

# 2017

## **Report on the Conduct of the May 30, 2017 Provincial General Election and Recommendations for Legislative Change**

### **Volume II**



**ELECTIONS  
NOVA SCOTIA**

40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election  
May 30, 2017

Published by the Chief Electoral Officer  
December 2017

# 2017

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of the May 30, 2017  
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Recommendations for  
Legislative Change  
Volume II**



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December 20, 2017

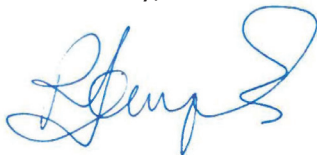
The Honourable Kevin Murphy  
Speaker of the House of Assembly  
Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia  
Province House  
1726 Hollis Street  
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Dear Mr. Speaker:

*The Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Proceedings of the 40th Provincial General Election* held May 30, 2017 will be presented in three volumes: *Volume I, Statement of Votes & Statistics* provides a summary of the election results and provides detailed statistics on the vote. It was published in September 2017. This is *Volume II, Report on the Conduct of the May 30, 2017 Election and Recommendations for Legislative Change* which includes the results of lessons learned. *Volume III, Financial Information & Statistics*, to be published in the spring of 2018 provides financial information on election expenses, candidate reimbursement, election administration costs and financial statistics.

I am honoured to present *Volume II, Report on the Conduct of the May 30, 2017 Election and Recommendations for Legislative Change* to the Legislative Assembly, in accordance with Section 163 of the *Elections Act*.

Sincerely,



Richard Temporale  
Chief Electoral Officer





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# Summary

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On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at the request of Premier Stephen McNeil, the Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable J.J. Grant CMM, ONS, CD (Ret'd), dissolved the Legislative Assembly. An Order in Council directed the Chief Electoral Officer to issue the writs of election to all 51 electoral districts, ordering that the 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election be held on Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

At the time of dissolution in the House of Assembly, there were:

- 34 members of the Nova Scotia Liberal Party,
- 10 members of the Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia,
- 5 members of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party,
- one independent member and
- one vacancy (Dartmouth South MLA Marian Mancini resigned April 23, 2017, a week before the writ was issued.).

In the May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Provincial General Election, 203 candidates stood for election: 51 from each of the Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP), the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP), the Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC), 32 representing the Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS), 15 from the Atlantica Party (Atlantica) and 3 independent candidates.

Elected to the House of Assembly were 27 members of the NSLP, 17 of the PC and 7 of the NSNDP. No GPNS, Atlantica or independent candidate was elected.

The NSLP received 158,383 votes (39.5%) of the valid votes cast, while the PC received 143,354 (35.7%), the NSNDP received 86,299 (21.5%), the GPNS received 11,127 (2.8%), Atlantica received 1,632 (0.4%), and independent candidates 447 (0.1%) of the valid votes cast.

As of the close of the polls on election day, there were 756,113 electors registered to vote. In total, 403,365 of those electors voted using one of the early voting opportunities or visiting a poll on election day. In all, 53.4% of registered electors voted compared to 58.2% in 2013 (see Figure 1: Voter Turnout Since 1960 on page 40 for details).

A total of 2,112 polling stations were set up in 889 different locations across the province. The breakdown by type of poll was; 51 returning offices accepted early voters within three days of the writ being issued; 58 write-in ballot polls including 6 hospital polls; 74 advance polls; 19 community polls; 87 mobile polls serving electors in residential centres and 1,833 election day polling stations. More than 6,700 Nova Scotians were employed during the election period.

The 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election was the first general election in Nova Scotia to have advance polls run for seven days, the first where electors could vote at any advance poll or community poll offered anywhere in the province, and the first where voters received a printed ballot that included their district's candidates' name and party affiliation



once nominations closed. Community polls were used as an early voting opportunity in districts with a large geographic area to cut down travel time for electors that wanted to take advantage of the opportunities offered to vote in advance of election day. Other early voting opportunities included write-in-ballot polls, and write-in ballot teams who visited homes, hospitals and long-term care facilities by appointment so those who could not visit a polling location had the opportunity to vote.

## **Abbreviations**

ARO – assistant returning officer  
Atlantica – Atlantica Party  
CEO – Chief Electoral Officer  
CPI – Consumer Price Index  
CTV – Certificate to Vote  
DPO – deputy presiding officer  
DRO – deputy returning officers  
EC – Election Commission  
ENS – Elections Nova Scotia  
ENS HQ – ENS Headquarters, 7037 Mumford Rd., Halifax  
GPNS – Green Party of Nova Scotia  
NSCC – Nova Scotia Community College  
NSHA – Nova Scotia Health Authority  
NSLP – Nova Scotia Liberal Party  
NSNDP – Nova Scotia New Democratic Party  
OOD – out-of-district  
PC – Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia  
PGE – Provincial General Election  
PO – Presiding Officer  
RA – revision assistant  
RO – returning officers  
ROAL – returning officer at large  
VIC – Voter Information Card  
WIB – write-in ballot

# Pre-Event

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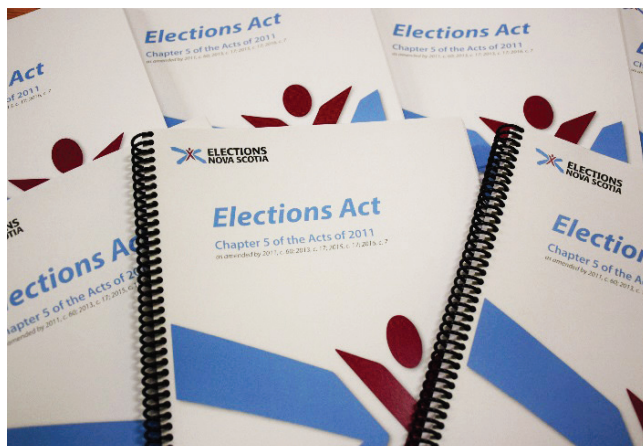
## Legislative Changes

The CEO's report on the conduct of the 39<sup>th</sup> PGE in 2013 contained a number of recommendations that were accepted by the government. In addition, CEO recommendations came forward after the three by-elections held in 2015 and resulted in legislative amendments that were introduced by the Minister of Justice, the Honourable Diana Whalen.

The 40<sup>th</sup> PGE was the first general election in Nova Scotia where:

- The number of days offered for Advance Poll voting increased from two to seven days;
- Electors could vote at any advance poll offered anywhere in the province rather than the one ascribed to them within their home district;
- On-demand printed ballots (ballots with the candidates' names and party affiliation) were used exclusively at all returning offices, advance polls and most community polls once nominations closed;
- Voting at the elector's home returning office on election day and the day before election day was permitted; scrutineers could take pictures of the bingo sheets showing the index number of electors who have voted and transmit that picture to their campaign office from the voting place;
- Clearer rules for the prohibition of photography within a poll;
- Each elector had to be asked to present identification when voting;
- Election advertising was permitted on election day.
- Candidate's nominations closed 20 days before election day rather than 14 days before election day previously required;
- Any nominated candidate and his or her spouse could choose to vote in the electoral district in which the candidate is running for election or the district where they reside (previously only candidates that were MLAs had this choice);
- Posting or displaying election advertising was banned within sixty metres of the entrance of buildings in which a voting location is located. There was an oversight in the previous version of the *Act* that only prohibited advertising within 60 metres of returning offices;
- Tax receipts provided to the official agents of candidates upon nomination were to be returned directly to the CEO after the election, instead of the returning officer of the district they contested;
- Nomination deposits were returnable to all candidates regardless of percentage of votes they received (previously a 10% minimum threshold was required) provided they filed their financial reports;

- A fine of \$50 per day for late filing of a candidate's financial report was introduced and capped at the greater of the amount of their refund for their expenses or \$500 if no refund was payable.
- The candidate's signature was required on their finance report, in addition to that of their official agent to ensure they were aware of the status of their personal filings.



### Returning Office Staffing

After the 2013 Provincial General Election, the debrief with returning officers and election clerks (the position currently called assistant returning officer) confirmed that four returning office staff positions were not sufficient to administer a provincial election and to support the expectations of the public, candidates and ENS for the anticipated growth of voting before election day in the returning office.

Consequently, a fifth position was added, primarily to administer voting in each returning office and to assist the returning officer in the general administration of the office.

The *Act* enables the recruitment and hiring of returning officers using a merit-based process. Vacancies are filled periodically between general elections and when a vacancy occurs during or close to an anticipated election, the CEO has the discretion to fill the vacant position temporarily by drawing from qualified individuals that may not fulfill the residency requirement. The RO position in Sydney-Whitney Pier was filled in this manner just prior to the writ of election being issued. A list of all returning officers during the 2017 PGE is found in Appendix A.

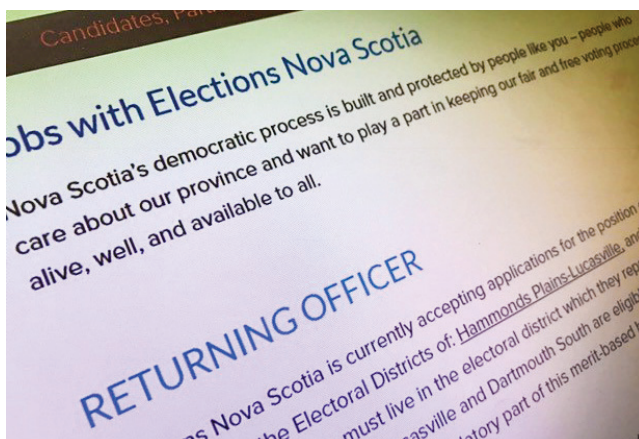
Returning officer turnover between provincial general elections remains a challenge. Between 2009 and 2013, 30 new returning officers were appointed. After the October 2013 general election, 23 of 51 returning officers either retired or resigned. This level of turnover, coupled with the need to maintain continuous election readiness in the absence of a fixed election date, necessitated the delivery of training for returning officers and their core office staff on seven occasions between 2015 and 2017.

## Training and Recruitment

### Returning Officer and Returning Office Staff

In the fall of 2015, two days of training (at a cost of \$48,000) prepared returning officers to carry out their responsibilities including selecting and setting up accessible returning offices and voting locations as set out in the election calendar (see Appendix B).

In April 2016, two and a half days of training (at a cost of \$157,000) was provided to returning officers (ROs), assistant returning officers (AROs), and returning officers at large (ROALs). This session reviewed earlier training provided to returning officers as well as financial management, the technology to be employed in the field during the election, staff safety, expectations for a respectful workplace environment, and the anticipated impacts on event delivery of the legislative changes passed in the spring 2016.



Over a five week period starting in August 2016 (at a cost of \$228,000), four days of training was provided to 255 individuals filling the core returning office roles (RO, ARO, ROAL, revision assistant (RA), presiding officer (PO) and deputy presiding officer (DPO)). Each training session included startup and deployment within the returning office, payroll, elector revision process, and the mechanics of the continuous poll and write-in ballot processes.

A subsequent one-day training refresher was delivered in February 2017 for returning officers and assistant returning officers (at a cost of \$87,000).

Over a two-week period in February 2017, all RAs, POs and DPOs reviewed the Election Management System software (at a cost of \$44,000) focusing on the processing of electors, particularly at the many out-of-district early voting opportunities throughout the province, that were planned for the first time.

A final training session for ROs and AROs hired since February 2017 was carried out in March 2017 and for new RAs, POs and DPOs in April 2017, at a cost of \$39,000.

More than 6,700 Nova Scotians are hired during the election period. For a demographic analysis of elections officers hired in 2017, see Appendix C.



### Trainer Pilot

During an election, returning officers hire and train election officials to work the polls in their own electoral district. The ROs most often take the lead in training these individuals. Elections Canada and a number of the other electoral agencies across the country allocate a position and funding to each returning officer to hire trainers. They plan, coordinate and deliver election

official training exclusively, thus freeing up returning officers to more effectively manage the delivery of the event at this most crucial time. As a pilot project, ENS hired five experienced professional trainers to deliver the required training for the people who would work in the polls on election day. They were deployed to support training in five electoral districts, training approximately 529 people to work as poll clerk, DRO, poll supervisor and information officer. The training of election day workers was delivered mainly in the last two weeks before election day.

While the returning officers participating in the pilot generally felt the trainers were able to communicate the material effectively to the prospective election officials, in all instances they attended every training session and responded to questions posed by the trainees that the trainers could not answer. Consequently, the results of the pilot as offered were inconclusive.

## **Training Modules and Training Videos – Election Day Officials**

ENS collaborated with Nova Scotia Community College to create online training modules for election day election officials for the positions of deputy returning officer, poll clerk, and poll supervisor. The modules, which were incorporated into the training provided by returning officers to election officers during the election, walked the user through the rules, processes and best practices of working at an election day poll.

Individuals who were interested in fulfilling these roles during the election could access them on the ENS website from home. Once the user completed each module they were prompted to take a small test. If a passing score was attained the user was prompted to forward their contact information to their local returning officer. As well as a training tool, these modules were useful for creating a list of individuals interested in working during elections.

This is a powerful tool to educate electors and introduce the processes to potential election officials. There was no media campaign in advance to promote these modules or to reach out to potential election officials before the election. A plan to use the modules as an opportunity for people to be certified in advance of an election will be developed for use in the lead up to the 41<sup>st</sup> PGE.

## **Training Modules and Training Videos – Early Voting Election Officials**

A series of six training videos were also produced for people working in early voting polls (returning office poll, advance poll, community poll and campus poll). The videos were used by staff to train prospective officers as well as being offered as a supplemental training resource available on the ENS website to anyone considering employment as a presiding officer (PO) or deputy presiding officer (DPO).

## **Preparation of the Register of Electors and Electoral Geography**

### **Updating Poll Divisions and Voting Locations**

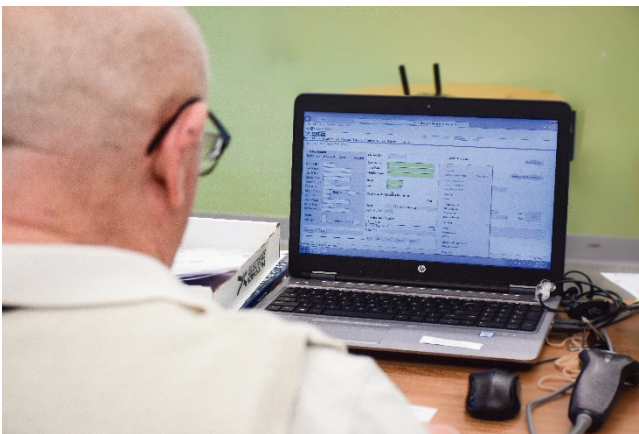
Polling division design and the allocation of a suitable election day voting location for each is critical to the successful delivery of every electoral event. Many factors must be considered when deciding polling division boundaries including the number of electors within the boundaries and local geographic features such as road access, rivers and lakes etc.. Each polling division must be tied a voting location that is accessible, with parking and within reasonable travel times. For these reasons, the review process for each was rigorous and thorough.

Each returning officer was tasked with reviewing every polling division within their electoral district. Each polling division was subsequently reviewed by head office staff based on the number of electors in each polling division and the likely availability of facilities that could be rented on short notice once a writ is issued and the benchmark travel times electors would experience from their place of residence. The standard for election day was a maximum 15 minute drive time for the elector.



In addition to these considerations, early voting locations had to have access to the services required to support the technology deployed in providing voting opportunities; the election management system (EMS), wireless network, internet and phone connectivity. All returning offices and early voting locations had to be able to accommodate printers and computers that could access the EMS and its centralized database of registered electors and election management tools. For more information on the EMS, see Appendix D. The CEO established a 25 minute standard drive time for early voting locations. To meet this standard, a number of community polls (polls open for 2 days of early voting), were added to facilitate access.

Once returning officers and ENS office staff had completed their reviews, the planned polling divisions and polling locations were presented to each of the registered parties and the MLAs by ENS staff and to prospective candidates and electoral district associations by each returning officer. The feedback from meetings with each of these groups was considered before finalizing the electoral geography to be used in the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE.



### **Register of Electors**

The Register of Electors is a database of Nova Scotians who are qualified to vote in provincial elections. The Register includes the name, date of birth, sex, civic address, and mailing address and whether the elector voted in recent elections.

The Register should only be used for electoral purposes. At the start of the 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election, the

Register included 750,270 electors. An elector's civic address determines the electoral district and polling division in which they reside and the polling location where they can vote on election day.

Several techniques were employed to ensure that electors were registered with their correct current address. Register data is updated based on monthly updates from the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Vital Statistics, and the Department of Health, and bi-annual updates from Elections Canada. Civic address information is vetted against the provincial civic address data contained in the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF) to ensure its accuracy, while the mailing address information is checked through a Canada Post approved program. Where the elector's information is matched, updates are applied to the Register to maintain its currency. The use of multiple data sources helps ensure the most up-to-date and accurate information is captured in the Register.

In addition to the digital scrubbing of the electors' information, special projects were designed for validating the Register's elector and civic address information by returning officers and head office staff. Such projects enhance the proper geolocation of addresses, accurate mailing addresses, and removal of duplicate electors from the Register.

## Planning Returning Office & Voting Accessibility

Starting two and half years after the 2013 general election, each returning officer was tasked with locating and selecting a primary and contingency returning office space. If either was to become unavailable, they were asked to find another space that met the basic requirements. It must:

- be accessible to electors with disabilities;
- be centrally located in the electoral district for the convenience of electors;
- meet the technical specifications for high-speed internet service to accommodate the election management and the learning management systems; and,
- meet the telephone providers' standards to be connected and use telephone land line for communication with the public.

Returning officers can only sign a lease or authorize payment for the facilities once a writ of election is issued. As could be expected, over the ensuing year before the writs were issued, many returning officers lost their primary location or contingency space and had to find an alternative acceptable location. Due at least in part to the difficulties in presenting a case to prospective landlords to consider renting a property with an unknown writ date, the rent eventually paid for securing returning office space varied significantly from \$1,450 to \$16,800.

Similar problems were also encountered when renting equipment and furniture, with costs paid ranging from \$800 to \$9,800 across the province.

## Voting Accessibility

Voting in a provincial election is a constitutional right of all Canadian citizens who have resided in Nova Scotia for the past six months and are 18 years of age on election day. Many people, including those with disabilities, face a variety of barriers to casting their ballot privately and independently.

According to the Statistics Canada publication *2012 Canadian Survey on Disability*, Nova Scotia has the highest rate of disability in Canada (19%); the national average is 14 percent. In addition, 34% of people aged 65 years or older, and 48% over age 75 have a disability. Nova Scotia has one of the oldest populations in Canada, with 25% of all Nova Scotia electors.

ENS's goal is to deliver services that will make the entire voting process – from registering, to voting, to casting a ballot – accessible for every Nova Scotian.

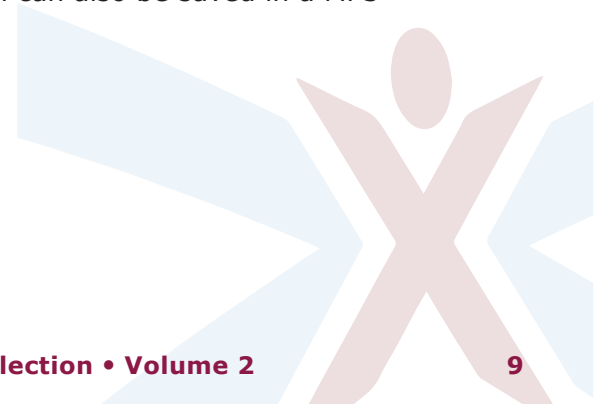
ENS consulted with Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities (NSLEO), the umbrella group for disabled persons in the province, for its perspectives on the needs for people with disabilities. Transportation to polls and accessing poll locations has historically been a major obstacle in preventing electors with disabilities from exercising their democratic rights. Finding accessible locations to house polls has historically been a problem because properties built before the Nova Scotia Building Code came into effect in 1987 were not subject to accessibility standards. In rural areas, many of the locations available to be poll locations pre-date 1987.

After discussions held between the CEO and the Speaker, the Honourable Kevin Murphy, and the CEO and NSLEO, a pilot project was launched in 2017 where avenues were explored to increase accessibility to voting opportunities for people with disabilities.

In preparation for the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, returning officers were tasked with reviewing each potential voting location for access by wheelchair. To increase wheelchair access of voting locations, some buildings were flagged as eligible to receive a small amount of funding, to a maximum of \$200, to assist the owner in upgrading the access. There were modifications to 71 buildings at a total cost of \$9,128. These upgrades which included grade improvements from parking lots to entrances and the addition of transition strips, ramps and railings. It is expected that these upgrades will improve the accessibility for the general public for years to come. As a result of these efforts, 89% of election day polls met our accessibility standards. All early voting opportunities including returning offices, advance polls and community polls met our accessibility standards as a condition of being selected.

In addition to this initiative, access to voting opportunities and electoral information was extended by:

- Voting at home in the presence of an election officer and a witness, on request;
- Assistance, at the voter's request, with registration and marking the ballot at advance and community polls, the polling location on election day or in the returning office;
- Providing candidates and their campaign teams access to an elector registration kit that would help them assist unregistered eligible electors they met campaigning complete the registration forms to be submitted to their local returning office for vetting and approval;
- Transportation of ballot boxes from the polling station to the curb at the request of a voter in need of assistance;
- Mobile polling stations in residential centres where seniors or persons with disabilities reside;
- Voting was facilitated in hospitals and residential centres using write-in ballots;
- A voting template for the visually impaired, issued by the DRO, enables those with visual impairments to mark their ballot independently;
- Transfer certificates on election day to permit persons who use wheelchairs or who have other physical disabilities to vote at facilities that provide level access if their own election day poll did not provide adequate access;
- A toll-free information line for those with a hearing impairment: TTY 1-866-774-7074 (Toll Free TTY); and,
- A website extension that can read aloud all our website content including PDF and Word documents. As visitors move the cursor over words, they are spoken aloud in any of more than 30 languages. The website material can also be saved in a MP3 format for replay later.





# Stakeholder Engagement

## Youth Engagement

One way to register new electors in Nova Scotia is by engaging youth as soon as they are qualified. Since 2016, ENS has received the names, dates of birth and addresses of youth 16 and 17 years of age who are registered in the province's secondary school system. In order to be added to the Register of Electors when these youths become 18 years old, they must confirm their eligibility (i.e., citizenship) or opt out of being added to the register.

In the lead-up to the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, letters were sent to 11,171 young adults who had turned 18 years old since the 2013 election, inviting them to confirm their information and eligibility and to consent to be added to the Register of Electors. By election day May 30<sup>th</sup>, a total of 2,440 responses (approximately 22%) were received via mail, telephone, or email and added as new electors to the Register. Of the newly added youth, 1,718 (70%) voted during the election.



## Electors Outside of Nova Scotia

It is always appreciated when we get feedback from eligible Nova Scotian electors, as it helps us improve processes and prepare materials for the next election. The Canadian Snowbird Association reached out to ENS in search of a document they could provide to their members to answer questions Nova Scotia residents may have about voting while travelling outside the province or country.

Based on the Canadian Snowbird Association's feedback a brochure for travelers was created and distributed during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE. The brochure explains who is eligible to vote in the election, how to vote if you are travelling within or outside Nova Scotia and how to complete a write-in ballot application along with important deadlines to keep in mind.

