

**S.C. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
FISCAL YEAR 2012 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

SOUTH CAROLINA

ELECTION COMMISSION

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SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the State Election Commission is to ensure every eligible citizen has the opportunity to register to vote, participate in fair and impartial elections, and have the assurance that their vote will count.

Over the past decade, the business of conducting elections has become vastly more complex and subject to exceptional scrutiny by voters, candidates, media, and the legal community as never before. This requires everyone involved in the elections process, whether at the municipal, county, or state level, to become more technologically savvy, be better trained, and possess a higher level of election expertise. This is the environment in which the State Election Commission (SEC) must operate and carry out its mission.

As the chief election agency in South Carolina, the SEC is responsible for overseeing the voter registration and election processes in the State. Specifically, the agency is tasked with:

- Maintaining the statewide voter registration system
- Supporting the statewide voting system
- Conducting the Training and Certification Program

Everything that we do as an agency, our programs and our projects, emanates from these responsibilities. The primary mission and goal is to provide the highest level and quality of service possible within our statutory mandates.

The SEC maintains the State’s computerized statewide voter registration system. The system contains voter registration data on every registered voter in South Carolina. All county voter registration offices have online access to the database. The SEC is responsible for providing lists of registered voters for use in all elections held in the State, which averages approximately 300 each year. In combination with the driver’s license file, the system also serves as the source for jury selection lists in the State.

The SEC provides oversight including assistance and advisory services to county and municipal election officials. The SEC administers a mandatory training and certification program for voter registration and election officials. All voter registration and election materials are provided to county election officials and counties are reimbursed for allowable primary and election expenses.

State law mandates the SEC support the statewide voting system. In fulfilling this mandate, the SEC creates election specific database definitions, produces electronic ballots, provides a comprehensive security plan, and conducts training for county election officials and poll managers in the proper use of the system. This support eliminates the need for counties to contract with the vendor for support saving taxpayers more than \$1M each year.

The Agency provides information regarding voter registration and elections to the media, political parties, special interest groups, and citizens. The SEC’s “Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” voter education and outreach initiative is designed to familiarize voters with the State’s voter registration and election processes and to promote participation in elections.

SEC Commissioners serve as the State Board of Canvassers after elections to certify election returns, to declare candidates elected, and to sit in a judicial capacity to hear testimony and rule on protests and appeals.

The Agency values:

- **Employees** – Human resources are the Agency’s most important assets. The institutional knowledge, skill, and dedication of each employee are vital to the success of services provided.

The Agency is committed to ensuring employee satisfaction, training, development, and well-being.

- **Customer Driven Excellence** – To meet customer demand by understanding and anticipating current and future needs.
- **Visionary Leadership** – Motivate employees by setting examples, providing direction, and providing recognition and rewards.
- **Understanding the Future** - Statewide primaries and general elections occur in two year cycles. Needs and other preparations for these two events must be considered in advance.
- **Agility** – Because of the statutory deadlines regarding elections, it is crucial that the Agency meet all deadlines and provide necessary services.
- **Relationships** – Developing positive working relationships with county and municipal election officials, the General Assembly, other state and federal agencies, political parties, and other special interest groups is vital to the success of the voter registration and election process.

Major Achievements of the Fiscal Year:

2012 Statewide Primaries

The SEC and county election commissions successfully conducted Republican and Democratic Statewide Primaries on June 12, 2012. Republican and Democratic Primary Runoffs were held two weeks later on June 26. The election process for these primaries and runoffs went very smoothly. This success can be attributed in part to the extensive experience state and county election officials have gained in using the statewide voting system, having now conducted seven statewide elections and hundreds of local elections using the system.

2012 Presidential Preference Primaries (PPPs)

The SEC and county election commissions successfully conducted the Republican PPP on January 21, 2012. This was the second PPP conducted by state and county election officials; the first was 2008. In the past, political parties have conducted their own presidential primaries. Act 81 of 2007 required the SEC and county election commissions to conduct the PPPs for 2008, but was unclear regarding the conduct of future PPPs. Several counties sued the SEC questioning what ministerial and financial duties and responsibilities were placed on counties regarding the PPPs. Ultimately, the S.C. Supreme Court ruled the SEC and county election commissions were required to conduct not only the 2008 PPP but all future PPPs under Act 81 of 2007. The early date of the primaries thrust South Carolina into a national and international media spotlight. The eyes of the country and world were on S.C., and the PPPs were a success.

Election Audits

Following the 2010 General Election, the SEC conducted audits of election results that in turn identified a number of county election commissions that certified incorrect vote totals. Even though none of these errors had an effect on the outcome of elections for any office or question, it highlighted the need for more comprehensive and timely audits. In FY2012 the SEC continued developing a number of new tools and procedures to help county election officials and poll managers guard against such mistakes in advance of future elections to include the 2012 Statewide General Election. These tools and procedures include:

- Pre-certification audit requirements for county election commissions
- Voting system auditing software
- Voting system auditing training class
- Asset management system to track all voting system inventory
- New and improved checklists for poll managers and county election officials

- Certification of county voting system technicians
- Updated training materials stressing the importance of key election procedures

Additionally during FY2012:

- Following the Presidential Preference Primary, all 46 counties were audited. The SEC conducted 37 of the 46 audits with 9 county audits being conducted. It is also significant to note that 44 pre-certification audits were completed prior to CEC certification and 45 post certification audits were completed.
- After the June 2012 Primary, 41 post certification audits were conducted by the SEC.
- In June 2012 and following the Primary Runoffs, all 18 counties involved were audited.

New Voter Registration System (VREMS)

In December 2011 the SEC made historic progress by implementing a new statewide voter registration system. The Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) replaced the nineteen year old legacy system used in SC since 1992. The more modern VREMS better utilizes state resources through a windows-based system that more accurately processes voter registrations and election data, and protects voter information. The new functionalities offered in VREMS have allowed each county election and registration office to benefit from real time voter information which translates into better voter services for citizens. The Presidential Preference Primary, the Statewide Primary, and numerous local and special elections were conducted using voter information from VREMS between January and June 2012.

Online Voter Registration (OVR)

On June 18, 2012, the Governor signed into law Act 265, allowing the SEC to create a system for voters to register to vote online. Under the law, voters with Driver's Licenses and ID cards issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) can complete and submit a voter registration application through the SEC's website, creating the ability to provide true, paperless online voter registration. A voter's identity would be verified electronically by cross-checking information with DMV records. This was a major step forward in providing citizens with increased opportunities to register to vote. South Carolina was only the 12th state in the nation to approve true, paperless online voter registration. At the close of FY2012, the SEC was working with DMV to develop the system with the goal of implementation prior to the October 6 voter registration deadline for the 2012 General Election.

Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)

The SEC continued work to encourage county election officials to take advantage of EVRL, and the number of precincts in which it is used is steadily increasing. There is an opportunity for the SEC to make EVRL statewide in 2014. This will decrease a voters wait times, increase poll worker accuracy, and allow for quicker and more efficient processing of voter history. EVRL has proven to shorten lines at the polls, make it easier for poll managers to find voters on the list, instantly show if a voter is in the wrong precinct and identify their correct precinct, and provide immediate and accurate voter participation statistics.

Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT)

In April 2012 the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) grant funds to design, develop, and implement an on line absentee voting application. This new application would be designed to allow UOCAVA voters the ability to cast and deliver their ballot and receive confirmation in a matter of minutes. The objectives of this system will be to increase the successful rate of returned ballots from our military and overseas voters while also reducing traditional mailing costs.

Photo Identification Legislation

Legislation requiring voters to present photo ID when voting was signed into law during FY2011 (May 18, 2011). The federal Voting Rights Act requires changes to state election law to be approved by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) before taking effect. The S.C. Office of the Attorney General (SCAG) submitted the preclearance request on June 30, 2011. On August 29, 2011, DOJ responded to the State's preclearance request by requesting additional information regarding the core components of the legislation. The SEC worked with SCAG and DOJ to provide this additional information. On December 23, 2011, DOJ formally objected to the core components of the legislation, blocking its implementation. In February 2010, SCAG filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia seeking preclearance from the Court. SEC staff worked with State's counsel to help prepare the State's case by providing information and appearing for depositions. The controversial nature of the legislation and confusion surrounding the preclearance process presented significant voter education and public perception challenges for the SEC. SEC staff worked diligently to ensure the public was provided with complete and accurate information regarding the status and requirements of the Photo ID legislation. At the end of FY2012, the Agency was awaiting the decision of the Court, and the provisions of the law were not yet in effect. Even so, SEC staff continued making preparations for implementation in anticipation of approval by the Court:

- Creating voter education materials
- Defining a photo voter registration card system
- Developing processes and procedures
- Preparing training materials for poll managers and county election officials

Local Election Support

In an effort to ensure success of the statewide voting system, the SEC provided voting system support to county election commissions for approximately 200 local elections; including county, special, and municipal elections. The SEC supported the county election commission in conducting special elections and associated primaries in State House of Representatives Districts 10 and 100. The SEC and the Horry County Election Commission conducted an election in the Town of Atlantic Beach. The SEC being directly involved in the conduct of a municipal election is rare and resulted from a Gubernatorial Order after the Town failed to provide for its own elections. The SEC provided the county commission with training, media relations, and voting system support for all elections. Counties realize significant cost savings by taking advantage of voting system services provided by SEC staff, rather than contracting services with the system vendor.

