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**INNOVATION.**

DELIVERING WITH CONFIDENCE



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SERVICE. INTEGRITY. INNOVATION: DELIVERING WITH CONFIDENCE  
ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN 2024–2025 ANNUAL REPORT (V1.0)



June 27, 2025

The Honourable Todd Goudy  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Room 129, Legislative Building  
2405 Legislative Drive  
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Pursuant to Section 286.1 of *The Election Act, 1996*, I have the distinct privilege of presenting the Annual Report for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (Elections Saskatchewan) to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

This Annual Report highlights Office activities for the fiscal year period of April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Boda, D.Phil., Ph.D.  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Province of Saskatchewan

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“In an era of declining democratic participation, it was heartening to see so many voters embodying a practical commitment to this province and to our shared future.”

- Dr. Michael Boda, Chief Electoral Officer

## A Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

This year, Saskatchewan was privileged to witness democracy in action. In October 2024, more voters turned out to vote in our provincial general election than in any since 1991. In an era of declining democratic participation, it was heartening to see so many voters embodying a practical commitment to this province and to our shared future. While there is still a great deal of room to grow voter engagement in Saskatchewan, the 2024 election was an encouraging step in the right direction.

That positive growth springs from a few key contributions. First, credit is due to the tireless work of thousands of committed individuals. From head office staff to our field leadership team and election workers, our province-wide team pulled together to deliver a remarkably smooth and effective voting experience, all while implementing new tools and processes.

Second, we saw the positive impact of robust investment in pre-election communications and voter registration. Building on a multi-year voter registration project, our team prioritized a proactive and concerted effort to engage voters well in advance of the election, boosting public awareness and interest.

Third, this election benefitted from historic progress on our decade-long plan to strengthen voter access. We made significant progress in removing barriers for voters on multiple fronts. Expanded voting times, places, and methods ensured that voters had ample opportunity to participate. The full story of Saskatchewan's 30th General Election will be told at length in volumes I to IV of *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election*.<sup>1</sup>

And finally, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the candidates, political parties, and hundreds of thousands of voters who took this opportunity to exercise their democratic rights. It was particularly gratifying to witness increased voter participation. While we still have a long way to go,



Dr. Michael Boda has been Saskatchewan's Chief Electoral Officer since June 2012. He has led the province through general elections in April 2016, October 2020, and October 2024.

<sup>1</sup> Volume I, *Statement of Votes* (Regina: Elections Saskatchewan, May 2025), is available on Elections Saskatchewan's website at <https://www.elections.sk.ca/reports-data/reports-publications/>. Volumes II through IV will be released during FY2025–26.



this positive shift in voter turnout offers hope that continued effort and investment may lead to more significant growth in the future. We look forward to building on this foundation as we complete our reporting and turn our attention to preparing for the province's 31st General Election, scheduled by legislation to occur on October 30, 2028.

As we wrap up the fiscal year, we are also reaching the end of Elections Saskatchewan's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan: *Service. Integrity. Innovation. Expanding Electoral Excellence in Saskatchewan.*<sup>2</sup>

While the delivery of the 30th General Election was our highest priority this year, it was not our only focus. I continued to engage in vital dialogue with my counterparts across the country and around the world, ensuring Elections Saskatchewan's ongoing engagement with, understanding of, and contribution to global developments in election administration. This work included my ongoing service as Past President of the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL), participation in the annual national Conference of Canadian Election Officials, a speaking engagement at a CIVIX Democracy Bootcamp in Saskatoon, and participation in a roundtable on the impact of AI on election administration.

As we wrap up the fiscal year, we are also reaching the end of Elections Saskatchewan's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan: *Service. Integrity. Innovation. Expanding Electoral Excellence in Saskatchewan.*<sup>2</sup> That plan marked a new strategic planning approach for Elections Saskatchewan, concentrating our efforts and reporting on specific stakeholder outcomes and measurable three-year deliverables. Over the course of the past three years, our team has worked hard to implement this plan and to evaluate our success in doing so. I am pleased to say, based on data collation, internal analysis, and evaluation by external experts, that we have successfully

achieved the plan's strategic imperative: "Saskatchewan's 30th General Election is modernized and positively perceived by stakeholders." A comprehensive report on Elections Saskatchewan's performance under the strategic plan is outlined in the Measuring Strategic Plan Performance section on pages 23–31 of this annual report.

Finally, in the past fiscal year we began work on two key publications: the comprehensive four volumes of *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election*, and a new four-year strategic plan that will be released in FY2025–26. Going forward, we are intentionally aligning our strategic planning process with the election cycle, allowing our team to build directly on the successes and lessons of the 30th election cycle as we complete our planning for the 31st. Both *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election* and the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan will draw on our past to expand our vision for the future of election administration in Saskatchewan. I look forward to sharing them with the public very soon.

Michael Boda, D. Phil., Ph.D.  
Chief Electoral Officer  
Province of Saskatchewan

Regina, Saskatchewan  
March 31, 2025

# ABOUT ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN



<sup>2</sup> Elections Saskatchewan. *Service. Integrity. Innovation. Expanding Electoral Excellence in Saskatchewan: A Strategic Plan for Elections Saskatchewan, 2023–2025* (Regina: Elections Saskatchewan, April 2023) ("the Strategic Plan"). Elections Saskatchewan's past and present strategic plans are available online at <https://www.elections.sk.ca/reports-data/strategic-planning/>.



## Our Hope and Dream for Saskatchewan: The people of Saskatchewan trust, value, and participate in their democracy.

The many components involved in planning, organizing, and implementing elections in Saskatchewan are overseen by an election management body (EMB).

An EMB is an independent, non-partisan institution responsible for impartial election administration within a democracy. In Canada, each provincial, territorial, and national jurisdiction has an EMB that administers elections, upholds the democratic rights guaranteed by the Canadian constitution, and conducts electoral events in accordance with applicable legislation.

Elections Saskatchewan fulfills that mandate for this province, serving as the secretariat to the statutory Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Its leadership team is based in Regina and dispersed across the 61 constituencies that elect the Members of Saskatchewan's Legislative Assembly.

In the months leading up to a general election, Saskatchewan's electoral service grows steadily. During the election period, thousands of temporary workers from all parts of the province have traditionally been required to administer voting. The modernization efforts described throughout this annual report are designed to bring this number down over time, but elections will always be labour-intensive. These workers serve provincial voters by administering an event that is fundamental to sustaining Saskatchewan's democratic traditions.

