



Chief Electoral Office: Business Plan

1 January 2003 – 30 June 2006



Comments and Suggestions

If you have any comments or suggestions for improving the plan please send them to:

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Introduction

The Chief Electoral Office is responsible for the conduct of general elections, by-elections and referenda. It also provides advice to Ministers and to Select Committees of Parliament on electoral issues. The Office is a division of the Ministry of Justice, although in the application of the electoral law the Chief Electoral Officer acts independently.

This business plan covers the planning period through to and beyond the next general election. The general election is expected sometime in 2005. The plan is part of the wider strategic plan of the Ministry of Justice.

The plan is designed to provide guidance for our office in carrying out its many activities. I hope that the plan will also be of interest to those many people who are interested in elections and in New Zealand democracy at work.

Chief Electoral Officer

Part I - Strategy



Overview

This Plan

The plan is divided into 3 parts:-

Part I – Strategy - including the assumptions and context in which our detailed planning occurs

Part II – Operations- including the detailed projects and timetables through to 2006

Part III - The 2002 General Election - basic statistical information relating to the 2002 General Election.

The Challenges

Planning for general elections and by-elections under New Zealand's constitutional system provides many challenges, not the least of which is that the date of the election is unknown until a few weeks beforehand. This means that many tasks cannot be completed until the date is certain. Prime examples are the employment of many thousands of temporary staff and the securing and supply of polling places.

Each parliamentary term the Chief Electoral Office seeks to improve its service to the voting public and to the political parties and candidates who contest elections. We strive to ensure that there is public and political confidence in the management of elections and that the Office acts with integrity and impartiality.

2000 - 2002

In the relation to last general election held in July 2002, our market research tells us that we restored public and political confidence in the management of the electoral process. The problems experienced in 1999 were put behind us. Voting and reporting of results proceeded smoothly.

This success was attributable to a range of new strategies, including the introduction of the EasyVote card for voters, changes to our counting and training methods, a better service to people on the Maori roll and detailed legislative changes enacted by Parliament.

In conjunction with our colleagues at the Enrolment Centre we also successfully introduced a new option for overseas voters which enabled them to download their voting papers from the Internet, although they were for legal and security reasons not allowed to vote electronically.

But we also noted that a range of improvements were required especially in relation to smooth processing of the official count after election day.

2003 - 2005

We are now working on further improvements for 2005 and beyond including:

- Reviewing all our processes and methods based on our experience in 2002
- Providing a better service for voters with disabilities
- Ensuring that our policies have regard to the interests of Maori as the tangata whenua
- Examining the possibilities for Internet or other remote voting using technology.

Vision

Widespread public and political confidence in the administration of the parliamentary electoral process.

People will have confidence in the administration of the parliamentary electoral process if the administration –

- is impartial, professional and acts in accordance with law
- supports the rights of voters to vote without undue influence and in secret
- delivers timely and accurate results
- provides information and services which make it easy for them to participate
- reduces their compliance costs as much as possible
- is responsive to their views and concerns
- is open to public, judicial and parliamentary scrutiny
- is efficient.

Purpose

Preparation and conduct of New Zealand's general elections, by-elections and referenda.

The Chief Electoral Office is responsible for the preparation and conduct of New Zealand's general elections, by-elections and referenda. This includes the responsibility for providing information and services to candidates, political parties and voters.

Principles of Electoral Administration

In undertaking its functions the Chief Electoral Office follows the principles of electoral administration endorsed by the Justice & Electoral Select Committee of Parliament:

