



Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Following the November 27, 2006,
By-elections Held in
London North Centre and
Repentigny

www.elections.ca





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The Chief Electoral Officer • Le directeur général des élections

March 28, 2007

The Honourable Peter Milliken
Speaker of the House of Commons
Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to submit this report, which covers the administration of the by-elections held on November 27, 2006, in the electoral districts of London North Centre and Repentigny. This report also deals with the administration of Elections Canada from the publication of the statutory report on the 39th general election of January 23, 2006, until the departure of my predecessor, Jean-Pierre Kingsley. I am submitting this report in accordance with subsection 534(2) of the *Canada Elections Act* (S.C. 2000, c. 9), within 90 days after the end of the year in which the by-elections were held.

Under section 536 of the Act, the Speaker shall submit this report to the House of Commons without delay.

This report includes a summary of the official voting results. For more information, please see the Elections Canada Web site at www.elections.ca.

Yours truly,

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer

Table of Contents

Foreword	7
Election readiness	7
Ongoing activities	7
Closing the cycle of the 2004 and 2006 general elections	9
Political financing	9
Financial reporting	10
Registered parties.....	10
Electoral campaign returns.....	10
Reimbursement of election expenses.....	10
Registered electoral district associations.....	11
Leadership contests	11
Third parties.....	11
The 2006 By-elections	12
Launch of the by-elections	12
Milestones of the electoral process	13
Communicating with electors	14
Youth outreach.....	14
Ethnocultural outreach	15
Homeless outreach	15
Media relations.....	15
Elections Canada Web site	15
Public enquiries	15
Communicating with candidates, official agents and auditors	16
Revising the lists of electors	16
Voting in the by-elections	17
Ordinary polls and advance polls.....	17
Special Voting Rules.....	19
Final lists of electors	21
Testing new initiatives	22
The candidates	23
By-election results	23
Special adaptations	25
Enforcement of the <i>Canada Elections Act</i>	25
Candidates' election expenses	25

Foreword

In addition to the by-elections of November 27, 2006, this report covers the activities of Elections Canada during the nine months from the release of the report on the January 23, 2006, general election to February 2007.

Election readiness

For the first time in 40 years and only the second time in the history of Canada's electoral system, Canadian voters elected a second consecutive minority government on January 23, 2006. Accordingly, during the period covered by this report Elections Canada's top priority was to return to a continuous state of readiness to conduct another major electoral event, which could occur at any time in a minority situation. The agency completed post-event activities associated with the closely spaced general elections of 2004 and 2006, and at the same time pursued other activities within its mandate.

Even before polling day for the 39th general election – in case it produced a second minority government – the Chief Electoral Officer made some decisions to initiate preparations for the 40th general election, predicated on the fact that historical averages suggest that another election could occur much sooner than would be the case under a majority government. Key preparatory tasks included:

- Restocking election materials, including manuals, paper for printing ballots and other essential components of the electoral process. In total, some 425 items were restocked between February 2006 and the fall of that year.
- Refurbishment of the local area networks (LANs) used to exchange data with returning officers in the field. All 308 LANs were refurbished by the fall of 2006.
- Pre-event assignments to be conducted by returning officers. By March 1, 2007, more than 20 assignments had been sent to the field in preparation for a general election:

- logistics – finding an office, assessing polling station accessibility, identifying key personnel, training community relations officers and organizing Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program activities
- targeted revision planning
- targeted polling division and advance polling division revision

Ongoing activities

Several pieces of legislation proposed since the beginning of the 39th Parliament have a bearing on the work of Elections Canada. Bill C-4, *An Act to amend An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act*, received royal assent on May 11, 2006. Other pieces of legislation include:

- Bill C-2, *An Act providing for conflict of interest rules, restrictions on election financing and measures respecting administrative transparency, oversight and accountability (Federal Accountability Act)*
- Bill C-16, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (fixed election dates)*
- Bill C-31, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Public Service Employment Act*

Also before Parliament are a number of private members' bills, as well as seven bills that propose to change electoral district names.

The Chief Electoral Officer appeared eight times before committees of the House of Commons to discuss such topics as Bill C-2, Bill C-4, Bill C-16, Bill C-31, his report on the 2006 general election, the elections in Haiti and a study of democratic development. He also appeared twice before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs during its studies of Bill C-2 and Bill C-4. Transcripts of all his appearances before parliamentary committees are posted on the Elections Canada Web site.

In his role as chair of the Advisory Committee of Political Parties, the Chief Electoral Officer hosted two meetings. Topics included members' impressions of the 2006 general election, poll site locations, voter registration, the Elections Canada Information Technology Renewal project and other items. Political party registration requirements were changed in 2004, with the result that after the 2006 general election, three newly registered political parties were invited to join the Advisory Committee: the Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada, the First Peoples National Party of Canada and the Western Block Party.

As part of the agency's ongoing involvement in international electoral assistance, Elections Canada hosted the worldwide launch of the Administration and Cost of Elections (ACE) Electoral Knowledge Network. The Chief Electoral Officer also participated in meetings with international organizations promoting democracy, took part in professional exchanges and visitors' programs in Mexico and Panama, and welcomed several foreign delegations. During this period, the International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections concluded its activities. To carry on its work, in October 2006 the Canadian Mission for Accompanying Haitian Elections (CMAHE) was established, led by the Chief Electoral Officer. The CMAHE provided information and evaluation to the Conseil Électoral Provisoire for the December 3, 2006, local, municipal and legislative elections in Haiti. Further information about the CMAHE, including its final report, is posted on the Elections Canada Web site.

