

# Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer 2018-2019



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## OUR VISION

Trusted by all Nova Scotians to excel in the delivery of fair and inclusive elections

## OUR MISSION

To serve democracy by delivering provincial elections impartially and professionally.

## OUR MANDATE

- Conduct provincial general elections and by-elections
- Ensure compliance with provincial electoral law including the political financing regime
- Establish and maintain election-related information, including the Nova Scotia Register of Electors
- Seek advice and conduct studies related to electoral processes
- Conduct electoral education programs

## OUR VALUES

- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Inclusivity
- Integrity (includes trustworthiness, professionalism, respect, fairness and objectivity)
- Transparency

## OUR GOALS

- 1 To conduct quality, cost effective, accessible elections
- 2 To create and provide quality electoral information
- 3 To engage and educate stakeholders in all aspects of the electoral process
- 4 To assist, seek and enforce compliance with the *Elections Act*
- 5 To continuously develop individual and organizational effectiveness

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August 30, 2019

The Honourable Kevin Murphy  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
1st Floor, Province House  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2Y3

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to present the annual report of Elections Nova Scotia, in accordance with the *Elections Act*, c.5, for the period of April 1st, 2018 to March 31st, 2019.

I respectfully request that you forward this report to the members of the House of Assembly at the next sitting.

Respectfully submitted,



**Richard Temporale**  
Chief Electoral Officer

# Message of the Chief Electoral Officer

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**The fiscal year 2018-2019 marked the first year of Elections Nova Scotia's (ENS) five-year strategic plan. In alignment with our vision ENS continued to explore ways to improve electoral processes, voter access, and *Elections Act* compliance. This year was busy with election readiness planning and lessons learned from the 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Election (PGE). All efforts this year have focused on working toward an election readiness date of April 1, 2020 for the next potential PGE.**

ENS's strategic plan identifies five organizational goals and accompanying performance measures. Our plan helps set our priorities, the actions we need to take, and how we will know when we have achieved success. This annual report highlights key initiatives by goal for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The report offers insight into the breadth of work undertaken by ENS to achieve a more modern, streamlined, cost-effective, and balanced electoral management system for all Nova Scotians. Our staff remains dedicated to continuous improvement processes to help realize and sustain our vision of being trusted by all Nova Scotians to excel in the delivery of fair, inclusive, and accessible elections.

In the absence of a fixed election date, ENS is vigilant about its state of election readiness. All our activities in a fiscal year revolve around both planning for future events and assessing our delivery of past events. Electoral activities in 2018-2019 included a by-election held on June 19, 2018 in the electoral district of Cumberland South. As the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), I released a report on the Cumberland South by-election in January 2019. In 2018-2019, we also began preparations for a by-election in the electoral district of Sackville-Cobequid. The representative for that district, Dave Wilson, resigned his seat on November 15, 2018.

Following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE in May 2017, I proposed 25 recommendations for legislative change. All but a few were unanimously supported by the Election Commission. These recommendations were included in ENS's annual report for 2017-2018. During 2018-2019, ENS worked with government on a request for legislative change to address these recommendations. The suggested amendments were considered by government but not tabled in either the fall 2018 or spring 2019 sessions of the House of Assembly. The proposed legislative amendments will be presented again to government for consideration for the fall 2019 session.

I also proposed three further recommendations for legislative change based on our assessment of our experience in delivering the Cumberland South by-election. I asked the government not to consider these recommendations, until my previous recommendations for legislative change are dealt with.



As we move ahead into the 2019-2020 fiscal year, ENS faces uncertainty in terms of election readiness planning. We are not privy to the government's intentions with respect to the tabling of our proposed legislative changes. Therefore, ENS must continue with planning election readiness activities on multiple streams.

Throughout 2018-2019 ENS supported the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. The Boundaries Commission utilized the specific skills of ENS staff members to help inform their work. In anticipation of new electoral boundaries, ENS undertook a merit-based competition and selection process to identify a pool of qualified returning officer candidates for appointment when the new boundary set is implemented. The planning for this recruitment was a key part of election readiness efforts in 2018-2019. This work will continue into 2019-2020 when the Boundaries Commission's final recommendations are tabled for consideration in the fall 2019 session of the House of Assembly.

ENS's mandate changed slightly in 2018-2019 when government removed the requirement in the *Liquor Control Act* to hold plebiscites in communities where the sale of alcohol is restricted. ENS's mandate had included the administration of liquor plebiscites.

2018-2019 was also the last full year for ENS at our current location. In November 2019 we expect to be moving to a new headquarters and warehouse facilities in Dartmouth.

Looking ahead to 2019-2020, ENS is facing a challenging year. There is a lack of clarity regarding the status of our legislative changes and budget request for election readiness requirements. Our mandate will also be affected by the implementation of more electoral districts with new boundaries. These uncertainties are having an impact on our continued election readiness efforts. Moving forward, if the appropriate funding and legislative framework are not approved, we will ultimately be required to alter our election readiness date. We commit to publishing updates on our election readiness plans as more clarity presents itself.

**RICHARD P. TEMPORALE**

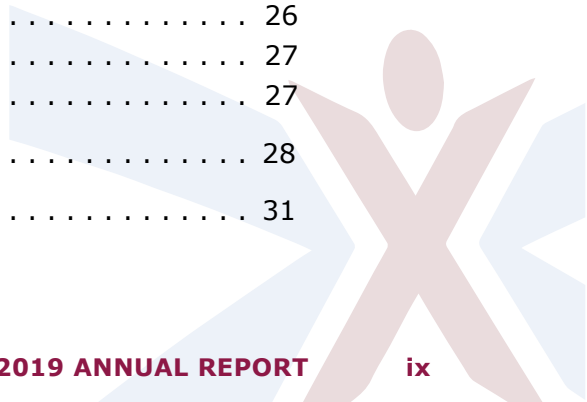
Chief Electoral Officer

August 2019

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## OVERVIEW

# Delivering on our Goals

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The scope of the work done by ENS is broad. It covers all aspects of the electoral process. Projects include: hiring and training returning officers and their core office staff; working to secure accessible voting locations for voters with physical disabilities; and ensuring compliance with the *Elections Act*.

Offering voters a wide variety of early voting opportunities throughout the writ period has positioned ENS among the leaders in Canada. The development of individual and organizational effectiveness is a continual process. Our strategic plan is aligned with our vision, mission, mandate, values, and goals, which are regularly assessed and modified as necessary.

This document reports on the activities undertaken at ENS, broken down by goal in 2018-2019. Our five-year strategic plan outlines a long list of initiatives, from 2018 to 2023. Fiscal year 2018-2019 was year one of our strategic plan and this annual report shows how we are progressing with our goals thus far.



## **GOAL 1 • CONDUCTING QUALITY, COST-EFFECTIVE, ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS**

This goal includes all activities to ensure every returning office, polling station, and staff member is equipped and ready to deliver and conduct fair and non-partisan elections. This includes developing and disseminating clear and concise materials in a timely way to all staff and political parties and candidates, and providing appropriate training.

