



Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

*Following the
Windsor–St. Clair
By-Election*





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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Elections Canada
Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada
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Text in English and French on inverted pages.
Title on added t.p.: Rapport du directeur général des
élections du Canada sur l'élection partielle dans
Windsor–St. Clair.

ISBN 0-662-64296-1
Cat. No. SE1-2/1999-1

1. Canada. Parliament—Elections, 1999.
2. Elections—Ontario—Windsor–St. Clair.
 - I. Title.
 - II. Title: Rapport du directeur général des élections
du Canada sur l'élection partielle dans
Windsor–St. Clair.

JL193.C32 1999 324.9713'32 C99-980219-4E

*The statistical data in this report are to be
considered preliminary; final figures will be
published in a report containing the official
voting results for all by-elections held in 1999, in
accordance with paragraph 193(b) of the Canada
Elections Act.*

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Catalogue No. SE1-2/1999-1
ISBN 0-662-64296-1

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PRINTED IN CANADA

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May 31, 1999

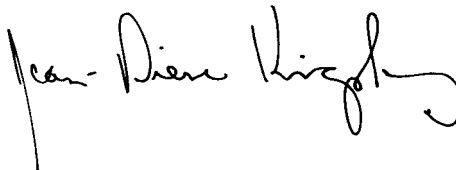
Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to submit this report, which covers the administration of my Office since the publication of the last report and, more specifically, the administration of the Windsor–St. Clair by-election held on April 12, 1999. The report is submitted in accordance with subsection 195(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, R.S., c. E-2, within sixty days after the writ of by-election was returned.

According to subsection 195(3) of the Act, this report shall forthwith be submitted by the Speaker to the House of Commons.

Preliminary information has been included on the results of the by-election, together with an account of the events. The official voting results will be published at the end of the year, in accordance with paragraph 193(b) of the Act.

Yours truly,



Jean-Pierre Kingsley

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Foreword

This report to the Speaker of the House of Commons, following the by-election in the electoral district of Windsor–St. Clair on April 12, 1999, describes the by-election and Elections Canada’s activities since the Sherbrooke by-election on September 14, 1998.

Like the last two by-elections in Port Moody–Coquitlam and Sherbrooke, the Windsor–St. Clair by-election gave Elections Canada the opportunity to test new developments in electoral administration in preparation for the next federal general election, while at the same time providing constituents and candidates in the Windsor–St. Clair by-election with up-to-date and efficient electoral administration and services.

For example, the Windsor–St. Clair by-election saw election officials provided with a version of the new Returning Officer Workstation, innovative new software developed at Elections Canada that integrates all of the current and updated software applications used in the offices of returning officers during electoral events. Extended testing will prepare this software for use in the next federal general election, where it is expected to make a significant contribution to streamlining electoral operations in the field.

As well, for the third time since its establishment in 1997, the National Register of Electors was used to produce the preliminary list of electors for a by-election. The low revision rate augurs well for future electoral events using a preliminary list of electors based on data from the Register.

National Register of Electors data were also used for the first time to produce preliminary electoral lists for a major provincial election on June 3, 1999, in Ontario. This was made possible by an agreement announced April 6, 1999, between Elections Canada and Elections Ontario.

Examples of innovation and improved service such as these are in keeping with key results areas

identified in Elections Canada’s second strategic plan, released on March 4, 1999. Based on what are believed to be the key demographic, legislative and technological trends that will influence Elections Canada over the next few years, the plan charts a course for the development of innovations and enhancements that will be required to respond to these trends.

Reflecting the course set out in the strategic plan, innovation and improved service were recurrent themes in my April 20, 1999, appearance before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to report on main estimates for 1999–2000. These themes underlie Elections Canada’s plans and priorities for the coming year, which include:

- a maintenance program for ensuring high quality electoral lists and improved data matching for the National Register of Electors;
- the intensified pursuit of opportunities for sharing Register data;
- the development of a digital national road network for electoral mapping;
- the continuing development of the Returning Office Technology Centre;
- the completion of year-2000 compliance preparations; and
- the replacement of ECAPLE, the current technology for revising electoral lists during an event, with an updated system called REVISE.

