



Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

**2006–2007
Estimates**

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

The Honourable Robert Douglas Nicholson, PC, MP
Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
and Minister for Democratic Reform

Table of Contents

The Chief Electoral Officer’s Message	5
Management Representation Statement	7
Section I – Overview	9
Summary Information.....	9
Elections Canada’s Plans and Priorities.....	11
Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome	19
Analysis by Program Activity.....	19
Section III – Supplementary Information	33
Elections Canada’s Organization and Accountability	33
Financial Information.....	35
Contacts for Further Information	39

The Chief Electoral Officer's Message



Immediately following the 39th general election on January 23, 2006, Elections Canada began to prepare for the next electoral event, whether it will be a by-election, another general election or a referendum. Being ready for any type of electoral event is an integral part of our mandate, and Canadians expect us to be prepared at all times.

Being prepared is never more essential than in the period following a general election that returns a minority government, as was the result of the 38th and 39th general elections. Therefore, in the short term, a considerable amount of our effort will be devoted to returning to, and maintaining at all times, a state of readiness for a general election that could happen at any time.

However, this will not be our only task. This report sets out the results that Elections Canada is committed to achieving during 2006–2007. In some result areas, our plans remain relatively similar to those of earlier years. Progress in these areas is incremental and continuous, sometimes depending on legislative developments and electoral events that occur during the year.

In 2006–2007, we will continue to administer the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. We will investigate complaints related to the 39th general election, and violators will be prosecuted. We will receive and review candidate and party returns for expenses related to the 39th general election and publish this information on our Web site. We will continue to make our systems and processes, which are critical to fulfilling our mandate, more robust. After analyzing the post-election evaluations, we will develop a new strategic plan that identifies the agency's priorities for the next five years.

This year presents a somewhat unusual challenge. On the one hand, we have to intensify our readiness for a potential general election; yet on the other, we cannot ignore the need to implement changes and enhancements that could make the electoral process more accessible and efficient for Canadian electors.

Our aim is to continue to provide the electorate with the most efficient, transparent, accessible electoral process possible. My Office is committed to the continuing process of electoral reform that has earned Canada a global reputation for being a model of electoral democracy.

It continues to be a privilege for me to serve Parliament and the Canadian people and to lead the energetic, multi-talented team at Elections Canada, dedicated to strengthening and upholding Canada's democratic process.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Management Representation Statement

I submit, for tabling in Parliament, the 2006–2007 Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide for the Preparation of Part III of the 2006–2007 Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports*.

- It adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) guidance.
- It is based on the agency's approved Program Activity Architecture structure, as reflected in its Management, Resources and Results Structure (MRRS).
- It presents consistent, comprehensive, balanced and reliable information.
- It provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to it.
- It reports finances based on approved planned spending numbers from the TBS in the RPP.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Section I – Overview

Summary Information

About Elections Canada

Elections Canada is an independent body set up by Parliament. Its responsibilities include ensuring that all voters have access to the electoral system, providing information and education programs to citizens about the electoral system, maintaining the National Register of Electors, enforcing electoral legislation and maintaining readiness to conduct electoral events.

The agency is also responsible for registering political entities, including political parties, electoral district associations and third parties that engage in election advertising; administering the allowances and reimbursements paid to eligible political entities; monitoring compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*; and publishing information on political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, nomination contestants, leadership contestants and third parties, including their financial returns.

Finally, the agency provides support services to the independent commissions responsible for adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts every 10 years, and it reports to Parliament on the administration of elections and referendums.

Agency Priorities

Priority ¹	Type	Planned Spending (\$ thousands)			
			2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
Strategic Outcome: Elections					
Electoral Event Delivery and Political Financing	New/ Ongoing	To deliver federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process and to administer the political financing provisions of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> .	31,161	31,161	31,161
Electoral Event Readiness and Improvements	Ongoing	To achieve and maintain a state of readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called and to improve the delivery of electoral events.	47,459	47,459	47,459
Public Education and Information; Support for Stakeholders	Ongoing	To provide timely and high-quality public education and information programs and assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public, parliamentarians, political entities and other stakeholders.	8,606	8,606	8,606

Note:


1. The agency's fourth priority, Electoral Boundaries Redistribution, was last completed in 2003–2004. Once we receive the 2011 Census return, redistribution will begin again.


Elections Canada's Plans and Priorities

What's New

There are seven new items since the preparation of our Main Estimates that will have an impact on our plans and priorities for 2006–2007.

1. On the advice of the Prime Minister, the Governor General, by proclamation on November 29, 2005, dissolved the 38th Parliament and gave instructions to issue writs of election. The Chief Electoral Officer directed the returning officers in Canada's 308 federal electoral districts to conduct the election of members of the House of Commons. Election day for the 39th federal general election was set by the Governor in Council for Monday, January 23, 2006, with the writs of election to be returned by February 13, 2006. Although the conduct and evaluation of the 39th general election was not taken into account for Main Estimates purposes, it is important to note that the report includes related plans and priorities for 2006–2007.
2. For the first time in 40 years, and only the second time in the history of Canada's electoral system, Canadian voters elected a second minority government on January 23, 2006. Such an event has tremendous implications for the activities of the agency. It is essential that in the wake of the results of the 39th general election, we return to an immediate state of readiness for a general election that could be called at any time.
3. 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 "Elections Canada is doing a good job of making sure that it is always ready for a federal election call and that eligible voters have the opportunity to cast their ballots." The Chief Electoral Officer has responded to the five recommendations contained in the report, and work has already started on addressing them. This work will continue in 2006–2007, as outlined in Section II of this report. More specifically, the audit has highlighted opportunities to explore additional ways to improve efficiency in certain aspects of our activities, the quality of performance measures, the reporting to Parliament on our strategic direction, and the improvement of human resources planning and information systems.

 For Chapter 6 of the Auditor General's report, Elections Canada – Administering the Federal Electoral Process, click here.
(www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20051106ce.html)

 This symbol of a computer mouse indicates that more detailed information is available at www.elections.ca or on another Web site.

4. On September 29, 2005, the Chief Electoral Officer tabled in Parliament a report entitled *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms – Recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 38th General Election*. This report recommended changes to the *Canada Elections Act* in the areas of operational issues, registration of electors, broadcasting and financial matters; it also made recommendations on certain technical amendments.

The Chief Electoral Officer's report was filed in accordance with section 535 of the Act.