## **GOAL 2 • QUALITY ELECTORAL INFORMATION**

One of our key tasks is maintaining and updating election-related data, including the Nova Scotia Register of Electors, which is a list of eligible residents who are registered to vote.

Voters included on this list will be sent voter information by mail during the election telling them where and when they can vote.

## **GOAL 3 • ENGAGING AND EDUCATING STAKEHOLDERS**

We are mandated to conduct voter education and information programs. We want to make sure that the electorate and other stakeholders have what they need to understand when, where, how they can vote and who can vote.

## **GOAL 4 • ELECTIONS ACT COMPLIANCE**

We are also vigilant in our efforts to assist, seek and enforce compliance with the *Elections Act*, including the political financing regime.

We disseminate clear interpretations of the requisite parts of the *Act*, as well as assist various electoral stakeholders prepare their financial statements and returns as required.

Election Nova Scotia calculates and disperses funds to registered parties and candidates pursuant to the *Act*. Elections Nova Scotia works closely with the official agents of the registered parties and has provided training reference material.

## **GOAL 5 • CONTINUOUS INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

We are mindful of the need to develop individual and organizational effectiveness, and to that end some projects are specifically developed to help us achieve this.





# Strategic Plan 2018-2023

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**ENS's five-year strategic plan revisits and modernizes our plan first developed in 2014. It applies lessons learned from the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE held on May 30, 2017. The updated ENS strategic plan outlines the challenges and risks anticipated over the next five years, as well as the ways we intend to seize opportunities and mitigate anticipated risks. 2018-2019 was year one of our new strategic plan.**

The plan incorporates several recommendations for legislative change proposed by the CEO. These changes would offer opportunities to use technology in early voting. This would enhance accuracy by reducing human error and to save time; both for the voter's experience when casting their vote and for the poll officials when tallying the results after the polls close on election night. These recommendations have been submitted to government for consideration but as yet, have not yet been tabled in the House of Assembly for legislative change.

The plan also anticipates the implementation of new electoral boundaries following the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission in 2018-2019. The Boundaries Commission released its final report in April 2019. This report recommended increasing the number of electoral districts from 51 to 55. This report will be considered in the fall 2019 session of the House of Assembly. The acceptance of their report by the House of Assembly and the implementation of a new boundary set would trigger the release of all current returning officers (RO). Thus, ENS has initiated a process to secure and train new RO appointments through merit-based recruitment before the next PGE.

All the work currently envisioned by ENS until 2023 has been incorporated into our strategic plan, including a move of our headquarters and warehouse facilities at the end of 2019. Election readiness is a big part of our strategic planning. ENS is working toward an election readiness date of April 1, 2020 to align with the priorities and goals identified in our strategic plan. However, the current context regarding budget, legislation, and electoral boundaries may make it necessary for ENS to reconsider both the timing and content of our election readiness plans and re-align our strategic goals in this regard.



## GOAL 1

# Conducting quality, cost-effective, accessible elections

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**Our primary goal is to conduct provincial elections. This means election readiness is the focus of our day-to-day work. Nova Scotia does not have a fixed provincial election date, so we are in a constant state of readiness to deliver a PGE or by-election.**

The state of constant readiness at ENS ensures that day-to-day duties and the development and distribution of resources is carried out in a timely and efficient manner. Outcomes and operational processes are in constant review to improve overall organizational performance. In alignment with our strategic goals, ENS focused efforts in 2018-2019 towards preparing for an election readiness date of April 1, 2020.



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## Strategic Goal 1 Measures

Activity to be measured	Measure
Measure quality through a post-Election (or post-by-election) audit/observation program.	Post-event analysis of the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE and Cumberland South by-election will be used to develop and define benchmarks for future electoral events.
Budget the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE to cost the same as the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE in CPI adjusted dollars and measure cost effectiveness against this decision.	The cost per voter was \$13.07 in the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE, compared to \$12.89 in the 39 <sup>th</sup> PGE, a cost increase of 1.4% while CPI rose by 4.9% over that same period. Costs for the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE will be estimated in 2019-2020 and will be adjusted for legislated changes.
Set specific, measurable objectives for training, communications and other elements of event delivery, and assess performance against predetermined criteria.	The measures for this result will be developed in 2019-2020 for the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE.
Meet accessibility objectives by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that 98% of registered voters are within a 15-minute drive of their election day voting place</li> </ul>	In the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE 99% of all voters could reach a voting place within 15 minutes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that registered voters are within a 25-minute drive of their early voting location</li> </ul>	In the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE 98% of all voters could reach their early voting locations within 25 minutes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that election day voting locations meet our accessible criteria for voters with physical disabilities</li> </ul>	Our accessibility standards were met in 89% of the election day voting locations in the 2017 PGE.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>expanding voting and employment opportunities for voters with disabilities at returning offices and where practicable, in voting locations</li> </ul>	In the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE, 10 of 17 individuals who put their names forward through reachAbility, were hired during the election. ENS will report on its effort to expand employment for voters with disabilities in future elections.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>working with disability communities to maximize our voting location levels of accessibility</li> </ul>	89% of polls were wheelchair accessible in the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE. ENS will report on efforts to improve on this percentage in the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE.

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## Election Readiness Planning

ENS's mandate is to prepare for and deliver fair and inclusive elections impartially and professionally in Nova Scotia. As the only provincial jurisdiction in Canada without a fixed election date, ENS must anticipate the earliest date on which a PGE could be called, and plan and budget accordingly.

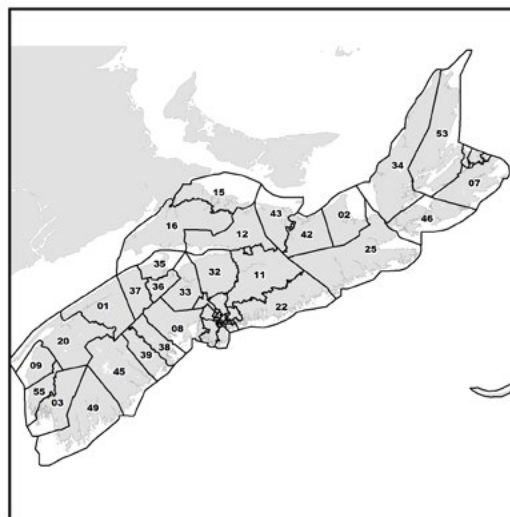
Eight of the last eleven provincial governments were majorities, where on average, the writ of election was issued prior to start of the fourth year of governing. Given the last PGE was held on May 30, 2017, the latest possible date an election could occur by law is May 30, 2022. Based on experience, an election ready date of April 1, 2020, 34 months into the government's mandate, provides a high degree of certainty of being fully prepared in advance of the eventual issuance of the writ. Therefore, ENS set the April 1, 2020 election readiness date to work towards.

We have planned our work for the next year accordingly. All election readiness efforts in 2018-2019 were focused on working towards achieving this goal in alignment with our business objectives outlined in our strategic plan.