As Elections Canada moves towards the 21st century, it does so motivated by an organizational vision that stresses the themes of innovation and service. Building on our established presence as a world leader in election technology and administration, we look forward to playing a pivotal and supportive role in the evolution of cost-effective and efficient processes that serve the electoral requirements of Canadians at all jurisdictional levels.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley

Elections Canada's activities since the last report

Follow-up to the September 1998 by-election in Sherbrooke

Commissioner's report

On February 4, 1999, the Commissioner of Canada Elections, Mr. Raymond Landry, announced that he had completed his investigation, undertaken at the request of the CEO, of the alleged offences committed by election officers in relation to the September 14, 1998, by-election in Sherbrooke.

The Commissioner found the evidence did not demonstrate that the alleged acts were committed in bad faith. In addition, the evidence reviewed does not show that anyone voted illegally, or that any elector was deprived of the right to vote.

In view of the facts and the law, the Commissioner concluded the evidence did not demonstrate that an offence under the *Canada Elections Act* had been committed and, consequently, it was determined that no prosecution would be undertaken.

The Commissioner received a total of seven complaints of alleged infractions relating to various sections of the Act. All cases are now closed and no prosecution resulted.

Candidate's Return Respecting Election Expenses

Under the *Canada Elections Act*, candidates are required to file an election expenses return within four months of election day. Elections Canada has completed the review of financial returns from the eight candidates who ran for office in the September 1998 by-election in Sherbrooke to ensure compliance with the Act and to determine the amount of reimbursement owed to those candidates who qualified. Reimbursements to those who qualified have been issued.

Official voting results for by-elections held in 1998

On December 30, 1998, the Chief Electoral Officer's report on the two federal by-elections held in 1998 was published in accordance with paragraph 193(b) of the *Canada Elections Act*. The report, entitled *By-Elections 1998: Official Voting Results*, presents the results of the vote, by polling division, for the by-election held on March 30, 1998, in the federal electoral district of Port Moody–Coquitlam, British Columbia (now Port Moody–Coquitlam–Port Coquitlam), and on September 14, 1998, in the federal electoral district of Sherbrooke, Quebec.

This report was produced in addition to the Chief Electoral Officer's statutory reports on the administration of each of these by-elections, which were submitted to the Speaker of the House of Commons in June and November of 1998 respectively, in accordance with subsection 195(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*.

The official voting results and previous statutory reports are available on the Elections Canada Web site at <http://www.elections.ca>.

Legislative issues

Establishment of Nunavut

As provided in the *Nunavut Act* (1993, c. 28), the territory of Nunavut was established on April 1, 1999. The election of members of Nunavut's first Legislative Assembly took place on February 15, 1999. The Chief Electoral Officer of the Northwest Territories served as the new territory's C.E.O. for this first election. Nineteen members were elected to the Legislative Assembly, which chooses a government leader and ministers by consensus. The first Premier chosen was Paul Okalik.

As a consequence of the provisions in *An Act to amend the Nunavut Act and the Constitution Act, 1867*

(1998, c. 15), the territory of Nunavut, like Yukon and the Northwest Territories, is entitled to one seat in the Senate (increasing the number of senators from 104 to 105), and to one seat in the House of Commons. Since the electoral boundaries of the federal riding of Nunavut were set at the redistribution in 1996 to coincide perfectly with the boundaries of the new territory of Nunavut, there was no need to modify them. Moreover, there will be no need to establish electoral boundaries commissions in either the new territory of Nunavut or the Northwest Territories, since each one now has only one seat. This will remain the situation for any territory, including the Yukon, as long as it is entitled to only one seat in the House of Commons.

Amendments to electoral legislation

An Act to amend the Judges Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, which received royal assent on November 18, 1998, (1998, c. 30), amends the definition of “judge” in the *Canada Elections Act* to take into account the new designation of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, allowing for the referral of electoral issues to that court under the Act.

An Act to amend the Nunavut Act with respect to the Nunavut Court of Justice and to amend other Acts in consequence, which received royal assent on March 11, 1999, (1999, c. 3), also amends the definition of “judge” in the *Canada Elections Act*, but to take into account the Nunavut Court of Justice, allowing for the referral of electoral issues to that court under the Act.

In both cases, the *Dominion Controverted Elections Act* is also amended accordingly.

Pursuant to section 331 of the *Canada Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer published a notice in the *Canada Gazette* on May 15, 1999, indicating that the necessary preparations for bringing these amendments into operation had been made and the amendments consolidated.