## Assembly of First Nations

ENS has worked closely with the Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations to enhance election services offered on Reserves during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE. The initiative commenced with a joint letter to the Chiefs of the 13 bands in Nova Scotia signed by the CEO and the Assembly of First Nations' Regional Chief Morley Googoo urging them to support this initiative. This in turn led to hiring of a Community Relations Officer (CRO) for each of the bands to work with their local returning officer, to ensure a number of initiatives were undertaken to enhance the on-Reserve voting experience. These included:

- Developing a community profile;
- Reviewing existing road networks and addressing to improve the delivery of voter information cards to eligible electors;

- Conducting on reserve elector registration drives where appropriate;
- Identification of reserve buildings suitable as polling stations;
- Hiring and training First Nations electors as poll officials;
- Having an elder and a youth representative in the polls on election day to answer voting process questions if necessary; and,
- Using local media (radio and local papers) to advertise election-related facts.

Evidence of growing elector engagement among First Nations people during the 2015 federal election indicates this new initiative was well timed. ENS doesn't keep statistics of electors and voters by heritage but we can say that voter turnout in general at on Reserve polls did not match federal engagement levels.

In ten of the 13 Bands, there were a total of one advance poll and 21 election day polls located within First Nations Reserve communities. A total of 75 election workers were hired from within these communities to work as either a Poll Clerk, a Deputy Returning Officer, a Youth representative and an Elder.

The CEO is encouraged by this new initiative which is aimed at building a relationship of mutual trust over time that could lead to increased engagement among First Nations electors and improved quality of electoral information from those communities. The First Nations Elector Outreach Report can be found in Appendix E.



## Student Vote

ENS worked with a non-partisan group, CIVIX, that organizes a parallel election for thousands of elementary and high school students in the province. The 40<sup>th</sup> PGE was the ninth Student Vote youth engagement project conducted in Nova Scotia. The parallel student vote resulted in 18,963 high school students in 50 of 51 electoral districts casting a vote during the mock election held May 29<sup>th</sup>, the day before the general election.

The low voter participation rate which is most pronounced among this

youngest group of electors is examined elsewhere in this report.

In the CIVIX report to ENS, a post-election survey was conducted with participating educators which suggested that students involved in the Student Vote program will be more likely to vote in future elections.

*"Educators speak highly of the impact of the program on students in terms of improving knowledge of the electoral process, increasing interest in politics, encouraging political discussion with family and friends, strengthening civic duty and increasing their intention to vote in future elections." (From the Student Vote Nova Scotia 2017 Final Report, page 4).*

Though, as noted in CIVIX report, participation is affected by timing of the election:

*"A snap election naturally hinders participation as teachers tend to plan out their learning and activities in advance and it can be a challenge to immediately change course or have time to repeat units completed earlier in the year. Furthermore, an election that occurs at the end of the school year can significantly impede participation as teachers are focused on culminating activities and exam preparation." (From the Student Vote Nova Scotia 2017 Final Report, page 24).*

The full CIVIX report is available on the [electionsnovascotia.ca/election-data/past-results/may-2017](http://electionsnovascotia.ca/election-data/past-results/may-2017)

## **Student Volunteers**

A second way to engage youth was used for the first time. ENS worked the Nova Scotia Department of Education through their partner Career Exploration and Experiential Learning Consultants with the goal of engaging youth to participate in the voting process by fulfilling designated roles such as student information officers, data entry / office clerks or social media monitors.

An information sheet was approved by the Department of Education for release to the schools. In all, 70 schools received the information. Contact information was provided and the names of those who expressed interest in volunteering were forwarded to the appropriate returning officer for follow-up and placement. As part of the high school curriculum, those that volunteered were to receive a curriculum credit.

A number of students volunteered throughout the province, mainly fulfilling student information officer positions. Elections Nova Scotia intends to continue building on this partnership with the Department of Education with the goal of providing opportunity to engage youth in the voting process.

## **Accommodation of Muslim Election Workers**

One of Elections Nova Scotia's key values is inclusivity. A new policy reinforces our commitment to diversity in the workplace by accommodating the religious practices of Muslim election workers. In collaboration with the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) and the local Muslim community, a policy was formed to enable flexibility in the timing of daily prayers without impacting the voting process at polls, as polls must, by law, remain open during all scheduled hours. The policy ensures that members of the Muslim community balance their religious obligations with their rights of participation in the electoral process, including the opportunity to work as election officers.

Though churches have been used as voting locations for many years, we believe this is the first time a mosque facility was used as a voting location in Nova Scotia (Ummah Mosque and Community Centre in the electoral district of Halifax Chebucto). While it is possible that Muslim individuals were hired as election workers at this location or others, we are not aware of any requests for accommodation of religious practice based on the new policy.

## **Diversity and Inclusivity**

ENS welcomes diversity in the workplace, and included diversity awareness training to election workers through its ongoing relationship with organizations like reachAbility. Through that organization, 10 of the 17 individuals who put their names forward were hired during the 2017 election.

# Event

## Returning Office Set-up

### Returning Office Site Selection

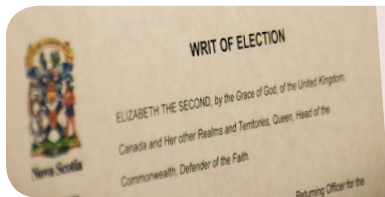
Without advance knowledge of the election period, the assessment and reassessment of potential sites for returning offices, advance and election day voting locations prior to the election was a challenge.

Given the importance of having mobile internet connectivity to access the web-based election management system, and telephone land lines at the 51 returning offices, Bell Aliant was contracted to conduct site surveys of each potential office to confirm internet coverage and land line telephone connections. All sites were visited by internal staff to confirm the strength of the internet connection in advance of head office approval. Only locations with reliable connectivity could be used.



### Deployment of Returning Office Supplies

At the call of the election, a provincial transportation company was deployed to pick up and deliver the first shipment of supplies from the warehouse to each of the 51 returning offices within 72 hours of the writs being issued.



### Did you know there are actually 51 writs issued when a provincial general election is called?

There is one writ issued for each electoral district.

This shipment included the computers, printers and other IT equipment needed to set up the returning offices, wireless connection and online connectivity to the election management system. An 'out-of-the-box' office setup was devised that enabled the returning office staff to set up their own networked IT environment with minimal instructions and in a more efficient manner. The change eliminated the need to contract external technical staff to perform this setup process across the Province. Because the setup had to be completed within 72 hours of the writ being issued and over a weekend, the cost savings of this innovation over the 2013 general election experience was significant.

All returning offices were fully operational and open to the public by Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. Almost all returning offices were open ahead of the Wednesday target with voting commencing at both the continuous and write-in ballot polls in each office the day they opened. There were 118 votes cast in 34 of the 51 electoral districts on the Monday and Tuesday immediately following the issuance of the writ.



## Support of Returning Offices

In addition to having a returning officer oversee the returning office in each electoral district there were returning officers at large (ROAL) who fulfilled important objectives in support of multiple field offices. ROALs have a dual role; to work on specific projects and to act as a standby or temporary replacement returning officer should an electoral district suddenly be without their appointed returning officer.

There were six ROALs who supported several projects during the 2017 writ period including:

- Leading the project to enhance election services on First Nations Reserve communities throughout the province;
- Managing the returning office support centre at ENS headquarters;
- Coordinating all write-in ballot applications and voting for military members and incarcerated electors;
- Overseeing the out-of-district ballot collection and counting processes at ENS headquarters;
- Coordinating the youth placement project as information officers at voting locations;
- Managing the accessibility of voting locations project; and,
- Assisting presiding officers and deputy presiding officers in the field focusing on community polls.

## Payments – Tariff of Fees and Expenses

The *Tariff of Fees and Expenses* provides the hourly wage rates paid to part-time support workers and returning office core staff and election officers. It also outlines the allowances for travel, meals, and accommodation for election officers and sets fees for products and services such as building rental for voting locations, printing and audit fees.

For all positions, hourly rates are linked to the current minimum hourly wage. Other expenses in the tariff are adjusted annually with increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

An updated version of the tariff to recognize updated responsibilities of election officials and updated election official positions based on changes to the *Act* was submitted by the Chief Electoral Officer to Cabinet before the issuance of the writs. The Chief Electoral Officer used his authority under section 5 of the *Act* to pay election workers and returning office staff rates that were awaiting approval by Cabinet.

The most recent tariff is published on the Elections Nova Scotia website.

## Driving Distances to Early Voting and Election Polls

Ensuring reasonable access to voting while containing costs are major factors in determining locations of early voting opportunities and election day polls. Elections Nova Scotia created two travel time standards for access to polls:

- Electors should be able to reach an early voting location within 25 minutes of driving. These early voting opportunities include 25 days of voting at any returning office, seven days of advance poll voting at any advance poll or voting at a community poll. These early voting opportunities are planned in central communities where most electors will travel to shop or do banking, etc.
- Electors should be able to reach their election day poll within 15 minutes of driving.

In planning for the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, returning officers selected poll locations with these time travel baselines in mind, where possible. It is not always possible to secure the preferred locations, as facilities are not always available to be leased, especially given the short notice after the writs of election are issued. Analysis of the driving distances achieved was included in the *Volume I: Statement of Votes Statistics* report following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE.

## List of Electors

An extract of the Nova Scotia Register of Electors, current electors as of April 29, 2017 was prepared and uploaded to the EMS for use by staff in returning offices for the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE. There are four legislated versions of the list of electors prepared during an election.

*Preliminary List of Electors:* The startup list of electors was revised with data of electors enumerated at residential facilities, and within 10 days of the writ, the Preliminary List of Electors was certified for each electoral district, and made available in digital and hardcopy formats to nominated candidates and registered parties. A total of 750,573 registered electors were included in this list, an increase of 303 electors over the initial list. This version of the list was used to generate the Voter Information Cards.

While enumeration is essential in residential centres, enumerators targeting other addresses receive decreasing response and lower value in updating the list of electors. In the first seven days of the election, enumerators knocked on 13,056 doors but only added 822 electors and updated 2,036 electors indicating a low response rate.

*Revised List of Electors* includes all revisions to elector's information, addition of newly registered electors, and removal of electors who were identified as deceased, moved out of the province or to an unknown address. In 2013, this list of electors was prepared on the fifth day before election day for use at the advance polls. With the earlier start of voting at advance polls in 2017, on the eve of advance polls, eleven days before election day, the Revised List of Electors was certified and included 751,194 electors, an increase of 621 electors over the preliminary list. Due to deployment of technology at the advance polling locations, EMS could be used to maintain in real-time a province-wide revised list of electors. All electors who had voted in any previous voting opportunities, and electors who were revised or added and voted during any of the advance polls, were immediately available for review at all early voting opportunities in the province.

*Revised List of Electors* for each electoral district was made available by returning officers to all nominated candidates and was provided by ENS head office to the registered parties.

*Official List of Electors* is the list of electors for use at election day polls and was prepared the second day before election day. It included all additions and revisions completed during the period leading up to and including the advance polls which resulted in a net decrease of 2,561 electors (2013 increased by 1,391 electors) with 748,633 on the Official List of Electors. It also flagged those electors who had voted at the advance polls as well as those who had voted by write-in ballot and at returning office continuous polls and community polls. The Official List of Electors in each electoral district was made available by the returning officers to nominated candidates, and to registered parties.

*Final List of Electors* includes all updates from election day, i.e., it flags electors who voted on election day and includes voters who registered or updated their voter registration on election day. At election day polls, there was a net increase of 7,480 electors to the Official List of Electors, compared to 11,053 names added in 2013. The

Final List of Electors is made available to registered parties and the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly and included 756,113 electors. This is a change of an additional 5,843 electors from the startup list of electors.

CEO Report *Volume 1 – Statement of Votes and Statistics* provides details and statistics on the List of Electors updates, demographics and participation.

## Voting

Upon the call of an election, electors in Nova Scotia have access to numerous voting opportunities. As in the 2013 General Election, electors could vote at any returning office in the province within days of the election being called. In 2017, the opportunity to vote anywhere was extended to advance polls and community polls. Electors could vote at any of the

- 51 returning offices through to the last Saturday of the election;
- 47 advance polls open for seven days of voting from Saturday to Saturday before election day;
- 19 community polls open for voting on the final Friday and Saturday before election day;
- three of the above community polls were open for six days of voting before and in addition to the seven days that advance polls opened.

**Table 1: Poll Types**

Poll Type	2013 General Election		2017 General Election	
	Number of Polls	Number of Polling Stations	Number of Polls	Number of Polling Stations
Returning Office Continuous Polls	51	56	51	60
Write-in Ballot Polls including Hospital Polls	56	56	58	58
Advance Polls including Community Polls	138	183	65	74
Mobile Polls on Election Day	89	89	87	87
Election Day Polls	1916	1949	1818	1833
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,250</b>	<b>2,333</b>	<b>2,079</b>	<b>2,112</b>

The changes from the 2013 PGE to the 2017 PGE include:

- the replacement of three satellite office locations with extended community polls in Cape Breton-Richmond, Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie and Queens Shelburne
- the use of one campus as an advance poll (as opposed to the use of 17 campus sites in September 2013)

The expanded availability of vote anywhere was facilitated by the implementation of technology at all early voting opportunities; in 2013, the technology was only implemented at returning offices and campus polls. In 2017, it's use was further extended to include all advance polls and most community polls.

## **Ballots**

Historically, the printing of advance poll and election day ballots was the responsibility of each returning officer who secured a local printer. Despite providing local printers with detailed instructions on the form of ballot, font size and type, the final ballot proofs, on occasion, contained errors and were inconsistent with the prescribed format. With the evolution of the printing industry, many of the local, smaller printers have become obsolete or are no longer in business, leaving many electoral districts without a qualified local printer and forcing returning officers to expand their search area significantly.

Available technology spurred the move toward printing ballots in fewer centres across the province.

Working with government procurement, ENS divided the province's 51 electoral districts into seven regions and through a Request for Proposals process invited proponents to bid on multiple regions if they could meet the requirements. Three printers were selected to print the ballots for the 51 districts in the province with the projected benefits in efficiency, consistency and quality realized.

As of the start of the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, one of the three printing companies selected was out of business. The other two printers proved they could commit to and complete the extra workload.

One of the innovations of the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE was the use of "ballot on demand" at the returning office, advance poll and community poll. For electors who arrived at any of these locations in the province the day after nomination day, the technology deployed allowed the election officials to print a ballot with the candidates' names and their party affiliation based on the elector's home electoral district. This innovation reduced the number of rejected write-in ballots and was a clearer means of informing voters of the candidates running for election.

## **Returning Office Voting and Advance Voting**

Presiding officers (POs) and deputy presiding officers (DPOs) started to process electors at returning offices throughout the province as soon as two days after the writ was issued.

Electors who chose to vote at a returning office, advance poll or community poll were greeted by a DPO who reviewed the elector's personal information (usually through the person's voter information card (VIC)), asked for identification and verified their eligibility to vote. The DPO used the deployed technology to verify or update the elector's information and strike-off the elector marking them as voted. Using the centralized database of electors ensures that the elector is flagged across the province and may only vote once.

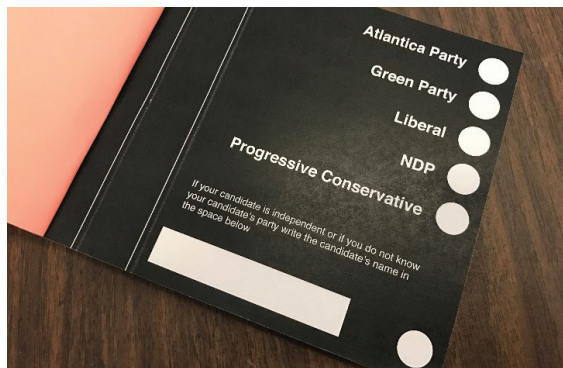
At the end of the last two Saturdays before election day, and under the observation of scrutineers, the early voting ballot boxes were opened and the out-of-district ballots were separated from the ballots cast in district. The in-district ballots were returned to the ballot box. The out-of-district ballots were packaged with a report and transferred to ENS HQ for counting on election night.



## Voting by Write-in Ballot

The write-in ballot provides an opportunity for electors to vote in advance of nomination day, or at an opportunity where technology is not available, such as voting at home or at a hospital.

The elector using the write-in ballot has the option to write either the name of the candidate for whom they are voting or mark the name of the party they wish to support in the election. The name of the party option is a consideration before the close of nominations.



## Voting by Mail

Qualified Nova Scotia electors, who are unable to attend a regular poll, may vote by write-in ballot. Although the timelines for voting are tight, plans were in place to assist voters in meeting all relevant deadlines. Among the electors who may take advantage of this opportunity are Nova Scotians vacationing or temporarily residing out of province, military personnel stationed out of province and those incarcerated in a correctional facility.

The traditional write-in ballot process requires qualified electors to request to vote by mail. A write-in ballot application is sent to them for completion and is sent back to the returning office (if elector is in-district) or ENS HQ (if elector is voting from out-of-district) for review and distribution of a write-in ballot kit to enable absentee electors to vote. It is a legislative requirement that provision of acceptable identification is included with a write-in ballot. Absentee electors may vote for either the candidate or party of their choice. Completed ballots are packaged in an envelope system to ensure privacy, and counted with other write-in ballots on election day night.

Once the write-in ballot is received, the elector's signature on the envelope must be compared to their signature on the application form before it can be considered on election day night. After the signatures are verified, the outer envelope is removed and the unmarked security envelope containing the elector's ballot is mixed in with all other security envelopes to ensure anonymity of the ballot before being counted.

## Voting by Members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Incarcerated Electors and Out-of-Province Nova Scotians

Immediately after the call of the general election, the Judge Advocate General's office was contacted, and sent a message to all units of the Canadian Armed Forces to inform them of the election, the eligibility requirements for voting, and the process for applying to vote by write-in ballot.

Information packages were sent to provincial and federal correctional facilities in the Maritime region and distributed by liaison officers appointed by the superintendent of each facility. The role of the liaison officer is critical in verifying the identity of the elector and in completing the application and voting process in time. A total of 171 incarcerated electors voted by out-of-district write-in ballot.

There were also 96 out-of-district write-in ballots received during the general election, bringing the total number of WIB applications to 290. Military and coast guard

applications represented 8%, incarcerated 59% and general public applications the remaining 33% of the out-of-district write-in ballots.

For the most part, write-in ballot has been successful in reaching those electors, however, for electors who are members of Canadian Armed Forces, the write-in process cannot not fully meet the intent. There were 200 vote by mail write-in ballot applications received by ENS from members of the Canadian Armed Forces. In all cases, the approval process was expedited as was the sending out of ballot kits to the members once approved. Of the 200 valid applications, only 10 ballot kits were returned to ENS in time to be counted on election night.

When an election is called, the designates of the Canadian Armed Forces are contacted to start the process of providing applications and ballot kits. Too often the members of the Canadian Armed Forces posted overseas are challenged in exercising their democratic right to vote. The following are the more obvious challenges they face:

- Often members of the military are deployed overseas in places that are geographically difficult to get to (Navy on patrol, remote foreign postings and sensitive or secret military locations)
- While the processing of applications for Vote by Mail Kits by members of the Armed Forces are expedited by ENS staff, ENS has no control over the speed of the delivery of the ballot kits to the eligible electors nor the return delivery of the marked ballots to ENS before close of polls on election night (by mail, courier or by the Military Liaison Officer).

The Chief Electoral Officer firmly believes use of internet (or e-voting) expressly for members of the Canadian Military posted out of province should be considered for the following reasons:

- The current vote by mail process presents an indefensible barrier to their ability to exercise their right to vote because of circumstances beyond their personal control
- The opportunity for fraudulent voting is miniscule.
  - The number of applicants would be controlled and limited.
  - The actual voting process available to the eligible electors would be under the scrutiny of the Armed Forces and therefore the usual concern with unsupervised voting (not knowing who is marking the ballot) is overcome.
  - Any cyber-attack attempt for the limited number of participants would be immediately detected.
- e-voting by the military posted out of province is the only viable solution currently available to overcome the barriers their circumstances present.
- e-voting by the military posted out of province can be defended as a one-off solution without changing current policy positions on e-voting for the public at large (concerns about e-voting security and unsupervised voting).

**Recommendation 1:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends the use of internet voting (or e-voting) for members of the Canadian Armed Forces stationed out of province.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

**Did you know?** Members of the Election Commission make recommendations to the Chief Electoral Officer respecting amendments to the Elections Act or related legislation, and advise the CEO on the administrative conduct of elections and the administration of the electoral financial regime; piloting of a procedure, equipment or technology. Members may also advise on the initiation or conduct of studies respecting the voting procedure; voting by persons with disabilities, and improvements to the electoral finance regime. The Commission is composed of a Chair, appointed by the Governor in Council for a term of five years, and two persons appointed for terms of two years by the leaders of each recognized party with members sitting in the House of Assembly.

### **In-home Voting**

Electors unable to leave their home to vote during the election were able to vote by contacting their returning office and scheduling a visit by a write-in ballot team (WIB).

Every senior's residence, group home, shelter and small long-term care facility with fewer than 10 electors in the province was contacted by their local WIB coordinator to be advised of this service offer.

The visiting WIB teams could complete and approve the elector's application to vote and provide them with a write-in ballot during a single visit to their residence. Any qualified elector present was also able to vote by write-in-ballot, even if they were not resident in that particular home.

### **Hospital Voting**

The *Act* enables electors to apply for and receive a write-in ballot while hospitalized. In districts with hospitals, WIB teams received special training to assist any qualified elector to vote regardless of the district in which they reside. The opportunity was also offered to eligible hospital staff and those who were visiting patients.

All hospitals with more than 50 beds were visited by a WIB team for one to three days the week before election day. In hospitals with fewer than 50 beds, hospitalized electors were invited to call the returning office to request a visit by the WIB team. Returning officers distributed relevant documents to hospital administrators to share with patients to inform them of the opportunity to vote.

At the end of each day of the hospital vote, the WIB teams delivered the write-in ballots to their returning office. Electors were struck off the list as voted, records were consolidated and documented and out-of-district ballots were prepared for delivery to ENS headquarters.

The same hospital voting procedures as used in 2013 were generally followed. Due to concerns raised by the Nova Scotia Health Authority over patient privacy, access to patients in some hospitals was more restricted, and bed-to-bed service was not permitted in one hospital, the Cape Breton Regional Health Care Complex. Despite the challenges experienced, WIB teams were available to accept votes from patients, their family members, and staff at all designated hospitals.

**Table 2: Hospital Write-in Ballot Polls**

Electoral District	Hospital Poll Location	Total No. of Voters	In-District Voters	Out-of-District Voters
27 - Halifax Citadel-Sable Island	QEII / Halifax Infirmary	165	7	158
	Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre	77	4	73
	Victoria General - Centennial Building	97	5	92
	IWK Health Centre	44	3	41
37 - Lunenburg West	South Shore Regional Hospital, Bridgewater	36	22	14
46 - Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg	Cape Breton Regional Health Care Complex**	0	0	0

\* All out-of-district applications for write-in ballots were processed at the Elections Nova Scotia head office

\*\* The hospital administrator refused to allow the returning officer to set up a poll in this 245 bed hospital.

### Campus Voting

A perennial criticism from young electors has been that elections held during the university year require students to vote at a polling location near where they live while they spend most of their time on campus. This inconvenience has been raised in federal and provincial elections since the voting age was reduced to 18 years.

ENS began planning for an on-campus vote based on the successful campus voting initiative in the October 2013 PGE. The planning for campus polls was in place and completed as part of the 2017 election readiness cycle. However, the writ of election placed election day, May 30<sup>th</sup>, outside of the post-secondary school year. Consequently, the plan for campus voting was cancelled for this general election. An advance poll was held on the Dalhousie campus to meet the needs of graduate and summer students and the community.

