



# CHAPTER 4



# ENUMERATION AND REVISION

**S**ome of the less fortunate effects of parallel referendums under federal and Quebec legislation were felt in the area of voter registration. Different residency criteria were used to determine who had the right to vote in Quebec and the rest of Canada. At the federal level, the voter's place of residence or home at the time of enumeration applied. In Quebec, however, voting was restricted to those who had resided in the province for at least six months, or had been absent from the province for less than two years.

As a result, anyone who moved from another province to Quebec less than six months before the referendum was ineligible to vote in either the federal or provincial referendum. In the end, an estimated 10 000 electors were disenfranchised in this manner. Quebec residents who had resettled in another province within two years of the referendum date, could vote in both referendums. They would be enumerated for the federal event at their current place of residence and could also take steps to ensure that they were registered on the list of voters living outside Quebec for the Quebec referendum. I had the opportunity to highlight these anomalies publicly early in September, at a symposium on the referendum and democracy held at Ahuntsic College in Montreal, which was covered by the media.

Voter registration for the federal referendum took place between October 2 and 19, with enumeration occurring from October 2 to 7. Electors incarcerated in federal and provincial correctional institutions registered from September 22 to September 25. Residents of Quebec who were incarcerated outside Quebec could not register to vote in the federal referendum. Sittings for revision were held from October 17 to October 19 in urban areas and on October 19 in rural areas.

Overall, voter registration was a success; the number of electors registered was higher than returning officers had estimated prior to the referendum period. The process went smoothly, thanks in part to the use of automated tools in preparing the voters lists and in part to increased flexibility in allocating human resources. These changes are further elaborated below. The small number of problems is especially noteworthy since returning officers and headquarters staff were dealing with new procedures brought in by the *Referendum Act* and a new automated system, all within a significantly shortened

timeframe compared to that available during an election (a referendum lasts only 36 days, whereas up to May 1993, an election could last a minimum of 50 days).

### **SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF ENUMERATORS, REVISING AGENTS AND REVISING OFFICERS**

To reinforce the principle of "equity balance", which helps ensure that the administration of electoral events is non-partisan and allows for participation but not control by any political party, the *Referendum Act* provided that the registered parties whose candidates ranked first and second in the last election could submit lists of names for the appointment of rural and urban enumerators, revising agents and revising officers. This was a departure from normal procedure at an election, which used this method of selection only for urban enumerators and revising agents.

For the first time, there was no distinction made between urban and rural polling divisions for the appointment of enumerators. While the *Referendum Act* states that two enumerators should be appointed per polling division, it allows the flexibility to use one or more than two enumerators per polling division, at the discretion of the returning officer. Returning officers could use only one enumerator in areas, for example, where safety was not an issue; or in institutions, which are often easy to enumerate. Returning officers were required to justify the appointment of fewer enumerators or an extra enumerator in each case.

The Act also gave the option of employing citizens 16 years and older as enumerators, as recommended by the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing in an effort to address

The process  
went smoothly

the problem of insufficient numbers of enumerators. In total, 67 752 enumerators were hired during the referendum.

Still, some returning officers continued to experience difficulty in finding sufficient enumerators and in finding enumerators who met the qualifications for the job. For example, returning officers complained that some enumerators failed to ask whether potential electors were Canadian citizens, despite having received training on the importance of this question. More effort is needed on the part of all concerned in compiling complete, up-to-date lists of nominees who are qualified to fulfill the duties of enumerators. This becomes especially important in the compressed timeframe of a referendum.

### **SUPERVISORY ENUMERATORS**

For the first time, legislation allowed the establishment of the position of supervisory enumerators to assist returning officers in the administration of enumeration activities. Each returning officer could, with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, appoint one supervisor for each polling division. These officials proved extremely valuable to the smooth conduct of the enumeration.

### **DOOR-TO-DOOR ENUMERATION**

At the referendum, Elections Canada enumerators wore large yellow identification badges to reassure electors of their official status, in response to concerns about electors' personal safety and the security of their homes.

Enumerators were also provided with a supply of Elections Canada leaflets containing basic information on the federal referendum, to be distributed to each home visited.

Enumerators were required to visit each home at least twice if unable to reach any qualified elector

on the first visit. In fact, in some cases, additional repeat visits were made in an attempt to find someone at home. Such flexibility is required, since it is frequently difficult to reach anyone in households where all the adults work, or when shift work and outside activities take people away from home most of the day and evening.

The enumeration experience also indicated a need for continued efforts to communicate with ethnocultural groups about the Canadian electoral process through targeted information programs and through enumerators who are able to speak languages other than French and English.

Electors staying in shelters for battered women required special arrangements for enumeration. For reasons of personal safety, they often did not want their names or addresses placed on the preliminary lists of electors, which are available by law for consultation by the public. To address this concern, returning officers offered such electors the opportunity to have their names added to the lists during the revision period, under their usual home address, and to vote at the same time in the office of the returning officer.

Returning officers were asked to contact those responsible for soup kitchens and shelters for the homeless to facilitate the task of enumerating the homeless. Following enumeration, a poster was distributed informing those using the shelters and soup kitchens of the address of the polling station.

Enumeration of university and college residences and large apartment buildings continues to represent a challenge. In some facilities, administrators and landlords did not wish to allow enumerators access. Returning officers had to intervene to ensure that enumeration could take place.

While most Indian reserves allowed both voter registration and polling to take place during the referendum, some permitted neither. Others allowed

registration but then refused to permit polling stations to be established on reserve property. Several tribal councils forwarded copies of resolutions stating they were taking a position of non-participation. Our primary concern was that electors should be able to exercise their franchise. Wherever it was necessary and feasible, I therefore authorized returning officers to prepare the lists of electors from the best information available if enumeration was not possible, and to establish off-reserve polling stations as required, to serve electors who wished to exercise their franchise.

### The Notice of Enumeration Card

As required by law, a Notice of Enumeration card was sent to those electors whose names appeared on the preliminary lists of electors. Elections Canada sought and obtained the cooperation of Canada Post in arranging timely delivery of this important notice.

Evaluation activities have brought to light the need to re-examine the format and design of the Notice of Enumeration card, to increase legibility and simplify the messages. The card was identified by 43% of the respondents of the survey that we commissioned with Gallup Inc. as the main source of information on the location and times of the polls. As such, it is vital for the card to convey clearly the information voters need to exercise their franchise.

### THE REVISION PROCESS

The revision process proved to be particularly heavy in some areas, in part because of the shortened time available for revision of the lists of electors (12 days for the referendum, compared with the usual 15 days

at an election, with less time to spare before polling day). As the deadline drew near, many revisal and returning offices had electors lined up, waiting to be added to the lists.

Returning offices reported that Elections Canada's advertising of the deadlines for revision was most effective in alerting electors to take action to have their names added to the lists of electors.

During the referendum, the enumeration period was extended, as subsection 9(1) of the *Canada Elections Act* as amended for the referendum authorizes, in 13 electoral districts (see Appendix E) in order to register electors who were missed during the regular enumeration. Because of the unforeseen heavy volumes of electors applying to have their names added to the preliminary lists of electors, extensions to the revision period were also authorized, at the request of returning officers. These extensions included 31 electoral districts, as follows: from 10 p.m.

on October 19, 1992, until noon on October 20 in 29 electoral districts, until 6 p.m. on the same date in one other electoral district, and until 2 p.m. on October 21 in one additional electoral district (see Appendix E).

In the 220 electoral districts involved in the federal referendum, the names of 13 211 757 electors (96.7% of the final list) were registered as a result of enumeration. An additional 437 378 names (3.3%) were added during the revision process, resulting in an official list of electors, prepared after the revision period for polling day, that contained 13 649 135 names. This compares to 2.2% of electors added at revision for the 1988 federal election. Of the 27 935 inmates incarcerated at that time, 11 398 (40.8%) registered to vote.