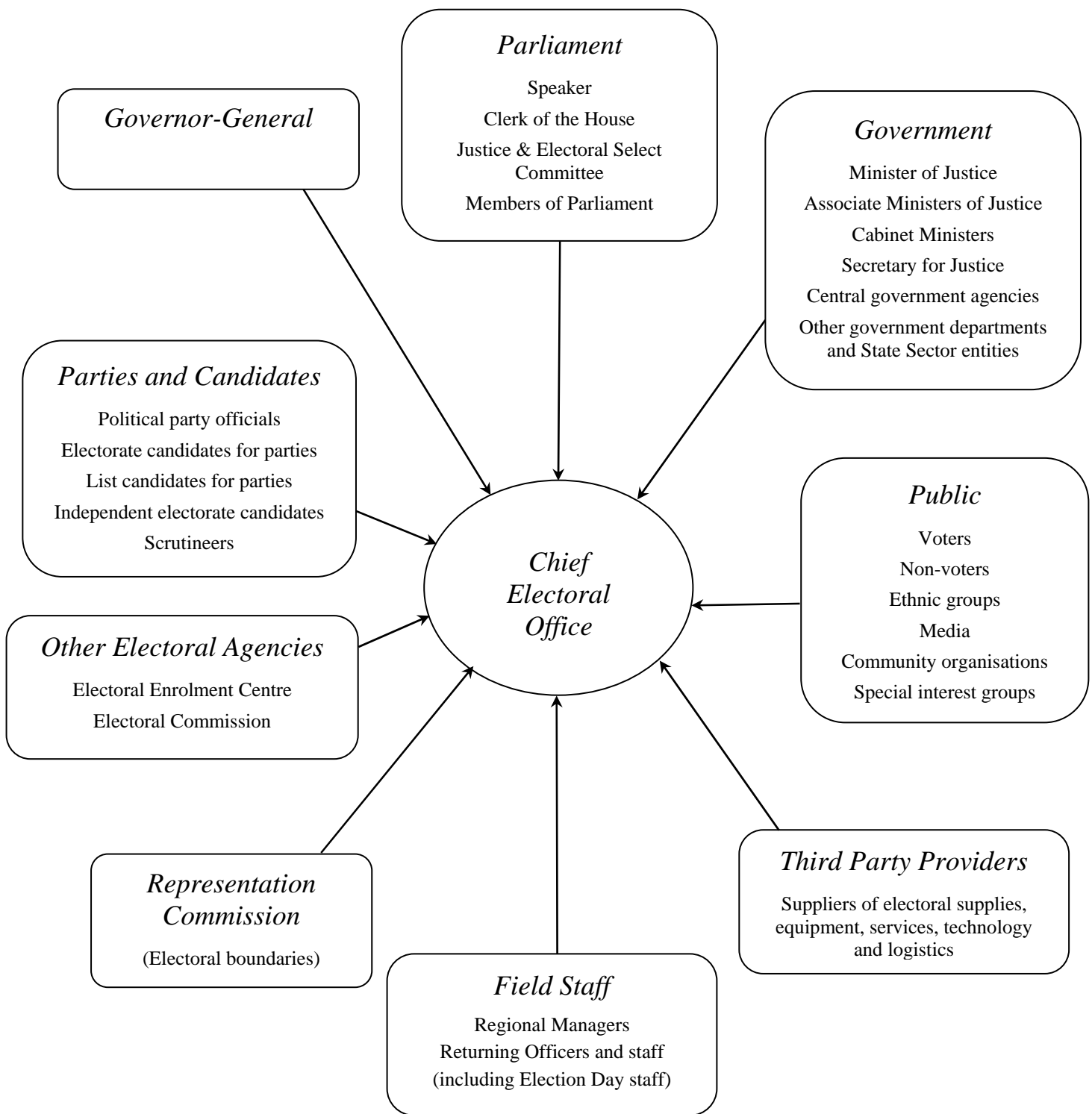
- Independence
- Neutrality
- Service to voters, candidates and parties
- Professionalism
- Responsibility and accountability.

Legislation

The Electoral Act and associated legislation and regulations are administered by the Ministry of Justice. The Chief Electoral Officer is a statutory officer employed by the Secretary for Justice.

