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Results-based Plan Briefing Book

2007-08

Democratic Renewal Secretariat

ISSN # 1718-6374

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PART I: Published Results-based Plan 2007/08

Ministry Vision, Responsibilities, Key Priorities & Results

The Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) was created to reform and revitalize the democratic institutions of the province, and create new opportunities for citizen participation. The Democratic Renewal Secretariat supports the Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal. It is responsible for policy development, coordination and implementation of initiatives in support of democratic renewal.

TDRS delivers strategies and related activities to support the government's commitment to engaging citizens in improving the quality of our democracy, modernizing our political institutions, and enhancing public confidence and trust in government.

DRS also supports other ministries in the development of legislative reforms and initiatives aimed at renewing Ontario's democracy.

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Stronger Democracy in 2007-2008

"Stronger Democracy" is a priority for the government, and DRS has the lead on this important initiative. In 2007-2008 the Minister will deliver on several government commitments described below.

Key Strategies: Electoral Reform

Key Initiatives for 2007-08

In November 2004, the Premier announced that the government would establish a Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform to examine Ontario's first-past-the-post voting system. The Premier stated that if the Assembly recommended an alternative to our current system, the government would hold a referendum on that alternative concurrent with the next provincial general election in October 2007.

The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform has voted to recommend that Ontario's current Single Member Plurality system be changed to the Mixed Member Proportional system it has designed. It will now present its final report to the Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal on May 15, 2007.

The Electoral System Referendum Act, 2007 implements the government's commitment to hold a referendum should the Citizens' Assembly recommend a new electoral system. For the first time, citizens will participate in a full, open debate on which electoral system best serves Ontario. In addition regulations under this Act will also be required to set out the parameters for a referendum campaign, e.g. reporting requirements. An Order in Council setting out the referendum question will also be required.

Key Initiatives for 2007-2008

- Prepare the government's response to the report of the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, expected in May, 2007.
- Present options and seek direction on the rules for a referendum campaign, and implement rules through regulation.
- If the Assembly recommends change, advise government on the form of the referendum question and implement through OIC.

Key Strategy: Modernizing Elections

DRS will develop initiatives to improve how elections work and target an increase in voter turnout of ten per cent.

Key Initiative for 2007-2008

- Present options and seek direction on legislative reforms to modernize Ontario's election system and improve voter turnout. Reforms could include increased access, enhanced integrity, testing new technology, and initiatives to target increasing voter turnout.
- Provide policy, legal, and communications support for passage of the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2007.
- Work with Elections Ontario on operational feasibility and cost-effectiveness.
- Seek direction on updates to the fee schedule for election staff to address critical recruitment issues for the 2007 election, and implement changes through regulation.

Key Strategy: Citizens' Assembly

An independent Citizens' Assembly was created by O. Reg 82/06 under the Election Act to assess Ontario's current electoral system and others, and recommend whether Ontario should keep the current system or adopt a new one.

The Citizens' Assembly consists of 103 individuals, one from each of the province's ridings. Members were randomly selected by Elections Ontario. The Assembly met for the first time on September 8-10, 2006, and thereafter for six weekends, to study Ontario's electoral system and other systems. The Assembly held public meetings during its consultation phase from November 2006 to January 2007.

On April 15, 2007, the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform voted to recommend that Ontario's current Single Member Plurality system be changed to the Mixed Member Proportional system it designed.

When the final report from the Citizens' Assembly is received with the recommendation, the government will hold a referendum on that proposed change concurrent with the next provincial general election on October 10, 2007.