The official  
list of electors  
contained  
13 649 135 names

## **FEEDBACK FROM ELECTORS AND LEGISLATIVE CHANGE**

Elections Canada received many comments from electors, in person and by letter, both during and after the referendum. Among the 854 letters my office received from across the country were 125 letters related to enumeration and revision. The general tenor of the comments was that revision procedures were not responsive to electors' needs and have not kept pace with the times. As well, many electors in urban areas who were not included on the lists of electors incorrectly assumed that they

would be able to register on polling day. This was a problem particularly in areas where polling day registration exists for provincial or municipal elections. These and other matters became a focus of the deliberations of the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reform, and formed part of the final content of the amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* introduced as Bill C-114. Adoption of Bill C-114 in May 1993 addressed a number of the concerns held about the enumeration and revision processes. For instance, polling day registration is now permitted in urban as well as in rural areas.



# CHAPTER 5



# REACHING THE VOTERS

**C**anadians increasingly expect – indeed, are demanding – the information they need to exercise their franchise. The proclamation of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* 10 years ago continues to have a major impact not only on Elections Canada's operations but also on its voter information program. The information program was given additional impetus with the adoption of Bill C-78, which requires that the Chief Electoral Officer make the electoral process better known to the general public and in particular to those persons and groups most likely to experience difficulties in exercising their franchise.



Its careful planning and professional expertise enabled the Communications Directorate to adapt the voter information program for referendum use in record time. All the required changes were introduced, resulting in a high-profile, successful program of information on the referendum for electors, registered referendum committees, and special interest groups.

This is one of the areas where innovation was most apparent during the referendum. Building on the experience gained at past elections, the agency conducted a comprehensive information program aimed at making voting accessible to all eligible electors.

## ADVERTISING

Elections Canada developed a multi-media advertising campaign, including paid advertising and public service announcements. This was complemented by public and media relations activities, and a nation-wide toll-free public enquiries service (1-800-267-VOTE) to inform electors during the referendum.

Working closely with Cossette Communication—Marketing, we placed paid advertisements in the English and French media to tell the public about the four stages of the referendum: the launch, enumeration, revision of the voters lists, and advance polls and polling day (Figure 10). As well, a separate series of advertisements dealt with the formation of registered referendum committees and their responsibilities. Our advertising mix was calculated to reach as many electors as possible, based on the target groups identified in the communications plan, and included television, radio, and daily newspapers. We also used selected weekly newspapers to complement advertising in other media. Our advertisements appeared in at least one weekly newspaper in almost all electoral districts. With the assistance of our advertising agency, Elections Canada was able to arrange



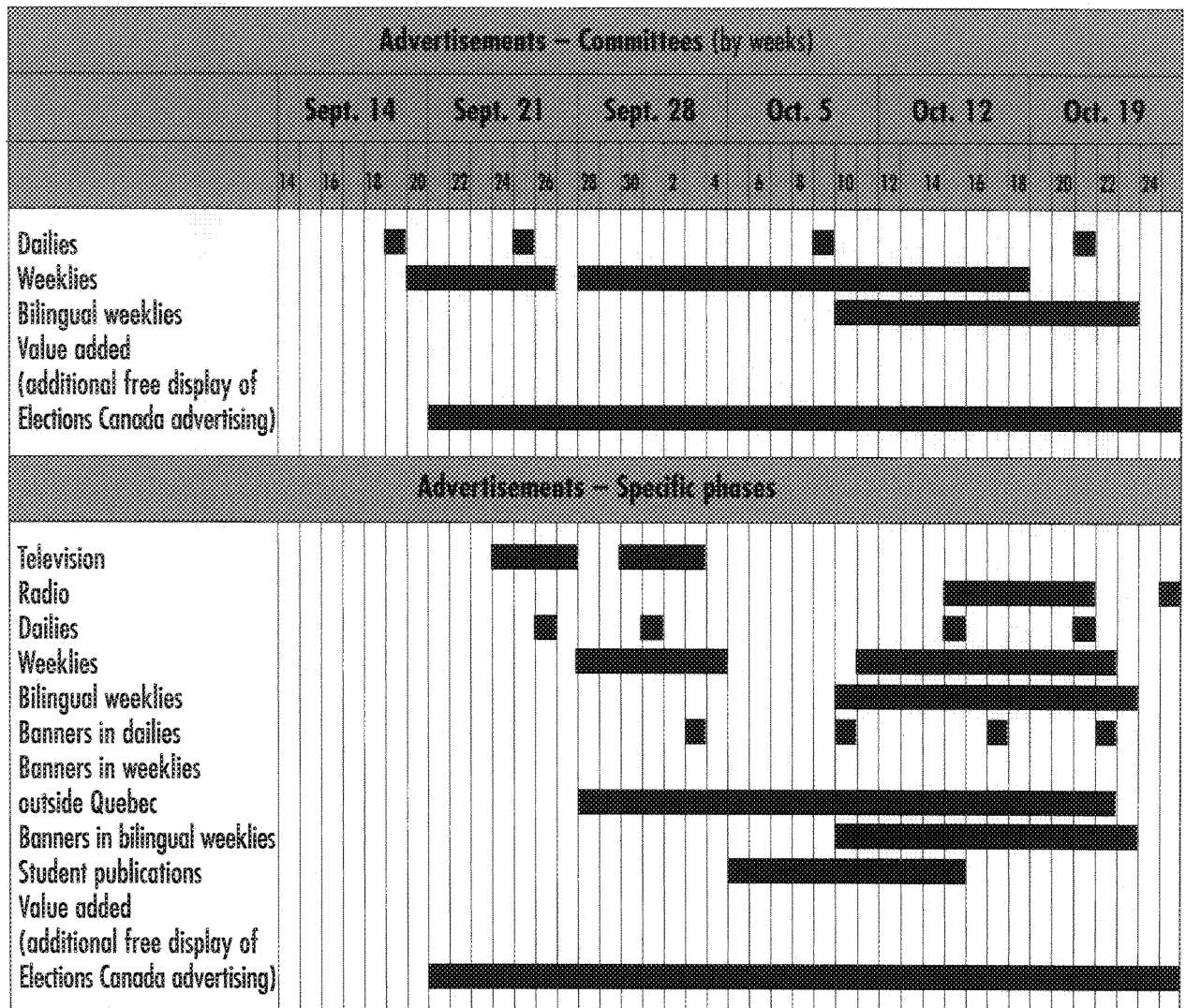
**FIGURE 10**  
Extensive use was made of the various media to inform the electorate about their rights and the referendum process

for additional advertising to be published and aired free of charge by the media that ran our paid advertisements. This free advertising amounted to a "value added" of more than \$600 000 or 14.4% of the media placement budget. (Figure 11 illustrates the referendum advertising schedule.) There was other free exposure as well, such as an Elections Canada message on the big board at Blue Jays games.

We employed the services of a specialized advertising agency, Ethnic/Ad Inc., to communicate with ethnocultural groups through a 39-language multi-media campaign involving advertisements in newspapers and through radio and television stations serving ethnic communities. We also placed advertisements in 37 Aboriginal languages, in newspapers and television and radio stations serving the Aboriginal population, through the National Aboriginal Communications Society (see Appendix F).

All Elections Canada advertising was designed with the needs of persons with disabilities in mind. Texts in the print media were presented simply and in a large, clear typeface. The telephone number for

FIGURE 11  
Advertisement calendar



people who are deaf or hard of hearing was clearly illustrated. Key messages were transmitted through the electronic media, and all television messages were closed-captioned. Public service announcements and news releases dealing with accessibility were also widely distributed.

Quebec's provincial referendum presented a challenge for Elections Canada's advertising and information programs. Starting with the reminder at the news briefing on September 17, 1992, that

"... remarks today apply only to voting in the other nine provinces, and in the Northwest Territories and Yukon," all ensuing publicity had to contain references to the parallel event in Quebec to prevent confusion. Although our own advertisements were not published in Quebec, we kept the province's media informed about the differences between the federal referendum process and what was happening in Quebec, so as to enable them to clarify matters for the public as necessary.