### Election Day Voting

Poll processes and procedures employed in 2017 were identical to those used in 2013. Election day polls were open from 8am to 8pm. As in 2013, the poll clerks and deputy returning officers (DRO) were seated at separate tables which helped delineate each position's roles and responsibilities. Each poll clerk could process any elector that entered the polling location and therefore, reduce the waiting time for each to be processed. This is commonly referred to by electoral bodies as the bank teller model.

On arrival at the voting location, electors were directed to the first available poll clerk who asked whether the elector had brought their VIC and if they brought identification. This card, sent to every elector on the list of electors, speeds the process of verifying or correcting elector information. The majority of electors had their VIC with them. Once the elector's name and address are located on the list of electors, they are struck off the list of electors. If the elector's information on the list was incorrect, the poll clerk made the required revisions.

If the elector's name was not on the list of electors, the elector was required to sign a declaration attesting to their name, address and eligibility and was then added to the

list of electors. As they would not have received a VIC, a Polling Day Card similar in appearance to a VIC and with the elector's identification information, was issued.

The elector was then directed to the specific DRO attending the polling station for their address, to present their VIC or Polling Day Card in exchange for a ballot.

The DRO checked the VIC or Polling Day Card presented for the correct polling division number and the poll clerk's initials, and issued a ballot to the elector to vote.

In a voting location with more than two polling stations, this procedure allowed electors to go to any poll clerk, rather than only one designated solely for their polling station.

A Voter Tracking Sheet, colloquially called a "bingo sheet," was used to track who voted. As each elector voted, a line was drawn through the elector's unique identifying number from the list of electors. This sheet was provided to all candidates or scrutineers on an hourly basis to identify those electors who had voted.

## Ballot Count

### Verification of Write-in Ballots

When a write-in ballot coordinator receives a returned completed write-in ballot kit from an elector there are numerous steps taken to process the completed kit. One of these steps is to verify the elector's signature on their write-in ballot application to their signature their declaration envelope (the envelope the voter returns their marked ballot in). This verification process is part of the steps necessary to ensure that the contents of the declaration envelope belong to elector who applied for the ballot kit, and thus approves that their ballot may be counted at the close of polls on election day.

At the close of polls on election day the team counting the write-in ballot poll must begin the counting procedures by again verifying the elector's signature on the application matches that on the declaration envelope. This second round of verification is to be witnessed by either candidate, their assigned scrutineers, or at least two electors (see recommendation Witnesses to the Count).

This redundant requirement in the legislation delays the counting of votes, thus delaying the reporting of votes for these particular polls.

**Recommendation 2:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends removing the redundant step of verifying the elector's signature on their write-in ballot application by comparing it to that on their declaration envelope a second time just prior to the count of write-in ballots on election day.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### Out-of-district Ballot Count

Among the numerous *Elections Act* and procedural changes since 2013 are changes in the way out-of-district (OOD) ballots are counted. Out of district ballots are cast by an elector in an advance poll, returning office, or community poll in a district in which they did not reside.



In the 2013 PGE, each returning office that received OOD ballots would gather them (sealed in envelopes to protect voter secrecy) into courier envelopes and ship to the elector's home electoral district. The sheer number of parcels in play between districts increased the risk that ballots could be shipped to the wrong district or lost. In the interest of minimizing this risk, and improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of shipping and counting OOD ballots, the process was altered for the 2017 PGE. All OOD ballots were shipped to ENS headquarters in Halifax, reducing the number of packages shipped from hundreds to a few dozen.



The sorting and counting of OOD ballots occurred in one secure location, ENS headquarters. Ballots received from all districts were sorted into the ballot boxes for the electoral district where the elector resided once polls closed at the end of Day 3. As reported in *Volume I: Statement of Votes & Statistics*, the number of ballots cast outside of the elector's home electoral district varied widely. Table 30 in Volume I shows that Halifax Chebucto was the district that had the most electors cast their ballot outside of the district (1,967) and Yarmouth (42) was the district with the fewest ballots cast outside the district. Table 29 in Volume I shows that Clayton Park West processed the most ballots (1,686) from people voting outside their home electoral district, and Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage processed the fewest ballots (12) from electors who reside in another district.

### **Witnesses to the Count**

ENS is mandated to ensure that the counting process remain as open and transparent as possible, while ensuring secrecy of the individual vote. In addition to having two election officers assigned for each ballot box there is a legislated requirement to have a minimum of two observers during the count. In instances where an observer leaves a count for whatever reason, the count must stop until they have been replaced. During the count of OOD ballots at head office, several observers left forcing staff to reduce the number of teams counting to be used as observers. This slowed the counting of results with the last of the 51 out-of-district ballot boxes being reported at 1:50am of May 31<sup>st</sup>. A few other polls in the field encountered similar problems with the last in-district box (and final poll) being reported at 2:30am.

All in-district early and election day voting was counted at the locations where the polls took place or at the returning office. All five parties were invited to send scrutineers to observe the process and witness of the count at every location ballot counting occurred, including ENS headquarters for the counting of OOD ballots.

**Recommendation 3:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends removing the requirement to have two witnesses present before starting the count of ballots for any poll.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Communications

Our mandate includes public communications and ensuring Nova Scotians receive information describing how, when and where to vote. Information is distributed to our internal and external stakeholders – eligible electors, candidates, election workers, political parties, electoral district associations, third parties, members of the House of Assembly and the public-at-large. A variety of media including print, web, social networks and our internal communications are commonly employed. Engaging these groups in two-way communication is key to attaining strategic success.

### Newspaper & Radio Advertising

In addition to the relay of information through the ENS website and social media, ENS communicated to electors through newspaper and radio advertising during the election. The *Act* requires newspaper publication of the notice of election and the consolidated notice of grant of poll. The notice of election appeared in every daily and weekly newspaper in the province as early as the day after the issuance of the writ. The consolidated notice of grant of poll was printed in newspapers as early as Saturday May 13<sup>th</sup>, following the candidate nomination deadline on May 10<sup>th</sup>.



Advertising was also purchased with a few online news websites, reminding electors about election day and providing a link to the list of candidates.

Samples of the notice of election and consolidated notice of grant of poll newspaper ads are included in the Appendix F.

There was a time when announcing an election through newspaper advertising was the most effective way to reach Nova Scotians. Elections Nova Scotia believes, as the trend of declining newspaper readership continues, there are more effective alternatives to informing electors once an election has been called. As an example, in Nova Scotia, the largest daily newspaper circulation is reported to currently be less than 100,000, far less than the 756,113 eligible electors. Electors can be informed of an election call through all forms of news media (online, TV, radio, newspaper) and social media. Direct mail to all households in the province and therefore all eligible electors currently at home during the writ period, has been proven to be a more effective way to inform Nova Scotians of an election than the legislatively required newspaper publication of the notice of election and grant of poll.

**Recommendation 4:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the requirement to publish the notice of election and the grant of poll in a newspaper be rescinded.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

A province-wide daily radio advertising campaign was purchased during the last two weeks of the election period. Hundreds of thirty second radio spots advised electors to watch their mail for voter information cards (VICs), promoted early voting opportunities including advance polls, and reminded people of the hours for voting on election day.

Advertising, voter information packages and other election resources were available on the [electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca) website and social media. Thousands of Nova Scotians accessed the website from their computers or smartphones. An analysis of website and social media access by the public during the election is available as Appendix G.

### **Direct Mail to Every Residential Address**

During this election, the voter information card (VIC) reached more eligible electors through direct mail than any other means of paid or unpaid communication. Significant changes were made to the VIC in the lead up to this general election. In 2013 and earlier provincial elections, the VIC was a single card mailed to each registered elector. As a single postcard, it contained much less valuable election related information than the package delivered to electors in 2017.



Improvements included:

- Up to eight VICs included in a single bright yellow VIC envelope to electors living in the same household, reducing postage costs;
- Nearest early voting location information was provided, helping the elector select the most convenient place and time to vote, with early voting locations listed in order of shortest distance and driving time. This is the first time this type of service was offered to electors anywhere in Canada;
- Details for all early voting locations and opportunities throughout the province; and,
- The names of every candidate running in each of the 51 electoral districts.

The VIC package was mailed to 400,267 homes and about 750,000 electors. Of those VIC packages, 24,349 were sent to addresses without any elector's names to ensure anyone living there received the information. About 2% or 9,923 of those mailed packages could not be delivered and were returned to ENS head office by October 2017.

The considerable amount of election related information included in the branded VIC package increased the likelihood that eligible electors would have access the information they needed to vote at a time and place of their choosing.

As the VIC package was a key source of information for electors, radio ads, daily website content and social media messages frequently referred readers and listeners to the details that could be found on the VIC.



There were a number of challenges leading into the production, printing, packaging and mailout of the VICs for this election that hadn't been encountered in the past. Examples include:

- The advance and election day poll locations could only be finalized after the writ of election was issued. Without a known election day date, leases could not be signed in advance. Consequently, some anticipated locations were no longer available and had to be replaced before the VIC could be finalized.
- Each personalized card included a list of the four nearest early voting locations based on distance and driving time for the elector's home address. This information could not be calculated until all polling locations province wide were finalized.
- Each 2017 VIC included the names and party affiliations of each local candidate. This valuable information could only be compiled after nominations closed on day 20, 10 days after the writ was issued.
- Advance voting began 10 days before election day in 2017 compared to four days before election day in 2013. Consequently, the VICs, which should be delivered to each household before advance voting commences, had to be produced and mailed a week earlier than in previous elections.
- To prepare the content for the publication of this new expanded VIC package, ENS had to gather far more information in far fewer days than for past elections.

The completion of the development of this package late in the election cycle, the unknown timing for the pending general election and complexity of the process to sort and assemble the data, print and place multiple voter information cards in envelopes by address and to mail to every elector forced ENS to forgo the preferred procurement mechanism of the tendering process for production. ENS sole sourced the production and assembling of the packages to an Ontario printing and data management firm with the known experience and capabilities to complete the job

ENS expects to use the same format and information provided in the VIC package for the 41<sup>st</sup> PGE. This knowledge, coupled with the lessons learned from the VIC project in 2017, will allow sufficient time for ENS to follow government procurement processes for the VIC production well in advance of our election readiness date for the next general election.

A summary of the VIC design project, and its inherent challenges, were presented to the Conference of Canadian Election Officials (CCEO) held in Regina, Saskatchewan in July 2017. The innovations incorporated in this version of the voter information card are currently being studied by several election management bodies across Canada.

A sample of a full VIC package is available in Appendix H.

### **Public Call Centre**

As soon as an election is called, the pace of public calls to Elections Nova Scotia increases significantly. Elections Nova Scotia routinely establishes a public call centre to ensure quick and relevant answers to enquiries from the general public.

In early 2015, discussions were initiated with Service Nova Scotia with the view to procure their services for an election related public call centre during the writ period. In July of 2016, Service Nova Scotia halted discussions with ENS on the grounds that they believed providing services to the independent agency would be perceived as a conflict of interest.

In keeping with public procurement protocols, ENS initiated a request for proposal process in August 2016. Subsequently, a call centre company based in Newfoundland won the competition and signed a contract in March of 2017, seven months after the competition began. It is of value to note that there were no respondents from Nova Scotia and only one from Atlantic Canada.

Details of the call centre analytics and the frequently asked questions can be found in Appendix I.

### **Selfie Stations**

The younger electorate are more apt to use social media to share everyday experiences, including their participation at the poll. Elections Nova Scotia piloted a selfie poster campaign during the Halifax Needham by-election in 2016 to encourage an alternative to illegally taking photos inside a polling station. The project's success led to its implementation province-wide during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE.



A life-size image of the well-known broadcaster Rick Mercer, was placed outside voting areas and accompanying comment cards could be held up by voters wishing to mark their experience with a selfie photo. The concept was also promoted on the ENS website, through social media and by Information Officers at voting locations.

## **Candidates, Official Agents and Registered Parties**

### **Candidate Registration**

The *Act* requires candidates to register with ENS if they receive a contribution, a transfer, or incur an expense before the election is called.

There were 46 candidates registered by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and reported financial activity in March 2017. By the time the election was called for the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, 136 candidates had registered, five more than at the start of the 2013 PGE.

### **Official Agent Training Seminars**

The *Act* imposes a rigorous reporting regime on political contributions and expenses. It is the candidates' official agent who is required to report the contributions to the

campaign and the candidates' expenses. ENS offered support to all official agents in a number of ways.

- With the input of official agents of the registered political parties, an official agent handbook that covered all aspects of the job to be performed was developed. Official agents could access these manuals on the ENS website, and were provided printed versions upon request.
- Brochures covering topics such contributions, tax receipts, fundraising, reporting were made available on line as "quick reference" guides for official agents.
- In April and early May 2017, 13 two-hour training sessions were held in eight locations across the province, in Halifax, Bridgewater, Stellarton, Yarmouth, Wolfville, Truro, Amherst and Sydney.
- A direct line to ENS subject matter experts was offered to answer questions related to their training.

### **Training Videos for Candidate Official Agents**

Videos covering highlights of the official agent duties and the nomination process were produced and posted on the ENS website as supplementary training aides.

### **Candidate Nominations**

Once an election is called, the candidate nomination process gets underway. With an earlier deadline in 2017 than in previous general elections, nominations closed at 2pm on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017, ten days after the writs were issued. The 2017 nomination deadline was six days earlier in the election calendar than in 2013. All candidates registered before the writ is issued, must also complete the nomination process in order to get their names on the ballot. Candidates who hadn't registered in advance are deemed to be registered when their nominations are accepted during the writ period.

In all, 203 candidates were nominated in the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE compared to 176 in 2013.

The timely and successful completion of the nomination process has historically been a stressful challenge for both candidates and returning officers. Forms were updated and access to the nomination process information was improved since the 2013 general election experience.

The ENS website contains guidelines and a series of videos for candidates and official agents, including a video on how to complete the nomination process. In addition, an explanation of the nomination process was a feature of the training sessions offered to all candidate's official agents. Lastly, the benefits of completing the nomination process well in advance of the cutoff of May 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm was reinforced.

Of the 203 candidates, 145 or 71% were nominated in the first week after the writ was issued; another 58 completed the nomination process in the following three days including nine candidates who were nominated on the day nominations closed.

**Table 3: Nominations by Date**

Nominations by Date							
	Atlantica	GPNS	NSNDP	NSLP	PC	Ind.	Total by date
May 2			2	13	4		19
May 3	1	1	10	11	8		31
May 4		3	14	6	16		39
May 5	2	6	12	11	7		38
May 6		6	5	4	3		18
May 8	1	6	6	5	11	3	32
May 9	4	8	2	1	1		16
May 10	7	2			1		10
	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>203</b>

### Campaign Signs and Campaign Offices

A significant number of the complaints filed with this office were about the location of election advertising signs, in particular, the proximity of the signs to a voting location. Election advertising is prohibited within 60 metres of the entrance to a building that houses a voting location. The intention of this legislation is presumably to keep electors arriving to vote from being exposed to last minute influences as they enter the voting location. Yet electors are constantly exposed to signs and information about candidates from many locations, media and other sources up to and including election day. The CEO believes that removing the 60 metre ban would have very little influence on electors' decisions and would simplify the administration of the election.

During the writ period, there were three complaints filed about campaign headquarters being within 60 metres of the location of a returning office (Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie, Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, and Yarmouth). These reports were filed 8 to 14 days after the writ was issued and well after campaign headquarters and returning offices leases had been signed. In Halifax Citadel-Sable Island, the campaign headquarters was 59 metres from the returning office.

The *Elections Act* prohibits the headquarters of a registered party, candidate or candidate's official agent within 60 metres of the returning office without an agreement of the Chief Electoral Officer. The intention of this legislation is presumably to not unduly influence electors arriving to vote at the returning office and to maintain the appearance that the returning office is non-partisan and not influenced by a specific candidate or party.

This rule has always been a challenge to enforce for three reasons. Firstly, in many urban and rural communities, available office space of sufficient size is limited and therefore both returning officers and local candidates must compete to secure a suitable leased space. Secondly, for financial reasons, returning officers are not permitted to sign leases for space on speculation that a writ of election will be issued. Candidates are likewise constrained because they cannot claim lease costs for the time before the writ is issued as election expenses eligible for reimbursement. Thirdly, returning officers must have the office setup and open to the public within 72 hours of the issuance of the writ. The restriction outlined in federal *Elections Act* which prohibits advertising within or posted on the exterior surface of a voting location would be a more appropriate model to follow.

**Recommendation 5:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends the removal of the prohibition on advertising within sixty metres of a voting location.*

The members of the Election Commission were unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

**Recommendation 6:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends the removal of the prohibition on the location of the headquarters of a registered party, candidate or candidate's official agent within sixty metres of the returning office and retaining the requirement for the agreement of the Chief Electoral Officer for these headquarters co-habiting with a returning office within the same building.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **Election Advertising by Elected Members of Other Jurisdictions**

During the election, a federal member of parliament assisted a provincial candidate through his constituency office in the creation of a video endorsing the candidate. While the *Act* currently contemplates, and restricts the involvement of federal and provincial political parties, their candidates and their electoral district associations, it is silent on the involvement of both federal and other provinces elected members. Specifically, S. 214(5) of the *Act* states:

214(5) Those entities from whom a registered party, electoral district association or candidate shall not accept, as a transfer, services, money or property include

- (a) a federal political party;
- (b) a federal electoral district association;
- (c) a federal candidate;
- (d) a political party in another province of Canada;
- (e) an electoral district association in another province of Canada; and
- (f) a candidate in another province of Canada.

The Chief Electoral Officer believes the intent of the *Act* is to prevent undue influence in an election by outside agencies and political entities and to hold elected members of other jurisdictions to the same standard.

As a point of clarification, this change if enacted, would not impinge in any way, a provincial or federal member of parliament from endorsing or canvassing for a provincial candidate during a writ period.

**Recommendation 7:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that elected members of federal, provincial and territorial legislatures be prohibited from transferring money, services or property to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate during a provincial election.*

This recommendation does not have the unanimous support of the members of the Election Commission.

## Candidate Withdrawals and Party Endorsements

The current wording in the *Elections Act* can lead to confusion among the voting public when either a candidate withdraws from the election or a registered party rescinds its endorsement for a candidate. There were three such examples during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE.

### Pictou East

Early in the election period, the Liberal Party announced it was withdrawing support for their nominated candidate in Pictou East, Matthew MacKnight. Mr. MacKnight formally withdrew his nomination on May 6<sup>th</sup> before the close of nominations. The *Elections Act* envisions a candidate withdrawing or changing their nomination before close of nominations but not after. Therefore, his name was removed from the ballot. Subsequently, with the endorsement of the Liberal Party, John Fraser filed his nomination papers on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Once nominations closed, two of the three forms of ballot used during the election, the printed on demand ballot and the election day ballot, listed Mr. Fraser as the Liberal candidate. The third form of ballot, the write-in ballot typically lists only registered parties' names with a space to write-in the name of an independent candidate.

Consequently, on election night the 16 write-in ballots cast for the Liberal Party and all ballots cast for Mr. Fraser were counted for Mr. Fraser as the Liberal candidate in Pictou East.

### Dartmouth East

In Dartmouth East, the NDP candidate Bill McEwen, announced he was withdrawing his name as a candidate on May 15<sup>th</sup>, several days after the close of nominations. The NDP also publicly stated that they had distanced themselves from Mr. McEwen and did not want to benefit from any provincial funding arising out the votes cast because of his candidacy. There are no provisions in the *Act* to facilitate a candidate withdrawing after the close of nominations. Consequently, his name and party affiliation remained on the two forms of ballot which include candidates' names. Despite his withdrawal, the seven write-in ballots cast for the NDP Party in Dartmouth East and the 957 ballots cast for Mr. McEwen were counted as valid votes cast for Mr. McEwen as the NDP candidate. There are also no provisions in the *Act* for ENS to withhold funding based on votes received and therefore the provincial funding tied to votes for Mr. McEwen remain earmarked for the NDP party.

### Dartmouth South

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, the PC party withdrew their endorsement for Jad Crnogorac, their nominated candidate in Dartmouth South. As stated above, there are no provisions in the *Act* to change the party affiliation for a candidate on the ballot once nominations have closed. In this case, Ms. Crnogorac decided to remain in the contest as an independent candidate. There are no provisions in the *Act* to facilitate a candidate changing their status from being a candidate for a registered party to an independent candidate after the close of nominations. Despite Ms. Crnogorac's and the PC party's wishes, the 12 write-in ballots cast for the PC Party and all votes cast for Ms. Crnogorac were counted for Ms. Crnogorac as the PC Party candidate. As well, the funding due to Ms. Crnogorac based on votes received remain earmarked for the PC party.



## Voter Confusion

To reduce voter confusion, Elections Nova Scotia issued a media release stating that the *Elections Act* does not permit changes after the close of nominations, and that all valid votes would be counted as cast. (see Appendix J).

Despite this, in the latter two cases, significant voter confusion appeared to remain. In the Dartmouth East case, most of the 957 votes for Mr. McEwan were cast in the 15 days remaining in the election after he withdrew. If his name and party affiliation was removed from the ballot, some of these voters may have chosen another candidate. Likewise, in the case of Dartmouth South, if the PC party affiliation for Ms. Crnogorac had been removed some of the voters may have voted for another candidate.

**Recommendation 8:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends updating the legislation to add a process for candidates who withdraw and for parties to revoke their endorsement of a candidate after the close of nominations, specifically:*

- *Support a process for a registered party to withdraw its endorsement of a candidate through to the end of the Saturday immediately before election day (Day 4).*
- *If a party withdraws their endorsement, remove the per vote subsidy to be provided semi-annually to that party based on the votes cast for that candidate.*
- *Where possible, Elections Nova Scotia update the ballot to reflect that a party has withdrawn its endorsement of a candidate who is now running as an independent.*
  - *At most early voting opportunities (at the returning office, advance poll and community poll) ENS uses the "ballot on demand" process which can be adjusted before voting starts the next day.*
  - *If the change is before the end of the second Saturday before election day (Day 10), the election day ballots will be adjusted.*
- *Inform each voter in the electoral district of the change through a method prescribed by the CEO, for example, by posting at each location any updates to party endorsement or candidate withdrawals.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Candidate Deposits

On October 25, 2017, the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta rendered its decision in *Szuchewycz v. Canada (Attorney General)*, stating that the \$1,000 deposit requirement for prospective candidates in federal elections infringes on section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which provides that: "Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein."

The CEO believes that this decision applies to Nova Scotia and invalidates Section 65 of the *Elections Act* and, as a result, prospective candidates will no longer be required to deposit \$200 as part of their nomination requirements.

**Recommendation 9:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the candidate's nomination deposit requirement be removed from the legislation.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **List of Persons to be Selected as Election Officers**

Section 81 of the *Elections Act* requires the returning officer to reach out to registered parties (whose candidates finished first and second in the previous election) and request lists of individuals who may be selected to work in the polls during the election. The list is to be sent to the returning officer by the end of day 25, five days after the writ is issued.

This section of the *Act* poses challenges for returning officers in that:

- Many campaigns, ignore the returning officers request often citing difficulty in filling their own campaign team rosters.
- When lists are provided, they are often incomplete and include outdated contact information making it difficult for the returning office staff to contact people named.
- Most often, lists are received after the deadline. Numerous returning officers reported campaign teams provided their lists exceedingly late, several with less than seven days before election day. At this time, the returning officer may have filled some or all of the election officer positions and are under no obligation to use any of the names provided. The late provision of names may cause unrealized expectations for the individuals and may create conflict with campaigns.
- Lastly, the individuals on lists have often been promised a specific position at a specific location by a candidate's campaign staff, causing conflicts among the returning office staff, the campaign and the individual. These conflicts are most difficult to manage in the more rural districts where polling stations tend to be located further apart and those listed are reluctant to travel outside their immediate locale.

