

Election Advisory Committee (EAC) Minutes

March 12, 2024
9:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Meeting conducted by Teams conference call originating at the
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

PRESENT

Committee Members (alphabetically by political party name)

- Connor Gibson, Conservative Party of British Columbia
- Jordan Reid, BC NDP
- Heather Stoutenburg, BC NDP
- Lindsay Coté, BC United
- Miguel Martinez, BC United
- Naomi Devine, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Elections BC Staff

Anton Boegman, Chief Electoral Officer (Chair)
Jodi Cooke, Executive Director, Electoral Finance
Aidan Brand, Senior Director, Corporate Planning and Strategic Initiatives
Jessica Christensen, Executive Services Lead (minutes)

Meeting commenced at 9:15 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Anton Boegman, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), welcomed attendees and opened the meeting. He stated that he was joining the meeting from Elections BC's office, which is located on the traditional territories of the Ləkʷəŋən (Lekwungen) speaking people, the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations. Anton acknowledged, with sincere gratitude, their stewardship of the lands where we live and work.

Anton noted that this is the first meeting of the Election Advisory Committee (EAC) since the Conservative Party of British Columbia became eligible to appoint representatives to the EAC. He described the role of the Election Advisory Committee (EAC) as established by sections 14-16 of the *Election Act*. He also encouraged questions and discussion throughout the meeting. He asked the participants to introduce themselves and then reviewed the agenda.

2. Regulation Amendments

Anton provided context on the timing of this meeting with the EAC, as it took place earlier in the process than previous regulation consultation meetings. The *Election Amendment Act 2023* (EAA 2023) introduced new regulation making authorities for the CEO as well as introducing legislation which requires updates to existing regulations. During the review of the existing regulations, Elections BC identified opportunities to streamline and modernize certain regulations. Elections BC is developing drafting instructions for legislative counsel with the proposed updates and elected to seek input from the EAC at an earlier stage to facilitate consideration of feedback when finalizing the drafting instructions. We anticipate this will allow for more timely completion of the regulation amendments.

Anton provided an overview of the five thematic areas of regulation change, covering seven regulations:

- a. ID verification process for vote-by-mail,
- b. Updates to expense classes in financial reports,
- c. Expense classes not subject to limits, and those not eligible for reimbursement,
- d. Contact information requirements for third party sponsors, and
- e. Form and content requirements for election advertising/authorization statements.

Anton confirmed that EAC members would be afforded an opportunity to review the meeting materials and provide feedback in writing.

a. Regulation Amendments

Before the passage of the EAA 2023, the procedure for verifying the ID of individuals who registered to vote in conjunction with voting by mail was described in the *Election Act* (the Act). The process required voters to provide paper copies of their ID documents, which presented a barrier to individuals who did not have access to photocopiers or other means to produce copies of ID.

Operationally, this process introduced delays to the ballot counting process as ID copies were verified manually before those ballots could be counted.

The EAA 2023 repealed the provisions of the Act that required paper copies of ID and authorized the CEO to establish an ID verification procedure. Anton outlined the proposed procedure. The existing process of providing physical copies with the vote-by-mail package is retained, and a digital method would be added to allow an individual to submit digital copies of ID or vouching documents, directly through the Elections BC website. Using this method, individuals can confirm that they are correctly registered before their vote-by-mail package is received by Elections BC.

We expect this will improve the speed and accuracy of ID verification and generate efficiencies in counting vote-by-mail ballots. Most importantly, it will reduce barriers to voting by providing individuals with another method to fulfill the ID requirement.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** Please clarify the requirement for ID verification for vote-by-mail and the associated timeline.
 - **Answer:** The online voter registration portal includes an option to request a vote-by-mail package. Voters who are already registered and on the voters

list would not need to provide ID in conjunction with voting by mail. Voters who have not registered are considered to register at the same time as they vote by mail. They would be required to provide ID for verification. A notification would be sent to them to either upload ID or provide copies with their completed vote-by-mail package.