As part of its youth outreach program, Elections Canada supported three consultations on the subject of youth electoral participation conducted by Canada25 – a youth civic engagement organization targeting 20- to 35-year-olds. Two of the sessions were held in Calgary in February 2006; a third was held in June 2006. In all, some 120 young people of various backgrounds participated.

Throughout 2006, Elections Canada continued to work in partnership with Aboriginal organizations. In January 2006, the agency participated in two events organized by the National Aboriginal Achievement

Foundation. The organization's "Blueprint for the Future" career fair and the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards gala were staged in Vancouver, and during that time, Elections Canada organized a talking circle on Aboriginal participation in federal elections, which allowed for inclusive and open dialogue among 39 participants. On December 6, 2006, the Chief Electoral Officer and National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Phil Fontaine signed a memorandum of understanding, agreeing on continued co-operation between their organizations to develop a voter education campaign for First Nations electors for the 40th general election. Over the coming months, the two organizations intend to work together to develop information and educational tools and strategies for First Nations people.

To refine its outreach approach and initiatives, Elections Canada commissioned four concept papers to be published in spring 2007. This initiative is a key building and updating process required to build a strategic direction. The papers examine the electoral participation of four groups of electors, as well as outreach practices aimed at them: youth, Aboriginal people, ethnocultural communities and Canadians with special needs. In view of gaps identified in some of the concept papers, Elections Canada formed a partnership with Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) to prepare three research papers on the political engagement of Canadian youth, including Aboriginal youth. The papers, which are part of CPRN's "Shaping a New Direction for Youth Democratic Participation" project, will be completed by summer 2007.

In June 2006, Elections Canada reviewed its outreach initiatives and created a long-term voter outreach strategy built around leadership, partnership, research, communications and operations.

Throughout the year, Elections Canada was engaged in renewing its strategic plan for 2007–12. The new plan will have a strong focus on results and will be supported by a performance measurement framework, also being developed by the agency.

Closing the cycle of the 2004 and 2006 general elections

By January 15, 2007, the Commissioner of Canada Elections, who is responsible for ensuring compliance with and enforcement of the *Canada Elections Act*, had received 1,931 complaints stemming from the June 2004 general election. Of these, 1,720 have been resolved and 211 are under review. Compliance agreements have been concluded in 19 cases. Charges have been laid in three cases: two for failure to file the electoral campaign return and documents, and one related to wilfully applying to be included in a list of electors for a polling division while already included in a list for another polling division.

By the same date, the Commissioner had also received 451 complaints arising from the 2006 general election, of which 347 have been resolved. The remainder are under review. Charges have been laid in two cases: for making a false statement of fact in relation to the personal character or conduct of a candidate, and for attempting to vote knowing that one is not qualified to be an elector.

There may be additional referrals to the Commissioner once Elections Canada has finished examining election expenses returns. Under the *Canada Elections Act*, candidates are required to file a return within four months of the polling date.

Details of compliance agreements and sentencing are posted on the Elections Canada Web site.

After the 2006 general election, Elections Canada again conducted the voter turnout study. Initiated after the 2004 general election, this measures elector turnout by age group, cross-referencing actual votes with data from the National Register of Electors. The report on voter turnout for the 2004 general election is available on the Elections Canada Web site; results of the 2006 study will be published later in 2007. Elections Canada also prepared a special issue of *Electoral Insight* magazine on the electoral participation of immigrants and ethnocultural communities that was published early in 2007.

Political financing

Since the report on the 2006 general election, Elections Canada has continued to fulfill its mandate of overseeing the financial provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. Full details, including returns and statistical tables, are posted in the Election Financing section of the Elections Canada Web site.

Bill C-2 received royal assent on December 12, 2006, and its provisions on political financing came into force on January 1, 2007. In preparation for the new provisions, Elections Canada produced guides, manuals, videos, software and other information tools, and developed forms to help political entities meet their obligations.

Financial reporting

Registered parties

The 15 registered parties in the 2006 general election were required to file their election expenses returns by July 24, 2006. Ten parties filed on time; the other five requested and received extensions under the *Canada Elections Act*. The extended deadlines were met in all cases.

Registered parties were required to file their fiscal returns for 2005 by June 30, 2006. Of the 15 registered parties in 2005, 6 filed within the original deadline, 6 requested extensions and 3 – the Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada, the First Peoples National Party of Canada and the Western Block Party – were not required to file. The three parties had become registered in December 2005; their 2006 returns will cover the period from the date they became registered to December 31, 2006. All 12 registered parties that were required to file met the original or extended deadline.

Any registered party that received 2 percent of the valid votes cast nationwide, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast in electoral districts in which it endorsed a candidate, is eligible to receive a quarterly allowance. Registered parties receiving a quarterly allowance must file quarterly returns on contributions and transfers received in the previous quarter.

All quarterly returns were filed within the filing deadline.