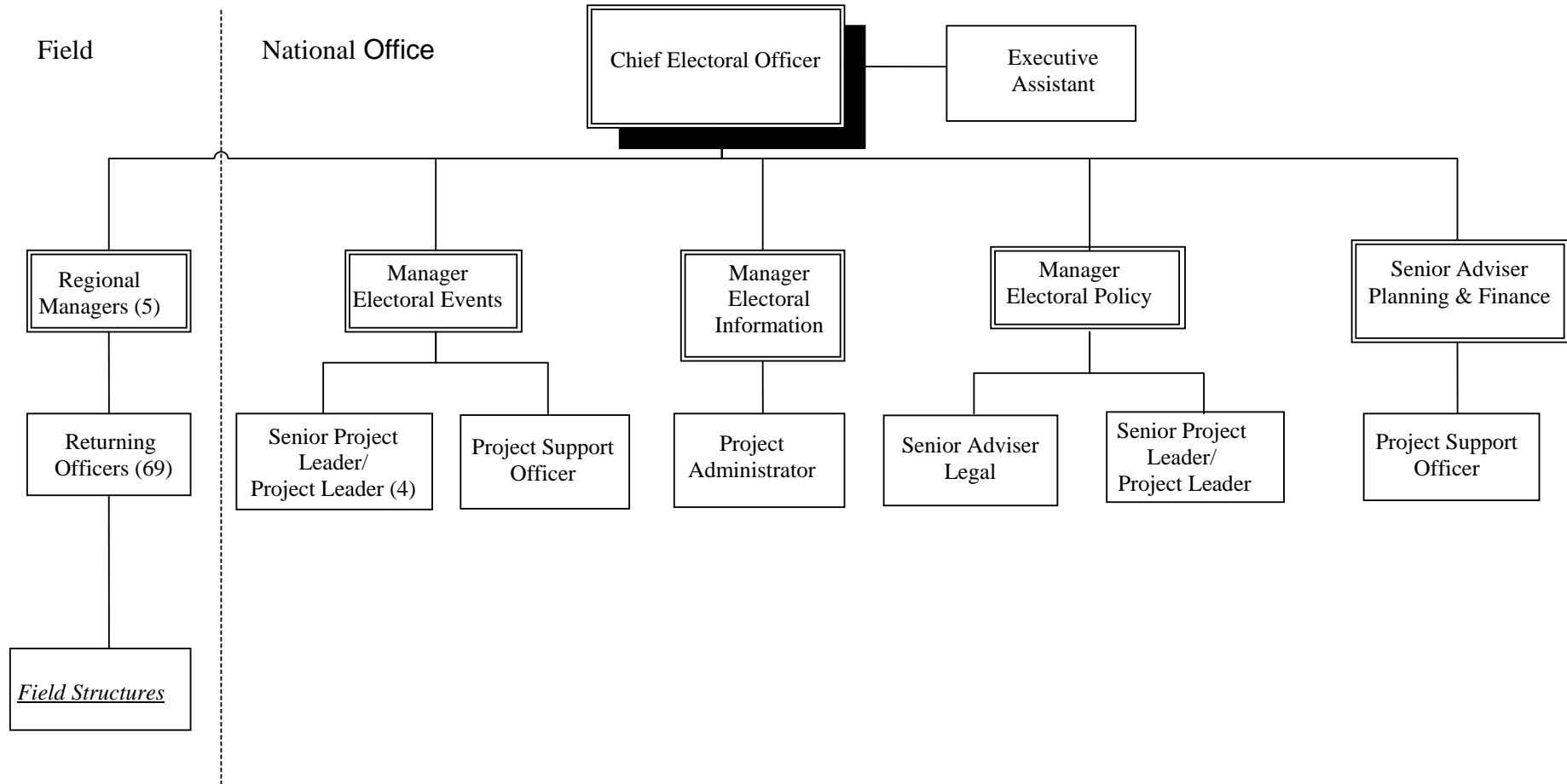
The functions and powers of the Chief Electoral Officer are set out in Parts 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the Electoral Act 1993, the Electoral Regulations 1996, the Citizens Initiated Referenda Act 1993 and the Referenda (Postal Voting) Act 2000.

Stakeholders

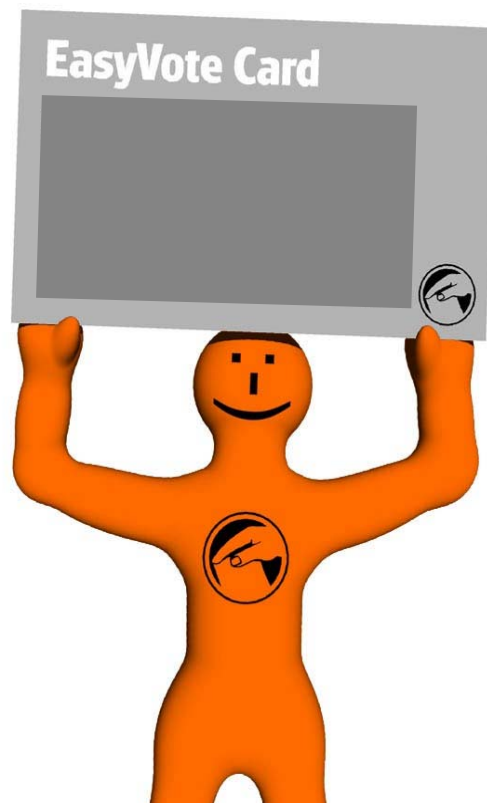


Organisational Structure (As at 1 July 2003)

Ministry of Justice: Chief Electoral Office



Part II - Operations



Major Planning Assumptions

The 2003-2006 Business Plan is based on the following assumptions:

Timing

- The 2005 General Election will be held in the 2005 calendar year (24 September 2005 is the last possible date under the law).
- All processes, systems and procedures will be built by 30 June 2004 and frozen by 30 November 2004.