## MEDIA RELATIONS

A news briefing on September 17 launched our referendum activities. The conference made use of satellite communications technology to link media representatives in six cities across Canada: Ottawa, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto and St. John's. This was the first such effort by Elections Canada, and provided an effective way to communicate our message to all participating regions simultaneously. Given the short referendum period and the fact that it began quickly after the adoption of the question by the Senate, there was a need to focus public attention quickly. The media event was well-attended by national and local media, and well-received. Journalists in all six cities were able to call in questions and receive answers immediately in a live phone-in segment. The referendum message got out quickly and effectively.

My office engaged the services of five regional representatives (one each for: Alberta and the Northwest Territories; Ontario; the Atlantic provinces; Manitoba and Saskatchewan; and British Columbia and the Yukon) to provide communications advice and services to returning officers across Canada and to headquarters. Their knowledge of the local media increased the exposure for our voter information messages and enabled Elections Canada staff to react rapidly to local situations.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations activities were directed at the general public and at specific target groups of electors. The communications program targeted 15 different groups to ensure that the needs of electors were met

as fully as possible. For each group, Elections Canada developed a dedicated communications plan and special publications as required. The groups were as follows: the general public, incarcerated electors, electors eligible to vote under the *Special Voting Rules*, referendum committees, groups requiring information from the Broadcasting Arbitrator, special needs groups, ethnic communities, youth, the Aboriginal community, groups concerned with the ECAPLE technology (including political parties), federal and provincial Members of Parliament, federal and provincial political parties, and returning officers.

Several new and revised publications were produced for the referendum, including a leaflet entitled *You Have a Say in the Matter*, which enumerators distributed to 7.7 million households. This leaflet informed electors of key dates in the referendum process, and contained a facsimile of the referendum ballot, including the wording of the referendum question.

There were also special publications such as those on the roles of the Broadcasting Arbitrator and the Commissioner of Canada Elections. In total, my office produced 29 new information pieces (books, backgrounders, videos, pamphlets, calendars, information sheets and posters). This material is listed in Appendix G.

## Electors with Disabilities

For the first time, Elections Canada mounted an intensive communications campaign aimed at voters with disabilities, the homeless, and those with reading difficulties. A brochure, a backgrounder and a poster were developed, and contacts were made with many

We kept Quebec's  
media informed about  
the differences between  
the two processes

national groups, such as the Canadian Foodbank Association and the Canadian Mental Health Association (see Figure 5). We worked intensively with these associations both to develop informative materials and to make sure that they reached the people who needed them.

Our publications were available in braille, on audio-cassette and in large print (see Figure 4). Approximately 85 000 copies of a brochure entitled "Voting Is Accessible", dealing specifically with the services available for persons with disabilities, were distributed to more than 1 000 organizations across the country. Posters and backgrounders on the same theme were also distributed. The text of all of our brochures was broadcast on *VoicePrint*, the radio service for people with visual impairments.

### Youth

Elections Canada continued its efforts to inform Canadians between the ages of 18 and 24 about their right to vote and about the voting methods available to students (Figure 12). Young voters were reached through publications such as the *Student*



FIGURE 12  
A special information package focused on young voters

*Viewer's Guide*, bookmarks, and posters, all with the theme "Voting's a Breeze". Information was distributed at colleges and universities (including campuses in Quebec, for students from outside the province), employment centres, shopping centres and other places where young people congregate. Paid advertisements were placed in campus newspapers and on rock music stations and television programs aimed at a young audience.

### Ethnocultural Groups

We distributed posters and flyers in 39 languages through ethnocultural community organizations, and articles in heritage languages were placed in various community newsletters (see Appendix F, Table F.2, for the list of languages used). Over 500 000 flyers were distributed through community organizations, returning officers and citizenship courts.

### Aboriginal Electors

During the referendum, Elections Canada mounted one of the most extensive programs ever undertaken by a federal institution to communicate widely in Aboriginal languages (Figure 13). Elections Canada distributed materials in 37 of the 53 Aboriginal languages used in Canada (see Appendix F, Table F.1) and advertised in others, bringing the total communications program for Aboriginal electors to 45 language groups.

Culturally appropriate booklets, audio-tapes and posters were distributed to Aboriginal electors on reserves and in Inuit and Métis settlements, as well as in urban centres. Friendship centres, band offices, Inuit settlement offices, cultural/educational centres and similar organizations helped with the distribution. The booklets were also available at all polling stations across Canada for Aboriginal voters to consult when casting their ballots. Comments from

Aboriginal persons and organizations indicate that the translations were well received.

### **Electors Voting Under *Special Voting Rules***

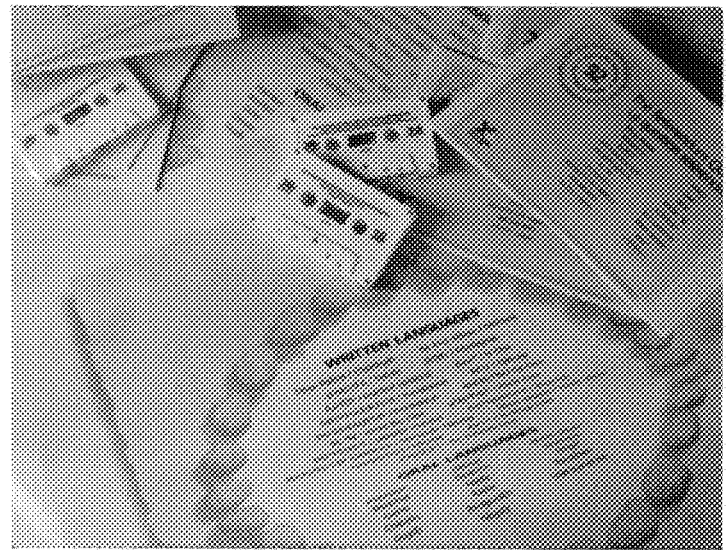
Special information programs were also mounted for electors voting under the *Special Voting Rules*. A detailed backgrounder was prepared, and copies were distributed to all Canadian diplomatic missions, consular posts, and Canadian Forces bases, to be posted on notice boards or otherwise made available to electors. Furthermore, an information flyer was prepared for Canadian Forces electors, advising them of voting procedures and providing the text of the referendum question.

### **Incarcerated Electors**

We conducted an information program to inform inmates of their right to vote and of the procedures for exercising that right. A voter's guide was distributed to each inmate along with an Application for Voting, and posters were displayed prominently in each institution. Information kits were distributed with the help of the Elizabeth Fry and John Howard Societies, and representatives of the two organizations were invited to monitor activities during the course of the event.

### **MPs, Referendum Committees and Political Parties**

As in all federal electoral events, Elections Canada provided a liaison service with Members of Parliament and Senators, and with federal political parties. This service naturally extended to registered referendum committees, as they were part of the referendum process. However, since a referendum on Canada's Constitution affects more than just the federal government, liaison services were also provided to members of provincial and territorial legislatures,



**FIGURE 13**

**Voting information was made available in 37 Aboriginal languages, including some that exist only in oral form**

and provincial political parties. Customized information kits were prepared to assist each of these groups in responding to questions from their members and constituents.

### **The Parliamentary Channel**

As at the 1988 federal election, Elections Canada again used the Parliamentary television channel to broadcast information to electors during the referendum. Information was broadcast continuously from September 20 until October 26, in bilingual format, 24 hours a day. Four information videos were broadcast in rotation on the Parliamentary Channel. The first highlighted the range of services which Elections Canada offers to persons with disabilities; the others dealt with enumeration, referendum committees, and the electoral process. These videos were all closed-captioned to ensure that persons who were deaf or hard of hearing would receive the same information as other Canadians. We also presented the text of the Charlottetown Accord, with

voice-over. According to research conducted on our behalf by Gallup Inc., the Parliamentary Channel broadcasts are estimated to have reached one out of ten Canadian adults.

Response to the Parliamentary Channel broadcasts has again been favourable, and has demonstrated the Channel's success as a cost-effective information tool for the general public. Elections Canada counts on being able to continue similar broadcasts in the future.