Online Training

The SEC continues to expand use of the agency Learning Management System (LMS). In FY2012, SEC staff worked to update the Online Poll Manager Training program, with implementation planned prior to the 2012 General Election. Development also continued on a class focused on the duties of municipal election commissions. The LMS is revolutionizing state election training by bringing programs into the digital age. The system is web-based and provides for the creation of an unlimited number of classes, all developed and administered by SEC staff. As a result, poll managers and election officials throughout the state can access this training at any time. While the system is not designed to totally replace in-person training, it adds great flexibility of access for trainees and helps administrators hold users accountable for results.

Voter Education and Outreach

The SEC continued to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections through the Agency's *SC Votes* voter education initiative. The SEC continued efforts in FY2012 to educate voters about potential changes to Photo ID requirements. Educational materials and plans

were under development in anticipation of preclearance of the changes by the U.S. District Court. The initiative includes: educational brochures, posters, videos, outreach at public events, a voter education website (scVOTES.org), social media messaging, and a statewide mass media campaign. to The focus of the initiative is ensuring voters are informed about the laws, procedures, and deadlines associated with voter registration and voting in South Carolina elections.

Key Strategic Goals

As part of the overall goal of improving the State's election process and maintaining its integrity, the following specific goals are priorities of the SEC:

| Agency Goals | Status and Plans |
|--|--|
| Conduct fair and impartial statewide primaries and general elections | Every other agency goal relates directly to this primary agency goal, and every agency program serves as a means to accomplish it. During FY2012, the SEC successfully conducted the 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries, the June Statewide Primaries, and several state-level special elections. Preparations were underway for the 2012 General Election. |
| Implement a new statewide voter registration system | In December 2011, the Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) was implemented for statewide usage. This window based system was designed to be used by all county boards of voter registration offices to register voters, track absentee applications and ballots, and assign poll managers to precincts. The system is unique because it facilitates placement of voters in the proper election districts and tracks voter participation in elections. VREMS replaced the 44-year-old legacy system used in SC since 1968. |
| Support the statewide voting system | The SEC continues to provide Election Support to county election commissions by providing election definitions and training in the proper use of the system. Experienced SEC staff uses specialized software and frequent on-site visits to provide counties assistance with election preparation and Election Day support. The Agency continues to improve training and provide tools to ensure county election officials follow proper election procedures. The SEC has developed an audit tool that enables county election officials to conduct election audits using data stored by the electronic voting system. |
| Expand use of Electronic Voter Registration Lists (EVRL) | EVRL reduces the amount of time it takes to process voters and allows voter participation to be processed more quickly and accurately. The SEC provides EVRL software to counties at no charge. This service saves counties thousands of dollars over similar, commercially available software. Implementation of the system requires laptops and barcode readers. The SEC continues to encourage expanded use of EVRL throughout the state and looks for ways to help facilitate this expansion. Use of the system has increased by 19% from 31 counties in FY2012 to 37 counties in FY2012. The SEC has provided 1,576 laptops in recent years to enable counties to use the system. |
| Expand use of the Learning Management System (LMS) | The LMS is a Web-based e-learning training program administered by the SEC. The LMS can encompass an unlimited number of classes, all developed and maintained by SEC staff. The LMS is currently used to provide online poll manager training, and the SEC is working to increase participation in the program. In FY2012, SEC staff continued development of an online municipal election commission training class – part of a new certification program for municipal election officials that is now required by law. The SEC plans to use the LMS to develop and offer more online training classes in the future. |
| Increase participation in the Training and Certification Program | This program is mandated by state law to train county voter registration board and election commission members and their staffs. 485 election officials participated in 19 classes held quarterly in FY2012. Classes are held in Columbia and regionally when possible. The Agency works to increase participation in the program, as required by state law. The LMS will eventually be used to offer some program classes online. |
| Conduct Voter Education and Outreach Program | Continue highly successful voter education and outreach efforts designed to familiarize South Carolina voters with the State's voter registration and election processes. Voter education efforts are intensified in the months leading up to statewide elections. The SEC focuses on making sure voters have the opportunity to register to vote and the assurance that their vote will count. In FY2012 preparations were being made to educate voters on potential changes to Photo ID requirements, which were pending approval by a U.S. District Court. |
| Improve accessibility for voters with | The SEC works to make voting in South Carolina more accessible to all voters. The audio feature and portability of the State's new voting terminals provide disabled voters unprecedented access. The Agency continues to work with disability advocates to educate the disabled community on the |

| Agency Goals | Status and Plans |
|--|--|
| disabilities | availability and use of these features. The SEC produces informational materials in various formats designed to meet the needs of voters' specific disabilities. The Agency works with county offices to use federal grant money to improve polling places, making them more accessible to voters with disabilities. Agency staff surveys county election commissions to measure the level of progress in improving polling place accessibility and to identify areas for improvement. |
| Assist SCARE with legislative priorities | The SEC provides information to members of the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) on the potential impact of proposed legislation. The SEC works with SCARE membership to draft legislation designed to improve the election process and to request that legislation be introduced. |

Key Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

Statewide Voter Registration System

The SEC made significant progress on the development and implementation of a new statewide voter registration system in FY2012. The Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) will meet critical needs long recognized by state and county voter registration officials and specifically identified by the 1999 Election Summit and the 2001 Governor's Task Force on Elections. This web-based, user-friendly system will make processing voters far more efficient and provide numerous additional functionalities. This upgrade from a mainframe-based system to a web-based system will mark a new age in the administration of voter registration in South Carolina.

Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)

EVRL was designed to improve the process by which poll workers process voters on Election Day. The use of EVRL along with the new Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) allows for more prompt processing of voter history compared to using the paper voter registration list still in use across the state. Additionally, expanded implementation of EVRL will shorten lines at the polls on Election Day plus be a more efficient use of poll workers time. Voters will also notice better service at the polls resulting from features within this system to more readily assist them and to address registration matters with less delay.

Learning Management System (LMS)

The LMS is a web-based tool used to conduct online training classes. The system allows users to access training 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The system enables county election officials to track a poll manager's progress and evaluate the poll manager's knowledge of the process. The first class developed for the system was poll manager training, designed to supplement in-person training on the county level. An updated version of this class was under development in FY2012, with implementation scheduled to occur prior to the 2012 General Election. Development of a second LMS course, Duties of the Municipal Election Commission, continued in FY2012. Opportunities exist to expand the use of online poll manager training among county users and to expand the number of courses offered through the system.

Poll Worker Recruitment

State law allows for sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to serve as assistant poll managers. Numbers of these young poll managers are on the rise throughout the state. The assistant poll manager program has proven beneficial at a time when retention of experienced workers is continually decreasing. The enthusiasm and ability of these young adults to perform this civic duty has been a great benefit to elections in South Carolina. An opportunity exists to recruit even more of these young poll managers to help ensure the preservation of good elections in the State for posterity.

Election Legislation

Each year the SEC, in cooperation with the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE), works with the General Assembly to enact legislation to improve the election and voter registration process in South Carolina. The Agency advocates legislative changes that would:

- Clarify candidate filing requirements
- Allow for early voting (no excuse absentee voting)
- Delete the requirement for witness signature on mail-in absentee ballots
- Reduce requirements for publishing costly legal notices in newspapers
- Set uniform municipal election dates
- Set uniform special election dates
- Move candidate certification deadlines up to provide more time for ballot preparation
- Bring certification deadline for President in line with certification deadline for other candidates
- Allow the SEC to institute a pilot project to gauge the feasibility of vote centers
- Combine voter registration boards and election commissions in counties where they are separate
- Remove obsolete language from Title 7

Federal Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant

The SEC applied for and received HHS grant funds providing \$1,309,033 over a nine-year period beginning on October 1, 2003, and ending on September 30, 2012. The grant funding is scheduled to end on September 30, 2012 and has been earmarked for improving access for voters with disabilities through polling place upgrades, training, and education. The Agency works with county election officials to identify areas where accessibility can be improved and assists them in applying for grant funds. Remaining funds present opportunities for continued improvement of polling place accessibility throughout the state.

Challenges

Agency Funding

Cuts to the agency budget in recent years have left the agency severely underfunded resulting in the potential for serious, detrimental effects on mandated core services. The SEC's current general fund operating budget remains underfunded by approximately \$800,000.