## Electoral Boundaries

The Nova Scotia *House of Assembly Act* requires the appointment of an independent Electoral Boundaries Commission to recommend the boundaries and names for all electoral districts across the province of Nova Scotia every ten years. In 2017, the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation of Acadians and African Nova Scotia (the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation) was established and made a number of recommendations respecting the process for establishing these provincial electoral boundaries. Based on the recommendations by the Commission on Effective Electoral Representation, the House of Assembly, through its select committee, appointed the 2018-2019 Electoral Boundaries Commission and established its Terms of Reference (TOR). The TOR set out the criteria to review electoral boundaries within Nova Scotia with a focus on effective representation.

Throughout 2018-2019 ENS supported the work of the Boundaries Commission. ENS staff provided technical assistance in the areas of mapping and spatial data analysis for the Boundaries Commission in building their report and recommendations.



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In November 2018, the Boundaries Commission published an interim report entitled, *Striking a Balance Between Effective Representation and Voter Parity*. Public consultation sessions were then held around the province. On Monday, April 5, 2019, the final report was released, entitled *Balancing Effective Representation With Voter Parity*, which recommended 55 electoral districts, four more districts than the current 51. This report was submitted to the Premier in April 2019 while the House was in recess. It will be tabled for consideration in the fall 2019 session of the House of Assembly.

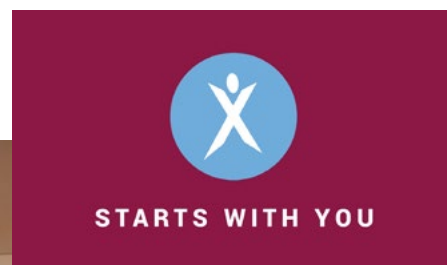
## Returning Officer Recruitment

Under the *Elections Act*, the delineation of new provincial electoral district boundaries will lead to the automatic dissolution of current returning officer (RO) appointments.

Appointed by Nova Scotia's CEO, a provincial RO administers the electoral process in their electoral district. When a new boundary set comes into effect after enactment by the House, new RO appointments are required.

In anticipation of this pending change, ENS began a merit-based competition and selection process in 2018-2019 to identify a pool of qualified candidates for RO appointments. As part of this process we developed a recruitment brand, engaged in a social media campaign, and conducted 14 public information sessions across the province.

In 2019-2020 ENS will continue this work and move forward to complete interviews and technical tests in preparation for potential appointments early in 2020.



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## Recommendations for Legislative Change

After each electoral event, it is standard practice for electoral agencies in Canada to assess the practical application of their governing legislation and make recommendations to the government for improvements. This process takes lessons learned and applies them to improve the administration and delivery of future elections as well as the ongoing administration and regulation of stakeholders. ENS follows this best-practice model and does a review for potential legislative and regulatory improvement following each electoral event. This process normally includes input from all stakeholders such as ROs, official agents and the Election Commission. ENS collects and considers all feedback for inclusion in any recommended changes.

Following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, the CEO proposed 25 recommendations for legislative change, the majority of which were unanimously supported by the Election Commission. These recommendations were considered by government but not tabled in either the fall 2018 or spring 2019 sessions of the House of Assembly. The proposed legislative amendments will be offered again to the Minister of Justice for consideration in the fall 2019 session.

Based on the experience of the Cumberland South by-election held June 19, 2018, the CEO made three further recommendations for legislative change to the *Elections Act*. These following recommendations were included in the Cumberland South by-election report published in January 2019:

**Recommendation 1:** *The CEO recommends the introduction of an audit fee subsidy to a maximum of \$1,500 for registered parties for their annual and election related financial reports. This change requires an amendment to the Tariff, a regulation under the Act, and as such will be provided to cabinet when the CEO next submits the Tariff for updates.*

**Recommendation 2:** *The CEO recommends the removal of requirement for an audit of the financial report for registered parties who spend less than \$500 during a PGE or by-election.*

**Recommendation 3:** *The CEO recommends the introduction of a penalty of \$50 per day to a maximum of \$1,500 for the late filing of an election financial report for a registered party or third party, or an annual financial report for a registered party.*



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## Cumberland South By-election, June 19, 2018

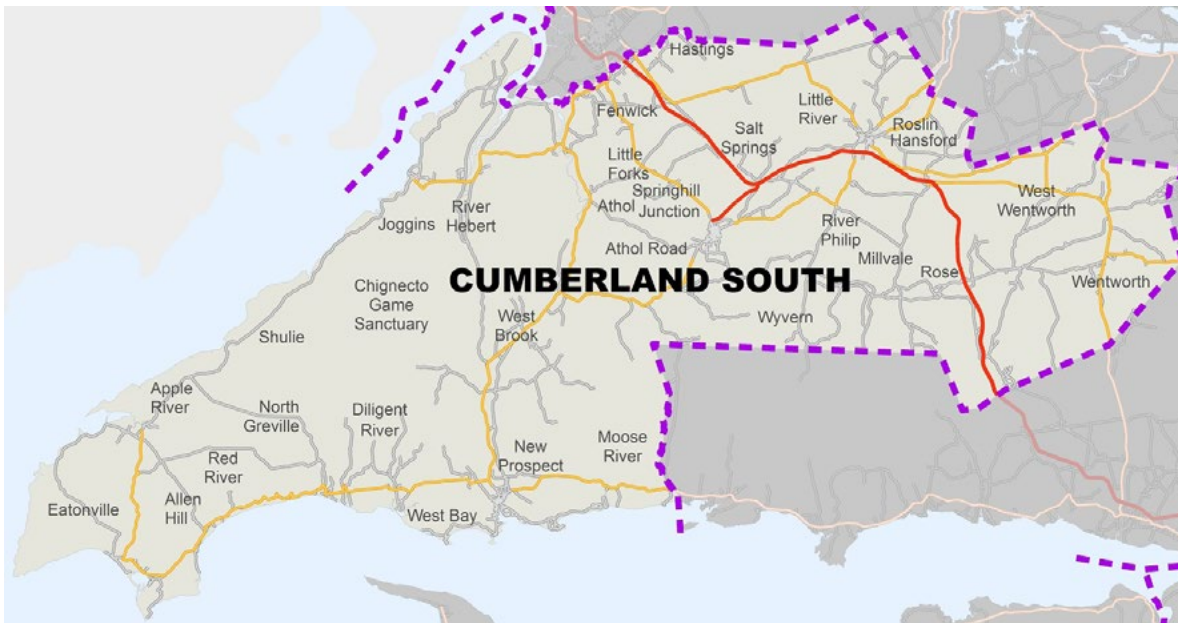
Progressive Conservative (PC) leader and Member of the Legislative Assembly, Jamie Baillie, resigned his seat effective January 24, 2018. This created a vacancy in the electoral district of Cumberland South. On Thursday, May 17, 2018, a writ of election was issued under the *Elections Act*, ordering that an election be held in Cumberland South on Tuesday, June 19.