🔗 For the report *Completing the Cycle of Electoral Reforms*, click here.
(www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=index&dir=rep/re2/r38&lang=e&textonly=false)

5. On May 18, 2005, the Chief Electoral Officer delivered to the Speaker of the House of Commons a report entitled *Enhancing the Values of Redistribution – Recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada Following the Representation Order of 2003*. The report contained a series of proposals for Parliament to consider in strengthening elements of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.

🔗 For the report *Enhancing the Values of Redistribution*, click here.
(www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=index&dir=rep/re2/recom_redis&lang=e&textonly=false)

6. New electoral boundaries for the electoral districts of Acadie–Bathurst and Miramichi came into force on November 29, 2005, upon the dissolution of Parliament following the publication of the notice of the Chief Electoral Officer in the *Canada Gazette*. The changes stem from legislation that received royal assent on February 24, 2005, after the establishment of a special Electoral Boundary Commission in 2004 following a court challenge to a portion of the Representation Order of 2003. The Federal Court of Canada suspended its ruling in the matter of *Raïche v. Canada (Attorney General)* for one year in May 2004 to allow these corrective measures to be taken to conform to the “spirit” of the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.
7. The tabling in Parliament of this report was delayed by several months; some activities originally planned for 2006–2007 have been completed in the first quarter of the fiscal year and therefore are reported as such in this report.

Our Purpose

Canada's political system is grounded in participation. Taking part in the electoral process strengthens the connections of Canadians with democratic decision-making and demonstrates concern for the future development of their country. Elections Canada is dedicated to helping Canadians exercise their democratic right to vote. We aim to make voting as accessible as possible by reaching out to all potential voters and by using proven technology wherever possible to deliver additional benefits and efficiencies to the electoral process.

Enhanced participation may be partially achieved through the successful execution of our responsibilities, which include the administration of federal elections, by-elections and referendums; making sure that all voters have access to the electoral process; informing citizens about the electoral system; maintaining and improving the National Register of Electors; and enforcing electoral legislation.

Elections Canada is also responsible for training and supporting election officers; producing maps of electoral districts; and registering political parties, electoral district associations and third parties that engage in election advertising. We administer the allowances paid to registered political parties; monitor election spending by candidates, political parties and third parties; and publish financial information on political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, nomination contestants, leadership contestants and third parties.

Our responsibilities also include supporting the independent commissions responsible for adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts every 10 years and reporting to Parliament on the administration of elections and referendums.

Our Funding

As an independent agency of Parliament, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada is funded by an annual appropriation, which provides for the salaries of permanent full-time staff, and the statutory authority contained in the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Referendum Act* and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*. The statutory authority provides for all other expenditures, including the costs of electoral events, maintenance of the National Register of Electors, quarterly allowances to eligible political parties, redistribution of electoral boundaries and continuing public information and education programs. There are also two other statutory items – the salary of the Chief Electoral Officer and contributions to employee benefit plans.

The statutory authority serves to recognize that Elections Canada's independence from the government and from the influence of political parties. It is a critical component in maintaining the integrity of the democratic process in Canada.

Risks and Challenges

Under Canada's parliamentary system, the length of time between federal elections is not a set period. However, under *The Constitution Act, 1867* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the House of Commons cannot sit for longer than five years except in times of real or apprehended war, invasion or insurrection. This means that the length of Elections Canada's business cycle varies, and this uncertainty makes planning a challenge. We must be ready at all times to deliver an electoral event – whether it is a by-election, general election or referendum – while at the same time striving to improve the management and administration of the electoral process. Consequently, we must continually react to parliamentary and political events and trends so that we can take into account contingencies that might affect our electoral readiness and preparations for electoral events.

The 39th general election of January 23, 2006, came in the wake of the 38th general election of June 28, 2004, which returned a minority government in Canada. Elections Canada placed its highest priority on returning to a state of readiness to deliver electoral events in 2005–2006, and it allocated personnel and resources accordingly. Again in 2006–2007, Elections Canada is faced with a minority government. It has therefore placed its highest priority on establishing a state of readiness for conducting a major electoral event, one that could conceivably, based on historical averages, occur in a much shorter time frame than would occur under a majority government.

Length of Term of Canada's Minority Governments	
Year	Length of Term (from return of the election writs to the dissolution of Parliament)
1921	3 years, 7 months, 21 days (1,329 days) – Liberal
1925	6 months, 25 days (207 days) – Liberal
1957	5 months, 24 days (177 days) – Conservative
1962	6 months, 19 days (203 days) – Conservative
1963	2 years, 4 months (854 days) – Liberal
1965	2 years, 4 months, 14 days (866 days) – Liberal
1972	1 year, 5 months, 19 days (535 days) – Liberal
1979	6 months, 3 days (186 days) – Conservative
2004	1 year, 4 months, 10 days (498 days) – Liberal
2006	January 23, 2006 – Conservative

Note: The average duration of a minority government in Canada is 1 year, 5 months and 27 days.

Source: Library of Parliament

Maintaining a constant state of heightened readiness imposes a particular strain on any organization, and Elections Canada must ensure it can sustain its full organizational capacity over time, for both its human resources and the technology that supports the electoral process. Care must be exercised in supporting a workforce that is both productive and motivated, while ensuring that deliverables are continuously met, and special attention must be given to the retention and renewal of our key staff. Investments must also be made now to renew our technology infrastructure as we stretch the lifespan of our current technology to meet our readiness goals.

At the same time, Elections Canada must continue to work on its strategic objectives, key programs related to ongoing and longer-term improvements and enhancements to Canada's electoral process and programs such as voter outreach and voter registration. In other words, it must continue to ensure the greatest accessibility for all Canadian electors.

The sheer size of our country, geographically the second largest in the world, and our responsibility to provide, as of the start of the 39th general election, 22,699,291 registered electors with timely information and an opportunity to vote conveniently, dramatically affect the size of the agency during an election. As a general election approaches, the number of employees at Elections Canada, including term and casual workers, may grow from 330 to more than 600 at

our office in Ottawa. This number excludes employment agency staff and consultants hired for an election. Returning officers face the significant challenge of hiring approximately 190,000 additional temporary workers to support the electoral process in some 19,000 polling locations across the country. We must provide all of these people with training, supervision, training materials, supplies and administrative support. To respond to these challenges, we ensure that our team is multi-skilled and multi-talented.