Service

- Voters and other participants will expect a quality of service at the next general election at least as good as that delivered in 2002.
- The service to voters with disabilities will be improved.
- Service will have regard to the interests of Maori as the tangata whenua.
- The possibility of piloting Internet or other voting technology will be examined for 2005 and beyond.
- Back office systems will be integrated to provide better service to Returning Officers.

Notice

- A quality general election can be delivered at 8 weeks notice in the 2005 calendar year.
- A quality by-election can be delivered at 8 weeks notice in any year.

Assistance

- Collective state sector support will be forthcoming when needed.

Legislation

- No legislative change is necessary to conduct a quality general election in 2005.

Turnout

- 85% of enrolled electors will vote in the 2005 General Election.

Training

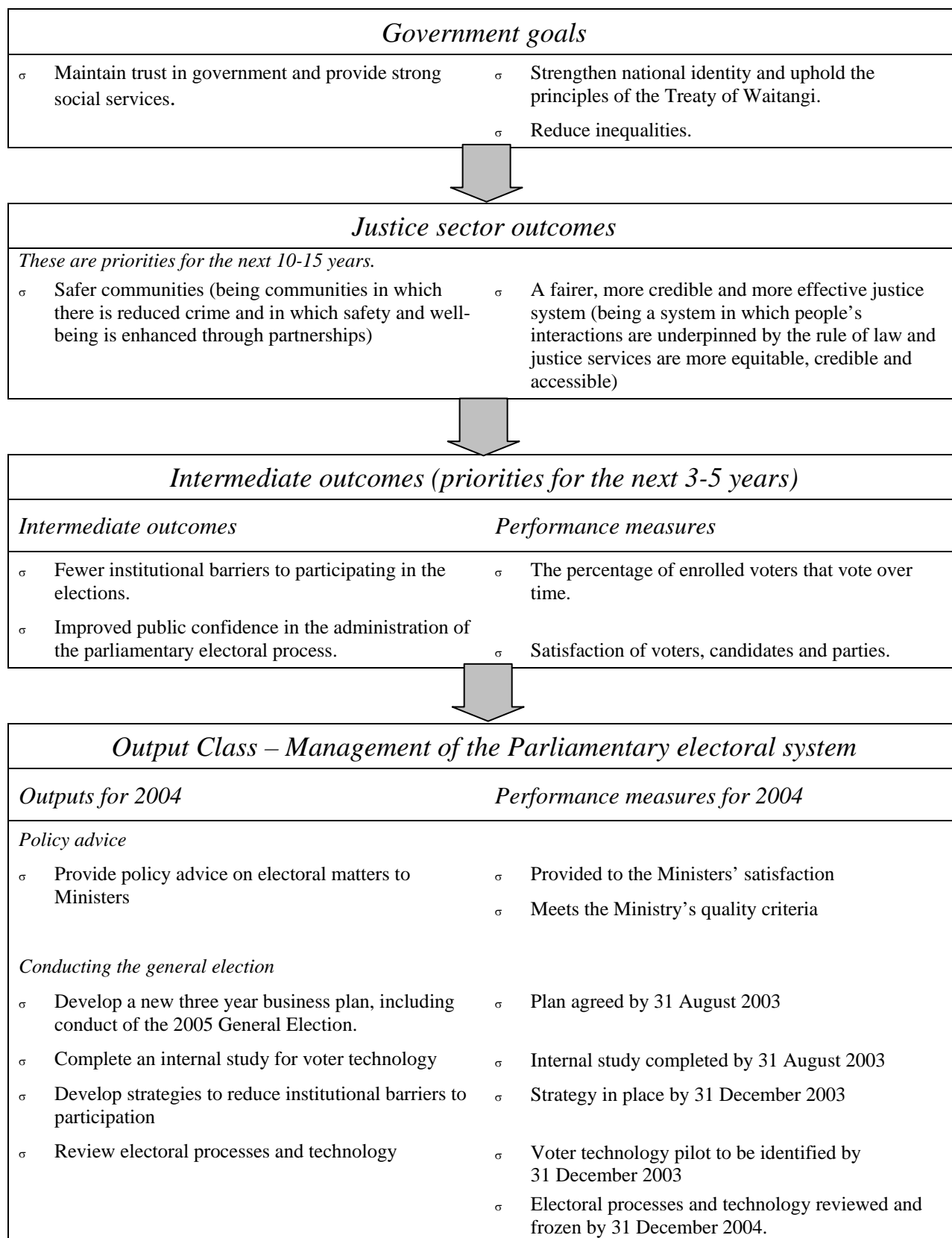
- All staff, including field staff, will be trained.

Funding

- Any Referenda or By-election will be funded separately.
- Price level increases (for supplies and services) over the years from 2002 to 2005 will be funded.
- The development of any new voter technology will be funded by capital injection.