Early voting opportunities commenced on Monday, May 21, within four days of issuing the writ. This was the first day the returning office was open to the public and voters could vote by write-in ballot. Voters could choose any early voting opportunity available. On election day, voters had to vote at their assigned poll or in the returning

office. At the close of polls on election day, a total of 5,790 (53.0%) of the 10,927 people on the final list of voters in Cumberland South had voted. On Thursday, June 21, at the Official Addition, Tory Rushton (PC) was determined to have the most votes and was declared elected.

Subsequent to the period this annual report covers, ENS administered another by-election on June 18, 2019 in the electoral district of Sackville-Cobequid. ENS will publish a full report on the Sackville-Cobequid by-election this winter.



## GOAL 2

# Quality Electoral Information

**Much of the quality of an election depends on the quality of the electoral information used and distributed.**

Maintaining and establishing election-related data, including the Nova Scotia Register of Electors, is an important part of ENS's mandate. It is key that we ensure information is current, free of flawed data, accurate, complete, and most importantly, secure.

ENS is committed to continuous quality improvement. To this end, we continually evaluate and evolve the goals and measures related to our strategic plan. Quality electoral information includes transparent reporting of spending and public funding.

For the first time, this annual report delivers information on how we spend our budget. This illustrates what it costs the organization to fulfill our mandate including public funding paid directly to registered parties. ENS plans to include an audited financial report as a measure in future years as it aligns with the ENS mandate and those of similar independent agencies within Nova Scotia and across Canada. An annual financial report (unaudited) for 2018-2019 is included in this report.

**Are you registered to vote?**



**Find how to get on the list of electors by clicking here**

**1-800-565-1504**  **[elections@novascotia.ca](mailto:elections@novascotia.ca)**



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## Strategic Goal 2 Measures

Activity to be measured	Measure
Determine the Register of Electors coverage. "Coverage" is defined as the percentage of eligible voters (18 years of age, Canadian citizen and resident of the province for 6 months) whose name is on the Register.	Register of Electors coverage of 95.50% was reported following the 40 <sup>th</sup> PGE elections in Volume I and updated in Volume II. After the 39 <sup>th</sup> PGE in 2013, ENS reported 92.95% coverage. This reporting will continue following PGEs.
Conduct qualitative research on the reading grade level of our publicly shared information and the effectiveness of information materials	In 2018-2019 we completed research on reading grade level because we are committed to making our reports easy to read and understand. As a result of this research we selected the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level tool to help determine readability. The Flesch-Kincaid measures the years of schooling that is estimated to be needed to understand a document. Going forward ENS will apply the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level tool to all reports and will work to solidify this practice in policy in 2019-2020.
Report on the reading grade level of reports such as the CEO's annual report and the Political Contributions Regime annual report.	ENS reported the reading level of the Cumberland South by-election report at 12.2 and 2018 Political Contributions Regime at 12.3. We strive for our reports to be at a high school level of 12.0.



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## Elections Canada Data Sharing Partnership

The Register of Electors contains the list of more than 756,000 eligible voters in the province. The information contained in the Register is gathered and updated directly from voters; through driver's license, vital statistics, and health record monthly updates; and through Elections Canada's National Register of Electors regular updates.

This year ENS worked with Elections Canada to enable eligible Nova Scotians to add their names to our register by entering it online. This initiative leveraged the ENS website and the Elections Canada e-registration portal. This system provides a convenient one-step registration process for the voter. The collaboration between Elections Canada and ENS synchronizes our efforts to gather timely, accurate, and secure voter data for both electoral agencies. The online registration went live in September of 2018. Between September 2018 and March 2019, 52 Nova Scotia voters used e-registration to either add or update their information to the list of voters.



### GOAL 3

# Engaging and Educating Stakeholders

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**Our mandate requires that we ensure Nova Scotians receive information describing how, when, and where to vote during provincial elections. This information is distributed to our internal and external stakeholders – eligible voters, candidates, election workers, parties, electoral district associations, third parties, and members of the House of Assembly, using a variety of media (print, local radio, web, social networks, and our internal portal). Engaging these groups in two-way communication is key to attaining strategic success.**

Engaging and educating stakeholders encompasses a variety of projects at ENS. These projects include developing a comprehensive communications plan to guide external communications and developing and providing election-ready materials. Election-ready materials include handbooks, brochures, videos, and in-person and online training to the prospective poll, party, and candidate officials regarding vital election messages.



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### Strategic Goal 3 Measures

Activity to be measured	Measure
Set targets and measure participation of educators and other stakeholders in ENS programs.	Measures for this goal are under development in advance of the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE. ENS plans to collaborate with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Education in a youth engagement program which may include youth participation as election officers at polls, for example.

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### First Nations Strategy

ENS continues to build on the relationships that have been established between this electoral agency and First Nations communities in Nova Scotia as part of our First Nations Strategy. Our goal is to enhance opportunities to engage First Nations communities, and through collaboration, to improve service to these potential voters.

Leading into the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, ENS worked closely with the Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations to enhance elections services offered on all Reserves as part of our First Nations Strategy. The initiative commenced with a joint letter to the Chiefs of the 13 bands in Nova Scotia signed by the CEO and the Assembly of First Nations' Regional Chief Morley Googoo urging them to support this initiative. This in turn led to hiring of a Community Relations Officer (CRO) for the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE in each of the bands. CROs worked with ENS staff and their local returning officer to ensure the list of voters used on their reserve was up to date and accurate. If a reserve had more than 100 eligible voters they had an on-reserve poll, run by First Nations poll officials, an elder and a youth representative.

In 2018-2019 a new First Nations Strategy was planned for the 41<sup>st</sup> PGE. The strategy leverages the strengths and weaknesses learned from the work conducted during the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE. While ENS organizationally is committed to working more collaboratively with First Nations communities, it has been acknowledged that we need to hire and partner with an individual of First Nations ancestry for the role of First Nations Liaison Officer to lead and inform our strategy. Additionally, our strategy includes our desire to again partner with Regional Chief Morley Googoo of the Assembly of First Nations to provide invaluable guidance and leadership. This initiative was set to begin March of 2019, but due to budget constraints for fiscal 2019- 2020, the initiative has been placed on hold.

A copy of the *First Nations Elector Strategy Report* can be found on the ENS website in Appendix E of *Volume II: Report on the Conduct of the May 30, 2017 PGE and Recommendations for Legislative Change*.



## New Canadian Citizen Initiative

New citizens are an important stakeholder group. Our goal is to ensure new citizens understand their rights as eligible voters, how to be added to the Register of Electors, and how to access voting in Nova Scotia.

To accomplish this goal in 2018-2019, ENS developed information brochures for new Canadian citizens. Our package of materials includes a welcoming letter from the CEO, a new citizens brochure explaining the Nova Scotia electoral process, and a brochure on how to get on the Nova Scotia Register of Electors.

Working with Immigration Canada, we began attending citizenship ceremonies in January 2019.

As often as possible, a member of ENS Senior Leadership attends the citizenship ceremonies and brings greetings to those receiving citizenship that day. Through this initiative, we distributed over 300 packages to new Canadians.

