

ELECTIONS BC

News Release

Date: December 15, 2004

Elections BC Adds 580,000 New Voters to the Provincial Voters List

Victoria – Elections BC has successfully merged the provincial and federal voters list, increasing provincial registration coverage from 2,113,344 to 2,698,295. This merge became possible when the *Election Act* was amended in May 2004 permitting Elections BC to use the National Register of Electors. The legislative change also enabled Elections BC to become the first electoral agency in Canada to provide voter registration via the Internet. Provincial voters can now register, update and confirm online at Elections BC's Web site at www.elections.bc.ca.

Randy Parker, Director of Geographic and Voter Data Services stated, "Merging the provincial and federal voters list was very successful as it increased provincial registration by nearly 600,000 voters." A recent quality survey conducted by BC Stats indicated there are just over 3 million eligible voters in British Columbia, and combining voters list information had increased coverage (number of voters registered in relation to the total number of eligible voters) from 70.4% to 88.9%. However, the currency (number of voters who are listed at the address where they currently reside) of the voters list information decreased from 70.8% to 67.1%, reflecting the fact that many voters are registered at a previous address.

To further increase coverage and currency, Elections BC will launch a voter registration campaign February 17, 2005, with the objective of creating a high quality voters list for use in the May 17, 2005 provincial general election and referendum on electoral reform. This will include targeted messages to non-current and non-registered voters through mail and communications media. All British Columbia residential households will receive an information pamphlet mid-February which will advise on options available to update, register or confirm voter registration information. The easiest way to do this will be via Elections BC's online voter registration service. Toll-free 1-800 information operators will also be available during the registration campaign from February 17 until the election officially begins on April 19, 2005.

Elections BC is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for the impartial administration of provincial elections and referendums, voter registration and voter education.

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For more information:

Elections BC

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