

# Annual Performance Report 2009-10

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer  
Commissioner for Legislative Standards





## Message from the Chief Electoral Officer/ Commissioner for Legislative Standards

I am pleased to present the Annual Performance Report of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (OCEO) and the Commissioner for Legislative Standards for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010.

The Office strives to be an organization that inspires confidence in all those involved in the electoral process through impartiality, excellence, and professionalism. It is primarily responsible for exercising general direction and supervision over the administrative conduct of elections; ensuring that all election officials enforce fairness, impartiality, and compliance with the Act; preparing various reports to be tabled in the House of Assembly and to be made available to the general public; administering the election finance provisions of the legislation as they pertain to registered parties and candidates; and encouraging voter participation through various forms of communication and promotion.

The OCEO produced a Business Plan for 2008-2011 and this is a report of our progress and achievements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010.

OCEO is now in the process of planning for the October 11, 2011, Provincial General Election. We have a busy year ahead, but are working with confidence due to the accomplishment of many goals and objectives since 2007.

This report was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the results reported in this document.

Sincerely,



Paul Reynolds  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Commissioner for Legislative Standards



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**Section A**

**Office of the Chief Electoral Officer  
(OCEO)**

## Overview

The Chief Electoral Officer for Newfoundland and Labrador is Mr. Paul Reynolds.

The OCEO is responsible for the conduct of elections and for ensuring fairness, impartiality and compliance with all aspects of the *Elections Act, 1991*. In addition to responsibilities associated with provincial elections, the Office works co-operatively with federal, provincial and municipal governments in the sharing of information to maintain an accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date permanent list of electors for other electoral events.

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009, the operating budget for the office was \$1,270,500.

The OCEO currently employs 13 people. Of these 13, ten are women and three are men.

The OCEO is located at 39 Hallett Crescent in St. John's. The telephone number is 729-0712 and the fax number is 729-0679. The Elections Newfoundland and Labrador website is [www.elections.gov.nl.ca](http://www.elections.gov.nl.ca) and provides information about the Chief Electoral Office itself, as well as information for key stakeholders.

## Lines of Business

The OCEO provides the following lines of business in carrying out its mandate.

### ***Facilitate Electors' Right to Vote***

Everyone in Newfoundland and Labrador who is over the age of 18 and is a resident of the province has the right to vote. The Chief Electoral Office facilitates this right by providing electors with everything they need to know in order to vote. This is done through proper election planning, effective communications strategies and well-trained and knowledgeable field staff.

### ***Election Preparation***

Election preparation is a continuous process and consists of a myriad of areas including ordering supplies for headquarters and field staff, manual preparation, training delivery, province wide ballot box distribution, and special ballot voting both at headquarters and at the district Returning Offices. Election preparation requires staff to have professional skills to provide a reliable and consistent service to those we serve. Election preparation involves providing electors with the information and mechanisms they require to participate in the electoral process.

### ***Voter Registry including Boundary Issues***

The Voter Registry was created and mandated partly because of legislative changes to the *Elections Act, 1991*, but also partly because of the need for voter data and geographic services to be in constant readiness for elections, by-elections, plebiscites and/or boundary redistributions. The sharing of information with federal, provincial and municipal governments and the continuous updating of both voter and geographic data are very important functions of the Registry.

The Voter Registry provides a range of services including continuous voter registration services to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians (both during and in between electoral events). The Registry maintains voter and address data; implements voting area boundary adjustments; manages address



resolution and collection; oversees information requests and responses; ensures safeguarding of data while providing the electorate with an accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date permanent list of electors.

**Election Finance**

Election Finance provides education, guidance and assistance to candidates and political parties about election finance with respect to meeting guidelines and disclosure according to the *Elections Act, 1991*.

**Communications**

It is important for OCEO to communicate clear, strong messages to its primary clients and the general public. Various types of communications are used frequently to provide the electorate with the information they require in order to be knowledgeable of the electoral process, particularly important dates and reminders. Public notices, advertising, press releases, media kits, and public service announcements are just a few of the methods that are used to inform the public of 'need to know' information. For example, the Special Ballot process was advertised in local papers, radio and television. Additionally, a news release was sent out to alert electors about Special Ballot general information and deadlines.