- **Question:** what can be accepted as a piece of ID? Would a screenshot of a BC Hydro bill be acceptable?
 - **Answer:** Elections BC's Voter ID Policy outlines a broad range of categories of what can be accepted as a piece of ID. This policy would be reviewed and potentially updated in conjunction with this new process.
- **Question:** Are there any concerns regarding individuals providing falsified digital ID documents?
 - **Answer:** We are confident in the robust procedures we have established to verify identification documents. There are also significant penalties for corrupt voting or for providing false information.
- **Question:** What is the expected timeline for the updated regulations to be in place, and what is the intention regarding implementation of the new processes?
 - **Answer:** The regulations are expected to be published in May and we intend to implement the new processes for the upcoming election.
- **Question:** How will you determine which formats will be accepted for digital ID, considering the need to not introduce new barriers by being too prescriptive.
 - **Answer:** Elections BC will ensure that the system can accommodate a wide range of commonly acceptable file formats, as well as uncommon formats to ensure the system does not create new barriers for voters.

b. Updates to expense classes in financial reports

Anton introduced the second area of updates: expense classes in financial reports. The EAA, 2023 amended section 1 (3) of the *Election Act* to broaden the scope of commercial canvassing from "text messaging" to "other means of electronic communication".

The first proposed regulation changes will update the language used in the Act as amended by the EAA, 2023, in the following five regulations:

1. Election Financing Regulation (B.C. Reg 170/2020)
2. Leadership Contestant Financing Reports Regulation (B.C. Reg. 24/2020)
3. Nomination Contest Regulation (B.C. Reg. 25/2020)
4. Political Party and Constituency Association Financial Reports Regulation (B.C. Reg. 26/2020)
5. Third Party Sponsor Disclosure Report Regulation (B.C. Reg. 171/2020)

In reviewing the existing classes of election expenses, Elections BC's Electoral Finance team also determined that the classes would benefit from several wording changes to reflect modern election practices.

| Existing classes of advertising | Proposed amended classes of advertising: |
|--|--|
| (i) commercial canvassing in person, by telephone or by mobile device | commercial canvassing incl. in person, by telephone or other electronic means |
| (ii) newspapers and periodicals | printed newspapers and periodicals |
| (iii) promotional materials, incl. newsletters, brochures, buttons and novelty items | promotional materials, incl. newsletters, brochures, buttons, novelty items and other mailed materials |
| (iv) radio | radio and podcasts |
| (v) search engine marketing and optimization | |
| (vi) signs | signs re-used signs |
| (vii) social media | social media advertising |
| (viii) television | television and video |
| (ix) website displays | online advertising, not incl social media |
| (x) other forms of advertising | other forms of advertising |

Anton noted that the expense classes include costs to both produce and place the advertising.

- i. Replace commercial canvassing by mobile device with commercial canvassing by "other electronic means", to ensure consistency between this regulation and the associated provisions of the amended Act.
- ii. This change is to clarify that newspaper and periodical advertising only applies to advertising in printed publications, as distinct from website ads in online news sources.
- iii. Broaden this advertising class to include any other item that might be mailed out to voters.
- iv. Add advertising on podcasts to the existing class of radio advertising.
- v. Remove the class of search engine marketing and optimization. Search engine optimization is too dissimilar from other forms of advertising to be included in this class; SEO costs would be reportable under another class, such as professional services. Search engine marketing would be included along with other online advertising.
- vi. Add a new class for re-used signs to allow for easier accounting of situations when candidates provide re-used signs to their campaign.
- vii. Social media will remain its own class.
- viii. Broaden television advertising to include the production and placement costs of video advertising.
- ix. Broaden online advertising from its current description as "website displays", to account for other online advertising like sponsored search engine results. This follows from the removal of search engine marketing as its own class.
- x. No change to the existing catch-all class of "other forms of advertising".