### **PUBLIC ENQUIRIES**

The formation of a dedicated group of telephone enquiries officers was another initiative of the 1988 election that was repeated for the federal referendum. Again, the service consisted of a central enquiries unit with 14 enquiry officers at Elections Canada headquarters in Ottawa, assisted by Reference Canada's telephone referral service, provided under contract for the referendum period. Reference Canada had approximately 90 telephone lines and a staff of 100 at its peak. The service was coordinated so that Reference Canada received phone calls first and provided basic information such as the name of an elector's riding or how to reach the local returning officer. More difficult or technical calls were transferred to the Elections Canada enquiries officers.

The Elections Canada enquiries unit was able to provide better, more efficient service to the public during the referendum because of a well-planned training program for enquiries agents, which was based on a new enquiries manual developed for the purpose. This was a major task in itself, as it involved thinking through the entire referendum process as it would affect the voter, and identifying well in advance the kinds of questions that would be likely to be asked. The work of the unit was also enhanced

by two newly-established supervisory positions and improved equipment. Among other features, the unit implemented an automated call distribution system and was able to transmit requests for publications directly to our distribution centre by computer.

Toll-free telephone numbers for the Reference Canada service were widely advertised. Our toll-free telecommunications device for the deaf telephone number (TDD/TTY) was publicized extensively in our advertising and on the Notice of Enumeration cards.

Reference Canada handled 195 000 calls during the period between September 20 and October 26, averaging 5 417 phone calls per day (compared to 1 480 during the 1988 federal election).

Their busiest periods coincided with enumeration, revision of the lists of electors, and polling day. The most-asked questions required looking up ridings and enumeration. Elections Canada's own enquiries unit handled over 46 000 calls between September 20 and October 26, 1992, that is, an average of 1 278 phone calls per day, compared to 800 in 1988. The questions asked most often concerned enumeration and revision of the lists of electors, advance polls, voting in the office of the returning officer, and issues relating to registered referendum committees.

The public opinion survey that we commissioned showed that the 1-800 number is well known; two-thirds of respondents were aware of this service. Caller satisfaction was found to be at 72%. The reason that this figure was not higher is probably that a significant number of callers telephoned our number in order to obtain information on the Charlottetown Accord or on the voting process in Quebec. It was not within our mandate to provide information on either of these matters, and Elections Canada enquiries officers referred 1 300 calls to the

## **The Parliamentary Channel broadcast ongoing referendum information**

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Quebec and close to 4 000 calls to the federal government's constitutional information hot-line, which dealt with questions of a more politically sensitive nature.

#### APPLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

In accordance with the *Official Languages Act*, Elections Canada provided bilingual services to the public during the referendum period.

As a general service, all publications, posters, forms and signage were produced in both official languages. The toll-free information lines for both the general public and voters who are hard of hearing provided bilingual service, and awareness of official languages policies was stressed in the training of returning officers, who are responsible for service to the public in their ridings.

All publications, posters,  
forms and signage were  
in both official  
languages

In all, 50 electoral districts outside Quebec where at least 3% of the population is of the minority official language were designated bilingual, following the same policy as during the 1988 election. In each such district, the returning officer was instructed to provide bilingual service during the referendum period.

In all other electoral districts, returning officers were encouraged to provide bilingual service in their offices. In any case where a voter wanted bilingual service but the returning officer was unable to provide it, the voter was referred to Elections Canada's toll-free 1-800 line, which offered bilingual service both during and outside the referendum period.

The number of complaints forwarded by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages indicates that there was an improvement in the level of

TABLE 7

Complaints forwarded by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

Province or territory	Total	Lack of service in R.O.'s office	Only one language at enumeration	Only one language at the poll	Others
Newfoundland	0	0	0	0	0
Prince Edward Island	1	1	0	0	0
Nova Scotia	2	0	0	0	2
New Brunswick	12	4	2	6	0
Ontario	11	2	5	3	1
Manitoba	9	0	1	8	0
Saskatchewan	4	4	0	0	0
Alberta	1	0	1	0	0
British Columbia	0	0	0	0	0
Northwest Territories	0	0	0	0	0
Yukon Territory	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>

bilingual service in the field. Out of millions of individual transactions with members of the public, 41 resulted in complaints. Most of these related to lack of bilingual service from enumerators, or in polling stations or the offices of returning officers (Table 7).

When complaints were transmitted to us without delay, action was taken immediately to rectify the situation by providing the necessary service. In some cases, this involved a special visit by a bilingual enumerator or revising agent to the home of the elector. Other cases involved misunderstandings, where an Elections Canada office shared church or shopping mall premises, and a voter approached someone who was not associated with Elections Canada for information.

A great many factors affect our ability to provide full bilingual services in the field during an electoral event. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the

case of enumerators, who must be selected from lists provided by the parties whose candidates came first and second in each electoral district. The requirements of the *Official Languages Act* form a part of our briefings for political parties, and returning officers make the best disposition they can to represent both official languages on the enumeration teams and in their offices.

I believe that this agency's performance in the matter of bilingual services to the Canadian elector is laudable. Elections Canada is committed to maintaining and improving its ability to serve the electorate in both official languages. Based on the referendum experience, new procedures and new uses of aids such as conference calls and information cards were produced for the 1993 election, and are expected to reduce the number of complaints still further.





# CHAPTER 6



# CONDUCT OF VOTING

**V**oting in the federal referendum began in the offices of returning officers on October 12, 1992. Advance polls were held on October 22 and 23, and regular polling day was October 26. Various other methods of voting were available, including voting by electors covered under the *Special Voting Rules*, voting by prison inmates, voting at a mobile poll and voting by proxy.

## SPECIAL VOTING RULES

The *Special Voting Rules* provided for the taking of the votes of Canadian Forces electors in Canada and abroad, their eligible spouses and dependants residing with them outside Canada, teachers and support staff in schools on Canadian Forces bases abroad, and public service electors and their eligible spouses and dependants posted abroad at the time of the referendum. With the exception of provisions of the Act which deal with the qualifications and entitlement to vote of electors who are veterans, the provisions in place for the referendum were the same as for a general election. Veteran electors receiving treatment or live-in care in a Department of Veterans' Affairs hospital, or in a provincial hospital where their treatment is paid for by that department, were treated as civilian electors and were enumerated in the same manner as other hospitalized electors (under Schedule II of the *Canada Elections Act* as adapted for the conduct of the referendum). With the adoption of Bill C-114 in May 1993, veteran electors no longer vote under the *Special Voting Rules*.

Upon enlistment, a Canadian Forces elector completes a declaration called a "Statement of Ordinary Residence", stating the electoral district in which his or her vote and the votes of eligible spouses and dependants will be counted. Until June, 1993, public servants being posted abroad completed a similar declaration. Canadian Forces electors have the opportunity to change this declaration in January or February of each year, while public service electors posted abroad could exercise this option only upon returning to Canada and accepting a subsequent posting.

## Various methods of voting were available

The decision to hold simultaneous but separate referendums in Quebec and in the other provinces and territories meant that members of the Canadian Forces and some public service electors living abroad could have been deprived of their right to vote because of different residency requirements. If they had declared Quebec as their province of residence under the *Special Voting Rules*, but had been residents for less than six months, they would be ineligible to vote in the Quebec referendum. Similarly, if they had been outside Quebec for more than two years, they would have been declared ineligible to vote in either the federal or provincial referendum.

My office therefore allowed all electors covered by the *Special Voting Rules* to update their statements of ordinary residence at the time of voting instead of waiting until January or February 1993. As a result, all Canadian Forces electors and all public service electors posted abroad were allowed to update their statements of ordinary residence when they voted under the *Special Voting Rules* between October 12 and 17, 1992. In all, 6 838 statements of ordinary residence out of a total of 61 792 were changed and updated by Canadian Forces electors, and 340 out of a total of 1 303 were changed by public service electors.