## Quality–Service–Value Awards

Each year the CEO awards those who have excelled in the delivery of quality, service or value to the electoral processes, in years between general elections as well as the election year. Recipients for the Quality-Service-Value Awards (QSV) are nominated by ENS staff or as the result of a letter of commendation from a stakeholder.



This year, a QSV Award was awarded to Mr. Cameron MacKeen for his long-term and dedicated service through the Election Commission. Mr. MacKeen is a criminal defense lawyer who resides in Halifax with his family. Mr. MacKeen enjoys politics and represented the Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia on the Election Commission since 2012. ENS thanks Mr. MacKeen for his many years of thoughtful advice and congratulates him on his award.

*[left] Mr. Cameron MacKeen, Quality-Service-Value Award winner for 2018*



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## **Democracy Day 2018**

ENS celebrated democracy week September 15-21, 2018. Through our website and social media, we offered tips on getting on the voters list, on finding educational and in-depth electoral information, and shared information about democratic initiatives at Elections Nova Scotia, and other electoral jurisdictions across Canada.

Canada's Democracy Week is organized by Elections Canada, a non-partisan agency created by Parliament that aims to raise awareness of democracy and the importance of voting, particularly among youth. It builds on the United Nations' International Day of Democracy on September 15 and extends the celebration with a week of activities to highlight Canada's democratic traditions and achievements.

## **Education Advisory**

In 2018-2019 ENS established an education advisory committee of Nova Scotia educators. This group is helping to evaluate and leverage the existing civic education materials on our website and develop new lesson plans to help youth learn more about democracy. When complete, these pre-packaged lesson plans will be available for teachers on the ENS website and will meet provincial curriculum outcomes to be approved for classroom use. This work builds on last year efforts to boost youth involvement in electoral processes which led to the introduction of a new course in all Nova Scotia grade nine classrooms in the 2018-2019 school year.



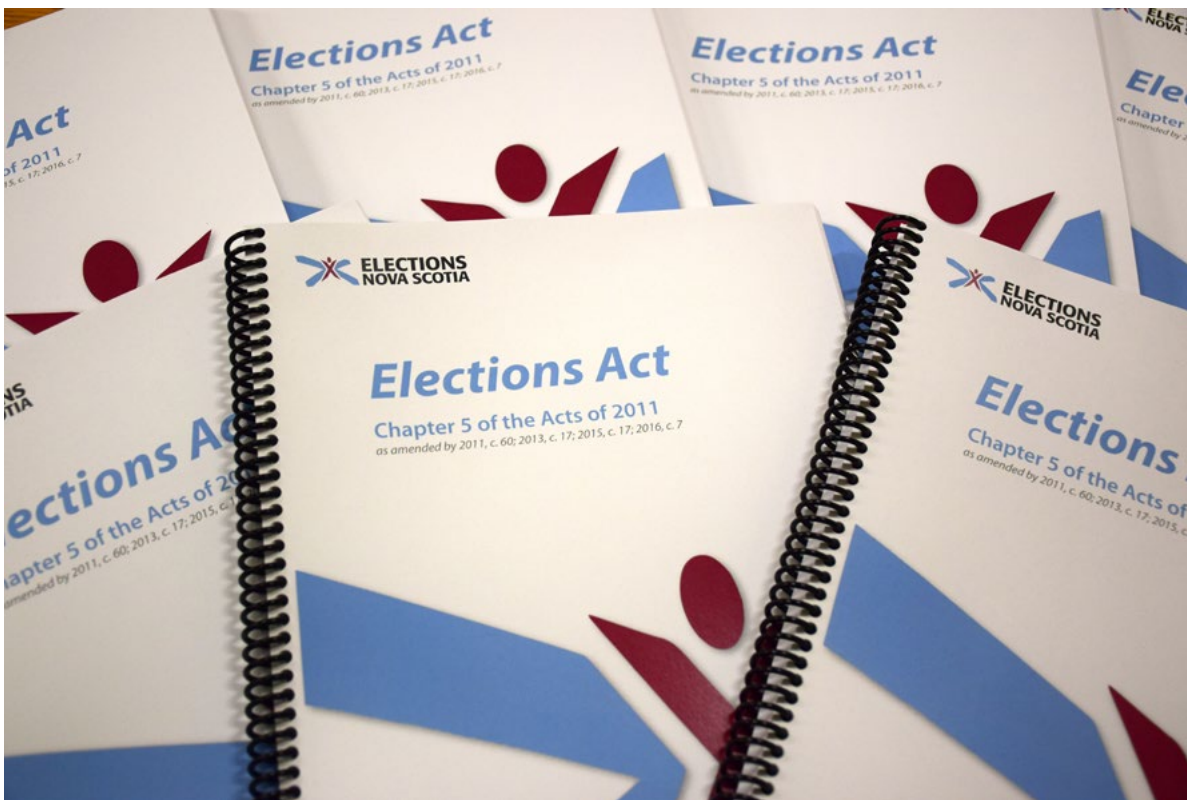
## GOAL 4

# *Elections Act Compliance*

Monitoring compliance with the *Elections Act* is an important function of ENS. This involves measures to educate and inform the public, the executive members responsible for the conduct of registered parties, electoral district associations candidates and third parties, and to investigate potential breaches of the *Act*.

ENS provides training for the official agents of candidates, parties, electoral district associations, and third parties to equip these stakeholders to conduct their finances in accordance with the *Elections Act*. Training opportunities include: in person training, online training videos, topical brochures, and handbooks outlining financial processes and procedures in accordance with the *Act*.

ENS strives to do its utmost to provide clear interpretations to various stakeholders to ensure their compliance with the *Act*. During the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, the traditional media sources and social networking sites were monitored for instances where the *Act* may have been knowingly and unknowingly breached. ENS social media channels were used to educate the public on relevant and interesting areas of the *Act* as a way to help avoid violations.



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## Strategic Goal 4 Measures

Activity to be measured	Measure
Measure the number of breaches that result in Compliance Agreements; ENS will report on failures to comply with annual reporting requirements by registered parties and EDAs.	During 2018-2019, there was an investigation into a compliance matter in the electoral district of Northside-Westmount resulted in a report published in April 2018 and three Compliance Agreements.
The targets for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 fiscal years and for the 41 <sup>st</sup> PGE are to have no compliance breaches or failures.	The Atlantica Party and their former leader also entered compliance agreements 2018 related to the loans reported in the 2017 annual report.
Measure the compliance of electoral finance stakeholders in meeting filing deadlines.	ENS reports on the compliance to filing deadlines through the annual donation report and election related reports.

## Atlantica Party Suspension and Reinstatement

The Atlantica Party of Nova Scotia was suspended on June 20, 2018, due to filing of financial statements that did not meet the requirements of the *Elections Act*. There were also issues with an outstanding loan from the former leader of the party. This suspension was lifted effective August 16, 2018, after Atlantica filed financial reports and provided a plan to rectify issues with the loan that satisfied ENS that they met the requirements of the *Act*.