In an effort to reduce operating costs, the SEC has taken the following actions:

- Of 19.5 authorized positions, two full-time and one part-time position have been left vacant.
- Greatly reduced travel
- Postponed replacement of aging equipment and technologies
- Negotiated lower rates from service providers
- Eliminated memberships in organizations
- Reduced the number of agency cell phones
- Eliminated participation in employee development programs

Every SEC program is directly related to three core Agency functions, all mandated by state law:

- Maintaining the statewide voter registration system
- Supporting the statewide voting system
- Conducting the Training and Certification Program

Under continuing budget restrictions, these functions have been reduced to a level at which the agency struggles to meet the state required mandates for voter registrations and conducting elections. The

Agency continues to rely on funds that are earmarked for conducting Primaries and General Elections. The current base funding is having a negative effect on these core functions in a variety of ways:

- Voter Registration System Maintenance – Budget reductions could lead to the inability to pay the Department of State Information Technology (DSIT) to maintain, protect, and enhance the Voter Registration and Election System (VREMS) used statewide. This could lead to potential discontinuation of service. Without proper maintenance, voter registration records would be in jeopardy not be current, potentially disenfranchising qualified voters and opening the door to voter fraud. Due to agency budget reductions, the SEC did not perform a confirmation card mail out following the 2010 statewide general election. Proper funding would allow the agency to conduct the mail out which corrects inaccurate addresses and preserves the voting rights of people who may have moved but did not update their address.
- Voting System Support As a result of staff shortages the remaining support staff has experienced a tremendous increase in workload. Increased workload results in two major liabilities: an increase in potential for ballot preparation errors and an increase in compensatory leave time (“comp time”). Ballot preparation errors can lead to protests, overturned elections, and the cost of new elections. Exorbitant comp time can have a negative effect on employee morale. Oftentimes, employees do not have the opportunity to take advantage of this leave time. Furthermore, comp time can be (and has been) taken away if not used in a timely manner. Low employee morale has led to a high turnover rate in these key positions.
- Training & Certification Program – Funding is required to run the program, most of which allocated to one full-time staff position tasked with administering the program. Other program costs include instructors, travel, and meeting spaces. Recent changes to state law have resulted in the added responsibility of providing training to municipal election officials throughout the state. Budget cuts have eliminated travel outside of Columbia and alternate meeting locations. Additional cuts would have a severe impact on the ability of the SEC to provide adequate training to county election officials. Officials conducting voter registration and elections without proper training and information can lead to poor voter service, violations of state election law, and overturned elections.

Statewide Voter Registration System

The statewide voter registration system used in South Carolina prior to December 2011 was a nineteen year old antiquated, legacy system. This system performed poorly in periods of peak activity, such as prior to a statewide election or primary, and produced unacceptable results. Problems experienced include inadequate storage for absentee voting records resulting in system outages and long lines of voters at county offices, inaccurate voter registration certificates produced for counties performing a voter precinct reassignment, and official voter registration lists that did not contain the names of all registered voters eligible to vote in the election. However in FY2012, the SEC successfully implemented the new Voter Registration and Elections Management System (VREMS) as a replacement to the previous legacy system.

Rising Cost of Confirmation Mailings

To maintain an accurate list of active registered voters, the SEC removes ineligible voters from the statewide voter registration database. To remove these voters, the Agency must send a confirmation mailing to each voter for verification. This effort is very costly due to the federal requirement for this to be a first class mailing with a postage-paid reply card. FY2012 also included additional unbudgeted mailing cost resulting from reapportionment and county reprecincting.

Participation in the Training and Certification Program

More than 500 county election officials in the State are required by law to gain certification through the SEC's Training and Certification Program. Participants include voter registration board members, election commission members, and their staffs. One hundred sixteen officials are not certified. Certification ensures election officials have the necessary knowledge to properly conduct elections. While the Agency has oversight responsibility for the program, it has no authority to compel compliance. Legislation was passed in FY2007 that requires the Governor to remove members who do not gain certification within the statutory timeframe, but this applies only to those members who were appointed after June 18, 2007. The SEC notifies the Governor and legislative delegations of non-compliant board members. As a result, participation has improved but is still inadequate. As a result of Act 191 of 2010, each Municipal Election Commission (MEC) member and their staffs are also required to complete a training and certification program administered by the SEC. The SEC is working to increase certification of MEC members.

Certification Deadline for Presidential Candidates

Current law sets the deadline for certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates. This deadline provides an inadequate amount of time for the SEC and county election commission to prepare ballots and voting machine databases and to meet the federal 45-day deadline to mail absentee ballots to military and overseas citizens.

Use of Accountability Report to Improve Organizational Performance

Throughout the year, the SEC prepares and gathers information to present in the accountability report. By preparing this yearly report, the Agency is able to compare and address any changes that have been made. By performing this self-critique, agency leaders are able to determine where improvements are needed to better meet the needs of agency customers. It also helps determine what improvements should be made. The Agency uses each yearly report to take a methodical, holistic view of the services provided to customers in order to identify, develop, and implement process improvements to increase the quality and efficiency of those services.

SECTION II – ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Major products and services of the State Election Commission

Statewide Voter Registration System

- Maintain and support South Carolina’s statewide voter registration system including additions and changes to the master file as provided by each county’s board of voter registration.
- Provide training and assistance on the statewide voter registration system to county voter registration staff through training classes, on-site visits, the Web, phone, and written documentation.
- Produce up-to-date lists of registered voters on a statewide, countywide, or specific election district basis upon customer’s request and payment of fees. Lists of registered voters are also available by voter demographics. In addition to current registered voters, historical lists are available of voters who participated in past elections.
- On a yearly basis, combine the voter registration file with the drivers license file and provide a list to be used by clerks of court and chief magistrates for the selection of jurors.

Conduct of the Primary and General Elections

- Oversee and assist with the conduct of primaries, general elections, and special elections; and if necessary, any subsequent protests or appeals.
- Insure the quality of the election process and the faith and trust the voting public has in the integrity of elections in South Carolina.
- Provide election supplies and forms to county and municipal election officials.

Election Support Services Program

- Provide counties with election support services and technical assistance related to the statewide voting system.
- Provide databases and ballot layout assistance to county and municipal election commissions.
- Provide election security oversight and guidance to counties.
- Act as a liaison between counties and the voting system vendor.

Training and Certification Program for Election Officials

- Administer a mandatory, statewide training and certification program for county voter registration and election officials and their staffs. Program components are designed to provide information about registration and election laws and procedures, as well as to sharpen management skills and other professional practices.

Educational Services

- Provide specialized training in the conduct of elections and state election law to poll workers, county election officials, and municipal election commissions.
- Provide county and municipal election officials assistance with ballot layout and proofing.

Voter Education and Outreach

- Conduct a continuing voter education initiative to ensure South Carolina voters are knowledgeable about the voting process. This effort covers the entire voter registration and election process with a particular emphasis placed on the proper use of the new electronic voting machines.

Public Information

- Provide results and statistics on elections held within the State.
- Provide information on current election law and policies.

- Respond to inquiries and requests from the public, media, candidates, political parties, elected officials, and other governmental agencies.

Program Management of the HAVA State Plan

- Implement processes to meet and maintain the requirements of the HAVA State Plan as required by federal legislation. A document has been established to chart the progress of plan goals.
- Track the progress of various projects associated with the implementation. This tracking is updated on a monthly basis.
- Manage program vendors and program financials.

Key Customers and Stakeholders

| Customer/ Stakeholder | Requirements/ Expectations |
|--|---|
| Citizens of South Carolina | To have the opportunity to register to vote, participate in fair and impartial elections, and have the assurance that their vote will count. |
| County boards of voter registration and election commissions | To provide necessary training and support to carry out their missions. |
| S.C. General Assembly | To follow state law regarding conduct of elections and provide input for recommended legislative changes. |
| Municipal election commissions | To provide necessary training and support to carry out their missions. |
| Political Parties | To provide information and guidance regarding the election process, to hold fair and impartial elections, and to ensure everyone’s votes are counted. |
| Candidates/ Elected officials | To provide information and guidance regarding the election process, to hold fair and impartial elections, and to ensure everyone’s votes are counted. |
| Other state agencies | To work with other agencies to provide citizens the opportunity to register to vote and to process information received when a voter is no longer eligible to vote. |
| Federal agencies such as the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and Federal Election Commission. | To follow federal laws and guidelines and provide military and overseas citizens the opportunity to register and vote. |
| Those who purchase lists of registered voters | To provide accurate voter registration lists at a fair price within a reasonable time period of the request. |
| News media | To provide accurate information relative to the election process in a clear, concise, and timely manner. |
| Special interest and advocacy groups | To provide access to voter registration and voting to their constituents. |

Key Suppliers and Partners

Key suppliers to the SEC include county voter registration and election offices, the State Budget & Control Board, the Division of State Information Technology, Office of Research and Statistics, Office of Human Resources, Office of State Budget, technology consultants, Election Systems and Software, voters and citizens, office supply companies, and printers.

Number of Employees and Locations

The SEC, when fully staffed, consists of 19 full-time employees and one part-time employee. One position is unclassified and 18.5 positions are classified. Two and one-half positions were left unfilled during FY2012 due to lack of funding. The Agency utilizes temporary employees and contract workers to meet daily operational demands and responsibilities in critical areas. The Executive Director is the only position in the Agency that is exempt from grievance rights. The Agency has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC.

Regulatory Environment

Agency leaders maintain regulatory accountability by strictly following state and federal law. The Agency operates in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Voter Registration Act of 1993, and the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The voting system used in South Carolina meets requirements of the S.C. Code of Laws and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG). The Agency adheres to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines on employee safety and well-being and state and federal guidelines on the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. State audits are conducted, and the Agency follows accounting procedures as outlined and audited by the State Auditor's Office. HAVA established the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to oversee funds distributed to the states to update voting technology, provide voter education, and accessibility to polling places. The SEC follows recommendations set forth by the EAC in order to receive federal funding. Federal audits are conducted in order to assure proper distribution of federal funds. The SEC strictly adheres to their policies and procedures on properly handling and distributing federal funds.