Three voting territories, with offices in Halifax, Edmonton and Ottawa, were established for the conduct of the referendum under the *Special Voting Rules*. The Ottawa territory was also given responsibility for receiving, sorting and counting the votes of all public service electors outside Canada. The exceptions were Bermuda, which fell under the Halifax office, and Alert, N.W.T., which was attached to the Ottawa office. The Department of National Defence established distribution centres in Washington to

serve Canadian voters in the United States, and in Lahr, Germany to serve Europe and Asia.

The names of 84 278 Canadian Forces and federal public service electors, including electors who had declared their place of ordinary residence to be in the province of Quebec, appeared on the lists of electors maintained for personnel of the departments of National Defence and External Affairs. This figure excludes eligible spouses and dependants, who also voted under the *Special Voting Rules*.

### **VOTING IN THE OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER**

Voting in the office of the returning officer in each electoral district was conducted from Monday, October 12 to Saturday, October 17, and from Monday, October 19 to Tuesday, October 20. Hours for this form of voting were from noon until 6 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on each of those days, as required by law.

Voting in the office of the returning officer presented a significant challenge for returning officers, since the shortened timeframe for the referendum meant that voting occurred while returning officers were engaged in revising the lists of electors, training poll officials, and preparing ballot boxes and voting supplies.

Under the legislation, votes in the office of the returning officer could only be accepted by the returning officer or the assistant returning officer. Because of the high turnout of voters during the first week, over half of the returning officers were granted permission to appoint a second assistant returning officer for their offices (see Appendix E).

Many complaints were received from electors in large electoral districts who lived some distance from the office of the returning officer. In large northern or remote areas, this distance was often hundreds of

kilometres. Although the establishment of 43 additional offices in 33 electoral districts had been authorized to provide better service to electors, staff there had no authority to accept votes. Electors in such areas who knew they would be absent from their ridings on polling day and during the advance polls were thus faced with the choice of not voting at all, or of paying transportation costs and perhaps taking a day or more off work to travel to the office of the returning officer to cast their ballots. The dilemma faced by these electors was a source of concern for this office until the adoption of Bill C-114. Electors unable to go to the polls are now able to vote by special mail-in ballot.

### **ADVANCE POLLS**

Advance polls were held on Thursday, October 22 and Friday, October 23, one day less than the usual three days of advance polls at an election. Many comments were subsequently received from the public that the dates were too close to polling day and that a Saturday should have been included.

Some comments were also received from electors about the distance of the advance poll from their home, or that an advance poll was not established in their community. Most of these comments came from communities with a population of less than 1 000, which is the minimum requirement for the establishment of a rural advance polling station.

There were 1 867 advance polling stations, an average of eight per electoral district.

### **VOTING BY INCARCERATED ELECTORS**

Voting took place across the country in 188 penal institutions on October 16, 1992. The envelopes containing the ballots were received, sorted and counted by scrutineers in Ottawa, under the supervision of a Special Election Administrator appointed by

my office and in cooperation with the Special Returning Officer appointed for the Ottawa voting territory under the *Special Voting Rules*.

### ORDINARY POLLING DAY

Ordinary polling day was Monday, October 26, 1992. Voting was almost overshadowed in some places by the baseball World Series win of the Toronto Blue Jays on the preceding Saturday. There were celebrations in many places, and traffic to the polls in Toronto was disrupted by the victory parade when the team returned on Monday. Some poll officials did not report to their polls on time because of the parade. As well, under the *Referendum Act*, the sale of liquor on polling day was not prohibited. Electors cast their ballots between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., except in those electoral districts which spanned more than one time zone. Different hours were established in those areas, as required by the *Canada Elections Act* as adapted for the conduct of the referendum.

There were a total of 39 232 regular polling stations and 434 mobile polling stations.

### Location of Polling Stations

As described earlier, polling division boundaries had been redrawn to increase the average number of electors in each polling division. This requirement, coupled with the new requirement for polls to be accessible to electors with a mobility disability, meant that some buildings that had traditionally been used as polling stations could no longer be used.

In a few areas, especially in some rural polling divisions, it was not possible to find sites for polling stations that met accessibility requirements and were convenient for all electors. Many returning officers therefore successfully made use of non-traditional sites for polling stations, such as motels, shopping plazas, restaurants and even a golf club. Where traditional polling stations were not used, many

enquiries were received from the public about the reason for the change.

For the first time, the legislation provided for Government of Canada buildings to be used as polling stations. This arrangement worked smoothly and proved quite useful in some locations.

During the referendum, the need for more and better signage for polling stations was identified; changes in signage were consequently implemented for the 35th general election.

As Table 8 shows, the majority of polling stations were located in schools, comprising 31% of the sites.

### Proxy Voting

As in previous electoral events, Elections Canada continued to receive comments indicating that electors found the process of proxy voting cumbersome and difficult. They considered the categories of individuals permitted to vote by proxy too restrictive and not

TABLE 8  
Types of sites used as polling stations

Sites	Number	%
Educational institutions	4 329	31.08
Community centres	3 654	26.23
Parish halls	1 361	9.77
Private residences	1 067	7.66
Homes for the elderly	1 019	7.31
Commercial locations	386	2.77
Fire halls	374	2.68
Royal Canadian Legion halls	309	2.22
Municipal buildings	235	1.69
Hospitals	230	1.65
Tribal Council offices	114	0.82
Post offices	13	0.09
Federal buildings	12	0.09
Other locations	828	5.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 931</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Note: Numbers do not include sites used in Quebec.

representative of the composition of modern society. Some categories of workers required to travel were recognized (prospectors, air crews) but others were not (long-distance truck drivers or business travellers).

Similarly, a person who was ill could vote by proxy, but a relative who left his or her own electoral district to care for that person was unable to vote if the trip spanned the days for advance voting and ordinary polling days. Numerous complaints were received from electors in this situation.

Concerns have also been expressed about the requirement for a medical certificate in order to obtain a proxy certificate, since many doctors now charge patients for this service. Electors voting by proxy because of illness had, in effect, to pay a fee to exercise their right to vote.

This method of voting is no longer applicable since the amendment of the *Canada Elections Act* in June 1993; it has been replaced by special ballot voting.

### **Ballot Boxes**

The cardboard ballot boxes which had been tested at the 1988 federal election were used in all electoral districts for the federal referendum. The use of recyclable cardboard eliminates most of the cost of storing ballot boxes between electoral events.

Attempts were made in most electoral districts to find recycling companies that would accept ballot

boxes for recycling after polling day. Whereas these overtures were successful in many areas, in a few others, returning officers were told that the glue from the seals rendered the boxes unacceptable for recycling. Elections Canada is examining possible modifications.

### **Poll Officials**

At the federal referendum, deputy returning officers were nominated by the registered political party whose candidate finished first in that riding at the last election. Poll clerks were nominated by the parties whose candidates ranked second. This procedure was different from that which was previously followed under the *Canada Elections Act*, and reinforced the "equity balance" principle. One representative per registered referendum committee was permitted to be present at each polling station during voting hours, instead of the two representatives per candidate allowed during elections.

### **The Closing of the Polls**

In most electoral districts, referendum committees did not appoint agents (or scrutineers) at the polls although they were entitled to do so. Deputy returning officers therefore appointed electors as witnesses to the counting of the votes.



# CHAPTER 7



# VOTING RESULTS

**F**or the first time at an electoral event, major news organizations pooled their resources and worked with Elections Canada to provide unofficial results to the general public on referendum night from each electoral district participating in the federal vote. This development was in line with a recommendation of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing that Elections Canada join with the networks and news services to explore ways of facilitating the reporting of the unofficial results on polling day. The organizations making up the media pool included Canadian Press, Société Radio-Canada, CBC, CTV, TVA, Global, and Standard Broadcast News.



Rather than have each news organization send staff to the offices of returning officers as they have traditionally done, each returning officer appointed a "correspondent". This person phoned in regular reports on the unofficial voting results to the media pool, which was based at Elections Canada headquarters in Ottawa but staffed by the media. The media used these unofficial results for analysis and predictions.