### VALUES

Elections Saskatchewan's core values sustain and motivate its work. While developing the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan, Elections Saskatchewan's leadership and staff consistently pointed to five leading values:

- Integrity
- Innovation
- Impartiality
- Service
- Dedication

These values are widely shared by election administrators across Canada and around the globe. They are defining elements of a modern election management body and are consistent with the Electoral Integrity Framework issued by Elections Canada.<sup>3</sup>

### STAKEHOLDERS

As the organizer of major civic events, Elections Saskatchewan has an extensive list of stakeholders. These include:

- Voters and prospective voters;
- Registered political parties (including chief official agents, political party staff, and volunteers);
- Candidates for election;
- Candidates' financial agents;
- Elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan;
- Members of the Legislature's Board of Internal Economy;
- Constituency associations of registered political parties;
- Unregistered political parties, external organizations, and advocacy groups;
- Media representatives, reporters, columnists, bloggers, and contributors;
- Other Canadian Chief Electoral Officers and their institutions;
- Urban, rural, and Indigenous election management bodies;
- External data providers;
- Service organizations, vendors, and contractors;
- Academic researchers and political analysts;
- Other independent officers of the Legislative Assembly; and
- Electoral boundary commissions.



CEO Dr. Michael Boda with the chief official agents of Saskatchewan's seven registered political parties in June 2024.

Elections Saskatchewan's success depends largely on its ability to address the needs and concerns of its stakeholders. This is reflected in the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan, which foregrounds stakeholders and explicitly identifies them as central to Elections Saskatchewan's mission and strategic imperative.

#### Mission:

Elections Saskatchewan is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly. We engage with all stakeholders to deliver and regulate provincial electoral events.

#### Strategic Imperative:

Saskatchewan's 30th General Election is modernized and positively perceived by stakeholders.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### The Head Office Leadership Team

The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

As head of Elections Saskatchewan, the CEO ensures the fair and equitable conduct of operational, administrative, and financial practices related to the electoral process. The CEO is assisted in these legislated responsibilities by a head office leadership team.

Elections Saskatchewan's primary responsibility is to maintain an appropriate state of provincial election readiness. To that end, Elections Saskatchewan must appoint and train the requisite numbers of constituency returning officers and election officers to ensure electoral preparedness throughout each government's mandate, and to be fully ready for by-elections and scheduled general elections.



*The Election Act, 1996* (the Election Act) also places a duty on the CEO to assist registered political parties, candidates, chief official agents, and financial agents to ensure the Election Act's financial transparency and disclosure goals are met. Elections Saskatchewan publishes guides for party chief official agents and candidate financial agents to help them fulfill their administrative and financial reporting responsibilities, compile the necessary support documentation, and ensure their annual financial disclosures are filed in accordance with the Election Act and *The Political Contributions Tax Credit Act, 2001*.

To ensure political stakeholders and the public are aware of important aspects of its role and mandate, Elections Saskatchewan maintains an outreach program that responds to public enquiries and liaises with registered political parties, candidates, and their chief official agents and financial agents.

Where applicable, Elections Saskatchewan is responsible for assessing and reimbursing election expenses, which are paid from the province's General Revenue Fund. Elections Saskatchewan has established a financial review system to certify public reimbursement of election expenses through the examination and audit of registered political parties' and candidates' expense returns and required disclosure documentation. To promote transparency, expense return details are tabled in the Legislative Assembly and posted on Elections Saskatchewan's website.

Elections Saskatchewan is also responsible for investigating offences under the Election Act. While the Act is regulatory rather than criminal, the role of Elections Saskatchewan is to inspect, investigate, and inquire about instances where contravention of the Election Act is suspected or alleged, as deemed necessary by the CEO. Since this responsibility is a matter of considerable discretion and is often initiated by

complaints filed by interested parties, it is incumbent upon Elections Saskatchewan to consider whether any specific situation has contravened the overall purpose, policy rationale, and/or legislative intent of the province's electoral legislation.

To ensure political stakeholders and the public are aware of important aspects of its role and mandate, Elections Saskatchewan maintains an outreach program that responds to public enquiries and liaises with registered political parties, candidates, and their chief official agents and financial agents.

As with other independent officers of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, the CEO is supported in his work by the Legislative Assembly's Board of Internal Economy (BOIE). The BOIE reviews the CEO's budget and has legislative authority to approve the use of alternate procedures (those differing from the procedures outlined in legislation) during general elections.

The Chief Electoral Officer reports annually to the Legislative Assembly, via submission of a written report that is tabled by the Speaker, on matters related to administering the Election Act. In addition to such annual reporting, the CEO also prepares reports to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on all elections administered by his office. *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election*<sup>4</sup> will be published in four separate volumes: 1) *Statement of Votes*, 2) *Administrative Review*, 3) *Statement of Expenditures*, and 4) *Chief Electoral Officer's Recommendations for Legislative Reform*. Administrative and financial reporting for constituency by-elections is encapsulated in individual by-election reports.

Elections Saskatchewan operates and is accountable in a unique and complex environment due to the potential uncertainty of the provincial electoral cycle, the decentralized nature of election administration, the requirement for an extremely large temporary workforce, and the interaction of registered political parties, candidates, media, and the electorate. The integrated management of this highly decentralized process rests with Elections Saskatchewan and depends heavily on its impartial and effective administration of the process integrity controls contained in the Election Act.

### The Field Leadership Team (FLT)

While central electoral administration is the responsibility of Elections Saskatchewan's head office leadership team, the regional and constituency-level conduct of electoral events is the responsibility of the field leadership team.

Supervisory returning officers (SROs), each representing a different geographic zone that comprises five to seven constituencies, are responsible for supporting returning officers within those constituencies in performing their duties. SROs act as a liaison between the head office and the constituency returning officers and provide oversight to ensure electoral events are administered and conducted at a consistently high standard across the province in accordance with direction from Elections Saskatchewan's executive leadership.

Representing Elections Saskatchewan at the local level, each constituency has a returning officer (RO) who is assisted by an election clerk (EC). These two individuals are entrusted with upholding the neutrality of the province's decentralized electoral process within their constituency, and are responsible for the administration, conduct, and reporting of electoral proceedings for general elections, by-elections, referendums, and plebiscites.