Goals, Outcomes and Outputs

The Chief Electoral Office carries out its work in the context of the New Zealand Justice Sector strategies and as part of the Ministry of Justice.



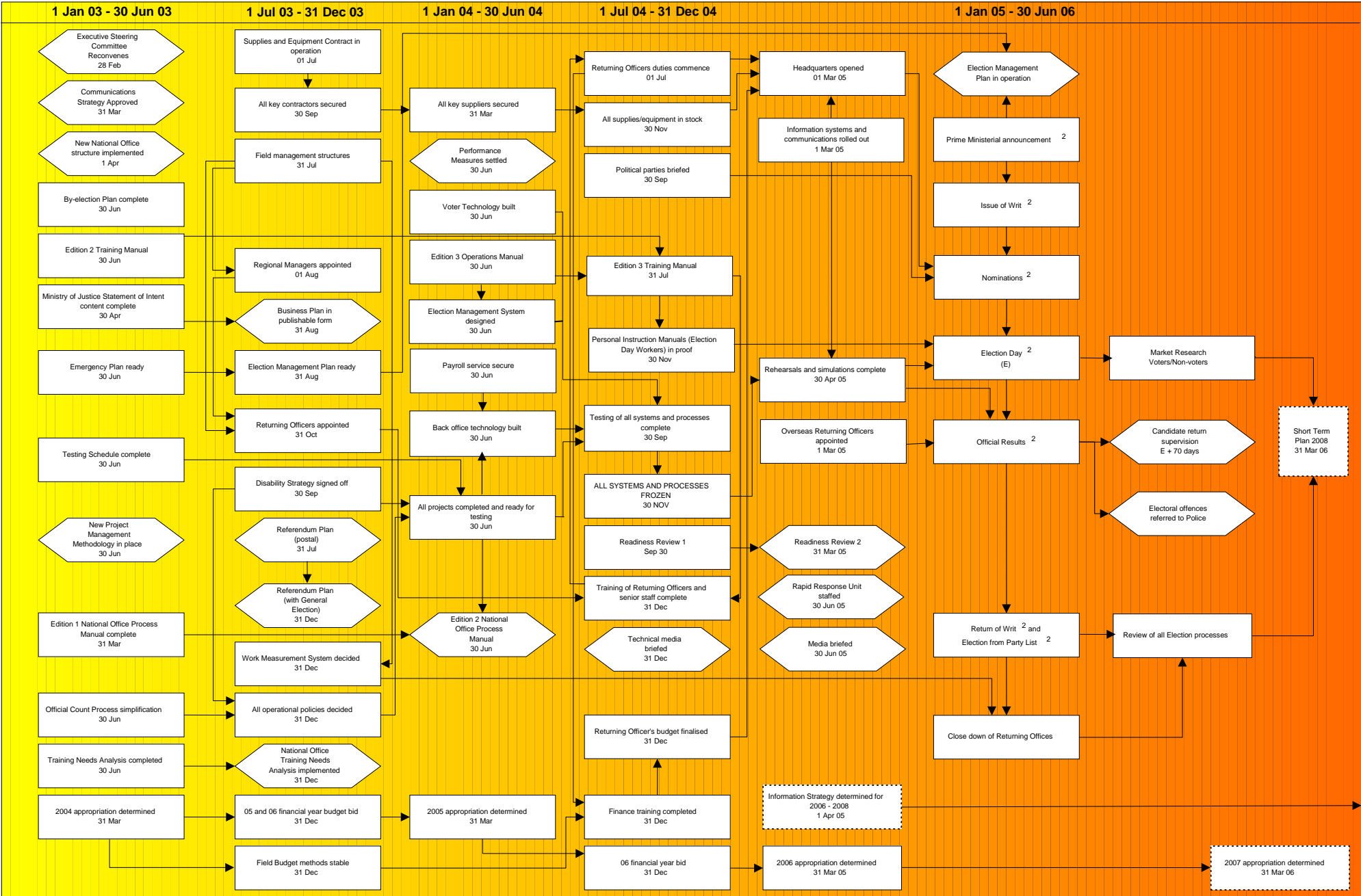
Significant Milestones – Chief Electoral Office

This chart depicts some significant milestones on the road to readiness for the 2005 General Election.