The correspondents also transmitted the final unofficial results from each local Elections Canada office to my office. We were able to tabulate the unofficial results immediately and to provide this information to federal and provincial governments and parties, as well as to publish the unofficial results of the referendum on the morning of October 27. A team of Elections Canada employees stood by their fax machines, computers and telephones until day-break to collate the results. Data from the media pool's computer was compared immediately to the

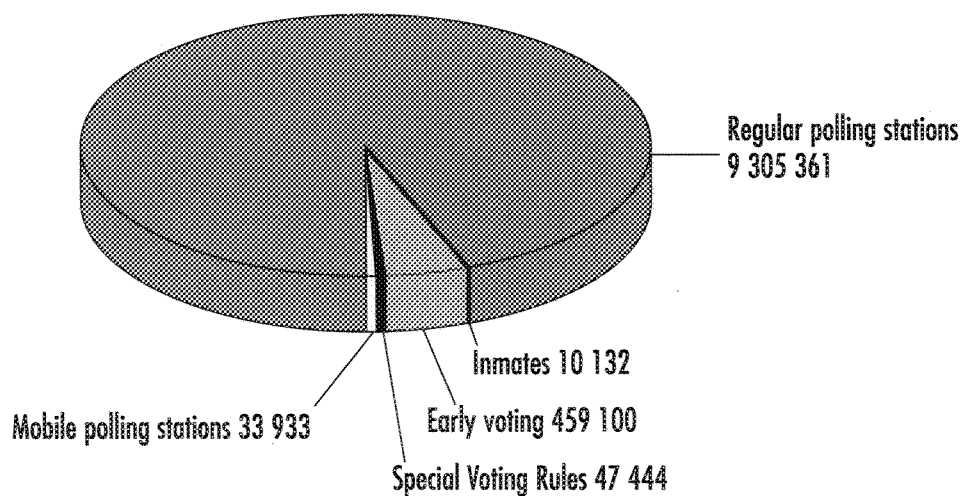
data faxed in to Elections Canada by returning officers. Discrepancies were immediately corrected before inclusion in the unofficial results reports. Interest in the results remained high until the very end, because the outcome of the referendum would be determined by the aggregate results for each side, rather than the individual riding results.

This cooperative system, using the most advanced computer and communications technology, with many built-in verification features, kept mistakes to a minimum and sped up the release of unofficial results. A variation of this process was repeated for the 35th general election.

#### OFFICIAL RESULTS

Immediately after the referendum, Elections Canada began compiling the official results of the referendum vote by polling division, using figures from the official addition of the votes conducted by the returning

**FIGURE 14**  
**Total number of votes by method of voting**



Total number of votes: 9 855 970

**TABLE 9**  
**Voting results by province and territory**

Province or territory	Total votes for		Valid votes		Rejected ballots		Votes cast		Electors on the lists
	YES	NO	Total	Percentage <sup>1</sup>	Total	Percentage <sup>2</sup>	Total	Percentage <sup>3</sup>	
Newfoundland	133 583	77 742	211 325	36.8	99.5	1 068	212 393	53.3	398 269
Prince Edward Island	48 541	17 128	65 669	26.1	99.5	305	65 974	70.5	93 534
Nova Scotia	218 967	229 690	448 657	51.2	99.5	2 065	450 722	67.8	664 594
New Brunswick	234 469	144 885	379 354	38.2	99.3	2 642	381 996	72.2	529 071
Ontario	2 409 713	2 395 465	4 805 178	49.9	99.4	29 564	4 834 742	71.9	6 719 895
Manitoba	199 905	320 918	520 823	61.6	99.5	2 370	523 193	70.6	740 627
Saskatchewan	203 525	251 441	454 966	55.3	99.6	1 644	456 610	68.7	664 917
Alberta	484 472	732 457	1 216 929	60.2	99.8	2 958	1 219 887	72.6	1 679 700
British Columbia	528 773	1 139 127	1 667 900	68.3	99.6	6 047	1 673 947	76.7	2 183 398
Northwest Territories	14 723	9 280	24 003	38.7	99.3	169	24 172	70.4	34 333
Yukon Territory	5 360	6 916	12 276	56.3	99.5	66	12 342	70.0	17 628
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 482 031</b>	<b>5 325 049</b>	<b>9 807 080</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>99.5</b>	<b>48 898</b>	<b>9 855 978</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>13 725 966</b>

<sup>1</sup> Percentage of the total valid votes cast.

<sup>2</sup> Percentage of the total votes cast.

<sup>3</sup> Percentage of the number of electors on the lists.



officer in each electoral district. These official results are presented in the book entitled *Referendum 92: Official Voting Results*, published and released on May 17, 1993.

The voter turnout for the federal referendum was 72% for all provinces and territories covered by the proclamation. This turnout was felt by some to be rather low, given the nature of the referendum. As Table 9 shows, a total of 9 855 978 voters cast their ballots. Of that number, 4 482 031 votes were cast for "YES" (45.7%) and 5 325 049 for "NO" (54.3%), for a total of 9 807 080 valid votes. There were 48 898 rejected ballots. Figure 14 shows the distribution of votes by the various methods of voting available at the referendum.

Some Aboriginal organizations asked me to provide data separately on the referendum results from preselected polling divisions where the population was largely or entirely Aboriginal. This was possible to some degree. Elections Canada staff had already identified polling divisions which contained Indian reserves and other communities whose populations are primarily Aboriginal, in preparation for the distribution of referendum information. With the help of two Aboriginal organizations — the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations — we identified 802 polling divisions in 96 electoral districts. As Table 10 indicates, the majority are concentrated

in British Columbia and Ontario. The unofficial referendum results from the agreed-upon polling divisions were transmitted to the Inuit Tapirisat and the Assembly of First Nations on referendum night.

Votes were cast by 10 132 inmate electors, representing 88.8% of those who had registered in federal penitentiaries and provincial institutions.

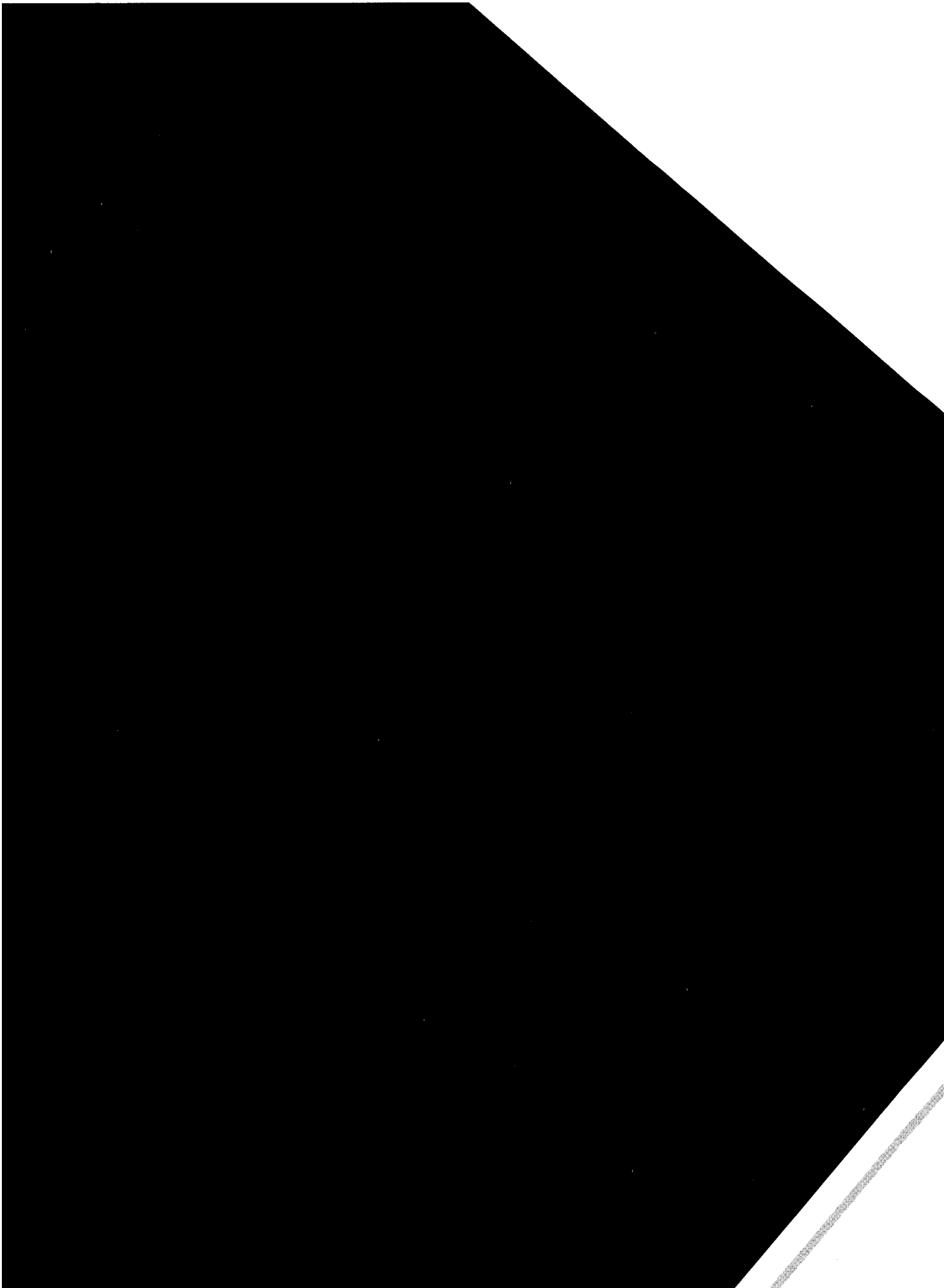
Voter turnout for the  
federal referendum  
was 72%.