Electoral campaign returns

May 23, 2006, was the deadline for candidates in the 2006 general election to file their electoral campaign returns for contributions, expenses and other financial transactions related to that election. In all, there were 1,636 confirmed candidates.¹ Elections Canada received 1,624 complete candidate returns as of January 22, 2007. Some 1,607 of the returns were received within the original filing deadline or an authorized extension period; 17 were filed late.

The remaining 12 candidates (0.7 percent) have not yet filed a complete return, and either did not seek an extension or missed the extended deadline granted by the Chief Electoral Officer or a judge.

Reimbursement of election expenses

Final election expenses reimbursements paid to candidates as of January 22, 2007, totalled \$9,442,664; this amount is net of repayments related to initial reimbursement overpayments. When combined with the initial reimbursements, the total election expenses reimbursements paid to date are \$19,851,071. Some 630 of the 884 candidates eligible for expenses reimbursements have been paid. Any candidate who submits a return is eligible for an audit subsidy, paid directly to his or her campaign auditor. Audit subsidy payments made as of January 22, 2007, totalled \$735,451.

A significant number of campaigns were required to file amended financial returns. As of January 22, 2007, 184 candidates requested authorization to file an amendment in order to correct errors or omissions, and 206 candidates who requested authorization to pay claims after filing their returns were required to file an amendment to reflect those payments.

¹ For the 2006 general election, 1,636 candidates were confirmed but 2 withdrew after confirmation, leaving 1,634 active candidates.

Registered electoral district associations

Any electoral district association (EDA) registered before July 1, 2005, was required to complete and submit a financial transactions return by May 31, 2006, for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2005. An EDA that accepted contributions or incurred expenses of \$5,000 or more during this fiscal period had to submit an auditor's report with the return. A total of 1,096 associations were required to submit a return; of these, 576 met the May 31 deadline and 489 filed later. As of January 22, 2007, 31 EDAs had failed to file a complete return.

Again as of January 22, 2007, \$834,256 had been paid to EDA auditors related to the audit of the 2005 fiscal returns.

Leadership contests

Two parties filed notices of leadership contests after the 2006 general election.

The Green Party of Canada held a leadership contest from April 21 through August 26, 2006. Three contestants registered with Elections Canada. Each was required to file six financial reports: one on registration, four in the last four weeks of the contest and one six months after the contest. The three contestants have provided all of the required reports due to date. The final reports for this contest were due on February 26, 2007.

The Liberal Party of Canada held a leadership contest from April 7 through December 3, 2006. Eleven contestants registered with Elections Canada. Three contestants withdrew from the contest and, in accordance with the *Canada Elections Act*, were not required to file any of the four interim financial reports during the last four weeks of the contest. All reports due on registration and interim reports were submitted on time. The final returns for this contest are due on June 4, 2007.

Third parties

A total of 80 third parties were registered for the 2006 general election. Each was required to file a return for election advertising expenses and related contributions with Elections Canada by May 23, 2006. Of these, 60 filed on time and 13 filed late. As of January 22, 2007, seven had not filed their returns.

No third parties registered for the London North Centre or Repentigny by-elections.

The 2006 By-elections

Launch of the by-elections

On August 28, 2006, Benoît Sauvageau, the Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament for Repentigny since October 25, 1993, died, leaving his seat vacant.

On September 20, 2006, the Honourable Joseph Frank Fontana, the Liberal Party of Canada Member of Parliament for London North Centre since November 21, 1988, resigned, creating a second vacancy.

Writs were issued on October 22, 2006, directing the returning officers in the two ridings to conduct by-elections on November 27, 2006.

At that time, the seat distribution in the House of Commons was: Conservative Party of Canada – 124 seats; Liberal Party of Canada – 101 seats; Bloc Québécois – 50 seats; New Democratic Party – 29 seats; Independent – 2 seats; and vacant – 2 seats.

The boundaries of the electoral districts of London North Centre and Repentigny were unchanged from those in effect for the 2006 federal general election. These were the boundaries defined in the Representation Order of 2003, issued in accordance with the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.

Election materials required for the by-elections were shipped to returning officers when the writs were issued, followed by computer equipment on October 24. On October 30, the ballot paper was shipped directly to the printers identified by the returning officers.

Table 1
Returning officers

Electoral district	Name	Occupation	Place of residence
London North Centre	Donna Kelly	University professor	London
Repentigny	Michel Carignan	Legal	Repentigny

Milestones of the electoral process

Table 2 provides an overview of milestones in the process from the issue of the writs to their return for the by-elections held in 2006.