**Recommendation 10:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the requirement for the CEO to request lists of election officers from the parties that came first and second in the previous election be removed from the legislation.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **Third Party Election Advertising**

A third party is an individual or group that is not a candidate, registered political party, or registered electoral district association. Election advertising is a message that promotes or opposes a registered political party, the election of a candidate, or a candidate's position on an issue. As an example, an advertisement that takes a position on a political issue, such as taxes, or supports or opposes a level of a specific government service such as health services, is considered election advertising.



The requirement to register as a third party is triggered when a third party spends \$500 on election advertising. The registration is valid only during the election period, which is from the issuance of the writ until election day.

Third parties had spending limits of \$10,943.77 in total on election advertising during this general election.

A third party shall identify itself in any election advertising placed by it and indicate that it has authorized the advertising. Election advertising by candidates and parties must bear the words “authorized by the official agent for [name of the third party]”.

ENS met with several organizations that potentially could become third parties once the writ was issued to review the requirements for third party registration under the *Act*. As well, a media campaign about third party registration requirements was introduced, both in advance of and after the writ was issued, on the ENS website, Facebook and Twitter, and during interviews with news media. Despite these efforts, some of special interest groups appeared unaware of their requirement to register as a third party during the election.

In the election, seven third parties registered: Annapolis Valley Regional Library, Canadian Federation of Students – Nova Scotia, Doctors Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Landowners and Forest Fibre Producers Association, Nova Scotia Nurses Union, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library and Students NS.

More details about election advertising including a few specific rules on election day, are included in an interpretation circular in the circulars section of the [electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca) website.

# Post-Event and Post-Event Analysis

## Judicial Recounts

Three judicial recounts were conducted following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE. Recounts for the electoral districts of Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie and Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank were held June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, and the recount for the electoral district of Chester-St. Margaret's was held June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. In all three judicial recounts, the recount confirmed the election of candidates as reported immediately following the election.

In each recount, each of the ballots cast was reviewed one at a time at one of the tables of election officers engaged in the recount. If there was a disagreement over the decision to count or not count a ballot among the candidates' observers stationed at the table, the ballot was next reviewed by counsel representing each candidate. If there was still no consensus, the ballot was brought by counsel to Justice who heard the arguments for and against counting the ballot and made a decision.

### Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Rob Wolf for the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia petitioned the Nova Scotia Supreme Court for a judicial recount following the 2017 PGE. A recount was ordered to be conducted Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in the Law Courts of Halifax under the supervision of Associate Chief Justice Deborah K. Smith.

The total number of ballots counted for two of the three candidates in the electoral district did not change. The NDP candidate gained one ballot in the recount.

The recount confirmed Lloyd Hines elected by 71 votes, unchanged from the official count.

The following table provides details on the adjustments made by Associate Chief Justice Smith:

**Table 4: Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie Recount**

Candidate (Party)	Official Count	Recount
Lloyd Hines (NSLP)	2,565	2,565
Marney J. Simmons (NSNDP)	893	894
Rob Wolf (PC)	2,494	2,494
Rejected ballots	65	65

### Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Dan McNaughton for the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia petitioned the Nova Scotia Supreme Court for a judicial recount following the 2017 PGE. A recount was ordered to be conducted Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in the Law Courts of Halifax under the supervision of Justice M. Heather Robertson.

The total number of ballots counted for two of the four candidates in the electoral district did not change. The GPNS and NSLP candidates each lost one ballot in the recount.

The recount confirmed Bill Horne elected by 65 votes, a reduction of one from the official count.

The following table provides details on the adjustments made by Justice Robertson:

**Table 5: Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank Recount**

Candidate (Party)	Official Count	Recount
Anthony Edmonds (GPSN)	507	506
Bill Horne (NSLP)	3,161	3,160
Rob Wolf (PC)	3,095	3,095
Trevor Sanipass (NSNDP)	1,567	1,567
Rejected ballots	41	42

### **Chester-St. Margaret's**

On June 2, 2017, Denise Peterson-Rafuse of the New Democratic Party of Nova Scotia petitioned the Nova Scotia Supreme Court for a judicial recount following the 2017 PGE. A recount was ordered to be conducted Monday June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in the Law Courts of Halifax under the supervision of Justice James L. Chipman.

The total number of ballots counted for two of the four candidates in the electoral district did not change. The PC candidate gained one ballot, and the NSNDP candidate lost one ballot in the recount.

The recount confirmed Hugh MacKay elected by 91 votes, an increase of one from the official count.

The following table provides details on the adjustments made by Justice Chipman:

**Table 6: Chester-St. Margaret's Recount**

Candidate (Party)	Official Count	Recount
Julie Chaisson (PC)	2,229	2,230
Hugh MacKay (NSLP)	3,112	3,112
Denis Peterson-Rafuse (NSNDP)	3,022	3,021
Harry Ward (GPNS)	413	413
Rejected ballots	34	33

### **Applications for a Recount**

Currently under the *Act*, after official addition, if the number of votes separating the first two candidates is fewer than 10 votes, the CEO must apply for a judicial recount. Given that a recount with a difference of more than 10 votes rarely succeeds, the CEO believes that any difference of 10 or more votes should require some justification to be presented to a Justice for a recount and that the Justice would have discretionary powers to

accept or reject the application. The federal *Elections Act*, and the Ontario *Elections Act* provides two possible justifications for a recount:

- that a deputy returning officer has improperly counted any ballot or improperly rejected any ballot or made an incorrect statement of the number of ballots cast for any candidate, or
- that the returning officer has improperly tabulated the votes.

**Recommendation 11:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that an applicant applying for a recount be required to provide justification, to the Justice that:*

- *a deputy returning officer has improperly counted any ballot or improperly rejected any ballot or made an incorrect statement of the number of ballots cast for any candidate; or*
- *the returning officer has improperly tabulated the votes; or*
- *where the Court has determined there may be other grounds to justify a recount.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **Recount Costs**

The direct costs associated with conducting this recount was about \$4,300 per recount with the total cost for the three judicial recounts was about \$13,000.

The salaries associated with full time and contract staff from ENS headquarters are not included in this breakdown, however, overtime costs associated unionized staff entitled to overtime are included as well as the hourly and travel costs associated of having returning officers count the ballots.

The total costs for each of these recounts was significantly less than the \$15,000 spent on the Kings North Judicial Recount held in Kentville in 2013. The difference is largely attributable to the necessity of transporting and accommodating ENS staff and returning officers assembling in Kentville to assist the Justice in performing the recount.

At the conclusion of the recount for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie, Associate Chief Justice Smith asked the representatives of the candidates if they wished to petition for costs. Both the counsel for the PC and NDP candidates indicated they were not inclined to ask for costs to be awarded. Similarly, at the conclusion of the recount for Chester St. Margaret's, Justice Chipman asked the party representatives to petition for costs and the counsel for the candidates were not inclined to ask for costs to be awarded. At the conclusion of the recount for Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank, Justice Robertson did not ask counsel for their positions on costs.

In each of these cases the Chief Electoral Officer was not asked about its costs. Preparing for one recount, let alone three recounts involves significant effort. As was observed at each of the recounts, the marks on the ballots are almost always clear and are agreed on. The *Act* currently does not provide any latitude for rejecting an application for recount. Recounts may even be applied for if the difference in votes is large. In each of the recounts, the changes in results found between the first and second place candidates ranged from zero to one vote.

The CEO believes that the awarding of costs should remain at the discretion of the Justice for recounts where the difference remains between 10 and 25 votes. The CEO also believes that the applicant should be required to pay a portion of the costs if the difference in votes that remains after a recount is greater than 25. The portion to be paid to be determined by the presiding Justice based on the arguments presented by the applicant, the other candidates and parties involved and the CEO.

**Recommendation 12:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that any applicant applying for a recount, where the vote difference is 25 votes or more between the candidate who received the most votes, and any other candidate, be required to pay a portion of the operational costs for the recount if the results of the recount does not result in a difference of less than 25 votes.*

This recommendation does not have the unanimous support of the members of the Election Commission.

A report on the three recounts is available in Appendix K.

## Modernizing the Voting Process

With the greater use of the “vote anywhere” process used at returning offices, advance polls and community polls, and the observed challenges in counting and reporting the vote on election night, greater use of technology within the voting process could provide efficiencies and streamline the process.

### Combining the role of DPO with PO

One example already implemented is the automation of the List of Electors for early voting opportunities. Currently Deputy Presiding Officers (DPO) scans the elector’s Voter Information Card (VIC) and their elector record is retrieved, whereas traditionally the poll official would need to manually locate them on a paper copy of the list. Using an electronic List of Electors decreases the time required to locate an elector on the list and improves the integrity of the voter check-in and registration process.

In the current roles, the DPO’s role is to check-in electors and revise them if required, and the PO’s roll is to hand electors their ballot, mark them as voted and ensure that the ballots are placed in the secrecy envelope before being placed in the ballot box.

Based on the feedback and the review of the process, the CEO sees the opportunity to reduce the number of required election officials.

**Recommendation 13:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends combining the role of DPO with PO with one role that performs all required steps. This change will increase customer service to electors, and leverage the successes of the “bank-teller model”, by allowing electors to go to any available poll official to cast their vote.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Greater use of Technology in Early Voting

Electors who choose to vote at a returning office or an advance poll after the close of nominations would be processed by the presiding officer in the same manner as in the 2017 general election. Once verified as eligible, the vote would be directed by the presiding officer to a privacy screen where they would be instructed to choose the candidate of their choice from the list of their local candidates on the touch screen of a voting tablet. Once they verified their choice, a ballot would be printed on demand with their choice marked. The voter would verify their choice on the printed ballot, fold it and return it to the presiding officer who would insert it into an envelope and hand it back to the voter to insert into the ballot box. This slight change in the current voting methodology would have several positive impacts for all stakeholders including:

- The use of technology introduces a minimal change to the process the voter is accustomed to (their choice is marked for them on their printed paper ballot). The remainder of the process is unchanged from that experienced during the 2017 general election.
- A reduction in the error rate in marking of ballots. The voter's choice is marked for them unambiguously on their printed ballot. As well, the voter gets to verify their choice twice in the voting process (on screen before complete casting their vote and visually on the printed marked ballot) before they personally deposit it in the ballot box.
- On election night, the unofficial results would be tabulated based on the voters' choice registered in the voting tablet. In this manner, the results of the 51 returning office continuous polls and all of the out-of-district votes province wide (about 30% of the total votes cast) would be posted within a half hour of the close of polls at 8:00pm on election night.
- The tabulation of these results would be 100 percent accurate and balanced against the number of voters and ballots used (not prone to the human error factor often encountered in manual counts).
- The paper ballots would be used in all manner of recounts (CEO recounts and judicial recounts).
- For accountability and transparency purposes, the paper ballots would be used in audits (random audits during a general election and automatic audits during by-elections) conducted by ENS and reported publicly in *Volume I Statement of Votes and Statistics*.
- The provision to registered parties of printed 'bingo sheets' would be replaced with the availability of a record of elector ID numbers for electors who have voted using this technology.

**Recommendation 14:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends using technology to support the voting process at early voting opportunities, i.e., for an elector to mark and print their ballot. On election night, using technology, the results may be reported immediately after the close of polls. The printed ballots are available for use in random audits to be conducted by ENS and reported publicly in Volume I Statement of Votes and Statistics and for any manner of recount.*

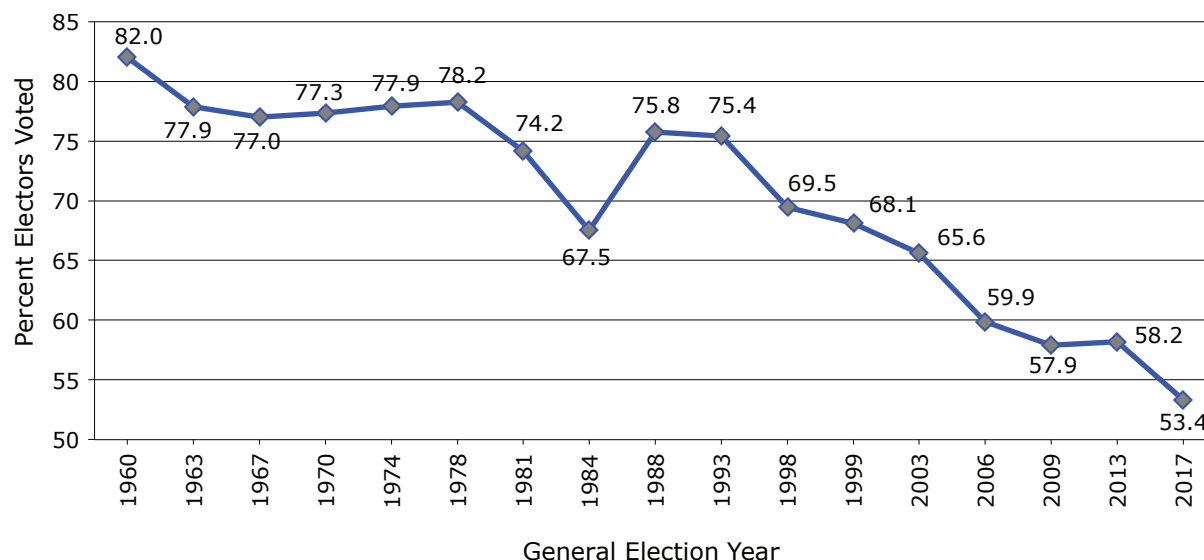
The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.



## Voter Turnout Analysis

The decline of voter participation, i.e., of voter turnout rates, is not unique to Nova Scotia. In 2017, voter turnout dropped to its lowest in a Nova Scotia PGE since 1960, when turnout was calculated at 82 percent. In *Volume I; Statement of Votes and Statistics*, voter turnout was calculated to be 53.4% in 2017, a drop from 58.2% in the 2013 election.

**Figure 1: Voter Turnout Since 1960**



Fewer people came out to vote; 403,365 votes in 2017 compared to 419,091 votes in 2013 despite an expansion of early voting opportunities and improved distribution based on the 15 minute travel time standard for election day voting locations.

There may be value in examining the second number that goes into calculating the voter turnout. The 53.4% turnout rate is calculated by taking the number of votes cast (403,365) and dividing it by the total number of people on the Final List of Electors (756,113).

Since 2013, the number of registered electors has grown by 36,036, from 720,077 electors to 756,113 in 2017. The register is under continual revision between elections and during the election period, with names being removed for people who have left the province or passed away, names added for young people who've turned eighteen or attained Canadian citizenship, or people who have moved to the province, and addresses changed when electors move.

Elections Nova Scotia's goal is to register every eligible elector in the province. Statistics Canada's estimates were used to measure "coverage", i.e., the percentage of eligible electors who are on the Register of Electors or the List of Electors.

In Volume I, it was reported that the list of electors had a coverage of 99.5% of the total eligible population. This estimate was based on the population reported by Statistics Canada's population estimate as of May 2016, a year before the election. Since the publication of Volume 1, an updated population estimate was received, adjusting the total population from 759,760 to 791,336, and changing the ratio of registered electors to population from 99.95% to 95.5%. The coverage of the population on the register of electors improved from 92.95% in 2013 to 95.5% in 2017. The following table uses Statistics Canada population postcensal eligible elector estimates as of July 1, 2017.

**Table 7: Voting Participation Percentages by Age Group, Based on Population Estimates of July 1, 2017**

Age group	NS Population Distribution estimates as of July 2017	Registered Electors		Electors Who Voted		
		No. of Electors	% of Population	No. of Voters	% of Registered Electors	% of Age Group
18 - 24 Years	83,366	55,411	66.5%	19,194	34.6%	23.0%
25 - 34 Years	120,737	108,953	90.2%	34,986	32.1%	29.0%
35 - 44 Years	115,406	113,872	98.7%	49,172	43.2%	42.6%
45 - 54 Years	134,839	137,574	102.0%	71,470	52.0%	53.0%
55 - 64 Years	148,519	149,546	100.7%	93,619	62.6%	63.0%
65 - 74 Years	111,775	111,739	100.0%	80,073	71.7%	71.6%
75 + Years	76,694	78,526	102.4%	50,614	64.5%	66.0%
Unknown		492		4,237		
<b>Total</b>	<b>791,336</b>	<b>756,113</b>	<b>95.5%</b>	<b>403,365</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>51.0%</b>

\* Source: Statistics Canada. Table 051-0001 - Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, 2017  
 Note: Population figures include Canadian citizens and ineligible electors (non-permanent residents and permanent residents) as in Volume I.

In April 2017, a data set of 38,766 new electors was received from Elections Canada. Though the addition of more names to the list improves the register's coverage and provides better access to electoral services for a greater number of electors; it did not, lead to better voter turnout. The voter turnout rate was 30% for this set of electors and was lower than the general election turnout rate of 53.4%. About two-thirds (68.8%) of these electors were in the youngest age cohorts under age 35, which historically have had the lowest turnout rates.

Although turnout expressed as a percentage of registered electors dropped from 58.2% to 53.1%, the turnout as a percentage of eligible electors did not drop quite as much; it dropped from 54.1% to 51.0%.

**Table 8: Age Distribution of Electors added to List from Elections Canada**

Age Group	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Total
Electors	18,599	8,071	3,869	3,016	2,736	1,576	899	38,766
Percentage	48.0%	20.8%	10.0%	7.8%	7.0%	4.1%	2.3%	100%

## Repeat Voter Turnout

The overall voter turnout rate dropped from 58.2% in October 2013 to 53.4% May 2017. As seen in the following table, a review of the final list of electors reveals the following observations:

- There were 644,998 electors who were on the list in both 2013 and 2017 election;
- 294,938 electors, or about three of four people who voted, voted in both 2013 and 2017;
- Of the electors who were on list in both 2013 and 2017, there were 97,399 who voted only in 2013 and 71,001 who voted only in 2017;
- There were 70,035 electors who were on the list in 2013 but not on the list in 2017
  - Most of these electors were in the 25-34 age range and have moved out of province or 75 years of age or older and have deceased (see table 9)
  - Of these 70,035 electors, 26,754 voted in 2013
- Of the 403,365 people who did vote in 2017, 108,427 people, or about one in three did not vote in 2013;
- There were 109,167 electors on the list in 2017 who were not on the list on 2013. Most of these additions to the list are youth or under 35. Both Elections Nova Scotia and Elections Canada have focused on increasing the coverage of the list in these age cohorts and the growth is evident.
  - Many electors of these electors new to the list, including the 1,718 youth who voted after registering in response to an ENS letter campaign to youth noted earlier in this document, and about 11,000 of the electors added to the list from Elections Canada data, were not eligible to vote in 2013.
  - Of these 109,167 new electors on the list, 37,426 voted.

**Figure 2: Electors registered and voted in 2013 and 2017**

### Electors Registered in 2013 and 2017

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Electors registered 2013 • **720,077**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Voter turnout 2013 • **419.091**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 )

Electors registered 2017 • **756,113**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Voter turnout 2017 • **403,365**

### Electors Registered in BOTH 2013 and 2017

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Electors registered in BOTH 2013 and 2017 • **644,998**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXX)

Voted in BOTH • **294,998**

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Those who voted in 2013 but NOT in 2017 • **97,399**

XXXXXXX

Those who voted in 2017 but NOT in 2013 • **71,001**

### Electors Registered in Only ONE Election

XXXXXXX  
 XX)

Registered voters in 2013 but NOT in 2017 • **70,035**

Those who voted • **26,754**

XXXXXXXXXXXX  
 XXXX

Registered voters in 2017 but NOT in 2013 • **109,167**

Those who voted • **37,426**

**Table 9: Repeat Voter Turnout**

	2013		2017	
	On List	Voted	On List	Voted
Names on Final list	720,077	419,091	756,113	403,365
on List in 2013 & 2017	644,998			
voted in 2013 and 2017	294,938			
on List in 2013 & 2017 who voted in only one election		97,399		71,001
On list in only one election	70,035	26,754	109,167	37,426

**Table 10: Electors on List in 2013 and not 2017 with Vote Status**

Age Range	Electors on the 2013 GE LoE but not on LoE of 2017 GE and vote status in 2013 GE		
	Voted	Not voted	Total
18-24	718	1,174	1,892
25-34	2,372	11,425	13,797
35-44	1,634	6,339	7,973
45-54	1,971	5,163	7,134
55-64	3,091	4,683	7,774
65-74	4,654	3,778	8,432
75 Plus	12,314	10,719	23,033
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,754</b>	<b>43,281</b>	<b>70,035</b>

**Table 11: Electors on List in 2017 and not 2013 with Vote Status**

Age Range	Electors on the 2017GE LoE but not on LoE of 2013GE and vote status in 2017 GE		
	Voted	Not voted	Total
Unknown	1	2	3
18-24	14,245	27,047	41,292
25-34	6,475	17,378	23,853
35-44	4,708	9,660	14,368
45-54	3,879	7,449	11,328
55-64	4,190	5,434	9,624
65-74	2,799	2,672	5,471
75 Plus	1,129	2,099	3,228
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,426</b>	<b>71,741</b>	<b>109,167</b>

## Number of Electors per Polling Division

The maximum number of electors per polling division (450) was originally determined based on the number of electors that could be processed effectively by a Deputy Returning Officer and a Poll Clerk on election day. At that time, all processes used in the poll were manual and time consuming. The poll clerk had to find the voter's name on a paper list and once confirmed, strike their name off the list as voted using a pen and ruler. The DRO then had to write their name and address in a paper poll record before they were given a ballot.

Processing a voter today is much less manual with significantly less writing required by the poll officials. The time it takes for the average person to vote today has dropped appreciable (85% of all voters bring their VIC to the poll and can be processed in less than a minute.).

In addition, there has been a significant decline in voter turnout from 75.9% in 1988 to 53.4% in 2017, and a steady growth in those choosing to vote early (from less than 5% in 1988 to 30% in 2017). It is anticipated that the trend to choose the convenience of voting before election day will continue, the number of electors who vote on election day has declined in every election over the past 20 years. In 2017, only 36.7% of registered electors chose to vote on election day.

The CEO expects these trends to continue. Additionally, the development of technologies used to process voters on election day coupled with the move to the bank teller model in locations with multiple polls, the number of voters that can be processed by election officials in a day has and will continue to grow. Many polling divisions, particularly in urban areas where travel times to the polling location are well within the accepted standard for travel time, could process significantly more electors on any given day with fewer staff. This change would lead to cost and operational efficiencies.

In less urban, rural and remote areas the province, the number of electors per poll would continue to be guided by current travel time standard restrictions and therefore are not expected to change appreciably.

**Recommendation 15:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that increases to the maximum number of electors assigned to each polling division be at the discretion of the Chief Electoral Officer with consideration given to travel time standards.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Final List of Electors

The *Act* states that the final list of electors is the revised list of electors prepared by the CEO and includes information whose names have been on or added to the official list of electors (the list used on election day).

In practice, this does not make sense in that electors' names may appear on more than one list. If an elector moves to a new poll division or to another electoral district, the elector's name will be added and according to the legislation, may not be removed from the list of their previous district.

In practice, the most accurate list of electors should only contain valid names of electors. If the CEO follows the *Act* as currently written, collectively the final lists of electors overstate the number of electors in the province by 24,868 (the total number of moves



performed during the 2017 general election). The CEO believes that he should have the authority to remove or update elector's information in all circumstances to create the final list of electors with all duplicates removed.

One concern may be that the number of names on the Final List may decrease and the expense limits of the candidates are based on this number. These limits are protected as the legislation also states the expense limit is based on the higher of the number of electors on the preliminary list of electors or on the final list of electors.