Key Initiatives for 2007-08

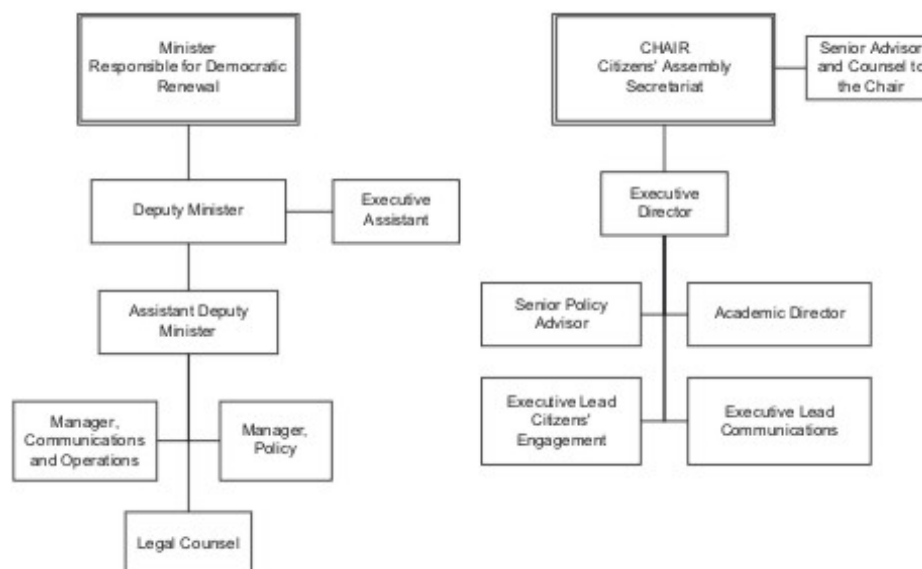
- The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform will present its report and recommendations to the Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal on or before May 15, 2007.

Performance Measures

Under the priority "Strong Democracy" and the result "More people contributing to democracy", Democratic Renewal Secretariat has identified the following measures:

- Introduce legislation to enable a province-wide referendum if the Citizens' Assembly recommends a change to the current electoral system.
- Develop options for political finance reform, if required (2007)
- Develop initiatives to improve how elections work and target an increase in voter turnout of ten per cent.
- Implement regulation setting referendum campaign framework, if required.
- Set a clear, concise and impartial referendum question through OIC, if necessary.
- Introduce legislation to modernize elections (2007).
- Provide policy, legal, and communications support for Schedules 10 and 11 of the Budget Measures and Interim Appropriations Act, 2007.
- Provide policy, legal, and communications support for passage of Bill 62.

Ministry Organization Chart





Legislation

Democratic Renewal Secretariat is responsible for policy development, communications planning and legal advice regarding the Election Act, the Election Finances Act, the Representation Act, 2005, the Legislative Assembly Act, and the Electoral System Referendum Act, 2006.

In addition, Democratic Renewal Secretariat is responsible for the following bills currently before the legislature:

- Bill 62, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006 – Bill introduced for first reading on February 16, 2006 which would amend Ontario's party registration rules.
- Schedules 10, 11 and 21 of the Budget Measures and Interim Appropriations Act, 2007.
- The Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2007 – Bill introduced for first reading on April 25, 2007

In 2007-08, DRS will also develop options for:

- Introduce and pass legislation to modernize elections
- Legislation to implement political finance reform
- Regulation to set referendum campaign rules
- Set the referendum question
- Receipt of the Citizens' Assembly report

Agencies, Boards, Commissions

No agencies, boards or commissions report to the Democratic Renewal Secretariat.

MINISTRY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Table 1: Ministry Planned Expenditures 2007/08 (\$M)

Operating	\$8,050,900
Capital	
TOTAL	\$8,050,900

Table 2: Operating and Capital Summary by Vote

The Democratic Renewal Secretariat is focused on delivering strategies and related activities in support of the government's commitment to strengthen democracy in Ontario. The government's democratic renewal agenda includes three main focus areas: Citizen Engagement, Electoral Reform and Institutional Reform.

Votes / Programs	Estimates 2007-08 \$	Change from Estimates 006-07 \$	Change %	Estimates 2006-07 \$	Interim Actuals 2006-07 \$	Actuals 2005-06 \$
OPERATING AND CAPITAL						
Vote A	8,050,900	4,456,700	55.35	3,594,200	2,207,511	2,243,447
Vote B		(6,000,000)	(100.0)	6,000,000	4,186,638	0

Total Including Special Warrants						
Less: Special Warrants						
Total Operating and Capital Expense to be Voted	8,050,900	1,543,300	19.16	9,594,200	6,394,194	2,243,447
Special Warrants						
Statutory Appropriations		(12,694)	(100)	12,694	0	12,421
Ministry Total Operating and Capital						
Consolidation & Other Adjustments						
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments						
Assets						
Total to be Voted	8,050,900	1,573,300	19.16	9,606,894	6,394,194	2,255,868
Statutory Appropriations	0	(12,694)	(100)	12,694	0	12,421

* Estimates for the previous fiscal year are re-stated to reflect any changes in ministry organization and/or program structure. Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the Ontario Budget.