Table 2
Key dates for the by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny

Date	Election calendar day	Event
October 22	Day 36	Issue of the writs; notice to persons entitled to recommend revising agents; voting by special ballot begins Office of the returning officer for Repentigny opens to the public
October 23	Day 35	Office of the returning officer for London North Centre opens to the public
October 25	Day 33	Revision of lists of electors begins
October 26	Day 32	Notice of Election published; candidates may file nominations
October 29	Day 29	Targeted revision begins
October 30	Day 28	Preliminary election expenses spending limits for candidates released
November 1, 2 and 3	Days 26, 25 and 24	Voter information cards mailed to all registered electors
November 6	Day 21 (2:00 p.m.)	Nominations for candidates close
November 8	Day 19	List of confirmed candidates released
November 8, 9 and 10	Days 19, 18 and 17	Reminder cards mailed
November 16	Day 11	Revised lists of electors distributed
November 17, 18 and 20	Days 10, 9 and 7	Advance voting
November 19	Day 8	Registration and voting begin in acute care hospitals
November 21	Day 6	Revision and special ballot registration end; registration and voting end in acute care hospitals Final election expenses spending limits for candidates released
November 24	Day 3	Official lists of electors distributed to candidates
November 27	Day 0	Election day; preliminary results by electoral district posted on the Elections Canada Web site
November 28	Day -1	Validation of results; validated results posted on the Elections Canada Web site
December 5	Day -8	Writs returned

Communicating with electors

As in all electoral events, an important part of Elections Canada's task in a by-election is to generate awareness – among the general public (especially young electors), political parties, candidates and the media – of the by-election and the key dates in the election period.

For the November 27, 2006, by-elections, the primary tool for communicating with the general public was the voter information card. Between November 1 and 3, it was sent to all electors registered on the preliminary lists. It provided details on when and where to vote, as well as alternative voting methods for electors unable or unwilling to vote at their polling stations on election day. Between November 8 and 10, Elections Canada followed up with reminder cards repeating the same information.

Our print and radio advertising campaign had two phases. The first phase notified electors that they should have received a voter information card, explained to electors who had not received the card how to register and informed electors how to have erroneous information corrected. These ads also included details on voter eligibility, advance voting and the special ballot. The second phase reminded electors of election day. Between November 10 and 17, mainstream radio stations in Repentigny ran repeated 60-second ads on the voter information card. In London North Centre, this phase of the campaign was delayed until after London's municipal election had been held on November 13 (Day 14) to avoid confusing electors. In the last five days of the by-election campaigns, ads reminding electors of election day were broadcast on morning radio shows.

As in other recent electoral events, Elections Canada made special outreach efforts to encourage participation by those who may experience barriers to voting, including youth, Aboriginal people, ethnocultural groups and homeless electors. In London North Centre, community relations officers for youth, ethnocultural populations and the homeless were hired. In Repentigny, a community relations officer for youth was hired. Information kits were sent to the N'Amerind Friendship Centre in

London and to organizations for persons with special needs in both ridings.

Youth outreach

Youth outreach was particularly important in London North Centre because the University of Western Ontario and its affiliated colleges occupy a large proportion of the electoral district. Of Western's 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students, more than 4,000 live on campus; many others live off campus but within the electoral district. This situation required extra efforts to ensure that young electors were aware of the eligibility requirements for voting and had the opportunity to vote. Targeted revision desks were established in student residences, and nine polling stations were set up on campus. To advise students living near the campus of their options, information kiosks were set up in the University Community Centre, and advertisements were placed in three student newspapers. The community relations officers also visited classes and contacted student associations.

To reach young people not attending university and raise awareness among high school students, the community relations officers contacted school boards and youth employment services, and placed posters in high schools and youth drop-in centres.

Repentigny had a similar situation, with a CEGEP located in the electoral district. The community relations officer for the riding had to develop innovative ways of reaching students of voting age, including meeting with them in cafeterias during lunch breaks. Teachers at both the CEGEP and the local high schools were open to receiving Elections Canada material and involving youth in the electoral process.

Ethnocultural outreach

In London North Centre, the ethnocultural community relations officer contacted community agencies, recruited staff and made presentations to English as a Second Language classes. Ads in Spanish, Korean and Chinese were placed in weekly newspapers serving those language groups. Community associations distributed Elections Canada's voter information guide in multiple languages to their members.

Homeless outreach

In London North Centre, the community relations officer for the homeless drew on experience gained during the 2006 general election to inform homeless electors about the federal by-election and differentiate this electoral event from the municipal election campaign being conducted at the same time.

Media relations

To ensure that all media outlets were well informed of the by-elections, Elections Canada distributed a media information kit containing the launch news release, profiles of the electoral districts, a calendar of key dates and backgrounders on topics ranging from the electoral process to the special ballot and the National Register of Electors. The kit also included information for parties and candidates regarding contributions and expenses. During the campaigns, we distributed 16 news releases; these highlighted key dates, including election day, and clarified what the media could and could not report on that day. All news releases were posted in the Media section of the Elections Canada Web site.

Elections Canada Web site

A special section for each by-election was established on the Elections Canada Web site. The section featured voter information about the electoral district, as well as the list of confirmed candidates, the electoral district map, the address and telephone number of the returning officer and general information on the voting process – in particular, voting by special ballot. The two sections attracted a total of 12,105 visits during the event. Another Web-based feature was the Voter Information Service, used since the 2004 general election (in a general election, the service is also speech-enabled). The service provided a variety of information, including the contents of the voter information card. On election night, results were posted on the Web site as they became available. The number of visits to the Election Night Results Web application was a record 14,151, up significantly from the previous by-election in May 2005.

Public enquiries

Elections Canada's Enquiries Unit can be reached through a toll-free number, or a toll-free TTY number for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. During the election period, the unit's bilingual staff fielded some 92 calls and 23 e-mail messages from the public, and provided documentation about the electoral process.