We must be ready to respond to any major incident, such as storms, power outages or other threats, which could affect stakeholders and the administration of an electoral event.

The Chief Electoral Officer provides returning officers with training and training materials, operational procedures, outreach programs, tools and other support systems and mechanisms. Lack of experience among certain newly appointed returning officers, especially those appointed just before an event, poses a risk. We manage this risk by ensuring that training programs reflect key principles of effective adult education and by applying an integrated approach to all our training materials. Furthermore, field liaison officers appointed by the Chief Electoral Officer provide assistance and guidance to returning officers during and between elections. Field liaison officers also provide daily field management reports to Elections Canada management in Ottawa during an election period.

Factors that can influence our performance include high mobility among electors (more than 16 percent of all Canadians change address every year); increased social, cultural and linguistic diversity; and legislative amendments that change the administration or application of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Our planning must also take into consideration proposed amendments to the electoral legislation considered by Parliament. For many of these bills, the Chief Electoral Officer is called to appear before the relevant committee of the House of Commons and/or the Senate, and the agency prepares a thorough analysis of the proposed changes as well as planning for their implementation should the changes be adopted by Parliament. The following are cases in point:

- Bill C-2, *An Act providing for conflict of interest rules, restrictions on election financing and measures respecting administrative transparency, oversight and accountability*, was introduced in the House of Commons on April 11, 2006. The bill has been adopted by the House and was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on June 27, 2006. Among other changes, the proposed legislation would reduce the limits on contributions from individuals and prohibit contributions from any other entity. It would provide for the appointment of returning officers by the Chief Electoral Officer and make the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer subject to the *Access to Information Act*. As well, the responsibility for the conduct of prosecutions for offences under the *Canada Elections Act* would pass from the Commissioner of Canada Elections to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- Bill C-4, *An Act to amend An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act*, was introduced in the House of Commons on April 24, 2006, and received royal assent on May 11, 2006. The new statute requires that the amendments made to the two statutes

following the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Figueroa* be the subject of a mandatory review within two years by committees of the House of Commons and of the Senate.

- Bill C-16, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act*, was introduced in the House of Commons on May 30, 2006. The proposed legislation would amend the *Canada Elections Act* to provide that, subject to an earlier dissolution of Parliament, a general election must be held on the third Monday in October in the fourth calendar year following polling day for the last general election, with the first general election after this enactment comes into force being held on Monday, October 19, 2009.

Private members' bills may also have significant effects on the planning for electoral events. For example, Bill C-318, *An Act to provide for a House of Commons committee to study proportional representation in federal elections*, introduced in the House of Commons on June 6, 2006, would provide for the consideration of proportional representation in the House of Commons. Bill C-329, *An Act to amend the Referendum Act (reform of the electoral system of Canada)*, introduced in the House on June 19, 2006, would amend the *Referendum Act* to allow a referendum to be held on any question relating to the reform of the electoral system of Canada.

During the 39th Parliament, Elections Canada will monitor proceedings in Parliament so that it can be prepared to act accordingly if and when new legislation is tabled in Parliament, including legislation that may deal with some or all of the items identified above as well as any new proposals.

Lastly, judicial decisions that affect the electoral legislation must be taken into account in our electoral planning and election delivery.

There are no decisions recently rendered that would significantly affect the administration of the *Canada Elections Act* or the operations of Elections Canada.

Strategic Relationships

The co-operation of many partners is essential to achieving a successful strategic outcome. The scale of our partnership agreements can vary, depending on whether, as in the last year, it is a year in which a general election is conducted or one or more by-elections are held.

We have several key partners who assist us in maintaining election readiness.

- The Canada Revenue Agency and Citizenship and Immigration Canada provide data to update the National Register of Electors, as do provincial and territorial driver's licence and vital statistics bureaus and electoral agencies.
- We share the maintenance and benefits of the National Geographic Database with Statistics Canada.

Lists of electors produced from the Register may also be shared with provincial and municipal electoral agencies for their electoral purposes; those agencies in turn provide revised lists that are then used to update the Register.

We also maintain strategic relationships and partnerships for our outreach to electors, particularly with our four key target groups: youth, Aboriginal people, ethnocultural electors and communities with special needs.

Our relationships with several federal and provincial government organizations assist us in delivering electoral events.

- Canada Post delivers election material to returning officers and information to electors in the form of the voter information card and the reminder card.
- Foreign Affairs Canada assists out-of-country electors.
- The Department of National Defence aids Canadian Forces electors.
- Correctional Service Canada and provincial corrections authorities assist incarcerated electors.
- The Passport Office distributes information on how Canadian electors can register and vote from abroad.
- Provincial electoral agencies may provide qualified human resources to Elections Canada to support election officers.
- Elections Canada maintains relationships with Environment Canada and the Government Operations Centre to ensure that we receive all available information on severe weather-related incidents, natural disasters or major national crises that may affect decisions made during an electoral event. Likewise, Elections Canada has relationships with numerous provincial and territorial jurisdictions to ensure that we receive all necessary information that may affect decisions about electoral events at a regional level.
- Security of electors, agency staff, temporary workers and polling places is assured through our ongoing partnerships with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Ontario Provincial Police, la Sûreté du Québec and other municipal police forces across Canada.

Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

Analysis by Program Activity

In 2005–2006, Elections Canada moved from a series of three strategic outcomes to a Program Activity Architecture (PAA). This will be our second year operating under a PAA. Our PAA contains one main strategic outcome and one program activity, Elections, described below.

Strategic Outcome

An electoral process that contributes to fairness, transparency and accessibility for all participants in accordance with the legislative framework.

Program Activity: Elections

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
87,226	87,226	87,226

Human Resources		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
361 FTE	361 FTE	361 FTE

Elections Canada is committed to providing four key results for Canadians.

- Delivering federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process and administering the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*.
- Achieving and maintaining a state of readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called and to improve the delivery of electoral events.
- Providing timely and high-quality public education and information programs as well as assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public, parliamentarians, political entities and other stakeholders.
- Administering the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, under which readjustment of federal electoral boundaries is carried out by independent commissions after each decennial (10-year) census to reflect changes and movements in Canada's population.

Furthermore, we will identify major initiatives to improve our internal services and operations. These initiatives will increase our efficiency and ultimately our ability to deliver our strategic outcome more effectively. The initiatives planned for 2006–2007 are identified later in this section in “Key Program 5: Other Programs and Services.”