Key Strategic Challenges

- Educating voters so that they have an understanding of the voter registration and election processes, including how to register to vote and how to vote using the electronic voting machines. Through voter education, the Agency works to build and maintain confidence in the State's voter registration and elections processes.
- Developing consistent procedures and setting standards for county election officials.
- Educating county election officials on state laws and established procedures and encouraging them to adhere to these rules.
- Securing funding necessary to complete our goals. Adequate funding is necessary to obtain the human resources necessary for full operational capacity and to update outdated technologies.
- Adapting our policies and practices to conform to ever changing state and federal mandates.

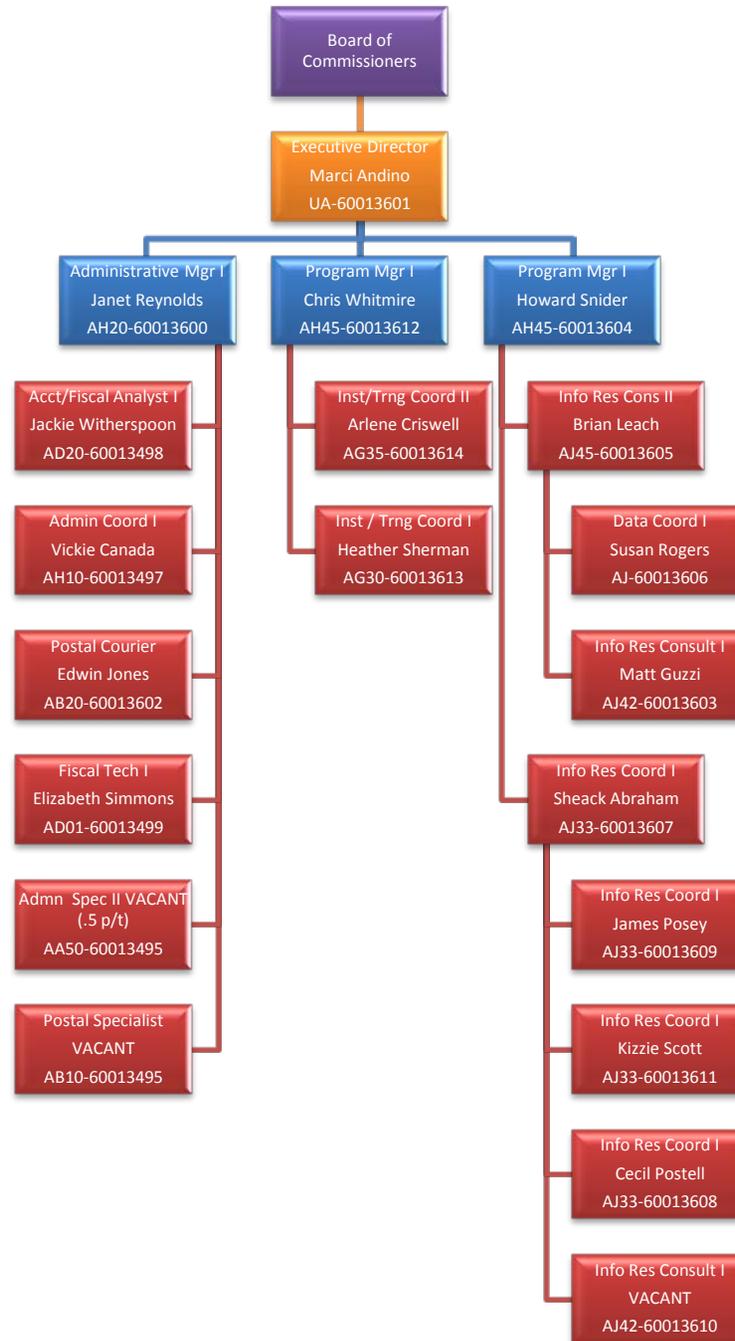
Performance Improvement System

Senior leaders regularly review the following performance measures and set policy or take steps to ensure improvement:

- Error rate and efficiency of election databases and ballots provided by the Voter Services department
- Election day problems and phone calls incurred versus amount and content of training provided prior to election day
- Evaluations from training and certification program classes
- Processing of pay vouchers is reviewed weekly to ensure proper coding and reimbursement amount
- Accurate charges for sales of lists of voters
- When new personnel are hired in county offices, SEC employees make contact with them on-site and determine their level of knowledge of voter registration and election procedures and laws. Based on that determination, training is encouraged in areas to increase their knowledge

- Voter registration status reports are printed and mailed to counties weekly, quarterly, and yearly. Management reviews completion of these mail outs and ensures their prompt delivery

State Election Commission – Organizational Chart – June 30, 2012



Appropriations/ Expenditures Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

| Major Budget Categories | FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures | | FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures | | FY 12-13 Appropriations Act | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Total Funds | General Funds | Total Funds | General Funds | Total Funds | General Funds |
| Personal Service | \$614,479 | \$552,842 | | \$585,008 | \$440,837 | \$377,040 |
| Other Operating | \$119,872 | \$111,015 | | \$90,929 | \$647,020 | \$270,117 |
| Special Items | \$380,527 | \$380,527 | | \$0 | \$3,135,000 | \$3,000,000 |
| Permanent Improvements | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Case Services | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Distributions to Subdivisions | \$0 | \$0 | | \$415,983 | \$533,000 | \$533,000 |
| Fringe Benefits | \$185,995 | \$163,180 | \$195,623 | \$171,642 | \$236,542 | 211,542 |
| Non-recurring | \$5,425,506 | \$0 | \$3,143,585 | \$76,575 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Total | \$6,726,379 | \$1,207,564 | \$4,583,491 | \$1,340,137 | \$4,992,399 | \$4,391,699 |

Other Expenditures

| Sources of Funds | FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures | FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Supplemental Bills | \$2,145,903 | \$262,153 |
| Capital Reserve Funds | \$1,151 | \$1,019,016 |
| Bonds | \$0 | \$0 |

Major Program Areas

| Program Number and Title | Major Program Area Purpose | FY 10-11 Budget Expenditures | | FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures | | Key Cross References for Financial Results |
|--|--|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|---|
| | | | | | | |
| 01010000/ Administration | Oversees the Agency's policies & procedures, provides leadership, support, financial services, other related administrative services | State | \$286,701 | State | \$314,012 | |
| | | Federal | | Federal | | |
| | | Other | \$72,798 | Other | \$79,251 | |
| | | Total | \$359,499 | Total | \$393,262 | |
| | | % of Total Budget | 39% | % of Total Budget | 17% | |
| 20010000/ Voter Services | Oversees implementation of new voter registration system project, maintenance of the database of all registered voters in the State, manages evaluation of voting system certifications, maintenance of agency computer network | State | \$422,439 | State | \$277,387 | Figure 7.1 Figure 7.2 Figure 7.3 Figure 7.6 Figure 7.7 |
| | | Federal | | Federal | | |
| | | Other | | Other | | |
| | | Total | \$422,439 | Total | \$277,387 | |
| | | % of Total Budget | 21% | % of Total Budget | 12% | |
| 25000000/ Public Information/ Training | Training & certification program oversight which includes a common curriculum to include core courses on the duties and responsibilities of county registration boards and county election commissions and electives to promote quality service and professional development | State | \$99,705 | State | \$84,539 | Figure 7.1 Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6 Figure 7.7 Figure 7.8 Figure 7.9 Figure 7.10 |
| | | Federal | | Federal | | |
| | | Other | \$8,216 | Other | \$24,255 | |
| | | Total | \$107,921 | Total | \$108,793 | |
| | | % of Total Budget | 5% | % of Total Budget | 5% | |
| 30010000/ Aid to Subdivisions | Provides a supplement to county board members/also provides aid to county for local registration board expense | State | \$438,262 | State | \$415,983 | Figure 7.8 Figure 7.9 Figure 7.10 |
| | | Federal | | Federal | | |
| | | Other | | Other | | |
| | | Total | \$438,62 | Total | \$415,983 | |
| | | % of Total Budget | 22% | % of Total Budget | 18% | |
| 95050000/ Benefits | Employee Benefits | State | \$185,424 | State | \$171,642 | |
| | | Federal | | Federal | | |
| | | Other | \$22,297 | Other | \$23,981 | |
| | | Total | \$207,721 | Total | \$195,623 | |
| | | % of Total Budget | 11% | % of Total Budget | 8% | |

| Remainder of Expenditures | FY 10-11 Budget Expenditures | | FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| | State | \$2,145,903 | State | |
| Federal | \$2,430,307 | Federal | \$1,748,396 | |
| Other | \$3,368,382 | Other | \$2,386,487 | |
| Total | \$7,944,593 | Total | \$4,473,610 | |
| % of Total Budget | | % of Total Budget | | |

Fines & Fees Report

State law requires each state agency to provide and release to the public via their website a report of all aggregate amounts of fines and fees the agency charged and collected in the prior fiscal year.

| SEC Fees Collected – FY2012 | Amount | Source | Applicable Statutes |
|--|-------------|--|--|
| Training & Certification Program Fees | \$8,080 | County/Municipal board members/staff | Proviso 79.7 |
| Sale of Lists | \$110,997 | Candidates, political parties, clerks of court, public | 7-3-20, Proviso 79.4 |
| Sale of Publications | \$60 | Various | Charge actual cost of printing per publication |
| Filing Fees for Special Elections | \$2,320 | Candidates | 7-13-40 |
| Filing Fees for 2012 Presidential Preference Primary | \$180,000 | Candidates | 7-13-40 |
| Filing Fees for Statewide Primaries | \$897,628 | Candidates | 7-13-40 |
| Refunds of Primary Filing Fees to Political Parties | \$(235,253) | Candidates | 7-13-40 |

SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE CRITERIA

Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility

The Agency has five commissioners, who meet monthly and when otherwise necessary to set policy for the Agency based on its mission. The commission sets goals and approves major projects. Additionally, the commissioners are extremely supportive of agency initiatives.