2005/06 Annual Report

Stronger Democracy in 2005-2006

The business of the Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) is focused on the government's priority "More active citizens' contributing to a stronger democracy." To accomplish this goal in 2005-2006, DRS delivered election reform, institutional reform and citizen engagement.

Key Strategy: Citizens' Assembly

An independent Citizens' Assembly Secretariat was created in March 2006 to assess Ontario's current electoral system and others, and recommended whether Ontario should keep the current system or adopt a new one. Its Chair was appointed in March 2006.

Key Accomplishments for 2005-2006

- Move forward on giving Elections Ontario the ability to select volunteers to sit on the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.

Key Strategy: Institutional Reform

Reforming our political institutions can enhance public trust and increase the opportunities for Ontarians to have their voices heard and hold their elected representatives accountable.

Key Accomplishments for 2005-2006

- Established fixed election dates to de-politicize the timing of provincial elections,
- Preserved 11 northern ridings and increased the number of southern ridings from 92 to 96 to secure strong representation for all Ontarians in the legislature,
- Moved forward on real-time disclosure legislation, requiring political parties and leadership campaigns to report contributions to the Chief Election Officer. The Chief Election Officer will then post details of the contribution on the internet.

Key Strategy: Citizen Engagement

The Democratic Renewal Secretariat worked to encourage citizens' participation in the democratic process.

Key Accomplishments for 2005-2006

- Maintained an effective on-line presence to facilitate awareness of the government's democratic renewal activities,
- Worked with other ministries to foster better citizen engagement policies and practices.

Table 1: Ministry Expenditures

	Ministry Actual Expenditures (\$M)
Operating	3944589
Capital	
Staff Strength (as of March 31, 2006)	17

2006/07 Annual Report

Key Strategy: Election Reform and Citizen Engagement

Key Accomplishments for 2006-2007

- In 2006-07, DRS focused its energies on election reform and citizen engagement including working on measures which may increase voter turnout (modernizing elections).
- Democratic Renewal Secretariat supported a Students' Assembly on Electoral Reform that provided young Ontarians with the opportunity to participate in a parallel citizens' assembly process.
- To facilitate public dialogue and awareness for the government's democratic renewal agenda, Democratic Renewal Secretariat maintained an appropriate online presence. Its web site continued to provide an electronic channel for Ontarians to obtain information on democratic renewal activities.

Key Strategy: Citizens' Assembly

Key Accomplishments for 2006-2007

- Citizens' Assembly members were randomly selected by Elections Ontario, one from each of the province's 103 ridings. The Assembly completed its learning phase, consultation phase as well as held numerous meetings. It will be presenting its report to the Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal in May, 2007.
- Legislation was introduced in October 2006 to implement the government's commitment to holding a referendum should the Citizens' Assembly recommend a new electoral system.
- The Electoral System Referendum Act, 2006 received Royal Assent on April 18, 2007.

Key Strategy: Modernizing Elections

- The government's platform committed to making online voting an option, undertaking supplementary, targeted voter enumeration, making it easier for disabled Ontarians to vote, and targeting an increase in voter turnout of at least 10%. In her mandate letter, the Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal was directed to improve voter turnout by 10%: by reducing barriers to voting, improving voter enumeration, making better use of technology and implementing other related strategies.
- DRS requested Cabinet direction on the scope and timing of the Modernizing Elections initiatives in the spring of 2006 with a view to having legislation changes in place for the 2007 provincial election.

Other Key Accomplishments for 2006-2007

- To facilitate public dialogue and awareness for the government's democratic renewal agenda, Democratic Renewal Secretariat maintained an appropriate online presence. Its web site continued to provide an electronic channel for Ontarians to obtain information on democratic renewal activities.
- Democratic Renewal Secretariat also provided ongoing policy, communications and legal support to other democratic renewal activities including Bill 62, (party registration), Schedule 10 (writ period), Schedule 11 (party registration), and Schedule 21 (riding name correction) of the Budget Measures and Interim Appropriations Act, 2007.

Table 2: Ministry Expenditures

	Ministry Actual Expenditures (\$M) 2006 / 07
Operating	9,606,894
Capital	
Staff Strength (as of March 31, 2007)	25

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Last Updated: 9/12/2007 7:32:36 PM

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