Court decisions

On March 10, 1999, the Ontario Court (General Division) in an action brought by Miguel Figueroa, the leader of the Communist Party of Canada, ruled unconstitutional certain provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*.

The Court found that requiring candidates to deposit \$1 000 as part of their nomination is a limitation of the right to become a candidate, as provided in section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The Court held that the reimbursement of one half of the deposit if a candidate obtains 15 percent of valid votes is unconstitutional, but that the \$1 000 deposit can be left in place if it becomes fully refundable upon compliance with the election financing reporting requirements. Paragraph 84(3)(b) of the *Canada Elections Act* is, therefore, of no force and effect.

The Court also ruled that the automatic deregistration and requirement to liquidate assets of political parties that did not nominate 50 candidates contravenes section 3 of the Charter. The Court held that a party that runs two candidates and becomes registered is able to issue tax receipts and to receive unspent funds from a candidate. The Court made it clear, however, that the 50-candidate threshold does not change for the purposes of a party’s entitlement to broadcasting time and the reimbursement of election expenses.

On April 9, 1999, the federal government served notice that it will appeal parts of the rulings, but not those relating to the liquidation of assets after automatic deregistration, or the forfeiture of part of the nomination deposit.

On March 16, 1999, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a news release clarifying the effect of the Ontario Court decision on candidates in the April 12 federal by-election, and also advised political parties that all candidates will now be entitled to a full refund of their deposit, provided they comply with the reporting requirements established in the *Canada Elections Act*.

The National Register of Electors

October 1998 list of electors

On October 15, 1998, in accordance with section 71.013 of the *Canada Elections Act*, the 1998 annual list of electors produced from the National Register of Electors was sent to members of Parliament and registered political parties. This annual list reflected updates from federal, provincial and territorial data sources.

Maintaining the National Register of Electors

Between general elections, the National Register of Electors must be kept as up-to-date and accurate as possible, so that it is ready at any time to generate reliable preliminary lists of electors for federal by-elections, such as the one called for Windsor–St. Clair on March 7, 1999, and for general elections and referendums. The Register is continually updated with data from Revenue Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, from provincial and territorial motor vehicle and vital statistics registrars and from electoral agencies in British Columbia and Quebec, where there are provincial registers of electors.

In March and April 1999, two new initiatives were launched as part of the National Register of Electors comprehensive maintenance program.

Some 270 000 verification notices were sent to electors whose information appeared to be incorrect or to have been added more than once to the National Register of Electors. Electors were asked to confirm or correct their information and mail back the notice.

Elections Canada also wrote to some 150 000 people who have turned 18 since the June 1997 federal election to advise them they are now of legal age to vote, and to obtain their permission to add their names to the National Register of Electors. Recipients were asked to confirm that they are Canadian citizens.

The letters to new 18-year-olds were not mailed in Ontario, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut or Newfoundland because of recent or expected

elections. The chief electoral officers in these jurisdictions will provide Elections Canada with electoral lists, including 18-year-olds who registered to vote, to update the National Register of Electors. Nor were they mailed in Quebec, since Elections Canada has an agreement with the Directeur général des élections du Québec for the provision of quarterly updates which include the names of 18-year-olds to be added to the National Register of Electors.

Sharing National Register of Electors data

Forging data-sharing partnerships is a corporate priority for Elections Canada. Since 1997, Elections Canada has signed data-sharing agreements with 60 jurisdictions at the provincial, territorial, and municipal levels, including agreements to supply Register data to municipalities in Nova Scotia, Manitoba and New Brunswick, as well as to some in Ontario. Considerable cost savings have resulted for those jurisdictions that have used National Register of Electors data to produce preliminary electoral lists.

On April 6, 1999, an historic agreement was announced between Elections Canada and Elections Ontario for the provision of National Register of Electors data to build Ontario's new Permanent Register of Electors. The use of a permanent register is expected to help Ontario avoid costs in the order of some \$10 million by eliminating, for the most part, the process of enumeration. Federal data were provided by Elections Canada at cost.

The agreement also provides Elections Canada with the reciprocal opportunity to update the National Register of Electors with data that Elections Ontario will provide from lists revised during the provincial election on June 3, 1999.

Information technology: Maintaining election readiness

Returning Office Technology Centre

Elections Canada headquarters in Ottawa now houses a permanent Returning Office Technology Centre (ROTC) that is responsible for co-ordinating the

deployment of computer tools and technology used by returning officers to administer elections, by-elections and referendums. The ROTC will also facilitate the introduction of new technology to offices of returning officers.

