

Projected Costs for the 2007 Provincial General Election and Referendum

Submitted by the

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

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VOTING. EVERY DAY IT MATTERS.

Administrative Overview

For electors, candidates, political parties, media and other stakeholders, the writ period that will begin on September 10, 2007 and end October 10 with Election Day represents their main election experience.

For the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (commonly referred to as "Elections Ontario"), the election is our signal to deploy with intensity the tools and techniques we have developed and refined to this point, towards delivering an electoral process that is marked by accessibility and integrity, to approximately:

- 8.5 million electors
- 9 registered political parties
- 500-600 candidates

We will do this in 107 electoral districts that comprise 107 returning offices plus satellite offices, and an estimated:

- 2,500 returning office staff
- 10,000 voting locations
- 28,000 polling places
- 70,000 poll workers

Our administration of the 2007 general election design will reflect critical benchmarks and insight, including:

- Analysis of responses by stakeholders through the 2003 Post-Event Research Survey on our performance, and their identification of opportunities for change and improvements
- The results and experiences of pilot projects through 10 by-elections across Ontario
- Consultation with stakeholders, including electors, candidates and parties
- Our Strategic Plan 2002-2007, which continues to guide us towards electoral process excellence.

Implementation of our event communications strategy is well underway to support and manage advertising, outreach and media relations campaigns for the benefit of Ontario's electors. These processes integrate with increased customer-service functionality (Where do I vote? Am I on the List?) through our new web site, as well as a central call centre that is prepared to respond to electors, including those with a range of special needs due to disability, language or residential issues.

Legislative Impact

The 2007 Projected Costs reflect our prompt and expedient response to recent changes to the *Election Act* and *Election Finances Act* and the passing of referendum legislation. A number of these changes expand the scope of our administration of the 2007 event and impact election facilities, materials, staffing, training, technology and other resource requirements therein¹. The following details the impact of legislative changes on our election operations.

Bill 214, Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005 (December 15, 2005)

- Redistribution from 103 to 107 electoral districts under the *Representation Act, 2005*, requiring the training of 107 returning officers, including 85 who are new to the role, and the resourcing of their local offices across Ontario
- Introduction of fixed-date elections
- Disclosure of contributions and real-time reporting.

Bill 155, Electoral System Referendum Act, 2007 (April 18, 2007)

- Directs us to apply the *Election Act* to the referendum with necessary modifications, as if the referendum were a general election. Also sets out detailed special rules for the application of the *Election Act* to the referendum, requiring:
 - A separate referendum ballot
 - Referendum ballots to be counted separately
 - Referendum campaign organizers to register with the Chief Electoral Officer and to provide financial reports on referendum advertising
 - Accommodation of additional scrutineers appointed by registered referendum campaign organizers, whose functions are limited to the referendum.

Ontario Regulation 211/07 made under the Electoral System Referendum Act, 2007, filed May 23, 2007

- Sets out rules for:
 - Registration of campaign organizers with Elections Ontario
 - The Chief Electoral Officer to publish on the Internet the names and addresses of registered referendum campaign organizers, as they are registered
 - Who can contribute for the purpose of referendum advertising
 - Return of surplus funds to contributors if the amount of money contributed to a referendum campaign organizer for the purpose of referendum advertising exceeds the referendum campaign organizer's referendum advertising expenses
 - Campaign authorization of referendum and pre-referendum advertisements

¹ See Table 3

- Referendum advertising blackout period
- Referendum advertising reports from registered campaign organizers, due by April 10, 2008.

Bill 187, Budget Measures and Interim Appropriation Act, 2007 (May 17, 2007)

- Sets the date for the issue of the writs and nomination day
- Amends the *Election Finances Act* to reduce the threshold for registering as a political party.

Bill 218, Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2007 (June 4, 2007)

- More than doubles the number of advance polling days from six to 13
- Extends the hours of voting on polling day by one hour
- Expands the ballot to include a candidate's party affiliation
- Establishes additional accessibility criteria for selecting voting locations
- Introduces broader elector identification requirements
- Charges the CEO to undertake election-related public education campaigns, including new-voter information for students approaching the voting age
- Prescribes target registration exercises
- Introduces on-line confirmation by voters, with an August 1 deadline to be operational
- Includes new reporting and transparency requirements for third parties who engage in election advertising
- Alters the advertising blackout rules
- Requires the CEO to implement a neutral public education program for the referendum.

Ontario Regulation 244/07 made under the Election Act (Fees and Expenses), filed June 7, 2007

- Increases the fees and expenses allowed to returning officers and other election officials in administering the election process in the 107 electoral districts.

Overview of Projected Costs

The Report² by the Chief Election Officer on the 2003 General Election presented costs incurred during the writ period. Event costs incurred outside the writ period were reported in annual Public Accounts.

Since the 2003 event, the Legislature has enacted fixed-date general elections. Consequently, Elections Ontario has adopted a new model of financial planning and reporting. The projected costs for the 2007 events (election and referendum) are based on this new model.

To provide a basis for comparison between the 2003 event and projected costs for the 2007 events, we have extracted the 2003 election costs from the relevant annual Public Accounts and are presenting them in Table 1.