The executive leadership system of the Agency consists of the Executive Director and three division directors. This management team meets weekly, or as often as needed, to share ideas, discuss situations, and conduct strategic planning. The agency mission and election laws of the State guide the team.

The Agency is involved to some degree in approximately 300 elections held each year in the State. Significant planning is required for the statewide primary elections and general elections conducted in even numbered years. Management must adhere to deadlines and anticipate possible problems as well as have a clear vision of information and actions that will be expected of the Agency for each election. Staff are instructed and provided with the necessary tools to complete this task. This is crucial to the successful conduct of elections.

- 1.1a** Short and long-term directions are based on customer needs, election schedules, election law changes, and changes in technology. For short-term direction, if a customer has an immediate need it is evaluated and delegated to the staff member who has the skills to address the need in a timely manner. For long-term direction, department directors and staff gather information, assess needs, develop a plan, and set a time-line for completion of the project. This time-line is stressed to each individual involved in achieving the long-term goal or direction.
- 1.1b/c** Employee performance expectations and organizational values are communicated through employee evaluations and staff meetings. Employees are expected to perform both effectively and efficiently. Employees performing below agency expectations are counseled and provided with the necessary resources, mentoring, and opportunity to improve their job performance.
- 1.1d** Potential employees submit to a State Law Enforcement Division background check before they are hired. All employees are expected to act in an ethical manner that meets established standards for professional and personal behavior. Problems with unethical behavior are immediately addressed as they occur. Written ethical policy provided by the Budget and Control Board is followed by the Agency.
- 1.2** Senior leaders establish and promote a focus on agency customers through a variety of learning and listening methods. Senior staff is also available to speak with customers when requested. An “unwritten” policy is in place for staff to promptly return all phone calls and reply to all letters within one business day, if possible.
- 1.3** The Agency determines the impact of its services through an agency e-mail service, an election community intranet, surveys, verbal/written communication, and focus group meetings. The SEC has an agency e-mail listed on the agency website where the public may submit questions, comments, or concerns/complaints on any voter registration or election related subject. Replies to these e-mails are made within 3-4 working days, depending on the information submitted and requested. Replies to written and oral requests are made within 2 days.

The SEC conducts surveys after each training class for feedback on any improvements that need to be made in the content or distribution of information.

- 1.4** Senior leaders maintain fiscal accountability by following guidelines outlined by the Comptroller General's office on paying agency bills from the proper fiscal year budget and meeting all deadlines to pay such bills. Every fiscal year, the SEC submits a budget request to the State Budget Office. The Agency then appears before the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee to justify the request. The Agency also undergoes external audits from the State Auditor's office. Formal internal audits are not conducted; however, informal audits are a part of agency business controls. For example, request for money must be in written form and properly released and authorized from the Finance Director and Executive Director.

Senior leaders maintain legal accountability and protection from lawsuits by closely following state election law. The SEC obtains legal opinions and assistance from the Attorney General's office or, when necessary, private attorneys on information that is not addressed in the laws. While agency leaders understand that any opinions issued from the Attorney General's office are non-binding, they rely on their in-depth knowledge and legal expertise regarding certain legal matters.

Agency leaders maintain regulatory accountability by strictly following state and federal law. The Agency operates in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Voter Registration Act of 1993, and the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The voting system used in South Carolina meets requirements of the S.C. Code of Laws and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG). The Agency adheres to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines on employee safety and well-being and state and federal guidelines on the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. State audits are conducted, and the Agency follows accounting procedures as outlined and audited by the State Auditor's Office. HAVA established the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to oversee funds distributed to the states to update voting technology, provide voter education, and accessibility to polling places. The SEC follows recommendations set forth by the EAC in order to receive federal funding. Federal audits may be conducted in order to assure proper distribution of federal funds; therefore, the SEC strictly adheres to their policies and procedures on properly handling and distributing federal funds.

- 1.5** Senior leaders regularly review the following performance measures and set policy or take steps to ensure accuracy:

- Error rate and efficiency of election databases and ballots provided by the Voter Services department
- Election day problems and phone calls incurred versus amount and content of training provided prior to election day
- Evaluations from training and certification program classes
- Processing of pay vouchers is reviewed weekly to ensure proper coding and reimbursement amount
- Accurate charges for sales of lists of voters
- When new personnel are hired in county offices, SEC employees make contact with them on-site and determine their level of knowledge of voter registration and election procedures and laws. Based on that determination, training is encouraged in areas to increase their knowledge
- Voter registration status reports are printed and mailed to counties weekly, quarterly, and yearly. Management reviews completion of these mail outs and ensures their prompt delivery

- 1.6** Senior Management determines their effectiveness as leaders through feedback from respective employees. This feedback is gained through an open-door policy and regular staff meetings.

Quarterly or monthly meetings are held to take suggestions on improving department processes. Verbal communication is encouraged and expected if an employee is dissatisfied or feels that their supervisor can help improve his/her performance.

- 1.7 Agency staff engages in succession planning through coaching, training and development, and promoting from within. Employees are encouraged to go back to school or take classes to gain knowledge and skills that will prove valuable to the Agency in the future. The SEC faces a unique challenge to succession planning due to the size of the Agency. Many departments do not have the depth necessary to train competent successors.
- 1.8 Priorities for improvement are based on immediate needs identified from various situations that arise. For example, due to the federal funding from the 2002 Help America Vote Act, it was identified that SC could afford to replace all voting equipment currently used statewide, much of which was antiquated and not reliable. Agency staff worked with various interests groups to gather input on what types of features were needed on a new voting system (i.e., ear phones for the blind). These features were specified in a request for proposal for election machine vendors and must have been met in order to offer their equipment.
- 1.9 Staff development and training is a crucial part of the Agency’s vision for the future. Through workshops, retreats, and employee teams, employees are provided with the tools, resources, and opportunities to develop ways to enhance customer service to the benefit of the Agency. Employees are encouraged to complete levels of higher learning and are offered flextime to accommodate their schedules. Budget restrictions require staff to seek opportunities with no registration fee or out of town travel when possible.. Figure 1.1 depicts the level of employee development programs in which agency employees have been involved. No employees are currently enrolled due to a lack of funding.

| EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS | | |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Courses | Number Completed | Number Enrolled |
| Executive Institute | 1 | 0 |
| Certified Public Manager | 2 | 0 |
| Associate Public Manager | 4 | 0 |
| Human Resource Professional Development | 1 | 0 |
| Election Security | 1 | 0 |
| Leadership Institute | 1 | 0 |
| SEC Certification Program | 5 | 11 |

Figure 1.1

The South Carolina Executive Institute existed primarily for state government officials with executive levels of responsibility and authority. The Institute was administered by the State Budget and Control Board and offered an annual curriculum tailored for public sector leaders designed to meet evolving needs of governmental leaders in South Carolina.

The Certified Public Manager™ (CPM) program is a nationally accredited management development program for public managers. The CPM designation is a professional credential that involves intensive study, practice, application, and testing to prepare public managers for the challenges of today’s and tomorrow’s workplace. This program, developed by the S.C. Budget

and Control Board's Office of Human Resources, was accredited by the National CPM Consortium in 1996.

The Associate Public Manager™ (APM) offers new or experienced supervisors the skills and knowledge to help them stay on top of the latest supervisory techniques and achieve success in today's changing workplace.

The Human Resource Professional Development (HRPD) Program is designed for HR professionals to enhance their skills in continuing education focusing on HR practices and developing skills in specific technical areas.

The Public Professional Development (PPD) Program is a new certification developed for professional/technical staff to enhance their ability to work with teams, gain presentation skills, and manage priorities.

The Leadership Institute at Columbia College prepares women to assume leadership within their professions and communities, to lead innovation and change throughout their lives, and to be effective in a global society.

- 1.10** Managers properly train and empower employees to make decisions and take actions within the boundaries of their job duties that satisfy customers and produce better business results. Employee innovation is encouraged in an effort to improve agency services to customers. Recognition is given to employees whose ideas increase agency productivity or reduce agency expenditures.
- 1.11** Through encouragement and example, senior leaders participate in professional, election, and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. In FY2012, SEC staff members contributed to the United Way during the organization's State Employees Campaign raising approximately \$500 to help improve their community. Employees are encouraged to be active in industry organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE).

