



## **Preparing for 2012: Voting System Preparation** *EAC Roundtable Discussion*

**November 17, 2011**

EAC Offices  
Suite 150  
1225 New York Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC

### **Participate**

Live webcast at [www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov)

Twitter: @EACgov #BReady2012

Submit questions & comments via Twitter and webcast

### **Premise**

Administering an election is a fulltime job requiring extensive preparation and planning that takes place well before voting begins. In elections, details matter. Election officials employ the processes of ballot proofing, logic and accuracy testing and acceptance testing to make sure voting systems will operate accurately, securely and reliably.

### **Goal**

Provide a national platform to share cost-efficient procedures and best practices for conducting voting system preparation activities to election officials around the country as they prepare for the 2012 federal elections.

### **Agenda**

- I. 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.      Voting System Preparation**  
*Introductions and overview of the pre-election procedures & explanation of their importance in the administration of elections.*
  
- 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.      Ballot Proofing**  
*Presentation by Patty Hansen, Election Administrator, Coconino County, Arizona*
  
- 11:00 – 11:15 a.m.      Morning Break**

- II. 11:15 – 12:30 p.m. Logic and Accuracy Testing**  
*Presentation by Jon Marks and Ian Harlow of Pennsylvania.*
- 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Lunch Break**
- III. 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. Acceptance Testing**  
*Presentation by Paul Aumayr, Voting Systems Project Manager, Maryland State Board of Elections*
- IV. 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Communication, Documentation & Budgeting**  
*Discussion about securing support for pre-election activities, making the process open to the public and officially chronicling activities to promote their formal integration into the process.*

## Participants

Moderator: Merle King, executive director, Georgia’s Center for Election Systems, Kennesaw State University. Jeannie Layson, EAC director of Communications & Congressional Affairs, will field questions and comments from the public. She will also tweet live throughout the discussion.

- [Paul Aumayr, voting systems manager, Maryland State Board of Elections](#)
- [Patty Hansen, election administrator, Coconino County, Arizona](#)
- [Ian Harlow, deputy commissioner, Pennsylvania Bureau of Commissions, Elections & Legislation](#)
- [James Long, computer engineer, U.S. Election Assistance Commission](#)
- [Jon Marks, commissioner, Pennsylvania Bureau of Commissions, Elections & Legislation](#)
- [Noah Praetz, deputy director of elections, Office of Cook County, IL Clerk](#)

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

These are questions (divided by discussion segment) the moderator is likely to pose to the entire panel. Depending on the direction of the discussion and time limitations, all questions may not be asked. These questions are provided to give the panelists the opportunity to further prepare for the discussion and to inform the public, including election officials, about likely topics.

### **I. Voting System Preparation**

- a. An election is a project, comprised of smaller projects. Preparing the voting system for the election is a project that consists of goals, processes, controls, resources and a timeline. Can you provide an overview of how your organization plans for an election, specifically those activities related to pre-election? Describe who is involved, how goals are identified, how resources are allocated and how results are evaluated.
- b. What role do pre-election activities play in contributing to voter confidence?
- c. Who are the stakeholders impacted by pre-election activities? What goals are served by election preparation?
- d. How are pre-election activities tied to audit procedures?
- e. Every election produces anomalies. Anomalies are unexplained and unanticipated events. The identification and mitigation of anomalies is a primary reason to conduct pre-election activities. Please provide an example of an anomaly discovered during pre-election testing and how it was

resolved. What recommendations would you make to other jurisdictions regarding the identification and reporting of anomalies?

- f. What is the role of voting system vendors in your pre-election testing? Has their role changed in recent elections? How could their contribution be improved?

## **II. Ballot Proofing**

- a. Describe your ballot proofing procedures, how (or by whom) your ballot is printed, how you handle errors that are discovered and how the procedure has evolved over the years? Please describe shortcomings in the process you've discovered and how you resolved them.
- b. How do you organize and implement your ballot review process, especially if you're testing ballots for multiple jurisdictions? How are errors in ballot building communicated and corrections reincorporated into the review process? Do you use checklists and signoffs?
- c. Every time an error is discovered in a built ballot, the election database must be removed from the processing queue and reinserted (usually at the end). How do you implement emergency ballot proofing? How can jurisdiction reduce their emergency ballot printing and delivery costs?
- d. How do you proof audio ballots, for English and other languages? How do you verify the correct pronunciation of the candidate's name?
- e. Does your jurisdiction have a post-election review of ballot building issues? If so, what do you do with the findings?
- f. Do you proof all possible displays of the ballot? For example, do you review low-vision settings, magnification, etc.? If the screen is altered, what happens to voter instructions?
- g. How do you make sure that ballot layout and organization conforms with your jurisdiction's governing statute or rule? What, if any, degrees of freedom exist within your jurisdiction to alter ballot layout or design?

## **III. Logic and Accuracy Testing**

- a. Many jurisdictions are now required to advertise in advance their logic and accuracy testing schedule in the "legal organ" for the area. What other ways do you notify the public about these activities?
- b. Logic and Accuracy testing typically focuses on vote capture and vote tabulation equipment. In addition to required these components, what else should be included in logic and accuracy testing? Should people be included in L&A testing?
- c. How do engineering change orders (ECOs), recent changes in statute or rules, or lessons learned from other jurisdictions impact your logic and accuracy protocols? Maintaining congruence of your L&A test protocols with the current state of your voting system is challenging. How do you capture the evolution of your voting equipment in your logic and accuracy protocols?
- d. How do the results of logic and accuracy testing inform your jurisdiction's certification process?
- e. Vendors may be involved in the design and implementation of L&A tests. What is an appropriate role for vendors in this activity?

## **IV. Acceptance Testing**

- a. Acceptance testing is the incremental unit testing of delivered voting system components. It seeks to assure that the delivered unit is identical to the certified or contractually described model. Acceptance testing is labor intensive. What is value of acceptance testing?
- b. Acceptance test protocols differ from state to state. Describe your jurisdiction's acceptance testing process. Are there weaknesses in the process? How could it be improved?
- c. Describe the following roles in acceptance testing: the vendor, the jurisdiction and the state.
- d. How do you share and leverage the outcome of your acceptance testing?

## **V. Communication, Documentation and Budgeting**

- a. How do you communicate to the public the value added to your election by having rigorous pre-election procedures?
- b. How did you successfully secure funding for these activities?
- c. Have you formed partnerships in your community to help with these activities?
- d. How do we achieve real transparency for pre-election activities? What are the benefits of transparency in pre-election activities?