TABLE 10  
Aboriginal communities and polling divisions  
at referendum

Province or territory	Number of districts with Aboriginal communities	Number of polling divisions
Newfoundland	2	3
Prince Edward Island	3	4
Nova Scotia	9	21
New Brunswick	7	17
Ontario	23	136
Manitoba	6	78
Saskatchewan	9	93
Alberta	10	65
British Columbia	24	243
Northwest Territories	2	94
Yukon Territory	1	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>802</b>



Following  
THE REFERENDUM





# CHAPTER 8



# ADMINISTRATION

**F**ollowing the official federal referendum period, Elections Canada continued with a busy schedule of activities: evaluation, publication of results, and completion of projects.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CANADA ELECTIONS

The Commissioner of Canada Elections, under the general direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, is responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* and of the *Referendum Act* are complied with and enforced. The Commissioner's consent is required in each case before prosecution for a violation of the statutes can be undertaken.

The Commissioner's first objective is to encourage compliance with the legislation. Where compliance efforts fail, legitimate complaints of violations of the provisions of the statutes are investigated promptly. Consent to prosecute is given where the facts of the case, public interest and the interests of justice warrant such action.



The Commissioner of Canada Elections,  
Raymond Landry

TABLE 11  
Alleged offences related to the 1992 referendum

Reference	Section of the Act: <i>Referendum Act/Canada Elections Act</i>	Number of cases	Closed	Open	Prosecution
2 R.L.	Definition of referendum expenses	4	4	0	0
13(4)(b) R.L.	Restrictions on registration of referendum committees	1	1	0	0
15 R.L.	Limit on referendum expenses	7	7	0	0
15(5) R.L.	No separate bank account	30	29	1	0
16(6) R.L.	Repayment of contributions	3	2	1	0
19 R.L.	Failure by Chief Agent to transmit Referendum Finances Return	20	0	20	0
19 R.L.	Late filing	26	23	3	0
27 R.L.	Advertising or publishing during the blackout period	11	11	0	0
28 R.L.	Failure of advertisements to bear authorization	1	1	0	0
71(3) E.A.	Obstructing enumerator	2	2	0	0
132 E.A.	Manner of voting	1	1	0	0
148 E.A.	Interference with right to four consecutive hours to vote	14	13	1	0
158 E.A.	Emblems, etc., prohibited in polling station	1	1	0	0
249 E.A.	Offences dealing with ballot box or paper	4	4	0	0
252 E.A.	Impersonation and voting when not qualified	8	5	2	1
254 E.A.	Election officer failing or refusing to comply with the Act	1	1	0	0
303 E.A.	Broadcasting outside Canada	1	1	0	0
328 E.A.	Premature publication of referendum results	2	2	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>137</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>



**Compliance**

The *Referendum Act* provides that, during the course of a referendum, no individual or group which is not a registered referendum committee may incur referendum expenses which total more than \$5 000. To encourage compliance with the Act, the Commissioner collaborated with Communications staff in the preparation of the *Handbook for Referendum Committees* and the publication entitled *Referendum Committees: Questions & Answers*.

**Enforcement**

By September 21, 1993, the Commissioner had received 137 written complaints regarding alleged infractions of the statutes, both during and after the referendum period. As Table 11 shows, the largest category of complaints concerns alleged infractions to subsection 15(5) of the *Referendum Act*, which deals with the bank accounts of referendum committees. Other complaints involve employees who may have been deprived of their right to vote because of work schedules. There were also complaints about advertising during the blackout period. Some of these matters are still under investigation.

**PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The payment of referendum officials and suppliers represented a significant portion of Elections Canada's post-referendum activities. The Election Financing Branch processed a heavy volume of cheque and payment transactions, totalling 175 428 accounts to the end of the 1992 fiscal year. The peak activity period was November 1992, when 120 000 of these transactions were processed. To accommodate the

anticipated number of calls from workers enquiring about their payment, a "Where's My Cheque" enquiries system was set up. Phone operators fielded 15 553 such calls before the end of December 1992.

Table 12 gives figures for the cost of the administration of the 1992 federal referendum.

**IMPROVEMENTS TO COMPUTERIZATION OF VOTERS LISTS (ECAPLE SYSTEM)**

The experience of the referendum enabled improvements in preparation for the use of ECAPLE during the 35th general election. In the period immediately following the referendum, Elections Canada made improvements in the software, procedures and training materials associated with the system, and carried out the administrative corrections to the electronic lists of electors that were requested by returning officers.

The Commissioner's first objective is to encourage compliance

TABLE 12  
Administrative costs of the 1992 referendum, by activity

Activity	\$ millions
Headquarters expenditures	24.4
Publicity	6.7
Returning Officer's offices	17.9
Enumeration	21.6
ECAPLE	11.2
Revision	2.8
Polling	17.5
Level access	0.4
Special Voting Rules	0.4
Registration of referendum committees	0.3
Voting by inmates	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>103.5</b>



# CHAPTER 9



# EVALUATION AND REVIEW

**E**lections Canada actively sought suggestions and comments from returning officers and our own staff through post-mortem evaluation sessions after the referendum. As well, we commissioned a public opinion survey through October and November 1992, to provide us with data on electors' experiences with the Notice of Enumeration card, accessibility, Elections Canada's advertising program, and various other aspects of the referendum.

Throughout and since the referendum, we have remained open to comments and suggestions from the electorate. Moreover, all complaints have been carefully investigated.

We received a total of 36 written and oral complaints concerning accessibility during the referendum. Most concerned physical accessibility at polling stations. In addition, we conducted a field survey to assess the effectiveness of our initiatives, and completed our own internal evaluation in concert with returning officers. As a result of these exercises, we planned further access improvements for the 35th general election. We are increasing the number of mobile polling stations; developing additional training modules to sensitize electoral personnel to the rights and special needs of electors with disabilities; continuing to ensure that the texts of brochures and fliers are suitable in style and content for those who read with difficulty; and developing improved signage for polling stations.

### **INTERNAL REVIEW OF PROCEDURES**

After the referendum, an internal review of the administrative procedures used by Elections Canada headquarters during the event was carried out. These sessions were held within directorates, and followed by a joint session for the whole agency – a first for Elections Canada. The results were beneficial on a number of levels.

