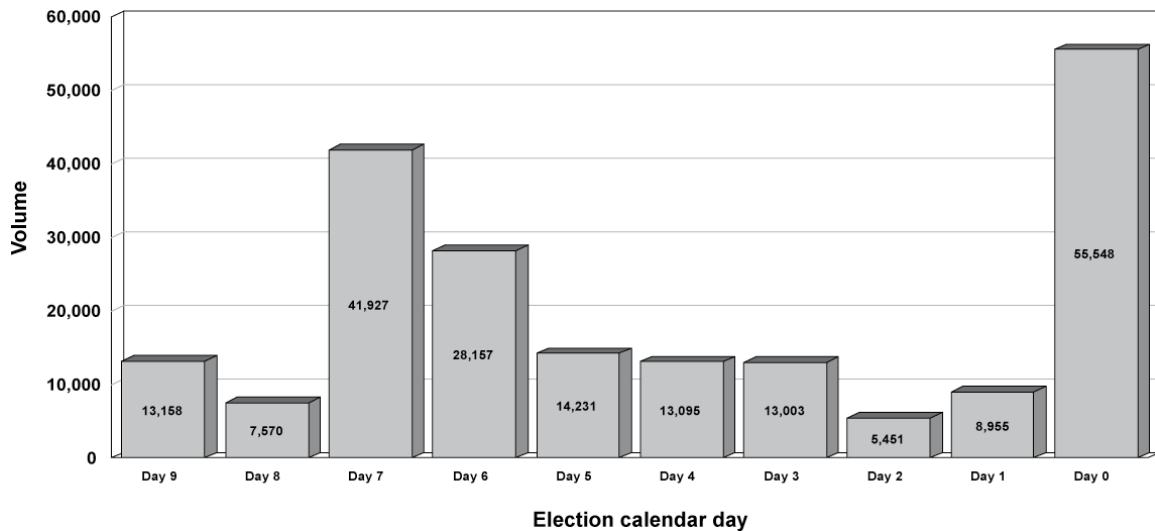
During the 39th general election, Elections Canada received 680,335 telephone inquiries, compared with 734,954 in June 2004. This 7.4 percent reduction in callers reflects the increase in use of the self-service features on the Elections Canada Web site, where traffic increased by over 116 percent in the same interval.

To handle the large volume of calls, Elections Canada once again partnered with Bell Canada to provide the Voter Information Service (VIS). As in the 2004 election, the VIS offered three self-service features:

- a self-service facility on our Web site
- an automated Web-based and speech-enabled Voice Response System (VRS)
- a partly outsourced call centre, with staff using Web-based tools, for callers who needed to speak with an agent

Electors made extensive use of these automated services throughout the election period. This alleviated communication problems in the early days, when returning offices were still being established and phone installation delays were being encountered in some areas.

**Figure 3.2 Voice Response System Call Statistics in Last 10 Days
39th General Election, 2006**



Extracted from Event Management System

Web-based Voter Information Service

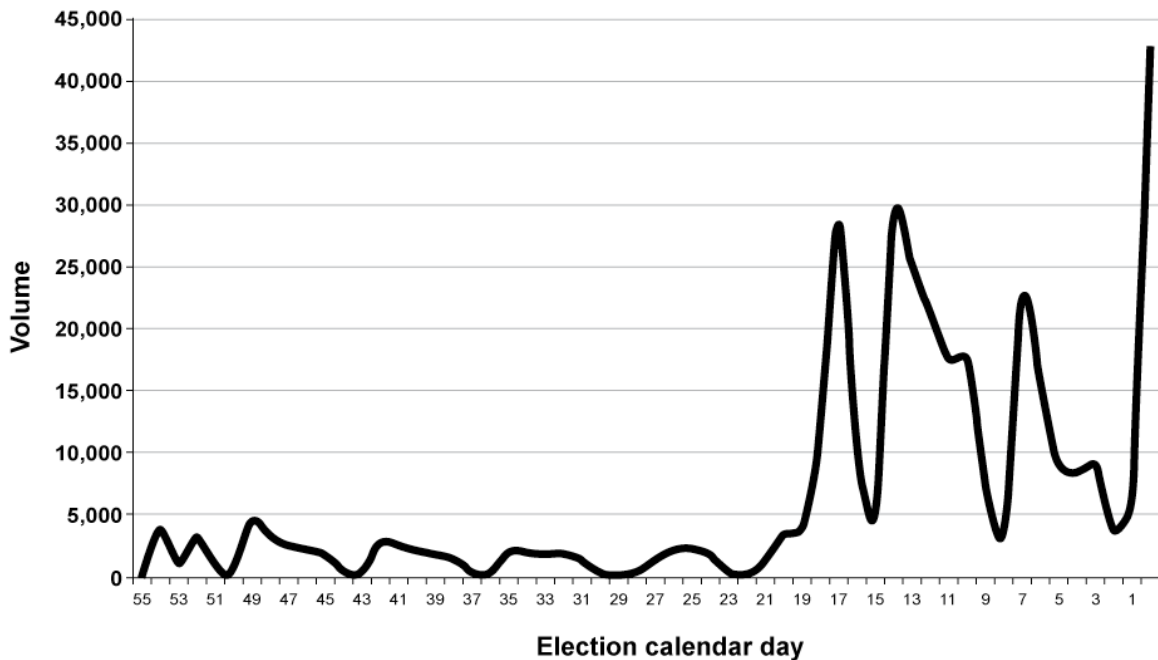
Able to provide electors with answers to their questions 24 hours a day, in a flexible and easy-to-use format, the VIS on the Elections Canada Web site received 1,465,751 visits during the 55 days of the election, compared with 676,130 in 2004. Furthermore, users of the Web-based VIS went on to surf the Elections Canada Web site for an average of eight minutes per visit.

The Voice Response System

Electors preferring to obtain information by phone could do so using Elections Canada's national toll-free number 1 800 INFO-VOTE (1 800 463-6868). Upon dialing in, all callers were initially greeted by the automated VRS.

The VRS operated 24 hours a day throughout the election period, answering all 680,335 phone calls received by the VIS. The VRS self-serve option, which enables users to obtain information without an agent, processed more than 343,550 questions, including those from electors who were automatically routed to their local returning office so they could find out whether they were registered to vote. Calls to the system spiked on the 14th day before election day, January 9, when 73,209 calls came in. This date coincided with the appearance of our main advertisement in newspapers across Canada. On election day, the VRS received 55,548 calls, compared with 57,854 in 2004.

**Figure 3.3 Calls Transferred from Voice Response System to Call Agents
39th General Election, 2006**



Extracted from Event Management System

Inquiries

At any time while connected to the VRS, callers had the option of asking to speak with a call centre agent – a choice made, in fact, by some 50 percent of all callers. This rate was higher than expected. Improvements are planned to reduce the number of agent-directed calls for the next election.

To handle the call volume, Elections Canada renewed agreements with partner call centres at Elections Ontario in Toronto and the federal government’s Canada Inquiries Centre in Ottawa. Agents were available to take calls from 7:00 a.m. through 1:00 a.m. Eastern Time throughout the 55-day election period. The extended hours ensured service to electors across the country. Staffing levels were adjusted daily, based on call demand – on election day, 294 agents were available to answer calls from the public. In the next election, further adjustments will be made to accommodate more calls on other peak-volume days. For example, on the 14th day before election day (January 9, 2006), agents were able to handle only 67 percent of the calls directed to them.

The VRS was also able to transfer a call, toll-free, to the elector’s returning office – a service it performed in 140,612 cases.

Alternatively, an elector could choose to call the local returning office directly. Elections Canada activated toll-free 1-800 lines for public access to all returning offices and additional offices. Callers could choose to speak to the staff conducting the revision of the lists of electors or to the receptionist to be transferred to another member of the returning office staff. Field staff performed extremely well, responding to

1,109,591 calls, with a response rate of 95 percent, during business hours, seven days a week. After-hours messages invited callers to call the office the next day or to call Elections Canada directly. In 2004, returning offices and satellite offices handled 1,159,352 calls.

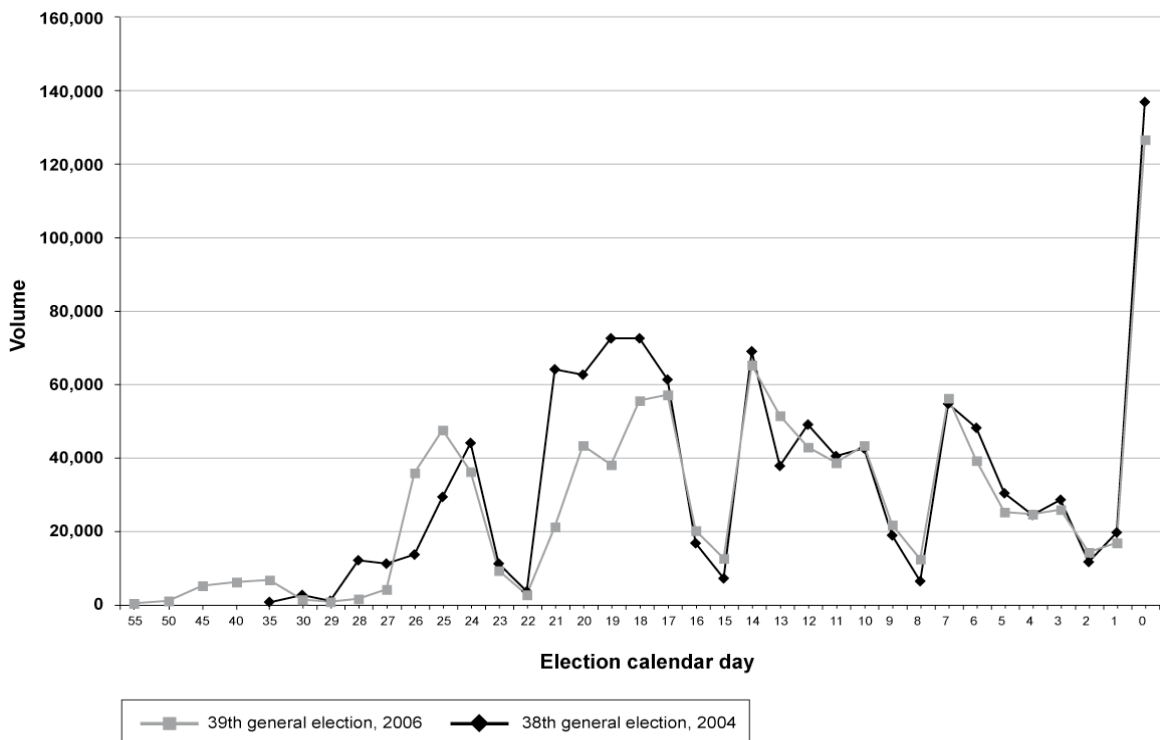
In addition, for callers who could not speak English or French, we were able to provide service in over 100 additional languages – including Aboriginal languages – by means of a three-way conversation involving an outsourced translation service and the RO or call centre agent.

Toll-free Network Level of Service

Elections Canada activated over 1,200 toll-free 1-800 lines for public access to returning offices, call centre agents and other election services during the election period. To monitor the level of service to field offices maintained by the toll-free network, system status was checked continually using real-time data analysis. If less than 85 percent of calls were being answered, the system would send an e-mail “alert” to a monitoring room and to field staff for remedial action.

Between November 29, 2005, and January 23, 2006, the system detected and forwarded a total of 8,830 such alerts. Less than 1 percent of these were considered major – i.e. when 10 or more lines were simultaneously busy or new callers received no answer over a 30-minute interval.

Figure 3.4 Calls to Returning Officers



Extracted from Event Management System

The Elections Canada Web Site

The Elections Canada Web site was a popular source of information for Canadians during the election. It doubled its daily number of visitors on election day, compared with the previous election. Where the 2004 election brought some 1.8 million visitors throughout its 36 days, the January 2006 election totalled approximately 3.3 million visits during its 55 days.

The Web site offered several new features to assist specific groups of electors:

- On the Home page, visitors were greeted with a distinctive “Snowbirds” icon, which also appeared in print ads for many popular travel destinations. The icon linked hundreds of thousands of Canadian electors who travel south each winter to a document that explained how to vote by special ballot before leaving the country or from their winter destination by mail.
- For electors with visual impairments, there was better access to both the initial splash page (where language is selected) and the Home page, where an alternative screen made it easier for them to find and use links. These improvements emerged from feedback received by our Web team, at the beginning of the election, when they met with members of various associations for people with disabilities.
- Testing by members of some of these groups also helped confirm that the Web component of our VIS, which electors could use to look up ridings, lists of candidates, ROs and polling locations, could be used by people with impaired vision. Elections Canada has identified improving the accessibility of our Web site as a priority for the next election.

Election Results at www.elections.ca

As the polls close in each electoral district on election night, poll officials count the ballots cast at their polling stations. Once the count is completed, the results are phoned in to the office of the returning officer. Simultaneously, special ballots cast locally are counted in the office of the returning officer, while advance poll officials count ballots cast a week before in their advance polling stations.

As results become available, returning office staff enter them into their computers. These results are automatically transmitted to the Media Consortium and to the Elections Canada Web site, where a computer application called Election Night Results takes over. At the close of all polls in Canada, at 10:00 p.m. Eastern Time, the public can begin to see preliminary election results on the Elections Canada Web site, updated continually in real time. Anyone with an Internet connection can view results nationally or by electoral district, major centre, province or territory, or party leader. Each results screen also provides users, in their official language of choice, with a profile for the electoral district, as well as the related voter turnout (excluding voters who registered on election day) and popular vote.

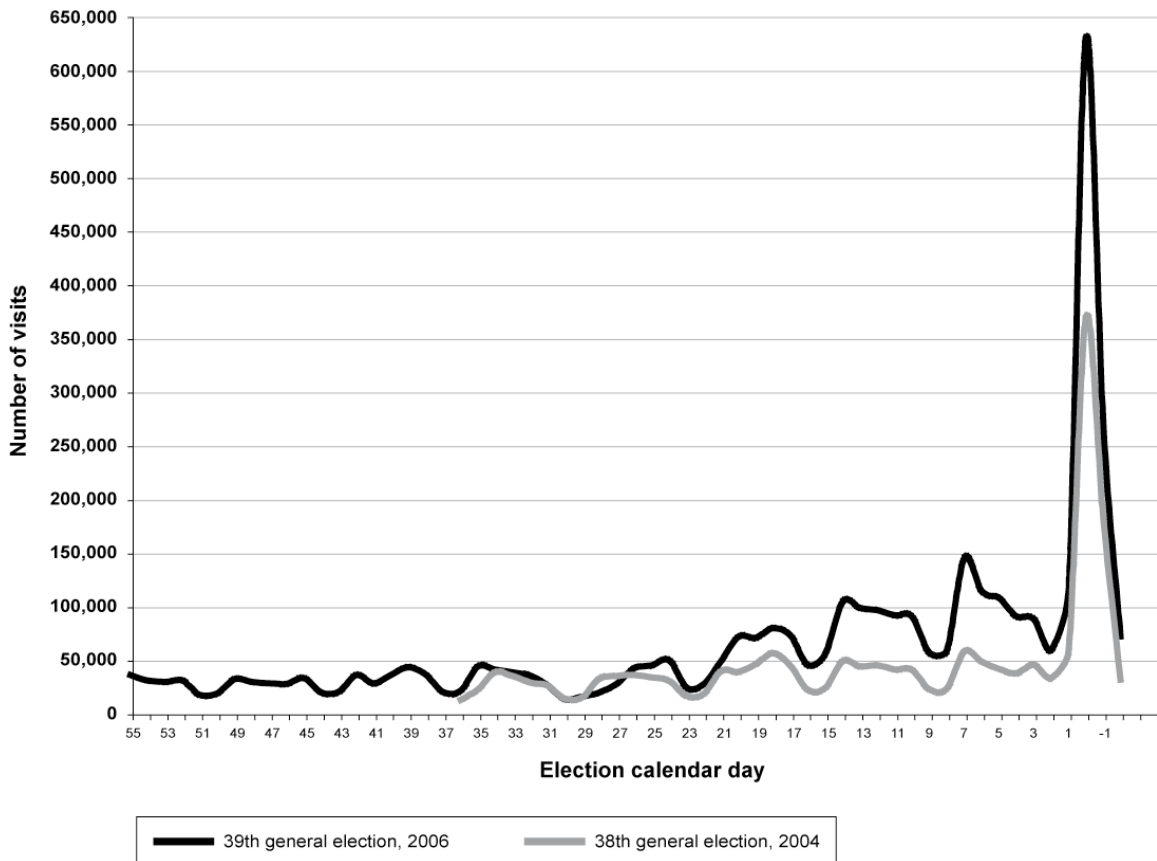
Over 120,000 visitors looked at the preliminary results on election night, with no interruption of service. The following day, another 189,556 visitors used the application.

Furthermore, recent improvements made to the Election Night Results application extended its usage to many post-election-night tasks, such as:

- publishing validated results and judicial recounts
- producing general and detailed views of judicial recounts
- allowing users to toggle back and forth between preliminary results and validated results
- downloading election results into a single database file

As in the 38th general election, a map showing the unofficial election night results was posted on the Elections Canada Web site the day after polling day. Results validated by ROs started arriving that same day and were posted on the site as they came in. On May 12, 2006, the map showing the official results of the 39th general election will be posted at www.elections.ca. Printed copies will be distributed to members of Parliament, senators and others.

Figure 3.5 Visits to the Elections Canada Web Site



Extracted from Event Management System

Advertising

Elections Canada's multimedia national advertising campaign was designed to catch the attention of as many Canadians as possible, to inform electors about voting and to motivate them to exercise their right to vote. To reach the public, we repeated our well-received 2004 advertising campaign, which centred on the theme "Why not speak up when everyone is listening?"

The campaign consisted of four distinct phases, each timed to coincide with a specific stage of the election calendar.

- **Phase 1: Election is called** – As soon as the election was called, we informed electors of the date of the election. Because of the timing of this election, a special message for snowbirds was added to this phase of our print advertisements.
- **Phase 2: Voter information cards (VICs)** – Every elector on the preliminary lists was sent a VIC, with the dates and places for advance and election day voting and other important information, like how to reach the returning officer and Elections Canada. This mailing was supported by advertisements, which advised electors to keep their card.
- **Phase 3: Advance voting** – Before the advance polls opened on January 13, 2006, we let voters know how they could vote in advance: by mail using the special ballot or in person at a returning office, or at advance poll locations in their home ridings over three days.
- **Phase 4: Election day** – Toward the end of the election period, advertisements highlighted the fact that people who had not already done so could still register on election day; this was meant to encourage them to get out and vote.

Key messages were conveyed to the public through television, radio, print and cinema advertisements, as well as Web banners. Our print ads alone appeared in 109 dailies, 752 weeklies, 94 minority-language papers, 22 ethnocultural papers and 78 student papers.

Targeted Initiatives

In addition to our general advertising campaign, Elections Canada devised special initiatives to reach certain target groups whose members were, for various reasons, less likely than the general electorate to obtain the information or have the incentive to vote.

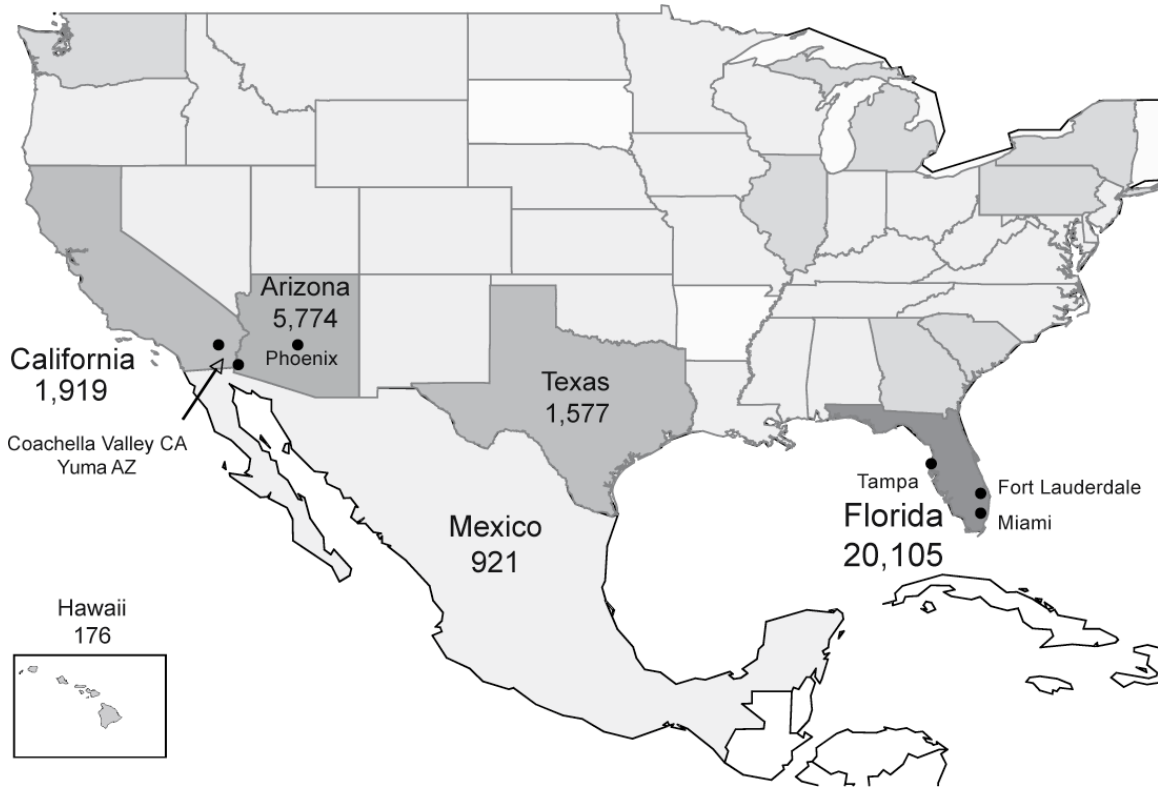
Snowbirds

Canada's first winter election in 25 years coincided with Canadians' seasonal migration to warmer climates. Elections Canada compensated with newspaper advertisements, e-mail messages and Web site announcements directed at Canadians temporarily living down south. The cost of advertising to this target group was \$260,708. To help electors take advantage of the Special Voting Rules (SVR), Elections Canada issued news releases on the first and second days of the election, describing the special ballot. Ten days before election day, we sent another reminder to the media about the impending deadline for registering to vote by special ballot.