Category 2- Strategic Planning verify references

| Program Number and Title | Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective | Related FY2010 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s) | Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures |
|--|---|--|--|
| | Support Statewide Voting System —Provide system support during local and statewide elections. | Provide voting system training and assistance to county election officials by preparing election-specific databases. | III. p.48 |
| 20010000/ Voter Services | Statewide Voter Registration System —Maintain and support the State’s voter registration system. | Provide maintenance and security of statewide voter registration system. Manage performance and enhancements to the system, ensuring conformity to new and existing laws and policies. | I. p.39-41 Figures 7.1 – 7.2 |
| | Conduct of Elections —Oversee and assist with conduct of primaries and elections and ensure the quality of the election process | Provide oversight, consultative feedback, and training to county election commissions on election process and election law. | I. p. 39-41 II. p. 41-48 III. p. 48 IV. p. 48-49 V. p. 49-51 Figures 7.1-7.10 |
| 25000000/ Public Information/ Training | Training and Certification —Administer program consisting of components designed to provide information about registration and election law and procedures | Provide training to county election and voter registration offices, staff, and commissioners on conduct of voter registration and election processes. | II. p.41-48 Figure 7.6-7.8 |
| | Implementation and Enforcement of Help America Vote Act —Successfully implement and insure compliance. | Develop and execute a plan to track the progress of various projects to ensure compliance with federal guidelines and deadlines. | II. p. 41-48 III. p. 48 IV. p.48-49 Figure 7.3-7.5 Figure 7.9 |

Figure 2.1

2.1 Our strategic planning process is guided by the Agency Director based on the goals of the Agency. Goals are based on the agency mission and statutory requirements. The Director includes ideas and input from departmental heads and other employees in pertinent areas. Being a small agency makes it easier to assemble key players and develop a plan, taking into consideration all risks, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

2.2-2.4 Action plans are developed and tracked using an agency project management site (PMO). The Agency PMO is a website that enables users to plan projects by organizing each task associated with the project. Each task is assigned an owner and a percentage value related to its importance in completing the project. As each task is completed, the program produces a percentage complete number for the project. The PMO also features a messaging system allowing users to communicate and collaborate on projects. It also features a calendar module for planning purposes. The PMO enables the Agency Director and departmental directors to track the status of projects and action items through the PMO.

- 2.5** The objective of enforcing the provisions of the Help America Vote Act allows us to address the strategic challenge of educating voters by funding a comprehensive voter education campaign. The training and certification objective addresses the challenge of developing consistent procedures and educating county election officials. The challenge of funding for employees with an elevated technical skill level is addressed as part of the objective of supporting the statewide voting system.
- 2.6** Our strategic planning process is evaluated on its effectiveness in developing a plan that is carried out in a way that adequately addresses our strategic goals. Our strategic planning process is constantly evaluated and updated to conform to changing needs.

Category 3 - Customer and Market Focus

3.1 The SEC identifies key customers based on statutory requirements and observation of the groups and individuals requesting specific election related information or services. Key customers of the SEC include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, elected officials, federal election agencies, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, those who purchase lists of registered voters, special interest and advocacy groups, and the media.

Customers are determined by recognizing those who request information and services from the Agency and whether the Agency can fulfill the request. For example, the Executive Director and management team meet regularly with election officials from all over the State. This committee serves as a liaison between all county election commissions and voter registration boards in the State and the SEC. By taking this approach, the management team is able to speak directly with one of the Agency's biggest customers and then lead and train agency employees to meet the customer's needs. They have also been extremely valuable in establishing needs for statutory changes and fine-tuning programmatic focus.

3.2-3.4 The SEC uses traditional and technological methods to listen to customers and learn what adaptations are necessary to meet their changing expectations. One way this is done is through the Agency's intranet site, ElectionNET. This is a growing, searchable electronic repository of a vast array of information including agency policies, processes, reference materials, tools, and historical documentation. This repository is the primary mechanism for one of our largest customer groups, county election officials, to seek information, conduct business, and make complaints. The SEC's public website, scVOTES.org, is the primary source for information for the general public. It also provides the public with a mechanism to make complaints by providing contact information for the SEC and county voter registration and election offices.

The management team also communicates with political parties, advocacy groups, and members of the legislature to discuss issues affecting the operation of the Agency. The SEC is interested in customer input on agency performance so that it may implement procedures, if needed, to improve customer service. The SEC assesses needs and determines how to best meet them in a cost effective and timely manner. Methods of determining levels of customer satisfaction include:

- Voter feedback through various communications
- Evaluations from training programs
- On-site visits with county offices
- Voting system users group meetings
- Advisory committee meetings with customers

3.5 Information from customers and stakeholders is used to improve services and programs by evaluating customer feedback and assessing the need for change in services or addition of new services. Many times, this requires a cross-functional team of agency staff, outside advisors, and county election and voter registration personnel.

3.6 The SEC is dedicated to continuous improvement of the voter registration and elections processes. By using the avenues outlined above, the goal is to provide the best possible service to customers of the Agency. Positive relationships with customers are built by providing accurate and timely information with excellent customer service.

Category 4 - Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management

4.1 The Agency decides which systems to measure based on the agency mission and key products and services. These measurements show trends for future planning and display areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

4.2-3 A review of voter registration lists used in all elections is concluded within ten days of receipt. The review checks for discrepancies and errors made at the precinct level on Election Day. If errors are found, the proper county election officials are notified immediately so that they can correct improper procedures or identify areas to reinforce through training.

Federal law requires the SEC to work with agencies providing voter registration assistance to their clients. The SEC reviews reports for inconsistencies in the number of voters assisted and contacts agencies when discrepancies are discovered.

Other divisions use various tables and recording notebooks to track efficiency and effectiveness methods. For example, the Voter Services Division keeps a manual log of when sample ballots are mailed to a county election commission, when they are returned, and the number of errors contained in the information. If errors are found on the agency end of the transmission, steps are taken to reduce those errors in the future.

4.4 Technology is used as much as possible to ensure data integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security, and availability for decision-making. When problems arise or trends change requiring a shift in procedure, correct data is essential to make the right decisions. All voter registration data is tracked using the Agency's statewide voter registration system and reports from that system can be accessed at any time. Reports available to the public include the voter registration totals broken down by race, sex, and age. Other reports are produced to determine proper ballot content and number of ballots necessary for an election.

4.5 Data analysis and election audit tools are used to determine the validity of a process and supports decision making by capturing the pertinent data over a period of time and then evaluating all data and options to improve the process. County offices were surveyed to determine existing gaps in services and future needs.

4.6 If a system, process or procedure is found to be inadequate or deficient; the problem is addressed immediately to lessen any impact in the short term. The issue is also addressed through the strategic planning process so that it can be improved or corrected in a more permanent way through changes in the particular system, process or procedure.

4.7 Employees with the greatest longevity within an organization usually possess the most technical and institutional knowledge. When an employee leaves their position, it is important to retain as much of their accumulated knowledge as possible. Significant time, money, and resources can be expended to fill the knowledge void through training new personnel or retraining existing personnel. The SEC is addressing the management of employee organizational and institutional knowledge management within the Agency by leveraging technology available through its new intranet (ElectionNET). This is a growing, searchable electronic repository of agency policies, processes, reference materials, employee desk procedures, tools, and historical documentation that is available to all agency employees.

Category 5 - Workforce Focus

- 5.1** Agency work is organized and managed on a departmental basis. Each department manager distributes work based on employee skills. During the past several years, the Agency has transitioned from heavily clerical work to work that requires more technical skills. Employees are hired and trained based on these current needs.
- 5.2** The SEC is a small agency with 13 employees (19.5 allowable) dedicated to the mission of the Agency. Cross training and cross functioning are essential to achieve the mission of the Agency. In some instances, the size of the Agency hinders cross training because many positions require a skill set that is not readily available.
- 5.3** When a vacancy occurs, employees inside the Agency are encouraged to apply. Management uses the South Carolina E-Recruitment System to find potential employees with necessary skill sets. In the past, staff performed primarily administrative and data entry functions. We now require a much more technical skill set, and position salaries have not been adjusted to reflect this demand. Another barrier is the extreme workload placed on employees during times of peak demand, particularly during statewide election preparation.
- 5.4** There is an advantage in the small number of SEC employees when it comes to evaluation of workforce capability and capacity. Managers work very closely with their employees and are acutely aware of their skills and competencies. Having a small number of employees also makes the agency very sensitive to changes in staffing level demands. Changes in demands cannot always be absorbed by current staff; and many times, it is necessary to hire temporary and contract employees.
- 5.5** SEC employee performance management system gives management an opportunity to acknowledge good performance or provide resources and advice to improve on substandard performance. This process is demonstrated through the annual employee evaluation and by addressing specific situations as they arise.
- 5.6** Being a small agency, the SEC has no internal leadership program, but the Agency takes advantage of external leadership programs such as the Executive Institute, the Leadership Institute, and the certification programs offered through the State Office of Human Resources. See Category I, Figure 1.1.
- 5.7-10** Employee training and development is updated as necessary to allow the Agency to carry out its action plans. Constantly changing demands placed on voter registration and election requires ongoing training and development. Through meetings, workshops, training classes, phone, and in-person conversations with agency customers, needs and expectations of the Agency are determined. Once identified, new processes or programs are created, or existing ones are improved, to ensure customer satisfaction. These developments and improvements are executed using the most modern and economically feasible means available. Many times, development training of employees is needed to accomplish these program improvements. Employees are encouraged to continue their education and to attend any training offered to help them better perform their job duties. Extra training is also encouraged when performance is substandard.
- 5.11** Motivation of employees is done informally through verbal conversations and mentoring. Formal motivation is achieved through practices such as flex time, agency retreats, promotions from within, and providing resources to perform the necessary job duties and monetary increases and bonuses when the agency budget allows. The Agency's compensation system is based on available funding and internal equity. If money is available in the agency budget, employee salary increases are given for performance, additional job duties, or completion of certain training programs. Regular staff meetings, verbal surveys, observation, and feedback during evaluations

are used to determine employee satisfaction and motivation.