We will also review our performance indicators to ensure that they are sufficient and continue to be relevant to obtaining accurate metrics, and we will refine these indicators where necessary. In addition, we will increase the quantity and enhance the quality of our performance measures and indicators for each key activity.

Key Program 1: Electoral Event Delivery and Political Financing

Expected Results: The successful delivery of federal elections, by-elections and referendums that maintain the integrity of the electoral process as well as the administration of the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
31,161	31,161	31,161

Human Resources		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
45 FTE	45 FTE	45 FTE

Electoral Event Delivery

Sub-program: Submit a statutory report on the administration of general elections, submit a report containing recommendations arising from the administration of the elections using surveys and evaluations, and publish the official voting results.

Expected Results: The timely tabling of a comprehensive report on, and results of, general elections and recommendations for improvements to future electoral events.

After the 39th general election held on January 23, 2006, Elections Canada began a process of evaluating its election administration and initiatives; this will continue into 2006–2007. The focus of the evaluations is new programs and programs of interest for the agency and/or external audiences, such as electors and political entities. The evaluations, in the form of surveys, include a general survey of electors and returning officers as well as an oversampling of particular target groups, such as youth and Aboriginal electors. More specifically:

- We are undertaking more than 40 evaluations of Elections Canada programs and projects with various stakeholders, including field liaison officers, returning officers and members of their staff. Using these evaluations, we will seek to identify short-, mid- and long-term enhancements to improve service delivery and election management. These enhancements will support the longer-term priorities defined in our strategic plan.
- With the support of the field liaison officers, we are evaluating the performance of the 308 returning officers.

- We have conducted surveys of electors to evaluate public opinions, attitudes and knowledge of our services and various aspects of the federal electoral process, including voter registration and electoral participation. Surveys were also conducted with target groups including the ethnocultural and special needs communities, as well as Canadians voting by special ballot while out of the country (snowbirds). We will hold consultations with the Advisory Committee of Political Parties.
- In conjunction with these activities, the Chief Electoral Officer has prepared his report on the activities of the election and presented it to the Speaker of the House of Commons on May 12, 2006, pursuant to subsection 534(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*. Also, as mandated under section 535 of the Act, the Chief Electoral Officer will prepare in 2006–2007 a report on recommendations to amend the Act following the general election. The recommendations will relate to operational reforms, the advancement of democratic rights of Canadians, the efficient and effective delivery of elections, and public confidence in the reliability of the process.

☞ For statutory reports by the Chief Electoral Officer, click here.
(www.elections.ca/statutoryreports)

Moreover, pursuant to section 533 of the Act, after a general election the Chief Electoral Officer must publish a report that sets out the voting results by polling division and any other information the Chief Electoral Officer considers pertinent. The official voting results include such information as the number of votes cast for each candidate, the number of rejected ballots and the number of names on the final lists of electors. Complete on-line versions of the report and the official voting results are available on the Elections Canada Web site.

☞ For the official voting results of electoral events, click here.
(www.elections.ca/officialvoting)

As specified in the Act, the final lists of electors were completed and distributed to members of Parliament and political parties on April 13, 2006. These lists reflect the revisions made to the preliminary lists of electors during the 39th general election, including electors who registered on election day, and are used to update the National Register of Electors.

Political Financing

Sub-program: Administer the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* related to political financing.

Expected Results: Electoral events that are fair and transparent in accordance with constitutional and legal requirements.

File Receipt

In 2006–2007, Elections Canada plans to receive:

- 1,636 candidate electoral campaign returns for the 39th general election
- 15 registered party returns in respect of 39th general election expenses
- 77 third party election advertising returns
- 12 registered party 2005 financial transactions returns
- 3 new registered party Statement of Assets and Liabilities
- 5 registered party financial transactions quarterly returns
- 1,144 registered electoral district association 2005 financial transactions returns
- the weekly leadership contestant returns for the December 3, 2006, Liberal Party of Canada leadership contest (the complete leadership contest returns will be due in May 2007)

Monitoring and managing filing deadlines is an extensive and time-consuming process. Given that candidate electoral campaign returns were due on May 23, 2006, and registered electoral district association returns were due on May 31, 2006, significant resources were devoted to monitoring these deadlines and processing requests for filing extensions.

File Review

We review files to verify compliance with the financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* and to determine the reimbursement or subsidy amount to be paid to a political entity and/or to its auditor, as required by the Act.

In the course of reviewing returns, we are working with various stakeholders to identify errors and omissions and other potential problems. We are also assisting stakeholders by identifying administrative options to help bring their returns into compliance.

Payments

Candidate Election Expenses Reimbursements

Candidate election expenses reimbursements are paid to eligible candidates in a two-step process. Eligible candidates are those who received at least 10 percent of the valid votes cast in their ridings. At the 39th general election, 884 candidates were eligible for election expenses reimbursements. Initial reimbursements in the amount of \$10.7 million (equal to 15 percent of the election expenses limit in the electoral district) were paid in February 2006.

Final reimbursements will be processed once the review of each campaign return has been completed. Pursuant to section 465 of the *Canada Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer must be satisfied that the candidate and his or her official agent have complied with the various requirements of the Act before initiating this final reimbursement.

Candidate Audit Subsidies

Candidate audit subsidies are paid when all required documents have been received and when the file review has been completed. The subsidy paid is the lesser of 3 percent of election expenses or \$1,500; the minimum payment is \$250.

Candidate Nomination Deposit Refunds

Candidate nomination deposit refunds are paid to all candidates who:

- return all unused official tax receipts within one month of polling day
- file their returns and related documents within four months of polling day or within an extended filing deadline

Nomination deposit refunds were issued shortly thereafter to all candidates who have met these two conditions.

Party Election Expenses Reimbursements

The Act provides for reimbursement of 50 percent of the election expenses incurred by registered parties in a general election. To be eligible, registered parties must have:

- filed their election campaign returns
- received at least 2 percent of all votes cast in the general election or 5 percent of the valid votes cast in electoral districts where the party ran candidates

Party election expenses reimbursements are processed once the review of each return for mandatory elements has been completed.

The returns for the 39th general election were due on July 24, 2006. Elections Canada issued reimbursements to the five registered political parties who met the requirements of the Act.

