

Electoral Boundaries Commission

Transition Activity Plan

2007

Message from the Minister

As Minister responsible for the Electoral Boundaries Commission, I hereby submit this document to outline the work of the Commission as prescribed in the *Electoral Boundaries Act*. The purpose of this transition plan is to fulfill the Commission's planning requirements under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

The Electoral Boundaries Commission is a category 3 government entity which is appointed every ten years to prepare a report that sets out its recommendations for the division of the Province into 48 proposed 1-member districts. This report is then submitted before the end of the calendar year and the Commission is disbanded shortly after.

The last report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission was tabled in the House of Assembly in January 2007. The Commission will be appointed again in 2016, at which time, it will meet its planning and reporting requirements as appropriate under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. During the time it is inactive, the Commission's planning and reporting requirements will be fulfilled in the Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Reports of the Department of Justice.

Yours sincerely,

Jerome P. Kennedy, Q. C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Introduction

Each year, the *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires each government entity to prepare a report of its activities and every three years to develop a plan that will guide the entities activities over that time period. The Electoral Boundaries Commission was active in 2006, however, is currently disbanded. The Electoral Boundaries Commission will be appointed again in 2016, at which time, it will meet its planning and reporting requirements as appropriate under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

In the interim, this document will serve to describe the activities of the Commission when it is active as prescribed in the *Electoral Boundaries Act*.

Overview

The *Electoral Boundaries Act* states the Electoral Boundaries Commission shall consist of five members. The chairperson is to be appointed by the Chief Justice of Newfoundland and Labrador and the additional four members are to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Assembly.

The Commission is responsible to the Minister of Justice and its financial information is included in the financial information for the Department of Justice.

Mandate

The Commission is directed to divide the Province into 48 proposed 1-member districts. The Act provides that the Commission divide the Labrador portion of the Province into four proposed districts and shall describe the boundaries of those districts in such a manner that the proposed new districts conform as closely as practicable to the present districts. With regard to the island portion of the Province, the Commission shall determine the boundaries by obtaining a quotient for each proposed district by dividing the total population of the Province (except that portion of the total population living within the area of the Province comprising Labrador) by the number 44.

The Commission shall assume that the proportion of electors to the general population is constant throughout the Province. Where the Commission considers it necessary to do so, they may depart from the quotient not to a greater extent than 10% more or 10% less of the quotient. The Commission may also recommend the creation of a district with a population that departs from the quotient up to 25% more or 25% less of the quotient, where the Commission concludes that the departure is warranted by special geographic considerations.

The Commission will submit a report to the Minister of Justice setting out its recommendations concerning the division of the Province, the description of the boundaries and the name to be given to each district, which names shall incorporate the historical and geographical factors that the Commission considers appropriate.