Conversely, if the *Act* is not changed to correct this obvious overstatement, it could be argued that candidate expense limits are inflated by the number of known duplicates on the final list used to make that calculation and therefore, the reimbursement provided by ENS to candidates for their eligible expenses may also be inflated.

Lastly, increasing the number of names on the final list has the effect of decreasing the reported turn out. In 2017, adding nearly 25,000 names would have had the effect of decreasing turnout from 53.4% to 51.6%.

**Recommendation 16:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the legislation be amended to provide authority to the CEO to complete the Final List of Electors and for the list to include only electors who "are on" the list (as opposed to "have been on the list"). Drop the Final List of Electors returned by the returning officer with the return of material.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Registration Requirement – Provision of Sex

The *Act* states that each application of an elector to be added, corrected or deleted from the register must include: legal name, residential address, mailing address, date of birth, proof of identity and residence, and sex.

Sex is interpreted as gender identity. When the applications were processed, it was found that about 12% did not include sex. In addition, about 5% of the names currently in the register do not have their sex indicated.

This information is maintained in the Register of Electors and has been used at times to match elector information from other sources when available. The information is not shown or used on any List of Electors or shared with the registered parties or candidates. It is shared with Elections Canada.

The governments of Nova Scotia and Canada have made changes in how gender identity is recorded and communicated in government documents such as driver's licenses and passports.

**Recommendation 17:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the requirement that electors provide their "sex" when making applications for the Register or List of Electors be changed from mandatory to optional.*

This recommendation does not have the unanimous support of the members of the Election Commission.

## Investigations of Breaches of the *Elections Act* Related to Voting

The Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for ensuring that the *Act* is complied with and enforced. Prior to changes made to the *Act* in 2012, the only enforcement tool in the *Act* was prosecution. The new *Act* has enhanced the compliance role of the Chief Electoral Officer.

The CEO has been given authority to enter into a compliance agreement with anyone the CEO believes, on reasonable grounds, has committed, is about to commit or is likely to commit, an act or omission that could constitute an offence under the *Act*. A compliance agreement is a voluntary agreement between the CEO and the person (the contracting party) in which they agree to terms and conditions that the CEO considers necessary to ensure compliance with the *Act*. A compliance agreement may include a statement by the contracting party in which he or she admits responsibility for the act or omission that constitutes the offence. It is important to note that the admission of responsibility does not constitute a criminal conviction by a court of law and does not create a criminal record for the contracting party. To maintain transparency, a notice that sets out the contracting party's name, the act or omission in question and a summary of the compliance agreement is made public.

During the 2017 PGE, ENS received numerous complaints ranging from unwanted signs placed on private property and allegations of ineligible persons voting. All complaints were investigated by ENS staff and resolved with the cooperation of candidates, their agents and the registered parties. There were no circumstances that the RCMP was asked to investigate potential breaches of the *Act* and to prepare for charges under the *Act*, if warranted. In almost all cases the subjects of the complaints cooperated with the investigations.

To this date, the Chief Electoral Officer has not entered into a compliance agreement with any individuals or organizations.

However, there are two investigations continuing where it is alleged that an ineligible elector voted.

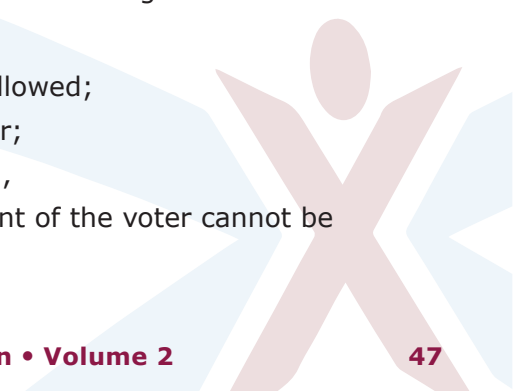
## Rejected Ballots

Rejected ballots have no direct impact on the outcome of an election. Once the polls close on election day, DROs and POs are instructed to follow the guidelines provided for accepting and rejecting ballots and to have no regard for the voter's intent with respect to a ballot they choose to reject.

The voter's intent is of public interest in the broader context and should be examined and reported on as time permits. As committed in the 2015-16 Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, an audit was conducted on rejected ballots following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE.

There were five main objectives in conducting this review:

- To determine if the guidelines for rejecting a ballot were followed;
- To tabulate the number of ballots that were marked in error;
- To tabulate the number of ballots spoiled intentionally; and,
- To tabulate the number of ballots that were left blank (intent of the voter cannot be determined).



Each of the 1,976 ballots rejected provincially was reviewed by an ENS team of subject matter experts to determine whether ballots were rejected for valid or nonvalid reasons, meaning ballots that were rejected by the DRO or PO contrary to the written guidelines they were provided for that purpose and to discern the voter's intent.

The audit revealed five important findings:

1. There was a significant decrease in the number of rejected ballots recorded provincially (36%) when compared to those counted during 39<sup>th</sup> PGE.
2. A reduction was in part due to a reduction in the total number of ballots cast in the 40<sup>th</sup> general election, but more importantly, there fewer ballots rejected because of voter error, an improvement attributable to the new write-in ballot design.
3. The vast majority of the rejected ballots (68%) were either intentionally spoiled or left blank by the voter for underminable reasons.
4. The findings further indicate that poll officials, for the most part, are following the guidelines for accepting or rejecting ballots during the count. Four percent of the ballots were rejected for non-valid reasons.

Lastly, the review of rejected ballots is valuable in that it allows us to validate the quality of our training, and develop improvements where required.

**Table 12: Rejected Ballots by Poll Type**

Rejected Ballots	Poll Type				
	Write-in Ballot	Continuous	Advance and Community	Mobile	Election Day
Verification					
Number at the poll	92	400	102	63	1,329
Number verified	92	399	97	63	1,325
Number spoiled intentionally	24	240	62	20	999
Number where voter's intentions not known (blank ballot)	13	80	19	35	273
Valid Reasons for Rejection					
Marked for more than one candidate	N/A	233	62	25	1,034
Marked for multiple parties	24	0	0	0	0
Marked as to identify elector	0	2	2	1	3
No mark at all	13	80	19	35	273
Incorrect candidate name	4	9	3	0	0
Name of candidate & party don't correspond	2	2	0	N/A	N/A
Not initialed on back	0	1	0	0	0
Illegible	2	1	1	0	5
Marked for party with no candidate	30	22	0	N/A	N/A
Non-valid Reason for Rejection					
Marked for party leader	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
Incorrect ballot	N/A	7	4	N/A	N/A
Could not determine why rejected	15	42	6	2	10

## Declining to Vote

While the *Elections Act* currently allows voters to decline their vote in protest, it does not afford them the same secrecy as those who choose to register their protest by intentionally spoiling their ballot during the voting process. The *Act* requires voters who wish to decline their ballot to return it to the poll official, and make their intentions known to the poll official. The poll official further compromises the elector's identity by crossing their name off the official list of electors and writing in beside their name the phrase "declined to vote".

In addition, a declined vote is not deemed to be a vote within the *Act* as it is treated as a cancelled ballot, and not considered a "valid vote" within official results. Conversely, a ballot that has been intentionally spoiled by a voter (e.g. marks all candidates, defaces their ballot) is counted as a rejected ballot, is considered as a valid vote cast and is reported in the official results.

Presently there are five jurisdictions within Canada who publicly report declined votes within their official tabulation: Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Yukon, and Northwest Territories.

**Recommendation 18:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that declined ballots be reported within official results. Further, the Chief Electoral Officer recommends that a voter's intent to decline their ballot not be made public.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

## Further Recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer

### Voting Before the Close of Nominations

In September 2017, the Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court released its decision on a challenge to the special ballot provisions of the Newfoundland and Labrador *Elections Act*. Of particular relevance is s. 86(4) which states:

*86 (4) An application to vote by special ballot may be made to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer **beginning not more than 4 weeks before the issue of the writ of election** and ending at 6:00 p.m. on a day to be determined by the Chief Electoral Officer. [Emphasis added]*

Ultimately, the Court determined that the legislative scheme created by the special ballot provisions interfered with the right of special ballot voters to play a meaningful role in the electoral process and their related rights to be well informed of all their choices when casting their vote. It was additionally determined that the sections inappropriately interfered with the right of some candidates to meaningful participation in the election process. Elaborating on this, the following three points were noted:

1. Because of the time limitations, special ballot voters could be required to vote prior to knowing the full slate of candidates. The Court considered that special ballot voters who happened to be unable to cast their vote after nominations close when the list of candidates were known could be forced to guess who the official candidates were.

2. The provisions impacted differently on the right of persons affiliated with a registered party and those running unaffiliated to be qualified for membership in the House of Assembly. It was noted that the legislation permitted voters to vote by indicating either: the name of the candidate, the name of the candidate along with the political party, or the name of the political party alone. Therefore, unaffiliated candidates without a political party were disadvantaged.
3. The advantages provided by incumbency that are in place during the period in which special ballot voting may be taking place (such as the ability to be active in their district and utilize public funds for meals and travel allowances in their district), create an unfair disadvantage for citizens challenging the incumbent and restrict the right to meaningful participation in an election.

Despite this, Justice Baker wrote for the court that the practice of voting before nominations close can be reasonably defended and balanced with the charter right to vote after the writ of election is issued and before nominations close as is practiced in Nova Scotia, eight other provinces and in federal elections.

Nova Scotia has one of the earliest dates in the writ period for the close of nominations, currently 20 days before election day. Between the issuance of the writ and the close of nominations in the 40<sup>th</sup> general election, 3,378 people voted, averaging 66 voters per district or 0.8% of the total votes cast province-wide. Only 195 of these votes were cast using a write-in ballot poll meaning 94% of these people voted in person at a returning office.

The CEO believes that by far the majority if not all these early voters could reasonably exercise their right to vote after nominations close on Day 20. Any elector who could not be accommodated after this date, could still apply for and be approved to vote by write-in ballot in advance of the close of nominations. ENS would expedite the delivery of their ballot kit once nominations close.

Based on the NL court decision, the Chief Electoral Officer makes two recommendations:

**Recommendations 19:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that:*

- *voting commence at 4:00pm, two hours after nominations close at on Day 20 so that voters may be made fully aware of the all nominated candidates contesting the election in their home electoral district; and,*
- *any elector who cannot attend a poll after nominations close on Day 20, apply and be pre-approved to be sent a write-in ballot kit on Day 19 along with a list of the candidates contesting the election in their district.*

This recommendation does not have the unanimous support of the members of the Election Commission.

### **Piloting Technology in Election Day Polls**

Based on the directive of the Chief Electoral Officer developed in 2015-2016, a pilot project to use technology to register and strike off electors at election-day polls during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE was planned to be implemented as early as fall 2017. As the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE was called before this date, this pilot project could not be delivered. Elections Ontario plans to introduce the use of the same technology in election day polls for the first time

in Ontario's 42<sup>nd</sup> PGE scheduled for June 9th, 2018. The CEO expects that the use of "e-poll" books for registration of electors will improve the integrity of the registration process by reducing the human error and improve efficiency at the polls.

The best opportunity to prove that these changes improve the election processes, improve the integrity of the election and define the costs of this or any pilot project is by testing these in a by-election. The lessons learned from the Ontario experience should benefit Elections Nova Scotia's plans for this pilot project. The *Act* (see Section 357) states that in order to use an alternative procedure, equipment or technology in a by-election or in up to one third of the electoral districts in a general election, a directive (or resolution) supported by majority vote in the House of Assembly is required. The directive may be initiated on the advice of the Election Commission or on the CEO's own initiative and must be passed at least 60 days before the election to which it applies.

The directive process can be challenging in getting the item on the agenda at the appropriate time and limits the opportunities of piloting new procedures and technology. With the advent of similar changes across the nation and new technologies coming available, the CEO recommends more flexibility in his ability to pilot procedures, equipment or technology. The CEO recommends that 30 days after presenting to the members of the Election Commission and receiving unanimous support of the Commission, that projects piloting an alternative procedure, equipment or technology be permitted.

**Recommendation 20:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that pilot projects be permitted in by-elections after presenting the details of said pilot project to the Election Commission, considering their feedback and receiving unanimous support of the Commission.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

**Recommendation 21:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the e-poll book solution be piloted in a by-election before use in a general election.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **Interpretation Clarification: Clear Days**

Under the *Controverted Elections Act*, a petitioner has 21 days from the return of the writ in which to file. If no petition has been filed after that time, the prothonotary of the Supreme Court certifies that no petition has been filed or that the petition has been presented and finally disposed of.

To enact this legislation, the CEO sends each prothonotary a letter and a form to facilitate their response. On review of the *Controverted Elections Act*, a conflict in the definition of "day" was found in the legislation. In the *Elections Act*, the term 'day' has been traditionally interpreted to mean any day of the calendar. This interpretation has important ramifications to the 30-day election writ period and the key dates with respect to the writ period and the declaration of the official results publicly.



Based on feedback from the courts and the prothonotaries, days has a different interpretation under the *Controverted Elections Act*. Days has been interpreted to mean “clear days”, that is, non-business days, or days that the court may sit.

If the interpretation were that the term means ‘clear days’ and the election calendar stops on non-business days, there would be a substantial impact on election planning and the execution of many sections of both the *Act* and the *Controverted Elections Act*.

**Recommendation 22:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the definition of “day” in the Elections Act and the Controverted Elections Act be defined as calendar days and not clear days.*

The members of the Election Commission are unanimous in their support of this recommendation.

### **Notice of Non-compliance and FOIPOP**

The Chief Electoral Officer has a range of options to respond to breaches of the *Elections Act* in order to take into account the nature and seriousness of the breach and to ensure fairness of the electoral process and the public interest. In recognition of the powers of the Chief Electoral Officer, the *Act* gives the CEO powers, privileges and immunities of a commissioner under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

Once an investigation is complete, the CEO may refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions, may enter into a compliance agreement, may issue a notice of non-compliance, or may dismiss the matter. The most serious matters are sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions who chooses whether to prosecute.

Less serious matters may lead to a compliance agreement where the contracting party accepts responsibility for the breach, and may agree to terms and conditions the CEO considers necessary. Once the compliance agreement has been signed, the CEO publishes a notice of the compliance agreement summarizing the breach of the *Act*.

For less serious breaches of the *Act*, where the CEO believes a person has committed an act or omission that would constitute an offence under the *Act*, a notice of non-compliance of the *Act* may be issued. In practice, these have been offences that are not likely to reoccur and where the person may not have been aware of the details in the *Act*. An example has been where a candidate’s official agent has accepted contributions to a campaign before the candidate was officially nominated.

While general information regarding compliance agreements are subject to Freedom of Information requests, section 299 of the *Act* explicitly restricts publishing by any means that the CEO has issued a notice of non-compliance. Currently, the *Elections Act* is not specifically named by regulation associated with the *Freedom of Information and the Protection of Privacy Act* to be exempt. This oversight needs to be addressed.

**Recommendation 23:** *The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that section 299 of the Elections Act be made exempt by Regulation from Freedom of Information requests. Alternatively, that section 299 be amended to remove the current restriction on publishing.*

This recommendation does not have the unanimous support of the members of the Election Commission.

## APPENDIX A

# Returning Officers

Since the Provincial General Election of 2009, prospective returning officers have participated in a merit based competition leading to the appointment of 51 returning officers by the Chief Electoral Officer. In Table 13, each returning officer is listed and their appointment dates indicated. Prior to appointments by the Chief Electoral Officer beginning in 2009, returning officers were appointed by Order in Council. Returning officers serve in each electoral district, and returning officers at large are also appointed to work on projects.

**Table 13: Returning Officers, Provincial General Election 2017**

Electoral District	Returning Officers	Returning Officers since:
01 - Annapolis	Marcia Corneal	January 23, 2013
02 - Antigonish	Allan Armsworthy	January 23, 2013
03 - Argyle-Barrington	Daniel Muise	May 1, 2003*
04 - Bedford	Robert Ripley	January 23, 2013
05 - Cape Breton Centre	Marie MacLeod	August 28, 2013
06 - Cape Breton-Richmond	Diane Rutherford	February 27, 2017
07 - Chester-St. Margaret's	Lynn Cochrane	October 5, 2015
08 - Clare-Digby	Nora Saulnier	January 15, 2008*
09 - Clayton Park West	Stephen Clancey	June 27, 2003*
10 - Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley	Guy Wheeler	April 11, 2016
11 - Colchester North	Lorraine Dawson	September 15, 1992*
12 - Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage	Malcolm MacDonald	April 10, 2003*
13 - Cole Harbour-Portland Valley	Debbie Kavanaugh	October 5, 2015
14 - Cumberland North	Joe Webb	January 23, 2013
15 - Cumberland South	Shelley Trenholm	January 23, 2013
16 - Dartmouth East	Dermont Jardine	January 23, 2013
17 - Dartmouth North	Bruce Delo	August 11, 2016
18 - Preston-Dartmouth	Brenda Brushett	January 23, 2013
19 - Dartmouth South	Dylan LaVigne	February 23, 2017
20 - Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie	Philip Hall	October 5, 2015
21 - Eastern Shore	Darlene Redman	January 23, 2013
22 - Fairview- Clayton Park	John Hart	Nov 12, 2008*
23 - Glace Bay	Robert Cerovich	July 11, 2016
24 - Halifax Armdale	Theresa Belliveau	October 5, 2015
25 - Halifax Atlantic	Eileen Murphy	April 11, 2016
26 - Halifax Chebucto	Robert Jack	October 5, 2015
27 - Halifax Citadel-Sable Island	Carol Beal	August 11, 2016
28 - Halifax Needham	Ron Skibbens	March 22, 2013
29 - Hammonds Plains-Lucasville	Eric Cottreau	February 23, 2017
30 - Hants East	Evelyn Jones	October 5, 2015
31 - Hants West	Garth Hazel	January 23, 2013
32 - Inverness	Thomas Oommen	October 5, 2015

<b>Electoral District</b>	<b>Returning Officers</b>	<b>Returning Officers since:</b>
33 – Kings North	Albert Kingsbury	April 25, 2005*
34 – Kings South	Paul Dennison	January 23, 2013
35 – Kings West	Karl West	January 23, 2013
36 – Lunenburg	Joseph Carnevale	October 5, 2015
37 – Lunenburg West	Leah Zinck	October 5, 2015
38 – Northside-Westmount	Alden MacLeod	1984*
39 – Pictou Centre	Lorne Smith	August 16, 2016**
40 – Pictou East	James Jeffrey	January 23, 2013
41 – Pictou West	Josephine MacDonald	May 1, 2003*
42 – Queens-Shelburne	Ted Bulley	May 1, 2003*
43 – Sackville-Beaver Bank	Kevin Selig	October 5, 2015
44 – Sackville-Cobequid	James Drolet	April 10, 2003*
45 – Sydney-Whitney Pier	Sharon MacIntyre	April 24, 2017
46 – Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg	Jerry Gillis	October 5, 2015
47 – Timberlea-Prospect	Allison Lawlor	October 5, 2015
48 – Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River	Christine Blair	February 18, 1998*
49 – Victoria-The Lakes	Philip MacRae	January 23, 2013
50 – Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank	Shera-Lee Kerr	January 23, 2013
51 – Yarmouth	Gail Van Buskirk	February 27, 2017
Ret. Officer at Large	Lars Goodman	January 23, 2013
Ret. Officer at Large	Eileen Pelham	January 23, 2013
Ret. Officer at Large	Colleen Gutteridge	October 5, 2015
Ret. Officer at Large	Joann Shanahan	January 23, 2013
Ret. Officer at Large	John Shaw	June 24, 2016
Ret. Officer at Large	Cynthia Simpson	June 7, 2016

\* Prior to appointments by the Chief Electoral Officer beginning in 2009, returning officers were appointed by Order in Council

\*\* Also served as a returning officer from January 2013 to October 2014

## APPENDIX B

# Election Calendar

After receiving the Order from the Lieutenant Governor in Council on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Chief Electoral Officer issued writs of election to the returning officers in each of the 51 electoral districts across Nova Scotia. Once the election was called, electoral activities followed the election calendar leading to Day 0, election day. Key dates from the planning calendar are shown in Table 14.

**Table 14: The 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election 2017 Calendar\***

Writs Issued	Day 30*	April 30
Notice of Election Issued (published online)		
Returning Offices begin to open and prepare to operate	Day 29	May 1
Voting at Returning Office continuous polls commence		
Voting by in-district and out-of-district Write-in-Ballot commences		
Target Enumeration begins		
Candidate Nominations open		
Revision to the List of Electors begins		
Notice of Election Issued (published in newspapers)		
All Returning Offices open and operational	Day 27	May 3
Target Enumeration ends	Day 24	May 6
Candidate Nominations close 2:00 pm	Day 20	May 10
Certification of the Preliminary List of Electors	Day 19	May 11
Preliminary Lists provided to each registered party and independent candidate		
Extended Community Poll open 9am to 6pm in:	Day 18	May 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelburne (ED 42)</li> <li>• Sheet Harbour (ED 20)</li> <li>• St. Peter's (ED 06)</li> </ul>		
Consolidated Notice of Grant of Poll published online and newspapers	Day 17	May 13
Voter Information Cards mailed to all electors	Day 15	May 15

Official List of Electors certified and provided to each party and candidate	Day 11	May 19
Advance poll begin 9am to 6pm	Day 10	May 20
Deadline to receive write-in ballot applications by mail, fax, and e-mail at 6:00 pm		
Hospital Voting begins	Day 8	May 22
Advance poll 9am to 6pm		
Advance poll 9am to 6pm	Day 7	May 23
Hospital Voting ends at 5:00 pm	Day 6	May 24
Advance poll 9am to 6pm		
Advance poll 9am to 8pm	Day 5	May 25
Advance poll 9am to 8pm	Day 4	May 26
Community polls begin in 16 locations around the Province 9am to 8pm		
Transfer certificates available for a candidate, scrutineer or elector physically unable to vote at their assigned polling station		
Advance poll ends 6pm	Day 3	May 27
Community polls end 6pm		
Returning Office out-of-district voting ends 6pm		
Write-in ballot out-of-district applications (by agent or write-in ballot coordinator team) ends at 6pm		
Transfer Certificates available to election officers appointed after the last day of the advance poll	Day 2	May 28
Write-in ballot in-district applications (by agent or write-in ballot coordinator team) end at 6pm	Day 1	May 29
Election Day 8am to 8pm	Day 0	May 30
Write-in ballot in-district applications (by agent or write-in ballot coordinator team) end at 3pm		
All write-in ballots must be returned to the Returning Office by 8pm		
Official Addition 10am	Day +2	June 1
Return of the Writ**	Day +10	June 9

\* The election follows a 30-day calendar counting down to Day 0, election day

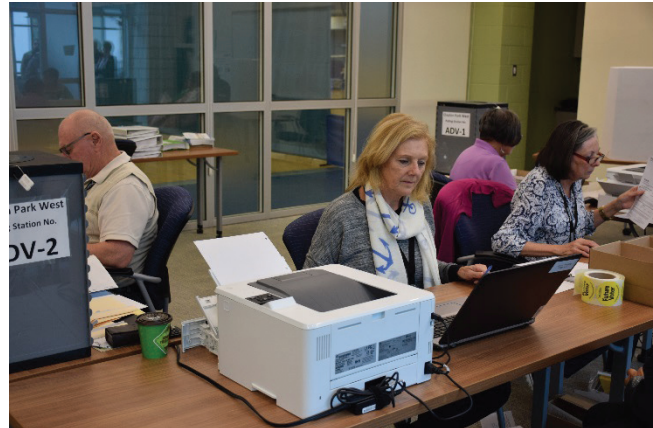
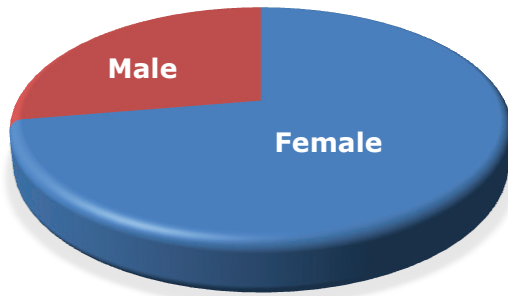
\*\* Reflects the date for the return of the writ where no judicial recounts are required

## APPENDIX C

# Election Officer Demographics

More than 6,700 Nova Scotians were hired to work in the array of staffing positions that are required during the election period. Election work appears to be more largely occupied by female workers; Of 6,739 election officers, 7 of every 10 was female.