Party Quarterly Allowances

Political parties that receive 2 percent of the national vote, or 5 percent of the vote in ridings where they endorsed a candidate, are eligible to receive quarterly allowances. Quarterly allowances are withheld if any party filings are in arrears. The allowance payment is equal to \$0.4375 multiplied by the number of valid votes received in the general election preceding the quarter, multiplied by an inflation adjustment factor. These payments are made as soon as practicable after the end of each quarter. In 2006–2007, Elections Canada plans to issue payments to five parties totalling \$26.3 million.

Registered Electoral District Association Audit Subsidies

Registered electoral district associations that had contributions or expenses of \$5,000 or more must have their returns audited. The associations are then eligible to receive an audit subsidy of up to \$1,500 of the audit expenses incurred. This subsidy will be paid to the auditor once a completed financial transactions return, audit report and invoice have been received.

Publication of Financial Returns

Pursuant to section 412 of the *Canada Elections Act*, all financial transactions returns will be published as soon as practicable after receiving them. They are made available in hard copy and on the Elections Canada Web site.

☞ For links to searchable databases of political entity financial returns, click here.
(www.elections.ca/intro.asp?section=fin&document=index&lang=e&textonly=false)

Electoral Readiness

The results of the 39th general election, which returned a second minority government in a row, have placed a heightened priority on:

- completing the file review process
- issuing reimbursements
- achieving a return to readiness to conduct another electoral event

Compliance and Enforcement

Sub-program: Investigate complaints about contraventions of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Expected Results: Effective compliance and enforcement programs, and electoral events, that are in accordance with legal requirements.

The Commissioner of Canada Elections is the authority responsible for ensuring that the *Canada Elections Act* is complied with and enforced. Anyone who has reason to believe that an offence under the Act or the *Referendum Act* has been committed, and who has specific and verifiable facts, may complain to the Commissioner, and he will investigate the complaint.

In 2006–2007, the Commissioner will continue to investigate complaints about contraventions of the Act related to the 39th general election. In addition, a number of complaints related to the 38th general election and new financing provisions of the Act remain open and under investigation at the time of this report. A prosecution for an offence may be instituted within 18 months after the day on which the Commissioner became aware of the facts giving rise to a prosecution, and not later than seven years after the day on which the offence was committed. The Commissioner may also conclude a compliance agreement with anyone whom he has reasonable grounds to believe has committed, is about to commit or is likely to commit an offence. This is a voluntary agreement between the Commissioner and the person, in which they agree to terms and conditions necessary to ensure compliance with the Act. A summary of each compliance agreement is made public.

☞ Details of convictions appear on our Web site: click here.
(www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=loi&document=index&dir=sen&lang=e&textonly=fa)

☞ For summaries of the terms of compliance agreements, click here.
(www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=%20loi&document=index&dir=agr&lang=e&textonly=false)

Key Program 2: Electoral Event Readiness and Improvements

Expected Results: Achieve and maintain a state of readiness to deliver electoral events whenever they may be called and improve the delivery of electoral events.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
47,459	47,459	47,459

Human Resources		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
265 FTE	265 FTE	265 FTE

Electoral Readiness and Improvements

Expected Results: Well-trained staff and election officers as well as up-to-date electoral processes, systems, databases and materials ready for any electoral event.

Expected Results: Improve the delivery of electoral events that respond to concerns of stakeholders.

Maintaining a constant state of readiness is critical to our ability to conduct elections, by-elections and referendums. Following the results of the 39th general election held on January 23, 2006 – the second general election in under 18 months – we placed the utmost priority on achieving the necessary state of readiness to conduct another general election.

We have identified the following activities as priorities to enable us to achieve the necessary state of readiness. These activities will be conducted in preparation for the 40th general election or subsequent elections, as appropriate.

- We will integrate into our plans the main recommendations arising from the post-election evaluation of mission-critical systems, functions and processes.
- We will maintain and improve our state of readiness to deliver general elections, by-elections and referendums, as required, using a number of mechanisms:
 - We will train newly appointed returning officers and continue to upgrade the skills of experienced returning officers. We will also train official agents for candidates and financial agents for registered associations. In addition, we will hold educational sessions across the country regarding the key issues and responsibilities involved in meeting the financial reporting obligations under the *Canada Elections Act*.
 - We will continue to develop the Field Liaison Officer Program. Field liaison officers provide functional leadership to returning officers in the field, enhance the quality of services to Canadians, and allow us to respond more rapidly to operational challenges.

- We will continue to improve the coverage and currency of the lists of electors generated by the National Register of Electors. We will do this by incorporating updated information from federal and provincial/territorial data suppliers and returning officers in each electoral district, in consultation with political parties and members of Parliament, and through continued co-operation with electoral agencies in other jurisdictions. In addition, we will concentrate on improving address information in rural areas, as well as identifying and removing non-residential addresses, to prevent electors from being incorrectly registered. This work will allow for more accurate lists, with the result that the information of fewer electors will need to be revised during an electoral event.
- We will continue to pursue, with the Canada Revenue Agency, proposed legislative amendments to permit tax filers to explicitly declare their citizenship on the Elections Canada portion of the income tax form. This will allow us to add new electors, especially youth, to the Register directly without having to confirm citizenship through costly outreach initiatives.
- We will continue to maintain the National Geographic Database, in partnership with Statistics Canada, and increasingly with provincial and territorial agencies responsible for maintaining geographic information at that level. This initiative, combined with improvements to the Register addresses, will result in a further increase in the percentage of electors who are georeferenced – that is, linked to a point on a map. The current figure is approaching 91 percent.
- We will continue to review and revise the methodology we use to estimate measures of Register data quality in consultation with our stakeholders, including returning officers, field liaison officers, political parties, provincial and territorial electoral agencies, and academics.
- We will review the agreements with our service providers in the areas of telephony and technical infrastructure. The goal is to improve the distribution of these services and the necessary equipment to each electoral district.
- We will review and, where appropriate, implement improvements stemming from the 39th general election to our communications mechanisms, in particular our Web site. We will review the performance of the Voter Information Service and implement additional streamlining, enhancements and features as appropriate. We will also review the information we provide to electors and the overall accessibility of the Web site.
- We will obtain and assemble election materials to maintain the amounts we must have in stock to deliver an electoral event. The reception and sorting of returned materials and supplies from the 308 electoral districts following the January 2006 general election will continue into 2006–2007.
- We will prepare a master plan to integrate and manage all of our key readiness activities across the directorates and with our key partners.