Additionally, Anton proposed minor changes to expense classes unrelated to advertising:

- Broaden “bank charges” to include “other payment processing fees,”
- Merge the existing classes of “conventions, workshops and meetings” and “social functions”, as there can be a crossover between meetings with catering and social functions with legitimate work purposes.
- Merge the classes of “furniture and equipment” with “office supplies and stationery”. Often, this spending would be included on the same receipt and there is no policy reason to see these items reported out separately.
- Remove “subscription and dues” as a class of expense, as this has not been a commonly reported expense class of late.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** What is the reason for the distinction of social media advertising and online advertising?
 - **Answer:** the overall goal with the expense classes is to be transparent to the public. Social media advertising includes ads placed on social media platforms such as Facebook and X (Twitter). Ads placed on YouTube may be reported differently dependent on the type of ad or communication. Generally, the goal is to have expenses classified appropriately to support greater transparency.
- **Question:** How will financial agents be supported with these changes? Will reference material and training be available? It is important to consider that most financial agents are volunteers, balancing their duties with other commitments.
 - **Answer:** We are updating the content of the Guide for Financial Agents concurrently with the development of the legislative drafting instructions, with the goal of having updated Guides and forms ready shortly after the regulations are amended.

Additionally, information sessions for financial agents will be scheduled in advance of the election period. Dates will be communicated in the next political parties newsletter. Elections BC is also available to attend party meetings and provide information to financial agents.

- **Question:** How should multiple placement costs be classified? Multiple placements across different mediums such as podcasts, printed and online are often include in one purchase transaction.
 - **Answer:** Placements included “at no charge” can be reported in each applicable class. Alternatively, an amount can be pro-rated among several classes. Again, the goal is to provide transparency to the public.

c. Updates to expenses which are and are not subject to limits

The next area of amendments relates to the Election Financing Regulation.

During the 2020 Provincial General Election, which was held during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CEO issued an order exempting the cost of non-partisan personal protective equipment (PPE) from expense limits. We propose to establish these

exemptions in regulation going forward, and to exempt expenses to reduce accessibility barriers from limits under that section.

The exempted accessibility expenses would include:

- Costs to address physical accessibility barriers such as ramps and automatic doors,
- Assistive technologies, and
- Sign-language interpretation.

This change is meant to enhance the existing provision in the Act which provides an exemption for spending to reduce accessibility barriers for candidates and expand this to members of campaign teams and the public.

In the past, Elections BC has received expense claims for violation tickets and fines as reimbursable election expenses. Including tickets and other monetary penalties with expenses that are not reimbursable election expenses ensures the appropriate use of public funds for legitimate election expenses.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** This is an important step forward to making the political space accessible to more people. Are there more specific examples available for costs for assistive technologies? Are these exemptions tied to a campaign office or other physical space?
 - **Answer:** It is not expected that assistive technologies would be tied to a physical location. The goal is to exempt these costs if they improve accessibility for voters with disabilities or specific accessibility needs. We are open to suggestions for items we have not discussed. Examples might include voice to text transcription, screen readers, and other specialized input devices. We intend this to be a broad class to capture items or services for individuals with different accessibility needs.
- **Question:** Will costs for hybrid meetings be included in this expense class? Hybrid meetings allow for individuals who manage chronic illnesses or cannot attend in person for accessibility related reasons to attend.
 - **Answer:** Costs related to, for example, closed captioning a hybrid event would be considered to improve the accessibility of an event and be included in this class. Elections BC will consider the inclusion of hybrid event costs further.
- **Question:** Regarding the exemption for PPE – does this include all types of PPE, such as hard hats and high visibility vests?
 - **Answer:** Elections BC would consider these types of PPE to improve the safety of campaign workers and volunteers. Provided the equipment is non-partisan, it would be considered as part of that exempt expense class.
- **Question:** Has consideration been given to exempt costs related to vandalism and increased security? We are seeing a rise in protests targeted at politicians and MLA offices and expect to see this carry through to campaign offices.