An important part of achieving and maintaining election readiness is having constituency ROs and ECs appointed and in position within each of the province's 61 constituencies. The CEO appoints all provincial ROs and ECs. Notices of all RO appointments (or cancellations) are published in *The Saskatchewan Gazette*. RO and EC vacancies are filled through independent merit-based competitions.

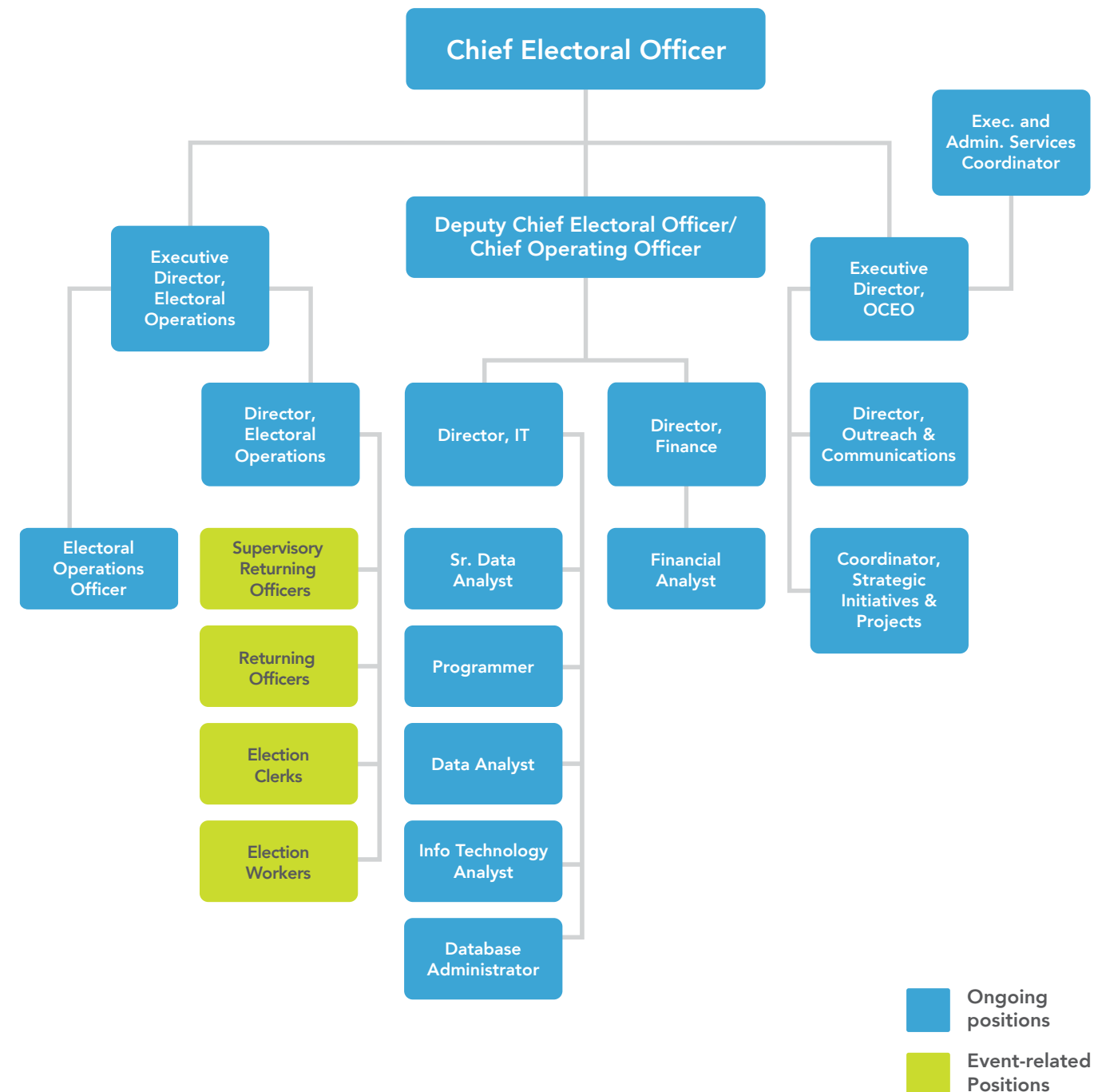


Elections Saskatchewan's field leadership team is responsible for administering electoral events throughout the province. The FLT gathered in April and September for critical training events.



## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Elections Saskatchewan (2024–25)



# REPORT ON 2024–2025

DELIVERING WITH CONFIDENCE





Elections Saskatchewan had voting locations in 531 communities throughout the province.

## 2024–2025 HIGHLIGHTS


- **April 16–18, 23–25**  
Pre-writ training events held in Regina and Saskatoon for ROs and ECs
- **May 1**  
Saskatchewan's second annual Voter Registration Month begins
- **June 4**  
Vote by Mail applications open, allowing voters to apply for a Vote by Mail package to be delivered once the 30th General Election is called
- **June 11**  
Last annual meeting between Elections Saskatchewan and the province's registered political parties before the 30th General Election
- **August 1**  
Elections Saskatchewan's public call centre opens and begins taking calls addressing questions about the 30th General Election
- **September 3**  
Elections Saskatchewan begins mailing Voter Information Letters to 500,000 households across Saskatchewan
- **September 4–6, 10–12**  
ROs and ECs gather for event training in Regina and Saskatoon
- **September 26**  
Elections Saskatchewan partners with CIVIX to hold Democracy Bootcamp for teachers
- **October 1**  
Writs of election issued
- **October 22–26 & 28**  
Voting Week for Saskatchewan's 30th General Election
- **November 9**  
Final Count for Saskatchewan's 30th General Election
- **November 12**  
International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy begin post-event assessment of Saskatchewan's 30th General Election
- **December 8–10**  
CEO Dr. Michael Boda attends Council on Governmental Ethics Laws conference (COGEL)
- **January 28**  
Filing deadline for candidate expense returns from 30th General Election
- **February 1**  
Elections Saskatchewan begins preparing for potential by-elections



## 2023–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

On June 23, 2023, Elections Saskatchewan published *Service. Integrity. Innovation. Expanding Electoral Excellence in Saskatchewan*. Expanding a strategic plan for the years 2023–2025. This strategic plan maintained a clear focus on Elections Saskatchewan's ongoing modernization initiative, emphasizing its importance for Saskatchewan's 30th General Election. The plan is summarized in the strategy map on the next page.



		ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN		2023–2025 STRATEGY MAP			
		OUR HOPE AND DREAM:		The people of Saskatchewan trust, value, and participate in their democracy.			
VISION:		We are a collaborative leader in establishing and refining best practices in election management in Canada.		MISSION: Elections Saskatchewan is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly. We engage with all stakeholders to deliver and regulate provincial electoral events.			
VALUES	INTEGRITY	INNOVATION	IMPARTIALITY	SERVICE	DEDICATION		
	We administer elections that are reliable, secure, transparent, and accessible.	We improve and modernize the election system while maintaining the trust of our stakeholders.	We are objective and treat stakeholders equitably and fairly.	We excel in how we serve stakeholders and colleagues in support of our mission.	We proudly and professionally administer electoral activities that support our democracy.		
		STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE:		Saskatchewan’s 30th General Election is modernized and positively perceived by stakeholders.			
THREE-YEAR DELIVERABLES 5.0 We meet our strategic imperative by accomplishing the following for those we serve:		5.1 Election Management 5.1.1 Modernize voter services management in accordance with legislation and electoral best practice. 5.1.2 Modernize election management system. 5.1.3 Modernize leadership of and collaboration with FLT and election workers.		5.2 Regulatory Affairs 5.2.1 Modernize and implement a political finance program to facilitate compliance by political parties, candidates, and financial agents. 5.2.2 Better serve political participants and registered political parties to navigate and comply with the electoral legislation through supportive relationships and education. 5.2.3 Modernize systems to ensure legislative compliance of political and governmental stakeholders during the election period.		5.3 Stakeholder Engagement 5.3.1 Educate all stakeholders on modernization changes to the electoral processes. 5.3.2 Engage all stakeholders to increase awareness and reduce barriers to participate and work in the electoral system. 5.3.3 Collaborate with municipal and Indigenous election management bodies on issues of common concern and best practices in election administration.	
STAKEHOLDERS (THOSE WE SERVE) 4.0 Our success comes from serving:		4.1 Voters “My voting experience was accessible, fast, and easy. I trust our electoral process.”		4.2 Political Parties and Candidates “I was provided with the support and information needed to comply with legislation. I trust our electoral process.”		4.3 Partners “I was provided with the support and information needed to fulfill my role. I trust our electoral process.”	
FINANCES 3.0 We ensure accountability and sustainability by:		3.1 Immediate Term: 3.1.1 Expending funds in accordance with polices and legislation.		3.1.2 Transparently reporting and managing election spending and reimbursements.		3.2 Long Term: 3.2.1 Investing in modernization efforts toward improved financial efficiencies in elections administration.	
OPERATIONS 2.0 We strive for operational excellence with specific emphasis in:		2.1 Systems Refinement 2.1.1 Implement new Election Management System (EMS). 2.1.2 Improve procurement processes. 2.1.3 Improve warehouse processes and operations.		2.2 External Communication 2.2.1 Strengthen mechanisms for communication with stakeholder groups. 2.2.2 Build and maintain important relationships with stakeholder groups.		2.3 Risk and Project Management 2.3.1 Inventory and address organizational risks. 2.3.2 Develop rigorous internal project management. 2.3.3 Refine simulation processes that support modernization and preparedness.	
ORGANIZATION 1.0 We strive for organizational excellence with specific emphasis in:		1.1 Organizational Capacity 1.1.1 Enhance institutional memory through process documentation. 1.1.2 Build redundancies into the organization to accommodate election pressures. 1.1.3 Update policy documentation.		1.2 Team Preparedness 1.2.1 Develop timely hiring and training practices aligned with modernization. 1.2.2 Further enhance training with principles of adult education and modern technology. 1.2.3 Implement strategies to promote an inclusive and representative election workforce.		1.3 Culture 1.3.1 Define and reinforce service-oriented organizational culture. 1.3.2 Develop workplace policies to sustain healthy and high-performing employees throughout the election cycle. 1.3.3 Improve internal communication to amplify employee awareness of and identification with vision, values, and strategic imperative.	





CEO Dr. Michael Boda formally opened the Vote by Mail portal in early June 2024

### PREPARING TO DELIVER SASKATCHEWAN'S 30TH GENERAL ELECTION

In Saskatchewan, like other Canadian jurisdictions, preparations for a general election must begin months and even years before the event is officially called. *The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007* requires that a provincial general election be held in Saskatchewan on the last Monday of October in the fourth calendar year after the previous general election. As the 29th General Election took place in October 2020, the 30th General Election was anticipated for October 28, 2024, long before the Chief Electoral Officer received an Order from the Lieutenant Governor in Council instructing him to issue the writs of election to the province's 61 returning officers.

In April 2024, all ROs and ECs gathered in Regina and Saskatoon for pre-writ training. Two training sessions were delivered: one for those who would be working in constituencies equipped with e-poll books, and one for those who would be working in constituencies—mainly rural—without the infrastructure to support the new technology. Following the training session, the ROs undertook their pre-writ assignment: finding and leasing spaces for returning offices, seeking out voting locations, and contacting facilities like care homes and hospitals to arrange special voting opportunities.

As the ROs diligently tracked down voting locations, Elections Saskatchewan's head office team focused on engaging voters. Voter registration was a top priority,

along with generous pre-writ communication to ensure awareness and improve participation. In May 2024, Elections Saskatchewan recognized the province's second annual Voter Registration Month, promoting voter registration through various channels including paid advertising, social media posts, and media engagement. The Vote by Mail registration portal opened shortly after, remaining open from early June until October 19. This portal provided an opportunity for voters to learn more about the Vote by Mail process and request a mail-in ballot.

In early September, ROs and ECs undertook additional training focused on critical tasks including worker recruitment, how to process candidate nominations, and administering special voting opportunities. Although improved voting processes, including the use of e-poll books and the Saskatchewan Election Management System (SEMS), reduced the number of workers needed, it was still necessary to recruit roughly 5,000 workers between early September and the election. That focused recruitment and hiring process took significant time and energy. While it was relatively easy to find workers in some constituencies, challenges in other regions required additional advertising and recruitment strategies.

### SASKATCHEWAN'S 30TH GENERAL ELECTION

In Saskatchewan, the dates of many key election activities are set in legislation. This includes a 27-day period between

the day the writs of election are issued and the last day of voting. The Final Count, during which all results are confirmed, is held 12 days after voting ends. There is then a period of time when applications for recounts can be made before the Return to the Writs, which takes place 23 days after the last day of voting. This 51-day period, from the date the writs are issued until they are returned, is a period of intense activity, scrutiny, and work, but is critical to the province's democratic traditions.