Communicating with candidates, official agents and auditors

For the London North Centre and Repentigny by-elections, the returning officers supplied various materials to candidates, official agents and auditors.

The returning officers met with the parties' representatives to make sure that they had all received the same information. These meetings provided an opportunity for explanations and discussions regarding voting procedures, election day rules and the election officer positions for which candidates and parties could recommend applicants. Returning officers were also asked to discuss with the candidates and/or their representatives a number of new electoral initiatives being tested by Elections Canada during the by-elections; for details, see page 22 of this report.

Revising the lists of electors

Quality estimates for London North Centre at the beginning of the by-election indicated that 89 percent of eligible electors were on the preliminary list of electors and that 77 percent of eligible electors were on the list and at the correct address as of October 1, 2006. As part of the targeted revision drive, revising agents visited 17,334 addresses identified by the returning officer. These addresses were located in high mobility areas, new residential developments, chronic care facilities and university residences. Overall, the returning officer undertook 9,488 registration transactions – 2,731 additions and 6,757 address updates. This represents 11 percent of the 89,880 electors registered on the preliminary lists of electors. There were also 6,710 corrections and removals made, bringing the total number of revisions performed during the London North Centre by-election to 16,198. Three electors were added to the list of electors voting outside Canada, Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors.

Some 6,521 registrations were performed during the revision period, and the remaining 2,967 were made on election day. As a result of the revision period and polling day registrations, it is estimated that the final lists of electors included 92 percent of eligible electors, with 83 percent of them at the correct address as of December 1, 2006.

In Repentigny, quality estimates at the beginning of the by-election showed that 96 percent of eligible electors were on the preliminary list of electors and that 90 percent of eligible electors were on the list and at the correct address as of October 1, 2006. Revising agents visited 3,744 addresses in high mobility areas, new residential developments and chronic care facilities. The returning officer undertook a total of 4,990 registration transactions – 716 additions and 4,274 address updates. This represents 6 percent of the 85,032 electors registered on the preliminary lists of electors. In addition, 2,536 corrections and removals were made, bringing the number of revisions performed during the Repentigny by-election to 7,526. Four electors were added to the list of electors voting outside Canada, Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors.

Some 4,589 registrations were performed during the revision period, and the remaining 401 were made on election day. It is estimated that the final lists of electors included 96 percent of eligible electors, with 94 percent at the correct address as of December 1, 2006.

For further information, see Table 3.

Table 3**Lists of electors – revision transactions during the by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny**

Electoral district	Electors on the preliminary lists, including Special Voting Rules (SVR)	Electors added ¹	Moves between electoral districts ²	Moves within the electoral district ³	Other corrections ⁴	Electors removed from lists ⁵	SVR Group 1 updates ⁶	Electors on the final lists
London North Centre	89,880	2,731	4,387	2,370	506	6,204	3	90,797
Repentigny	85,032	716	1,853	2,421	297	2,239	4	85,366

1. Electors who did not appear on any lists at the beginning of the election and were added during the event.
2. Electors who appeared on a list at the beginning of the election but who changed their address because of a move to another electoral district during the event.
3. Electors who appeared on a list at the beginning of the election and changed their address because of a move within the same electoral district during the event. These figures also include administrative changes made by the returning officer to elector records during the event.
4. Electors who appeared on a list of electors and requested a correction to their name or mailing address during the event.
5. Electors who appeared on a list of electors but were removed for one of the following reasons: the elector was deceased; the elector requested to be removed; the elector had moved; the elector was unqualified to be on the list (for example, less than 18 years old or a non-citizen); or the elector had a duplicate record on the same list. This figure also reflects elector records removed as a result of elector moves to another electoral district during the event and duplicates removed during the preparation of the final lists of electors.
6. Indicates the increase in the number of Group 1 electors registered under the Special Voting Rules (Canadian electors temporarily residing outside Canada, Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors) during the event.

Voting in the by-elections

In the London North Centre by-election, 38,273 of the 90,797 registered electors cast ballots, for a turnout of 42.2 percent. In comparison, 60,407 of the 91,328 registered electors in the 2006 general election voted, for a turnout of 66.1 percent.

In Repentigny, 31,636 of the 85,366 registered electors cast ballots, a participation rate of 37.1 percent. In the 2006 general election, 56,873 of the 84,312 registered electors voted, a turnout of 67.5 percent.

Ordinary polls and advance polls

In London North Centre, 35,050 people (91.6 percent of those who cast ballots) voted at one of the 240 ordinary polling stations located in 74 polling sites across the electoral district. Each ordinary poll served an average of 146 electors.

In Repentigny, 27,981 people (88.4 percent of those who cast ballots) voted at one of 204 ordinary polling stations located in 33 polling sites. Each ordinary poll served an average of 137 electors.

Under subsections 125(1) and 538(5) of the *Canada Elections Act*, mobile polling stations are established to collect the votes of seniors or persons with disabilities confined to chronic care facilities. These polling stations are set up in polling divisions with at least two health care institutions. For the by-election in London North Centre, five mobile polling stations served residents of 11 institutions. In Repentigny, two mobile polls collected ballots in six institutions.