The Agency's rewards and recognition program is based on a peer-nominated approach. Employees are nominated quarterly by their peers for outstanding service performed based on the Agency's goals and mission. From those nominees, an employee of the quarter is chosen and recognized at a breakfast or luncheon and awarded a plaque. Each year an employee of the year is chosen from the employee of the quarter recipients and their name is engraved on a larger plaque in the office lobby.

Additionally, the SEC recognizes the outstanding registration/election office, official, and newcomer from the various counties in the State. These peer-nominated awards are presented annually at the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials conference.

Many employees are actively involved in work related activities such as:

- S.C. Association of Registration and Election Officials
- National Association of State Election Directors
- Election Assistance Commission Standards Board
- Election Center
- The Society of Certified Public Managers
- Executive Institute Alumni
- SC State Government Improvement Network
- Government Finance Officers Association
- SC Information Technology Directors Association
- State Agency Training Consortium
- CPM Advisory Board
- International Public Management Association
- Human Resources Advisory Committee
- SC Assistive Technology Advisory Committee

Most employees also participate in the United Way and Good Health Appeal programs. Other volunteer programs by agency staff include Christmas adopt-a-family, blood donations to the Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, Sistercare Christmas assistance, school mentoring, Salvation Army, local soup kitchens, and food drives. Some employees have even used their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

5.12 There is no formal assessment method to measure employee well being, satisfaction and motivation at this time. Informal assessments are conducted through open-door conversations and regular office visits by management staff. The agency encourages a work-life balance.

SEC Employee Wellness Initiatives

During FY2012 the following practices and activities included: Advising employees to stay home if sick until 24 hours after they no longer have symptoms

- Preparing for extended employee absences and for continuation of essential functions
- Educating employees about proper cough and sneeze hygiene
- Providing education regarding hand hygiene and providing hand sanitizers
- Routinely cleaning surfaces that are likely to have frequent hand contact

- Encouraging sick employees at higher risk of flu complications to seek medical attention
- Encouraging all Agency and county employees to get vaccinated
- Distributing flu prevention posters to county officials for display in offices and polling places

5.13 The SEC has attempted to establish career paths to enable employees to advance within the Agency. Cross training of employees is done agency wide. A limited amount of workforce planning has been done, but the size of the Agency and the varied skills sets of its employees, makes a specific, agency wide plan impossible.

5.14 A custodial staff provided by the Budget and Control Board Building Services Division maintains the work environment. Employees report any unsanitary conditions to custodial staff and/or other appropriate authorities immediately. The Agency also complies with OSHA and state fire marshal regulations.

The implementation of the electronic voting system has made the workplace safer by eliminating the need for large rolls of paper. Before the new system, SEC employees created ballots using large architectural plotters that require very heavy rolls of paper. Because of the extra weight, back braces were provided for staff to use while lifting the paper. Aprons and latex gloves were also provided for working with the plotter ink cartridges.

Employees using computers on a regular basis are provided with larger monitors containing screen filters, keyboards designed to prevent hand injury, and stands to hold data to be processed.

Category 6 - Process Management

I. Statewide Voter Registration System

New Voter Registration System

During FY2012 a new voter registration system was implemented. The Voter Registration & Election Management System (VREMS) is an easier-to-use, windows-based system that makes the processing of registered voters and their assignment to proper election districts far more efficient. System security features current hardware and software controls. VREMS also requires multiple levels of user authentication to access the system. The system is housed at the Department of State Information Technology (DSIT) where it will be protected from outside threats using high-tech firewalls and security protocols.

Security and Maintenance

The SEC is responsible for maintenance and security of the statewide voter registration database, which currently contains more than 2.9 million active, registered voters. The Agency works with DSIT to provide housing for the database, regulate user access, and provide physical security. The SEC manages performance and enhancements to the system, ensuring conformity to new and existing laws and policies.

Each county voter registration board has online access to the database. On a daily basis, the boards add new registered voters and make changes to existing voter records within their county. The Agency provides the boards with technical support and training in the proper use of the system. The SEC provides the boards with necessary forms and materials to conduct voter registration.

Public access to the database is provided through the Agency's website, an in-office public access computer, county voter registration offices, and statistical reports. Through scVOTES.org, voters can access their voter registration record and information regarding the status of their absentee and/or provisional ballots.

The SEC keeps the database current by removing the names of voters who have died, moved, been convicted of felonies or crimes against the election laws, or who have otherwise become ineligible. Records that need to be made inactive are identified in several ways:

- Data from DMV on individuals who have surrendered their SC Driver's License to another state
- Death reports from DHEC's Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Reports of convictions from federal and state courts
- Registration reports from other states
- Database comparisons with other states to detect dual registrations
- Requests directly from voters
- Confirmation card mailings

Confirmation Card Mailings (CCMs)

CCMs are conducted pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act and are designed to maintain voter registration database records by correcting inaccurate addresses and to preserve the voting rights of people who may have moved but did not update their address. The SEC sends postage paid return addressed post cards to voters who have not participated in at least one election for a specified time period. The post card asks the voter to confirm their address or provide their new address by returning the card. Voters who do not respond are flagged. Flagged voters who do not vote within two general election cycles after being flagged are made inactive.

Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports

The SEC is responsible for producing eligible voter registration lists for every election held in the State and providing those lists to the appropriate county boards of voter registration. These lists are used on election day to assist poll managers in determining voter eligibility before a ballot is issued. Lists are provided no later than 10 days prior to any election.

This eligible voter registration list traditionally has been provided in a printed format. The SEC also provides a system to allow poll workers to use a laptop computer to access the voter registration list at the polling place on Election Day. The Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL) system reduces the amount of time it takes to process voters:

- Poll Managers can search for voters by name or voter registration number
- Poll Managers no longer have to flip the pages of a poll list to find a voter
- Reading bar code on voter registration card decreases processing time and increases accuracy

EVRL helps determine the correct precinct for voters more quickly:

- EVRL will display the voters appropriate ballot style to the poll manager, thereby reducing the chance of giving a voter the wrong ballot
- EVRL will list all voters in all precincts within a county; therefore, if a voter shows up at the wrong precinct, the poll manager can use the system to direct the voter to the correct precinct

EVRL allows voter participation history to be processed more quickly and accurately:

- EVRL reduces the chance that a poll manager will mark the wrong person as voted
- Voter participation records can be updated in the Voter Registration and Election Management System within days upon receipt compared to weeks with the paper list

The SEC provides training, databases, and some equipment to county voter registration boards and election commissions to facilitate use of EVRL in elections.

The Agency provides customers with various other lists of voters that are also produced from the voter registration database. These are many times referred to as “voter registration lists,” but are not to be confused with the official eligible voter registration lists described above. These lists are available broken down by geographical region (statewide, county, precinct, district), by demographic (age, sex, race), and by participation in a particular election or primary.

Various statistical reports on voter registration and voter participation are also made available to agency customers. These reports show numbers of registered voters at a given time or numbers of voters who participated in a particular election. These numbers are also available broken down by geographical region and demographic. Reports are produced at regular intervals (annually, quarterly, and weekly) and special reports are available on request.

The SEC is also responsible for providing jury pool lists to clerks of court, chief magistrates, and municipal courts to be used in jury selection. Jury pool lists are created by combining the names in the voter registration database with those in the drivers license file.

Voter Participation Statistics

After every election and primary held in the state, the SEC conducts a process by which each individual voter that participated in the election or primary is given credit for participating. By giving each voter credit, the Agency is able to make sure voters who are participating in elections are kept on the list of active, registered voters; and identify voters who are not participating in elections for inclusion in confirmation card mailings (see “Security & Maintenance”). This process also allows the SEC to produce voter participation lists and statistical reports (see “Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports”).

II. Public Information and Training

Public Information

On a daily basis, the public information staff interacts with the general public; local, state and national media; elected officials; candidates; political parties; county voter registration and election offices; the U.S. Department of Justice; and others. The staff completes surveys and responds to requests for information via letter, e-mail, telephone, and personal appearance. The Public Information and Training Division also produces informational publications including the bi-annual Election Report.

Voter Education and Outreach

The SEC is committed to providing education and outreach to voters. It is imperative for voters to be knowledgeable about voter registration and election processes in the State to ensure that the Agency's mission of conducting successful elections is accomplished. This commitment to voter education is consistent with the Agency's voter education message—"Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts." The Agency continues to deliver this message to voters in various ways through its *SC Votes* voter education and outreach initiative.