<i>Milestones</i>	2003				2004				2005				2006		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Edition 2 of manuals completed				◆ 31 Mar '03											
New National Office structure in place				◆ 1 Apr '03											
Field management structure settled				◆ 31 Jul '03											
Regional Managers appointed				◆ 1 Aug '03											
All key contractors identified				◆ 30 Sep '03											
Returning Officers appointed				◆ 31 Oct '03											
All operational policies decided				◆ 31 Dec '03											
All key suppliers identified					◆ 31 Mar '04										
Voter technology built (if any)						◆ 30 Jun '04									
Back office technology built						◆ 30 Jun '04									
All projects completed ready for testing						◆ 30 Jun '04									
Returning Officers' duties commenced						◆ 1 Jul '04									
Political Parties briefings commenced							◆ 30 Sep '04								
All systems & processes frozen							◆ 30 Nov '04								
Long lead time supplies in stock							◆ 31 Dec '04								
Training of Returning Officers & senior staff complete							◆ 31 Dec '04								
Electorate Headquarters opened								◆ 1 Mar '05							
Last legal date for Polling Day												◆ 24 Sep '05			
Closedown & review of processes completed													◆ 31 Dec '05		

Work Programme – Chief Electoral Office

Simplified Work Programme (end dates only)¹



¹ Not all projects or activities are shown

² General Election day and associated dates are unknown until announcement by the Prime Minister.

Financial Information

*Electoral Cycle Appropriations
(Excluding GST)*

Fiscal Year Ending 30 June	Electoral Commission \$m	Electoral Enrolment Centre \$m	Chief Electoral Office \$m	Total \$m	
2004	0.734	10.556	4.018	15.308	21%
2005 [#]	0.734	17.866	4.615	23.215	32%
2006 [#]	1.235 [*]	14.198	18.837	34.270	47%
TOTAL	2.703	42.620	27.470	72.793	100%
	4%	59%	38%	100%	

[#] Subject to annual budget appropriations

^{*} In addition, \$1.850m is appropriated for broadcasting allocations to political parties by the Electoral Commission.

Responsibilities of New Zealand Electoral Agencies

The responsibilities of the electoral agencies are summarised in this table:

<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Electoral Enrolment Centre</i>	<i>Electoral Commission</i>	<i>Chief Electoral Office</i>	<i>Ministry of Justice</i>
Information for electors on enrolment	X			
Enrolment of voters (opportunity and encouragement)	X			
Production/maintenance of electoral rolls and habitation indexes	X			
Supply of electronic lists of electors & walk lists (residences with no enrolment) to parties and candidates	X			
Hosting of the Elections website	X			
Conduct of Māori Electoral Option	X			
Verifying, by sample, that signatures on CIR petitions are those of enrolled electors	X			
Supply of lists of qualified electors to Courts for jury rolls	X			
Registration of Political Parties/logos		X		
Allocation to parties of election broadcasting time and money; payment of parties' election broadcasting accounts; receipt of broadcasters' returns of election programmes		X		
Supervision of annual returns of donations and returns of election expenses – political parties		X		
Public education and information on electoral matters		X		
Conduct of Parliamentary general elections and by-elections				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ information to voters, parties and candidates 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ receipt of writ 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ designation and staffing of polling places 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ calling for and receipt of nominations (including bulk nominations) 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acceptance or rejection of party lists (general elections) 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ballot papers-production 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ voting (advance, on election day) 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ scrutiny of rolls and identification of dual votes 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ preliminary and official counts 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ qualification of special votes 	X		X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ declaration of results 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ recounts 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ return of writ 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ allocation of members from party lists (general elections) 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ supervision of returns of candidate expenses and returns of donations 			X	
Conduct of referendum (government initiated and citizen-initiated)			X	
Filling vacancies from the party list			X	
Membership of the independent Representation Commission (electoral boundaries)			X	
Administration of the Electoral Act (including policy advice to Ministers)				X
Advice to Select Committees	X	X	X	X

Risk Management

We define Risk Management as:

The systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of identifying, analysing, assessing, treating and monitoring risk.

A risk management framework has been developed by the Ministry of Justice and is used by the Chief Electoral Office. This framework provides a structure for the identification, documentation and management of risks.

The framework requires six questions to be answered:

- What don't we want to happen?
- What could cause this to happen?
- How can we reduce the chance of this happening?
- After taking action, what is the chance of this happening? (Likelihood)
- If it does happen despite our efforts, what more can we do?
- What will the impact be then? (Consequence)

Likelihood and consequence are rated High, Medium or Low and are captured in the following table:

Consequence	H			
	M			
	L			
		L	M	H
		Likelihood		

The position on the table highlights those risks which require more attention than others.

The framework requires the regular reassessment of risks. In addition, new risks are identified progressively. A risk management assessment is produced each quarter.