- **Answer:** There is an existing provision in the regulation that applies to the cost of security services. These costs are exempt from the limits provided that the individual(s) providing security services does not wear anything supporting the candidate or the party. We will consider the feedback on costs related to vandalism.

d. Updates to expenses which are and are not subject to limits

The subject of this amendment is the required contact information for third party advertising sponsors. This would amend and rename the existing Third Party Sponsor Disclosure Report Regulation.

The EAA 2023 added email as one of the means of contacting the sponsors of election advertising, which requires Elections BC to have the legal authority to collect the email address of third party sponsors (TPS) at the time of registration.

Additionally, we have found that the current minimal identification requirements to register third party sponsors under s. 240 are problematic. As only organization contact information is collected, it is possible for TPS to register without providing contact information for any individual officers or representatives.

The intent of this amendment is to prescribe by regulation additional registration requirements for third party sponsors, including:

- (1) to provide the email address of the individual or organization who is registering as a TPS, and;
- (2) for organizations registering as a TPS to include the residential address and contact information of the principal officers of the organization.

Collecting the residential address of principal officers would also help to review situations where a sponsor organization's principal officer has the same name as a candidate, which may indicate a sponsor who is not independent of a candidate or party.

As these amendments will expand the scope of the Third Party Sponsor Disclosure Report Regulation, for better clarity the regulation will be renamed the Third Party Sponsor Regulation. This also supports potential further areas for regulation in relation to third party sponsors, such as considerations related to their independence under s. 239(5)(d).

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** How will Elections BC manage updating registrations for existing third party sponsors?
 - **Answer:** Historically, Elections BC has proactively contacted those who are affected by a change to legislation or regulation to ensure they are aware and can bring themselves into compliance. B.C. is unique in that third party sponsors are registered in perpetuity so this will also be an opportunity for those TPS that wish to deregister to do so prior to the next election.

3. Regulation Amendments

Anton introduced the final set of amendments to the Election Advertising Regulation, related to the form and content requirements for election advertising and authorization statements. These amendments are responsive to changes introduced by the EAA 2023, and Elections BC's experience in previous events.

The first proposed amendment is to exempt business cards from the requirement for authorization statements. Historically, Elections BC receives a significant number of complaints that business cards are being distributed without authorization statements. Elections BC has not enforced the authorization statement requirement on business cards, as such items typically contain sufficient contact information to achieve the transparency which is the purpose of the authorization statement, and this change will formalize that practice.

The other proposed changes support the importance of transparency in election advertising and are intended to ensure that authorization statements can be easily read by an advertisement's audience, as well as by Elections BC as the regulator.

Anton summarized the proposed amendments as follows:

- Authorization statements be in English, as well as the primary language of the advertisement if it is not English.
- Requirements for the legibility of text of authorization statements.

Elections BC receives multiple complaints during elections that signs and other printed media do not contain the required authorization information. Upon investigation, in most cases the required information is present but in such small font that is not readily visible. The proposed requirements will introduce standardization to authorization statements and ensure that they are reasonably legible to viewers from the distance that the intended audience is likely to read the rest of the information on the advertisement. Additionally, specific requirements are proposed dependent on the medium of the advertisement, for example, audio and television ads.

Consistent with the CEO's authority to prescribe form and content requirements for advertising, Anton noted the intent to propose a requirement for more transparency when that advertising contains digitally manipulated or artificially generated content. This will apply when the election advertising contains images, video, or audio which appear to depict a real person performing an action that did not actually occur, or events that did not take place. In these cases, the ad must contain a notice that the advertising includes manipulated or artificially generated media.

