



Survey gauges our poll position

Tories canvass Canadians on opinions about giving opinions

March 15, 2008

OTTAWA—The federal government has conducted an opinion survey to find out what Canadians think of, uh, opinion surveys.

Release of the polling data comes amid pressure on Ottawa to rein in spending on public opinion research.

The poll, Canadians' Preferences in Answering Surveys, was completed Jan. 31 by Ekos Research Associates for Public Works and Government Services.

The survey of more than 2,250 Canadians last fall found 45 per cent of respondents preferred telephone surveys over Internet or in-person questionnaires.

A Public Works spokesperson could not say immediately how much the survey cost or why it was undertaken.

In opposition, the Tories often criticized the ruling Liberals for the amount of money spent on polls.

In December, an independent investigator reported the Conservatives spent \$31.2 million on public-opinion research in the 12 months leading up to a government-commissioned probe. By contrast, the Liberals averaged \$18 million a year on polls between 1993 and 2006.

The Conservatives are promising to spend \$10 million less on government surveys in the next budget year.

The Canadian Press