



June 12, 2023

The Honourable Randy Weekes
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Chair, Board of Internal Economy
Room 129, Legislative Drive
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Enclosed with this letter is a General Directive of the Chief Electoral Officer (General Directive). This General Directive is an important step in establishing the framework that my office will use to administer Saskatchewan's 30th General Election, scheduled by legislation for October 28, 2024.

The Election Act, 1996 (the Act) provides the CEO with the authority to make certain modifications to the Act, as described in section 5.3 through 5.5, or to direct the use of alternate procedures, equipment or technology during a general election, as described in section 5.2. All of these sections of the Act require the approval of the Board of Internal Economy before implementation can take place. This General Directive puts forward a number of decisions that the Board must make so that my office can continue its important work of preparing for the next general election.

On May 10, 2023, I provided the Board of Internal Economy with a memo offering reasoning behind my planned modernization activities in three pending by-elections. Within that memo, I indicated that I would be providing the Board with a series of CEO Directives (or "Specific Directives") by early June. After careful consideration, I have determined that it would be more effective to create and submit the attached General Directive, providing the Board with an overview of my plans and describing a series of decisions that must be made. This approach is consistent with one that I outlined initially in my January 2023 budget submission to the Board and offers the best balance of thoroughness and efficiency. Once I have a response from the Board, I will prepare more detailed Specific Directives (where necessary) providing greater details on modifications and identifying which sections of the Act will not be complied with and how.

The enclosed General Directive presents a system of administering voting that is consistent with the framework described in *A Report on the Twenty-Ninth General Election*, Volume IV, Chief Electoral Officer's Recommendations for Legislative Reform, which was tabled with the Legislative Assembly in October 2022 (see elections.sk.ca/reports-data/reports-publications).

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This framework was further described within the CEO Directives put forward for three pending by-elections and in my May 10, 2023 memo to the Board offering my rationale for the implementation of those by-elections (a copy of this memo can be viewed at elections.sk.ca/candidates-political-parties/bulletins-circulars/#ceo-directives).

In the interest of assisting with the Board's decision making, I have broken down the decisions needed into four categories. These are:

- **Category 1.0:** Modifications to Polling Divisions and Creation of a Polling Period
- **Category 2.0:** Introduction of Electronic Poll Books (Voting Record) and Introduction of Vote Counting Equipment
- **Category 3.0:** Implementation of Vote Anywhere
- **Category 4.0:** Implementation of Vote by Mail

Within the General Directive, I have tried to make clear the impacts of not accepting certain categories and that some categories cannot be implemented without other items first being in place. These consequences are shown in blue boxes under the heading of "Non-acceptance." To provide an example, under Category 3.0, Vote Anywhere, which is a complicated, technical option, cannot be implemented without all elements of Categories 1 and 2 being approved and in place.

To be clear, I am putting forward a system of administering voting with elements that depend on each other and work together for coherence and to maintain its integrity. It is my strong preference, and I am requesting, that the Board accept this General Directive as written and not "pick and choose" elements that can move forward and elements that cannot move forward. That said, I have written the document in such a way that it is possible for certain items to be approved and others not approved, as I recognize that ultimately the Board must make the final decision.

As you will read within the General Directive, I am requesting a response from the Board no later than Friday, June 30, 2023. I recognize that this is a short timeline, however, my office has significant planning and preparation to do before our next general election. I am available as needed between now and the end of June to respond to Board questions.





If a response is not received by June 30, I will need to withdraw this General Directive in writing and have my team begin preparing to administer the next election in accordance with legislation. This would result in an election similar to the one my office delivered in 2016.

I genuinely appreciate your attention to this important matter. As mentioned, I am available as needed to answer your questions. I appreciate your ongoing collaboration and cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Michael D. Boda'.

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

cc: The Honourable Jeremy Harrison, Government House Leader
Ms. Nicole Sarauer, Opposition House Leader
Members, Board of Internal Economy