## GOAL 5

# Continuous Individual and Organizational Effectiveness

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Enhancing individual and organizational effectiveness is key to helping us achieve our goals and to keeping us on the right path. We cannot afford to lose sight of our vision and mandate. In our dynamic environment, we need to continuously take stock of our initiatives in relation to our goals and adapt our work processes as needed to overcome the challenges of the day.

Organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement measures are aligned with our five-year strategic plan mentioned earlier in this report. ENS is vigilant in instilling a learning culture within the organization and focuses on the use of best practices and staff/professional development. We are also mindful of having structures in place to allow the flexibility we need, while always remaining cost conscious.

At ENS, we focus on attracting and sustaining engaged employees to support the continuous growth and development of our organization. This is done by building strength in the areas of leadership, decision making and structure, people, work processes and systems, and culture. When we do uncover weaknesses, we develop and implement and/or adapt strategies and processes to improve the situation and ensure continued growth and development.

### Strategic Goal 5 Measures

Activity to be measured	Measure
Develop a Learning Index and measure performance through the Index as an aggregate measure of organizational participation in internal and external learning opportunities, partnership projects and inter-jurisdictional cooperation.	The design and measures for the Learning Index are under development and progress will be reported on in subsequent annual reports.

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## Assessment of Topics of Interest to Voters and Assembly Members

In 2018-2019, ENS continued its efforts to modernize electoral processes to meet the changing needs and expectations of stakeholders. ENS applies lessons learned from each electoral event in an effort to evolve the electoral model. Although the model must evolve, it must do so at a pace that is acceptable to all stakeholders so their trust in the delivery of fair and inclusive elections is maintained. The risks and opportunities for change in electoral process is continually in flux. The *Act* enables the CEO to seek the advice of advisory committees and panels of experts to examine developing issues and best practices.

Previously, through ENS's strategic planning process, the CEO identified key topics of interest to explore and report on. The following provides an update on our work in these areas to date:

### Cybersecurity Assessment

Over the past few years, cyber threat activity against democratic processes have increased and we believe that Nova Scotia is not immune. Through its review of work and reports of the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), reports from the Brennan Center, the Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutes at UBC and in collaboration with election management bodies throughout Canada, ENS has sought to clarify the types of threats involved and our role in detecting and combatting attacks.

The CSE has issued two reports on threats to Canada's Democratic Process and a Cyber Security Guide for Campaign Teams. The report identifies three potential targets:

- election management bodies,
- political parties and politicians, and
- the media.

The CSE concludes that it is very likely that Canadian voters will encounter cyber interference ahead of, and during, the 2019 federal general election.

Towards the end of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, planning took place through the Secretariat for Electoral Coordination (SEC) to hold a roundtable on cyber security. SEC focusses federal, provincial and territorial electoral management bodies work on common projects to save time, money and effort and to learn from nation-wide expertise.

The roundtable focused on four key objectives:

- 1 to determine the main cyber threats;
- 2 to explore opportunities to address those threats;
- 3 to define cyber security roles within electoral management; and
- 4 to produce recommendations for the SEC Steering Committee for areas within which it might produce tangible deliverables.

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That roundtable was scheduled for early April to be held in Regina, SK. ENS planned to attend this roundtable.

ENS will continue to report on this work and seek input from key stakeholders, including the Election Commission on these threats and deliverables to address potential cyber security threats.

### **Electoral Operations**

The need to modernize traditional voting processes has been recognized by election management bodies across Canada for several decades and important modernization initiatives are now underway here and in the majority of the 13 jurisdictions. ENS is continually seeking ways to improve service to Nova Scotia voters and candidates by reviewing the trends and standards in electoral operations and monitoring what other election management bodies across Canada are doing. Following the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE and in preparation for planning for the 41<sup>st</sup> PGE, the operations team committed to streamline and simplify materials and processes used while voting. By-elections have been the testing ground for these changes and to-date, have proven effective. Where practical, ENS brings in adjacent returning officers and their key core staff to fill election officer positions in the field. Success has been measured by pre and post event staff surveys of field staff, electors, parties and candidates. Additionally, operations worked closely with the ENS information technology division to shape voting processes that incorporate more automation in voting and ultimately led to some of the legislative recommendations regarding early voting procedures.

### **Electoral Finance**

Jurisdictions across Canada have varying rules governing their electoral finance regime. In recent years, legislators in other jurisdictions have embarked on reviews of their finance regimes and in some cases, made significant changes. Changes to the electoral finance regime in Nova Scotia have typically been recommended by the CEO in conjunction with other legislative change proposals. Included in this review is an 'environmental scan' of what is being offered and considered in other Canadian jurisdictions.

### **SharePoint**

In 2018, due to the 40<sup>th</sup> PGE, the implementation of SharePoint was placed on hold. During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, ENS worked to develop a collaborative online environment in SharePoint to be actively used by all staff in each of its program areas. We are now ready to move ahead with implementation. We expect to have our SharePoint site fully operational in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

## Elections Nova Scotia Census Data

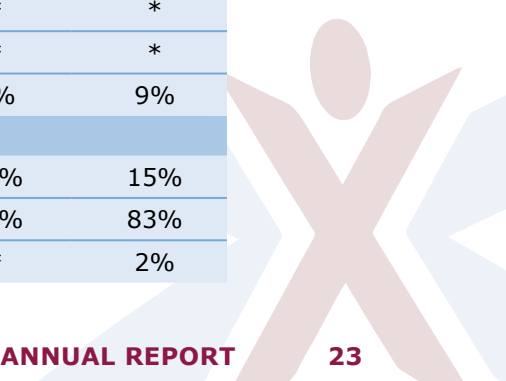
ENS is supportive of the goal to have a more diverse organization. One that is reflective of the demographics of Nova Scotia.

Model on the Public Service Commission's survey, *Count Yourself In!*, released in 2016, ENS begun collecting census data from ROs, contract consultants, and head-office staff to determine how ENS compares.

2018-2019 is the fourth year for ENS's census data. It is used as a baseline measure of diversity within the organization. In the first two years of the census, the sample size was larger, 127 potential respondents in 2016 and 160 potential respondents in 2017. In 2018 the sample size was smaller, 59, because it followed the general election. For 2018-2019 the sample size is 54 largely because it was not an election year and there are currently 17 vacant RO positions. The rate of response to the voluntary census was 85%.