#### Election Dates 2024

- ➔ **October 1**  
Writs of Election issued, returning offices open
- ➔ **October 12**  
Candidate nomination deadline
- ➔ **October 19**  
Deadline for electors to register in advance; deadline for Vote by Mail and Homebound Voting applications
- ➔ **October 22–26**  
Personal Care Facility and Homebound Voting
- ➔ **October 28**  
Hospital, Remand, Temporarily Displaced Voting
- ➔ **October 22–26, 28**  
Voting Week
- ➔ **October 28**  
First Preliminary Count (all Voting Week, Personal Care Facility, and Homebound Voting ballots counted)
- ➔ **October 30**  
Second Preliminary Count (Vote by Mail ballots received by Oct 26 counted)
- ➔ **November 7**  
Deadline to receive Vote by Mail ballots
- ➔ **November 9**  
Final Count (remaining Vote by Mail ballots and all Hospital, Remand, Temporarily Displaced Voting ballots counted)
- ➔ **November 20**  
Return of the Writs

Even before the issuance of the writs, the province's election date legislation and overall consensus regarding the likely election timeline allowed for some important early preparations. Communication and training were top priorities. In early August, Elections Saskatchewan opened its public call centre to field questions and concerns from the public. The call centre played an important part in public communication and awareness, receiving just under 9,000 calls between its opening date and its closure on October 30. Elections Saskatchewan also delivered Voter Information Letters to more than 500,000 households in September, providing important information on what to expect when the election was called, how to vote, and how to apply to Vote by Mail.

Issuance of the writs on October 1 triggered further preparations, including delivery of detailed information to voters. From October 11–18, Elections Saskatchewan distributed more than 784,000 Voter Information Cards (VICs) providing information on voting times, locations, and ID requirements. An additional 14,400 VICs were distributed by email, and just over 4,870 were delivered via SMS text message. Each VIC provided personalized information to a voter on where and when to vote.

Extensive voter communication both before and after issuance of the writ was particularly important this year due to adjustments in the voting process. This election featured Saskatchewan's first ever Voting Week, an extended voting period allowing and encouraging people to vote at a time convenient for them, with less emphasis on a final "election day."

One of the most exciting elements of the 30th General Election was the adoption of e-poll books. E-poll books are a major step forward for election administration in Saskatchewan, improving the accuracy of voter registration updates and speeding up the voting process. They were tested in a trio of by-elections in August 2023. Successful deployment in that instance led to their adoption for the first time in a general election in October 2024. While infrastructure limitations in some constituencies prevented full deployment of e-poll book technology throughout the province, they were successfully implemented in a total of 34 constituencies—more than half of the province. With an e-poll book and a barcode scanner, a single election worker can



complete the same amount of work that used to require multiple people.

The election included another milestone: the province-wide implementation of the new SEMS, a powerful software tool that has been in development for several years. SEMS enables coordination of a wide range of election logistics including worker recruitment, voting location details and leases, task management and tracking, and results entry and management. It is designed to allow data to move smoothly throughout the system, eliminating unnecessary data entry and decreasing errors.

The 30th General Election also saw the ongoing maturing of the Vote by Mail process. While all voters were encouraged to consider the process as an accessible alternative available through a simple application, Elections Saskatchewan made a particular effort to contact independent living facilities and encourage residents to

use the Vote by Mail process if accessing the regular polls posed a challenge. More than 28,000 people chose to use Vote by Mail.

While not a new practice, special voting was another critical tool employed by the Elections Saskatchewan team to ensure voter access. Hospitals, remand facilities, and care homes featured special voting opportunities to ensure that individuals unable to access the polls in the usual ways were able to exercise their democratic rights. If a voter could not leave their home due to a disability, Elections Saskatchewan workers would visit them and accept their vote through the Homebound Voting process.

As a result of these combined efforts, more voters participated in Saskatchewan's 30th General Election—in person, via Vote by Mail, and by special voting—than in any provincial election since 1991.



The Final Count for Saskatchewan's 30th General Election took place on November 9, 2024.



Elections Saskatchewan had nearly one million ballots printed for the October 2024 general election.

Once voting ended, the important work of counting votes began. In the First Preliminary Count, more than 400,000 ballots were counted across all 61 provincial constituencies after voting ended at 8 p.m. on October 28. Two days later, on October 30, workers in Regina completed the Second Preliminary Count, counting the 20,417 Vote by Mail ballots that had been returned by October 26, 2024.

In keeping with the Election Act, the Final Count took place on November 9, 2024, 12 days after the last day of voting. In the Final Count, election workers at a central Regina location counted all Vote by Mail ballots received between October 27 and November 7, along with all votes from hospital and remand centres. On that same date, ROs also verified that the results of the First Preliminary Count had been entered correctly. The results of the Final Count are available on Elections Saskatchewan's website.

Saskatchewan's 30th General Election officially ended on November 20, 2024, when Saskatchewan's 61 ROs returned their writs of election to the CEO, who formally delivered the names of the winning candidates to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

## EVENT CLOSEDOWN

Although the election officially concluded on November 20, this did not mark the end of Elections Saskatchewan's event-related work. Critical post-event tasks include obtaining feedback from key stakeholders; collecting, sorting, and storing supplies and materials; collecting and reviewing candidate expense returns; and preparing a comprehensive report on the election.

Two key external bodies help manage post-election stakeholder engagement: the IFES, and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS). Immediately following the election, these two bodies partnered to gather feedback from accessibility groups and First Nations communities. Those engagement results will be consolidated into Elections Saskatchewan's post-election reporting, identifying what went well and providing recommendations to strengthen voter services going forward.

A second major post-election task is closing down returning offices and dealing with the supplies and materials distributed across the province. Some of these materials can be returned to external suppliers; others must be returned to Elections Saskatchewan's warehouse in Regina for sorting, storage, or donation. Certain items related to the election, including ballot boxes and other election materials, must be retained, by legislation, for one year before being securely destroyed. Items that can be reused, such as accessibility ramps, office supplies, and signage, are catalogued and stored for use in future events.