OCEO also has a website that contains a wealth of information on the electoral process. The Office strives to keep the website up-to-date and current with issues that pertain to elections. The website will be revamped for the 2011 General Election.

## Vision and Mission

Vision	Mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be an effective and efficient organization with a professional and dedicated staff committed to (a) meeting our mandate, and (b) the integrity of the electoral process.</li> <li>• To be an organization that challenges and encourages staff to be creative in finding ways to improve service to those we serve.</li> <li>• To be an organization that, through impartiality, excellence, and professionalism, inspires confidence in all those involved in the electoral process.</li> </ul>	<p>By 2011, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have implemented programs and services required to support the 2011 Provincial General Election.</p> <p><b>Measure:</b> Implemented programs and services.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Voter Information Cards</li> <li>• Initiated development of a Youth Awareness campaign</li> <li>• Increased effort put toward encouraging people to register to vote</li> <li>• Improvement to Election Official training</li> </ul>

## Highlights and Accomplishments

Notable highlights and accomplishments include:

- OCEO successfully administered three by-elections in the electoral districts of The Straits – White Bay North, Topsail and Terra Nova.
- A new software package called TRIM was launched in February and OCEO's management of information has already improved significantly. Quick and easy access to updated information enables OCEO to have enhanced reporting and informed decision-making capabilities. OCEO is confident that this program will prevent loss of records, duplication of records, and will ensure organization and efficiency.
- OCEO has done significant work in revising administrative processes for Special Ballot Voting and for the General Election.
- OCEO's bi-monthly newsletter, *The Writ*, has received much praise and acknowledgement from its recipients. We currently circulate 250 copies of each issue.
- The Electoral Planning Committee has been working in partnership with all OCEO staff to document processes from the 2007 Provincial General Election and is currently working on recommendations to improve efficiency. OCEO is moving into 'election mode' in October 2010 (one year prior to the 2011 General Election) and is bustling with plans and preparation.

## Results of Objectives

### Objective 1:

- 2) **By March 31, 2010, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have continued to incorporate multi-source data and explored additional sources.**

**Measure: Incorporated multi-source data and explored additional sources.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New data now incorporated</li> <li>• Efforts toward making new partnerships documented and explained</li> </ul>	<p>The Voter Registry has been incorporating updates from federal, provincial, and municipal sources. The list is updated on a daily basis.</p> <p>Legislation was passed in 2007 to allow OCEO to enter into an agreement with a municipality or a board with respect to the supply and exchange of information necessary for a revision, correction or compilation of a Permanent List of Electors. For the September 2009 Municipal Elections, OCEO signed agreements with approximately 225 municipalities for the exchange of information. This was a very worthwhile venture as we received and, continue to receive, updates from all municipalities in an endeavor to keep the Permanent List of Electors as current as possible. Particular attention is being focused on the mailing addresses, especially postal codes, because one of our goals for the October 2011 General Election is to produce Voter Information Cards for the electorate.</p> <p>OCEO met with officials from all School Board Associations to discuss boundaries and voter lists for their November 2009 School Board Elections. Each of OCEO's Voter Registry Coordinators were assigned to District Associations and provided them with election assistance, as well as boundary and voter information.</p>

**Plan for 2011:**

- 3) By March 31, 2011, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have improved availability of voter information in support of the 2011 Provincial General Election.**

***Measure: Availability of voter information improved for 2011 General Election.***

*Indicators:*

- *Voter information circulated to residents of Newfoundland and Labrador in the form of a blanket-type mail-out by Canada Post, encouraging registration for the 2011 General Election*
- *Voter Information Cards will be mailed out to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, providing information essential to voting (such as voting qualifications, locations of polls, etc.).*

**Objective 2:**

- 2) **By March 31, 2010, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have designed and implemented Voter Information Cards.**