| Type of Advertisement | Form and content requirements |
|--|---|
| Written material, including, posters, letters, emails, objects, advertising material, or newspaper or periodical advertisement | Reasonably legible from the distance that the intended audience is likely to read the rest of the information on the advertisement. |
| Signs and billboards | Must be reasonably legible and occupy at least 4% of the vertical height of the sign or billboard. |

| Type of Advertisement | Form and content requirements |
|---|---|
| Social media and other messages circulated on the Internet, including online advertisements and ads sent by instant messaging | Required information available in the ad content itself, or if it cannot be clearly included in the content, a page that can be accessed from one hyperlink from the ad. |
| Radio advertisement | Required information included at the beginning or end of the message. Read in a manner that is easily heard and clearly spoken and in a pitch that can be easily heard by the average listener. |
| Television advertisement or other electronic display advertisements | Required information must be placed so the statement is easily discernible and provided on screen throughout the duration of the message. Occupies at least 4% of the vertical picture height. |
| Commercial canvassing via telephone call, including robo-calls | Identify the individual/ organization making the call. Including on whose behalf the call is being made (if applicable) at the beginning of the call. Phone number where the financial agent or sponsor can be contacted. Notification that recipients can be removed from the call list / unsubscribe mechanism. |

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** How will Elections BC determine when the artificial media statement should be included? A common example is compositing several candidate photos together for a billboard. This may depict a situation that did not take place, as the candidates were not in a room together. Additionally, it is noted that requiring this type of statement may increase mistrust in political advertising.
 - **Answer:** While we hope that everyone agrees from the perspective of transparency that this is an important question, the intent of this consultation is to solicit feedback from the EAC members which will inform the development of the amendments. Anton noted that in the U.S., there have been approximately 30 states which have created transparency requirements or outright bans on the use of AI tools for political advertisements during the pre-campaign and campaign periods. The input respecting the potential impact to trust will be considered further.
- **Follow up:** There needs to be a balance struck should this move forward. The direction of a disclaimer with the goal of increasing trust is supported however, it was noted that it was unlikely to be a simple solution.
- **Question:** Has Elections BC considered that by increasing the complexity of requirements for authorization statements it may increase instances of inadvertent non-compliance? From a party perspective, establishing spatial requirements for authorization statements could impact the ad space available to the party to convey

their message. Finally, what is the rationale for the requirement for an authorization statement to be displayed for the duration of a television ad, but not for audio ads?

- **Answer:** Overall, the aim is to create more consistency across authorization statements with the goal of increasing transparency so that viewers of political advertisements know who is communicating with them and who to contact. Elections BC recognizes that any time change is made there is often an increase in unintentional non-compliance and this would be considered during implementation.
- **Question:** Regarding social media advertisements, click-through to an authorization statement may not be possible due to limitations established by the hosting platform. Additionally, traditional media broadcasters often establish requirements related to authorization statements which may conflict with the proposed requirements.
 - **Answer:** The requirements related to television ads are supported by research and communication with other jurisdictions which have implemented standards. The relevant context to consider is that viewers may not view the entirety of a television ad and it is therefore important to have the authorization statement information available for the duration of the ad.
- **Question:** Is the requirement for 4% of the vertical height going forward?
 - **Answer:** 4% of the vertical height is Elections BC's proposal and we encourage the EAC members to provide feedback for consideration.

4. Advisory Opinion Policy

Anton reviewed the Advisory Opinion Policy, which is under development. Elections BC intends to implement this policy in July, at the beginning of the pre-campaign period. It is being introduced pursuant to the CEO's authority to prepare directives and guidelines for parties, candidates, and constituency associations.

The objectives of this policy are to enhance the transparency of the process by which campaigns seek advisory opinions from Elections BC, and to ensure a level playing field when Elections BC is considering a policy interpretation question. Additionally, this will create a clear and consistent process for requesting interpretations. The policy will apply to novel questions which are not clearly answered by existing materials available on the Elections BC website or in our guides.

The principles behind the policy are that all parties and the public will know when an interpretation question has been asked, and they will also all receive the interpretation at the same time.

In terms of the process itself, we would begin by ensuring that we are aware of who parties wish to designate to request opinions or interpretations from Elections BC.

Elections BC would immediately publish requests received from an authorized individual and provide a notice to other parties that the request is under consideration. We may also reach out to other parties for their input on a question. Requests will be addressed as soon as possible, and the finalized interpretation will be published on the Elections BC website as well as distributed directly to all parties.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** Will the authorized individual's information be posted along with the request, or will requests be anonymized?
 - **Answer:** We intend to identify the requestor.
- **Follow up:** This may create a barrier for parties in requesting information if the request could be used to reveal campaign strategy. Will Elections BC have legal counsel in-house to support this policy?
 - **Answer:** We are investigating options for legal resources and appreciate the concern raised. Overall, the aim of the policy is to increase transparency, not to create barriers for parties seeking clarification.

