



U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
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EAC Approves Voting System Testing & Certification Program Standards

New Program is First for Federal Government

WASHINGTON – The United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) today voted to approve a new voluntary program for the testing and certification of voting systems. Today’s approval marks the first time that the Federal Government will provide for the certification, decertification and recertification of voting system hardware and software used during the federal election process, and the accreditation of testing laboratories. The new program is scheduled for implementation beginning in January 2007.

“Election reform has made great improvements since the enactment of the Help America Vote Act in 2002,” said Paul DeGregorio, Chairman of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. “EAC’s new testing and certification program is one more step in the federal election process to ensure the integrity and reliability of voting system operation.”

A webcast of today’s meeting can be viewed [here](#). The Voting System Testing and Certification Program Manual can be viewed [here](#).

The new program provides information and procedures to manufacturers for the testing and certification of voting systems consistent with the requirements of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). The program also supports state certification programs, provides information and support to state elections officials, and provides increased quality control in voting system manufacturing and increased voter confidence in the use of electronic voting systems.

Under the new program the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) will assist EAC through the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP), which will provide recommendations to EAC for final determination regarding the accreditation of laboratories used to test voting systems.

While participation in EAC’s new voting system testing and certification program is voluntary, states and manufacturers are encouraged to send their machines through the new program to ensure an added layer of security and protection against voting irregularities. States and voting system manufacturers that choose to participate in the program must comply with the program’s mandatory procedural requirements, which will include random reviews and spot checks of voting systems currently used in the field through EAC’s Quality Monitoring Program to ensure that those systems match the records of systems certified by EAC.

Voting systems that do not meet the requirements of the EAC Voluntary Voting System Guideline standards risk being decertified and will be removed from EAC's list of certified voting systems. Additionally, laboratories will be held accountable under the accreditation requirements and international lab standards and could risk losing accreditation by both EAC and NVLAP if a violation of those standards occurs.

Prior to the passage of HAVA, voting systems were assessed and qualified by the National Association of State Elections Directors (NASED), a non-partisan association consisting of elections directors nationwide. EAC developed the new voting system testing and certification program in response to required mandates under HAVA, which was enacted in 2002. To date, approximately 40 states currently require voting systems to be certified at the national level.

EAC is an independent bipartisan commission created by HAVA. It is charged with administering payments to states and developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, implementing election administration improvements, adopting voluntary voting system guidelines, accrediting voting system test laboratories and certifying voting equipment and serving as a national clearinghouse and resource of information regarding election administration. The three EAC commissioners are Paul DeGregorio, chairman; Donetta Davidson and Gracia Hillman. One vacancy currently exists.

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