Advertising and Outreach Program – 39th General Election

Given that the advertising and outreach campaign developed for the 38th general election in 2004 was positively received, and the fact that there was such a short time between the 38th and 39th general elections, Elections Canada decided to use the same communications program for the 39th general election.

In 2006–2007, we will begin to review our advertising and outreach programs for groups that are less likely to participate in the electoral process, including Aboriginal peoples, ethnocultural communities, youth and electors with special needs. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the products and services offered for the 39th general election and aimed at increasing awareness and promoting electoral participation within these groups: our communications and advertising campaigns and initiatives such as our Community Relations Officer Program and programs to support people with disabilities. We will consult with national organizations and associations to identify their needs and concerns, and we will develop ongoing information and education programs. We will also develop an improved performance-measurement framework for these programs.

Technology Renewal

Elections Canada relies heavily on technology to fulfill its mandate successfully. A number of systems were developed and implemented in the last decade, and they need to be upgraded to satisfy the requirements for interoperability and support of our many stakeholders and partners. As a first step, we have identified a number of upgrade, replacement and enhancement initiatives for hardware and software. Implementation began in 2005–2006 and will continue in 2006–2007 to upgrade the database technology and application environment in our Ottawa office.

We have also embarked on a comprehensive evaluation of current and emerging technologies as they affect our mandate and the ongoing improvement and expansion of our capabilities and the range of services we provide. The recommendations and implementation that flow from this strategic initiative are expected to fulfill our information technology requirements for the next 5 to 10 years.

Electoral Technology Accord

Our information technology infrastructure is critical to supporting the National Register of Electors, our geographic databases and other election delivery and support systems we use.

In the spring of 2004, Canadian federal and provincial electoral agencies signed the Electoral Technology Accord with the objective of enhancing service delivery and quality, reducing technology costs and reducing the threat of obsolescence in returning office technology. The Accord seeks to establish partnerships among the electoral agencies by examining the potential for sharing systems and technology. In 2006–2007, we will work with our partners on a series of short-term objectives. Activities will include expanding the common data model for election financing and reviewing opportunities for sharing data and software used in electoral geography.

Voter Registration

Elections Canada will continue the strategic review of voter registration in the wake of the 39th general election. This review aims to develop a new vision of how voter registration should take place for federal elections in Canada and produce an implementation strategy. The review will be carried out in collaboration with all stakeholders and will identify how we can further improve the quality of the lists of electors and voter registration and how we can better serve the needs of all stakeholders.

The Chief Electoral Officer's recent report to Parliament on proposed changes to the *Canada Elections Act* included specific recommendations to improve targeted revision, measures that, based on the 38th general election in 2004, would have significantly reduced the cost of voter registration. Other proposed measures would increase the registration rate at no additional cost. We will work with the new Parliament to review legislation and implement any changes before the next general election.

This report also contained specific recommendations to enhance register and geography partnerships. Working with Parliament, we will continue to build on the 40 existing agreements with the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal agencies involved.

Key Program 3: Public Education, Information and Support for Stakeholders

Expected Results: Provide timely and high-quality public education and information programs as well as assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public, parliamentarians and political entities.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
8,606	8,606	8,606

Human Resources		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
51 FTE	51 FTE	51 FTE

Sub-program: Provide timely and high-quality public education and information programs as well as assurance that support on electoral matters is available to the public.

Expected Results: Electoral processes that are better known to the public, particularly those persons and groups most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their democratic rights.

Our education and information programs concentrate on making the electoral system and processes more easily understood by the general public. They also reach out to electors whose participation rate in voting has been historically lower than that of the general electorate. These goals respond to the mandate given to the Chief Electoral Officer in section 18 of the *Canada Elections Act*. Since the 2000 general election, Elections Canada has been particularly active in reaching out to young people and Aboriginal electors.

Voter Education and Outreach Programs

In 2006–2007, Elections Canada will determine and refine targets and indicators for its ongoing voter education and outreach programs for youth, Aboriginal communities, ethnocultural communities and people with disabilities. We will develop a long-term plan, detailed action plan and updated communications platforms to reach these electors.

Stakeholder Information and Support

Elections Canada will continue to provide stakeholders with timely and high-quality information, advice, products and support. This assistance includes technical expertise and analysis to support parliamentary initiatives to review and revise electoral legislation.

We will provide technical expertise and analysis to support Parliament in its review of the recommendations contained in recent reports of the Chief Electoral Officer to improve the *Canada Elections Act* and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* following the 38th general election.

International Assistance

Elections Canada will continue, through multilateral programs, to help emerging democracies develop the institutional capacity to deliver electoral events that strive to meet internationally recognized standards and criteria. This assistance includes professional assessment and monitoring for events such as Haiti's parliamentary, presidential and local elections, provided through the International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections (IMMHE).

☞ For further information, visit the IMMHE Web site: [click here](http://www.mieeh-immhe.ca).
(www.mieeh-immhe.ca)

On May 4, 2006, the Chief Electoral Officer hosted the launch of the Administration and Cost of Elections (ACE) Project Electoral Knowledge Network. This network is a partnership among Elections Canada, EISA, the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico, IFES, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the United Nations Development Programme. ACE will enable professionals to use capacity-development initiatives to generate, share and apply knowledge to solving problems and improving the professionalism of those engaged in electoral activities. A new ACE Project Web site was launched in May and will provide core authoritative text and dynamic technological features to meet the needs of today's election practitioners.

☞ For further information, visit the ACE Project Web site: www.aceproject.org. Or [click here](http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=int&document=index&dir=ace&lang=e&textonly=false).
(www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=int&document=index&dir=ace&lang=e&textonly=false)

Our international work is conducted in co-operation with other independent electoral management bodies and organizations as well as with other Canadian government departments and agencies. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency provides funding for our international involvement activities. Outside Canada, we partner with multilateral organizations including the United Nations, the Organization of American States, La Francophonie and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM).

We also brief foreign delegations visiting Canada about the Canadian electoral system.

Key Program 4: Electoral Boundaries Redistribution

Expected Results: Administer the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, under which federal electoral boundaries are readjusted by independent commissions after each decennial (10-year) census to reflect changes and movements in Canada’s population.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
0	0	0

Human Resources		
2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
0 FTE	0 FTE	0 FTE

Sub-program: Provide professional, technical, financial and administrative support to 10 independent commissions responsible for adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts every 10 years.