The ROTC is about to begin extended testing of Release 1 of the new Returning Officer Workstation, innovative new software developed at Elections Canada that integrates the installation configuration and set-up of all of the current and updated software applications used by returning officers during electoral events.

A version of Release 1 was used in the Windsor–St. Clair by-election and was well received by the returning officer's staff, who reported that it was easier to use than the software for the 1997 general election. The ROTC also assisted in providing interactive training for the Election Results System, and was able to install updates remotely from its headquarters location.

REVISE software development project

The development of a system to replace ECAPLE, the current technology for revising electoral lists in the field during an electoral event, is well underway. The new system, called REVISE, will be year-2000 compliant and will provide increased functionality to meet needs that have evolved since the establishment of the National Register of Electors.

The project is proceeding on schedule. The definition phase for the system's functional requirements is complete, following stakeholder consultations with Elections Canada's directorates and with field representatives, including returning officers and automation co-ordinators.

The application is now well into the design phase.

Electoral geography

Elections Canada is developing a digital national road network, to be known as the National Geographic Database, that will be used for electoral mapping and for making the National Register of Electors more accessible to other jurisdictions that have different

electoral boundaries. This work is being undertaken jointly with Statistics Canada, and merges Statistics Canada's Street Network File and boundaries, Elections Canada's electoral map files, and thousands of new roads, road names and address ranges. As new electors are added to the National Register of Electors or as electors move to new addresses, we will identify where that elector's address is located on the national road network, and in which electoral district and in which polling division the elector's residence is located.

This process, known as geo-referencing, will allow provincial and municipal agencies to adapt the road network to identify their own "service areas" – electoral areas, school districts, evacuation zones, or social service areas, to name only a few examples – all from the same database.

The building phase of this project will be accomplished early in the summer of 1999 and the geo-referencing will be completed shortly thereafter. It will allow us to geo-reference 50 percent of the addresses in the National Register of Electors by using Statistics Canada's address range information. Another 43 percent will be geo-referenced using other sources such as data from Canada Post Corporation. The remaining seven percent represent rural addresses that cannot be geo-referenced until they are converted to civic addresses.

The National Geographic Database is proving to be of interest to other government agencies. For example, the database will be made available to the Department of National Defence for a year-2000 readiness project carried out under the umbrella of the National Contingency Planning Group.

Relations with Parliament and political parties

Chief Electoral Officer's appearance before the Senate Standing Committee

On February 3, 1999, the Chief Electoral Officer appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs regarding its consideration of bills C-445, C-464 and C-465.

The three bills, which received royal assent on March 11, 1999, change the names of the following electoral districts pursuant to the 1996 Representation Order:

An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Stormont–Dundas, (1999, c. 7), changed the name of that district to Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh.

An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Sackville–Eastern Shore, (1999, c. 8), changed the name of that district to Sackville–Musquodoboit Valley–Eastern Shore.

An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Argenteuil–Papineau, (1999, c. 6), changed the name of that district to Argenteuil–Papineau–Mirabel.

The Chief Electoral Officer took the opportunity to make some observations on the redistribution process as it relates to the selection of electoral district names and to draw the Committee's attention to the administrative impact of electoral district name changes.

Members of Parliament are able to make objections to the electoral boundaries commissions' reports. Only 11 of the 81 objections put forward during the 1996 redistribution related to name changes. In addition, since the January 1996 proclamation of the Representation Order, 44 electoral district names have been changed, including the bills under review, compared to 37 changes after the 1976 redistribution and 18 changes after the 1987 redistribution. Under the last three representation orders the commissions are selecting longer electoral district names.

In that regard, the Chief Electoral Officer explained that making such changes has a cost impact, given that Elections Canada's informatics systems, as currently designed, accommodate a maximum of 50 characters.

Report to House Standing Committee on Plans and Priorities

On April 20, 1999, the Chief Electoral Officer appeared before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to report on main estimates for 1999–2000.

The Committee was advised that for the 1999–2000 fiscal year Elections Canada's planned statutory and voted expenditures are \$35.3 million.

The Chief Electoral Officer also highlighted plans and priorities for the coming year. They include the maintenance program for ensuring high quality electoral lists and improved data matching, development of a digital national road network for electoral mapping, continuing with the development of the Returning Office Technology Centre, completion of year-2000 compliance preparations, and replacement of ECAPLE, the current technology for revising electoral lists during an event, with an updated system called REVISE.