The Canadian Snowbird Association assisted us in getting out the word, sending approximately 80,000 applications to register and vote by mail to its members vacationing outside Canada and distributing the form to Canadian communities and clubs in the United States. Elections Canada invested \$91,000 in advertising in the association's magazine and in fees paid for use of its network to send out materials. Posters and flyers promoting voting by mail were sent to regional offices of the Canadian Automobile Association, some of which included a message in e-letters sent out to its members. Our initiatives were also supported by Canada's consulates in southern U.S. states and the embassy and consulates in Mexico, whose representatives went out into their communities, distributing posters and application forms, as well as assisting Canadians with the registration process.

All told, there were 67,775 visits to the information for snowbirds on our Web site, and 36,623 application forms were downloaded. Additionally, our inquiries officers informed hundreds of callers a day about how to register and vote by mail-in ballot. About 30,472 applications were ultimately received by Elections Canada from snowbirds in the U.S. and Mexico (over 20,000 from Florida alone). This represents almost 37 percent of the 83,133 special ballot applications received from electors away from their own ridings during the election period and some 6 percent of all electors who requested ballots under the SVR. (See section 3.6.1, Special Ballots and the Special Voting Rules for further information on the SVR.)

Figure 3.6 Applications Received from Canadian Snowbirds – Concentrations in the U.S. and Mexico



Travellers

Through co-operative arrangements with 23 airport authorities, “I’m Mailing My Vote!” posters and flyers were displayed in high-traffic areas in airports across the country. The aim was to inform Canadians travelling to, from or within Canada about the option of voting by mail.

Students

The Chief Electoral Officer met or communicated with presidents of the major national student associations – including the Canadian Federation of Students, la Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec, la Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations – to discuss how to facilitate voting by students who were on campus on election day. We distributed youth voter information to the members of these student federations. We also distributed Elections Canada e-mail bulletins, news releases and other information about registration and voting for youth and students to student federations and a list of major youth organizations throughout the country.

Aboriginal Electors

The principal theme for the targeted Aboriginal advertising campaign was “I can choose to make a difference. I can vote.”

Messages developed with the assistance of an Aboriginal advertising firm were placed in 42 Aboriginal community newspapers and on 50 radio stations, the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, and the CBC North and CBC Pacific TV services. All ads were produced in English, French and Inuktitut, with transcripts available through the Elections Canada Web site in 10 additional Aboriginal languages, including Gwich'in, Nisga'a, Plains Cree, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Mohawk, James Bay Cree, Michif, Innu and Mi'kmaq.

Ethnocultural Communities

“My future, my vote” served as the central theme for Elections Canada’s campaign to reach ethnocultural groups. Messages were placed in 25 languages in ethnocultural newspapers and in 23 languages on ethnocultural radio stations. Mainstream English and French television ads were voiced-over in 12 additional languages.

As well, a voter information guide was produced in 26 languages; the number of copies requested during the election is shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4 Voter Information Guide
Multilingual Copies Requested**

Language	No. of Copies
Traditional Chinese	16,971
Simplified Chinese	15,666
Greek	5,709
Vietnamese	4,138
Arabic	3,661
Urdu	3,605
Tamil	3,171
Somali	3,066
Spanish	2,244
Hindi	2,216
Croatian	2,154
Korean	2,113
Tagalog (Filipino)	1,992
Ukrainian	1,870
Punjabi	1,630
Farsi (Persian)	1,530
Italian	1,472

Language	No. of Copies
Polish	1,143
Bengali	1,102
Gujarati	944
Russian	782
Portuguese	668
Serbian	497
German	477
Romanian	459
Hungarian	288
Total	79,568

Electors with Special Needs

Elections Canada has developed a wide range of services and information in alternative formats, explaining the many ways of voting and the assistance available to persons with special needs in exercising their right to vote.

In addition to placing ads in publications for people with special needs, distributing information kits to 35 national associations and sending order forms to approximately 2,000 local associations, we worked with several organizations to produce and deliver revised and customized information in accessible formats on such subjects as level access to polling stations, visual aids, voting aids and the option of having a designated person give assistance if requested.

Products made available for the election included key electoral information in Braille and plain language, and on video, audio-cassette and diskette; a sign-language information video, developed in co-operation with the Canadian Association of the Deaf and the Centre québécois de la déficience auditive, for distribution to members of these two organizations and to the public on request; news releases, a voter information guide and other forms of information broadcast on VoicePrint; and an animated Web presentation, developed jointly with the Movement for Canadian Literacy, intended for literacy educators to use in the classroom.

Table 3.5 Special Needs Publications Distributed

Publication	Format	No. of Copies
<i>Accessibility of the Electoral System</i>	standard	954
	large print	1,597
	Braille	197
	audio-cassette	243
	diskette	206

Publication	Format	No. of Copies
<i>Other Ways to Vote</i>	standard	1,348
	large print	1,418
	Braille	192
	audio-cassette	208
	diskette	201
<i>Voting in a Federal Election</i>	plain language	4,325

Remote Camp Workers

In January 2006, special communication and outreach initiatives were conducted in 31 remote camps in the Fort McMurray area in Alberta. These initiatives informed up to 10,000 transient workers, some 95 percent of whom were from outside the electoral district, about their voting options. The Chief Electoral Officer wrote to the camp managers to ask for their support and enclosed a notice to inform electors that they had a number of options for voting: at home on their days off; on advance voting days; on election day; in the Fort McMurray–Athabasca election office by special ballot; or by mail, using the special ballot, forms for which could be obtained in the camps themselves or from the Elections Canada Web site. Ottawa staff visited the area to meet with the returning officer (RO) and assistant returning officer, as well as the Northern Alberta field liaison officer and regional media representative, to ensure that established procedures were followed.

Reaching Electors in the Community

Certain groups in Canadian society, including Aboriginal peoples, youth, ethnocultural communities and homeless electors, have historically participated in federal elections at lower rates than other electors. In the 39th general election, Elections Canada did more than ever before to disseminate information and facilitate access to the democratic process by members of these groups. Certain Elections Canada initiatives, such as the Community Relations Officer Program, and strategic partnerships with organizations throughout Canada and abroad, strengthened our ability to inform and motivate electors in these groups.

The Community Relations Officer Program

During the election, ROs could appoint community relations officers, where warranted, to help identify and address the needs of individual communities and encourage participation in the electoral process. A total of 345 community relations officers were appointed, compared with 329 in 2004, to serve ridings with significant Aboriginal, youth, ethnocultural or homeless populations.

The largest community relations officer contingent in this election served in Aboriginal communities, where they helped with targeted revision, arranged for polling stations, ensured that Aboriginal poll officials were recruited and trained for these locations and kept ROs informed about local concerns.

Youth community relations officers, meanwhile, identified neighbourhoods with high student concentrations to target for registration drives, helped ROs locate polls in places where youth would have easier access and provided information about registration and voting to the youth community.

In ridings where community relations officer assistance was not required, ROs and their staff were responsible for conducting all outreach. This involved hiring staff who were representative of the population being served, selecting accessible polling sites and disseminating information about the electoral process. In addition to hiring poll officials from the community (who spoke the languages represented in the community), ROs ensured that interpreters were on hand at polling stations if needed; 12 were hired for advance polls and another 47 on election day.

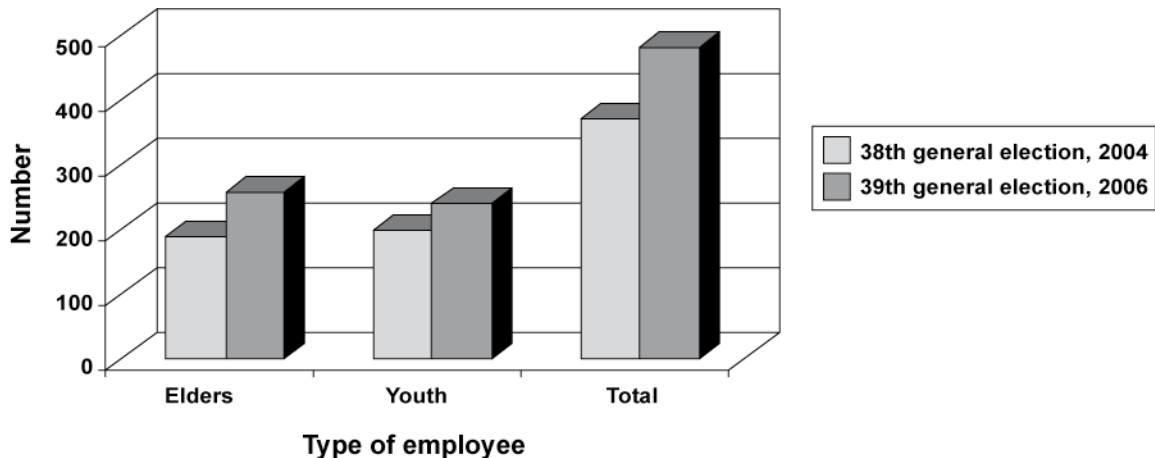
Table 3.6 Community Relations Officer Program

Type of Community Relations Officer	Number of Electoral Districts That Hired Community Relations Officers	Number of Community Relations Officers Hired
Aboriginal	123	157
Youth	106	114
Ethnocultural	53	64
Homeless	9	10
Total	291	345

The Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program

Another Elections Canada initiative encouraged elders and youth to facilitate at polling stations that serve mainly Aboriginal electors. The 2006 election saw more Aboriginal communities participating in the Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program than ever before, with 240 elders and 225 youth present in 64 electoral districts. This compares with 173 elders and 182 youth in 48 electoral districts in 2004.

Figure 3.7 Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program



Strategic Aboriginal Communications and Partnerships

Elections Canada formed communications partnerships with a number of groups representing Aboriginal interests leading up to and during the 39th general election.

- **Assembly of First Nations (AFN)** – Following the adoption of a historic resolution in December to make participation in federal elections a priority, the AFN approached Elections Canada. The AFN proposed a partnership to develop a voter education and information program for First Nations electors (see section 1.4.3, Outreach Initiatives). To that end, the AFN and Elections Canada engaged in two targeted communications initiatives during the elections. First, AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine and the Chief Electoral Officer, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, produced a joint public service announcement on the electoral process, which aired on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) and appeared on the APTN Web site during the election. They also distributed a joint message that was sent through the AFN’s distribution list to approximately 800 contacts, including chiefs, regional AFN offices and major Aboriginal organizations in early January. The message, which was accompanied by a voter information kit, focused on the partnership between the two organizations and the importance of voting to First Nations electors.

The collaboration between the AFN and Elections Canada contributed not only to the above communications and outreach initiatives, but also to developing knowledge of and trust in the federal electoral process by First Nations electors who participated in the joint activities.

- **National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)** – Although Elections Canada, both in Ottawa and in the field, has had contact with a great number of friendship centres in the past, a landmark partnership was established with the NAFC after the call of the 39th general election. The NAFC represents all 117 friendship centres in Canada. The partnership produced a joint message about the election from the Chief Electoral Officer and NAFC President Vera Pawis-Tabobondung that was distributed to all NAFC members.

Elections Canada also produced a questionnaire with the NAFC that served two purposes: to verify that Elections Canada’s voter information kits had reached the friendship centres to which they had been sent and to find out whether friendship centres had been, or wanted to be, contacted by an RO or a community relations officer in their area. Of the 117 questionnaires distributed to friendship centres across Canada in early December 2005, 43 were returned to Elections Canada for analysis. (A similar response rate was obtained after the 2004 election, when a more detailed questionnaire was sent.) Of the 43 respondents, 36 had received the information kits in mid-December and planned to display the information if they had not already done so. Comments on the enclosed posters, voter information guides and newsletter were all positive. The questionnaire also asked whether an RO or community relations officer had been in touch already, enabling field staff to follow up efficiently.

Strategic Communications and Partnerships with Youth

In addition to a youth-oriented, targeted advertising campaign, young voter education materials, targeted revision in areas where youths and students live, and providing polling sites on or near campuses, Elections Canada engaged in strategic communications with youth and student associations using a series of “e-bulletins.” During the election, we sent 13 bulletins to a distribution list of 33 youth groups and student associations.

Table 3.7 E-bulletins Sent to Youth and Student Groups

Date	Subject
December 14, 2005	Election Information for Students
December 15, 2005	Message Sent to Student Associations and Youth Groups
December 19, 2005	Youth Registration for the Election
December 30, 2005	Accessibility of the Electoral Process
January 4, 2006	Targeted Registration of Students
January 6, 2006	Reminder Cards
January 7, 2006	Election Information Regarding Advance Polls
January 9, 2006	Are You Registered to Vote?
January 9, 2006	Polling Sites Near Campuses
January 10, 2006	Information Regarding Voting by Special Ballot
January 11, 2006	Reminder to British Columbia Electors
January 20, 2006	Reminder to Electors
January 23, 2006	Student Vote 2006

We also embarked on two important partnerships – with Student Vote, a federal election simulation for young people under 18, and the other with the Dominion Institute’s Democracy Project – to foster greater interest in and knowledge of the election.

Student Vote

Elections Canada renewed its support for the Student Vote program, which aims to develop a habit of participation among Canadian students who have not yet reached voting age, by giving them the opportunity to vote in a parallel election simulation for the candidates in their school's electoral district.

According to the Student Vote interim report, 2,504 schools across Canada took part in the program during the January 2006 election, casting 468,753 ballots. This was a significant increase over the 263,588 ballots cast by 1,168 schools during the June 2004 election.⁵

Table 3.8 Provincial and Territorial Participation for Student Vote 2006

Province or Territory	Ridings	Schools	Participants	Valid Votes	Rejected	Spoiled	Avg. Ballots
Newfoundland and Labrador	7	46	7,531	7,300	231	76	159
Prince Edward Island	4	29	6,212	6,069	143	40	209
Nova Scotia	11	91	18,450	17,986	464	132	198
New Brunswick	10	50	10,404	10,169	235	60	203
Quebec	51	109	18,084	17,574	510	10	157
Ontario	106	1,205	264,999	257,448	7,551	2,138	214
Manitoba	14	131	16,545	16,144	401	123	123
Saskatchewan	14	136	12,925	12,688	237	146	93
Alberta	28	441	64,254	62,747	1,507	561	142
British Columbia	36	251	47,450	45,918	1,532	360	183
Yukon	1	3	672	670	2	106	223
Northwest Territories	1	9	942	926	16	4	103
Nunavut	1	3	285	282	3	1	94
Total	284	2,504	468,753	455,921	12,832	3,757	181

The Student Vote 2006 results were released following the close of official polls across Canada on election day. Participating schools were asked to keep their results confidential until the official release of the results. The Chief Electoral Officer, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, and the Chief Election Officer of Student Vote, Taylor Gunn, issued a news release, acknowledging that the program had had its most successful year ever.

Full results for the 2006 Student Vote election can be found on the Student Vote Web site at www.studentvote.ca/.

⁵It should be noted that fewer students would have been in class at that time of the school year.

The Democracy Project

Elections Canada partnered with the Dominion Institute on a 12-month education and research program for youth called the Democracy Project, which seeks to gain a better understanding of the causes of low voter turnout and identify new ways of addressing it. During the election, the Democracy Project:

- organized 63 town hall meetings at high schools and universities across the country, giving over 23,000 young people, aged 12 to 25, the opportunity to speak with 240 local candidates from a range of political parties
- gave more than 200 print, TV and radio interviews
- integrated features such as text message polls, chat rooms and message boards on its Web site to engage youth in discussing electoral matters; the site received a total of 550,204 hits, and its educational resource guide was downloaded 1,216 times
- distributed another 1,000 of these guides directly to schools
- received over 1,000 questionnaires from young Canadians offering their recommendations on how to increase youth involvement in elections

The Democracy Project Web site is located at www.thedemocracyproject.ca/.

Homeless Elector Initiatives

To be eligible to vote in an electoral district, electors must be ordinarily resident in that district. If someone has no permanent residence, however, the *Canada Elections Act* allows the elector's quarters at registration time – a shelter, hostel or other place that provides food, lodging or social services – to be considered the ordinary residence of that person.

Posters with information for homeless persons who wished to vote were distributed to shelters about a week before election day. Shelter administrators then assisted in providing proof of residence for homeless electors to whom the shelter provided food, lodging or other social services as specified under the Act. Along with proof of address, homeless electors had to submit proof of identity (such as a health card) when they registered to vote.

The Media Relations Team

During the election, the media relations team helped to inform electors by providing services to national and regional media. It delivered information on matters concerning Elections Canada, responded to media queries, directed the media to our Web site or other appropriate sources, set up media interviews and produced news releases and other media documents within tight deadlines. Field liaison officers worked closely with regional media relations advisors to provide services locally.

The national media relations network included 6 persons in Ottawa and 13 regional media relations advisors across the country. Over the 55-day election period, this network

fielded 4,017 calls from members of the media and issued 35 press releases and 2 media advisories. The unique nature of the winter election resulted in media calls on a variety of matters, including:

- **Snowbirds** – The timing of the election resulted in numerous calls from journalists about the voting process for electors about to leave the country for the winter months.
- **Special Voting Rules** – The possibility of severe weather on election day meant that the media wanted to inform voters of the other ways they could vote in the lead-up to election day.
- **Targeted groups** – Elections Canada’s advertising campaign and outreach efforts stimulated a high level of media interest in how targeted groups were responding to these initiatives.

Boundary Readjustment

Before the election, the New Brunswick electoral districts of Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi underwent boundary readjustment (see section 2.3, Electoral Geography). To ensure that electors living in the affected areas were aware of the changes, Elections Canada placed print ads in newspapers throughout both ridings, and sent flyers to each household in the 15 affected polling divisions, to inform electors that they would now be voting in a different riding. Electoral maps and atlases, lists of electors and campaign expenses limits for both districts were revised. The Chief Electoral Officer ensured that the Advisory Committee of Political Parties was kept informed.

3.3.2 Getting on the Voters List

Elections Canada goes to great lengths to register electors to vote, up to and including election day.

The Preliminary Lists of Electors

As an election becomes imminent, information is extracted from the National Register of Electors to produce the preliminary lists of electors. For the 39th general election, the preliminary lists included 22,699,291 electors. By comparing this count with the estimated total number of electors, we estimated that some 94 percent of Canadian electors were registered; this exceeded our target of 92 percent. Electors not listed included persons who were eligible to vote in the 38th general election but did not register, as well as some persons who became citizens or reached the age of 18 after the 2004 election but who had yet to be added to the Register. Some 31,000 electors did not appear on the lists because their addresses had not yet been assigned an electoral district and polling division. We wrote to each of these electors, asking them to contact their returning officer (RO) and provide more precise address information so they could be added.

By comparing the number of elector moves processed by the Register with the estimated number of moves occurring in the electoral population, we calculated that some

85 percent of all electors were on the preliminary lists at their current address. This exceeded our target of 77 percent.

**Table 3.9 Estimates of Quality, Preliminary Lists of Electors
(as of December 1, 2005)**

Province or Territory	Coverage (Target 92%)	Currency (Target 77%)
Newfoundland and Labrador	95%	87%
Prince Edward Island	93%	85%
Nova Scotia	95%	85%
New Brunswick	98%	90%
Quebec	96%	89%
Ontario	92%	85%
Manitoba	95%	80%
Saskatchewan	95%	84%
Alberta	94%	82%
British Columbia	91%	83%
Yukon	88%	69%
Northwest Territories	96%	69%
Nunavut	91%	54%
Canada	94%	85%

Maintaining the currency of the Register in the North is challenging, due to the unique characteristics of the area – a fact that ROs must take into account when revising the preliminary lists of electors in these regions.

Revisions from the Register

If new information is available, the Register continues to update elector records even after the writs are issued. Some 750,000 revisions to the preliminary lists were sent electronically to ROs in the first two weeks of the election, including 620,000 registrations and 130,000 corrections and removals. Once the revisions had been approved by the ROs, voter information cards were sent to the affected electors to inform them of the correct polling location.

Voter Information Cards

The *Canada Elections Act* states that voter information cards (VICs) must be mailed by the 24th day before election day – for the 39th general election, December 30, 2005. After analyzing various options and consulting the Canada Post Corporation, the Chief Electoral Officer decided that the optimal time to mail out the VICs would be between Christmas and New Year’s, as this would allow ROs to incorporate as many revisions as possible in advance, including revisions downloaded from the Register. It would also ensure that the VICs would not get caught up in the pre-holiday mail rush, Canada Post’s busiest time of year. Finally, it would mean that the majority of electors would be at

home and able to respond quickly if changes to their information were required. The Chief Electoral Officer directed all ROs to deliver their VICs (approximately 22.8 million in total) to Canada Post by noon on December 23, 2005, so they would be ready for immediate delivery on December 28. According to statistics provided through the Event Management System, independently verified by Canada Post, all 308 ROs successfully achieved this milestone.

VICs were mailed on December 28 and 29 to every elector registered on the voters lists in each electoral district. The cards confirmed electors' names, addresses and the fact that they were registered to vote. They also explained where and when to vote at the advance and regular polls, indicated whether the polling station had level access and gave the address and toll-free telephone number of the local returning office. Electors were asked to call or visit their returning office if corrections were needed to the name or address on the card or if they required assistance to vote.