Part III - The 2002 General Election



General Election Results - 2002

Total Votes Counted: 2,040,248 (including special votes 218,431)

Turnout: 76.97%

<i>Party</i>	<i>Party Votes</i>	<i>Votes %</i>	<i>Electorate Seats</i>	<i>List Seats</i>	<i>Total Seats</i>
Labour Party	838,219	41.26	45	7	52
National Party	425,310	20.93	21	6	27
New Zealand First Party	210,912	10.38	1	12	13
ACT New Zealand	145,078	7.14	0	9	9
Green Party	142,250	7.00	0	9	9
United Future	135,918	6.69	1	7	8
Jim Anderton's Progressive Coalition	34,542	1.70	1	1	2
Christian Heritage Party	27,492	1.35	0	0	0
Outdoor Recreation NZ	25,985	1.28	0	0	0
Alliance	25,888	1.27	0	0	0
Aotearoa Legalise Cannabis Party	12,987	0.64	0	0	0
Mana Maori Movement	4,980	0.25	0	0	0
OneNZ Party	1,782	0.09	0	0	0
NMP	274	0.01	0	0	0
Informals	8,631	-	-	-	-
<i>Total</i>	2,040,248	100	69	51	120

Source: Chief Electoral Office. For further information refer www.electionresults.org.nz

Achievement against Output Class performance measures – Chief Electoral Office

<i>Description</i>	<i>Quantity, Quality and Timeliness</i>	<i>Achievement</i>
Provision of policy advice on electoral matters to Ministers	Policy advice will be provided to the Ministers' satisfaction and will comply with the Ministry's internal quality criteria	Achieved.
Provision of advanced voting facilities for voters unable to vote in electorate on election day	All voters enrolled by writ day are provided with advice on the advance voting option	Achieved. Advance voting facilities were provided and advertised for 10 days before polling day. The option was also publicised in the personalised voter information pack.
Provision of adequate voting facilities on election day	Approximately 2,800 polling places are provided in New Zealand. Ordinary Māori voting facilities are provided in every polling place	Achieved. 78% of Maori voters and 75% of non-Maori voters rated the location of the polling place as 'excellent'.
Electors registered by writ day receive a Voter Information Pack comprising key messages, an EasyVote Card, list of local polling places and candidates, party lists for all parties	99 percent of packs are delivered by polling day minus four	Achieved. 100% of packs were delivered by polling day minus 7. 84% of voters used the EasyVote card. 88% of voters and 72% of non-voters read the information pack.
Reporting of the preliminary count in a timely and accurate way	At least 50 percent of polling places report by 10.00pm and the balance by 11.30pm	Achieved. 77% by 10.00pm and 98% by 11.30pm.
Party votes of voters using the wrong ballot paper are allowed during the Official Count (general election only)	All votes in this category are identified	Achieved. 18,133 voters using the wrong ballot paper had their party vote allowed.
Reporting of the Official Count in a timely and accurate way	Official results declared on polling day plus 14	Achieved.
Election of Party List members (general election only)	Election of party list members declared by polling day plus 21 (if no recounts)	Achieved. List members declared elected on polling day plus 19.

Critical Success Factors for Chief Electoral Office

The following success factors are recommended by the Justice and Electoral Select Committee when assessing the management of a general election.

<i>Success Factor</i>	<i>2002 Result</i>
Turnout of those enrolled to vote	77% of all enrolled voters (1999 – 85%) Non-voting was not caused by institutional barriers to voting.
Turnout amongst Maori, Pacific peoples and youth	58% of voters on the Maori roll (1999 – 71%). Pacific peoples and youth not separated out.
Number of early (advance) votes cast	(6.45% of voters) cast advance votes (1999 - 5.22%).
Number of special votes cast and disallowed	10.65% of voters cast special votes (1999 – 12.33%). 15.2% of candidate and 6.9% of party special votes were disallowed (15.97% for both in 1999).
Levels of public understanding of the voting system	Voter survey, the new split vote analysis and the survey of informal votes suggest good knowledge of the Mixed Member Proportional system.
Number of upheld complaints and irregularities	214 complaints received. 2 candidates referred to Police for failure to file election expense return.
Number of plural votes	8 plural voters were referred to the Police.
Timeliness and accuracy of preliminary count	77% of polling places were counted at 10.00pm and 98% were counted at 11.30pm.
Timeliness and accuracy of official count	Results declared accurately and on time.