Advisory Committee of Registered Political Parties

Since the Chief Electoral Officer's last report, three meetings with the Advisory Committee of Registered Political Parties have dealt with a range of issues of interest to its members. At its February 5, 1999, meeting, the Committee finished its review of administrative issues as referred by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs during its consideration of the *Canada Elections Act* in 1998.

Most recently, on April 23, 1999, the main subject for an all-day session of the Committee was a review of various electoral systems and how they could apply in the Canadian context. The recurring theme of the session was that no electoral system is perfect, because, for instance, none of them can perfectly achieve a proportional representation that includes the representation of women, Aboriginal and ethnocultural minorities.

Three respected Canadian political scientists (André Blais, Université de Montréal; John C. Courtney, University of Saskatchewan; Heather MacIvor, University of Windsor) were invited to present papers on subjects ranging from the design of electoral systems to the examination of electoral systems used in other democracies that could be applied in the Canadian context. The papers will be available on the Elections Canada Web site in June 1999.

International activities

Global Electoral Organization (GEO) Conference

As part of Elections Canada's continued efforts to support democratic development around the world, the agency hosted the first meeting of the Global Electoral Organization (GEO) Network in Ottawa, April 11–14, 1999. The GEO Network is sponsored by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), and the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UN-EAD).

Participants at the conference included representatives of twelve associations of election management bodies. Also in attendance were representatives of over 15 bilateral development agencies, foreign ministries, and international financial institutions.

The conference had several objectives. The first was to bring together election management associations to exchange information on programs they conduct to benefit their members and the electoral processes of their region. The second was to identify bilateral programs that could be established. The third was to identify the common needs shared by all associations and their members.

The twelve associations gave reports on the history and activities of their groups. This was followed by working groups for discussion in greater detail of the lessons learned about association development. Reports from the working groups were shared with the general assembly.

The conference established a follow-on mechanism for a GEO Network. At the conclusion of the conference, the organizers, together with Mexico's Instituto Federal Electoral, signed a letter of intent to co-operate on electoral governance projects. The conference directed this partnership, of which Elections Canada is a key member, to provide follow-on support for GEO Network communications and activities.

Update on missions

In response to requests and funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency, Elections Canada receives foreign delegations interested in learning about the Canadian electoral system and provides professional electoral advice to other countries.

Since September 1998, Elections Canada has received the following delegations.

Five members of the Kenyan Electoral Commission visited Elections Canada on October 21–22, 1998, to examine the Canadian electoral system. This delegation studied Elections Canada's roles and responsibilities, electoral law and reform, the organization of national elections, the National Register of Electors, the financing of political parties and candidates and the voter education program.

On November 25–26, 1998, Elections Canada received the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the Commissioner and three other members of the Electoral Commission of Uganda. The objectives of this visit were to examine Elections Canada's roles, responsibilities and authority, electoral law, the establishment of electoral districts, the referendum process, and referendum committees and their financing.

On March 25, 1999, Elections Canada received a parliamentary delegation from Lesotho, which included the President of the Senate, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, the Deputy Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk Assistant of the National Assembly. The purpose of their visit was to obtain a general overview of Canada's electoral system and referendum law.

During this same period, Elections Canada provided the following professional and technical assistance.

A memorandum of understanding was signed with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) to provide Canadian government-funded training for poll workers, which was one of the most pressing needs for the March 28, 1999, legislative

elections in Benin. It was part of IFES' program to provide comprehensive training for all individuals involved in the implementation of nationwide voter registration and voting under the authority of the Autonomous National Election Commission of the Republic of Benin.

Under an administrative agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency, Elections Canada signed a contract with CODE Incorporated, a Canadian organization specializing in support to elections in developing countries, for the procurement of pre-assembled voter registration and polling station kits for the Malawi Electoral Commission.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Elections Canada and the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) for a Canadian electoral expert to serve as a moderator at a conference on elections organized by IFES and the Supreme Elections Commission of Yemen. The conference took place in Sanna, Yemen on March 15–18, 1999; 12 distinguished international moderators were invited to facilitate seven working groups. This was the first time that government and non-government participants had been assembled to discuss strengthening the electoral administration in Yemen.