In cases where electors had recently moved and Elections Canada's data suppliers had not yet sent the change of address, some electors received cards for previous residents at the same address. It is important to note that the information on the VIC relating to where and when to vote, and how to contact the RO, was valid for any elector resident at the address. Nearly 7 percent of respondents to our survey of electors indicated that they had moved their primary residence during the five months prior to the election. Some 35 percent of those who had recently moved reported not receiving a VIC addressed to them personally, compared with 9 percent of those who had not moved; 12 percent of the respondents who had moved received a card addressed to someone not living in their household, versus 9 percent of those who had not moved. Addresses on VICs were reported to be accurate by 90 percent of those who had recently moved, compared with 98 percent of those who had not moved. Electors who later registered at their new address during the revision period were automatically updated on the voters list and issued a new VIC.

Although it is a useful tool for electors, the VIC cannot serve as proof of identity to have one's name added to the list of electors or to vote – a point emphasized on the 2006 VIC by the statement “This is not an identification document.” This warning was also conveyed during training to each deputy returning officer and poll clerk.

Collaboration with Canada Post

The 39th general election was a success in no small part because of the initiative and effort of Canada Post personnel, who coped with the tight deadlines imposed by legislation throughout the election, as well as some unforeseen events, with the utmost professionalism.

During their busiest season of the year, Canada Post delivered 4,331 monotainers of election material, ballot paper and computer equipment to more than 308 locations in Canada, bringing everything back again after the election. Close to 22.8 million electors received their voter information cards on time. Registration and voting material was delivered to 204 correctional facilities throughout Canada, and all special ballots completed by incarcerated electors were picked up and returned to Elections Canada in time to be counted.

Canada Post's dedication, responsiveness, experience and knowledge ensured excellent service during this election. Elections Canada looks forward to continuing the successful partnership with Canada Post as we prepare for the next election.

Reminder Card

One week after the VICs were delivered, we also sent a generic reminder card to each household in Canada. Well received when introduced in the 2004 election, this "Important Reminder to Voters" card is intended to prompt electors to act without delay if they received either no VIC or one that contained errors. The card also included a telephone number for Elections Canada that would connect callers to the local returning office. The Elections Canada survey of electors found that 41 percent of respondents remembered receiving a reminder card, and 54 percent of them reported that it was useful.

Each reminder card displayed an image of the VIC, intended to highlight the importance of being accurately registered to vote.

Targeted Revision

As part of the effort to register electors, pairs of revising agents from Elections Canada target new housing developments and areas where people tend to move frequently with door-to-door revision to the lists of electors.

During the election, revising agents visited electors to confirm their registration on the voters lists and to add or update name, address and date of birth information, as verified by a piece of identification. They also notified the RO when an elector had moved to an unknown address so that the elector's name could be struck from the voters list. If no one was found at home after two visits, a mail-in registration package was left. The Chief Electoral Officer's decision to start targeted revision early in the 55-day election calendar allowed door-to-door visits to be scheduled around weather conditions and holiday staff shortages.

According to the reports filed by ROs during the election, targeted revision covered approximately 1,407,000 addresses – 10 percent of all addresses in the country – and yielded registration forms for some 232,000 households. Revising agents also left 283,000 mail-in registration packages.

The historically lower voter turnout among youth, coupled with the exam and holiday season timing of the election, prompted Elections Canada to ensure that ROs and the media relations team gave special attention to youth participation. ROs were instructed to carry out targeted revision and set up polling sites on university and college campuses, where feasible. Because students can vote in the riding where they live while at school if they consider it to be their ordinary residence, revising agents in 137 electoral districts targeted local campus residences, receiving some 22,500 completed registration forms as a result of the initiative.

Improving Revision

While Elections Canada retains responsibility for trying to reach all electors who require revision, the usefulness of door-to-door canvassing is declining and its cost-effectiveness must be critically reviewed. It is increasingly found that people tend to be at home less than they once were and are more reluctant to open their doors to strangers.

To fulfill our commitment to reach out to the entire spectrum of electors, the Chief Electoral Officer allowed some ROs, on a case-by-case basis, to put in place a number of alternative targeted revision methods if revising agents were unable to perform their duties due to severe weather conditions, influenza outbreaks in care facilities or security reasons such as denial of access to gated communities. These initiatives included setting up registration booths (or revisal offices), administered by revising agents, in nearby shopping centres, grocery stores, public libraries and lobbies of high-rise buildings or gated communities. The RO for Toronto Centre also experimented with reaching electors by telephone rather than door-to-door visits.

In previous elections, revision efforts focused on adding names to the lists of electors. However, in the two most recent elections, when most electors already appeared on the preliminary lists, the main outcome of revision has been the updating of existing elector records, including changes of address, while polling day registration has resulted mainly in adding new voters to the lists. The reason behind these patterns may be that, while recording a change to an existing elector record can be done over the phone (unless the elector has moved to a new riding), adding a name to the voters lists requires an elector to show identification and sign a declaration of eligibility. Thus, busy electors needing to be added to the lists may find it more expedient to register and vote at the same time and place. Our preliminary post-election analysis indicates that this is especially true for first-time voters. Those needing only to make information changes would typically find doing so in advance by phone more expedient than having to wait to show identification and fill out a form at a registration desk on election day.

By statute, revising agents must work in pairs; this restriction necessarily raises the cost of this effort without adding to its effectiveness.⁶ In addition, managers of institutions and apartment building superintendents are increasingly reluctant to validate any information about their residents due to privacy concerns; this circumstance forces revising agents to knock on each and every door in a building when searching for only those electors who do not appear on the voters lists. In light of these challenges, Elections Canada is planning to review targeted revision, with the aim of determining more effective methods of reaching out to unregistered voters in new and high-mobility residential areas.

Registration at Advance and Ordinary Polls

Elections Canada's goal is that as many electors as possible who vote on election day will already be on the lists. At the same time, election officers must be ready to serve any elector wanting to vote whose name has not yet been added to the list for the polling division in which he or she is eligible to vote.

At advance polls, ROs reported performing some 55,000 registrations, compared with the 51,000 advance poll registrations performed in the 2004 election. The numbers reveal an advance poll registration rate of 3.6 percent of voters in 2006, down from 4.1 percent in 2004. This reduction in registration is an indicator that the quality of the National Register of Electors and the preliminary lists continues to improve.

At the close of the revision period, the Chief Electoral Officer exercised his authority under the *Canada Elections Act* to permit the hiring of extra registration officers in ridings likely to have a high registration volume. With 12,033 registration officers and deputy returning officers (DROs) available to handle the proceedings, we were, in fact, prepared to process up to 900,000 registrations at the polls.

By close of polls on election day, the actual number processed was approximately 795,000. This means that some 6.2 percent of ordinary and mobile poll voters registered before casting a ballot – consistent with the 6.3 percent who did so at the 2004 election. Together, the numbers from these two elections establish a significant improvement over the 8.8 percent of registrants in November 2000. Nevertheless, we observe that registration on polling day accounts for a sizeable proportion of all the electors who need to get on the lists or have their records updated during an election. The utility of this registration method now seems firmly established in our electoral process.

Interactions between revising agents and electors accounted for some 750,000 registrations, or 35 percent of all registrations recorded during the election. When we subtract the estimated 200,000 registrations from targeted revision, barely 550,000 voters were registered through their sole initiative. However, revisions sent electronically by the Chief Electoral Officer from the Register to all ROs in the early phase of revision accounted for some 620,000 registrations, or 29 percent of the total. Lastly, 37 percent of all registrations, or 795,000, were taken by registration officers or

⁶The Chief Electoral Officer suggested removing this restriction in his September 2005 recommendations report, *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms*.

DROs on election day.

It should be noted that polling day registrations for first-time voters increased significantly in the 2006 election. The number of 18-year-olds who registered on election day increased by over 70 percent in the 39th general election compared with the previous one. Further studies will be carried out to confirm whether the turnout was higher for first-time voters in this election.

Figure 3.8 Distribution of Registrations – Additions and Address Changes 38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006

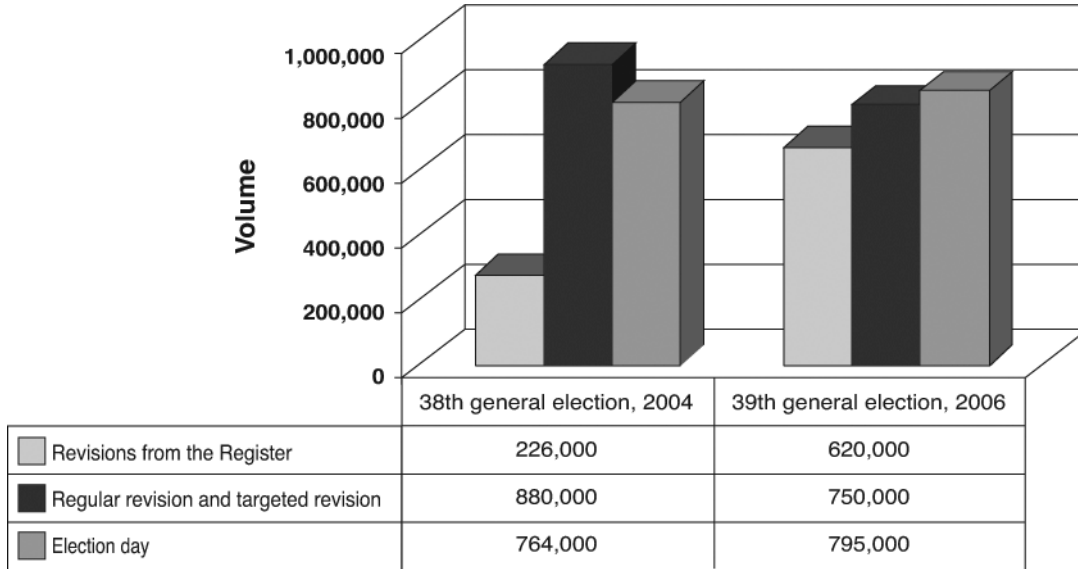


Figure 3.9 Distribution of Registrations – 38th General Election, 2004

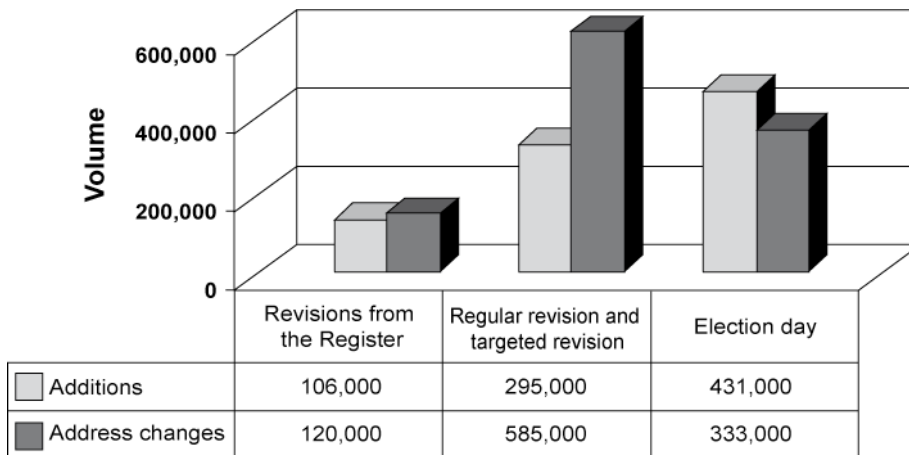


Figure 3.10 Distribution of Registrations – 39th General Election, 2006

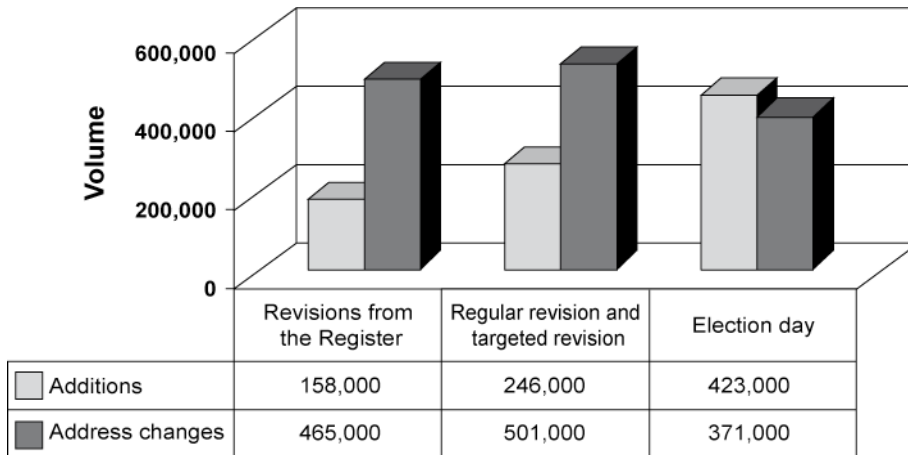


Table 3.10 Voter Registration Statistics – 39th General Election, 2006

Province or Territory	Electors on Preliminary Lists	Electors Added ¹	Inter-ED Address Changes ²	Moves Within ED ³	Other Corrections ⁴	Electors Removed ⁵	SVR Group 1 Update ⁶	Electors on Final Lists ⁷
Newfoundland and Labrador	397,477	13,287	7,599	22,249	8,728	14,589	208	403,982
Prince Edward Island	101,177	10,169	2,297	7,097	3,730	6,023	57	107,677
Nova Scotia	710,722	60,151	22,523	53,670	19,911	43,140	573	750,829
New Brunswick	589,767	16,965	10,523	19,900	10,359	23,476	325	594,104
Quebec	5,810,368	120,446	108,073	132,587	114,890	190,280	3,921	5,852,528
Ontario	8,370,665	353,267	220,671	237,029	165,819	414,290	6,046	8,536,359
Manitoba	824,436	32,930	26,165	34,400	17,852	53,275	1,022	831,278
Saskatchewan	704,073	27,427	19,427	33,654	15,500	39,533	1,033	712,427
Alberta	2,289,792	88,865	108,435	102,179	59,660	166,780	1,796	2,322,108
British Columbia	2,834,830	101,250	76,688	86,247	57,938	138,924	2,106	2,875,950
Yukon	20,717	1,339	640	2,033	753	1,237	34	21,493
Northwest Territories	28,746	1,432	704	1,968	546	2,224	134	28,792
Nunavut	16,521	756	462	310	223	738	87	17,088
National Total	22,699,291	828,284	604,207	733,323	475,909	1,094,509	17,342	23,054,615

ED = electoral district

SVR = Special Voting Rules

1. Electors who did not appear on any lists of electors at the beginning of the election and were added during the election.
2. Electors who appeared on the lists of electors of one ED at the beginning of the election but changed their address due to a move to another ED during the election.

3. Electors who appeared on the lists of electors of one ED at the beginning of the election and changed their address due to a move within the same ED during the election. These figures also include administrative changes the RO made to elector records during the election.
4. Electors who appeared on a list of electors and requested a correction to an error in their name or mailing address during the election.
5. Electors who appeared on a list of electors but were removed due to one of the following: the elector was deceased, the elector requested to be removed, the elector was no longer resident at that address or the elector was not qualified to be on the list (for example, less than 18 years old or a non-citizen). Figures also reflect elector records removed as a result of elector moves to another ED during the election and other duplicates removed during the election, including those removed during the preparation of the final lists of electors.
6. Indicates the increase in the number of Group 1 electors registered under the SVR (Canadian electors temporarily residing outside Canada, Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors) during the election.
7. The total number of electors on the final lists is the sum of electors on the preliminary voters list, electors added, inter-ED address updates and SVR Group 1 updates minus removed electors.

3.4 Assisting Political Entities

In this section, we review Elections Canada's role in helping candidates, political parties and third parties work within the rules during the 39th general election.

3.4.1 Candidates

Beginning with the nomination process, Elections Canada's support and regulation of candidate activities continued throughout the election period and beyond.

Nominations

Anyone wishing to be a candidate had to obtain nomination papers from the RO in that riding or Elections Canada and return a completed set to the RO before the close of nominations at 2:00 p.m. (local time) on January 2, 2006. At least 100 electors entitled to vote in the riding must sign in support of a nomination in most electoral districts; 50 signatures are required in the 39 largely rural electoral districts listed in Schedule 3 of the *Canada Elections Act*. Once he or she received the completed nomination papers, the RO had 48 hours to complete a thorough review, and accept or reject the nomination. In the case of a rejection, candidates have until the close of nominations to present new nomination papers. ROs are directed to consult the Chief Electoral Officer before rejecting a candidate's nomination.

As candidates are confirmed, their names appear on the Elections Canada Web site; this assists electors away from home wishing to vote by special ballot.

To smooth the process, Elections Canada wrote to all political parties and encouraged their prospective candidates to provide more than the minimum number of signatures in case some were not acceptable under the Act, to clearly and completely enter the name and address for each supporting elector and to file their nomination papers early in case corrections might be needed.

A candidate whose witness is unable to get to the returning office to file the nomination papers can make other arrangements with the RO. If the documents are faxed, however, the required \$1,000 deposit must still be paid by the close of nominations and the original copy of the documents presented at the returning office within 48 hours after the deadline.

With the winter timing of the 2006 election, Elections Canada took into account the possibility that a candidate might be delayed, or the returning office closed, due to inclement weather. ROs were reminded that they had to be available, right up to the deadline, to provide fair treatment to any candidate arriving at the last minute. They were further urged to inform Elections Canada immediately if exceptional circumstances nonetheless forced their office to close or prevented access.

ROs kept all potential candidates' telephone numbers on hand so they could reach anyone who had expressed an intention to run but had not yet filed the nomination papers. Candidates were likewise provided numbers for the returning office and the RO's cellphone. Late filers were reminded that the returning office kept weekend business hours and were urged to get their papers in before the close of nominations.

Within 48 hours after nominations closed, ROs had completed the confirmation and rejection of candidates in their electoral districts and faxed all official candidate documents to Elections Canada. The final list of confirmed candidates by electoral district was subsequently posted on our Web site and sent to the departments of National Defence and Foreign Affairs for distribution to their members around the world.

ROs then delivered their lists of candidates to their local printers to produce ballot papers for the advance polls and election day.

Withdrawals and Rejections

In Jeanne-Le Ber (Quebec) and Ahuntsic (Quebec), Marxist-Leninist candidates withdrew after completion of the confirmation process, but before the statutory deadline of 5:00 p.m. on nomination day. In York–Simcoe (Ontario), the PC Party candidate pulled out of the contest before completion of the confirmation process. (Under section 74 of the *Canada Elections Act*, this does not constitute a withdrawal.) In two ridings, Edmonton–Sherwood Park (Alberta) and Markham–Unionville (Ontario), nominations were rejected by the ROs because there were insufficient valid signatures, and the prospective independent candidates were unable to deliver more before the deadline of 2:00 p.m. on January 2.

Nomination Denial Contested

Anderson Tung's confirmation as an independent candidate in Ontario's Markham–Unionville riding was denied by the RO because, as of the 2:00 p.m., January 2, 2006, filing deadline, his nomination paper was incomplete. On January 10, Mr. Tung applied to the Ontario Superior Court to order the Chief Electoral Officer to accept his nomination paper as validly filed. His application also asked that the Governor in Council be ordered to remove the RO from office and sought damages from Elections Canada for the alleged mishandling of his file. The application was expedited and heard on January 18, but denied on grounds that the Ontario Superior Court lacked jurisdiction over the Chief Electoral Officer. On January 19, Mr. Tung applied to the Federal Court of Canada for similar relief and sought an expedited hearing of his application. However, on January 20, the Court refused to hear the case before polling day, stating that justice would not be served if the matter proceeded without all respondents having sufficient time to prepare.

Profile of the Candidates

In 2006, 15 registered political parties ran candidates, compared with 12 in 2004. As in 2004, four parties nominated candidates in every electoral district. The total number of confirmed candidates was 1,634,⁷ compared with 1,685 in 2004. In the 2006 election, 1,544 candidates (94.5 percent) ran under the banner of a political party, while 85 ran as independents and 5 had no affiliation. There were 380 (23.3 percent) women candidates, compared with 391 (23.2 percent) in 2004. Of the sitting members of the House of Commons, 278, including 58 women, sought re-election, while 28 did not.

See Appendix VII of this report for details of the candidates by province, party and gender.

Preparing Candidates

As required by the *Canada Elections Act*, ROs provided candidates and their official agents with election documentation, lists of electors and accompanying statements of quality, lists of addresses for targeted revision and a series of geographic documents and maps for the riding. They also arranged meetings to explain such matters as the various voting methods, election day rules, how candidates could contribute to the quality of the lists of electors, the election officer positions for which candidates were entitled to recommend applicants and the location of polling places.

Elections Canada also provided training videos, handbooks, forms, software and guidance materials to brief candidates and their official agents on election expenses, reporting requirements and other election-related financial matters.

⁷Although 1,636 candidates were confirmed, 2 of them withdrew after confirmation, leaving 1,634 active candidates. Under the election financing rules, candidates who withdraw after the deadline are subject to all reporting requirements. In 2004, 1,686 candidates were confirmed, but 1 withdrew after confirmation, leaving 1,685 active candidates.

We delivered this information by means of an electronic kit. All materials included in the kit were available through our Web site and also distributed on CD-ROM and DVD to all candidates and their teams. This approach gave greater accessibility at lower cost than traditional hard-copy documents.

3.4.2 Registration of Political Parties

Since Bill C-3 came into force on May 15, 2004, any political party that endorses at least one confirmed candidate in a general election, and complies with the other legal requirements of the *Canada Elections Act*, attains or maintains its registration. When the 39th general election was called, 12 political parties were registered and another 3 eligible to become so. All 15 maintained or acquired registered status during the election.