Concrete improvements were identified and have been implemented. These range from a multi-disciplinary approach to staff training, to a support network that provides fast problem resolution for returning officers during an electoral event, to a case tracking system for enquiries that ensures better service to the public and to political parties and candidates seeking information. Perhaps the most far-reaching benefits of these evaluation sessions, however, have been the improvements in our internal

**Our multi-disciplinary  
approach results  
in increased  
professionalism**

communications patterns, and the clear understanding of how interdependent all parts of the organization are. The evaluations emphasized the value of the interactive planning system that we initiated and called for its expansion. Decisions and changes in one part of this organization always have impacts in others, and the multi-disciplinary approach we are now using works better than any other in enhancing communication, clarifying responsibilities, and contributing to increased professionalism.

### **REVIEW WITH RETURNING OFFICERS**

Obtaining feedback from administrators in the field helps us identify the need for improvements in administrative procedures and changes in legislation, and to confirm what works well. For this purpose, returning officers attended combined evaluation and planning sessions in late February and early March of 1993 to learn from the experience of the referendum and thus benefit from it during the election. Their comments have been tabulated and analyzed to determine adjustments to procedures for the 35th general election.

The review with returning officers was a wide-ranging and lively exchange of experiences, which resulted in a broad spectrum of operational and training improvements, from minor adjustments to forms and procedures to more far-reaching changes. For example, improvements to poll maps have been initiated, to make them more accurate and easier to use. This will, among other benefits, make enumeration more efficient. Task descriptions and procedures for ECAPLE have been refined and extended. Suggestions for improvements in training and manuals continue to be implemented, with the preparation of

additional training videos and materials, and revision of the manuals.

## COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Elections Canada has received a great deal of feedback on the conduct of the referendum. In particular, we received 854 letters from the public and Members of Parliament dealing with electors' experiences during the referendum. We consider that the number of letters represents only a small portion of electors who experienced the same situations or expressed the same comments.

The majority of letters suggest changes to the *Referendum Act* or the *Canada Elections Act* as adapted for the conduct of a referendum to improve access to voting and to modernize the electoral process. The topics fall into five main areas: 1) difficulties with the enumeration and revision processes; 2) the absence of any provision for polling day registration in urban areas; 3) the need for electors to travel considerable distances if they wish to vote in the office of the returning officer in a geographically dispersed electoral district; 4) the appointment of returning officers and the manner in which their duties are discharged; and 5) the lack of provision for voting by electors who are living outside Canada or who are temporarily absent from their electoral district.

Feedback received by Reference Canada and Elections Canada's own telephone enquiries unit reflected the same concerns with the restrictions of the electoral legislation in effect during the referendum. Approximately 62 600 calls were received regarding problems with enumeration and revision similar to those above.

This information was brought to the attention of the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Electoral Reform. The adoption of Bill C-114 in June 1993 addressed the problems of many of these voters. For example, polling day registration is now

available for electors in urban as well as in rural areas, and Canadians living abroad are generally able, after registration, to vote under the *Special Voting Rules*.

## OPINION SURVEYS

A survey was commissioned by my office from Gallup Canada Inc. to gain a better understanding of voters' reactions to the electoral process and to Elections Canada's initiatives, and to gather data on voters' information needs.

The researchers gathered information through two national telephone surveys, one during the referendum and one after. In addition, a number of case studies were undertaken in selected geographic areas to interview voters, including those with special needs. Gallup also conducted surveys (exit polls) with voters leaving selected polling stations, and performed detailed studies with individuals and special needs groups. The various surveys examined:

- ▶ knowledge of the voting process;
- ▶ the needs, attitudes and experiences of voters with special needs;
- ▶ views on the fairness and impartiality of the administration of the vote;
- ▶ the use and importance of Notice of Enumeration cards;
- ▶ where people got information about voting procedures and how much they relied on such information;
- ▶ views on the various phases of the electoral process;
- ▶ exposure to and assessment of Elections Canada's advertising;
- ▶ the impact and effectiveness of the use of alternative media; and
- ▶ the use of and reactions to the toll-free telephone service.

Overall the results from this independent research were very encouraging. Gallup reported that "... the low incidence of procedural problems experienced by voters demonstrates that Elections Canada has done an excellent job in eliminating or reducing procedural barriers to voting across the country".

### **Public Awareness and Information**

Seventy-five percent of respondents said that they had sufficient pre-polling day information relating to voting procedures during the referendum. Of the remainder, 90% were actually seeking information on the Charlottetown Accord, which was provided by the federal government's constitutional information hot-line — not by Elections Canada.

The most relied-upon source of procedural information was the Notice of Enumeration card. Referred to by 43% of respondents, this instrument was twice as prevalent as any other information source. A total of 75% of electors who received a Notice of Enumeration card both read and kept their card; a further 18% read the card before throwing it out.

Elections Canada programming on the House of Commons television station was watched either "every day" or "sometimes" by one third of Canadians who were aware of the service. This level of viewership is considered by advertisers generally to be a good return for the money spent.

About 66% of respondents were aware of the availability of a toll-free telephone information service about voting procedures at the referendum. Of the respondents who reported having used this service, 72% indicated that they were fully satisfied with the outcome of the call. Many of the remainder were looking for information on the Charlottetown

Accord or on voting procedures in Quebec, and were referred to other telephone numbers as appropriate.

### **Voter Registration**

When asked if their name was on the voters list, 95% of those interviewed replied yes, and 63% remarked that their Notice of Enumeration card indicated this to them. Virtually 100% of those questioned felt the enumeration process was conducted in a non-partisan manner.

### **Voting and Not Voting**

Eleven percent of respondents to the pre-vote survey either did not know the date, or named an incorrect date for polling day.

Of the total sample, 15% admitted not having voted. When asked why not, most cited personal reasons. Thirteen percent of non-voters (or 1.9% of the total population) said they had not voted because they had not been enumerated.

The procedural barriers identified by respondents who had voted that fall within the mandate of Elections Canada were found to be minimal. Four percent cited enumeration as a problem, 3% noted difficulty finding out where to vote, and 2% reported problems related to the polling station.

More than 95% of the respondents were satisfied that their vote was secret.

### **Awareness of Elections Canada**

Only 12% of those surveyed could name Elections Canada as the agency responsible for drawing up lists of electors and administering voting procedures.

It was recommended that Elections Canada continue to promote itself as the non-partisan agency responsible for the conduct of federal electoral events.

**Elections Canada has  
gone a long way toward  
reducing procedural  
barriers to voting**

## Case Studies

The detailed case studies carried out as a supplement to the national survey corroborated the findings of the national survey and provided detailed feedback about Elections Canada's initiatives for groups with special needs. For example, the information designed for student electors was distributed effectively but the design was not well received by some student groups. Information materials designed for people with disabilities, on the other hand, were well designed and well received. Material in alternative formats received positive reviews but did not appear to have been distributed effectively to its intended audience. It was recommended that a direct mail information network be established, to allow materials to be distributed to individuals as well as to groups and organizations.

People needing special measures to make voting accessible were generally pleased with Elections Canada's performance in providing barrier-free access to polling places. Reaction to the new mobile poll service was also very positive. It was felt that this initiative improved voter turnout dramatically among certain segments of the population. Representatives of people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities, however, felt that service to these electors could be improved through better staff training and more effective distribution of information.

The flyer produced in 39 heritage languages and the overall effort of Elections Canada to provide service to new Canadians and speakers of languages other than French and English were evaluated positively.

The inmate voter registration process was generally evaluated positively, although it was time-consuming for the liaison officers, who were often required to fill out registration forms for inmates with low literacy skills.

Elections Canada also contributed questions to the national election survey conducted by Carleton University. The Carleton research provided confirmation of the Gallup findings concerning the information needs of the electorate, the voter registration process, and awareness of Elections Canada.

We also conducted focus groups with enumerators and deputy returning officers. The focus groups yielded useful information about these officials' on-the-job experiences, the effectiveness of our instructional manuals for referendum officials, and the suitability of the training that returning officers gave to referendum workers. The findings were taken into account in post-referendum operational and training plans.

The overall effort  
to provide service to  
new Canadians was  
evaluated positively