In accordance with section 131 of the Act, polling stations were open for 12 hours on election day, from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Eastern Time).

Electors could also vote at the advance polls, which were open on November 17, 18 and 20 from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) at 10 polling locations in London North Centre and 11 in Repentigny. In London North Centre, 2,782 people voted in advance, compared with 5,882 electors in the 2006 general election. In Repentigny, 3,169 electors took advantage of the advance polls, compared with 4,953 in the 2006 general election.

Table 4 shows the details of the polling station sites, and Table 5 shows how many and what kinds of polling stations were available. Table 6 indicates polling station accessibility. In London North Centre,

225 polling stations were established at 87 polling sites, some of which served for both advance and ordinary polls. In Repentigny, 191 polling stations served electors at 40 sites.

Table 4
London North Centre – Types of polling sites*

Facility type	Ordinary polling sites		Advance polling sites	
	No.	%	No.	%
Apartment building	6	8	0	0
Church hall	12	16	4	40
Community centre	21	29	5	50
Educational facility	31	42	1	10
Seniors' residence	4	5	0	0
Total	74	100	10	100

Repentigny – Types of polling sites*

Facility type	Ordinary polling sites		Advance polling sites	
	No.	%	No.	%
Apartment building	2	6	0	0
Church hall	2	6	2	40
Commercial site	3	9	2	40
Community centre	3	9	1	20
Educational facility	23	70	0	0
Total	33	100	5	100

* Because the figures were rounded, there may be some discrepancies in the totals.

Table 5**London North Centre – Types of polling stations**

Ordinary		Advance	Total
Stationary	Mobile		
235	5	10	250

Repentigny – Types of polling stations

Ordinary		Advance	Total
Stationary	Mobile		
202	2	11	215

Table 6**Polling site accessibility**

Electoral district	Total sites	Number accessible	Percentage accessible
London North Centre	87	87*	100%
Repentigny	40	40*	100%

* No facility was modified to provide level access.

Special Voting Rules

As in any election, the option of voting by mail-in ballot under the Special Voting Rules (SVR) was available to electors who did not wish to, or could not, vote in advance or at the ordinary polls, as well as electors travelling or temporarily residing outside Canada. Canadians abroad could obtain information about how to cast their ballots by contacting any of the diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, or by visiting the Elections Canada Web site. Members of the Canadian Forces – whether based in Canada or abroad – were informed of their voting rights by the Department of National Defence. When the writs were issued, special ballot voting kits were sent to all Canadian Forces electors and electors residing outside Canada whose names appeared on the lists established for the electoral districts of London North Centre and Repentigny.

To ensure that electors unexpectedly hospitalized in acute care facilities during an election or by-election are able to vote, Elections Canada adopts procedures allowing these electors to register and vote by special ballot. In London North Centre and Repentigny, registration and voting in acute care facilities took place on November 19, 20 and 21, 2006.

The 2002 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Sauvé v. Canada (Chief Electoral Officer)* determined that the former paragraph 51(e), now paragraph 4(c), of the *Canada Elections Act* limiting inmates' right to vote contravened section 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. As a result of this decision, all incarcerated electors may now vote in federal elections regardless of the length of the term they are serving. In the London North Centre and Repentigny by-elections, all eligible electors incarcerated in a correctional institution or federal penitentiary could vote by special ballot in accordance with the relevant provisions. To be eligible, electors had to have their

place of ordinary residence in the electoral district of London North Centre or Repentigny.

In the past, Elections Canada in Ottawa faxed the lists of national and international electors to returning officers once during the third week and again during the fifth week of the 36-day electoral calendar. As a pilot project during the 2006 by-elections, the lists were sent electronically. The list of national electors was provided twice weekly – on Tuesday and Friday – starting from the third week. As in the past, the list of international electors was available during the third and fifth weeks. The initiative was successful: it reduced the time required to produce and send the lists, and it gave returning officers greater access to the lists and allowed them to identify electors who had previously registered, thereby lessening the risk of duplicate registrations. Elections Canada will use this method of distributing lists of national and international electors in future events.

In previous elections, the special ballot coordinator had sole responsibility for managing the registration process for voting by special ballot in the returning office. As a pilot project the agency introduced new SVR procedures during the Repentigny by-election, allowing the special ballot coordinator and the revising agent to share the task of SVR registration. Under the new procedures, the revising agent validated the elector’s proof of identity and completed form, and then directed the elector to the special ballot coordinator to receive a special ballot voting kit. The project proved successful, and the amended procedures will be implemented in future events.

Table 7 shows the number of registrations for voting by special ballot in the by-elections, by group and category.

Table 7
Registrations under the Special Voting Rules during the by-elections held in November 2006 in London North Centre and Repentigny

Groups and categories of electors under the Special Voting Rules	Number of ballots issued	
	London North Centre	Repentigny
Group 1*		
Members of the Canadian Forces	253	112
Incarcerated electors	1	2
Electors temporarily residing outside Canada	71	13
Group 1 subtotal	325	127
Group 2**		
Electors temporarily outside their electoral district	36	39
Electors voting in their electoral district	371	437
Group 2 subtotal	407	476
Total number of registrations for electors voting by special ballot	732	603

* Electors in the three categories registered under Group 1 of the Special Voting Rules are not included in the local lists that are revised by the returning officer during an event.