Table 3.11 Status of Political Parties on Election Day

Registered Party Status	Party
Status newly acquired for the 39th general election, 2006	Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada First Peoples National Party of Canada Western Block Party
Status retained from the 38th general election, 2004	Bloc Québécois Canadian Action Party Christian Heritage Party of Canada Communist Party of Canada Conservative Party of Canada Green Party of Canada Liberal Party of Canada Libertarian Party of Canada Marijuana Party Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada New Democratic Party Progressive Canadian Party

Table 3.12 Number of Confirmed Candidates by Affiliation

Political Affiliation	No. of Confirmed Candidates
Conservative Party of Canada	308
Green Party of Canada	308
Liberal Party of Canada	308
New Democratic Party	308
Independent	85
Bloc Québécois	75
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	69
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	45
Canadian Action Party	34
Progressive Canadian Party	25
Marijuana Party	23
Communist Party of Canada	21
Libertarian Party of Canada	10
First Peoples National Party of Canada	5
No affiliation	5
Western Block Party	4
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	1
Total	1,634

Help Desk for Candidates and Parties

As in 2004, Elections Canada set up a dedicated toll-free telephone support network to respond to questions from candidates and parties, providing assistance on various aspects of the process throughout the election.

Call statistics over the course of the election period are as follows:

- The Election Financing Directorate answered 2,506 of 2,606 incoming calls, for a response rate of 96 percent. In 2004, there were 2,076 finance-related calls, of which 1,999 were answered, also a 96 percent response rate.
- The Operations Directorate answered 1,746 out of 1,855 calls, for a response rate of 94 percent. This shows improvement over 2004, when 1,185 of 1,317 calls were answered, a response rate of 90 percent.
- The Registration Unit answered 329 of 342 incoming calls, for a response rate of 96 percent. Most of these dealt with the ongoing registration of electoral district associations of registered parties and third parties. Inquiries of a more complex nature

were referred to Legal Services. In 2004, the Registrar fielded 199 of 205 calls, for a response rate of 97 percent.

3.4.3 Financing Matters – Parties and Candidates

The *Canada Elections Act* sets limits on the election expenses of candidates and registered political parties. Such expenses include money paid, liabilities incurred and the commercial value of goods and services donated or acquired at less than commercial value. These expenses must be for goods and services used during an election, regardless of when they were acquired or paid for, and must be incurred directly to promote or oppose a registered political party or to elect a particular candidate.

Election Expenses Limits

The election expenses limit of a registered party is based on the number of names on the preliminary or revised lists of electors (whichever is greater) for all ridings in which the party has endorsed a candidate. The limit for candidates is based on the number of names on that riding's list of electors. All candidates in a riding share the same limit, but among ridings the amount varies; it is adjusted for those with a lower-than-average number of electors or those of large geographical size.

On December 2, 2005, the Chief Electoral Officer announced the preliminary election expenses limits for both registered parties and candidates; the announcement of final election expenses limits came on January 16, 2006.

Registered parties fielding a confirmed candidate in each of the 308 electoral districts were limited to a maximum of \$18,278,278.64 in election expenses. The limit for candidates varied among ridings, with the average candidate election expenses limit being \$81,159.30. Details of the limits for each electoral district have been published at www.elections.ca, under Election Financing.

A vast array of information related to financing was communicated to parties and candidates throughout the election on matters that were sometimes specific to the timing of the 39th general election. Examples include the effect of political financing laws on greeting cards and expenses related to Christmas parties.

3.5 Regulation of Election Advertising

The *Canada Elections Act* establishes rules for advertising during an election period. Three significant areas of concern include regulating the political advertising activities of third parties, defining how broadcasting time for political parties is to be allocated and setting timelines for the publication of election results.

3.5.1 Third-party Election Advertising

A third party is defined as a person or group other than a candidate, a registered party or an electoral district association of a registered party. Under section 352 of the Act, all third parties conducting election advertising during an election must provide basic identifying information on that advertising.

Third parties must register with Elections Canada once they have incurred election advertising expenses of \$500. Furthermore, they must produce a financial report, within four months after polling day, itemizing their election advertising expenses and the sources from which these advertising funds came. Section 350 of the Act sets limits on the amount a third party may incur in election advertising expenses. In the 39th general election, these limits amounted to \$172,050 for a national campaign and \$3,441 for an electoral district.

During the election, 80 third parties registered with Elections Canada, compared with 63 in 2004. Their financial reports are due no later than midnight on May 23, 2006.

**Table 3.13 Number of Third Parties by Type
38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006**

Type of Entity		2004	2006
Corporations; unions; other groups	With governing bodies	28	48
	Without governing bodies	27	19
Individuals		8	13
Total		63	80

3.5.2 Broadcasting Time for Political Parties

The *Canada Elections Act* provides for the appointment of a Broadcasting Arbitrator, who allocates air time to parties, issues guidelines on the obligations of broadcasters during a general election and arbitrates disputes between political parties and broadcasters concerning the application of the Act. Since 1992, the Broadcasting Arbitrator has been Peter S. Grant, a lawyer specializing in broadcasting matters.

Allocation of Time Available for Purchase

During a general election, the *Canada Elections Act* requires every broadcaster in Canada to make at least 390 minutes of paid broadcasting time available to registered and eligible parties. On April 8, 2005, the Broadcasting Arbitrator made an initial allocation of this time for the next election based on the 12 parties then registered. Adjustments were made later as two more parties became eligible before the November 29 election call.

On December 7, the First Peoples National Party of Canada became the final party to achieve registered status for the 2006 election and consequently asked the Arbitrator to allocate it broadcasting time. The Arbitrator did so, revising the allocation of paid time to

all other parties accordingly and issuing a notice to this effect to all registered and eligible parties, as well as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

The total time ultimately allocated to all parties for the 39th general election was 408 minutes, apportioned as shown in Table 3.14.

Table 3.14 Allocation of Paid Time (as Revised on December 8, 2005)

Political Party	Minimum Number of Minutes:Seconds
Liberal Party of Canada	105:00
Conservative Party of Canada	85:00
Bloc Québécois	44:30
New Democratic Party	43:30
Green Party of Canada	25:00
Marijuana Party	13:30
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	13:30
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	13:00
Canadian Action Party	12:30
Communist Party of Canada	12:00
Progressive Canadian Party	11:30
Libertarian Party of Canada	11:00
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	6:00
First Peoples National Party of Canada	6:00
Western Block Party	6:00
Total	408:00

Decisions of the Broadcasting Arbitrator on allocating paid time under the *Canada Elections Act* are posted at www.elections.ca.

Allocation of Free Broadcasting Time

Under the *Canada Elections Act*, all “network operators” that provided free broadcasting time in the previous general election must, at a minimum, provide the same amount of free time in the subsequent election. Furthermore, this time must be allocated to parties in the same proportion as set out for each party by the Broadcasting Arbitrator.

The free time that network operators were required to allocate to the parties in the 39th general election is shown in Table 3.15.

Table 3.15 Allocation of Free Time

Political Party	Network		
	CBC-TV SRC-TV	CBC Radio One SRC Première chaîne	TVA TQS Réseau Corus Québec
Liberal Party of Canada	55	31	16
Conservative Party of Canada	44.5	25	13
Bloc Québécois	23.5	13	7
New Democratic Party	23	13	6.5
Green Party of Canada	13	7	3.5
Canadian Action Party	7	4	2
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	7	4	2
Marijuana Party	7	4	2
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	7	4	2
Communist Party of Canada	6	3	2
Libertarian Party of Canada	6	3	1.5
Progressive Canadian Party	6	3	1.5
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	3	2	1
First Peoples National Party of Canada	3	2	1
Western Block Party	3	2	1
Total Number of Minutes	214	120	62

The Broadcasting Arbitrator's Guidelines

On November 30, 2005, the Broadcasting Arbitrator issued his guidelines to all registered and eligible political parties and to the CRTC.

The guidelines addressed such matters as procedures for booking advertisements, the requirement to identify the sponsor of election advertising, laws affecting the content of political messages, the period within which election advertisements could be aired, the requirement for broadcasters to apply their lowest applicable rates to political parties, the law relating to the publication of opinion polls and third-party advertising and the status of the rule prohibiting the release of election results before the closing of local polls.

Throughout the election, the Broadcasting Arbitrator responded to numerous inquiries from broadcasters and parties seeking guidance on the interpretation of the *Canada Elections Act* and the application of the guidelines. All complaints and disputes were resolved without the need to issue a binding arbitration order.

The Broadcasting Arbitrator's guidelines are available at www.elections.ca.

3.5.3 Blackouts

Polling Day Election Advertising Ban

During the election, Elections Canada considered the extent to which section 323 of the *Canada Elections Act* prohibits election advertising on election day. Among the other exceptions to the prohibition in subsection 323(1) that are set out in subsection 323(2) and section 324 of the Act, this prohibition does not extend to messages, whether live or automated, that are sent to a specific telephone or e-mail address. This interpretation was posted on the Elections Canada Web site.

Premature Publication of Election Results

As recounted in the report on the 38th general election, a decision of the British Columbia Supreme Court in the *Bryan* case declared section 329 of the *Canada Elections Act* to be unconstitutional. Consequently, there was no enforceable provision prohibiting the premature transmission of election results for that election.

The decision was appealed to the British Columbia Court of Appeal, which overturned it on May 20, 2005.⁸ Leave for appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada was granted on December 15, 2005,⁹ with the case scheduled to be heard on October 18, 2006.

In the interim, a media consortium applied to the Supreme Court of Canada in early January 2006, seeking the suspension of section 329, together with paragraph 495(4)(d), which makes it an offence to violate the prohibition. An alternative application was also made to have the *Bryan* appeal hearing expedited. On January 13, 2006, both motions were dismissed, effectively clearing the way for the prohibition established by section 329 to be applied on polling day at the 39th general election.

3.6 Voting

As the culmination of an election, the act of voting essentially defines the democratic process. It falls to the administrators of an election to ensure that every elector has the opportunity to partake in that act.

During the 39th general election, Elections Canada's efforts to keep all electors informed were complemented by the strides taken since 1993 to accommodate all who wished to vote, regardless of their personal circumstances.

The methods by which electors could vote were threefold: at a polling station on election day, at a polling station during the three days of advance voting and by special ballot, throughout the election, under the Special Voting Rules.

⁸*R. v. Bryan*, 2005 BCCA 285.

⁹*R. v. Bryan*, 2005 CanLII 46902 (S.C.C.).

3.6.1 Special Ballots and the Special Voting Rules

The Special Voting Rules (Part 11 of the *Canada Elections Act*) afford the opportunity to vote by mail or at the office of a returning officer to electors who cannot or do not wish to go to the polls. Use of the special ballot is particularly important to Canadians away from home: Canadian Forces personnel, inmates in correctional institutions, international electors (those temporarily residing outside Canada) and national electors (those living in Canada but away from their electoral districts during the election period). The Special Voting Rules (SVR) have been extended considerably since 1990, yet further changes must be considered to better accommodate the continually evolving needs of the Canadian electorate. The Chief Electoral Officer suggested a review of all SVR legislation in his September 2005 recommendations report, *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms*.

For the 2006 election, knowing that most college and university students would be back in class by election day and that some 200,000 other Canadians would be away for the holidays, we anticipated a high volume of special ballot use. Communication plans and resources were ramped up accordingly. The SVR administrative office hired and trained 254 individuals to conduct SVR registration and voting, compared with 169 in 2004.

Special ballot application forms and guides were available in 30 Passport Canada offices across the country, through Canadian high commissions, embassies and consular offices around the world and on the Elections Canada Web site. Electors could request the forms from an RO in person or by telephone, fax, e-mail, courier or regular mail. A total of 119,506 special ballot application forms were downloaded from the Web site, compared with 29,971 in 2004.

During the 2006 election, 127 special ballot officers were appointed to count some 112,000 special ballots received by Elections Canada, compared with 60,566 ballots counted in 2004. An additional three teams of special ballot officers were required to accommodate the increased number of ballots.

Local and National Voting

Table 3.16 shows the number of special ballots requested by local and national electors (those who live in Canada but vote by special ballot).

**Table 3.16 Local and National Elector Ballots
38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006**

Special Ballots		2004	2006
Local electors (vote within own riding)	Issued	191,469	336,377
	Returned by deadline	189,654	332,975
National electors (vote outside own riding)	Issued	31,005	83,133
	Returned by deadline	21,236	70,796

All applications were processed immediately, and a voting kit was mailed within 24 hours of receiving a completed application form. Of the more than 83,000 applications received from national electors, nearly 10,000 (12 percent) required further geographic research to determine the elector's correct electoral district. The SVR administrative office made some 6,500 calls to electors who had not provided proof of identity or other required information with their applications. A total of 769 electors did not provide the required information in time to register to vote by special ballot. Electors who sent incomplete applications for registration on January 16 and 17 were contacted by telephone and encouraged to vote in person on election day.

Some 12,868 electors requested a special ballot voting kit from Ottawa three or fewer days before the close of registration (January 17, 2006). Although Elections Canada promptly mailed the voting kit, as prescribed by the *Canada Elections Act*, the elector had the responsibility to ensure that his or her ballot was received in Ottawa by the legal deadline of 6:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on January 23, 2006. A total of 3,173 ballots were received after the deadline, compared with 495 in 2004.

International Voting

Elections Canada maintains a register of Canadian non-military electors who are temporarily living outside the country. Voting rights for most Canadians abroad are subject to a five-year limit since the elector's last visit home.

As a partner of Elections Canada, Foreign Affairs Canada has, since 1993, been providing information about the electoral process through its diplomatic missions and consular offices. These offices distribute registration forms and guides, respond to inquiries about registration and voting procedures, make the names of confirmed candidates available to electors and receive completed registration forms and special ballots to be forwarded to Ottawa. On January 5, 2006, Foreign Affairs Canada sent the list of confirmed candidates for all electoral districts to each mission; electors could call or visit that office to find out who their candidates were.

During the election, more than 2,100 voting kits were sent from Elections Canada to electors abroad via diplomatic classified bag. Out-of-country electors were entitled to return their completed ballots to any Canadian high commission, embassy, consular office or Canadian Forces base in time for the ballots to reach Elections Canada in Ottawa no later than 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time on election day. Diplomatic missions and consular offices sent the ballots to Elections Canada in Ottawa, as they received them, by the next diplomatic classified bag or commercial courier, respectively.

**Table 3.17 International Elector Ballots
38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006**

Special Ballots	2004	2006
Issued to electors in the international register	11,719	15,083
Returned before the deadline	7,736	9,208
Returned after the deadline	391	933

Courier Initiative

Records from the June 2004 election show that some 75 percent of all ballots mailed to electors outside Canada were sent to either the United States or Western Europe, where postal service is reasonably efficient and reliable. This was reflected in their return rates of 72.1 percent and 73.5 percent, respectively, with an average return time of about 20 days. For other regions, however, results were dramatically different, with an overall return rate of only 49.4 percent and an average return time of nearly 25 days.

After reviewing these statistics, Elections Canada prepared a pilot project for the 39th general election whereby special ballot voting kits would be sent by courier to those regions outside Canada, the U.S. and Western Europe with an average return time of more than 21 days.

The 5,706 ballots sent during the 2006 election were more than double the 2,742 sent in 2004. The number of ballots returned on time from the targeted regions increased by 6.2 percent to 55.6 percent. As well, the number of ballots not returned at all decreased by 4.2 percent to 36.8 percent.

Canadian Forces Voting

Members of the Canadian Forces (CF) can vote in a general election by special ballot wherever they are stationed. Upon enlisting, a CF member completes a form (which can be amended when needed) indicating his or her address of ordinary residence, and the member's vote is counted in the electoral district where that address is located. For a minimum period of three days between January 9 and 14, 2006, polling stations were set up on CF bases around the world to give all members the opportunity to vote.

The Minister of National Defence designates a coordinating officer and liaison officers to work with Elections Canada in administering the military vote. A total of 12 liaison officers coordinated efforts for Canada, the United States, Europe and special operations around the world. The excellent collaboration and support from members of the CF contributed to successful vote-taking once again during this election.

Election material was shipped to CF bases in two phases. The first shipment, sent in early December 2005, consisted of information pamphlets and posters delivered to 92 different destinations throughout Canada, the U.S. and Europe. The second shipment, through December and early January, contained 1,165 parcels of material required to conduct the vote; these were delivered to 551 destinations in Canada and around the world.

**Table 3.18 Canadian Forces Electors
38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006**

Canadian Forces	2004	2006
Units	1,046	1,059
Registered electors	62,436	60,878
Ballots cast on base	22,344	20,772

The CF turnout rate has remained fairly constant over past general elections. However, Elections Canada cannot capture data on all the ballots cast by CF members. The *Canada Elections Act* permits CF electors to vote at a polling station in their electoral district if they happen to be on leave or posted at home during an election. Given the holiday season, more CF members may have been on leave in their home ridings.

Student Voting

On certain campuses during the election, booths were established at which students could apply to vote by special ballot. Generally, such SVR initiatives were set up to complement other Elections Canada services, such as targeted revision and public advertising campaigns. Five electoral districts had special ballot coordinator booths where voting actually took place. In many more, election officers distributed special ballot applications and information during targeted revision or at information booths.

A common challenge faced by students wanting to register on election day was that they did not always have the necessary proof of residence for their university address. Registration officers, deputy returning officers (DROs) and poll clerks were reminded which types of identification were acceptable and that a DRO needed to be satisfied that those documents were authentic and proved an elector's identity and residence. Under the *Canada Elections Act*, the DRO's decision is final.

On-campus Initiative at the University of Toronto

In the electoral district of Trinity–Spadina (Ontario), Elections Canada was made aware, on short notice, of an initiative of the local returning officer, who was encouraging students to vote by special ballot over a three-day period at special ballot desks on the campus of the University of Toronto. Similar, but more limited, initiatives had been carried out in other locations to give students better access to voting.

Although the booths had not been designed to serve large voting communities, they would have nonetheless been accessible to some 50,000 students. The magnitude of this undertaking raised concerns about the ability to deliver quality service and the lack of legal authority that election officers would have to maintain order and protect the privacy of voters. It was also determined that not all candidates had been given sufficient notice of the initiative, and it would thus interfere with their ability to campaign in the same locations.

Given these concerns, the initiative was cancelled. The special ballot desks were replaced with information booths and targeted revision on campus and 10 new polling stations were opened in three student residence buildings to better serve students on election day. Student electors could also register and vote at the nearby advance polls on January 13, 14 and 16. Those who wanted to register and vote by special ballot could do so at the local returning office.

Voting in Acute Care Hospitals

Patients in acute care hospitals, whether inside or outside their electoral districts, were able to vote by special ballot. Elections Canada contacted all such facilities in early December 2005, explained the procedures for voting and asked for co-operation in helping patients to vote. ROs arranged for special ballot voting with local hospital administrators. They also appointed one hospital special ballot coordinator for every 200 acute care beds to register all eligible patients who wished to vote.

Due to circumstances typical of a hospital environment, some hospital officials expressed concerns about patient safety and privacy and were reluctant to allow election officers to visit patients in their rooms. In these cases, special arrangements were made to allow visits with the consent of the patient.

Special ballot registration and voting in hospitals took place on January 15, 16 and 17, 2006. By law, this service could not be provided after the end of registration on January 17, 2006. A total of 7,221 electors hospitalized outside their electoral districts registered to vote by special ballot, compared with 5,808 in 2004. According to reports filed by returning officers, some 11,060 electors hospitalized within their own electoral districts registered to vote by special ballot as well, bringing the total number of hospitalized voters to some 18,280.

Voting in Correctional Institutions

The Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Sauvé v. Canada (Chief Electoral Officer)* on October 31, 2002, made all incarcerated electors, regardless of the length of their sentences, eligible to vote by special ballot. At present, however, the *Canada Elections Act* provides a voting process only for individuals incarcerated in provincial institutions. The Chief Electoral Officer therefore adapted sections 246 and 247 of the Act to extend this process to federal institutions.

For the 2006 election, a polling station was set up for each group of 100 electors in every institution; inmates voted on January 13, 2006. Of the estimated 35,314 incarcerated persons in Canada eligible to vote, 12,373 registered and 11,594 cast ballots.

Table 3.19 Voter Registration in Correctional Institutions

Jurisdiction	Electors	Electors Who Registered
Federal	12,557	5,640
Provincial	22,757	6,733
Total	35,314	12,373

Voting in Isolated Places

The flexibility of the special ballot allows Elections Canada to accommodate electors in some of the most remote and isolated places in Canada.

- In British Columbia, a special ballot coordinator flew to 27 lighthouses to help electors working there to register and vote.
- Special arrangements were made to ensure that electors working in isolated mines were able to vote in Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
- Companies that operate offshore drilling rigs were provided with information on how employees could exercise their right to vote.
- Special arrangements, coordinated with National Defence and Environment Canada, were made to ensure the timely delivery and return of special ballots to Northern weather stations in Eureka and Alert.

Overall SVR Numbers

More electors voted under the SVR in the 39th general election than in the 38th or 37th. Table 3.20 compares the number of special ballots cast in each of these three elections.

Table 3.20 Special Voting Rules – Comparison Among the 37th, 38th and 39th General Elections (2000, 2004 and 2006)

Categories of Electors Eligible Under the Special Voting Rules	Number of Ballots Cast		
	2000	2004	2006
Group 1			
Members of the Canadian Forces	19,030	22,344	20,722
Incarcerated electors	5,188*	9,250	11,594
Electors temporarily residing outside Canada	7,700	7,736	9,208
Group 1 Subtotal	31,918	39,330	41,524
Group 2**			
Electors voting in their electoral districts (Local)	138,065	189,654	332,975
Electors temporarily outside their electoral districts (National)	25,963	21,236	70,796***
Group 2 Subtotal	164,028	210,890	403,771
Total Number of Special Ballots Cast	195,946	250,220	445,295

*Electors incarcerated in federal institutions did not have the right to vote in 2000.