Political finances raise some of the most challenging post-event tasks. Candidates, their financial agents, and all registered political parties are required by law to submit expense returns following the election. The Election Act stipulates that candidates must submit their returns within three months of the election (January 28, 2025), while registered political parties are required to submit theirs within six months (April 28, 2025). While the majority comply with those deadlines, some do not, necessitating a significant time investment to follow up and gather this data. Once all expense returns have been submitted, Elections Saskatchewan will review the returns for completeness and accuracy. This work is likely to continue late into FY2025–26. While time-consuming, the work of ensuring accurate political finance reporting is critical to maintain accountability and transparency.





CEO Dr. Michael Boda formally presented Iris Lang, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, with the names of the winning candidates on November 20, 2024.

All of these activities will be summarized and accounted for in *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election*, Elections Saskatchewan's comprehensive post-election report. The report will consist of the following four volumes:

1. *The Statement of Votes*: official poll by poll results and analysis of voter turnout;
2. *Administrative Review*: a detailed look at how the election was conducted; includes in-person observations and detailed survey data of all major election processes and procedures;
3. *Statement of Expenditures*: captures and provides context to the four-year cost of the election; and,

4. *Chief Electoral Officer's Recommendations for Legislative Reform*: drawing on lessons learned through the election cycle, Volume IV summarizes opportunities for improvement and provides recommendations to strengthen the province's election system and serve stakeholders more effectively.

A final but important post-election task is renewing Elections Saskatchewan's readiness for by-elections. By-election events are inherently unpredictable, and Elections Saskatchewan has a mandate to ensure that it is ready to respond at any point if a by-election is called. Now that the general election has passed, this readiness will once again be a top priority for the team. Substantial progress was made between January and March 2025 to ensure operational readiness.

# STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

## MEASURING STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE

In 2022, Elections Saskatchewan adopted a new strategic plan, *Service. Integrity. Innovation. Expanding Electoral Excellence in Saskatchewan*. This comprehensive plan represented a critical evolution in how the organization approached its long-term vision and operational execution. Designed to guide Elections Saskatchewan through to 2025, the plan articulated a bold and measurable strategic imperative: “Saskatchewan’s 30th General Election is modernized and positively perceived by stakeholders.”

This imperative not only established a clear destination but also reflected the organization’s commitment to innovation, transparency, and trust in the democratic process.

What distinguished this strategic plan from its predecessors was a refined and more impactful approach to performance reporting. Rather than dispersing accountability metrics and progress updates throughout the document, Elections Saskatchewan strategically concentrated its reporting within two dedicated sections. **Section 4** of the plan provided a focused summary of the outcomes of strategic initiatives, specifically from the perspective of key stakeholders. This included how voters, political participants, partners, and the broader public were expected to benefit from the organization’s efforts. It demonstrated a stakeholder-centric philosophy, emphasizing real-world impact over abstract targets.

**Section 5**, on the other hand, outlined a comprehensive series of **three-year deliverables**, serving as a roadmap of specific, actionable initiatives that Elections Saskatchewan intended to implement. These deliverables were not merely aspirational; they were measurable and time-bound commitments that will shape how the agency adapts to new challenges, integrates technology, and strengthens the democratic infrastructure of the province.

In essence, this strategic plan represented both continuity and transformation. It preserved the enduring values of **service**, **integrity**, and **innovation**, while introducing a more dynamic framework for achieving and assessing progress. By clearly aligning strategic goals with measurable deliverables and stakeholder-centred outcomes, Elections Saskatchewan is setting a new standard in electoral administration—one that prioritizes modernization in service of broadening access to the vote, and transparency in setting goals and being accountable to them.

## 4.0 STAKEHOLDERS (THOSE WE SERVE)

### 4.1 Voters - “My voting experience was fast and easy. I trust our election process.”

	2020	2024
I understood how to vote	77%	83%
It was easy to vote	97%	97%
I trust the election process	97%	94%

Elections Saskatchewan has made measurable progress toward its strategic goal of ensuring voters understand how to vote, find the voting process accessible, and trust the electoral system. Survey data from the 2024 general election shows that 83 percent of voters agreed with the statement “I understood how to vote,” up from 77 percent in 2020—a notable 6-point increase that reflects successful efforts in voter education and communication. Satisfaction with the ease of voting remained exceptionally high, with 97 percent of voters in both 2020 and 2024 agreeing that “It was easy to vote.”

While voter confidence in the electoral process remains strong, there was a slight decline in agreement with the statement “I trust our election process,” dropping from 97 percent in 2020 to 94 percent in 2024. This modest decrease, while still within a high confidence range, likely reflects a broader wave of distrust that we have seen over the past five years in both Canada and the United States. While Elections Saskatchewan prioritized the issue of trust in the 2024 General Election, the drop, however slight, highlights the need for Elections Saskatchewan to continue its efforts to reinforce voter confidence in the election system.

### 4.2 Political Parties and Candidates - “I was provided with the support and information needed to comply with legislation. I trust our electoral process.”

Following the 30th General Election, Elections Saskatchewan was pleased to find that the vast majority of political parties, candidates, and their financial agents felt well-supported in fulfilling their legislative responsibilities. In a post-election survey, 80.5 percent of respondents reported that they were adequately trained and prepared to participate successfully in the electoral process. Additionally, 97.1 percent found the

materials prepared by Elections Saskatchewan to be effective in helping them understand and meet their obligations. These results reflect strong levels of satisfaction and trust in the administration of the electoral process. Further insights and perspectives from participants will be shared in Volumes II and III of *A Report on the Thirtieth General Election*.

### 4.3 Stakeholder Groups and Partners - “I was provided with the support and information needed to comply with legislation. I trust the electoral process.”

In advance of the general election, the Chief Electoral Officer of Saskatchewan undertook proactive outreach to a wide range of stakeholder groups and partners to ensure transparency and trust in the electoral process. This outreach included:

- publishing a policy brief for the JSGS entitled “Policy that Governs Elections is the Foundation of a Healthy Democracy”;
- signing Memoranda of Understanding with a number of First Nations committing to cooperation and ongoing communication;
- partnering with Diefenbaker Canada Centre to produce a course for students on Saskatchewan’s history of democracy;
- partnering with CIVIX to conduct a pre-election boot camp for teachers and the “Student Vote” program in schools throughout the province during October;
- partnering with the Democratic Engagement Exchange at Toronto Metropolitan University to produce “Be Vote Ready,” an activity for high school students that prepares them to register and get on the voters list;
- publishing election integrity pages on the Elections Saskatchewan website;
- conducting technical briefings with media;
- speaking with the Saskatchewan Teachers Institute on Parliamentary Democracy on the vibrancy of the province’s democratic institutions; and,
- partnering with JSGS and the International Foundation of Electoral Systems to conduct consultations with accessibility groups and First Nations chiefs and band officials, both before and after the election.