** Electors in the categories registered under Group 2 of the Special Voting Rules are included in the local lists of electors.

Final lists of electors

On the basis of the 2001 Census, the population of London North Centre was 107,672 and that of Repentigny was 103,977. There were 89,880 names on the preliminary lists of electors for London North Centre and 85,032 on the preliminary lists for Repentigny. The lists were produced using information from the National Register of Electors. During the revision period (October 29 to November 21, 2006), 16,198 electors were registered in London North Centre and 7,526 in Repentigny. These numbers include individuals who already appeared on the lists but had changed addresses.

The final lists of electors (prepared after election day under section 109 of the *Canada Elections Act*) included 90,797 people in London North Centre and 85,366 in Repentigny. Within those totals were electors who registered on election day – 2,967 in London North Centre and 401 in Repentigny.

Table 8 presents statistics on the number of ballots. Table 9 compares voter turnout in the 2006 by-elections with turnout in the 2006 general election.

Table 8
Statistics on the number of ballots cast, by voting method
and voter turnout, in the London North Centre and Repentigny by-elections*

London North Centre							
Number of electors on final lists	Ordinary polls	Advance voting	Special Voting Rules ballots	Rejected ballots	Total valid votes	Total votes cast	Voter turnout
90,797	35,050** 91.6%	2,782 7.3%	441 1.2%	174 0.5%	38,099 99.5%	38,273	42.2%
Repentigny							
Number of electors on final lists	Ordinary polls	Advance voting	Special Voting Rules ballots	Rejected ballots	Total valid votes	Total votes cast	Voter turnout
85,366	27,981** 88.4%	3,169 10.0%	486 1.5%	493 1.6%	31,143 98.4%	31,636	37.1%

* Because the figures were rounded, there may be some discrepancies in the totals.

** Includes electors who voted at a mobile poll.

Table 9
Voter turnout in the London North Centre and Repentigny by-elections

Electoral district	2006 by-elections	2006 general election
London North Centre	42.2%	66.1%
Repentigny	37.1%	67.5%

Testing new initiatives

Several other new initiatives designed to improve Canada's electoral process were tested during the by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny.

- **Visual aid for voters.** Large-size mock-ups of a ballot were displayed at polling stations to provide an additional voting aid to visually impaired electors. This visual aid proved useful and was well received by a number of elderly electors and by electors with reduced vision. These visual aids will be used in the 40th general election.
- **Public notice at the polls.** This initiative – posting signs reading “A person who votes when not entitled or who votes more than once is committing an offence and is subject to a fine of up to \$5,000 and to imprisonment for up to five years” – was developed to address recent concerns raised in the June 2006 report by the House Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs entitled *Improving the Integrity of the Electoral Process*.
- **Voter information cards.** *Improving the Integrity of the Electoral Process* also raised concerns about the potential for fraudulent use of the voter information card. To address these concerns, information officers were asked to collect the cards when electors entered the polling station. The cards were either placed in a box for future shredding or, if the elector preferred, returned to the cardholder after his or her name had been stated and struck from the list of electors. In London North Centre, at polling stations where the cards were collected, 83.4 percent of electors arrived with their cards; of those, 0.6 percent chose to have their card returned to them. In Repentigny, 77.5 percent of electors arrived with their cards, and 0.3 percent chose to have them returned. The process will be implemented in the 40th general election.
- **Revision.** A new component of the revision process saw revising agents visit addresses at which more than four electors were listed on the preliminary list of electors. Actual residents were confirmed or added to the list, and the names of electors no longer residing at the address were removed. This initiative will be used for the 40th general election. In another revision initiative, a list of potentially non-residential addresses was provided to revising agents for on-site verification. This proved to be a significant improvement to Elections Canada's program for detecting commercial addresses, but its implementation for the next general election is still being studied.
- **Training.** At the conclusion of training sessions for poll officials, trainees were tested to assess the knowledge they had acquired during the sessions and identify anyone who had not mastered the essential requirements for working as a deputy returning officer or poll clerk. In addition, an evaluation form was created to allow participants to give feedback on their training. Both initiatives proved to be well received for assessing the subject matter covered with poll officials during training and will be implemented in preparation for the 40th general election.
- **Reference aid for poll officers.** At ordinary polls, an *aide-mémoire* called a Quick Reference Guide was tested with deputy returning officers and poll clerks. The guide featured a summary of key procedural elements that had been covered during training, and could be used as a quick and simple reference tool during voting. Positive feedback was received from returning officers, training officers, deputy returning officers and poll clerks, and the Quick Reference Guide will be used in the 40th general election.

The candidates

From October 26, 2006, when the returning officers published the Notice of Election, the candidates in the by-elections had until 2:00 p.m. on November 6, 2006, to file their nomination papers. The candidates had until 5:00 p.m. on the same day to withdraw or make corrections to the name, address or occupation indicated on the nomination papers.

In London North Centre, six registered parties nominated candidates: the Canadian Action Party, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Green Party of Canada, the Liberal Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party and the Progressive Canadian Party. One candidate ran as an independent. None of the candidates withdrew before the deadline.

