

# ELECTIONS SASKATCHEWAN



## FIELD LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWSFEED July 30, 2015: ISSUE THREE

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In this issue of the Newsfeed, we discuss the release of Elections Saskatchewan's (ESK) 2014-2015 annual report. We also give an update on the poll site accessibility review, and discuss some of ESK's available work opportunities.

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### ANNUAL REPORT NOTICE

This week we released *Pursuing a New Vision*, Elections Saskatchewan's (ESK) 2014-2015 Annual Report. A copy of this report will be mailed to Supervisory Returning Officers (SRO) in the coming days. Each Returning Officer (RO) and Elections Clerk (EC) team will also receive a copy in care of the RO. ECs who would like their own physical copy are encouraged to let their SRO know. The report is also available [online](#).

Over the past year, we at ESK have collectively rolled up our sleeves and begun to implement a new vision for conducting elections in the province. Central to this work has been passage of *The Election Amendment Act, 2014*, which introduced significant amendments to *The Election Act, 1996*. With these legislative changes, Saskatchewan's electoral processes have become increasingly modern, efficient, cost-effective and accessible.

As a key member of ESK's FLT, we want to thank you for your work and support. I hope that you will take a few minutes to read our story from the past year.

### OFFICE AND POLL LOCATION ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

As you are aware, ESK recently released [Towards Improved Accessibility for Saskatchewan Voters](#), the third publication in the Chief Electoral Officer's Assessment Series. ESK is committed to removing barriers to participation with the objective of making the electoral process more accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. An important component of the Accessibility Implementation Plan for the 28th General Election is the commitment to ensuring the accessibility of returning offices and voting locations.

Fulfilling this objective is a significant undertaking as there will be 61 returning offices and hundreds of advance polls and polling places. The identification of returning office locations, as well as advance polling places and election day polling places, was an important component of the recently completed pre-writ assignment. The assignment required ROs to conduct an accessibility assessment of all selected locations, which included the submission of individual accessibility reports.

In terms of accessibility, ESK has set the following goals for the 28th General Election:

- All returning offices are accessible or made to be accessible;
- All advance polls are accessible or made to be accessible;
- As many polling sites as practicable on election day are accessible or made to be accessible; and
- The accessibility status of all locations is confirmed to ensure that stakeholders can be made aware of the status.

The FLT has done a great job in collecting information during the pre-writ assignment. In order to meet our commitment to making the voting process more accessible to everyone, we now need to carry out due diligence in verifying this information.

We have received data from Elections Canada regarding their polling locations. Upon reviewing this information, we encountered a significant number of polling locations that do not reflect the same level of accessibility or modifications required to achieve accessibility. This is a concern and is one of the reasons we will be auditing various locations to confirm our findings and meet our threshold.

Meeting this commitment will require a significant investment of time and resources. As such, there will be a follow-up assignment for **SROs** to validate recent accessibility site work to ensure the accuracy of the accessibility status of all locations being used in the upcoming election. This assignment includes all returning office sites and advance poll locations in the pre-writ assignment. In addition, we are providing SROs with a select list of election day polling locations to conduct an accessibility assessment. In completing this assignment, your SRO may need to contact you to obtain clarification or request your assistance.

If you have any questions about the office and poll location accessibility review, please don't hesitate to contact either Jeff Kress or Bonnie Schenher. Jeff can be reached by phone at (306) 787-0258 or by email at [jkress@elections.sk.ca](mailto:jkress@elections.sk.ca). Bonnie can be reached by phone at (306) 787-0156 or by email at [bschenher@elections.sk.ca](mailto:bschenher@elections.sk.ca).

## **NOW HIRING**

ESK is also looking to hire Deputy Supervisory Returning Officers (DSRO) for each of the province's electoral zones. The DSRO assists the Supervisory Returning Officer on an as-needed basis. We are accepting DSRO applications until August 3, 2015.

ESK is also looking to fill the following positions:

- Returning Officer in Cumberland;
- Election Clerks in Regina Elphinstone-Centre, Cumberland, Moose Jaw Wakamow and Rosthern-Shellbrook; and
- Financial Analyst located at ESK's head office.

Detailed descriptions of these positions can be found [here](#).

As we get closer to the general election we will be looking to hire a number of personnel for a variety of positions. If you know of anyone who may be a good fit for any of these positions, please encourage them to apply. Applications are received through [ESK's website](#).