Through these activities, the Chief Electoral Officer worked to address stakeholder concerns and foster confidence in the integrity and accessibility of the electoral system. This collaborative approach aimed to build broad understanding and support for administration of the election across diverse communities in Saskatchewan.



Elections Saskatchewan has made measurable progress toward its strategic goal of ensuring voters understand how to vote, find the voting process accessible, and trust the electoral system.





5.0 THREE YEAR DELIVERABLES

5.1 ELECTION MANAGEMENT

5.1.1 Modernize voter services management in accordance with legislation and electoral best practice

5.1.1.1	Update operations process documentation to reflect changes in technology	Completed	All processes related to new technology were documented in manuals and training for the 30th General Election.
5.1.1.2	Assemble project team, develop training material, and pilot in by-election	Completed	Pilots were conducted for modernization of voting services during the 2023 by-elections in Lumsden-Morse, Regina Coronation Park, and Regina Walsh Acres.
5.1.1.3	Update and implement election worker sensitivity training	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan produced a new video that was delivered to all workers via the Saskatchewan Election Academy (SEA) app for the 30th General Election. Cultural sensitivity training was also provided to all ROs and ECs.
5.1.1.4	Build partnerships with other EMBs to source goods and services	Completed	The CEO signed major agreements with Elections Ontario and Elections Alberta to source key equipment for the 30th General Election.
5.1.1.5	Update warehouse inventory and processes to support new polling station technologies	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan produced a complete inventory of all assets at its warehouse using new asset management software. Innovations to packing procedures for shipments to returning offices were also made in advance of the election.
5.1.1.6	Develop early election preparedness plan	Completed	Sessions on early election preparedness were held in the spring of 2023. A preparedness plan was developed based upon these sessions.
5.1.1.7	Overhaul 30th General Election project plan to reflect modernization	Completed	The project plan was overhauled prior to the 30th General Election to incorporate all aspects of modernization.
5.1.1.8	Test changes to voting process through simulation	Completed	An election simulation lead was recruited to head up a dedicated simulation team. Extensive simulations of all aspects of the voting process were conducted beginning in November 2023.
5.1.1.9	Test changes to voting process in by-elections	Completed	Voting process changes were tested during the 2023 by-elections in Lumsden-Morse, Regina Coronation Park, and Regina Walsh Acres.



5.1.2 Modernize election management system

5.1.2.1	Utilize SEMS to track and flag history of voting locations	Completed	SEMS was used throughout the election to create an inventory of voting locations across the province to facilitate selection in future events.
5.1.2.2	Improve quality of baseline data to support future strategic planning initiatives	Completed	SEMS provided invaluable data throughout each phase of the election, allowing the team to better understand challenges and plan for the future.
5.1.2.3	Test SEMS implementation through simulation process	Completed	As part of the SEMS development plan, modules were tested extensively prior to the general election through simulations. Modules were also tested through use in the 2023 by-elections.
5.1.2.4	Complete SEMS transition in time for the 2024 election	Completed	All SEMS modules were ready and were used in the 2024 general election.



5.1.3 Modernize leadership of and collaboration with field leadership team (FLT) and election workers

5.1.3.1	Improve FLT newsfeed	Completed	The process of producing and distributing the FLT newsfeed has been regularized, new content has been produced, and consistency of messaging has been assured.
5.1.3.2	Develop interactive training opportunities that leverage modern technology	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan developed the SEA app and updated training processes to leverage modern adult learning techniques through both in-person and online methods. Additionally, videos were produced for multiple phases of the election as well as for use of SEMS and electronic pollbooks.
5.1.3.3	Update FLT manual to reflect modernized election processes	Completed	The FLT manuals received a complete rewrite for the 2024 General Election to reflect updated processes.
5.1.3.4	Examine opportunities to strengthen FLT via policies	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan engaged FLT in a comprehensive policy review and development process to strengthen the FLT experience.
5.1.3.5	Establish training task force to ensure organization-wide consistency in training	Completed	The Training Task Force was established in 2023 and has been working to ensure all training is coordinated and consistent.
5.1.3.6	Refresh communication strategy to ensure consistent communications with FLTs throughout the election cycle	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan implemented consistent messaging across all training, meetings, manuals, newsfeeds, the FLT support line, and other forms of communication to ensure consistent communication of values, processes, and procedures.
5.1.3.7	Incorporate service and impartiality messaging in FLT curriculum and communications	Completed	Service and impartiality messaging are stressed as fundamental to FLT work in every contact from hiring through to reporting on results.
5.1.3.8	Improve Take Part list process	Completed	A specific resource was assigned to the management of the list, refining it and developing a sense of community through the consistent communication of engaging and meaningful content.



5.2 REGULATORY AFFAIRS

5.2.1 Modernize and implement a political finance program to facilitate compliance by political parties, candidates, and financial agents

5.2.1.1	Increase administrative efficiency	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan adopted a materiality threshold for the enforcement of political finance regulations, removing the need to amend returns that are below the threshold. The Act was also amended to remove the requirement for audited returns when expenses and contributions are below \$1,000, lowering the administrative burden for financial agents.
5.2.1.2	Improve speed and accuracy of party and candidate access to information	Completed	All material pertaining to political finance has been posted on the website. Elections Saskatchewan contacts financial agents immediately upon appointment and copies candidates on all communication with financial agents.
5.2.1.3	Alter name from business manager to financial agent to better reflect the responsibility of the position	Completed	Adopted through legislative change and then reinforced in all materials provided to RPPs and candidates.

5.2.2 Better serve political participants and registered political parties to navigate and comply with the electoral legislation through supportive relationships and education

5.2.2.1	Hold an information session for registered political parties addressing modernization initiatives	Completed	At Elections Saskatchewan's annual RPP meeting, Chief Official Agents were informed about legislative changes and their implications.
5.2.2.2	Implement a program for evaluating communicate effectiveness	Completed	All communications including the communiques are currently being evaluated through Vol II: <i>Administrative Review</i> , the second installment of <i>A Report on the Thirtieth General Election</i> .