**Figure 3: Election Officers by Gender**

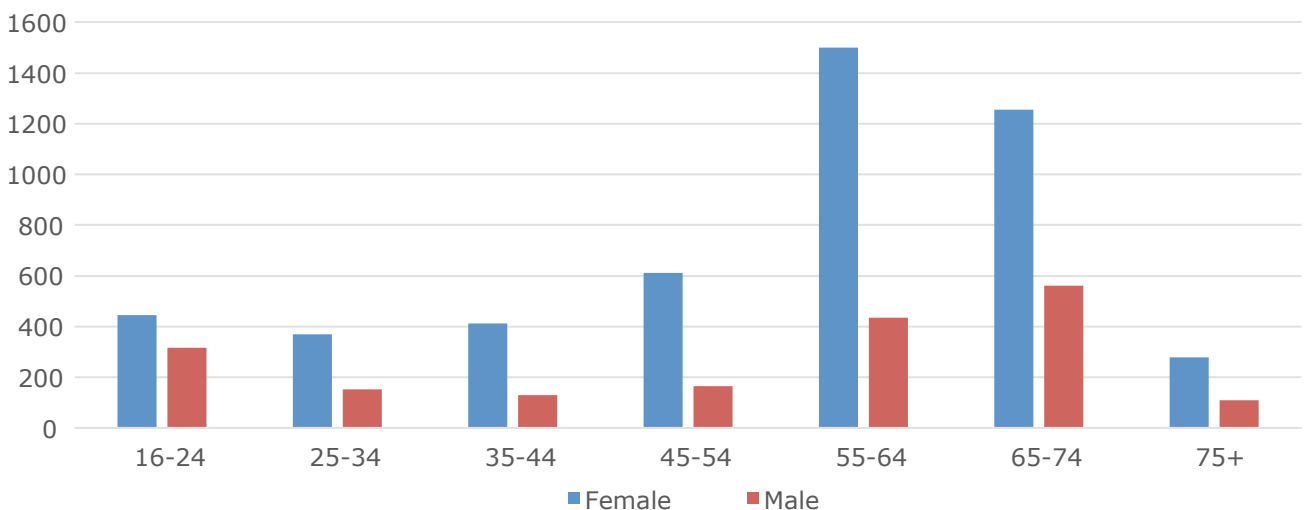


Females outnumbered males in the majority of the 25 election officer roles during this election. Male election officers outnumbered their female colleagues in only three of the 25 roles (Returning Officer, Constable and Ballot Box Courier). A full list of the election officer roles and gender representation in each is provided in Appendix G.

People nearing retirement or in retirement continue to make up the majority of election workers. People 55 years and older were 61% (4,140) of all election officers hired in 2017. There were more females than males hired in all seven age groups (see Figure 2).

Though it is not new that the demographic distribution of the election workforce is skewed older, this may in part be due to the availability of retired individuals to be hired on short notice and the fact that many of them are comfortable with the work having worked multiple municipal, provincial and federal elections in the past.

**Table 15: Election Officers by Age Group & Gender**





**Table 16: Elections Officers by Age Group & Gender**

Age Group	Female	Male	Total
16-24	444	316	760
25-34	370	151	521
35-44	412	130	542
45-54	611	165	776
55-64	1501	435	1936
65-74	1256	561	1817
75+	279	108	387
	<b>4873</b>	<b>1866</b>	<b>6739</b>

**Table 17: Elections Officers Positions by Age Group & Gender**

Election Officers Positions 2017	Total	Female	Male
Assistant Returning Officer	53	44	9
Assistant Write-In Ballot Coordinator	71	54	17
Ballot Box Courier	33	11	22
Ballot Counter	272	182	90
Clerical	100	71	29
Constable	145	42	103
Deputy Presiding Officer at Poll Locations	79	53	26
Deputy Presiding Officer at Returning Office	82	63	19
Deputy Returning Officer	2005	1487	518
Enumerator	179	117	62
Information Officer	300	192	108
Out-of-district Ballot Supervisor	3	2	1
Out-of-district DPO	33	22	11
Out-of-district PO	26	21	5
Poll Clerk	2072	1624	448
Poll Supervisor	406	270	136
Presiding Officer at Poll Locations	74	54	20
Presiding Officer at Returning Office	69	54	15
Returning Officer	53 <sup>1</sup>	22	31
Returning Officer at Large	6	4	2
Revision Assistant	55	44	11
Standby	385	281	104
Witness	167	106	61
Write-In Ballot Coordinator	72	51	21
Youth Worker	7	7	
Total Officers	6743 <sup>2</sup>	4876	1867
Number of Officers at poll locations	6429	4647	1782
Number of CORE STAFF (RO, ARO, RA, DPO, PO)	314	229	85

1 A second Returning Officer was appointed for a period of time in two of the electoral districts, when the primary returning officer was not available,.

2 Total shows 6,743 instead of 6,739 due to some individuals moving from one position to another during the election period.

## APPENDIX D

# EMS – Election Management System

ENS has developed a modern election management system (EMS) that uses web based tools to provide key electoral support to returning offices and early voting locations. It was first offered to returning officers during the 2013 general election to use its various tools to manage polling locations and election worker records, register and revise electors' information, generate Voter Information Cards (VICs), print the list of electors for use at the polls and by candidates, mark electors who have voted, and publish election night results as they were reported by election officers at the polls.

In 2013, EMS was used to support electors with new voting opportunities and to vote outside their electoral district, but only at any returning office in the province or at university and college campuses, while maintaining the integrity of the vote. EMS supported access to the complete NS List of Electors so that an elector could be checked against the list and marked as voted regardless of where they voted. In 2017, EMS extended the electors ability to vote outside their electoral district at any early voting opportunity location (returning office, advance poll, community poll).

EMS also enabled the printing of the ballot on demand. After nominations closed, the election worker was able to provide the elector with a ballot with a list of candidates for the elector's home electoral district regardless of where they were casting their vote, and could mark them as voted (struck off the list of electors) in real time.

Due to deploying technology at the early voting poll locations and lack of a fixed election date all elections workers responsible for administering those polls could only be recruited and hired after the writ was dropped. These election officials were trained at the ENS offices in Halifax, during the election period, resulting in higher cost and overhead during the writ period, which would not be required if election date was known in advance.



## **APPENDIX E**

# **First Nations Elector Outreach Strategy Report**

### **Background**

The goal of this strategy is to build a relationship with Nova Scotia's First Nations people and to have a plan in place to ensure their elector needs are understood and met leading to higher voter participation.

When this strategy was being developed a number of conversations and meetings took place with First Nations leaders including Senator Dan Christmas and AFN Regional Chief Morley Googoo. Both endorsed the strategy and Chief Googoo co-signed the letter to the Chiefs with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Richard Temporale.

Executive Directors, Douglas Brown of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians and Dr. Donald M Julien were copied on the letters and kept informed on the progress of the Strategy from time to time. The CEO and/or the Returning Officer at Large (ROAL) Joann Shanahan, made presentations to 8 of the 13 First Nations Chiefs before the writ was issued on April 30th, 2017.

Each of the 13 Chiefs of the First Nations Communities in Nova Scotia received the personal letter from Richard Temporale and Chief Googoo outlining the importance of the strategy to the First Nations communities of Nova Scotia and asking for their support of the initiative. A copy of the First Nations Elector Outreach Strategy, and the Job Opportunity for a Community Relations Officer (CRO) for each band were appended to their letter. Copies of these documents can be found in Appendix A.

### **Community Relations Officers**

A key element of the Strategy was the hiring of CROs for each of the 13 First Nations bands. The CRO would communicate with their community and provide information on when, where, and ways to register and vote, making voting as accessible as possible. The CRO would work with the Band Council and Management and act as a liaison between their Band and Election Nova Scotia. They would also hire workers from the community to work in any advance and election day polls located on Reserve. The CRO would also work as the Supervisor for the polls located on Reserve.

Elections Nova Scotia hired an impressive slate of Community Relations Officers that included Membership Clerks, Electoral Officers, Aboriginal Youth Leaders, former band councilor and a former Chief Mary Louise Bernard, who was a winner of Aboriginal Woman of Distinction Award.

To assist the CRO in their duties a Community Relations Manual was developed along with a tool kit to assist them with their duties within their communities.

The first assignment for each CRO was to develop a Community Profile for their Band, identifying key contacts, potential polling locations, existing and new housing developments, and the various options available for communicating with members of the community and band council/executive.

Voter registration drives were organized by CRO in their communities on an as needed basis to allow those eligible members not currently on the List of Electors to register prior to election day.

### Polls within First Nations Communities

The decision to locate one or more polls within a Reserve community was based on the number of eligible electors' resident there. The CEO set the minimum threshold for an on-Reserve poll at 100 eligible electors.

Each CRO was asked to identify potential sites for polling locations within Reserve communities and to complete accessibility assessment forms for each to ensure they met the minimum criteria to be used as a polling location. In instances where the local returning officer felt the community met the minimum elector threshold for an election day poll, the CRO sought out potential poll workers from within the community and assisted the returning officer in selecting and training them. As well, following the Elections Canada model, for every poll allocated the CRO was asked to secure a Youth representative and an Elder who spoke Mi'kmaq to make members feel comfortable and to answer any questions they may have about the voting process.

If a community did not meet the minimum requirements for an on-Reserve poll, it was the CROs responsibility to alert the community members of where they were to vote off reserve and to work there themselves on election day to make the members feel comfortable.

## Analysis

In ten of the 13 Bands, there were a total of one advance poll and 21 election day polls located within First Nations Reserve communities. A total of 75 election workers were hired from within these communities to work as either a Poll Clerk, a Deputy Returning Officer, a Youth representative and an Elder.

**Table 18: Poll Locations By Band**

Band	Advance Poll	Election Day Poll
Annapolis Valley		1
Eskasoni	1	4
Membertou		7
Millbrook		1
Paqtnkek		1
Pictou Landing		1
Potlotek		2
Sipekne'katik		2
Wagmatcook		1
We'koqma'q		1
Total	1	21



## Looking to the Future

### Personal Contact

*"We are a face to face people"*– Natashia Kennedy, Councillor, Annapolis Valley

ENS head office and field staff experience suggests that Chiefs and band council members are far more likely to return calls or emails once there has been a face to face. ENS staff including the CEO and the ROAL were asked by Douglas Brown, Executive Director of UNSI, to do a presentation to the 7 chiefs at a Union meeting in Millbrook. ENS also did a presentation for the Annapolis Valley Reserve and the Acadia Band Council.

**In future, as much face to face and personal contact as possible is recommended to foster the long-term trust relationship with First Nations Communities outlined in the Strategy.**

### Registration Drives

As part of the Strategy, up to two registration drives were to take place in each community during the writ period. Registration drive times, places and methods of advertising or communicating were to be approved by the local returning officer and the ROAL in advance. Overall, the drives could not be considered effective. In some cases, no one showed up, in others those who did show up were willing to register but would not consent to have their ID photographed. This was deemed to be a requirement of the process because neither an enumeration team nor a revision assistant was present to register electors. In other cases, the work was improperly done and could not be accepted as valid registrations. Given the disappointing results from the first round of registration drives, the second round was abandoned.

**In future, the requirement for taking photographs of identification during this process should be eliminated if drives of this nature are to be considered.**

### Finance

It would be advisable to have CROs and local returning officers work with the election finance department in advance when drafting a budget for each CROs work supporting their band communities. For example, the distance from some Reserves to the local returning office was over 2 hours. This was not anticipated in the strategy. As well, considerable time is required in advance dealing with the details of finance including sending out necessary tax forms and answering questions regarding expenses and payments. All of which would be best dealt with direct discussions with head office finance staff.

**In future, the finance department should be involved with the CRO program from the outset, as they would be when ENS is hiring any returning office's core staff.**

### Communications

Overall, the communication between the ROAL responsible for the project, the local returning officers and the CROs went well. In future, all correspondence between the ROAL, the CRO and the local returning officer should be cc'd to the assistant returning officer who is responsible for tracking the hours worked for all local election workers. In a number of cases, the assistant returning officers were not aware that the CRO were to be paid the CRO rate for training and on election day. This led to pay issues that needed to be corrected.

More detailed communications plans must be developed in advance of the issuance of the writ. As an example, only 6 of the 13 CROs participated in the first conference call despite the ROAL's request that anyone who could not attend contact her directly in advance. There should be a minimum of one conference call per week during the writ period with mandatory participation of all CROs. Detailed emails should be sent to all the CRO after each conference call. Emails and direct calls from the ROAL and the CROs should continue to be the primary source of communication throughout the duration of the project including during a writ period.

In future, detailed communications plans must be developed in advance of the issuance of the writ and participation of CROs in regular conference calls be mandatory.

### Training

CROs should be hired well in advance of the anticipated writ period. In that way, face to face training specific to their job would be in advance would be beneficial. All CRO were given DRO, PC, and SDRO training but questions arose early on that suggested there was a lack of general understanding of the voting process. The guide book for the CROs did cover all that was needed but because they were to study the contents on their own, in some cases they were not read and understood completely.

In future, CROs should be hired well in advance of the issuance of the writ and training should include face to face classroom style training.

If possible, meetings and training of the CROs should take place at either the CMM offices in Truro or the UNSI offices in Membertou.

With respect to general meetings with CROs, invitations could be extended to both Executive Directors, who have offices in these facilities and to the Chiefs and Band Councillors who may wish to participate. The sessions would provide an opportunity to receive suggestions and build relationships.

### ROAL Position

The recent experienced proved positive relationships can be built among the First Nations communities and ENS. There were some very successful experiences and some very enthusiast CROs. After the election, several CROs contacted the ROAL responsible for the project and thanked her for the experience.

Establishing good working relationships will take time and the more face to face time ENS has within the communities, the better. As well, the current ROAL responsible for the project is of the opinion that appointing a First Nations person as the ROAL for this project might lead to more success. While the current ROAL was welcomed into the communities she believes more doors could have been opened and more efforts may have been made if a First Nations person was doing the asking.

In future, consideration should be given appointing a First Nations person to the position of ROAL in charge of this project.

Consideration should also be given to hiring two coordinators to assist in the management of the project, one for Cape Breton where there are 6 Reserves and 2 of the largest in the province, and another on the Mainland.



## A Brief Discussion of Results by Electoral District

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### Acadia

Returning Officer Gail Van Buskirk  
Yarmouth  
CRO Sarah Jermey

Acadia was one of the communities that did not have an election day poll on Reserve. Arrangements were made to have the CRO, Ms. Jermey work at the poll near to her community. Ms. Jermey was a very enthusiastic CRO and was grateful for the opportunity and learning experience. She completed a university level project based on this strategy. RO Van Buskirk was pleased with Ms. Jermey and her work on the Community Profiles and efforts during the Registration Drive held on the Reserve.

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### Annapolis Valley

Returning Officer Paul Dennison  
Kings South  
CRO Keshia Toney

#### Election Day Poll (1 split poll)

Annapolis Valley did not have enough eligible electors to meet the CEO's minimum criteria to support an election day poll within the community. Chief Toney was very supportive of the strategy and arranged for the CRO to do a presentation to council. The CRO Keshia Toney was very enthusiastic and hand delivered Registration Notices to members of her community. Band Council was also appreciative that RO Dennison agreed to have an election day poll split within Kings South to accommodate Reserve electors where 29 members exercised their right to vote.

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### Bear River

Returning Officer Nora Saulnier  
Clare-Digby  
CRO Megan Longmire

The number of eligible electors in Bear River were not sufficient to meet the CEO's minimum criteria to support an election day poll within the community. The CRO, Ms. Longmire completed a Community Profile but resigned shortly after the writ was issued to pursue an opportunity that offered her full-time employment. As a consequence, very little more than a profile was accomplished in Bear River.

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### Eskasoni

Returning Officer Phil MacRae  
Victoria-The Lakes  
CRO Nadine Bernard

#### Advance Poll (1)

Eskasoni was the only First Nations community to have an advance poll on Reserve for the week before election day. The CRO, Ms. Bernard was instrumental in securing a voting location for an advance poll on Reserve in the eleventh hour along with the ROAL. Due to a number of staffing issues before the first day of advance voting, the poll did not get off to a smooth start. The day before the advance poll was to open, the CRO and

Deputy Presiding Officer missed a scheduled appointment at the advance poll location with RO MacRae to set-up the computers and to do a dry run. Not all the trained staff showed up the first morning of the advance poll and consequently, the poll opened late at 9:50am. The poll ran smoothly for the rest of the week and 318 voters chose to vote during the seven days of advanced voting.

#### **Election Day Polls (4)**

All four polls ran smoothly on election day. The ROAL visited the polls at 7:00pm and helped the four DRO's close their polls and tally the votes. Results were posted with the returning office by 9:10pm, a huge improvement from the last election when the results were not called in until after 1:00am. In total 676 of 2,128 electors voted representing 32% of the eligible electors. While this percentage is low in comparison to the 59% turn out for the district as a whole, 11 of 34 election day polls had turn outs of less than 40%.

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#### **Glooscap**

Returning Officer Garth Hazel  
Hants West  
CRO Chris McNutt

Glooscap did not have the numbers to support a poll and arrangements were made for Chris to work a nearby poll. CRO Chris McNutt completed the community profile and identified and distributed election materials to the Community Hall and Health Center. CRO Chris McNutt met with the Chief and Councillors and attended a monthly meeting of the Seniors Group to explain the voting opportunities and the First Nations Strategy.

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#### **Membertou**

Returning Officer Sharon MacIntyre  
Sydney-Whitney Pier  
CRO Chris La Porte

#### **Election Day Polls (7)**

RO MacIntyre was very pleased with the efforts of Mr. La Porte, who has been serving the election clerk for the Membertou Reserve for a number of years. He had all the workers picked for the seven polls at Membertou by the end of the first week of the election. Mr. La Porte chose not to have a registration drive because as election clerk, he knew the members of the community very well. He chose to reach out to anyone who was not already on the list of electors through social media. In total 766 (32%) of 2,415 eligible electors chose to vote on election day compared to 996 (32%) in 2013. The ROAL travelled to Membertou personally on election day to observe the poll and poll workers processing voters and reported that everything ran smoothly.

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#### **Paq'tnkek**

Returning Officer Allan Armsworthy  
Antigonish  
CRO Paula Paul

#### **Election Day Poll (1)**

RO Armsworthy made arrangements for the lease for the election day poll at the Paq'tnkek Health Centre. He supplied Ms. Paul with the list of names of community members who worked the poll from the last election for her to contact. Ms. Paul worked

diligently to ensure the list of electors from her community was up to date. There 208 eligible electors compared to 193 in 2013. A total of 85 (42%) voted on election day a drop of 5 from 2013. Ms. Paul was the supervisor for the poll on election day. RO Armsworthy was pleased that the poll ran smoothly under her supervision.

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### **Pictou Landing**

Returning Officer Fred Jeffery  
Pictou East  
CRO Vanessa Nicholas

#### **Election Day Poll (1)**

RO Jeffery was a great supporter of the strategy and was extremely pleased with CRO Ms. Nicholas' performance throughout the election. She made every effort to reach out to her community and was the supervisor for the poll on election day where 272 of 564 eligible electors (48%) voted compared to 344 (56%) in 2013.

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### **Potlotek**

Returning Officer Dianne Rutherford  
Cape Breton-Richmond  
CRO Tracey George

#### **Election Day Poll (1)**

RO Rutherford was very pleased with CRO Ms. George and her performance. She felt she lightened her work load significantly. RO Rutherford described her team as very pro-active with respect to the Strategy. Their polling locations was one of the best she had. The election day materials were returned early and in very good. In total 94 of 294 (32%) eligible electors voted compared to 101 in 2013. RO Rutherford has worked in Inuit Communities in the past, she feels that it will take time to develop a good working relationship and constancy is important. RO Rutherford felt that Ms. George

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### **Sipekne'Katik**

Returning Officer Evelyn Jones  
Hants East  
CRO Allan Knockwood

#### **Election Day Polls (2)**

There were two election day polls held for Sipekne'Katik voters in Hants East compared to one in 2013. In total 176 (23%) of 779 eligible electors voted compared to 240 (34%) of 698 eligible electors in 2013. CRO Knockwood cancelled a planned registration drive because of a family death. RO Jones was pleased with the CRO's work on election day.

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### **Wagmatcook**

Returning Officer Phil MacRae  
Victoria-The Lakes  
CRO Mary Louise Bernard

#### **Election Day Poll (1)**

This was the second Band Community in RO MacRae's district. In total 102 (32%) of 324 eligible electors voted compared to 177 (51%) in 2013. While the number of voters were down in 2017, RO MacRae considered this project to be very successful. CRO Ms. Bernard, a former Chief of this Community for 8 years, sent in over a dozen names of elders to the Returning Office so a Write-In-Ballot team could make appointment to go to their homes to assist them with voting. As Supervisor for the poll on election day, Ms. Bernard ran the poll smoothly and election day materials were returned to the returning office on time and in good order.

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### **We'koqma'q**

Returning Officer Thom Oomen  
Inverness  
CRO Sue Evans

#### **Election Day Poll (1)**

CRO Evans, who has worked at the Band Office for 26 years in different capacities and is currently its' Membership Clerk and knows her community and people well. RO Oomen and Chief Rod Googoo were very impressed with CRO Evans efforts throughout the writ period to register electors and promote their participation in the electoral process. In total 132 (27%) of 483 voters cast their vote on election day compared to 185 (43%) in 2013. As Supervisor for the poll on election day, Ms. Evans ran the poll smoothly and election day materials were returned to the returning office on time and in good order.

# APPENDIX F

## Newspaper Ads

Following are samples of newspaper ads for the notice of election and consolidated notice of grant of poll.

### Notice of Nova Scotia General Election



On **Tuesday, May 30, 2017** a provincial general election will be held to elect a member in each of the 51 electoral districts to serve in the House of Assembly. The following days are pursuant to the *Elections Act*.

#### ELECTION DAY

**Tuesday May 30th 8am to 8pm**

On election day, you must vote at your assigned voting location.

#### ADVANCE POLL - May 20th to May 27th

**Saturday to Saturday 9am to 6pm**

**Thursday and Friday 9am to 8pm**

**Closed Sunday**

You can vote at any early voting poll location in Nova Scotia.

#### RETURNING OFFICE - before May 30th

**Monday to Saturday 9am to 6pm**

**Thursday, May 25th 9am to 8pm**

**Friday, May 26th 9am to 8pm**

**Closed Sunday**

Vote at any Returning Office in Nova Scotia before election day.

#### WRITE-IN BALLOT APPLICATIONS

**By Mail Deadline:**

**Saturday May 20th 6pm**

**In Person and by agent: (out of district)**

**Saturday May 27th 6pm**

**In Person and by agent: (in district)**

**Tuesday May 30th 3pm**

Write-in ballots must be received by 8pm on election day at your Returning Office.

