

Electoral Boundaries Commission Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Commission shall review the area, boundaries, name and representation of the existing electoral districts and shall, on completion of that review, prepare a report containing recommendations respecting the area, boundaries, name and representation of the electoral districts proposed by the Commission.

2. Guidelines

The Legislative Assembly requires the commission the following guidelines:

- a) The Commission shall review the existing electoral districts using the most recent and accurate census and other population data available.
- b) In keeping with Canadian constitutional conventions, relative parity between electoral districts shall be sought, to the extent possible, except where special circumstances warrant exceptional deviation.
- c) For greater certainty, relative parity means that the percentage variation between the number of persons in a riding and the average mean should be within plus or minus 25 per cent.
- d) In addition to whatever recommendations the Commission may propose for more than 19 seats, the Commission shall recommend how the electoral boundaries should be drawn if the Legislative Assembly were composed of 19 seats.
- e) The Commission shall prepare an interim report with proposed electoral district boundaries for review by the public and discussion at public hearings.
- f) The Commission shall establish a website or other publicly accessible mechanism(s), in addition to public hearings, to receive submissions on the existing and/or proposed boundaries.
- g) All submission to the Commission shall be considered public documents.
- h) Simultaneous interpretation of official languages shall be available at public hearings where the use of an official language in that region or community warrants the use of interpreters.
- i) If the Commission is not able to fulfill its mandate within the budget allocated, it may return to the Legislative Assembly to request additional funds.

3. Composition

The Commission shall be composed of a chairperson and four additional members. They are appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The Chairperson must be a current or retired judge of the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeal, or someone who meets the qualifications to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeal.

4. Considerations

The Electoral Boundaries Commission Act requires the Commission, in preparing its report, the Commission shall consider:

- a) Demographic factors, including the sparsity, density or rate of growth of the population of any area;
- b) Census data and other information pertaining to population;
- c) Information in the register of electors maintained under the *Elections and Plebiscites Act*;
- d) Geographic factors, including the accessibility, size or shape of any area;
- e) Traditional names for geographical features, populated places and regions;
- f) Community boundaries and boundaries established under land, resources and self-government agreements, including land claim and treaty land entitlement agreements;
- g) Facilities for and patterns of transportation and communication within and between different areas;
- h) Language, culture and any other special community or diversity of interests of the residents of any part of the Northwest Territories;
- i) Special circumstances relating to any existing electoral districts;
- j) Public input obtained by the Commission;
- k) Any guidelines or criteria proposed for the consideration of the Commission by resolution of the Legislative Assembly; and
- l) Any other similar and relevant factors that the Commission considers appropriate.

5. Report

The final report of the Commission complete with recommendations, shall be submitted in English and French to the Speaker and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, no later than nine months after the Commission is struck.

6. Finance and Administration

The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, in consultation with the Commission, shall identify a Secretary to the Commission. Pursuant to s. 6 of the Act, the Commission may engage the services of any persons necessary to assist in the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties under the Act.

The Speaker, on the recommendation of the Board of Management, will approve funding for the Commission. The Commission will ensure expenditures do not exceed the allotted funds.

Total Allotment (remuneration and expenditures): \$150,000.00

7. Remuneration

A Member of the Commission, including a Chair if they were appointed under s. 2(3)(b), (c) or (d), is entitled to remuneration for their services at rates determined by the Board of Management.

8. Termination

A Commission dissolves 60 days after its report is laid before the Legislative Assembly.