

news release

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ELECTIONS MANITOBA RELEASES 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Elections Manitoba's 2016 annual report, released today, notes the total operational cost of the 41st general election was \$13,548,389 and outlines the detailed work that occurred before, during and after the election. Chief Electoral Officer Shipra Verma's recommendations for amendments to *The Elections Act* and *The Election Financing Act* are also contained in the report.

"This annual report gives the public a picture of the preparation required to run a general election," says Verma. "From opening 57 returning offices and 2,700 voting stations across Manitoba, to scaling up from a permanent staff of 17 to a 10,000-person operation, to reviewing the election financial statements of 238 candidates and six registered parties, the report gives a sense of the magnitude of this province-wide event."

"All the activities of our office are driven by our legislative mandate to deliver free, fair and accessible elections, while providing service and information to the public and assistance to political entities in fulfilling their obligations," says Verma.

Recommendations made by the Chief Electoral officer focus on four key areas: creation of a permanent voter register, administrative change to reflect emerging voting trends, legislative clarity and innovation in the electoral process. Many of these recommendations have already been introduced in Bill 27, *The Elections Amendment Act*, which will be debated in the upcoming session.

"Two important objectives guided these recommendations: improving the voting experience and achieving administrative efficiencies," says Verma. "The proposed amendments reflect consultations held with all parties through the advisory committee, experiences from past elections and best practices of other jurisdictions."

As noted in the annual report, the overall cost to conduct the 2016 general election was \$16,985,131. This includes the operational cost of \$13,548,389 and \$3,436,742 in reimbursements and auditor subsidies.

The report contains an election financial statement for each registered party and candidate required to file, as well as annual statements from parties and constituency associations. A historical summary of contributions made to registered parties over the past 10 years is also included.

Under *The Elections Act* and *The Election Financing Act*, an annual report that includes recommendations for amendments to legislation is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs for review. The committee may call the Chief Electoral Officer to discuss the report.

To see the full report, visit Elections Manitoba's website at electionsmanitoba.ca.

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Elections Manitoba is the independent office of the Legislative Assembly responsible for the administration of provincial elections and byelections.

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