Post Election Research - 2002

Extract from voter survey results

	<i>Voters</i>
Ordinary vote	94%
Special vote	6%
Voted in electorate	97%
Voted same place as in 1999	48%
<i>Voting time</i>	
Before 11am	21%
11am-1pm	24%
1-3pm	22%
3-5pm	19%
5-7pm	13%
Queued	8%
Did not queue	92%
Took EasyVote card	84%
<i>Time in polling place</i>	
Under 5 minutes	76%
5-10 minutes	18%
Considered a reasonable time	99%
Less time than in 1999	58%

<i>Sample</i>	
Maori	342
Non-Maori	687
Total	1,029

	<i>Voters</i>	<i>Non-Voters</i>
<i>Rating of Polling Place (neutral to excellence)</i>		
Convenience	95%	
Outside Signage	78%	
Layout	90%	
How well-equipped was booth	96%	
Privacy	89%	
Staff - politeness	97%	
- well-informed	76%	
- efficiency	96%	
<i>Decision not to vote (timing)</i>		
Election Day		44%
1 week before		13%
More than 1 month before		26%
<i>Knowledge</i>		
Knowledge of most conveniently located polling place	N/A	82%
Recall advertising	90%	86%
Heard advertising on EasyVote card	69%	58%
Heard advertising on advance voting	74%	66%
Looked at party lists	60%	39%
Satisfied/very satisfied with information	84%	67%
Recall receiving Voter Information pack	99%	88%
Read pack	88%	72%
Satisfied/very satisfied with pack	95%	88%
Followed results on Election Night	68%	30%
- on television	98%	100%
Satisfied with timeliness (or better)	94%	88%

Source: Chief Electoral Office: Satisfaction with the Voting Process for the 2002 General Election – 11 October 2002 conducted by BRC Marketing & Social Research

Other Key Statistics

Key Dates, 1996 – 2002

	1996	1999	2002
Prime Minister announced election date	21 May	26 Sep	11 June
Parliament dissolved	6 Sep	18 Oct	18 June
Writ day	12 Sep	27 Oct	25 June
Nomination day	18 Sep	3 Nov	2 July
Advanced voting commenced	23 Sep	9 Nov	10 July
Election day (Saturday)	12 Oct	27 Nov	27 July
Declaration of official results	Declared progressively		10 Aug
Last day for return of writ	1 Nov	16 Dec	14 Aug
List MPs declared elected	14 Nov	20 Dec	15 Aug
Parliament meets	12 Dec	20 Dec	26 Aug

Source: Chief Electoral Office

Nomination Analysis, 1999 & 2002

Category	2002	1999
Parties contesting party vote	14	22
Total number of parties standing candidates	29	35
Male candidates	487 (71%)	647 (67%)
Female candidates	196 (29%)	318 (33%)
Total number of candidates	683	965
List candidates only	90	286
Electorate candidates only	160	197
Dual candidates	433	482
Average number of candidates per electorate	8.6	10.1

Source: Chief Electoral Office

Voter Turnout statistics, 1990 – 2002

	1990 FPP ¹	1993 FPP	1996 MMP ²	1999 MMP	2002 MMP
Electors on the Roll	2,202,157	2,321,664	2,418,587	2,509,365	2,670,030
Estimated voting age population on election day	2,400,360	2,506,110	2,642,400	2,755,800	2,835,240
% of estimated voting age population enrolled	91.74	92.64	91.53	91.06	94.17
Total number of votes cast	1,877,115	1,978,092	2,135,175	2,127,245	2,055,404
Turnout of those enrolled (%)	85.24	85.20	88.21	84.77	76.98
Turnout of estimated voting age population (%)	78.20	78.93	80.80	77.19	72.50

¹ First Past the Post

² Mixed Member Proportional

Source: Electoral Enrolment Centre and Chief Electoral Office

Informal Votes statistics, 1999 & 2002

	2002	1999
Party	0.4%	1.0%
Candidate	1.3%	1.8%

Source: Chief Electoral Office

Contact Details

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Chief Electoral Officer – David Henry

Statutory officer with overall responsibility for conducting parliamentary elections, by-elections and referenda.

Phone: 04 498 2304
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Manager Electoral Events – Robert Peden

Responsible for the design of electoral processes and the management of national office operations.

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Manager Electoral Policy – Philippe Leloir

Responsible for policy and interpretation advice, and ministerial servicing.

Phone: 04 498 2306
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Manager Electoral Information – Mike Williamson

Responsible for the application of information technology to electoral processes.

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Websites

Information on elections provided by the Chief Electoral Office, the Electoral Enrolment Centre and the Electoral Commission –

www.elections.org.nz

Information on election results (including election night results in real time) provided by the Chief Electoral Office –

www.electionresults.govt.nz

Information on justice issues generally, provided by the Ministry of Justice –

www.justice.govt.nz