Table 1 – Adjustments 2003	
Target Registration	16,000,000
Target Registration - computer rental	970,000
Event Preparation - Training	970,000
Event Preparation - Preliminary Duties	3,100,000
Event Preparation - Communications	1,304,000
Election Finances	4,394,000
Total	\$26,738,000

As noted, the 2007 Projected Costs respond to the changes within our legislative environment – in particular, the:

- **Fixed date.** This has allowed costs that previously had to be assigned under ongoing, statutory operations to be allotted to the general election costs.
- **Referendum.** Wherever possible, we have tried to meld our administrative practices, including our communications planning, to cover both election and referendum requirements, with a goal of managing costs as effectively as possible.

Table 2 – 2007 Projected Costs illustrates the allocation of our projected costs (\$92,944,000) for administering the 2007 general election and referendum and the referendum education program.

² *Access, Integrity and Participation: Towards Responsive Electoral Processes for Ontario* (page 34)

Table 2 - 2007 Projected Costs³

	<i>Published 2003</i> ⁴	<i>Adjustments 2003</i> ⁵	RESTATED 2003	TOTAL 2007
HEADQUARTERS				
Communications	6,188,000	1,835,000	8,023,000	13,829,000 ⁶
Human Resources	1,557,000	669,000	2,226,000	3,677,000
Hardware and Equipment	244,000	168,000	412,000	603,000
Services	1,957,000	421,000	2,378,000	4,167,000
Supplies	1,943,000	8,000	1,951,000	2,251,000
Distribution, Transportation, Postage	913,000	545,000	1,458,000	1,074,000
	12,802,000	3,646,000	16,448,000	25,601,000
ELECTION FINANCES	0	4,394,000 ⁷	4,394,000	6,169,000
ELECTORAL DISTRICTS				
Administration of Returning Office	10,048,000	5,585,000	15,633,000	14,645,000
Advance Polls	953,000	(42,000)	911,000	3,371,000
Hardware and Equipment	2,169,000	4,389,000	6,558,000	1,748,000
Notice of Registration Cards	3,956,000	-	3,956,000	5,225,000
Polling Day	11,446,000	113,000	11,559,000	18,064,000
Printing	1,169,000	1,000	1,170,000	1,414,000
Revision Personnel	4,920,000	4,595,000	9,515,000	11,891,000
Supplies, Distribution and Services	236,000	184,000	420,000	359,000
Training	-	975,000	975,000	2,068,000
Preliminary Duties	-	2,898,000	2,898,000	2,389,000
	34,897,000	18,698,000	53,595,000	61,174,000
TOTAL	47,699,000	26,738,000	74,437,000	92,944,000

³ Based on responsibilities under the *Election Act*, the *Election Finances Act*, the *Representation Act, 2005*, the *Electoral System Referendum Act, 2007* and the *Taxpayer Protection Act, 1999*

⁴ 2003 Actuals published in the Report by the Chief Election Officer on the 2003 general election

⁵ 2003 Adjustments include event-related fees and expenses that occurred prior to and after the 2003 general election

⁶ Includes \$6,825,000 for Referendum Education

⁷ Published by the Chief Electoral Officer in annual reports under the *Election Finances Act* and shown in Adjustments above

The 2007 Projected Costs address the:

- Increase in number of electoral districts to 107 from 103
- Ontario Regulation 244/07 made under the *Election Act*, on Fees and Expenses, filed June 7, 2007
- Impacts of Bill 218 and Bill 155 (impacts from Bill 187 and Bill 214 were incorporated into our ongoing business practices), as detailed in the preceding section, *Legislative Impact*
- 2007 Election Design, including service level increases (Table 3)
- Inclusion of Election Finances Projected Costs (Table 4)
- Referendum Education Projected Costs (Table 5)

Table 3⁸ – Projected Cost Impacts	
Legislative Changes	
Electoral Districts	400,000
Schedule of Fees	3,900,000
Advance Polls	2,460,000
Identification Requirements	2,125,000
Longer Polling Hours	1,451,000
Election Administration	720,000
Referendum Administration	1,651,000
Communications	850,000
Election Finance Act – (Table 4)	1,775,000
Referendum Education – (Table 5)	6,825,000
Fixed Date Election	-7,051,000
	15,106,000
Service Level Increases	
Elector Base	403,000
Polling Divisions	2,609,000
Voting Locations	389,000
	3,401,000
Total	18,507,000

⁸ Consolidates the impact of legislative changes on our election operations.

Table 4 – Election Finances Projected Costs	
Human Resources	296,000
Transportation & Communications	32,000
Services	970,000
Supplies & Equipment	66,000
Other transactions: Audit & Election Subsidies	4,805,000
Total	6,169,000

Table 5 – Referendum Education Projected Costs	
Householders (4.8M addresses)	850,000
Direct Mail (8.5M electors)	220,000
Post-secondary Outreach	50,000
High School and Elementary School	50,000
Community Outreach Strategy	50,000
Television/Radio/Newspaper/Outdoor	4,200,000
Website/Internet	620,000
Call Centre	250,000
Brochures	60,000
Liaison Engagement	350,000
Administration	75,000
Earned media	50,000
Total	6,825,000