5.2.3 Modernize systems to ensure legislative compliance of political and governmental stakeholders during the election period

5.2.3.1	Improve ELMS user interface to facilitate legislative compliance	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan introduced user interface changes to assist with accurate completion of the fiscal period return, most notably in the area of advertising disclosure.
5.2.3.2	Develop a user-friendly and secure means for candidates and registered political parties to receive live strike off data	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan developed an online portal to share live strike off data with registered political parties and candidates.

5.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

5.3.1 Educate all stakeholders on modernization changes to the electoral processes

5.3.1.1	Develop a thorough media strategy responsive to cultural shifts in news and media channels	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan created a media strategy drawing on both new and older forms of media to ensure thorough outreach to populations across Saskatchewan, including First Nations communities and senior citizens.
5.3.1.2	Implement a program for evaluating advertising effectiveness	Completed	Vol II of <i>A Report on the Thirtieth General Election</i> consists of a comprehensive administrative review of the election, including evaluation of Elections Saskatchewan’s media campaign.



5.3.2 Engage all stakeholders to increase awareness and reduce barriers to participate and work in the electoral system

5.3.2.1	Develop an election workforce recruitment media campaign targeting youth, First Nations, newcomers, and the accessibility community	Completed	A recruitment task force was established to target these underserved groups through new forms of advertising, enhanced Supervisory Deputy Returning Officer positions, and partnership with SaskAbilities.
5.3.2.2	Improve the quality of voter and worker demographic data to establish an accurate baseline for future assessment of representation in the workforce	Completed	In the 2024 General Election, Elections Saskatchewan leveraged SEMS to capture demographic data on election workers.
5.3.2.3	Improve the voter experience through delivery of accurate and consistent information drawn from a centralized data source	Completed	SEMS now provides a single source of data relating to voter information and polling locations. As a result, accuracy in materials and services has dramatically improved.
5.3.2.4	Establish an external focus team to assess and improve external communications and relationship management	Completed	The external focus team was established in 2023 and has met regularly to conduct its work.

5.3.3 Collaborate with municipal and Indigenous election management bodies on issues of common concern and best practices in election administration

5.3.3.1	Invite municipal election representatives to observe demonstrations of the new SEMS	Completed	Municipal representatives were invited to demonstrations of SEMS capabilities in 2023.
5.3.3.2	Establish Memoranda of Understanding with First Nations	Completed	Elections Saskatchewan has signed Memoranda of Understanding with nine First Nations, and another six are in the process of being considered.
5.3.3.3	Invite municipal election representatives to observe by-elections	Completed	Representatives were invited to participate in a visitor’s program during the 2023 by-elections held in Lumsden-Morse, Regina Coronation Park, and Regina Walsh Acres.
5.3.3.4	Enter into agreements with municipalities for the sharing of data	Completed	Agreements were signed with North Battleford, Regina, Saskatoon, and the RMs of Sherwood and Shaunavon.

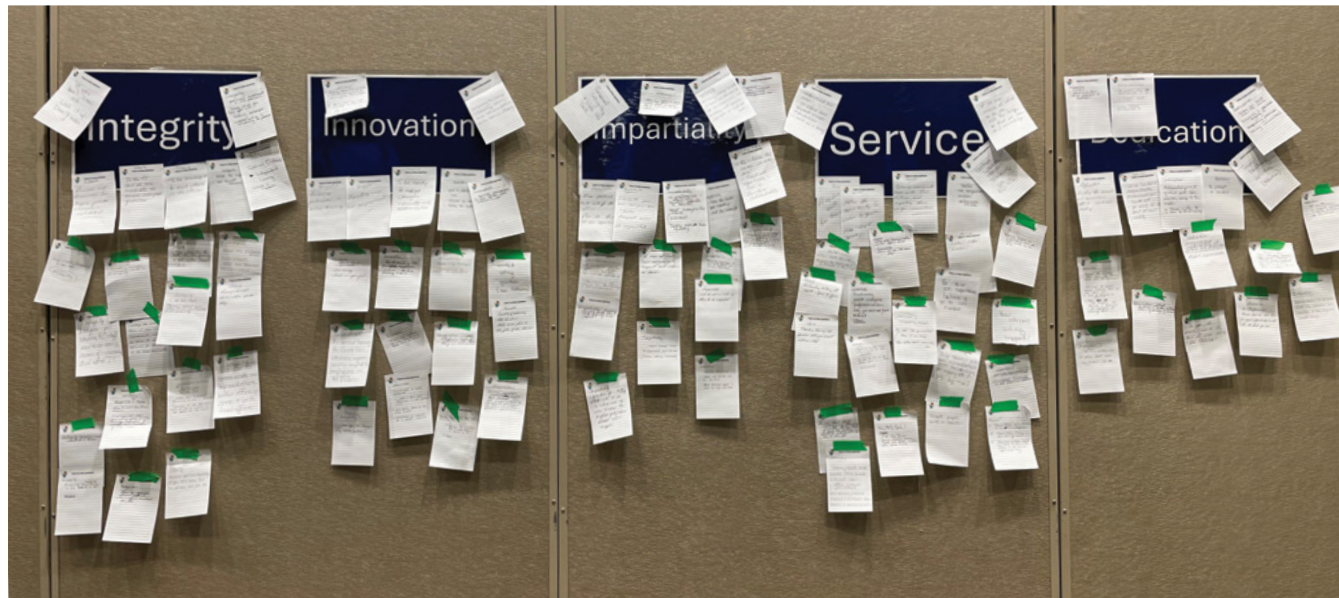




# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The work of an election management body differs fundamentally from that of most other public service organizations in that it operates on a four-year electoral cycle rather than an annual cycle. As such, it incurs costs associated with the ongoing operations of the institution as well as costs associated with the delivery of electoral events that happen either on a schedule set out in statute (i.e., general elections and boundary redistributions) or on demand (i.e., by-elections and referenda). In most cases, the former expenditures will remain relatively constant over time while the latter costs will fluctuate and peak in the 12-month period that immediately follows a general election call.

A complete report of Elections Saskatchewan's expenditures for FY2024–25, including audited financial statements, will be available on the Elections Saskatchewan website in the Corporate Reports and Publications section. You can also find them by visiting [www.elections.sk.ca/financials](http://www.elections.sk.ca/financials).



Members of the Field Leadership Team offered examples of what each organizational value means to them at a training event in September 2024.

**SERVICE.**  
**INTEGRITY.**  
**INNOVATION.**



**DELIVERING WITH CONFIDENCE**

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