This activity was last completed in 2003–2004. Once we receive the 2011 Census return, redistribution will begin again.

Key Program 5: Other Programs and Services

Expected Results: Deliver high-quality leadership and management throughout the agency.

Elections Canada has identified a number of corporate initiatives that will begin or continue in 2006–2007. These are described below.

Human Resources Modernization

Elections Canada’s human resources plan will be formalized in the context of the *Public Service Modernization Act* while continuing to meet the requirements of the *Public Service Employment Act*. We will develop policies and provide training to support this legislation as well as the new *Public Service Labour Relations Act*. This formalized plan will be linked to our strategic plan and integrated into our annual business planning cycle.

We will also review key performance indicators in the area of human resources management and establish additional indicators in accordance with our needs.

In addition, we will implement a “self-serve” electronic leave request system to assist managers and staff in managing their leave.

Modern Management Practices

In addition to human resources modernization, and in accordance with Elections Canada’s action plan for implementing modern management practices, we will continue to focus in 2006–2007 on management areas that will improve election readiness and delivery as well as the overall management of the agency. Specific measures include strengthening the links among strategic outcomes, performance measures and reporting mechanisms, and we will initiate the development of additional performance measures at the corporate level.

Review of Strategic Plan

In 2005–2006, Elections Canada was ready to develop a new strategic plan. A detailed process for establishing the plan was prepared and an environmental scan completed. However, when the 38th Parliament was dissolved in November 2005 and the general election was called, this process had to be postponed so that we could dedicate all resources to the election at hand.

After the 39th general election, we set out once again to review our long-term priorities. In light of the fact that we must remain in constant readiness mode, we opted to develop a more operationally focused plan. This new strategic plan, to be published in 2006–2007, will establish specific objectives and deliverables for each of our key results areas, identify high-priority projects and define performance indicators. The plan will concentrate on the next five years. In developing the plan, we will review recommendations flowing from the evaluations of the 38th and 39th general elections as well as those resulting from the 2005 performance audit.

Internal Audit

The internal audit function is a key component of Elections Canada’s governance framework, and we have completed an audit plan based on a risk analysis conducted across all directorates. This plan outlines the internal audit projects considered priorities for the next three fiscal years. It will be reviewed and updated in light of the 39th general election and the changes to be brought about by the new internal audit policy of the Treasury Board Secretariat.

In addition, as noted earlier in the What’s New section of this report, in 2006–2007 we will monitor and report on the progress that the agency has made to address the recommendations resulting from the 2005 performance audit.

Section III – Supplementary Information

Elections Canada’s Organization and Accountability

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, commonly known as Elections Canada, is headed by the Chief Electoral Officer, who is appointed by resolution of the House of Commons. Reporting directly to Parliament, the Chief Electoral Officer is independent of the federal government and political parties.

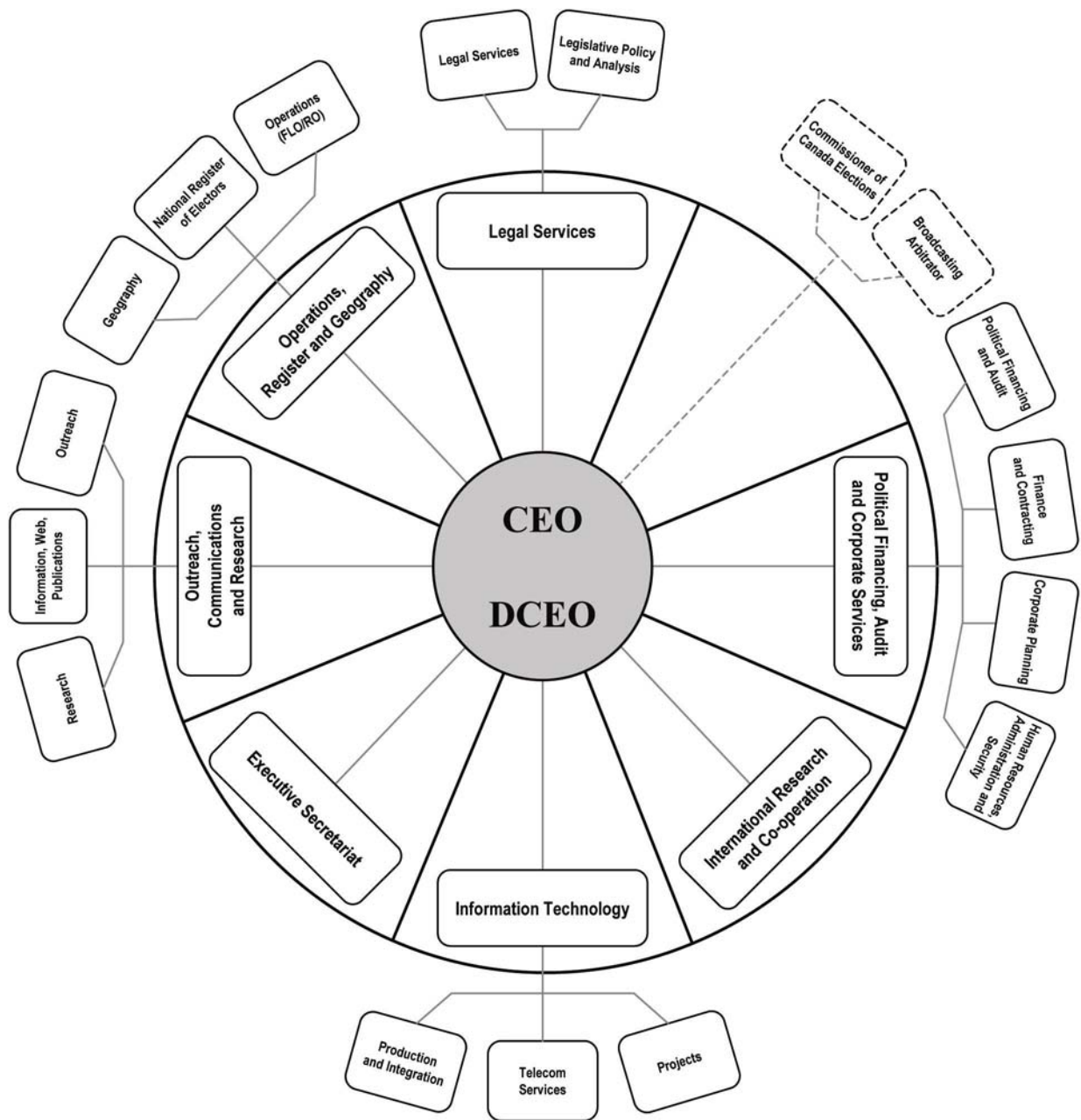
The Chief Electoral Officer appoints the Commissioner of Canada Elections and the Broadcasting Arbitrator. The Chief Electoral Officer is seconded by the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and Chief Legal Counsel, and is supported by five directorates:

- Operations, Register and Geography
- Outreach, Communications and Research
- Political Financing, Audit and Corporate Services
- Legal Services
- Information Technology

Returning officers, under the general direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, administer the electoral process in the 308 electoral districts. Elections Canada provides extensive technical expertise and services to federal electoral boundaries commissions and authorizes the amounts required to pay the commissions’ expenses.