5. Election Advertising Definition

Jodi reviewed the definition of "campaign period election advertising" from the *Election Act*. This definition has remained unchanged for some time and a number of exemptions are established. Elections BC is updating the interpretation of this definition however, it is important to note that this change is not intended to impact any of the existing exemptions.

Over the past two provincial general elections, Elections BC has considered activities conducted on a commercial basis as advertising activities. This includes communications over the internet where there is an associated placement cost, for example, banner ads or sponsored social media posts.

Under that interpretation, placement costs did not necessarily include preparation costs; for example, videos produced and shared on YouTube would not incur a placement cost. Such a video would not be categorized as election advertising and therefore not required to follow advertising and financial requirements.

Going forward, any message with an associated placement cost will be considered to be election advertising. Communications without an associated placement cost may also be considered election. Examples include professional services for communications without a placement cost. This would not include internet or social media posts made by individuals where no payment is provided to prepare or conduct the advertising.

This change should not affect the overall financial planning for political participants. Some messaging may now be required to include an authorization statement if there is a cost associated with the development or production of the message. The goal of this change is to increase the transparency of political advertising and maintain a level playing field for all participants. Elections BC is developing guidance materials to assist political participants in identifying election advertising.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** Political parties may employ staff whose duties include the creation of graphics which would be used for several purposes, including as part of advertising. Would an authorization statement be required for those graphics?
 - **Answer:** This requirement applies to candidates, political parties, and third party sponsors. If there is a production cost associated with the

advertisement it should contain an authorization statement or a link to one with the information where someone could find information about the financial agent and how to contact them.

- **Question:** To clarify, functionally this change impacts the things which require an authorization statement and there should be no impact to party finances.
 - **Answer:** Correct. The purpose here is to increase transparency. We want to ensure the public knows who is behind political advertising. There are no changes to accounts, spending limits, etc.
- **Question:** Typically, candidates and parties include an authorization statement in the “about” or “bio” section on social media platforms. Would this requirement extend to volunteers who might share information organically, without any specific payment being made?
 - **Answer:** We consider this to fall into the same category as political signs and bumper stickers. The individual who pays to produce the item or communication is the sponsor. If another individual then takes that item and shares it, it is considered a transmission on a non-commercial basis of their personal political views and is therefore exempt from advertising requirements. This would also apply to a volunteer who shares information or material organically.
- **Question:** Regarding costs to produce a message for advertising. How would costs for polling and messaging testing be accounted for?
 - **Answer:** Generally, research and polling costs would not be considered production costs if they form part of an overall campaign strategy. If research or polling costs are related to content specifically intended for election advertising, it would be included in production costs. This is dependent on the facts of each situation, and we recommend contacting the Electoral Finance team for guidance.

6. Operational Update

Anton then provided an operational update.

Simulations

In January, Elections BC conducted a large-scale simulation of voting and counting processes and tools to test the effectiveness and efficiency under a variety of circumstances, including count reporting processes. Anton reported that all systems worked well, and enhancements identified during the simulations largely related to ensuring Elections BC instruction materials for election officials are at the right level of detail.

The next hands-on exercise will be a demonstration for political parties the week of May 27 at Elections BC headquarters in Victoria. This will be an opportunity for parties to bring operational staff to see the election technology up close.

Redistribution

Anton noted that the redistribution public awareness campaign was underway. As part of the campaign, a householder was sent to every residential address in the province. 12 regional variants of the householder were distributed province-wide, featuring a map of the new electoral districts in that region. Traditional and social media advertisements are being conducted to support the mail campaign. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness of the new boundaries coming into force in the next election.