The Windsor–St. Clair by-election

On December 9, 1998, the Liberal Member of Parliament for Windsor–St. Clair, Shaughnessy Cohen, died suddenly, leaving a vacancy in the House of Commons. On March 7, 1999, the Governor in Council announced that the by-election to replace Ms. Cohen would be held on April 12, 1999.

Following this announcement, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a writ to the returning officer for Windsor–St. Clair, directing her to hold a by-election. Table 1 provides an overview of the important milestones between the issue of the writ and its return.

Table 1
Key dates for the April 1999 by-election in Windsor–St. Clair

Date	Election calendar day	Event
December 9, 1998		Liberal Member of Parliament for Windsor–St. Clair, Shaughnessy Cohen, dies
March 7, 1999	Day 36	Issue of the writ; preparations made to open the office of the returning officer
March 7 to 13	Days 36 to 30 (midnight)	Advertising blackout period for political parties
March 10	Day 33	Revision of list of electors begins
March 11	Day 32	Proclamation published – candidates may file nominations
March 15	Day 28	Targeted revision begins
March 17 to 19	Days 26 to 24	Notices of Confirmation of Registration mailed to all registered electors
March 22	Day 21 (2 p.m.)	Nominations close
April 1	Day 11	Revised list of electors distributed
April 2, 3, 5	Days 10, 9 and 7	Advance polls
April 6	Day 6 (6 p.m.)	Revision and special ballot registration ends
April 9	Day 3	Official list of electors distributed
April 11 to 12	Days 1 and 0	Advertising blackout period for political parties
April 12	Day 0	Election day
April 13	Day –1	Official addition
April 20	Day –8	Writ returned

Communicating with electors

An important part of Elections Canada's task in the Windsor–St. Clair by-election, as in all electoral events, was to generate awareness – among the general public, political parties, candidates, and the media – of the by-election and of the key dates in the election period.

The principal means of communicating with the general public was the “householder”, a pamphlet sent to all residences in the electoral district within days of the issue of the writ. This publication provided basic information, including the name of the returning officer and the phone number of her office, information about the National Register of Electors, and details on how to have names added to, or corrected on, the list of electors. It also gave information on deadlines for voting by special ballot and the return of special ballots, key dates for advance polls, procedures for registering and voting on election day, and the residency requirements for voting in a by-election. It also stressed the importance of keeping the notice of Confirmation of Registration until election day.

The notice, which arrived several days after the householder, provided details of where and when electors could vote, including several alternatives that Elections Canada provides for electors unable or unwilling to go to their local polling station on election day.

All material was produced in both official languages. Census data revealed no ethnocultural or Aboriginal communities whose numbers would warrant translating basic information into other languages. However, key information was made available in alternative formats, including Braille, large print, and audio-cassette.

A print advertisement was run in daily and community newspapers in the final days of the election calendar to remind electors that their polling station location was printed on their notice of Confirmation of Registration, and that they could register to vote at the poll. The advertisement

was based on the approach used in the last general election.

Elections Canada also worked closely with local media to ensure that electors had the necessary information, supplying a media information kit containing the launch news release, the householder, an electoral district profile, and a calendar of key dates. In addition, the kit contained background information on a variety of topics, ranging from the electoral process and the role of Elections Canada, to the Special Voting Rules, the National Register of Electors, and election expenses and contributions guidelines for candidates and parties.

Over the course of the 36-day campaign, Elections Canada issued 10 news releases highlighting key dates, election day reminders, and clarification of what the media could and could not report on the weekend preceding election day.

A special by-election segment was also established on Elections Canada's Web site. The list of official candidates, the electoral district map, and the address and telephone number of the office of the returning officer were included in this segment, along with general information on the voting process and voting by mail-in ballot. On election night, results were posted on the Web page as they became available.

As well, Elections Canada Enquiries Unit staff members were available to answer questions and distribute information to electors.

Communicating with candidates, official agents and auditors

Seminar

Elections Canada presented a seminar on March 19, 1999, to help candidates, official agents and auditors understand and comply with the financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. Instruction was given on how to complete the Candidate's Return Respecting Election Expenses and a demonstration of the Electronic Candidate Return was provided.