Elections Canada also retains the services of 28 field liaison officers. Field liaison officers support the work of returning officers in the field as functional leaders, quality enhancers and troubleshooters. They are also responsible for liaising with the media at the local level.

The figure on the next page illustrates the agency’s organizational structure.



Elections Canada’s Organizational Structure

Financial Information

Table 1: Agency Planned Spending and Full-Time Equivalents

(\$ thousands)	Forecast Spending 2005–2006	Planned Spending 2006–2007 ¹	Planned Spending 2007–2008 ¹	Planned Spending 2008–2009 ¹
Program Activity: Elections	83,839	87,226	87,226	87,226
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)	83,839	87,226	87,226	87,226
Less: Respendable revenue	–	–	–	–
Total Main Estimates	83,839	87,226	87,226	87,226
Adjustments				
Supplementary Estimates	–	–	–	–
GG Special Warrants	–	–	–	–
Other	230,548	–	–	–
Total Adjustments ²	230,548	–	–	–
Total Planned Spending	314,387	87,226	87,226	87,226

Total Planned Spending	314,387	87,226	87,226	87,226
Less: Non-respendable revenue	–	–	–	–
Plus: Cost of services received without charge	5,283	5,346	5,349	5,369
Net Cost of Program	319,607	92,572	92,575	92,595

Full-time Equivalents	456	361	361	361
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Notes:

1. Planned Spending for the three fiscal years does not include spending that will be required for the implementation of the upcoming *Federal Accountability Act*. Elections Canada is in the process of developing a business case and an implementation plan with respect to aspects of the Act that will affect the agency. The exact funding and resource requirements will not be known until the agency has concluded its internal analysis based on the final wording of the legislation and the coming into force dates.
2. Total adjustments reflect 2005–2006 actual expenditures, including spending related to the 39th general election. The statutory authority is adjusted in Public Accounts in accordance with Treasury Board directives.

Table 2: Program Activities

2006–2007					
(\$ thousands)	Budgetary		Total Main Estimates	Adjustments (Planned Spending Not in Main Estimates)	Total Planned Spending
	Operating	Contributions and Other Transfer Payments			
Program Activity					
Elections	60,951	26,275	87,226	–	87,226
Total	60,951	26,275	87,226	–	87,226

Table 3: Voted and Statutory Items Listed in Main Estimates

2006–2007			
Vote or Statutory Item	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	Current Main Estimates (\$ thousands)	Previous Main Estimates (\$ thousands)
15	Program Expenditures	21,468	20,231
(S)	Salary of the Chief Electoral Officer	224	219
(S)	Expenses of Elections	61,455	59,343
(S)	Contributions to Employee Benefit Plans	4,079	4,046
	Total Agency	87,226	83,839

Table 4: Services Received Without Charge

Service (\$ thousands)	Total
Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada	3,600
Contributions covering employer's share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures paid by Treasury Board Secretariat (excluding revolving funds)	1,627
Worker's compensation coverage provided by Social Development Canada	4
Salary and associated expenditures of legal services provided by the Department of Justice	11
Audit services provided for the annual audit by the Office of the Auditor General	104
	5,346

Table 5: Summary of Transfer Payments

Over the next three years, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will manage transfer payment programs in excess of \$5 million.

Program Activity: Elections (Statutory)	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending		
	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
		(\$ thousands)		
Allowances to eligible political parties and auditors' subsidies for electoral district associations (political financing provision under the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>)	25,468	26,275	26,275	26,275
Reimbursement of candidates' and political parties' election expenses as well as auditors' subsidies	53,750			
Total Transfer Payments	79,218¹	26,275	26,275	26,275

Note:

1. Total amount reflects 2005–2006 actual expenditures, including spending related to the 39th general election. The statutory authority is adjusted in Public Accounts in accordance with Treasury Board directives.

Table 6: Details of Transfer Payment Programs

Objective	<p>Elections Canada’s role is to administer the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>, which has three main objectives: fairness, transparency and participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Act provides for reimbursement of election expenses to candidates and parties as well as a subsidy for certain auditors’ fees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A candidate who is elected or receives at least 10% of the valid votes cast at an election is entitled to a reimbursement of 60% of actual paid election expenses and paid personal expenses to a maximum of 60% of the election expenses limit. ○ A registered party is eligible for reimbursement of 50% of election expenses if the party obtains 2% or more of the total number of valid votes cast nationally or 5% of the valid votes cast in electoral districts where the party has endorsed candidates. ○ The Act provides for a subsidy equal to the lesser of \$1,500 or 3% of the candidate’s election expenses, with a minimum of \$250 to be paid out of public funds directly to the auditor. • The Act allows eligible political parties to be paid a quarterly allowance according to the following formula: registered political parties that obtain at least 2% of the total valid votes cast in a general election, or 5% of the valid votes cast in the ridings where they are presenting candidates, have the right to a quarterly allowance that is calculated as the product of \$0.4375 multiplied by the number of valid votes cast in the most recent general election preceding that quarter and the inflation adjustment factor that is in effect for that quarter.
Expected results	Electoral events that are fair and accessible in the context of, and in accordance with, constitutional and legal requirements.
Outcomes for 2006–2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculating quarterly allowances for eligible political parties and making payments of approximately \$26 million by March 31, 2007. • Reimbursements of election expenses to candidates and parties regarding the January 2006 general election were recorded in fiscal year 2005–2006 in accordance with the Treasury Board’s Policy on Payable at Year-End. However, payments will be made in 2006–2007.

For further information on transfer payment programs, visit:
www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/20062007/p308_e.asp#Table2

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