Field update

The district electoral officers are completing their second work package, which includes identifying voting places and assigning voting areas to them, selecting a location for the district electoral office, beginning outreach to Indigenous communities, and finalizing the strategy for the enumeration.

Upcoming milestones

Anton then provided an overview of the major milestones upcoming in the months ahead.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| May | Voting place technology demonstrations for parties Voting place locations published |
| June | Enumeration plans for each electoral district published |
| July 23 | Pre-campaign period begins |
| August | Enumeration public awareness campaign begins |
| September | District electoral offices open Field enumeration activities begin |
| September 21 | Writs of Election issued |
| October 19 | Final Voting Day |

Foreign interference report

Anton thanked the EAC members for their feedback on the draft foreign interference report, and outlined the key changes that were made to the report. The recommendations have been reorganized into four thematic sections: fairness, transparency, enforcement, and whole-of-society approach.

A recommendation for further public consultation on a definition/prohibition of foreign interference has been included to ensure that such a definition is fit for purpose and does not unintentionally capture the legitimate activities of foreign diplomats or members of diaspora communities. Finally, the recommendation for legislators to consider a role for Elections BC in party nominations and leadership contests has been removed. Anton reminded all parties that nominations contests have been identified as potential areas for foreign interference and asked for continued vigilance in this area.

Campaign activity code of practice

Anton reminded the EAC members of the Political Campaign Activity Code of Practice that was jointly developed by representatives from the parties on the EAC, Elections BC, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner between 2021 and 2022. The Code is available on the Elections BC [website](#). It sets out 10 fair campaigning practices for campaigns to commit to, some of which mirror legislated requirements, and some of which go above and beyond what's strictly required by law. As we approach the intensive period of campaigning in the lead-up to the election, Anton encouraged all parties to review the code, and to sign on if any party has not already done so.

Discussion Questions

- **Question:** Regarding the enumeration plans, how will Elections BC manage addresses of new developments? Similarly, with field enumeration, what sort of guidance and direction is being given to DEOs regarding new developments? There are several communities that have experienced significant growth and turnover since the last election, and it is important to ensure these are captured.
 - **Answer:** Elections BC conducts empty address mailings as well as communicates with municipalities to ensure new addresses are brought forward and entered into our systems. Mail sent to empty addresses will note that no voters are registered at the address, and will provide information on eligibility requirements and how to register. We have found this mail-based approach to be highly effective in the past. Additionally, it is important to note that the EAA 2023 provides Elections BC with access to a broader suite of provincial data touch points to enable the ongoing maintenance of the voters list.

District Electoral Officers are currently researching their electoral district profiles, developing a comprehensive understanding of their communities, including the locations of new developments. This information, alongside identification of community events and other registration opportunities, will be built into their enumeration plans.
- **Question:** Regarding the foreign interference report. Political parties do not have access to all the information that would support them in being aware of potential interference in parties. Would Elections BC be in a position to share information with the relevant parties?
 - **Answer:** Elections BC has established an inter-agency working group in the lead up to the election. It is modeled on similar groups in Australia and Sweden which brings together provincial regulators and federal agencies including the RCMP and CSIS to be better able to understand the risk of threats to election integrity, to understand each participating agencies' role and mandate, to determine what information if available to be shared, and to encourage each agency to use the levers they have available should any incidents occur.

This has been a productive exercise so far as increasing the understanding of each member agencies' role. We have identified challenges in sharing information due to legislative restrictions and are participating in consultations regarding potential amendments to federal legislation to

increase the opportunities for information sharing between federal and provincial agencies.

- This group aims to put Elections BC and the other member agencies in a better position to act. By increasing communication between our agencies we can ensure that each agency can take action through their individual mandates. We will ensure we communicate with any affected parties as much as possible.

7. Closing Remarks

Anton Boegman thanked members for their participation, thoughtful comments, and perspectives. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Attendees may forward any questions regarding this meeting to Jessica Christensen, Executive Services Lead, by phone at 250-952-6641 or by email at correspondence@elections.bc.ca.