Revising the list of electors

For the third time since its establishment in 1997, the National Register of Electors was used to produce the preliminary list of electors for a by-election. The returning officer for Windsor–St. Clair reported fewer than 4 300 additions, removals and changes during the event to the information contained in the preliminary list of electors. This number represents six percent of the total 69 034 electors on the preliminary list and demonstrates that the quality of the information contained in the National Register of Electors is consistent with projections made by Elections Canada during the Register’s research and feasibility phase.

Including electors who registered on election day, there were, in total, 3 628 electors who asked that their names be added to the list or that their registration be modified during the event. Of the total, 1 291 electors responded to the notice of Confirmation of Registration; 391 electors were added or corrected their records during targeted revision, 41 at advance polls and 1 905 on election day. Figure 1 shows the distribution of additions and corrections by each method of registration. In addition, a total number of 587 records were removed from the list for a total of 4 215 transactions. Table 2 shows the details of revision transactions.

Figure 1
Windsor–St. Clair by-election

Distribution of additions and corrections made to the preliminary list of electors by registration method
N = 3 628

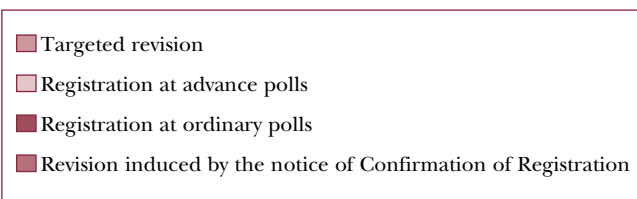
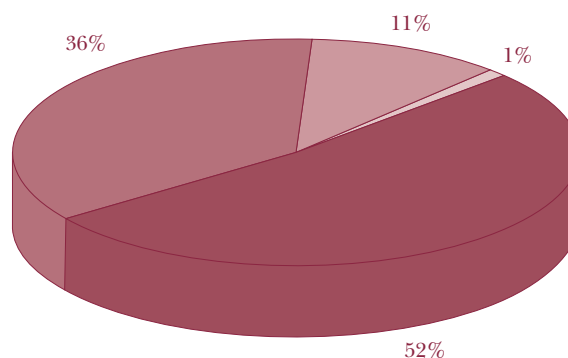


Table 2
List of elector revision transactions

Calendar	Revision transactions	Cumulative totals	
Day 33 to Day 11	<i>Preliminary list</i>	69 034	
	Additions	761	
	Corrections	521	
	Deletions	496	
	Total	1 778	
Day 10 to Day 6	<i>Revised list</i>	69 299	
	Additions	353	1 114
	Corrections	88	609
	Deletions	70	566
	Total	511	2 289
Election day	<i>Official list</i>	69 582	
	Additions	1 591	2 705
	Corrections	314	923
	Deletions	21	587
	Total	1 926	4 215
	<i>Final list</i>	71 152	

Voting in the by-election

Voter turnout

In total, 31 827 of 71 152 eligible electors cast their ballots in the Windsor–St. Clair by-election. The majority voted on election day, April 12, 1999, at one of the 52 polling sites located throughout the electoral district. Polling stations were open from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

Voter turnout was 45 percent, compared to 49 percent for the Sherbrooke by-election in September 1998, and 56 percent for Windsor–St. Clair in the 1997 general election.

For those unable to vote on election day, advance polls were held on April 2, 3 and 5, 1999. Table 3 shows the details of polling site locations and accessibility.

As is always the case during elections or by-elections, residents of the electoral district unable to vote at the advance or ordinary polls, as well as

residents travelling or residing outside Canada temporarily, could vote by mail-in ballot under the Special Voting Rules. Canadians abroad were notified of their opportunity to cast a ballot in the by-election by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade through its diplomatic missions and consular posts. Soldiers posted to Canadian Forces bases, whether inside or outside Canada, were informed of their right to vote by the Department of National Defence (please see Table 4).

As well, persons in institutions, including hospitals and correctional facilities, were permitted to vote in the by-election under the Special Voting Rules. Registration and voting in acute care hospitals was held on April 5 and 6. To facilitate special voting in correctional facilities, information kits were supplied to the John Howard and Elizabeth Fry societies.

Preliminary statistics on the number of ballots cast by all means are presented in Table 5.