	<b>Nova Scotia Government Employees</b>	<b>Elections Nova Scotia</b>			
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Education</b>					
Less than High School Diploma	2%	*	*	*	*
High School Diploma/General Education Diploma (GED) or equivalent	68%	9%	13%	6%	2%
Some trade school	1%	*	3%	4%	2%
Graduated trade school	6%	5%	5%	*	*
Some postsecondary (college or university)	11%	22%	16%	20%	17%
Graduated postsecondary (college or university)	72%	66%	64%	70%	78%
Prefer Not to Say	2%	*	*	*	
<b>Age</b>					
Under 18	1%	*	*	*	*
18 – 24	7%	*	3%	*	*
25 – 34	12%	1%	8%	2%	2%
35 – 44	26%	11%	10%	8%	17%
45 – 54	34%	13%	14%	12%	11%
55 – 64	23%	43%	35%	32%	35%
65 +	2%	31%	30%	46%	33%
Prefer Not to Say	2%	*	*	*	4%

	Nova Scotia Government Employees	Elections Nova Scotia			
	2016	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Heritage Groups</b>					
Acadian	7%	6%	9%	12%	7%
African Nova Scotian	4%	*	*	*	*
Gael/Gaelic	6%	4%	1%	10%	11%
Mi'kmaq	2%	1%	8%	2%	*
None	76%	82%	81%	74%	74%
Prefer Not to Say	5%	2%	1%	2%	7%
<b>Culture / Ethnicity</b>					
Caucasian	81%	84%	84%	82%	85%
Aboriginal**	2%	1%	10%	*	*
Asian	2%	3%	1%	*	4%
Black**	3%	*	*	2%	*
Latin/Hispanic	2%	*	*	*	*
Middle Eastern	7%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Multi-racial	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Other	4%	*	*	2%	*
Prefer Not to Say	5%	10%	2%	10%	4%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	35%	**	41%	62%	52%
Female	60%	**	57%	38%	45%
Other	2%	**	*	*	*
Prefer Not to Say	3%	**	2%	*	2%
<b>In what language(s) are you currently fluent? More than one may apply.</b>					
English	87%	100%	100%	94%	98%
French	7%	9%	8%	8%	4%
Gaelic	*	*	*	*	*
Mi'kmaq	*	*	3%	*	*
Physical Languages	*	*	*	*	*
Other Languages	2%	5%	5%	8%	9%
<b>Immigrant Status</b>					
Yes	6%	7%	7%	10%	15%
No	92%	92%	92%	90%	83%
Prefer Not to Say	2%	1%	1%	*	2%



	Nova Scotia Government Employees	Elections Nova Scotia			
	2016	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Disability</b>					
Yes**	9%	6%	8%	6%	11%
No	87%	93%	91%	94%	87%
Prefer Not to Say	3%	1%	1%	*	2%
<b>Do you require a workplace accommodation?</b>					
Yes	28%	29%	8%	2%	7%
No	59%	71%	83%	98%	4%
Prefer not to say	13%	*	8%	*	*
<b>How many years in total (non-consecutive) have you worked with government of NS / Elections Nova Scotia in any capacity?</b>					
Less than 5 years	22%	62%	65%	38%	35%
5-10 years	27%	19%	20%	36%	24%
11-15 years	15%	9%	6%	4%	13%
16-20 years	12%	2%	3%	12%	7%
21+ years	22%	4%	4%	10%	9%
Prefer not to say	1%	*	*	*	2%
<b>Sample Size***</b>	<b>11048</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>~50%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>85%</b>

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%

\*less than one percent

\*\*NS Labour Force: Aboriginal 3%, Black 2%, Disability 10%

\*\*\*Sample size is the number of people the survey was sent to. This includes ENS core staff, returning officers, and support staff.

## Increasing Transparency

The CEO is committed to increasing transparency relating to ENS travel and expenses claimed for travel that exceeds \$250 for each senior manager. To support the commitment to maintain professional staff who are leading electoral events in Nova Scotia using best practices, travel is undertaken to observe innovative practices in other Canadian jurisdictions to ensure democratic principles are upheld for the citizens of Nova Scotia. Interprovincial travel takes place for professional development and interprovincial joint projects. In 2017-2018, the total comparative cost was \$17,485. Election related training and meetings resulted in total costs of \$19,774 in 2018-2019.

Name	Title	Event	Cost
Richard Temporale	CEO	Ontario Elections Visitors Program	898
		Canadian Conference of Election Official in Newfoundland	1,652
		Winnipeg Elections Visitors Program	1,816
		Observe BC Referendum Processes	1,996
		CEO Meetings in Ottawa and Compugen Meeting in Toronto	1,303
Peter Gzowski	ACEO	Ontario Elections Visitors Program	1,210
		Canadian Conference of Election Officials in Newfoundland	1,692
		Observe BC Referendum Processes	2,059
Dorothy Rice	Managing Director Electoral Finance	Canadian Conference of Election Officials in Newfoundland	1,565
Lindsay Rodenkirchen	Director Operations	Canadian Conference of Election Officials in Newfoundland	1,245
		Executive Leadership training and meeting in Ontario	770
Naomi Shelton	Director Policy and Communications	Outreach and Civic Education Subcommittee Meeting in Ontario	1,000
		Introduction to Election Management Training in Alberta	1,388
Linda Fares	Director IT	Canadian Conference of Election Officials Newfoundland	1,179
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,774</b>

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## Advertising Costs Reporting

ENS has been reporting annual advertising expenses since 2016. The changing nature of the advertising landscape offers alternatives to traditional advertising. Reporting this data provides a baseline for future comparison, ensuring accountability and transparency on how taxpayer's dollars are spent on advertising.

As outlined in earlier reports, the CEO has recommended removing the requirement to publish the notice of election and the grant of poll in a newspaper.

	Radio	Print	Social	Online	Ad Design and Development	Total
<b>2018-19 Cumberland South By-election</b>		\$1,815				\$1,815
<b>2017-18 Provincial General Election May 30, 2017</b>	\$43,194	\$20,560		\$1,840	\$1,595	\$67,188
<b>2016-17 Halifax Needham By-election</b>	\$9,327	\$26,787	\$300			\$36,414

## Readability

ENS is committed to making our reports easy to read and understand. To achieve this, we measure readability through the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level tool and work to improve the readability of our public facing materials.

The Flesch-Kincaid tool measures the years of schooling that is estimated to be needed to understand a document. We strive for our reports to be high school level at 12.0. This means the report has specialized information for an audience that is well-informed in the subject area.

This report is grade 12.4, which is within our acceptable range.



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## FOIPOP and Requests

ENS values include accountability and transparency, and this agency responds to requests for information as fast as possible. Most requests for information to this agency are informally resolved; requests about the *Elections Act*, or for data from past elections or electoral finance reports, for example. Most information requested is readily available online at [electionsnovascotia.ca](http://electionsnovascotia.ca) or contained within published reports from this agency. We also receive broader requests for information through the process defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP).

In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, we did not receive any requests for information.

## Role of the Election Commission

Established under the *Elections Act*, the members of the Election Commission provide advice to the CEO on the administration of elections. The Election Commission is comprised of a Chair, appointed by the Governor in Council for a term of five years; and two persons appointed for terms of two years by the leaders of each registered party with members sitting in the House of Assembly.

### CHAIRPERSON: Vince MacLean

Nova Scotia Liberal Party	Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia
Jane O'Neill	Don Fraser	George White
Ellen Burke	Jill Houlihan	Stephen Taylor

# Annual Financial Statement

## 1 ENS 2018-2019 costs summary by category compared to budget

The annual budget is presented annually to a committee of the legislature who reviews and recommends the budget estimates to the Finance and Treasury Board (FTB) for inclusion in the Government's estimates. Forecasts are submitted periodically throughout the year to FTB.