#### NOMINATIONS CLOSE

**Wednesday May 10th 2pm**

#### TO VOTE you must be an eligible elector:

- 18 years of age or older on May 30th, born on or before May 30, 1999
- A Canadian citizen
- Lived in Nova Scotia since October 30th, 2016

#### For information contact Elections Nova Scotia

800-565-1504 or TTY 866-774-7074

electionsnovascotia.ca

**Richard Temporale**  
Chief Electoral Officer



**Nova Scotia  
40th General Election**



### Consolidated Notice of Grant of Poll

The 40th provincial general election will be held on **Tuesday May 30, 2017**, to elect a member to serve in the House of Assembly for each of the 51 electoral districts.

The **full list of candidates**, their political party, and returning office contact information for each electoral district is found at [www.electionsnovascotia.ca](http://www.electionsnovascotia.ca) by clicking on "Where and When Can I Vote?", or by phoning Elections Nova Scotia at 1-800-565-1504 or TTY 1-866-774-7074.

**If you are on the list of electors**, watch the mail for a yellow envelope containing your **Voter Information Card (VIC)**. Your VIC and the "Where and When Can I Vote?" page includes the location of your election day poll, the nearest early voting opportunities and your local returning office.

**If you are unable to attend a poll**, a write-in ballot team can visit you at home by appointment and help you vote.

**To vote you must be** an eligible elector; a Canadian citizen, 18 years or older on election day and lived in Nova Scotia since October 30th, 2016.

**Election Day** Tuesday May 30th

**Advance Poll** Saturday May 20th to Saturday May 27th

**Returning Office** Open Monday to Saturday

#### WRITE-IN-BALLOT APPLICATIONS

**By Mail Deadline** Saturday May 20th

**In Person and by Agent**

out of district Saturday May 27th

in district Tuesday May 30th

#### For information contact Elections Nova Scotia

800-565-1504 or TTY 866-774-7074

electionsnovascotia.ca

**Richard Temporale**  
Chief Electoral Officer



## APPENDIX G

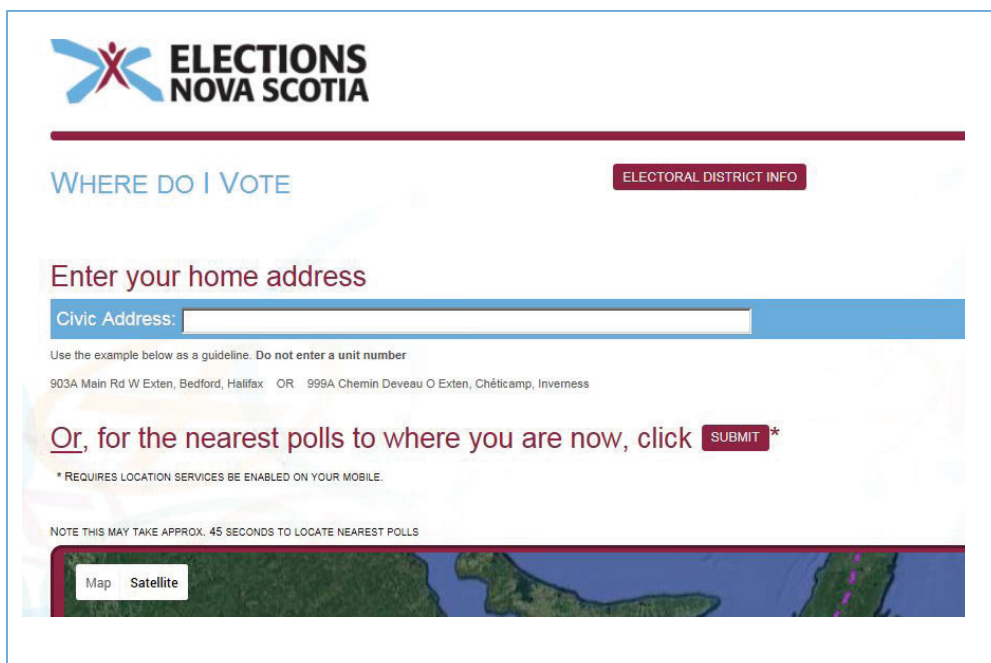
# ENS Website Analysis

### Electionsnovascotia.ca website

On the website, daily postings covered a wide range of election topics from how to become a candidate, to the rules about election signage and third-party advertising, to introductions to the voter information card and the dozen different ways to vote. While elector interaction with the website is typically low outside of election periods, engagement during the general election soared with more than 137,000 unique visits and over 360,000 page-views based on Google Analytics data.

### Interactive Web Modules

Through the main ENS website, an interactive module helped electors search electoral information, find where they can vote on election day and the closest poll locations they can vote at in advance, a map for directions, voting hours and a list of candidates in each electoral district.



The screenshot shows the 'ELECTIONS NOVA SCOTIA' logo at the top. Below it is a section titled 'WHERE DO I VOTE' with a button labeled 'ELECTORAL DISTRICT INFO'. The main heading is 'Enter your home address'. There is a text input field for 'Civic Address:' with a placeholder text: 'Use the example below as a guideline. Do not enter a unit number'. Below the input field is an example address: '903A Main Rd W Exten, Bedford, Halifax OR 999A Chemin Deveau O Exten, Chéticamp, Inverness'. There is a 'SUBMIT' button with an asterisk. Below the button is a note: '\* REQUIRES LOCATION SERVICES BE ENABLED ON YOUR MOBILE.' At the bottom, there is a note: 'NOTE THIS MAY TAKE APPROX. 45 SECONDS TO LOCATE NEAREST POLLS' and a map interface with 'Map' and 'Satellite' buttons.

A similar service could be reached from smartphones guiding the elector to early voting opportunities closest to their current location.

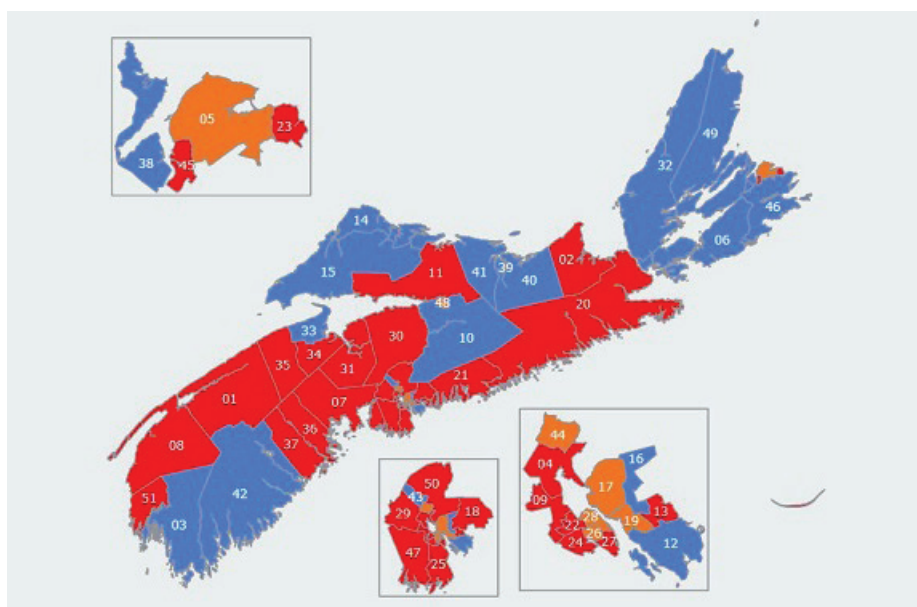
The election night results interactive module was accessed most often through a mobile device, with 56% of all visits to the module from a smartphone, 32% from a desktop and 12% from a tablet device.



Similarly, the daily website topics were tweeted and posted in abbreviated form. The @electionsns Twitter account tweeted as many as 19 times daily during the election period, and this garnered 193,600 impressions including over 28,000 on election day. Facebook engagement was lower than Twitter with posts mustering 99,500 impressions including more than 14,000 on election day.

## Election Night Results

When the election day polls closed at 8 pm, the election management system was used to record the vote count. The staff at each returning office received calls from each voting location in their district and entered the votes received for each of the candidates and the number of rejected ballots for each polling division. Immediately, the totaled results were displayed in each returning office and, under ENS head office overview, were directly published to the election night results page on the ENS website. The data was simultaneously provided to the media consortium to broadcast to members of the consortium.



Election night results were accessed by thousands of Nova Scotians who witnessed the election outcomes in real time, by electoral district and as a provincial total. Once the vote count was done for all districts, the website published the completed preliminary poll by poll results based on the official list, and it included the names and vote count for all candidates in each district. The official results were published on the website following Official Addition. Official Addition is the legislated process held two days after election day where, under possible observation from candidates or their scrutineers, the results of each poll are verified.

# APPENDIX H

## Voter Information Card Package

 **ELECTIONS  
NOVA SCOTIA**  
Halifax Needham  
123 Barrington St  
Halifax NS B3H 1E4

**Election Day is**  
Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>

**Not your name?  
Eligible to vote?  
You can vote.**

**Call to register or  
to make corrections:  
1-800-123-4567**

**You are registered to vote if you have  
received a VIC in your name.**

**To learn more about voting without a VIC,  
please read the details below.**

**8** individual

### Voter Information Cards (VIC)

People listed in this package are included on the  
Province's list of electors at this address.

**Bring your VIC and ID  
for faster service.**

**On Election Day, you must vote at your assigned election day poll location.  
Or, you can vote before election day at any returning office,  
advance poll or community poll in the province.**

Your VIC shows your nearest voting locations. For other locations in the province, visit [electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca)  
and look for the "Where Do I Vote?" link, or call Elections Nova Scotia at 1-800-565-1504

#### To vote, you must be:

- a Canadian citizen
- at least 18 years old on Election Day, May 30<sup>th</sup> (born on or before May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1999)
- have lived in Nova Scotia since October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

#### You Can Vote without a VIC or ID

You can vote without a Voter Information Card although bringing your VIC and ID will save you time.

If you're not on the list of electors you can be added when you vote.

#### Acceptable ID

You will be asked for ID with your name and current civic address – where you physically live.

#### No ID?

You can still vote without ID by taking and signing a declaration of eligibility.

# Election Day is Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>

## Bring your VIC and ID for faster service



### ELECTION DAY

Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>

8am to 8pm

On election day you must vote at your assigned voting location.

### YOU CAN VOTE AT ANY EARLY VOTING POLL IN NOVA SCOTIA

See your VIC for your nearest early voting locations.

See our website or call for other early voting opportunities.



### VOTE AT ANY ADVANCE POLL

Saturday May 20<sup>th</sup> to Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup>, 9am to 6pm OR

until 8pm Thursday May 25<sup>th</sup> and Friday May 26<sup>th</sup>.

Closed Sunday.



### VOTE AT ANY COMMUNITY POLL

See your VIC for the dates and times of your nearest community poll.



### VOTE AT ANY RETURNING OFFICE

Monday to Saturday, 9am to 6pm OR

until 8pm, Thursday May 25<sup>th</sup> and Friday May 26<sup>th</sup>.

Closed Sunday.

YOU CAN VOTE AT ANY RETURNING OFFICE IN NOVA SCOTIA BEFORE ELECTION DAY.

## If you are unable to attend a poll, here are other ways you can vote:

1. Make an appointment through your local returning office for a write-in ballot team to visit you at home and help you vote, **OR**
2. Ask someone who is at least 18 years old, such as a neighbour, family member, caregiver or friend to help you apply for a write-in ballot. This person is called an agent and will bring your ballot kit home for you, **OR**
3. You can download the write-in ballot application from the Elections Nova Scotia website, [electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca), or call us at 1-800-565-1504 and we'll send you one by mail or email.

## Write-In Ballot Deadlines

**Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>** – Mailed write-in ballot applications must be received by this date

**Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup>** – Applications made on your behalf **outside of your** district must be received at a Returning Office by this date

**Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 3pm** – Applications must be received at **your** Returning Office by this date and time

**Election Day, Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>, 8pm** – Completed write-in ballots must be received at Elections Nova Scotia or **your** Returning Office by this date and time



The voting location is wheelchair accessible.



The voting location is not fully wheelchair accessible.  
Call your local returning office for other choices.



For persons who are deaf or hard of hearing  
(TTY) 1-866-774-7074

For daily updates visit  
[electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca)  
Follow us on Facebook &  
Twitter @electionsns

Elections Nova Scotia

1-800-565-1504

[electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca)



87654321

**This Voter Information Card (VIC) is for:**

**JANE SAMPLE**  
APT 4  
5768 HARBOURVIEW DR

Electoral District: **Halifax Needham**

Bring your **VIC** and **ID**  
for faster service

**Poll: 28**

**ELECTION DAY**

**Tuesday May 30**

**8am-8pm**

The Reddish Building,  
5431 Doyle St, Unit 104, Halifax



**ADVANCE VOTING  
(nearest locations)**

Saturday May 20 to Saturday May 27  
Thursday May 25 and Friday May 26

9am-6pm  
9am-8pm

Closed  
Sunday

Halifax-Needham,\*  
123 Barrington St, Halifax

\* This poll open the same hours  
as your local returning office



3 km 7 min

Acadia Square Lodge North,  
2158 Gottingen St, Halifax



6 kms 14 min

Acadia Square Lodge North,  
2158 Gottingen St, Halifax



8 kms 17 min

Acadia Square Lodge North,  
2158 Gottingen St, Halifax



20 km 45 min

**COMMUNITY POLL**

Friday May 12 to Saturday May 27  
Thursday May 25 and Friday May 26

9am-6pm  
9am-8pm

Closed  
Sunday

Acadia Square Lodge North,  
2158 Gottingen St, Halifax



45 km 180 min

**YOUR LOCAL RETURNING  
OFFICE 1-800-123-4567**

Monday to Saturday  
Thursday May 25 and Friday May 26

9am-6pm  
9am-8pm

Closed  
Sunday

Halifax-Needham,  
123 Barrington St, Halifax



Bring this Voter Information Card (VIC) with you for faster service.  
You can vote without this VIC or ID by taking and signing a declaration of eligibility.

**Acceptable Identification**

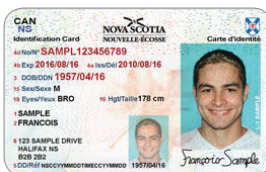
You will be asked for identification that shows your name and current civic address – where you physically live.

**ONE of these documents**

**Nova Scotia Driver's License**



**Nova Scotia Identification Card**



**Certificate of Indian Status**



**Or, TWO of these documents**

Both documents must contain your name and at least one contain your current civic address (the address where you reside and includes unit number, civic number and suffix, street name, street type, street direction, and community name)

- Voter Information Card
- Letter of Confirmation
- University/college/school Student Card, Admissions Letter or Tuition Fee Statement
- Health Card
- Canadian Passport
- Canadian Citizenship Card
- Canadian Forces ID
- Birth Certificate
- Social Insurance Card
- Old Age Security Card
- Vehicle or Residence Insurance Policy
- Vehicle Registration
- Personalized Cheque Printed by Bank
- Credit Card
- Library Card
- Hospital bracelet (worn by patient in hospital)
- Statement of Account (telephone, power bill, credit card)
- Statement of benefits (Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance)

# Nova Scotia Early Voting Locations

You can vote at any of these early voting locations

♦ indicates Returning Office

Early Voting Poll hours are 9am-6pm Monday-Saturday. Open until 8pm on May 25 and 26

See your VIC for your nearest early voting locations

## Annapolis

♦ New Scotiabank Bldg, 2-278 Granville St E, Bridgetown	May 1 - 27
Annapolis Royal Fire Hall, 5 St. Anthony St., Annapolis Royal	May 20-27
Middleton Fire Hall, 49 Church St, Middleton	May 20-27
Springfield Fire Hall, 986 Highway 10, Springfield	May 26-27

## Antigonish

♦ Antigonish Mall, Unit 140 133 Church St, Antigonish	May 1 - 27
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## Argyle-Barrington

♦ Hubbards Point Comm Ctr, 342 Chemin de la Pointe, Hubbards Point	May 1 - 27
Barrington Court House, 2447 Highway 3, Barrington West	May 20-27

## Bedford

♦ Bedford Place Mall, 1658 Bedford Hwy, Bedford	May 1 - 27
Bedford United Church Hall, 1200 Bedford Hwy, Bedford	May 20-27

## Cape Breton Centre

♦ Carmel Centre, 3208 Mt Carmel Ave, New Waterford	May 1 - 27
Dominion Volunteer Fire Department, 14 Commercial St, Dominion	May 20-27

## Cape Breton Richmond

♦ Port Hawkesbury Shopping Ctr, Suite 9, 47 Paint St, Port Hawkesbury	May 1 - 27
United Church Hall, 9917 Grenville St., St. Peter's D'Escousse Civic Improvement Ctr, 3276 Highway 320, D'Escousse	May 12-27
East Bay Fire Hall, 3542 East Bay Hwy, East Bay	May 20-27
	May 26-27

## Chester-St. Margaret's

♦ Chester Shore Mall, Unit 110, 4115 Highway 3, Chester	May 1 - 27
New Ross Fire Hall, 4929 Highway 12, New Ross	May 26-27

## Clare-Digby

♦ Saulnierville Parish Hall, 9636 Highway 1, Lower Saulnierville	May 1 - 27
Maud Lewis Provincial Building, 84 Warwick St, Digby	May 20-27

## Clayton Park West

♦ Rockingham Ridge Plaza, 30 Farnham Gate Rd, Halifax	May 1 - 27
Canada Games Centre, 26 Thomas Raddall Dr, Halifax	May 20-27

## Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley

♦ Professional Centre, 5 Mill Village Rd, Shubenacadie	May 1 - 27
Bicentennial Theatre, 12390 Highway 224, Middle Musquodoboit	May 20-27

## Colchester North

♦ 7 Atlantic Central Dr, East Mountain	May 1 - 27
Tatamagouche Fire Hall, 202 Main St, Tatamagouche	May 20-27
Debert Air Industrial Park, 439 MacElmon Rd, Debert, Debert	May 20-27

## Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage

♦ EP-CB Lions Club, 65 Hornes Rd, Eastern Passage	May 1 - 27
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## Cole Harbour-Portland Valley

♦ Cumberland Plaza, Unit A101D, 1 Cumberland Dr, Cole Harbour	May 1 - 27
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## Cumberland North

♦ Amherst Centre Mall, Unit 0235, 142 South Albion St, Amherst	May 1 - 27
Pugwash Ground Search and Rescue, 61 King St, Pugwash	May 20-27

## Cumberland South

♦ Royal Cdn Legion, 10 Elgin St, Springhill	May 1 - 27
St. George's Anglican Hall, 23 Church St, Parrsboro	May 20-27
Advocate Fire Depart, 4176 Highway 209, Advocate Harbour	May 26-27

## Dartmouth East

♦ Woodlawn Staples Plaza, Unit 110, 114 Woodlawn Rd, Dartmouth	May 1 - 27
St. Andrew's Church, 8 Locks Rd, Dartmouth	May 20-27

## Dartmouth North

♦ Suite 200, 11 Akerley Blvd, Dartmouth	May 1 - 27
Northbrook Community Centre, 2 Chapman St, Dartmouth	May 20-27
Dartmouth North Comm. Ctr, 105 Highfield Park Dr, Dartmouth	May 20-27
Dartmouth Sportsplex, 110 Wyse Rd, Dartmouth	May 20-27

## Preston-Dartmouth

♦ (Former) City Heights Church, 946 Highway 7, Westphal	May 1 - 27
East Preston Recreation Center, 24 Brooks Dr, East Preston	May 20-27

## Dartmouth South

♦ Suite 110, 250 Baker Dr, Dartmouth	May 1 - 27
NSCC Waterfront Campus, 80 Mawmi Pl, Dartmouth	May 20-27

## Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie

♦ Jost Building, 82 Main St, Guysborough	May 1 - 27
Eastern Shore Wildlife Association, 202 Pool Rd, Sheet Harbour	May 12-27
Havre Boucher Community Hall, 12401 Highway 4, Havre Boucher	May 20-27
Municipality of the District of St. Mary's, 8296 Highway 7, Sherbrooke	May 20-27
Harbourview Fire Dept, 13566 Highway 316, Isaacs Harbour North	May 26-27
Shamrock Club, 89 Queen St, Canso	May 26-27
Mulgrave Fire Dept, 385 Murray St, Mulgrave	May 26-27

## Eastern Shore

♦ Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church, 8 Park Rd, Musquodoboit Harbour	May 1 - 27
Saint Barnabas Anglican Ch, 40 East Chezzetcook Rd, Head of Chezzetcook	May 20-27

## Fairview-Clayton Park

♦ Bayers Road Shopping Ctr, Suite 165, 7071 Bayers Rd, Halifax	May 1 - 27
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## Glace Bay

♦ Senators Corner, Unit 104, 633 Main St, Glace Bay	May 1 - 27
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## Halifax Armdale

♦ Chebucto Place, 7105 Chebucto Rd, Halifax	May 1 - 27
Halifax Water Commission, 455 Cowie Hill Rd, Halifax	May 20-27

## Halifax Atlantic

♦ St. Michael's Church Hall, 14 St Michaels Ave, Halifax	May 1-30
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## Halifax Chebucto

♦ Chebucto Place, Unit 355, 7105 Chebucto Rd, Halifax	May 1 - 27
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## Halifax Citadel-Sable Island

♦ Unit 302, 5475 Spring Garden Rd, Halifax	May 1 - 27
Dalhousie Student Union Building, 6136 University Ave, Halifax	May 20-27

## Halifax Needham

♦ Cansel Wade Print Centre, 2700 Robie St, Halifax	May 1 - 27
Acadia Square Lodge North, 3450 Devonshire Ave, Halifax	May 20-27
Gordon B. Isnor Manor, 5565 Cornwallis St, Halifax	May 20-27

## Hammonds Plains-Lucasville

♦ Unit 7, 2069 Hammonds Plains Rd, Hammonds Plains	May 1 - 27
Cornerstone Wesleyan Church, 1215 Hammonds Plains Rd, Hammonds Plains	May 20-27

## Hants East

♦ Ribahi Centre, Unit 3, 485 Highway 2, Enfield	May 1 - 27
Walton Shore Fire Hall, 4281 Walton Woods Rd, Walton	May 26-27
Kennetcook Fire Hall, 6205 Highway 354, Kennetcook	May 26-27

## Hants West

♦ Windsor Curling Club, 174 Gray St, Windsor	May 1 - 27
Brooklyn Fire Hall, 995 Highway 215, Brooklyn	May 20-27
Hantsport Fire Hall, 5 Oak St, Hantsport	May 26-27

## Inverness

♦ Inverness County Centre for the Arts, 16080 Central Ave, Inverness	May 1 - 27
Le Club des Retraites de Chéticamp, 15108 Cabot Trail, Chéticamp	May 20-27
St. Peter's Parish Hall, 260 Main St, Port Hood	May 20-27
Blues Mills Fire Hall, 7548 Highway 105, Blues Mills	May 26-27

## Kings North

♦ Kentville Post Office, 495 Main St, Kentville	May 1 - 27
Centreville Hall, 1951 Highway 359, Centreville	May 20-27

## Kings South

♦ County Fair Mall, Unit 120, 9256 Commercial St, New Minas	May 1 - 27
Wolfville Lion's Hall, 36 Elm Ave, Wolfville	May 20-27

## Kings West

♦ T&S Office Supplies, 778 Main St, Kingston	May 1 - 27
Berwick Lions Hall, 225 Veterans Dr, Berwick	May 20-27

## Lunenburg

♦ Main Floor, 112 Lincoln St, Lunenburg	May 1 - 27
Rosedale Home for Special Care, 4927 Highway 10, New Germany	May 20-27