**Includes electors in acute care hospitals.

***Includes snowbirds.

3.6.2 Voting in Advance

Another option provided by the *Canada Elections Act* for Canadians who cannot or do not wish to go to the polling station on election day is advance voting.

On January 13, 14 and 16, 2006, in 2,767 locations, 3,371 polling stations were open across Canada. In preparation for advance voting, returning officers printed revised lists of electors, which reflected the updates made since revision had started. Across Canada, the revised lists contained the names and addresses of 22,765,324 electors. Any elector whose name was not on the revised lists could register and vote at an advance polling station. A total of 1,561,039 electors cast advance votes in the 2006 election, representing 6.8 percent of registered electors.

Table 3.21 Advance Voting 1997–2006

General Election	Valid Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout
1997	704,336	3.6%
2000	775,157	3.5%
2004	1,248,469	5.5%
2006	1,561,039	6.8%

Field Staff Contingency Planning

ROs developed a field staff contingency plan for advance voting, in conjunction with field liaison officers, to ensure adequate service for the expected increase in advance

voters. The contingency plan rested not only on the deployment of standby resources, but also on greater flexibility in hiring. ROs could hire additional and standby registration officers, information officers, poll clerks, DROs and central poll supervisors. If necessary, ROs could also have poll officials on standby. These resources are not usually authorized for advance polls. The electoral district profile and expected number of advance poll voters governed the final resourcing decisions, and prior approval from the Chief Electoral Officer was mandatory for any additional resources. Overall, ROs were prepared to handle up to 100 percent more advance poll voters in 2006 than they had prepared for in 2004.

Table 3.22 shows the number of additional and standby resources for all 308 electoral districts at advance voting.

Table 3.22 Advance Voting Contingency Plan

Additional Resources	
Registration officers	2,159
Information officers	1,258
Poll clerks	751
Central poll supervisors	696
Subtotal	4,864
Standby Resources	
Registration officers	384
Information officers	209
Deputy returning officers	840
Poll clerks	463
Central poll supervisors	294
Subtotal	2,190
Total Additional and Standby Resources	7,054

In anticipation of a heavier turnout, the Chief Electoral Officer authorized ROs to hire additional teams of DROs and poll clerks to count the ballots cast at advance polls. This count takes place at the close of polls on election day – one week after the end of the advance polls. Hiring additional teams would ensure a timely release of results. ROs were authorized to hire up to two additional teams of poll officials (one DRO and one poll clerk) if more than 750 advance poll ballots needed to be counted. Elections Canada recommended one team per advance poll day. ROs were urged to advise the candidates in their electoral district of these procedures and invite them to deploy additional candidates’ representatives to witness the count.

3.6.3 Voting on Election Day

The third and final means by which Canadians are able to vote is to cast a ballot at a polling station on election day. As the traditional method of voting, it remained the first choice for the vast majority of Canadian electors during the 39th general election. In preparation for election day, ROs printed official lists of electors, which reflected the updates made since revision had started. The names of the electors who had already applied to vote by special ballot or who had voted at an advance poll were crossed off to prevent any attempt at voting twice. Across Canada, the official lists contained the names and addresses of 22,812,683 electors. This section recounts what occurred on election day, January 23, 2006.

Field Staff Contingency Planning

As for advance voting, field liaison officers (FLOs) helped ROs develop contingency plans to ensure that all election day polling stations would open at the time prescribed by the *Canada Elections Act*. For election day, ROs could hire additional and standby registration officers, information officers and central poll supervisors. They could also hire standby DROs and poll clerks. If sufficient additional staff were warranted, additional time would be assigned to the training officer, as well. ROs responded extremely well to the directive to develop contingency plans.

The contingency plan for field staff on election day took into consideration the distances that standby resources would have to travel. In principle, standby poll officials had to arrive at the assigned polling station within 30 minutes.

Ballots

It is through the ballot that electors exercise their right to vote. Printing the ballots for an electoral district is one of the most demanding tasks for an RO – especially in view of the strict deadlines imposed by the *Canada Elections Act*. While ballots are printed locally in each riding, the special paper used is provided under strictly controlled conditions by Elections Canada.

Before the election, each RO had lined up a local printer for the ballots and other riding-specific items. Because it was likely that many companies would not be working during the holidays unless alerted in advance, ROs contacted their printers in mid-December to ensure that key items could be produced when needed. The ROs had a series of printing deadlines during the election: the voter information cards (at the printer no later than December 16), the revised lists of electors (printed by January 10), the ballots (printed by January 8) and the official lists of electors (printed by January 20).

Elections Canada shipped the blank sheets of controlled ballot paper directly to each printer between December 14 and 22 (Canada Post's National Coordinator and Regional Team Leaders managed these deliveries in conjunction with the printers for Elections Canada).

In mid-December as well, other materials necessary for the printing of ballots were shipped to the returning offices – the artwork for the back of the ballot paper, as well as the artwork for the front, where the names of political parties are listed. New artwork was prepared for the three new political parties.

As soon as each riding's candidates were confirmed, the RO sent the printer the candidate information for the ballot. After the RO signed off on the proof copy of the ballot, the candidates' names and affiliations were printed and the ballots were bound in books, ready for voting in the returning office, at the advance polls and on election day.

Logically, the election day contingency plan required more standby resources than the contingency plan for advance voting. Table 3.23 shows the number of additional and standby resources for all 308 electoral districts on election day.

Table 3.23 Election Day Contingency Plan

Additional Resources	
Registration officers	2,551
Information officers	2,065
Central poll supervisors	920
Subtotal	5,536
Standby Resources	
Registration officers	1,100
Information officers	713
Deputy returning officers	4,244
Poll clerks	1,563
Central poll supervisors	1,229
Subtotal	8,849
Total Additional and Standby Resources	14,385

Elections Canada has established a comprehensive tracking and reporting system to ensure that advance and regular polls open on time. The DRO in every poll must arrive 45 minutes early; the central poll supervisor must arrive 60 minutes early and phone the RO to confirm that the poll is ready to open. Standby resources are deployed immediately to any poll not calling in. ROs are directed by the Chief Electoral Officer to report any poll in danger of not opening on time and to advise the FLO. All of these warnings are monitored at Elections Canada in Ottawa to ensure that remedial action is taken to open polls on time. ROs were also instructed to report any events during voting hours that resulted in polls having to close due to severe weather, power outages or other unforeseen events.

Delays and Disruptions at the Polls

Of the 62,106 polling stations on election day (60,795 stationary and 1,311 mobile), Elections Canada was informed that 36 – located at 16 polling sites in 11 electoral districts – did not open at the time prescribed by the Act, thereby potentially affecting service to some 13,393 electors. Many of these polling stations established service within one hour of the appointed time. Reasons for delays included nine poll officials who did not arrive (one of whom was in a car accident) and had to be replaced; documents were missing – in one case, ballots were delivered by helicopter to a remote reserve isolated by bad weather; and one poll had to be relocated because the furnace was not working at the original site. At another remote location, poll officials could not get access to the site because of a power outage. One DRO put up signs and opened a temporary polling station at her own home, while another operated a polling station from a truck.

Service to electors was interrupted for various reasons in 31 other polling stations, at six polling sites in six electoral districts. This potentially affected 11,639 electors. Four sites (29 polling stations) experienced brief evacuations due to fire alarms; at one polling station, the DRO was replaced within 15 minutes after a death in the family, and another polling station was closed for 50 minutes in the evening due to a power outage.

Despite the difficult weather conditions and power outages that affected four electoral districts, some 60 polls at the 32 related polling sites were able to provide service, without delay or interruption, to some 18,600 electors. Some poll

Power Failure in Northern Saskatchewan

Early in the evening of election day, the RO for Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River called Elections Canada to report a power failure. As details continued to come in from the field, the Major Incident Task Force Control Centre activated the plans it had developed for such a contingency. Communication with the RO, the power company and the Government Operations Centre established the magnitude of the power failure. Some 31 polls were affected at 24 sites. In a matter of minutes, the Control Centre had mapped the area and provided the Chief Electoral Officer with the estimated number of electors affected (some 9,000) and the latest local weather forecast.

The RO and local staff worked relentlessly to keep polls open and ensure uninterrupted service to electors. Some voting took place by candlelight. Meanwhile, the Chief Electoral Officer instructed the Control Centre to enter full contingency mode for the transmission of polling night results, as it was difficult to estimate how long the failure would last. The RO secured a power generator, and communication was quickly established between local electricians and information technology specialists in Ottawa to ensure that the returning office server could be powered up safely. The server was back on-line some 50 minutes before results would be made public.

After discussing the matter directly with the RO and considering that at no time were any polls closed in that riding, the Chief Electoral Officer concluded that the situation did not call for him to invoke section 59 of the Act. Throughout their ordeal, the local staff were helped by relatively mild temperatures for the season and the tenacity of the RO. Power came back on at 8:22 p.m. local time.

officials went on duty with flashlights so the voting could continue uninterrupted, and one poll was moved to the kitchen of the facility, where ovens provided some heat. Another poll was held in the foyer of a building, despite cold weather, because daylight from the front window offered sufficient lighting while the power was out.

The many poll officials who endured freezing conditions, and who devised creative solutions to provide service to their electors during power outages and various disruptions, deserve high commendation, as do the ROs who provided excellent leadership and support.

Destruction of a Ballot Box

In one electoral district, a man entered a polling station, snatched a ballot box, took it outside and ran over it with his truck. Approximately 50 people had already voted, and their ballots were in the box.

Police took the man into custody until the polls closed, and the RO delivered a new ballot box to the polling station.

The crushed box, with its ballots, was brought in and placed on the floor of the polling station. The RO ensured that all candidates had a representative at the polling station and, in the presence of the representatives and election officers, removed all ballots from the damaged box and placed them in the new ballot box. The new box was duly sealed, and all representatives and election officers signed the seal. Voting proceeded without further incident.

Media Filming in Polling Stations

Section 135 of the *Canada Elections Act* prohibits the presence of the media at a polling station on polling day, even if an elector consents to being filmed. This is meant to allow voters to consider and cast their votes in private, without distraction, disruption or delay.

On January 18, 2006, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a reminder to the media that their representatives were not permitted at polling stations or in the returning office to film or broadcast voting by electors – including party leaders. They were permitted, however, to film proceedings from the doorway of these locations, provided this could be done without obstructing easy access to the polling location or disturbing electors within it or nearby. Most media respected the request. An e-mail sent on January 19, 2006, to the Advisory Committee of Political Parties distribution list reminded the parties of the same restriction.

3.6.4 International Delegates

Elections Canada hosted numerous delegates from other nations to observe our operations during the 39th general election.

Visitors Program

Our Visitors Program ran from January 19 to 23, 2006. A total of 15 people participated, including election administration officials from Australia, Mexico and Iraq, representatives of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights & Democracy) and students from the University of Moncton and the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, who were involved in an international exchange program to refine their knowledge of democracy and elections.

The program consisted primarily of information sessions on the role of Elections Canada during an election period, demonstrations of our Event Management System, visits to returning offices and observations of polling stations on election day.

3.7 Adaptations During the 39th General Election

The Chief Electoral Officer may adapt the *Canada Elections Act* under subsection 17(1) to address an emergency, an error, or an unusual or unforeseen circumstance.

The Chief Electoral Officer's adaptations to the Act made during the 39th general election are listed in full in Appendix VIII of this report.

4. Wrap-up of the 39th General Election and a Look Forward

Introduction

Once the polls close, for most people the election is over. For Elections Canada, an intensive stretch of work is just beginning.

Our post-election activities can be divided into three general, overlapping phases. First, we must confirm the election results and the winning candidates for each of the 308 ridings across the country. At the same time, we must conduct election close-out activities, such as shutting down 308 returning offices and 111 satellite offices, making payments to over 180,925 election workers and office staff (who filled 205,932 positions), processing financial and advertising reports from political entities and reimbursing their eligible expenses, dealing with electoral law enforcement matters and reporting to Parliament. Finally, we must evaluate our performance during the election in an ongoing effort to improve our administration of each successive electoral event.

This chapter recounts Elections Canada's activities for each of the three post-election phases. We then examine some of our more critical preparations for the next election, which are already underway.

4.1 The Electors Speak

This first section looks at the specific outcomes of the vote, including how many electors voted, the preliminary results reported on election night and the final election results. These were determined after the validation process was performed in each returning office and by Elections Canada or, in some cases, by judicial recounts following the validation of results.

4.1.1 Final Lists of Electors

On election day, some 795,000 electors registered at the polls; either they were added to the lists of electors, or they had their addresses changed before they voted. Shortly after election day, returning office staff entered these registrations into their local databases. As was the case during the revision period, however, before adding an elector, staff first eliminated duplicate entries. They searched the national lists and deleted electors who had moved to a new riding from the database for their former riding. Once updated in the field, all elector databases were sent back to Elections Canada. This completed a cycle of 55 days, during which more than 2 million changes were made to the preliminary lists of electors.

Elections Canada then verified the entries to detect and remove any remaining duplicate records. Although most returning officers (ROs) had used all the quality assurance tools at their disposal to ensure that no elector appeared twice on the lists, we were able to find and remove some 217,000 duplicate records – a reduction from the 288,000 duplicate records on the lists of electors returned after the June 28, 2004, election.

At the conclusion of this effort, the number of names on the final lists of electors for the 39th general election was 23,054,615. This was an increase of 1.6 percent over the preliminary lists and up 2.6 percent from the 2004 election. The final lists of electors

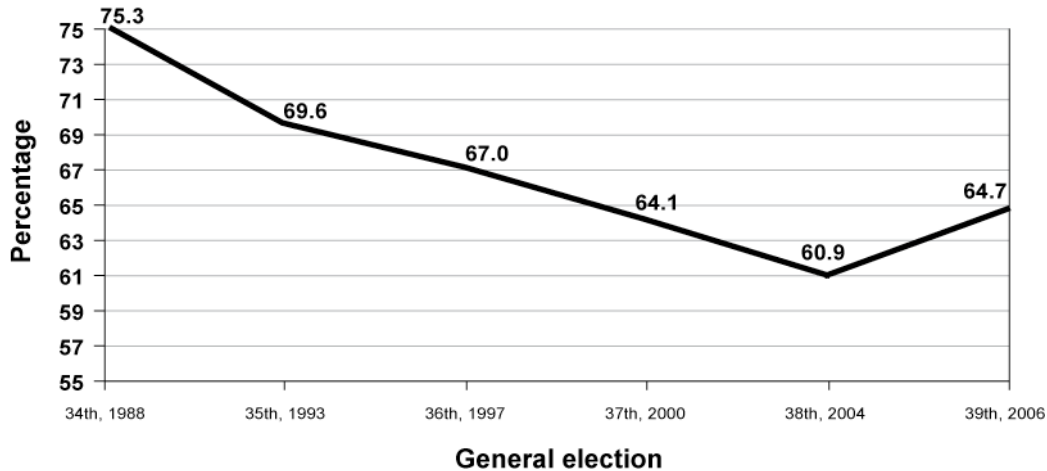
were delivered to members of Parliament and registered political parties on April 13, 2006.

4.1.2 Voter Turnout

There are various ways of calculating voter turnout. One method is to compare the number of votes cast with an estimate of the total population of electors. Another method, used by Elections Canada, is to express voter participation as the ratio between the number of votes cast and the number of registered electors. Hence, if the number of registered electors increases and if the number of votes cast is stable, then the rate of voter participation will decrease over time relative to the number of registered electors.

The total number of votes cast in the 2006 election, including advance polls, special ballots and ordinary polling day, was 14,908,703 – an increase of about 9.0 percent over the 13,683,570 cast in 2004. Relative to the 23,054,615 electors on the lists, this translates into a turnout rate – using the method employed by Elections Canada – of 64.7 percent. This marks the first turnout rate increase since the 34th general election (1988).

Figure 4.1 Trend in Voter Turnout



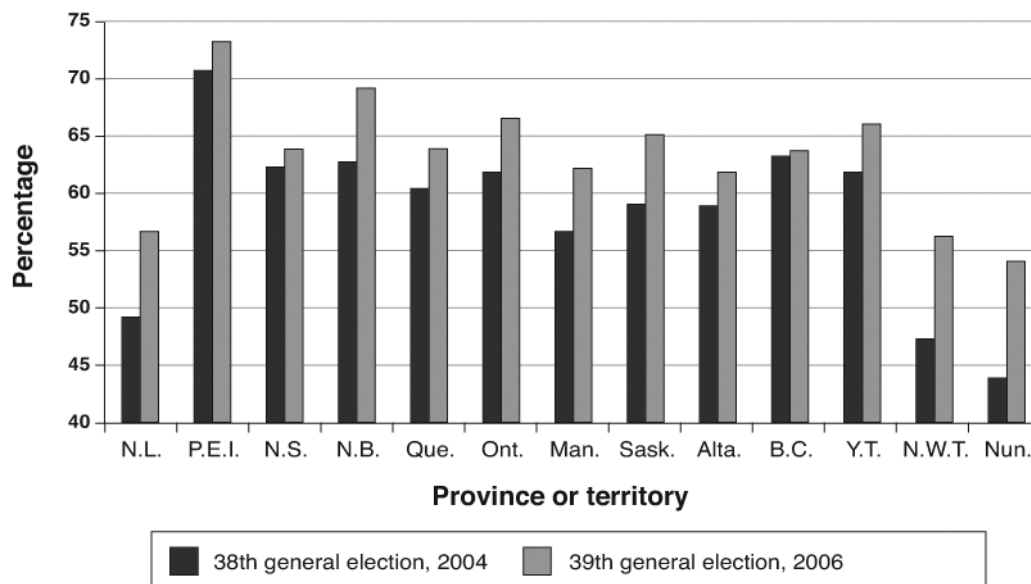
Note: The turnout in 2000 was adjusted from 61.2 percent to 64.1 percent following the normal maintenance of the National Register of Electors to remove the names of deceased electors and duplicates.

Table 4.1 Voter Turnout – 38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006

Province or Territory	38th General Election, 2004			39th General Election, 2006		
	Electors on Final Lists	Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout %	Electors on Final Lists	Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout %
Newfoundland and Labrador	405,032	199,536	49.3	403,982	228,961	56.7
Prince Edward Island	109,031	77,143	70.8	107,677	78,829	73.2
Nova Scotia	706,932	440,450	62.3	750,829	479,580	63.9
New Brunswick	597,440	374,952	62.8	594,104	410,918	69.2
Quebec	5,800,109	3,507,100	60.5	5,852,528	3,737,849	63.9
Ontario	8,294,928	5,127,387	61.8	8,536,359	5,682,366	66.6
Manitoba	841,061	476,512	56.7	831,278	517,557	62.3
Saskatchewan	723,922	427,960	59.1	712,427	463,788	65.1
Alberta	2,171,584	1,278,932	58.9	2,322,108	1,436,655	61.9
British Columbia	2,750,577	1,739,999	63.3	2,875,950	1,832,557	63.7
Yukon	20,345	12,578	61.8	21,493	14,206	66.1
Northwest Territories	28,619	13,546	47.3	28,792	16,186	56.2
Nunavut	17,041	7,475	43.9	17,088	9,251	54.1
Canada	22,466,621	13,683,570	60.9	23,054,615	14,908,703	64.7

Both the number of votes cast and the turnout rate increased in all provinces and territories over 2004, but the percentage improvement was greater in some regions than others. This was due partly to the fact that turnout was influenced by changes in the number of registered electors.

Figure 4.2 Voter Turnout – 38th and 39th General Elections, 2004 and 2006



4.1.3 Preliminary Results on Election Day

Shortly after the last polls closed for the 39th general election on Monday, January 23, 2006, Elections Canada began to count the ballots, and at 10:00 p.m., Eastern Time, we began to report the preliminary results on our Web site.

Each deputy returning officer (DRO) counted the votes for his or her polling station in the presence of witnesses. The DRO then filled out a statement of the vote and telephoned the unofficial results to the returning office, where they were entered into the Event Results System (ERS) – a software application that captures poll-by-poll results. The ballots and other election documents were then sealed in the ballot box and delivered to the RO for validation.

Special ballots counted in Ottawa from national, international, Canadian Forces and incarcerated electors were also tabulated and faxed to each RO on election night. They were then added to the results of voting by local electors in the ERS as two separate groups. Group 1 included the votes of international, Canadian Forces and incarcerated electors, while Group 2 included the votes of national and local electors.

As results were entered into the ERS, they automatically appeared on our Web site. They were also simultaneously relayed to the computers of the Media Consortium – a national media group representing major news providers that centralizes media access to preliminary voting results on election night. The Consortium, in turn, distributed the results, continuously and unfiltered, to all of its national, regional and local media members and to the Web sites of Canada's main news outlets. Local and regional media representatives were often present in returning offices and were able to obtain progressive local results upon request.

Members of the Media Consortium

- CBC and its French-language sister SRC
- CTV
- Global TV
- TVA
- CHUM Television
- The Canadian Press and Broadcast News/La Presse Canadienne et Nouvelles Télé-Radio

The election night results for the 39th general election were based on 66,151 of the total 66,171 polls reporting. The riding of Mount Royal (Quebec) closed with all but 16 polls reporting, while in Kenora (Ontario) and Nunavut (Nunavut), the evening closed with all but 2 polls reporting in each riding, after the DROs failed to phone in the results. This total of 20 polls that did not report is a significant reduction from the 241 that did not report in the 2004 election; however, additional improvements will be sought in an effort to reduce this number further.

Poll-by-Poll Results

To protect the secrecy of the vote, Elections Canada does not release any preliminary poll-by-poll results on election night. Instead, we summarize the results for five polls at a time in each electoral district. Candidates' representatives receive a copy of the Statement of the Vote on election night at each poll they attend.