Table 3
Polling sites

Location of polling sites			Types of polling stations			
Building type	Number of sites	Percentage	Ordinary	Mobile	Advance	Total
Church hall	16	30.8%	199	3	9	211
Community centre	12	23.1%				
Educational	11	21.1%				
Hostel for the elderly	5	9.6%				
Recreation centre	1	1.9%				
Residential	5	9.6%				
Royal Canadian Legion	2	3.9%				
Total	52	100.0%				

Polling station accessibility		
Total number of polling stations	Accessible polling stations	Percentage
211	211	100%

The candidates and by-election results

The deadline for the nomination of candidates was 2:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time, on March 22; 5:00 p.m. was the deadline for withdrawal or for making corrections to information on candidates' nomination papers. Five candidates were nominated for the by-election, and four political parties were represented. One candidate ran with no political affiliation.

Once nominations closed, the list of official candidates was transmitted to Canadian diplomatic

missions and consular posts by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, as well as to Canadian Forces bases by the Department of National Defence. The list was also posted on the Elections Canada Web site.

On election night, the returning officer's Election Results System was linked to Elections Canada's central computer; as votes were counted, they were transmitted to the Ottawa server for posting on the Web site.

Liberal candidate Rick Limoges received the most votes and was elected Member of Parliament for Windsor–St. Clair (please see Table 6).

Table 4
Registrations under the Special Voting Rules

Categories of electors asking to vote under the Special Voting Rules	Number of ballots requested
Group 1¹	
Members of the Canadian Forces	133
Incarcerated electors	15
Electors temporarily residing outside Canada	18
Group 1 subtotal	166
Group 2²	
Electors temporarily outside their electoral districts	6
Electors voting in their electoral districts	468
Group 2 subtotal	474
Total number of registrations for voting by special ballot	640

¹The three lists of electors registered under group 1 of the Special Voting Rules are separate from the list that is revised during an event.

²The electors registered under group 2 of the Special Voting Rules are also entered on the revised list of electors.

Table 5
Preliminary statistics on the number of ballots cast and voter turnout, April 1999 by-election in Windsor–St. Clair

Number of electors on final list	Ordinary polls	Advance polls	Special Voting Rules	Total votes cast	Rejected ballots	Total valid votes	Voter turnout
71 152	29 677	1 848	487	32 012	185	31 827	45%

Improvements to electoral administration

As a result of discussions with the Advisory Committee of Registered Political Parties, a review and pilot project were undertaken during the Windsor–St. Clair by-election to test the format of identification labels provided by Elections Canada for the use of candidates' representatives at the polls. The objective was to make identification of the representatives more visible to electors as they enter the polling station, as well as to party workers who must contact these representatives periodically during voting hours.

A larger identification card was developed, to be worn around the neck. As well as the representatives' identification cards, those worn by poll personnel were also modified. The returning officer reported that these new labels were viewed by all parties as an improvement.

It was also decided that new seating arrangements at the polls for representatives of candidates would be tested during the by-election. No tables were provided for the representatives; they were seated behind the deputy returning officer and the poll clerk. Their chairs were positioned as close as possible to the poll officials' table to ensure that they could clearly hear the electors identifying themselves as they arrived for voting.

All deputy returning officers and central poll supervisors were surveyed to assess the usefulness and appropriateness of the new identification cards and seating arrangements. The results of this survey will be discussed with the Advisory Committee of Registered Political Parties. Elections Canada will then determine whether or not these new measures should be implemented for the next general election.

Table 6

Preliminary statistics on valid votes cast, by candidate, April 1999 by-election in Windsor–St. Clair

Candidate	Political affiliation	Valid votes obtained	Percentage
Comartin, Joe	New Democratic Party	13 800	43.4%
Cowan, Scott	Reform Party of Canada	1 956	6.2%
Easton, Bruck	Progressive Conservative Party of Canada	2 074	6.5%
Limoges, Rick	Liberal Party of Canada	13 891	43.6%
Turmel, John C.	No affiliation	106	0.3%
Total		31 827	100.0%

Conclusion

This report fulfils the statutory obligation of the Chief Electoral Officer to report on the Windsor–St. Clair by-election. Like the past two by-elections in Port Moody–Coquitlam and Sherbrooke, it gave Elections Canada the opportunity to test new developments in computerization in preparation for the next federal general election, while at the same time providing constituents and candidates in the Windsor–St. Clair by-election with up-to-date and efficient electoral administration and services.

As is customary, the report reviews other developments since the last by-election, highlighting progress towards Elections Canada’s established goals. We have also taken the opportunity to introduce new plans and priorities that will build on established goals in the years ahead, reflecting directions identified in the recently released strategic plan.