In Repentigny, five registered parties nominated candidates: the Bloc Québécois, the Canadian Action Party, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Liberal Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party. Two candidates ran as independents. None of the candidates withdrew. The nomination of a candidate for the Green Party of Canada could not be accepted because the potential candidate arrived at the returning office shortly before the deadline and did not have the necessary documents required by the *Canada Elections Act*.

Elections Canada posted the names of candidates on its Web site as they were confirmed, and posted the final lists of confirmed candidates once nominations closed. To ensure that Canadians abroad and members of the Canadian Forces could exercise their right to vote, the agency also transmitted the lists of official candidates to Canadian diplomatic missions and consular posts through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and to Canadian Forces bases through the Department of National Defence.

By-election results

On election night, each returning officer's Event Results System was linked to Elections Canada's central computer. As votes were counted, the numbers were transmitted to the server in Ottawa for posting on the Elections Canada Web site. Ballots cast under the SVR by incarcerated and Canadian Forces electors, and by Canadians voting from outside the riding, were counted at Elections Canada in Ottawa during the week before election day and on election night.

In London North Centre, Glen Pearson, the Liberal Party of Canada candidate, was elected. Bloc Québécois candidate Raymond Gravel was elected in Repentigny.

Table 10 identifies the political affiliation of each candidate, and the number and proportion of valid votes obtained by each.

Table 10
Statistics on valid votes obtained, by candidate

Candidate	Political affiliation	Place of residence	Occupation	Valid votes obtained	Percentage of valid votes (%)
London North Centre					
Arlow, Will	Canadian Action Party	Straffordville	Businessman	53	0.14
Ede, Robert	Independent	Thornhill	Realtor	78	0.2
Haskett, Dianne	Conservative Party of Canada	London	Lawyer	9,327	24.48
Hunter, Steve	Progressive Canadian Party	London	Carpenter	146	0.38
May, Elizabeth	Green Party of Canada	Ottawa	Federal political party leader	9,845	25.84
Pearson, Glen	Liberal Party of Canada	London	Firefighter	13,285	34.87
Walker, Megan	New Democratic Party	London	Executive director, NGO	5,365	14.08
Total				38,099	99.99
Repentigny					
Baig, Mahmood Raza	Canadian Action Party	Montréal	Journalist	91	0.29
Bellemare, Réjean	New Democratic Party	Le Gardeur	Economist	2,187	7.02
Bourgon, Stéphane	Conservative Party of Canada	Repentigny	Lawyer	5,822	18.69
Gravel, Raymond	Bloc Québécois	La Plaine	Priest	20,635	66.26
Leduc, Jocelyne	Independent	Saint-Hippolyte	Student	390	1.25
Millette, Régent	Independent	Laval	Retired	78	0.25
Turenne, Christian	Liberal Party of Canada	Repentigny	Financial advisor	1,940	6.23
Total				31,143	99.99

Special adaptations

In accordance with subsections 17(1) and 178(2) of the *Canada Elections Act*, the Chief Electoral Officer may adapt any provision of the Act to deal with an emergency, an error, or an unusual or unforeseen circumstance. During the 2006 by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny, the Chief Electoral Officer used his authority under these provisions on five occasions.

The Act prohibits voting by prisoners in federal institutions (that is, those serving sentences of two years or more), and therefore does not specify a procedure for such prisoners to vote. Since the 2002 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Sauvé v. Canada (Chief Electoral Officer)*, which struck down the prohibition, the Act has had to be adapted in federal elections or by-elections to extend the statutory process for voting by SVR in provincial institutions and make it applicable to federal prisoners.

A growing number of electors choose to vote at advance polls, but the Act provides for fewer election officers at those polls than at ordinary polls on election day. The Act was therefore adapted to enable returning officers to appoint additional poll clerks, information officers, registration officers and central poll supervisors to assist at the advance polling stations.

The collection of voter information cards at the entrance to polling places by information officers necessitated an adaptation because the Act permits the appointment of information officers only at central polling places, not at locations with only one polling station.

Special ballots were mistakenly given to three people who did not reside in the electoral districts of London North Centre and Repentigny, and the *Special Voting Rules as Adapted for the Purposes of a By-election* did not provide for a special ballot officer to set aside an outer envelope in such a case. Consequently, the rules were adapted to permit a special ballot officer to set aside an outer envelope if he or she ascertained that a special ballot had been given in error to an individual who did not reside in the electoral district in which the by-election was held.

A mobile polling station in London North Centre was established to receive electors at a care facility between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m. before moving to other institutions. One elector registered to vote at that location could not vote during those three hours. The Act was adapted to permit the returning officer or assistant returning officer to issue a transfer certificate to that elector, allowing him to vote at a nearby polling station.

Enforcement of the *Canada Elections Act*

The Commissioner of Canada Elections received two complaints stemming from the by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny. Both have been resolved.

Candidates' election expenses

Under the *Canada Elections Act*, candidates are required to file an election expenses return within four months of election day. Elections Canada examines the returns for compliance purposes, as well as to determine the amount of reimbursement owed to qualified candidates. The candidates in the November 27, 2006, by-elections in London North Centre and Repentigny are required to file their returns by March 27, 2007. The information in the returns will be published as filed on the Elections Canada Web site shortly after they are submitted.