A few ROs have traditionally provided preliminary poll-by-poll results to local media, but the Chief Electoral Officer directed all ROs not to provide such information.

On February 2, 2006, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a news release committing Elections Canada to a review of the system. For elections held after October 1, 2006, poll-by-poll results will be available to local media after validation of the results in a new hard-copy report developed for this purpose.

4.1.4 After Election Day

Validation of the Results

The results compiled and reported on election night are considered preliminary. These results are then verified and completed (in the case of polls not reporting on election night) during the validation process within seven days of election day.

To validate the results, the RO – in the presence of witnesses – adds the totals given on each Statement of the Vote. Upon completing the validation, the RO delivers a certificate announcing the validated results to the candidates. Seven days later, or immediately following any judicial recount, the RO writes the name of the winning candidate on the back of the writ and returns it to the Chief Electoral Officer. As each RO reports to Ottawa, results and validation dates are posted on the Web, showing the number of valid ballots by candidate as well as the rejected ballots and total ballots cast.

In the 39th general election, 178 electoral districts conducted validation on January 24, 2006, and another 94 on January 25. By February 2, all 308 districts had been validated and the results posted at www.elections.ca.

Adjournments of Validation of the Results

If the RO does not receive all ballot boxes and results of voting by special ballot by the date published in the Notice of Election for the validation of results (this can happen in large ridings with remote polls), validation must be postponed and every effort made to retrieve any missing boxes. The delay, however, cannot exceed two weeks beyond the original seven days permitted by law. In the event that a ballot box has been destroyed or continues to be missing, specific procedures are outlined in section 296 of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Following the 39th general election, there were eight postponements (also referred to as “adjournments”). As entitled witnesses of the validation proceedings, all candidates in these cases were duly advised.

**Table 4.2 Adjudgments of Validation of the Results
39th General Election, 2006**

Province or Territory	Electoral District	Delay
Quebec	Ahuntsic	1 day
Ontario	Algoma–Manitoulin–Kapusking	2 days
	Kenora	1 day
	Thunder Bay–Superior North	1 day
British Columbia	Okanagan–Coquihalla	1 day
	Skeena–Bulkley Valley	1 day
Northwest Territories	Western Arctic	3 days
Nunavut	Nunavut	1 day

Recounts

There were two judicial recounts following the 39th general election, both of which confirmed the original winning candidate.

- Parry Sound–Muskoka (Ontario)** – A recount was automatically called under section 300 of the *Canada Elections Act*. The validation of results showed that the Conservative candidate, Tony Clement, had a majority of only 29 votes over the Liberal candidate, Andy Mitchell; this was less than 1/1000th of the 46,331 votes cast. The recount occurred from February 1 to 3, 2006, and the difference between the two candidates was adjusted to 28 votes.
- Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River (Saskatchewan)** – A recount was requested under section 301 of the Act by the second-place Conservative candidate, Jeremy Harrison. The margin between the first two candidates was 73 votes in favour of the Liberal candidate, Gary Merasty, after the validation of results. Following the recount, completed on February 10, 2006, the difference between the two candidates was adjusted to 67 votes.

Final Results (Return of the Writs)

The candidate with the most votes in a riding is officially declared elected when the RO completes the form on the back of the writ. The RO sends a copy of the return of the writ to each candidate, then returns the writ itself, along with all other election documents, to the Chief Electoral Officer. The Chief Electoral Officer records the receipt of the writs and, without delay, publishes the names of the elected candidates in the *Canada Gazette*.

For the 39th general election, the date set for the return of the writs was February 13, 2006. Writs must be held at least six days after the validation of the results to allow time for candidates and electors to request a recount. Should such a request occur before a winner is declared, the RO must await the recount judge's decision before returning the writ. As a result of the statutory recount process, the final writ for the 39th general election was actually returned on February 15, 2006.

A total of 308 candidates were elected to the House of Commons in this election. Of these, 240 were members in the 38th Parliament. Additionally, 64 of the elected candidates were women, the remaining 244 were men. (The 38th general election holds the record for most women elected, at 65.)

Table 4.3 compares the number of seats won by each party in the election with standings in the House of Commons at Parliament's dissolution on November 29, 2005.

**Table 4.3 Number of Seats in the House of Commons, by Political Affiliation
39th General Election, 2006**

Political Affiliation	At the Dissolution of Parliament (Nov. 29, 2005)	After 39th General Election (Jan. 23, 2006)
Conservative Party of Canada	98	124
Liberal Party of Canada	133	103
Bloc Québécois	53	51
New Democratic Party	18	29
Independent/No affiliation	4	1
Canadian Action Party	–	–
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	–	–
Communist Party of Canada	–	–
Green Party of Canada	–	–
Libertarian Party of Canada	–	–
Marijuana Party	–	–
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	–	–
Progressive Canadian Party	–	–
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	*	–
First Peoples National Party of Canada	*	–
Western Block Party	*	–
Total	306**	308

*Party registered during the 2006 general election.

**At the dissolution of Parliament, two seats in the House of Commons were vacant.

Official Results

After each general election, the Chief Electoral Officer, in accordance with paragraph 533(a) of the *Canada Elections Act*, must publish a report that sets out the official voting results, by polling division, together with any other information he considers relevant.

Given the demand for poll-by-poll results during and shortly after the election, the Chief Electoral Officer published interim poll-by-poll results on the Elections Canada Web site on March 13, 2006. The interim results reflected the validation conducted by ROs and the judicial recounts that occurred in two ridings; they did not include the number of electors on the lists because these had not yet been finalized.

For the 39th general election, the official voting results were posted on our Web site on May 12, 2006.¹⁰ They were also published on a CD-ROM – together with a results map, statistical tables, poll-by-poll results grouped by candidate and riding, and a user guide – and distributed to each member of the House of Commons and Senate, and to the leaders of each registered political party, within one week of being posted on our Web site. Two copies of a printed map entitled *Canada: The 39th Parliament*, showing results by riding and listing members of the House of Commons and senators, were sent under separate cover at the same time. Like all Elections Canada reports, this report is distributed to provide precise and complete information to the public about the administration of the 39th general election, thereby ensuring the transparency of the Canadian electoral process.

4.1.5 Lists of Electors

Reports of Non-citizens on the Lists of Electors

Before being registered in the National Register of Electors or on a list of electors, a person must first provide adequate proof of identity and attest to Canadian citizenship. The only exceptions occur when names are added to the Register through updates from a provincial or territorial list of electors. In these cases, it is expected that the source agency has verified the elector's status before adding the name to its own lists.

During the election, reports appeared in some newspapers about non-citizens who had incorrectly been registered to vote. These reports included sufficient detail for Elections Canada to follow up on four cases. We generally found the electors in question to have been originally registered to vote through a door-to-door enumeration. They were included in the Register either through provincial electoral lists used for updates or from the last federal enumeration in 1997. Whenever non-citizens were discovered, they were removed from the lists. Further investigation of the Register revealed that 511 non-citizens had been included on preliminary voters lists through an administrative error, despite the fact that they had confirmed with Elections Canada that they were not

¹⁰This is the date on which the Chief Electoral Officer submitted this statutory report on the administration of the election and activities of his Office since the previous election. Section 536 of the *Canada Elections Act* requires the Speaker to forward this report to the House of Commons without delay.

Canadian citizens. Their records were removed from the revised lists of electors, and Elections Canada sent a notification to each of these individuals.

New electors are added to the Register from Citizenship and Immigration Canada files only after citizenship is granted and consent is provided. They may also be identified from driver's licence files or income tax files, but we write to those potential electors asking them to attest to Canadian citizenship before adding them to the Register. During the election, and when registering on polling day, electors must show identification and sign an oath confirming they are Canadian citizens. In addition, the prescribed form clearly states that it is an offence to provide false information. There are large signs posted in all voting locations that clearly state that only Canadian citizens at least 18 years of age are eligible to vote.

Electors Listed at Non-residential Addresses

An elector's residential address determines his or her polling division and consequently the advance and ordinary polling station where the elector may vote. However, a small number of electors appear in the Register at non-residential addresses. For the most part, these business addresses are derived from tax file information for electors who prefer to have their Canada Revenue Agency correspondence sent to their place of work. A non-residential address may also be assigned to an elector who is under the guardianship of a public trustee.

Elections Canada's voter registration system has improved its ability to detect these addresses. In some cases, Canada Post has identified the target address with a commercial postal code; in other cases, Register staff have flagged the building as commercial, based on past experience, to prevent electors from being assigned to that address. However, at the time preliminary lists were distributed, we had reason to believe, from new postal code information, that some 6,500 electors were still assigned to non-residential addresses. ROs were informed, and after revising agents had confirmed that these were non-residential addresses, the electors in question were struck off the revised lists for the polling division where they were incorrectly registered.

Nevertheless, some electors remained assigned to non-residential addresses that had not yet been identified as such. Shortly before polling day, representatives of a candidate in Edmonton Centre informed Elections Canada and the media that some electors appearing on the revised lists were still registered at non-residential addresses. To ensure that only eligible voters appeared on the lists used on polling day, all elector records in this electoral district were checked against available sources to determine whether these assertions were true. Suspect buildings were visited, and in the end, some 350 records appeared to be at primarily non-residential addresses. These records were flagged so that deputy returning officers and candidates' representatives at the polls could verify the electors' correct residential addresses when they came to vote.

Elections Canada will continue exploring new and more thorough methods of identifying and recording non-residential addresses across Canada. One promising method consists of matching lists of Register addresses with a file of addresses to which only a commercial telephone line is assigned.

4.2 Closing Out the Election

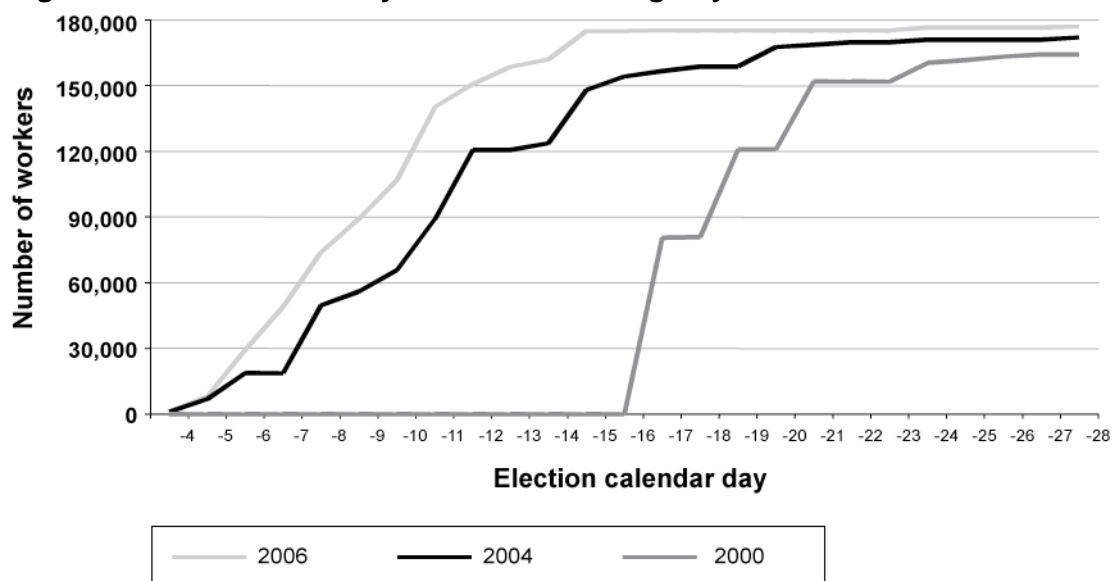
The process of closing out a federal election begins immediately after polling day with the preparation and distribution of payment to tens of thousands of election workers and the shutting down of 308 returning offices and 111 satellite offices. It can take years to complete because some matters of electoral law enforcement may ultimately need to be remedied through the judicial system. Between these two extremes of the close-out time frame, Elections Canada must also administer the process of election expenses reimbursement and campaign reporting for political entities.

4.2.1 Payments to Election Workers

Approximately 170,000 payments were made to advance poll and election day workers following the election. Delivery was efficient, with 93 percent of the payments processed within 9 days after election day, compared with the 88 percent of payments processed within 10 days of the 2004 election. Payments were issued every two weeks to returning office staff across the country. Some 81 percent of workers opted for direct deposit to their bank accounts (compared with 72 percent in 2004), helping to speed up the payment process.

Elections Canada has a payment inquiry line to respond to questions from election workers. From February 2006 through the end of March 2006, we received 20,500 calls, with a daily average answer rate of 93 percent (compared with 83 percent after the 2004 election). When callers indicate a potential payment problem, a request is recorded in our call-tracking system. A total of 160 requests were still active two months after election day (compared with 817 in 2004). The following payment chart shows the cumulative daily number of workers who received payment within four weeks of election day.

Figure 4.3 Cumulative Payments After Polling Day



4.2.2 Shutting Down Offices

Before shutting down their offices, ROs must capture all payment data in a customized application called the Returning Office Payment System (ROPS) and all polling day registrant data in the REVISE application. They must also validate the results, participate in judicial recounts (if any), pack up all their materials and computer equipment, return furniture and equipment to suppliers, arrange for the phones to be disconnected and arrange for their mail to be redirected to their home address. Additional assistant returning officers, who manage satellite offices, carry out similar tasks.

Elections Canada contracts with the Canada Post Corporation to pick up the tonnes of election materials and deliver them to our central distribution centre in Ottawa, where they will be sorted and archived as required. IBM Canada also contracts with Canada Post to pick up computer equipment from each returning office across Canada and deliver it to its Markham distribution centre for storage.

4.2.3 Returning Officer Evaluations

As in the previous two elections, Elections Canada conducted performance evaluations of ROs during the 39th general election. Shortly after election day, field liaison officers (FLOs) met with their ROs to complete the evaluation grid. ROs were asked to sign this to acknowledge their participation in the process. The evaluation grids were then sent to Elections Canada for completion, after which FLOs reviewed them once more to comment on any discrepancies between their evaluations and those of the agency.

Elections Canada is currently consolidating the data gathered for the 36 indicators tracked in the evaluation grid. Senior management will review the results in early May 2006, and then they will be mailed to the ROs. An appeal process provides an opportunity for ROs to explain any disagreement they may have with their evaluations.

4.2.4 Electoral Law Enforcement

As of April 5, 2006, a total of 329 complaints had been received by the Commissioner of Canada Elections related to the 39th general election. Of these, 231 cases have been resolved to date, while the other 98 remain open.

One charge has been laid against an individual for contravening paragraph 5(a) of the *Canada Elections Act*, thereby committing an offence under paragraph 483(a). Paragraph 5(a) states that no person may vote or attempt to vote at an election knowing that he or she is not a qualified elector. To be qualified, an elector must be a Canadian citizen 18 years of age or older on polling day.

On December 5, 2005, the Commissioner of Canada Elections dealt summarily with the appearance of an ad on eBay that offered a Canadian vote for sale during the election. At the request of the Commissioner, the ad was removed by eBay on December 6, 2005. No sale had taken place. Since then, eBay has put in place a permanent filter that will search all eBay.ca listings, no matter the origin, to prevent any attempt at such a transaction from occurring again.

Additional complaints may be filed following the deadline for submitting candidates' and third parties' financial returns, four months after election day. As cases progress, updated statistics on complaints, compliance agreements and prosecutions appear in the Chief Electoral Officer's periodic reports and publications.

4.2.5 Reimbursements and Election Expenses

All candidates are entitled to a refund of the \$1,000 nomination deposit if they comply with the *Canada Elections Act's* reporting requirements. They must return all unused official income tax receipts within one month after election day and submit a campaign financial return within four months of the election. Candidates who are elected or receive at least 10 percent of the valid votes cast in their electoral districts are entitled to a 60 percent reimbursement of their combined paid election and personal expenses, to a maximum of 60 percent of the election expenses limit in that riding. Additionally, candidates receive a subsidy to cover audit fees, equal to the greater of \$250 or 3 percent of their election expenses to a maximum of \$1,500. Registered political parties that obtain at least 2 percent of the total valid votes cast in the election, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast in the ridings where they endorse candidates, are entitled to a 50 percent reimbursement of their paid election expenses.

Within three weeks of election day, Elections Canada issued the initial reimbursement payments for election expenses to the 884 candidates who were elected or who received 10 percent or more of the valid votes cast in their ridings; these constituted about 54 percent of all candidates. The average reimbursement was \$12,158.22, and the total amount reimbursed was \$10,747,869.59.

Final reimbursements and audit subsidy payments are made after receipt of the candidates' electoral campaign returns (due no later than May 23, 2006, unless an extension is granted) and after the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied (as required by section 465 of the *Canada Elections Act*) that the candidate and his or her official agent have complied with specific sections of the Act.

**Table 4.4 Number of Candidates Eligible for Reimbursement
39th General Election, 2006**

Province or Territory	Candidates Eligible for Reimbursement
Newfoundland and Labrador	18
Prince Edward Island	10
Nova Scotia	33
New Brunswick	30
Quebec	213
Ontario	308
Manitoba	43
Saskatchewan	43
Alberta	68

Province or Territory	Candidates Eligible for Reimbursement
British Columbia	109
Yukon	3
Northwest Territories	3
Nunavut	3
Total Candidates Eligible	884
Total Candidates at 39th GE	1,636*
Portion Eligible	54.03%

*Two candidates withdrew after confirmation, leaving 1,634 active candidates. However, under the election financing rules, candidates who withdraw after the deadline are subject to all reporting requirements and are included in candidate statistics.

4.2.6 Reporting

The election financing reforms to the *Canada Elections Act* that came into force on January 1, 2004, introduced new reporting requirements for registered electoral district associations (EDAs) and nomination contestants. They add to the existing reporting requirements for registered political parties, candidates and third parties.

In February, March and April of 2006, Elections Canada held training sessions for financial agents of registered EDAs and official agents of candidates, aimed primarily at demonstrating how to prepare their returns using our Electronic Financial Return (EFR) software. A total of 40 sessions were held in major centres across the country.

Attendance at these sessions is summarized in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Electoral District Association Financial Training Sessions (2006)

Political Affiliation	Attendees
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	8
Bloc Québécois	34
Canadian Action Party	5
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	4
Conservative Party of Canada	173
Green Party of Canada	65
Liberal Party of Canada	131
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	2
New Democratic Party	72

Political Affiliation	Attendees
Progressive Canadian Party	3
Independent/No affiliation	56
Total	553

The objectives of the sessions were to help participants understand the obligations of an official agent of a candidate or a financial agent of a registered EDA. Presenters demonstrated how to complete the reporting requirements using the EFR. Based on evaluation forms from attendees, the sessions were very well received. Highlights of the evaluations included the following: 96 percent of survey respondents indicated that the sessions met the objectives; 97 percent were satisfied with support given by Elections Canada, with 87 percent stipulating that service was very good to excellent; and 94 percent indicated that they now plan to use the EFR software.

Financial Returns

Candidates

Candidates, through their official agents, must submit audited returns to the Chief Electoral Officer within four months after election day – May 23, 2006. Candidates' returns must show all electoral campaign expenses incurred, the amounts and sources of all contributions, loans and transfers, and the names and addresses of those who contributed more than \$200.

Following the deadline for submitting these returns, the Chief Electoral Officer will publish a summary of the returns at www.elections.ca. Each RO must also make a copy of the returns for that riding available locally, for six months, to allow any member of the public to consult them or obtain extracts. After this period, the returns can be examined through Elections Canada in Ottawa. A database available through our Web site contains all contribution and expense information reported by candidates for each election since 1997.

Registered Parties and Nomination Contestants

Within six months of election day, every registered political party must submit to the Chief Electoral Officer an audited return of its election expenses. Returns for the 39th general election are due no later than midnight, July 23, 2006.

Within 30 days of a contest being held to select a candidate for a registered party, the party or its registered EDA must submit a report to the Chief Electoral Officer. Elections Canada has received 651 reports related to the 39th general election, naming 959 nomination contestants.

A nomination contestant whose campaign contributions or expenses are \$1,000 or more must submit a return to the Chief Electoral Officer, along with an auditor's report if either of these amounts is \$10,000 or more. The deadline for this return is four months from the selection date, except when this date falls during or within 30 days preceding a

local election period. In that case, the nomination return may be submitted together with the candidate's election campaign return.

Third-party Election Advertising Returns

As described in section 3.5.1, Third-party Election Advertising, 80 third parties registered with Elections Canada for the 39th general election. Each is required to submit a financial report disclosing election advertising expenses, and the related funding sources, no later than midnight, May 23, 2006.

4.3 What We Learned

Elections Canada is committed to continuous assessment and improvement of our operations. At no time is this more evident than following a general election, when the agency's primary reason for being has been put to a crucial test. While the full evaluation of our performance in the 39th general election will take more time to complete, some lessons learned have been included in this report. The results of further post-election analyses will be provided in subsequent reports as they become available.

4.3.1 Post-election Evaluation Studies

Estimate of Voter Turnout by Age Group

Following the 38th general election, Elections Canada carried out a study of voting behaviours by age group (see section 1.1.1, Post-election Evaluation Studies). Information was gathered on all who voted at advance polls and by special ballot, and on those who registered to vote on election day. In addition, the names of electors who voted on polling day at a selected sample of polling stations were collected. This information was combined with the electors' dates of birth from the National Register of Electors for an accurate estimate of turnout by age group. We will repeat this study for the 39th general election.

Elections Canada Survey of Electors at the 39th General Election

Between January 26 and February 16, 2006, Elections Canada conducted a survey of public opinions, attitudes and knowledge of our services and various aspects of the electoral process, including individuals' experience of the election.