## Lunenburg West

♦ Unit 2, 821 King St, Bridgewater	May 1 - 27
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## Northside-Westmount

♦ North Sydney Mall, Unit 21, 116 King St, North Sydney	May 1 - 27
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## Pictou Centre

♦ Old Anchor Motors Bldg/Toyota, 193 Westville Rd, New Glasgow	May 1 - 27
Summer Street Industries, 72 Park St, New Glasgow	May 20-27

## Pictou East

♦ Eureka District Fire Hall, 5222 Stellarton Trafalgar Rd, Eureka	May 1 - 27
Kenzieville Community Hall, 11677 Highway 4, Kenzieville	May 26-27
Salvation Army Citadel, 1784 Main St, Westville	May 26-27

## Pictou West

♦ Pictou Co. Office, 46 Municipal Dr, Pictou	May 1 - 27
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## Queens-Shelburne

♦ Old Steel & Engine Bldg, 72 Market St, Liverpool	May 1 - 27
Osprey Arts Centre, 107 Water St, Shelburne	May 12-27
The Hub, A-9793 Highway 8, Caledonia	May 26-27

## Sackville-Beaver Bank

♦ Faith Baptist Church, 299 Stokil Dr, Lower Sackville	May 1 - 27
Vineyard Christian Fellowship Centre, 1129 Sackville Dr, Middle Sackville	May 20-27
Upper Sackville Rec Facility (Weir Field), 2476 Sackville Dr, Upper Sackville	May 26-27

## Sackville-Cobequid

♦ Knox United Church, 567 Sackville Dr, Lower Sackville	May 1 - 27
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## Sydney-Whitney Pier

♦ Moxham Centre, 380 Kings Rd, Sydney	May 1 - 27
Ukrainian Hall, 49 West St, Sydney	May 20-27

## Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg

♦ Bethel Christian Education Ctr, 2590 Hillside Rd, Marion Bridge	May 1-27
Royal Cdn Legion Br. 151 East Bay, 2317 Kings Rd, Howie Centre	May 20-27
Grand Lake Road Fire Hall, 850 Grand Lake Rd, Grand Lake Road	May 20-27

## Timberlea-Prospect

♦ Rock Place, Unit 102, 1308 St Margarets Bay Rd, Beechville	May 1 - 27
Prospect Road Community Centre, 2141 Prospect Rd, Hatchet Lake	May 20-27
Estabrooks Community Hall, 4408 St Margarets Bay Rd, Lewis Lake	May 20-27

## Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River

♦ Truro Centre, 10 Esplanade, Truro	May 1 - 27
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## Victoria The Lakes

♦ Royal Cdn Legion, 37 Ross St, Baddeck	May 1 - 27
Parish Centre, 244 New Haven Rd, Neils Harbour	May 20-27
Crane Cove Seafoods, 4115 Shore Rd, Eskasoni 3	May 20-27

## Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank

♦ Fall River Baptist Church, 36 Lockview Rd, Fall River	May 1 - 27
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## Yarmouth

♦ Lovitt Plaza, Suite 109, 368 Main St, Yarmouth	May 1 - 27
Carleton & District Fire Hall, 20 Highway 203, Carleton	May 26-27



## Your Annapolis electoral candidates are:

Zac CROCKATT	GPNS	Atlantic Party Association of Nova Scotia
Ginny HURLOCK	PC	Green Party of Nova Scotia
Stephen MCNEIL	NSLP	Nova Scotia Liberal Party
Kent ROBINSON	Atlantic	Nova Scotia New Democratic Party
Colin SPROUL	NSNDP	Progressive Conservative Association Of Nova Scotia
	IND	Independent

## Candidates for all Electoral Districts in Nova Scotia are listed below:

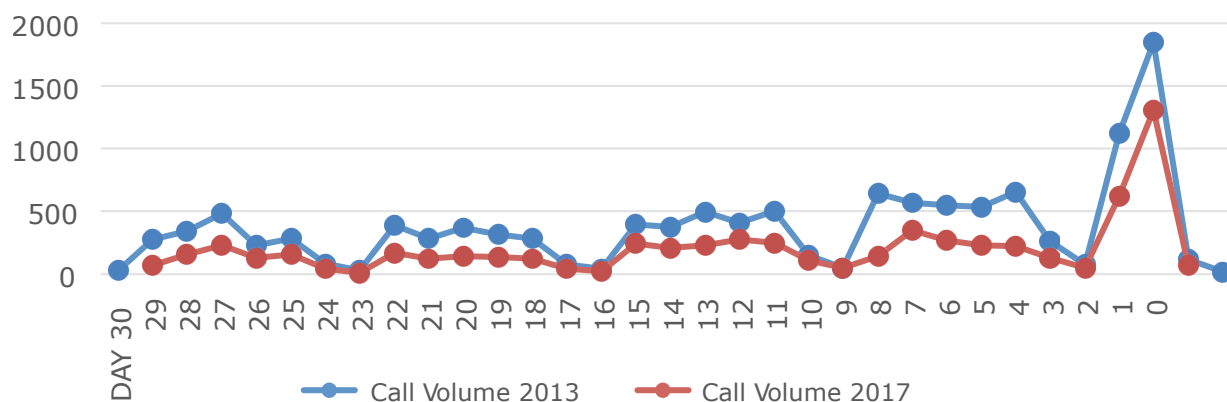
<b>Annapolis</b>		<b>Cumberland South</b>		<b>Halifax Needham</b>		<b>Queens-Shelburne</b>	
Zac CROCKATT	GPNS	Jamie BAILLIE	PC	Melinda DAYE	NSLP	John DAVIS	NSNDP
Ginny HURLOCK	PC	Larry DUCHESNE	NSNDP	Matthew DONAHOE	PC	Kim MASLAND	PC
Stephen MCNEIL	NSLP	Kenny John JACKSON	NSLP	Andrew JAMIESON	GPNS	Kathleen MILAN	GPNS
Kent ROBINSON	Atlantic	Michael (Thor) LENGIES	Atlantic	Lisa ROBERTS	NDP	Vernon OICKLE	NSLP
Colin SPROUL	NSNDP						
<b>Antigonish</b>		<b>Dartmouth East</b>		<b>Hammonds Plains-Lucasville</b>		<b>Sackville-Beaver Bank</b>	
Randy DELOREY	NSLP	Edgar BURNS	NSLP	Jessica ALEXANDER	GPNS	Rita BILLINGTON	Atlantic
Morag MACGILLIVRAY	NSNDP	Tim HALMAN	PC	Ben JESSOME	NSLP	Stephen GOUGH	NSLP
Ray MATTIE	PC	Bill MCEWEN	NSNDP	Paul MCGUINNESS	NSNDP	Brad (BJ) JOHNS	PC
Ryan SMYTH	Atlantic	Matthew RICHEY	GPNS	Matt WHITMAN	PC	Dennis KUTCHERA	NDP
						Michael MONTGOMERY	GPNS
<b>Argyle-Barrington</b>		<b>Dartmouth North</b>		<b>Hants East</b>		<b>Sackville-Cobequid</b>	
Chris D'ENTREMONT	PC	Joanne BERNARD	NSLP	Liam CROUSE	NSNDP	John GIANNAKOS	PC
Louis D'ENTREMONT	NSLP	David F. BOYD	Atlantic	Jenn KANG	GPNS	Michel HINDLET	NSLP
Greg FOSTER	NSNDP	Tyler J. COLBOURNE	GPNS	John A MACDONALD	PC	Tanner MONTGOMERY	GPNS
		Susan LEBLANC	NDP	Margaret MILLER	NSLP	Cathy MORGAN	Atlantic
<b>Bedford</b>		Melanie L. RUSSELL	PC			Dave WILSON	NDP
Michele HANSHAW	GPNS	<b>Preston-Dartmouth</b>		<b>Hants West</b>		<b>Sydney-Whitney Pier</b>	
Kelly REGAN	NSLP	Aaron ALEXANDER	GPNS	Edward F. BOUCHER	Atlantic	Madonna DOUCETTE	NSNDP
Valerie WHITE	PC	Irvine CARVERY	PC	Torin BUZEK	GPNS	Laurie MACINTOSH	PC
Blake WRIGHT	NSNDP	Keith COLWELL	NSLP	Lalia KERR	NSNDP	Derek MOMBORQUETTE	NSLP
		Shelley FASHAN	NSNDP	Janice MUNROE DODGE	PC		
<b>Cape Breton Centre</b>				Chuck PORTER	NSLP		
Tammy MARTIN	NSNDP	<b>Dartmouth South</b>		<b>Inverness</b>		<b>Sydney River-Mira-Louisbourg</b>	
Louie PIOVESAN	PC	Vishal BHARDWAJ	NSLP	Allan MACMASTER	PC	Katherine MACDONALD	NSLP
David WILTON	NSLP	Claudia CHENDER	NSNDP	Bobby MORRIS	NSLP	Alfie MACLEOD	PC
		Jad CRNOGORAC	PC	Michelle SMITH	NSNDP	Bill MATHESON	NSNDP
<b>Cape Breton-Richmond</b>		J.A. (Jim) MURRAY	Atlantic			<b>Timberlea-Prospect</b>	
Larry KEATING	NSNDP	June TRENHOLM	GPNS	<b>Kings North</b>		Tim KOHOOT	PC
Alana PAON	PC			Ted CHAMPION	NSNDP	Matt MANSFIELD	Atlantic
Michel P. SAMSON	NSLP	<b>Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie</b>		Bryden DEADDER	Atlantic	Linda MOXSOM SKINNER	NDP
		Lloyd HINES	NSLP	Mary Lou HARLEY	GPNS	Iain RANKIN	NSLP
<b>Chester-St. Margaret's</b>		Mamey J. SIMMONS	NSNDP	John LOHR	PC	Kai TRAPPENBERG	GPNS
Julie CHAISSON	PC	Rob WOLF	PC	Geof TURNER	NSLP		
Hugh MACKAY	NSLP			<b>Kings South</b>		<b>Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River</b>	
Denise PETERSON-RAFUSE	NSNDP	<b>Eastern Shore</b>		Peter HARRISON	PC	Craig JOHNSON	NSLP
Harry WARD	GPNS	Devin ASHLEY	NSNDP	Joel HIRTLE	Atlantic	Keltie JONES	PC
		Patricia AUCHNIE	PC	Keith IRVING	NSLP	Lenore ZANN	NSNDP
<b>Clare-Digby</b>		Andy BERRY	GPNS	Sheila G. RICHARDSON	GPNS	<b>Victoria-The Lakes</b>	
Norm CORMIER	PC	Randy CARTER	IND	Stephen SCHNEIDER	NDP	Keith BAIN	PC
Harold NEIL	NSNDP	Kevin MURPHY	NSLP			Lisa BOND	NDP
Gordon WILSON	NSLP			<b>Kings West</b>		Pam EYKING	NSLP
<b>Clayton Park West</b>		<b>Fairview-Clayton Park</b>		Cheryl BURBIDGE	NSNDP	Adrianna MACKINNON	GPNS
Jonathan G DEAN	Atlantic	Patricia ARAB	NSLP	Leo GLAVINE	NSLP	Stewart (Stemer) MACLEOD	IND
Rafah DICOSTANZO	NSLP	Paul BEASANT	PC	Chris PALMER	PC	<b>Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank</b>	
Paul KIMBALL	PC	Charlene BOYCE	GPNS	Madeline TAYLOR	GPNS	Anthony EDMONDS	GPNS
Thomas TRAPPENBERG	GPNS	Joanne HUSSEY	NSNDP			Bill HORNE	NSLP
Rana ZAMAN	NSNDP			<b>Lunenburg</b>		Dan MCNAUGHTON	PC
<b>Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley</b>		<b>Glace Bay</b>		Marc BREAU	NSNDP	Trevor SANIPASS	NSNDP
Larry HARRISON	PC	Lois MACDOUGALL	NDP	Suzanne LOHNES-CROFT	NSLP		
Janet MOULTON	NSNDP	Geoff MACLELLAN	NSLP	Brian PICKINGS	PC	<b>Yarmouth</b>	
Matthew RUSHTON	NSLP	Steven James MACNEIL	Atlantic			Mitch BONNAR	PC
		John WHITE	PC	<b>Lunenburg West</b>		Zach CHURCHILL	NSLP
<b>Colchester North</b>		<b>Halifax Armdale</b>		Mark FUREY	NSLP	Jim LAYERIE	GPNS
Karen CASEY	NSLP	Lena DIAB	NSLP	Carole HIPWELL	PC	David OLIE	NSNDP
James A. FINNIE	NSNDP	Sylvia GILLARD	PC	Lisa NORMAN	NSNDP		
Rebecca TAYLOR	PC	Michael (Mike) F. MCLEOD	Atlantic	Michael D SHEPPARD	GPNS		
<b>Cole Harbour-Eastern Passage</b>		Marc-André TREMBLAY	GPNS			<b>Northside-Westmount</b>	
Barbara ADAMS	PC	David WHEELER	NDP	Ronald CROWTHER	NSNDP	John HIGGINS	NSLP
Nancy JAKEMAN	NSNDP			Eddie ORRELL	PC		
Rebecca MOSHER	GPNS	<b>Halifax Atlantic</b>		<b>Pictou Centre</b>		Jeff DAVIS	NSLP
Joyce TREEN	NSLP	Chelsey CARTER	GPNS	Pat DUNN	PC	Henderson PARIS	NSNDP
		Bruce HOLLAND	PC			<b>Pictou East</b>	
<b>Cole Harbour-Portland Valley</b>		Trish KEEPING	NSNDP	<b>Pictou West</b>		Karla MACFARLANE	PC
André CAIN	NSNDP	Brendan MAGUIRE	NSLP			Ben MACLEAN	NSLP
Tony INCE	NSLP			<b>Pictou West</b>		Shawn MCNAMARA	NSNDP
Chris MONT	PC	<b>Halifax Chebucto</b>				Cecile VIGNEAULT	GPNS
Melanie MULROONEY	GPNS	Gary BURRILL	NSNDP				
		John Wesley CHISHOLM	PC				
<b>Cumberland North</b>		Casey Dylan (Young) MEIJER	GPNS				
Bill ARCHER	Atlantic	Joachim STROINK	NSLP				
Earl DOW	NSNDP						
Terry FARRELL	NSLP	<b>Halifax Citadel-Sable Island</b>					
Richard PLETT	IND	Rob BATHERSON	PC				
Elizabeth SMITH-MCCROSSIN	PC	Labi KOUSOULIS	NSLP				
		Glenn WALTON	NSNDP				
		Martin WILLISON	GPNS				



# APPENDIX I

## Call Center Analytics

**Figure 4: Number of Calls Daily 2013 & 2017**



Preparation between elections includes development of quick-reference question-answer information for the call centre staff, and an escalation protocol created to ensure timely and prioritized responses.

Call centre agents were trained to answer frequently asked questions and to escalate calls to subject matter experts to answer questions for which they were not trained.

It may be an indicator of successful communications and of the use of interactive tools in place during the 2017 election that the number of calls made to the call centre during the election period was considerably lower than in the previous two provincial general elections. In 2017, there were 6,334 calls received, much lower than the 12,317 in 2013 and 11,606 in 2009. The amount of time spent on those calls was also less than the previous election, with the 12,343 minutes on call centre calls averaging two minutes each in 2017, and the 31,864 minutes in 2013 averaging just over two and a half minutes per call.

As might be expected, the peak number of calls throughout the election period were made to the call centre on election day, May 30th, 2017, with 1,309 calls, or 21% of all calls during the election period. The peak call day in 2013 was also election day, with 1,844 calls or 15% of all election period calls received.

Call centre agents used the ENS website search tool to provide poll and returning office location information based on the address of the callers. The call centre was also kept informed on caller topics that were anticipated based on issues of the day and the schedule of the election calendar (see Appendix B for key dates the election calendar).

The most frequently asked question was "Where do I vote?" with 1,459 calls. This question was followed closely by general voter process inquiries with 1,317 calls in that category. On further examination, many of the calls marked as voter process inquiries could have been included in the remaining top question categories listed below, as well numerous inquiries about poll location, the elector's electoral district identification, and about the ways to vote and eligibility to vote.

### Top Ten Public Call Centre questions

Where do I vote?	1,459
Voter process inquiries	1,317
Update voter information	425
Voter Information Card	348
Employment Opportunities	308
How do I vote?	297
Call redirected to ENS HQ	227
Wrong Number/disconnected	100
Voter ID requirements	88
Calls to/from returning officers	82

Communications staff also responded to more than 600 requests via email. The largest number of emails were media questions, followed by requests for information about the rules on election signage, about polling locations and elector eligibility.

### Communications – Election Period Emails

Media Inquiries	106
Election Advertising/Signs	103
Polling Locations and Elector Eligibly in ED	72
Website	52
Public Inquiries	41
General Complaints	36
Questions about Candidates	34
VIC, Oath, Questions and Complaints	32
Election Worker Inquiries	28
Count/recounts	23
Questions from Candidates	18
Staff & Staff Process Issues	15
Write-in Ballot Questions and Complaints	13
Accessibility Questions and Complaints	8
Youth Vote Inquiries	7
Selfie Station	6
Online voting	4



## APPENDIX J

# Media Release May 25, 2017

### Dartmouth East & Dartmouth South Clarifications

May 25, 2017

Elections Nova Scotia is seeking to correct misinformation circulating in the media and social media regarding whether and how votes for candidates in Dartmouth East and Dartmouth South will be counted.

The *Elections Act* permits a candidate to withdraw or change their nomination before close of nominations but not after.

In Dartmouth East, New Democratic Party candidate Bill McEwen, announced his intention to withdraw as a candidate after nominations closed. Mr. McEwen's name will remain on the ballot as the NDP candidate in Dartmouth East and ballots cast for him will be counted as valid ballots cast.

In Dartmouth South, the Progressive Conservative Party stated they had dropped candidate, Jad Crnogorac as a PC candidate after the close of nominations. As in the case of Mr. McEwen, her name will remain on the ballot as the PC candidate in Dartmouth South and ballots cast for her will be counted as valid ballots cast. Ms. Crnogorac announced her intention to continue as an independent candidate.

#### Media Contact

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## APPENDIX K

# Recounts in Three Electoral Districts

### Overview of the Recounts

The timeframe for conducting a recount is quite short with a requirement of a recount being held and completed within eight days of an application being filed with the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia (*Elections Act* Subsection 149(3)). Following the 40th General Election, on June 7th, 2017 the Chief Electoral Officer was notified that three recounts were to be held, two on June 9th, 2017, and one on June 12th, 2017. One notable difference between these three recounts and those held in the past is that all three recounts were held in Halifax at the Law Courts on Upper Water Street, whereas in past they have been held near the local electoral district. Elections Nova Scotia has foundational recount procedures that, as part of post event activities, are revisited following each election. With the notification of the recounts received by the CEO, a roster of available returning officers and election officials was established, and recount training conducted at Elections Nova Scotia headquarters on June 7th, 2017.

The procedures to be implemented were provided in a handbook form to all assigned Justices, Associate Chief Justice, registered political parties, and their associated candidates prior to the recounts taking place. Conference calls were held between the Justices, Associate Chief Justice, the CEO, and the ACEO to provide an opportunity for questions and procedures clarity or revision if required. These calls were held on June 6th, June 7th, and June 8th.

On June 9th, the recounts for Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie (ED 20) and Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank (ED 50) took place, and June 12th the Chester-St. Margaret's (ED 07) took place. Prior to the commencement of the recounts an overview of the recount procedures was provided to all scrutineers, and an opportunity for questions was provided. With all in attendance clear on the procedures, the recounts commenced.

The Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie (ED 20) recount had seven tables, Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank (ED 50) recount had five, and Chester-St. Margaret's (ED 07) had eight. At each table was a team of two returning officers or Elections Nova Scotia headquarters staff, one was filling the role of Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), and the other was maintaining tally. The following details the procedures employed:

1. All scrutineers at the table were provided with a tally sheet to enable them to maintain count as the recount progressed;
2. The DRO would indicate to the electoral district's returning officer that they were ready for a box of poll materials;
3. Once received, the DRO would open the materials and begin the recount by opening the Envelope Ds (valid votes cast), in the order as the candidates appeared on the ballot;
4. The DRO would remove the ballots from the Envelope D, and show those at the table that the Envelope D was empty;

5. The DRO would take one ballot at a time, call out the candidate's name voted, show the front, and back of the ballot to those at the table;
6. The tally would be recorded, and step five was repeated for all the Envelope Ds presented in the poll materials;
7. After every 25 ballots counted the DRO would have the tally keeper confirm the numbers with the scrutineers at the table, if all were in agreement the count continued. If anyone at the table didn't have the same tally the DRO would recount the ballots in increments of 10, until all tallies matched.
8. Once all Envelope Ds were counted the DRO would open the Envelope C (rejected ballots), if applicable, and show the front and back of each of those ballots at the table.

During the recount scrutineers could object to any ballot presented to them. If an objection was made the initial step was to allow the scrutineers at the table to come to consensus. If a consensus could not be reached the matter would be escalated to the designates of the political parties. If a consensus could not be reached by the party designates, the matter was escalated to the Justice for a decision.

1. With all ballots counted and agreed upon, the DRO would confirm the numbers of the Statement of Poll, and make any adjustments resulting from a vote changing.
2. The DRO would indicate that they were done, the Statement of Poll would be collected, numbers centrally captured in an Excel spreadsheet, and the Justice would sign the Statement of Poll.
3. The poll materials were collected, and returned to the secure area.

The above steps repeated until all polls were recounted and a final result rendered by the Justice.

The recount procedures implemented during these recounts considered all valid votes cast and rejected ballots, but did not consider or review any cancelled or unused ballots, as the latter from a recount perspective are not procedurally relevant to the review of votes cast.

The average time to complete the recounts was 5.5 hours, with the average time to complete a poll at 8.14 minutes.



## Members of Recount Teams

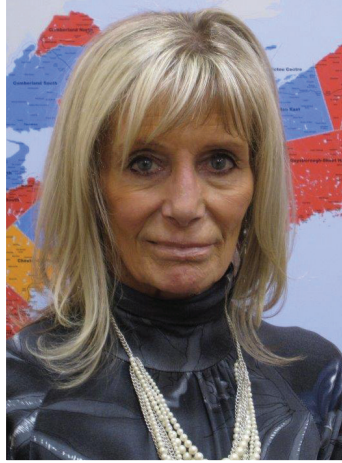
The following lists those who worked each recount:

<b>Guysborough-Eastern Shore-Tracadie</b>	<b>Waverly-Fall River-Beaver Bank</b>	<b>Chester-St. Margaret's</b>
ED 20	ED 50	ED 07
Darren Watts	Eric Cottreau	Eric Cottreau
Kevin Selig	Debbie Kavanaugh	Debbie Kavanaugh
Paul Dennison	Theresa Belliveau	Theresa Belliveau
Bruce Delo	Dermot Jardine	Dermot Jardine
Melanie Briand	Guy Wheeler	Allison Lawlor
Maureen O'Connell	Christine Blair	Bruce Delo
Sharon O'Connell	Mark Robbins	Darlene Redman
Vanessa Smith	Helen Chisholm	Paul Dennison
	Gail Hemlow	Guy Wheeler
	Darlene Hartling	Kevin Selig
	Peter Meagher	Joseph Carnevale
	Darlene Redman	Darren Watts
	Yvonne Delo	





Elections Nova Scotia was deeply saddened to lose a key team member in the early days of the election period. Sandra Little (Sandi) was Director of Operations with ENS. She worked diligently in planning this election and other electoral events since 2008. She was a loved and respected colleague.





**[electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca)**

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