ENS 2018-19 Budget and Costs	Actual	Budget
Administration	2,287,356	2,490,000
Service Delivery	146,741	300,000
Public Funding	699,360	704,000
Election and By-election Related	150,104	
Plebiscite	20,043	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,303,605</b>	<b>3,494,000</b>

## 2 Election Activities by-election costs Cumberland South, June 19, 2018

Costs for each electoral event are reported in the post-election reports. The summary costs for the Cumberland South by-election held in 2018-2019 is included for completeness in the annual report.

Cumberland South By-election Costs	
Category	Cost
Election Workers	27,778
Enumerators	0
Polling stations	6,212
Postage, Courier shipping	6,159
Ballot and VIC printing	4,822
Office and equip. leases	6,100
Office expenses	3,868
Salaries	35,894
Telephone and internet	1,185
	<b>92,018</b>
ENS Overhead (incl. advertising)	20,283
	<b>112,301</b>
Candidate reimbursement	34,782
Audit fee reimbursement	3,021
	<b>150,104</b>
<b>Number of electors</b>	<b>10,927</b>

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### 3 Annual Public Funding 2010-2019 by Registered Party

Funding is provided by the Province of Nova Scotia annually to each party directly through annual payments and indirectly through tax credits to the individuals who contribute directly to political entities registered. ENS is responsible to distribute the annual public funding and to ensure that the issuing and reporting of tax receipts is in accordance with the *Elections Act*. In June each year, ENS publishes a report of political donations on our website listing individuals who contributed over \$200 to parties and electoral district associations for the previous calendar year. ENS provides support to individuals responsible for financial administration and reporting by so they can meet their reporting obligations.

The chart below summarizes the payments made directly to each registered party since 2010.

Year	Registered Party					Total
	Green	Liberal	NDP	Atlantica	PC	
2010	14,454	168,240	279,834		151,805	<b>614,333</b>
2011	14,772	171,941	285,990		155,144	<b>627,848</b>
2012	15,156	176,410	293,423		159,176	<b>644,165</b>
2013	15,429	239,083	298,704		168,337	<b>721,554</b>
2014	5,722	308,362	181,051		177,531	<b>672,666</b>
2015	5,758	310,263	182,167		178,626	<b>676,813</b>
2016	5,828	314,065	184,400		180,815	<b>685,108</b>
2017	16,526	318,057	186,744	2,282	230,507	<b>754,115</b>
2018	18,927	269,411	146,795	2,776	243,845	<b>681,754</b>

### 4 ENS 2019-2020 Budget Estimates

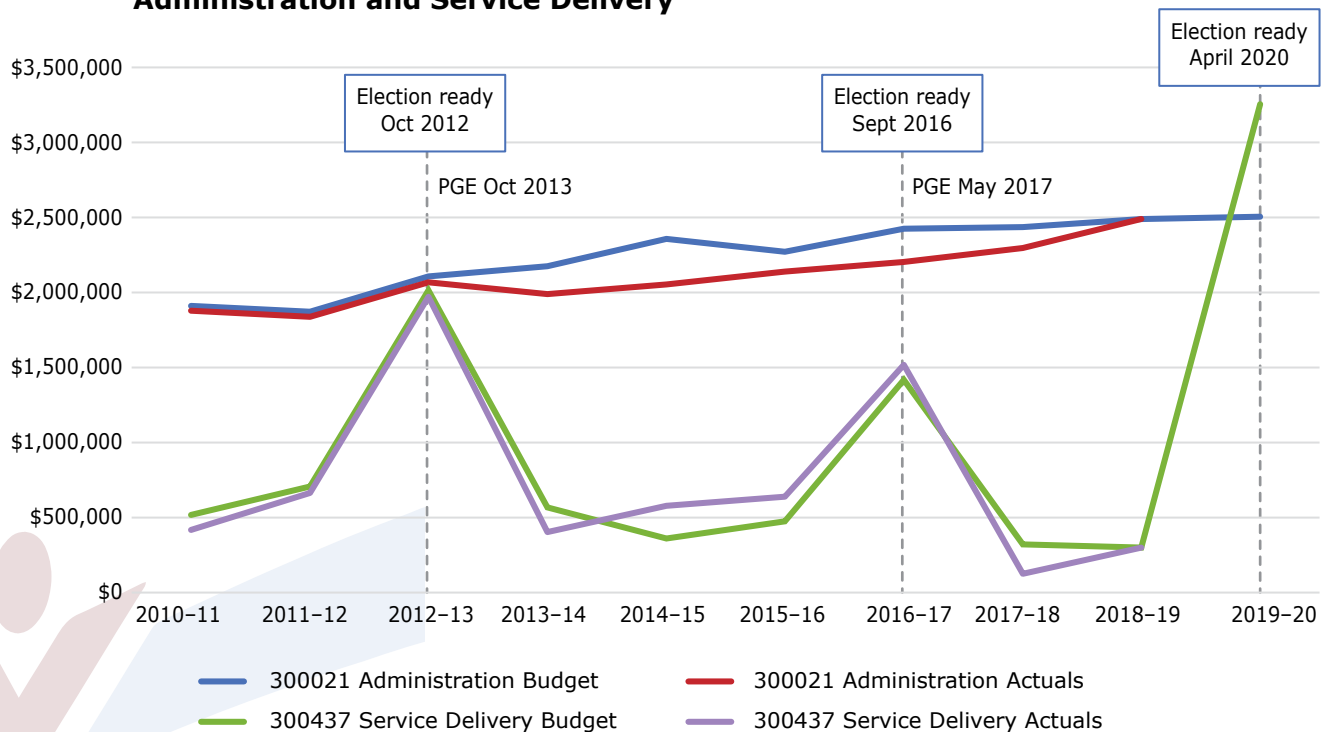
The following budget estimates were submitted and approved by the Special Committee to Review the Estimates of the Auditor General and the Chief Electoral Officer in January 2019.

The CEO's estimates for election readiness includes IT procurement and preparation, RO recruitment and training, election official training, and election materials acquisition.

<b>ENS 2019-2020 Budget Estimates</b>	
<b>Programs and Services</b>	<b>Budget Estimate</b>
Administration	2,505,000
Registered party funding	725,000
Service delivery and development	298,000
Election readiness	2,689,000
Cost of move and increase in lease cost	268,000
By-election related	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,685,000</b>

The chart below shows the history of the ENS budget and expenditures by fiscal year and shows the planned budget and spending activity by the organization as it prepared for the 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Provincial General Elections and prepares for the 41<sup>st</sup>. The budget submission for 2019-2020 reflects the amount submitted to the special committee of the legislature in January 2019.

### Elections Nova Scotia Expenditures by Year Administration and Service Delivery



# Elections Nova Scotia Organizational Chart