The survey consisted of 20-minute telephone interviews with 3,013 Canadian residents 18 years of age or older, including an over-sample of 502 Aboriginal respondents and 500 young people aged 18 to 24. The questionnaire for the 2006 election built on the one used in 2004, but it was refined to achieve greater insight into several aspects of the electoral process.¹¹

¹¹The margin of error for the general population sample of 2,011 is ± 2.2 percent, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error for Aboriginal respondents (national sample and over-sample combined) is ± 3.8 percent, and ± 3.7 percent for the youth component (national sample and over-sample combined).

The resulting survey included questions on registration and the voter information card, the reminder card and the Voter Information Service, the experience of and satisfaction with the electoral process, reasons why non-voters did not vote, Elections Canada's advertising campaign and attitudes toward elections and politics. There was also a new section focusing on Aboriginal and young electors.

The full analysis of Elections Canada's survey of electors, anticipated later this year, will be published at www.elections.ca.

Preliminary Findings from the 2006 General Survey of Electors

- 89 percent of respondents said they received their voter information cards.
- Of the respondents who received a voter information card, 96 percent did not report any error in their personal information, such as registration status, name or address.
- 52 percent of respondents recalled seeing or hearing a non-partisan ad encouraging people to vote. In addition, 81 percent remembered having seen or heard information on advance voting, 47 percent on how to register and vote, and 31 percent on voting by mail.
- 70 percent of the respondents remembered having seen or heard the slogan "Why not speak up when everyone is listening?" (79 percent on TV and 15 percent on the radio).
- 55 percent said that they liked the Elections Canada advertisements a lot or somewhat, 36 percent had no opinion and 8 percent had a negative reaction.
- 9 out of 10 respondents thought that the voting procedures were very easy.
- 97 percent of voters said that the distance they had to travel to reach the polling station was convenient; 98 percent did not have any difficulty finding the polling station.
- 97 percent were satisfied with the information provided on how to cast a ballot.
- More than 99 percent were satisfied with the language spoken at the polling station (slightly less than 98 percent among Aboriginal respondents).
- Among non-voters, 59 percent said they did not vote partly because they had lost interest in politics; 51 percent did not vote partly because they did not like any of the candidates; 43 percent indicated they lacked time to vote; and 48 percent said that something happened to prevent them from going to the polls (mostly related to work, school or family).
- The least frequent reasons for non-voting were the fact that the vote did not matter (26 percent), the lack of information on where and when to vote (25 percent) and not being registered on the list of electors (24 percent).

2006 Canadian Election Study

The Canadian Election Study (CES) is an academic study that has been conducted on every federal general election since 1965 (except for 1972). The four studies since 1997 have all been carried out in partnership with Elections Canada. The CES consists of two successive surveys with the same respondents – one during the campaign period, the

other after the election. Of the over 4,000 respondents in the 2006 study, half were taken from the sample used at the 2004 general election.

The 2006 survey asked 31 questions on the following themes:

- **Voters' experience during the election** – The voter information card (receipt and accuracy), Elections Canada advertising, voter participation, reasons for voting or not voting and individual engagement (political and non-political).
- **Attitudes toward financing regulation** – Contributions, public financing and party membership.
- **Other issues** – Fixed-date elections, electoral system and representation for youth, women, Aboriginal people and ethnocultural groups.

The results of the CES are expected later in 2006.

Evaluation of Outreach Activities

Elections Canada has undertaken a number of initiatives to assess the effectiveness of its activities aimed at better serving youth, Aboriginal peoples, ethnocultural communities and persons with special needs.

- We have commissioned academic experts on each of these four target groups to produce concept papers reviewing the existing literature and best practices, nationally and abroad, to identify research gaps.
- We have established internal working groups to assess our outreach programs and services during the 39th general election.
- We have asked community relations officers and Aboriginal elders and youth to complete questionnaires on their experiences during the general election so that we can improve these programs.

Based on the results of these investigations, Elections Canada plans to commission further research and consultations to refine our outreach programs.

Returning Officers' Reports of Proceedings

Under section 314 of the *Canada Elections Act*, every RO must report to the Chief Electoral Officer soon after the return of the writ on the conduct of the election in his or her riding. These reports are analyzed by Elections Canada, and the conclusions are used as a starting point in preparing for the next election.

- Overall, ROs were satisfied with Elections Canada services, more so than in 2004. The Elections Canada Support Network received high marks for timeliness, accuracy and professionalism.

- ROs were satisfied with the field liaison officers who assisted them during the election. RO satisfaction was also high with Elections Canada's financial products and services.
- ROs were less satisfied with the services provided by telephone companies, particularly in relation to the installation of telephone systems.
- A majority of ROs felt that staff rates of pay were too low but that the number of individuals hired for the office and the amount of training time were appropriate.
- ROs were satisfied with their relationships with political parties and candidates. They reported that the nomination process went smoothly.
- There was a significantly higher degree of satisfaction with election day activities and communication between the RO and polling stations than in 2004.
- Most ROs felt that Elections Canada was effective and efficient in communicating with electors. Many ROs hired community relations officers and noted a positive effect on voter turnout.

Community Relations Officer Evaluations

- Community relations officers also completed evaluations of their role and experience in the 2006 election. A large majority (88 percent) stated that they had a generally positive experience; 85 percent, that they would take the position again if it were offered; 84 percent, that their position was well received; 82 percent, that they were an important part of the staff; and 81 percent, that their community contacts offered positive feedback.
- Community relations officers stated that they worked extensively during the election period, primarily with youth and Aboriginal populations, spending the majority of their time in the field under the supervision of their ROs. They found the materials provided to them useful, but suggested that coordination should be improved and that they be allowed more time to complete tasks.
- Colleges and universities were the most popular sites for information kiosks and outreach activity sessions among youth relations officers, and, as expected, contacting young people was most successful in these locations as well as high schools.
- Contact with Aboriginal electors, meanwhile, was most successful on First Nations reserves and in friendship centres.
- While ethnocultural community relations officers reported making various contacts to facilitate their outreach activities, most of the contacts reported were made with people in community resource centres and drop-in or recreational facilities.

Aboriginal Elder and Youth Questionnaire

Elections Canada prepared a questionnaire for participants in the Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program (AEYP). (Please see section 3.3.1, Informing Electors, for details of the program.) ROs reported that the program had a positive effect. However, less than 50 percent of AEYP participants responded to the questionnaire; therefore, the highlights below may not be representative of all AEYP experiences.

- Almost half (46 percent) of respondents were recruited through the local community relations officer.
- A large majority (85 percent) found the program helpful in creating a welcoming environment for Aboriginal electors.
- AEYP personnel assisted electors at polling stations in largely Aboriginal communities. Almost a quarter (23 percent) helped between one and five people, while slightly fewer assisted between 6 and 10 (17 percent) or 11 to 20 people (11 percent). Thirty-one percent said they helped at least 21 people on election day. About 11 percent did not report providing assistance to electors directly. Seven percent did not respond to this question.
- AEYP representatives performed a variety of tasks to assist electors. Some 65 percent indicated that they answered questions about the voting process most often, and 51 percent devoted time to serving as a liaison between poll officials and voters. Some 31 percent served as interpreters, and 19 percent vouched for a non-registered elector. Participants also reported other tasks, such as assisting the elderly and greeting and guiding electors.

Field Liaison Officer Program Evaluation

After the election, all 27¹² field liaison officers (FLOs) received a questionnaire to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Field Liaison Officer Program. FLOs were also invited to an evaluation session in Ottawa from March 20 to 24, 2006. Following are the highlights of their responses, as well as the results of internal evaluations by the program team:

- The changes made to the program after the 2004 general election increased its effectiveness.
- The program helped the 2006 general election run more smoothly.
- The program is administered efficiently, provides effective support to FLOs and the equipment provided is adequate. FLO advisors handled 11,035 e-mails and 2,666 phone calls, while analysts spent approximately 360 hours in conference calls with FLOs throughout the election.
- There is greater understanding of the FLO's role among ROs.

¹² One of the 28 FLOs resigned during the election and was replaced by a backup.

- Increased involvement of FLOs in ROs' pre-election planning activities has proven beneficial to ROs and to Elections Canada.
- FLOs made close to 200 recommendations for improvements to procedures for ROs and staff. These are currently being analyzed.
- Regional meetings held with key field staff before the election were instrumental in ensuring the readiness of resources and proved to be an efficient way to impart last-minute changes in procedures.
- Increased FLO participation in the training of new ROs fostered a solid working relationship.
- Regional media advisors provided good support to FLOs in their dealings with the media. FLOs responded to 327 media requests throughout the election period.

Media Relations

A total of 4,017 calls were handled by the media relations team during the 39th general election. These included inquiries from print, broadcast and Web media, as well as journalists representing Aboriginal, ethnocultural and student media. Overall, the team was able to meet the majority of journalists' requests effectively. To create a more efficient media relations system for the 40th general election, improvements will be undertaken in the following areas:

- **Media relations network** – Establish a stable cross-Canada team of media advisors that can serve as a resource during elections and can deal with electoral issues. This would ensure a team with a strong base of knowledge about Elections Canada and the electoral system.
- **Regional media advisors and FLOs** – Further develop the existing relationships to improve communications and operations in the regions. This in turn will allow regional media advisors and FLOs to better serve media at the local level.
- **Media relations** – Continue to build relationships with the media as a way to raise public awareness and inform citizens about the electoral system. This will help meet our mandate of making sure that all voters have access to the electoral system.

The experience of the 39th general election underscores the importance of having a team of knowledgeable and well-trained media officers in place and with the resources and tools necessary to communicate electoral information to the public.

4.3.2 Official Languages

All election officers were trained in their responsibility to provide service in both official languages during the election. As usual, ROs were instructed to recruit bilingual workers or, in areas where this was difficult, to provide unilingual election workers with descriptive cards explaining to electors how to obtain service in either official language. Elections Canada made all of its election-related information available in both English and French, and it provided fully bilingual services through a toll-free 1-800 number and our Web site.

Early in the election period, staff of Elections Canada and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) established procedures for responding to language complaints within 24 hours. During the election, the Commissioner received 19 formal complaints, compared with 45 during the 2004 election. Given that over 180,000 election officers across Canada were interacting with up to 23 million electors over a 55-day period, we were encouraged by the small number of complaints, and we are confident that our hiring, training and awareness measures were largely successful. Nevertheless, we will continue our efforts to significantly reduce such complaints in the future.

The OCOL is currently completing its analysis of all the complaints before sending a final report to Elections Canada.

4.4 Preparations for the 40th General Election

The general election of January 23, 2006, returned another minority federal government in Canada (the first back-to-back minority governments in more than 40 years). This rare event determines Elections Canada's priorities for the coming months and will significantly affect how we deploy our resources. Once again, we must quickly prepare to deliver another general election – possibly as early as 2006 or 2007 – while still finalizing the tasks of the last election.

Immediately after the 39th general election, we reviewed each of our business lines and established critical paths for election preparations. The Chief Electoral Officer has approved restarting the replenishment of supplies and the necessary staffing plans. Briefly noted below are some of the more critical preparations in the areas of operations, election financing and information technology.

4.4.1 Operational Matters

Materials Inventory and Replenishment

We have undertaken the procurement and stockpiling of election materials to maintain the quantities needed for delivering an election. As well, the sorting of returned election materials and reusable supplies from the 308 electoral districts following the 39th general election is expected to continue into the first few months of the 2006–2007 fiscal year.

Telephony Services

We will review the agreements with our telephony and technical infrastructure service providers to improve the deployment of the necessary equipment and services in each electoral district.

4.4.2 Political Financing

Preparation for the 40th general election will require extensive planning and resource management because most resources will be committed to receiving, processing, reviewing and publishing the 2006 election candidate returns and the 2005 electoral district association annual returns. Both of these are due within one week of each other – May 23 and May 31, respectively.

In preparing for the 40th general election, we have applied annual adjustments to the various contribution and spending limits, and we have made this information available at www.elections.ca to ensure that all political entities are duly informed before the next general election.

Contribution Limit Updates

The limits on political contributions are adjusted before April 1 each year to factor in inflation figures published by Statistics Canada. Elections Canada published the following contribution limits in the *Canada Gazette* on March 18, 2006:

- annual individual contribution limit, 2007: \$5,400
- annual corporation, trade union and association contribution limit, 2007: \$1,100
- contribution limit applicable to leadership contests and to the election of an independent candidate, April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007: \$5,400

Updates to Political Entity Electronic Kits

Elections Canada maintains a number of tools and guidance materials to assist political entities in complying with the finance provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. Based on comments and experience from the 39th general election, the Political Entity Electronic Kit was redesigned and includes a new version of the Electronic Financial Return software application.

All tools and guidance materials will be inventoried for election readiness in electronic format (CD-ROM or DVD). These materials are also available at www.elections.ca.

4.4.3 Systems and Information Technology

During the 39th general election, Elections Canada identified several minor improvements necessary to our field systems – REVISE (the computer application used to revise the lists of electors), the Event Results System (which tabulates and transmits voting results) and the Returning Office Payments System. The changes will be made and

the systems will undergo testing before the fall of 2006. Key contracts with our field hardware and Internet service providers will be amended as necessary to facilitate the next election.

We are also determining the near- and long-term upgrade needs for ROs' home computers and our returning office computers. We began seeking competitive bids for replacing this aging hardware before the 39th general election; however, the November 2005 election call placed this initiative on hold. In restarting the process, we must consider whether to retain our current information technology architecture or move to a completely new one. It is our objective, where possible, to accommodate the agency's vision of a fully centralized computer system within this hardware upgrade initiative.

One option that Elections Canada will explore is the use of wireless telecommunication technologies to meet the demanding infrastructure requirements for conducting an election. This could alleviate the recurrence of delays and other problems encountered in both the 38th and 39th general elections, when some ROs had trouble locating, on short notice, temporary offices that met our telecommunications requirements.

4.4.4 Voter Registration Review

Elections Canada is continuing the strategic review of voter registration processes in the wake of the 39th general election. The review has two main objectives:

1. To further improve the quality of the lists of electors and voter registration services to meet elector and stakeholder needs.
2. To increase the participation and support of stakeholders, such as political parties, members of Parliament, senators, and provincial and territorial chief electoral officers, by actively involving them in the review and in our ongoing efforts.

Following a parallel track with preparations for the 40th general election, the registration review will be conducted in collaboration with all stakeholders. The review will help to refine our vision of how voter registration should take place for federal elections in Canada and to devise an implementation strategy.

4.5 Conclusion

The coming year presents Elections Canada with a rare challenge. On one hand, we have to intensify our readiness for a potential general election; yet at the same time, we cannot delay implementing changes that could make the electoral process more accessible and efficient for Canadian electors.

The agency will focus mainly on achieving and maintaining full readiness in the context of a minority government. Although this context does not permit us to launch a full review of our strategic plan, we will, nonetheless, identify the main elements of a new corporate tactical plan for the next planning cycle. These elements are expected to flow from the evaluations carried out after the 39th general election.

Appendices

Appendix I – Elections Canada’s Data-sharing Agreements

Jurisdiction	Driver’s Licences	Vital Statistics	Electoral Agencies
Newfoundland and Labrador	Department of Government Services, Motor Registration	Department of Government Services	Elections Newfoundland and Labrador
Prince Edward Island	Department of Transportation and Public Works	Department of Health and Social Services, Vital Statistics	Elections Prince Edward Island
Nova Scotia	Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Registry of Motor Vehicles	Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Vital Statistics	Elections Nova Scotia
New Brunswick	Department of Public Safety, Motor Vehicle	Department of Health, Vital Statistics	Office of the Chief Electoral Officer
Quebec	Information reflected on the permanent voters list of the Directeur général des élections du Québec		Directeur général des élections du Québec
Ontario	Ministry of Transportation, Licensing and Control	Ministry of Consumer and Business Services Office of the Registrar General	Elections Ontario Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC – Ontario)
Manitoba		Manitoba Finance, Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs	Elections Manitoba City of Winnipeg
Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan Government Insurance	Department of Health, Vital Statistics	Elections Saskatchewan
Alberta	Registrar of Motor Vehicle Services (through Elections Alberta)	Alberta Government Services, Vital Statistics	Elections Alberta
British Columbia	Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (through Elections BC)	Ministry of Health, British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency	Elections BC
Yukon	Department of Highways and Public Works, Transportation	Department of Health and Social Services, Vital Statistics	Elections Yukon
Northwest Territories	Department of Transportation, Road Licensing and Safety	Department of Health and Social Services, Registrar-General of Vital Statistics	Elections NWT
Nunavut	Department of Economic Development and Transportation	Nunavut Health and Social Services, Registrar-General of Vital Statistics	Elections Nunavut
National Suppliers of Data			
Canada Post (National Change of Address file)			
Canada Revenue Agency			
Citizenship and Immigration Canada			
Cornerstone Group of Companies, Info-direct (national listed land-line phone numbers in Canada)			

Appendix II – Civil Suits Related to the 38th General Election, 2004

Case	Description
<i>Stevens v. Conservative Party of Canada and the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada</i>	<p>On December 7, 2003, the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada filed an application with the Chief Electoral Officer to register their merger pursuant to section 400 of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>. The Chief Electoral Officer reviewed this application that day and replaced the names of the two former parties with that of the Conservative Party of Canada in the Registry of Political Parties.</p> <p>Mr. Sinclair Stevens sought judicial review of the Chief Electoral Officer's decision. On November 19, 2004, the Federal Court dismissed the application for judicial review and held that the Chief Electoral Officer had exercised his discretion properly in finding that the merger application complied with the statutory requirements as to form. It stated, however, that the Chief Electoral Officer should have waited 30 days before approving the merger, pursuant to sections 400 and 401 of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>, but that this error had had no material effect in this case because no writ for an election had been issued during this time.</p> <p>Mr. Stevens appealed to the Federal Court of Appeal, which dismissed his appeal in a decision rendered on November 17, 2005. Mr. Stevens sought leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, which refused to hear the appeal on April 27, 2006.</p>
<i>Goddard v. Burley, Kramp, Conservative Party of Canada, Quinte Living Centre and Elections Canada</i>	<p>An elector fell out of her wheelchair in the electoral district of Prince Edward–Hastings on polling day, June 28, 2004, and required medical assistance as a result of the fall.</p> <p>A claim was filed against Elections Canada, the volunteer who assisted the elector, the Conservative candidate who supplied the assistance of the volunteer to the elector and the Conservative Party. The owner of the building where the incident took place was eventually added.</p> <p>Counsel representing the Conservative Party, the Conservative candidate and the volunteer settled the claim, with the liability to be apportioned between all defendants at a later date.</p>
<i>Jobateh v. Ontario (Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services), Her Majesty The Queen in Right of Ontario, the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada and Elections Canada</i>	<p>An incarcerated elector in Ontario has brought a class-action lawsuit against the Chief Electoral Officer and the Government of Ontario for \$31.5 million on behalf of himself and other incarcerated electors who claim that they were denied their right to vote in the 38th general election.</p> <p>The plaintiff claims that he gave several written requests to vote to prison guards at the Central East Correctional Centre in Lindsay, Ontario. Allegedly, these requests were not passed on by the guards to the prison liaison officer, or alternatively were not acted upon by the liaison officer. The plaintiff alleges that, as a result, he lost his right to vote. The plaintiff also claims that two other inmates at the Central East Correctional Centre, and one inmate at the Owen Sound Jail in Owen Sound, Ontario, were also denied their right to vote in a similar fashion.</p> <p>The court action is set to commence in the summer of 2006.</p>
Others	<p>Four other minor claims were made against Elections Canada. Three were resolved and one abandoned.</p>

Appendix III – Chief Electoral Officer’s Appearances Before Parliamentary Committees Between the 38th and 39th General Elections

<p>Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs</p>	<p>October 26, 2004, to discuss the report of the 38th general election and improvements to the National Register of Electors; also highlighted the main features of the 2004 general election, including areas of improvement.</p> <p>November 23, 2004, to discuss the report of the 38th general election, the appointment and performance of returning officers, the official voting results, and the location of polling stations.</p> <p>May 5, 2005, to discuss the 2005–2006 main estimates, as well as the two budgetary authorities of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.</p> <p>October 20, 2005, to discuss Bill C-312, <i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (appointment of returning officers)</i>, including the appointment, length of term and performance of returning officers, and the Chief Electoral Officer’s recommendations.</p>
<p>Senate Standing Committee on National Finance</p>	<p>February 8, 2005, concerning the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005.</p> <p>The Chief Electoral Officer discussed the two budgetary authorities that fund his Office: an annual appropriation, plus a statutory authority granted by electoral legislation. The process for appointing and removing the Chief Electoral Officer was also discussed.</p> <p>In its report following this appearance, the Committee recommended a stronger role for parliamentarians in examining the budgets of the officers of Parliament, further transparency in the appointment process of an officer of Parliament, and increased correspondence between officers of Parliament and parliamentarians. In response to the report, the government agreed to create a Special Committee on the Funding of Officers of Parliament chaired by the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons.</p>

<p>Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics</p>	<p>February 15, 2005, concerning the funding of his Office.</p> <p>The Chief Electoral Officer discussed the two budgetary authorities that fund his Office, as well as the process for appointing and removing the Chief Electoral Officer.</p> <p>In its report following this appearance, the Committee recommended a new parliamentary budget determination process, with membership comprised of Government and Opposition members from both Houses of Parliament, and the ability to receive advice from external experts during budget deliberations. The Committee was clear that, in the case of the Chief Electoral Officer, the budget determination process would apply only to his annual appropriation vote.</p>
<p>Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs</p>	<p>February 16, 2005, concerning the following proposed legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill C-36, <i>An Act to change the boundaries of the Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi electoral districts</i> • Bill C-302, <i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Kitchener–Wilmot–Wellesley–Woolwich</i> • Bill C-304, <i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Battle River</i> <p>Discussion concerned the effects these bills would have on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, including the reprinting of maps and atlases, and the updating of computer systems to produce accurate voter information cards, lists of electors and geographical information.</p>