**Measure: Voter Information Cards designed and implemented.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voter Information Cards designed and approved by election field staff (will be distributed for the October 11, 2011 General Election)</li> </ul>	<p>OCEO did not implement Voter Information Cards by the March 31, 2010 planning commitment. This is due to the fact that they cannot be implemented until polling locations are determined for the 2011 General Election, which will not occur until the 2010-11 budget year.</p> <p>OCEO staff researched the use of Voter Information Cards in other jurisdictions, as well as their effectiveness in replacing other polling location advertising means.</p> <p>Internal consultations were held between the Voter Registry and Election Operations divisions of OCEO to determine what kind of information the cards would communicate, as well as where the mail out of VICs would fit into our legislation based electoral process. Both the content and mailing timelines were agreed upon.</p> <p>External consultations were conducted with Canada Post. They are able to create and distribute such cards, with our office providing them with the data (more specifically, elector mailing addresses from the voters list).</p> <p>Once the data has been confirmed for the Voter Information Cards, OCEO will request input from election field staff on the efficiency of layout and content.</p> <p>Funding for this project was requested, but not approved, in the OCEO's 2009-10 budget. Another request for funding will be submitted in the 2010-11 budget.</p>

**Plan for 2011:**

- 3) By March 31, 2011, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have assessed advertising availability province-wide for the upcoming Provincial General Election.**

***Measure: Province-wide advertising availability for the Provincial General Election assessed.***

*Indicators:*

- *Provincial Returning Officers contacted to search for new advertising potential within their specific electoral districts.*
- *Radio stations, television stations, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and internet sources researched for potential advertising opportunities.*

**Objective 3:**

- 2) **By March 31, 2010, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have initiated work on improving training materials.**

**Measure: Contacted Elections Canada and other election offices country-wide**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other provincial elections offices forwarded their training materials to OCEO for review</li> <li>• OCEO's election field staff contacted for suggestions</li> <li>• Changes initiated to improve OCEO's staff training materials (training for Returning Officers, Election Clerks and Special Ballot Officers)</li> </ul>	<p>To begin revising training materials for the 2011 General Election, OCEO staff had to closely examine the processes on which election staff require training, to ensure that they are being conducted in the most efficient manner. This resulted in administrative process changes to Special Ballot voting and General Election voting (forms and envelopes revisions).</p> <p>All other provincial electoral offices were contacted to request that their training materials be forwarded to OCEO for review. OCEO conducted a review of their training, and sent staff members to observe training done by Elections Canada in June and September of 2009.</p> <p>Election field staff have not yet been contacted for input into training topics. Rather, OCEO identified the need for additional internal training. Four OCEO staff members received "Train the Trainer" training and two OCEO staff members received "Instructional Design for New Designers" training. Both these courses have provided training staff with the ability to design both a training program and the required training materials (manuals, study guides, exercises, etc.). After completing these new training courses, it was determined that OCEO must first create a training plan, then contact elections field staff for topics they require additional focus on.</p> <p>The new training program is currently in progress and will be implemented in July 2011 for the October 11, 2011, General Election.</p>

**Plan for 2011:**

- 3) **By March 31, 2011, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer will have implemented new training methods for the 2011 Provincial General Election.**

***Measure: New training methods for the 2011 Provincial General Election implemented.***

*Indicators:*

- *New training program designed and implemented.*
- *New training manuals designed.*
- *New training evaluation plan developed.*



## **Opportunities and Challenges**

The next Provincial General Election will take next year, on October 11, 2011. OCEO will continue to work toward goals and new projects in time for the election.

A challenge this Office faces is that by-elections can arise at any time. The Office must be in a state of constant readiness and this can lead to problems in implementing forward-thinking plans.



## **Section B**

### **Commissioner for Legislative Standards**

## Overview

Mr. Paul Reynolds is the Commissioner for Legislative Standards.

The Commissioner for Legislative Standards is assigned responsibility for investigating and conducting inquiries, when necessary, to determine whether a Member has failed to fulfill any obligation under the code of conduct and to report to the House with recommendations as to appropriate sanctions similar to the ones that are available for breached conflict of interest duties in Part II of the *House of Assembly Act*.

The Commissioner is located at 39 Hallett Crescent in St. John's. The telephone number is 729-0712 and the fax number is 729-0679.

### ***Vision***

The vision of the office of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards is to maintain an environment where the highest ethical standards are in place for the House of Assembly.

### ***Mission***

By 2011, the Commissioner for Legislative Standards will have made an effort to increase communications with Members regarding timeliness of disclosure statement filing.