Appendix IV – Amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* Introduced Between June 29, 2004, and November 29, 2005

Bill	Title	Stage
House Government Bills		
C-36	<i>An Act to change the boundaries of the Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi electoral districts</i>	Received royal assent – February 24, 2005
C-43	<i>An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 23, 2005</i>	Received royal assent – June 29, 2005
C-63	<i>An Act to amend An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st reading – September 28, 2005 • 2nd reading and debate – October 17, 2005 • Referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs – October 18, 2005 • Reported with amendment – November 18, 2005
Private Members' Bills		
C-224	<i>An Act to amend the Referendum Act (reform of the electoral system of Canada)</i>	1st reading – October 18, 2004
C-226	<i>An Act to provide for a House of Commons committee to study proportional representation in federal elections</i>	1st reading – October 18, 2004
C-261	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (voter and candidate age)</i>	Negatived – June 8, 2005
C-297	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (candidate selection)</i>	1st reading – November 19, 2004
C-302	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Kitchener–Wilmot–Wellesley–Woolwich (changed to “Kitchener–Conestoga”)</i>	Received royal assent – February 24, 2005
C-304	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Battle River (changed to “Westlock–St. Paul”)</i>	Received royal assent – February 24, 2005
C-312	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (appointment of returning officers)</i>	2nd reading, referred to Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs – June 22, 2005 Committee meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 29, 2005 • October 4, 2005 • October 6, 2005 Reported with amendments – November 18, 2005
C-318	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (military dependants)</i>	1st reading – December 13, 2004
C-323	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Welland (changed to “Niagara South–Centre”)</i>	1st reading – February 7, 2005
C-324	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (public information programs)</i>	1st reading – February 9, 2005

Bill	Title	Stage
C-336	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of New Westminster–Coquitlam (changed to “New Westminster–Coquitlam–Port Moody”)</i>	1st reading – February 22, 2005
C-337	<i>An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (telephone, fax and Internet service to campaign offices)</i>	1st reading – February 23, 2005
C-356	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Sackville–Eastern Shore (changed to “Sackville–Preston–Eastern Shore”)</i>	1st reading – March 24, 2005
C-403	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Toronto–Danforth (changed to “Danforth–East York–Riverdale”)</i>	1st reading – June 7, 2005
C-406	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Cambridge (changed to “Cambridge–North Dumfries”)</i>	1st reading – June 15, 2005
C-416	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Nickel Belt (changed to “Sudbury–Nipissing”)</i>	1st reading – June 22, 2005
C-429	<i>An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry (changed to “Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry Sud”)</i>	1st reading – October 19, 2005
Senate Bills		
S-22	<i>An Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act (mandatory voting)</i>	1st reading – December 9, 2004 Debates at 2nd reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 9, 2005 • March 10, 2005 • April 21, 2005 • May 17, 2005 • June 8, 2005 Dropped from the Order Paper – October 18, 2005

Appendix V – Chief Electoral Officer’s Response to Recommendations in the Auditor General’s Report

Auditor General’s Recommendation	Elections Canada’s Response
Preparedness for an Election Call	
<p>Elections Canada, in collaboration with other public sector organizations, should pursue its efforts and explore additional ways to rationalize and improve the overall efficiency of data collection and management of information on Canadians and Canadian geography.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will build on the 36 existing agreements with various federal, provincial, territorial and municipal agencies to support voter registration. The Electoral Technology Accord signed by all provincial and territorial chief electoral officers builds upon data-sharing partnerships and demonstrates their commitment to increased co-operation to achieve cost savings and efficiencies through common processes and services, shared data, and expertise. • We will continue to maintain the National Geographic Database with Statistics Canada, as well as partnering with Statistics Canada and other federal organizations to develop a common national road network through the Inter-Agency Committee on Geomatics, which is co-chaired by Natural Resources Canada and the Department of National Defence. Finally, we will pursue additional partnerships in this area with the Canada Post Corporation. • In June of 2005, Elections Canada launched a strategic review of voter registration, in collaboration with all stakeholders, to continue improving list quality and voter registration services. New partnership opportunities are expected to arise from this project. • The Chief Electoral Officer’s September 2005 report to Parliament on proposed changes to the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> includes recommendations specifically designed to further facilitate register and geography partnerships, such as sharing elector data with provincial electoral authorities for updating purposes, and sharing neutral address and geographic information.
Delivering Fair and Transparent Elections	
<p>Elections Canada should assess the cost-effectiveness of its targeted revision activities, consider other options to REVISE, and evaluate the effectiveness of its communication strategy.</p>	<p>The Chief Electoral Officer’s September 2005 report to Parliament recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising agents should no longer have to work in pairs while performing targeted revision, a measure that would reduce by half revising agents’ fees, related training costs, and travel allowances. Based on the 2004 general election, this would amount to a reduction of some \$2.4 million in the cost of targeted revision. • There should be increased flexibility in registering electors who are absent when a revising agent visits their residence. That is, an elector answering the door would be able to register other electors residing there, without having to provide proof of identification for them. This would increase registration rates at no additional cost.

Auditor General's Recommendation	Elections Canada's Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have already initiated a project to conduct a complete review of voter registration processes. Data management and systems for lists of electors will also be examined in light of current technological advances. • The advertising campaign for the 2004 general election was based on assessment of the campaign used for the 2000 election and the feedback it generated from parliamentarians and others, as well as evolving strategies for outreach to target groups. As no negative feedback was received on the 2004 campaign, the Chief Electoral Officer decided that we would use the same communications program for the subsequent general election. This decision enabled the agency to be ready with a tested program, generating significant savings. <p>In accordance with this recommendation, we plan to undertake a review of the campaign after the 2006 general election.</p>
Performance Measurement and Reporting	
<p>Elections Canada should enhance the quality of its performance measures and ensure that performance targets and indicators are in place for all of its key activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to build on our experience in establishing comprehensive performance indicators for election readiness and delivery activities, to determine and refine targets and indicators for ongoing programs, particularly our advertising campaign and voter education and outreach programs for youth, Aboriginal communities, ethnocultural groups, and people with disabilities.
<p>Elections Canada should enhance its reporting to Parliament on its future strategic direction and on the progress made in achieving its objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have undertaken to update our strategic plan, and in future appearances before Parliament, the Chief Electoral Officer will continue to link the strategic direction of the agency, recommendations to amend electoral legislation to improve the electoral process, and the actual performance of the organization between and during elections.
Financial and Human Resources Management	
<p>Elections Canada should develop and implement a human resources plan and a succession plan that are linked to its long-term strategic direction and objectives, and establish key performance indicators and obtain information on its performance for the management of human resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our human resources plan will be formalized in the context of the <i>Public Service Modernization Act</i>, while continuing to meet the requirements of the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> and the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>. This plan will be linked to the agency's strategic plan and integrated with the annual business planning cycle. We will also review our key performance indicators in the area of human resources management and establish additional indicators in accordance with the needs of the agency.

Appendix VI – Election Workers, 39th General Election, 2006

Number of Election Positions in Electoral Districts 39th General Election, 2006

Position	Workers
Additional assistant returning officer	126
Additional poll clerk – advance poll	373
Assistant automation coordinator	332
Automation coordinator	333
Assistant returning officer	308
Community relations officer – Aboriginal	157
Community relations officer – ethnocultural	64
Community relations officer – homeless	10
Community relations officer – youth	114
Central poll supervisor – standby	275
Central poll supervisor – advance poll	939
Central poll supervisor – ordinary poll	9,174
Deputy returning officer – advance poll	3,674
Deputy returning officer – correctional institution	261
Deputy returning officer – mobile poll	1,308
Deputy returning officer – ordinary poll	61,026
Deputy returning officer – special ballot	1,194
Deputy returning officer – standby – advance poll	602
Deputy returning officer – standby – ordinary poll	3,155
Financial officer	345
Information officer – advance poll	1,522
Information officer – ordinary poll	11,353
Interpreter – Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program – elder	240
Interpreter – Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program – youth	225
Interpreter language – advance poll	12
Interpreter language – ordinary poll	47
Inventory clerk	549
Judicial recount clerk	52
Office clerk	6,229
Office coordinator	624
Office messenger	593
Poll clerk – advance poll	4,190
Poll clerk – correctional institution	239
Poll clerk – mobile poll	1,307
Poll clerk – ordinary poll	60,997

Position	Workers
Poll clerk – special ballot	1,153
Receptionist	1,375
Recruitment officer	531
Registration officer – advance poll	2,532
Registration officer – ordinary poll	12,033
Registration officer – standby	349
Returning officer	308
Revising agent – office of additional assistant returning officer	606
Revising agent – regular revision	6,036
Revising agent – targeted revision	4,362
Revision centre clerk	890
Revision supervisor	485
Special ballot coordinator – office of additional assistant returning officer	278
Special ballot coordinator – hospital	813
Special ballot coordinator – office of returning officer	982
Special messenger	432
Support staff for office of additional assistant returning officer	43
Training officer	517
Witness – validation of results	258
Total	205,932*

*With the exception of the positions of returning officer and assistant returning officer, all figures reflect the total number of election workers who filled a specific position during the election period. However, in some cases, more than one individual was hired to perform a given task, due, for example, to staff changes and job sharing. Additionally, some workers filled more than one position. Therefore, the 205,932 positions listed above were filled by a total of 180,925 workers.

Appendix VII – Number of Candidates, by Province, Party and Gender, 39th General Election, 2006

Party	Sex	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nun.	Total
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	F						1								1
Total							1								1
Bloc Québécois	F					23									23
	M					52									52
Total						75									75
Canadian Action Party	F						2		1	1	4				8
	M				1	1	12	1		4	7				26
Total					1	1	14	1	1	5	11				34
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	F						5	3							8
	M		1	1		1	16	5	3	4	6				37
Total			1	1		1	21	8	3	4	6				45
Communist Party of Canada	F					1	2	2	1	1					7
	M					1	8	1		1	3				14
Total						2	10	3	1	2	3				21
Conservative Party of Canada	F	1				13	12	3	2	2	4	1			38
	M	6	4	11	10	62	94	11	12	26	32		1	1	270
Total		7	4	11	10	75	106	14	14	28	36	1	1	1	308
First Peoples National Party of Canada	M						2			2	1				5
Total							2			2	1				5
Green Party of Canada	F	3	2	3	3	16	25	4	2	8	6				72
	M	4	2	8	7	59	81	10	12	20	30	1	1	1	236
Total		7	4	11	10	75	106	14	14	28	36	1	1	1	308
Liberal Party of Canada	F	1			1	26	29	3	2	8	7		1	1	79
	M	6	4	11	9	49	77	11	12	20	29	1			229
Total		7	4	11	10	75	106	14	14	28	36	1	1	1	308

Party	Sex	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nun.	Total
Libertarian Party of Canada	F						1								1
	M					2	4				3				9
Total						2	5				3				10
Marijuana Party	F					1									1
	M		1	1		4	9			1	5			1	22
Total			1	1		5	9			1	5			1	23
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	F					7	10			2	5				24
	M			3		12	20			2	8				45
Total				3		19	30			4	13				69
New Democratic Party	F	4	2	4	3	24	37	3	5	10	15	1			108
	M	3	2	7	7	51	69	11	9	18	21		1	1	200
Total		7	4	11	10	75	106	14	14	28	36	1	1	1	308
Progressive Canadian Party	F						1								1
	M					3	17	1		1	2				24
Total						3	18	1		1	2				25
Western Block Party	F										1				1
	M									1	2				3
Total										1	3				4
Independent	F					2		1			4				7
	M		1	2	5	15	27	5	3	9	10		1		78
Total			1	2	5	17	27	6	3	9	14		1		85
No affiliation	F						1								1
	M						2		1		1				4
Total							3		1		1				5
All parties	F	9	4	7	7	113	126	19	13	32	46	2	1	1	380
	M	19	15	44	39	312	438	56	52	109	160	2	4	4	1,254
Grand Total		28	19	51	46	425	564	75	65	141	206	4	5	5	1,634

Appendix VIII – Adaptations to the *Canada Elections Act*, 39th General Election, 2006

Statutory Provision Adapted	Explanatory Notes
Section 95	<p>Purpose: Allowed voter information cards to be sent to the most recent addresses of electors, based on updates to the preliminary lists of electors up to the time the cards were sent for printing.</p> <p>Explanation: Improvements in technology resulting in faster data processing made it possible to update the preliminary lists of electors before the voter information cards were issued. The adaptation ensured that those updates were taken into account in addressing the cards.</p>
Section 64	<p>Purpose: Removed the statutory requirement that the notice of grant of poll set out the addresses of the candidates and their official agents.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 64 requires a returning officer to include the address of each candidate and that candidate's official agent in the notice of grant of poll, which is a public document. The public disclosure of this information was considered inappropriate in a time of heightened concern for the security of public individuals.</p>
Section 168	<p>Purpose: Allowed returning officers, with the permission of the Chief Electoral Officer, to regroup polling divisions that made up an advance polling district.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 168 provides for the establishment of advance polling districts containing a number of polling divisions, but does not provide for alteration to those districts once created (other than for combining two advance polling districts). It was determined in seven electoral districts that access to the advance polling stations in the established advance polling districts was difficult or impracticable due to long distances to travel over damaged or closed roads in winter.</p>
Section 122	<p>Purpose: Allowed returning officers who could not locate suitable premises for a polling station within a polling division to establish a polling station for that division in an adjacent electoral district. The prior approval of the Chief Electoral Officer was required.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 122 permits a returning officer who is unable to locate suitable premises for a polling station within a polling division to locate the polling station in an adjacent polling division within the same electoral district. However, in two electoral districts, Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington (Ont.) and Fundy Royal (N.B.), suitable premises could not be found within an adjacent polling division in the same district, but could be found within an adjacent electoral district.</p>
Section 93	<p>Purpose: Allowed registered parties to receive, on request, electronic copies of the preliminary lists of electors at the beginning of the election for electoral districts in which the party endorsed a candidate.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act only provides for the provision of preliminary lists of electors to candidates at the beginning of the election. There had been over 800,000 significant changes made to the lists since the parties last received the annual lists in October 2005. The adaptation ensured uniformity between the lists of electors in the possession of candidates and registered parties at the beginning of the election.</p>

Statutory Provision Adapted	Explanatory Notes
Sections 32, 39, 168, 169	<p>Purpose: Allowed returning officers to appoint additional poll officials at advance polls where high turnouts were anticipated.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act does not provide for the appointment of additional deputy returning officers, poll clerks, registration officers, and central poll supervisors for advance polls. The uncertainty of weather conditions in winter made it likely that increased numbers of electors would avail themselves of the right to vote at advance polls, thereby creating a need for additional officials at those polls.</p>
Sections 159, 160, 288	<p>Purpose: Allowed deputy returning officers to issue transfer certificates to enable electors arriving at the wrong polling station as a result of misinformation printed on their voter information cards to vote at that polling station.</p> <p>Explanation: Electors in certain polling divisions in the electoral district of Palliser (Sask.) were sent voter information cards that advised them to vote at a polling station for the wrong polling division. The adaptation permitted any of those electors who went to that incorrect station to vote to do so by transfer certificate.</p>
Sections 32, 283, 284, 285, 287	<p>Purpose: Allowed returning officers to appoint additional deputy returning officers and poll clerks, working in pairs, to assist in counting the votes from an advance poll if more than 750 electors voted at that poll.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act provides for the appointment of one deputy returning officer and one poll clerk for each advance poll, but does not provide for the appointment of additional deputy returning officers and poll clerks to count the vote at that poll. The adaptation was made because the uncertainty of winter weather conditions made it likely that increased numbers of electors would vote at advance polls.</p>
Section 151	<p>Purpose: Allowed the use of photocopied ballot papers in polling stations where it was evident that there were insufficient ballot papers and the supply could not be replenished before the close of polls.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act requires that an elector vote using a ballot prepared according to the Act's specifications. There was concern that one or more remote polling stations might run out of ballots on election day and be unable to replenish their supply before the close of polls.</p>
Sections 32, 135	<p>Purpose: Allowed the appointment of an additional poll clerk with the permission of the Chief Electoral Officer at a polling station in Pierrefonds–Dollard (Que.).</p> <p>Explanation: A poll clerk at a polling station in the electoral district of Pierrefonds–Dollard had to absent himself from his duties for five minutes every hour. As there was a strong turnout in that district, it was necessary to enable the returning officer to appoint an additional poll clerk, if necessary, to ensure that proceedings at the poll were not delayed as a result of these absences.</p>
Sections 159, 160	<p>Purpose: Authorized the returning officer or the central poll supervisor at a specific polling station in the electoral district of Ottawa Centre (Ont.) to issue transfer certificates on election day.</p> <p>Explanation: A broken elevator prevented some electors from reaching their polling station on the second floor of the building. They received transfer certificates to vote at another polling station located on the ground floor.</p>

Statutory Provision Adapted	Explanatory Notes
Sections 246, 247	<p>Purpose: Extended the statutory process for voting by the Special Voting Rules in provincial institutions to federal institutions.</p> <p>Explanation: As the Act formerly prohibited voting by prisoners in federal institutions, it does not describe a process for such prisoners to vote. Since the 2002 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in <i>Sauvé</i> struck down the prohibition, the Act has had to be adapted in every federal election to extend the statutory process for voting in provincial institutions to federal institutions.</p>
Section 252	<p>Purpose: Permitted special ballot officers to set aside special ballots cast by incarcerated electors, and omit their names from the list of electors, if the incarcerated elector specified the correctional institution as the place of ordinary residence.</p> <p>Explanation: Incarcerated electors who vote using the Special Voting Rules are required to vote in the electoral district of their ordinary residence. The Act directs how that ordinary residence is to be determined. It cannot be the correctional institution in which the elector is imprisoned. Nevertheless, on the application for registration and special ballot, some incarcerated electors indicated the correctional institution as their ordinary residence, and the error was not discovered by the liaison officers who validated the application. The special ballot envelopes had to be set aside to avoid having the ballots counted in the wrong electoral district. The Act contained no provision by which this could be done.</p>
Section 242	<p>Purpose: Allowed electors who, by reason of erroneous instructions from an election officer, completed their special ballot by naming a political party rather than a candidate, to ask for another special ballot, up to the close of polls on election day. Where such a request was made, the elector's first special ballot was not to be opened or counted but was to be marked as spoiled and set aside.</p> <p>Explanation: In Prince Edward–Hastings (Ont.), Thunder Bay–Superior North (Ont.) and South Surrey–White Rock–Cloverdale (B.C.), some electors were erroneously advised by officials in the returning office that, in voting by special ballot, they could vote by naming a political party rather than by naming a specific candidate. Paragraph 279(1)(c) of the Act requires that a special ballot be rejected if it is marked with a name other than the name of a candidate. There was no provision in the Act whereby such ballots could be set aside as spoiled ballots and the electors given another ballot.</p>
Section 242	<p>Purpose: Two similar adaptations were made for the electoral districts of Elgin–Middlesex–London (Ont.) and Papineau (Que.) to allow electors in each district to re-vote by special ballot if their original vote did not reflect their intention as a result of receiving an incorrect list of candidates from officials of the returning office.</p> <p>Explanation: In both districts, a returning office official had given an elector who was voting by special ballot an incorrect list of candidates. The adaptation permitted the electors to request another special ballot, at which time their original special ballot envelope would be set aside.</p>

Statutory Provision Adapted	Explanatory Notes
Section 277	<p>Purpose: Two similar adaptations were made to allow electors who had been led by returning office officials to vote by special ballot in the wrong electoral district to have their original special ballots set aside and to allow them to vote again.</p> <p>Explanation: A number of electors were registered by returning office officials to vote by special ballot in the wrong electoral district. The adaptations permitted those special ballot envelopes to be set aside unopened and permitted those electors to vote again. Without the adaptation, the special ballot envelopes of these electors would have been set aside unopened, but the elector would not have been permitted to vote again. The adaptation applied to the following districts: Palliser (Sask.), Saanich–Gulf Islands (B.C.), Nepean–Carleton (Ont.), Calgary West (Alta.), Essex (Ont.), Edmonton East (Alta.), Dartmouth–Cole Harbour (N.S.), Ajax–Pickering (Ont.), North Vancouver (B.C.), Saskatoon–Humboldt (Sask.), Richmond Hill (Ont.), Oakville (Ont.), Wild Rose (Alta.), Gatineau (Que.), Mississauga–Streetsville (Ont.), Edmonton–Mill Woods–Beaumont (Alta.), Cariboo–Prince George (B.C.), Newmarket–Aurora (Ont.), LaSalle–Émard (Que.), Ottawa Centre (Ont.), Cambridge (Ont.), Guelph (Ont.), Ahuntsic (Que.), Pierrefonds–Dollard (Que.).</p>
Section 190	<p>Purpose: Three adaptations were made to extend the period during which specific Canadian Forces electors could vote by special ballot.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act provides that Canadian Forces electors may vote by special ballot during the period beginning 14 days before election day and ending 9 days before election day. Circumstances did not permit certain groups of Canadian Forces electors to vote during this period. The adaptations extended the voting period for each group according to the circumstances. The adaptations applied to Canadian Forces electors serving in Afghanistan; Canadian Forces electors participating in an exercise with the French Navy; Canadian Forces electors participating in an exercise with the armed forces of the United States and the Netherlands; Canadian Forces electors serving in Amman, Jordan; Canadian Forces electors stationed at the United States Air Force Base in Elgin, Florida; Canadian Forces electors belonging to the Recruit School of the Canadian Forces Base in Saint-Jean, Quebec; and the Canadian Forces elector who was part of the Medical Air Evac Team that was unexpectedly scheduled to fly from Trenton, Ontario, to Ramstein, Germany, to evacuate Canadian Forces members who were seriously injured in Afghanistan.</p>