***Measure:*** Increased communication with Members

***Indicators:*** Increased number of information materials provided  
Increased number of Members filing within required timelines

### ***Role and Mandate***

The Commissioner is an officer of the House of Assembly and reports annually upon the affairs of the office to the Speaker of the Assembly, who then presents the report to the House of Assembly.

Mr. Reynolds is responsible for the enforcement of the conflict of interest provisions of the *House of Assembly (Amendment) Act*.

As well as the responsibilities under the House of Assembly Act, the Commissioner is also responsible for hearing appeals of public office holders under the *Conflict of Interest Act, 1995*.

It is the mandate of the Commissioner for Legislative Standards to ensure that the conflict of interest legislation is followed by all members.

## Lines of Business

The Commissioner for Legislative Standards provides the following lines of business in carrying out his mandate.

### ***Inquiries***

The Commissioner for Legislative Standards will conduct inquiries into Members' conduct and will make recommendations based on his findings.

### ***Disclosure Statements***

After each Provincial General Election and on April 1 of each year thereafter, the Commissioner is required to acquire Disclosure Statements from the Members of the House of Assembly. Once they are approved, they are made available to the public for review.

### ***Annual Reporting***

The Commissioner is responsible for preparing an Annual Report on the progress that is made.

### ***Values***

The primary value for the Commissioner for Legislative Standards is **Integrity**. The Commissioner aims to protect the integrity of Members by ensuring that there is no conflict between them and Government practices.

## Results of Objectives

### Objective 1:

- 2) **By March 31, 2010, the Commissioner for Legislative Standards will have begun communication with Members to advise them of deadlines.**

**Measure: Communications begun to advise Members of filing deadlines.**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters sent when necessary</li> <li>• Telephone calls initiated when necessary</li> </ul>	<p>Where necessary, the Commissioner placed telephone calls to Members who were nearing or who had past the filing deadline.</p> <p>After placing required telephone calls, the Commissioner felt that adequate follow-up had been conducted. It was determined that letters were unnecessary and, as a result, they were not sent.</p>

### Plan for 2011:

- 3) **By March 31, 2011, the Commissioner for Legislative Standards will have explored additional options to facilitate the timely filing of Member Disclosure Statements.**

**Measure: Additional options explored to facilitate the timely filing of Member Disclosure Statements.**

*Indicators:*

- *The Commissioner consults with support staff to brainstorm additional options for facilitating the timely filing of Member Disclosure Statements.*

## **Appendix A**

### **Financial Statements**

Please note that although these statements are labeled "Office of the Chief Electoral Officer" and includes the financial information for the Commissioner for Legislative Standards.

*Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended March 2010 (unaudited).*





*Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for  
Fiscal Year Ended March 2008 (unaudited).*

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

*CURRENT*

	Actual	Estimates	
		Amended	Original
	\$	\$	\$
<b>3.1.01. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER</b>			
01. Salaries .....	<b>898,443</b>	908,500	828,900
02. Employee Benefits .....	<b>3,660</b>	4,200	4,200
03. Transportation and Communications .....	<b>62,300</b>	72,000	72,000
04. Supplies .....	<b>17,764</b>	15,100	10,100
05. Professional Services .....	<b>61,373</b>	130,000	170,000
06. Purchased Services .....	<b>221,280</b>	227,600	163,000
07. Property, Furnishings and Equipment .....	<b>24,189</b>	25,000	22,300
10. Grants and Subsidies .....	<b>16,617</b>	17,200	-
	<b>1,302,626</b>	1,399,600	1,270,500
02. Revenue - Provincial .....	<b>(5)</b>	-	-
Total: Office of the Chief Electoral Officer	<b>1,302,621</b>	1,399,600	1,270,500
<b>TOTAL: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER</b>	<b>1,302,621</b>	1,399,600	1,270,500
<b>TOTAL: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER</b>	<b>1,302,621</b>	1,399,600	1,270,500

Audited financial information will be included in the Annual Report of the House of Assembly Management Commission to be tabled by the Speaker during the next sitting of the House. The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer does not have a requirement for a separate, individual audited financial statement.