Election Night Results Reporting

The SEC uses an online tool called Election Night Results (ENR) to report results for all statewide general elections and primaries. ENR is available to users through scVOTES.org. This tool not only provides public access to results on election night, but serves as an historical repository available throughout the year. ENR provides visitors with a graphical view of in-depth state and county results. Users are presented with a breakdown of votes received for a candidate by contest. Maps illustrate the counties or precincts reporting, voter turnout, and results by county or precinct. A reporting area allows interactive report creation and the ability to download detailed reports. As county election commissions compile precinct-level results, they are electronically transmitted to the SEC. The SEC aggregates and reports each county's state and local results in real time via the ENR Web interface.

scVOTES.org

The SEC website, scVOTES.org, is designed to provide clear, accurate, and timely information to the general public on all aspects of voter registration and elections in the State. The site is maintained in house by SEC staff. Voters, candidates, poll workers, and news media use the site to find valuable information relative to their concerns. This site is reviewed on a weekly basis to determine whether changes are necessary to better serve customers. Site design, features, and functionality are kept up-to-date with current Web technologies.

Social Media Messaging

The SEC uses Facebook and Twitter to rapidly disseminate election information to end users, particularly during times leading up to important dates and deadlines and after important changes to election procedures. While all voters are not social media users, the viral nature of these media make them essential for reaching other influencers who regularly interact with our target audiences. Follow "scvotes" on Facebook and Twitter.

Training

Training & Certification Program

County and municipal voter registration and election officials and staff members are required by statute to complete a Training and Certification Program provided by the SEC. SEC staff, county election commission staff, other governmental agency staff, and professional trainers conduct component classes of this program. Classes are offered on a quarterly basis and at the annual conference. Updates to the training classes are made as needed due to election law changes, procedural changes, and information gathered by feedback from participants. Some future classes may be conducted online through the agency Learning Management System.

Once the classes are scheduled, agency staff prepares a calendar of deadlines for class preparation. Registrations for classes are received up until the day of the class. Because of the extended registration procedure, extra materials are produced by the deadlines set on the original class calendar. Supplies for producing these materials are well stocked in advance and re-stocked immediately after depletion.

Performance from suppliers, trainers, and staff preparing materials are monitored in several ways. Materials for classes are monitored by using the deadlines previously determined. If there is a breakdown in production, it is noticed immediately and dealt with as soon as possible. The best way to prevent a breakdown is to prepare in advance by stocking proper materials and not waiting until the deadline to complete a project. Senior leaders encourage this process. Overall evaluation of classes and performance of trainers is obtained from written evaluations completed by class participants. These evaluations are used to identify improvements to future training classes which are paid for, in part, by a minimal registration fee paid by each participant.

Educational Services

On-site training programs for poll workers, county election commissioners, and municipal election commissioners are performed on an as-needed basis. A county or municipality may request training in any of these areas by phone, e-mail, or written communication. Once the request is made, SEC staff arrange for the time and place of the training based on the customer's schedule. This training is conducted during day and evening hours.

A Learning Management System (LMS) is used to conduct online training classes as a supplement to in-person instruction. This training resource allows user access 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The LMS also enables state and county election officials to manage a user's progress through tracking and testing functions in the system. The first application of the system is the online Poll Manager Training Program. Development of a second application, a municipal elections training course, continued in FY2012. The LMS will be used in the future to conduct additional classes, including training and certification program classes.

Periodic election law changes require changes to materials used in various training programs and on Election Day. These election law changes are tracked and cataloged by staff in the Public Information & Training Division. Prior to every primary and general election, if not needed before, these changes are reviewed and incorporated into various forms and materials supplied by this office including the Poll Managers Handbook, the voter registration and election laws handbook, the Municipal Election Handbook, and the Voter Registration and Election Commission Handbook. Changes needed as a result of a suggestion from office staff or customers are also incorporated at this time. Supplies and printing are secured using state procurement procedures and distributed to county offices via UPS, interagency mail service, and personal delivery.

Agency staff travels regularly to county offices to provide assistance. Onsite visits are also used to obtain feedback and new ideas from customers that would benefit the election process. The SEC also provides support and training in response to staff turnover within county election offices.

Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration

The SEC administers a grant from the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Grant has helped improve access for voters with disabilities by providing funding for polling place upgrades, training, and education. The grant provides funding in four areas:

1. Improving physical accessibility to polling places.
2. Providing opportunities for equal access and participation.
3. Training of election officials.
4. Providing accessible information.

The SEC makes the availability of this funding known to counties and encourages counties to take advantage of this opportunity. County election commissions, with the help of the disabled community, assess their polling places and identify needed improvements. Once a county applies for funds, the SEC reviews the request and determines whether grant requirements are met. If approved, the county contracts for the work to be completed and sends the Agency the required documentation for reimbursement. This grant funding period ends on September 30, 2012.

Ballot Review and Approval

The SEC serves as the final reviewer for all ballots used in statewide primaries and general elections, as well as special elections for state-level and multi-county offices. The Agency also assists county and municipal election commissions by serving as a final reviewer of ballots for local elections. This review ensures ballots are designed in compliance with state law and ballot standards established by the SEC. The review includes making sure ballots have correct spelling, appropriate ballot headings, and the proper listing of candidates, offices, and questions. Ballot standards are reviewed and revised as necessary by a Ballot Standards Committee made up of SEC staff. The SEC strives for no later than a 48 hour turn-around time for approval. This ballot review and approval process conducted by the Public Information and Training Division is part of the overall election definition process described in the next section.

III. Statewide Voting System

Voting System Support

VSD staff is knowledgeable and available for phone and on-site support to users of the voting system. Division staff also conducts periodic needs and security assessments and provides advice to users in areas where the security can be improved. Software upgrades to the system in all counties are performed by VSD staff, and assistance with firmware upgrades is provided where needed. Division personnel are in contact with suppliers of the software, specialized supplies, and mailing supplies needed. Contact with voting system vendors is made by phone for immediate resolution and through users group meetings for items that need discussion and input from other customers.

VSD staff develops and conducts voting system training classes on an as needed basis. Classes cover topics such as voting system software, voting system preparation, results accumulation, and technical support.

Election Definition

Election definition is a process by which software is used to build a database containing election-specific information such as precincts, offices, and candidates. From this database, ballots are produced for voting machines and optical scan paper ballots. The election definition database also allows for integrated reporting of all election results, from voting machines and paper ballots. Staff in the Agency's Voter Services Division (VSD) performs this election definition process for most counties and elections held throughout the state. By providing this service to county and municipal election commissions, they are able to significantly reduce election costs. Seven counties define their own databases for most elections.

VSD has a formal policy of delivering all databases and ballots within two weeks after receiving election specific information. With the exception of elections with special circumstances, such as candidate withdrawals and lawsuits, the goals are met by performing preliminary work on databases well in advance of receiving candidate names. This early delivery is accomplished by following strict election definition procedures.

Election Definition procedure summary:

- County election commission (CEC) submits election information.
- SEC builds election database.
 - Database passes initial Quality Assurance (QA).
 - Ballots created, proofed, and tested.
 - SEC performs final database QA.
 - Ballots sent to CEC for approval.
- CEC reviews ballots, requests changes if necessary, and approves ballots.
- CEC orders printing of absentee, emergency, and failsafe ballots; orders audio files to be produced; and prepares and tests voting system for election.

Election Auditing & Support

The SEC provides county election commissions with the tools and training necessary to conduct election audits prior to certification of elections:

- Pre-certification audit procedures
- Voting system auditing software
- Voting system auditing training classes
- Asset management system to track all voting system inventory
- Checklists for poll managers and county election officials
- Certification of county voting system technicians
- Training materials

Voting System Certification

The SEC is responsible for examination and certification of any upgrades to the current voting system. Prior to seeking certification in South Carolina, the voting system vendor must complete national qualification testing at an independent laboratory based on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's voting system guidelines. Once the federal examination and test are complete, the system can be presented to SEC Commissioners for certification.

Because the State utilizes one system of voting, the SEC no longer tests voting systems from various vendors but maintains a list of hardware, software, and firmware associated with the statewide voting system vendor.

IV. Administration of Federal Election Requirements

Help America Vote Act of 2002(HAVA)

HAVA aims to improve the administration of elections in the United States, primarily through:

- Providing funds to improve the election administration process, technology related to elections, replacement of punch card voting systems, and assistance to disabled voters.
- Establishing a federal presence for election assistance.
- Providing that every citizen has the opportunity to vote and have their vote counted.
- Offer training to voters, poll workers, and election officials on voter registration and the election day process.

Each state in the nation was required to submit a State Plan to the federal government outlining steps that would be taken to achieve HAVA compliance. A diverse group of approximately 50 people were appointed to the HAVA State Plan Task Force. The group consisted of members from the Senate and House of Representatives, Office of Research and Statistics, Office of the State Chief Information Officer, Governor's office, both political parties, NAACP, Palmetto Project, League of Women

Voters, disability community, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, and staff from the SEC. The plan was delivered to the Federal Election Commission in September of 2003 and has been updated yearly as necessary.

Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) requires states to provide special procedures to military and overseas citizens to help facilitate voter registration and absentee voting. Persons protected by this Act are:

- members of the United States Uniformed Services and merchant marine;
- their family members; and
- United States citizens residing outside the United States.

Citizens covered under UOCAVA are allowed to:

- register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot by completing a single form
- send and receive voting materials by fax and email
- receive an Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) ballot at the time they receive ballots for a primary
- receive their ballot at least 45 days prior to the date of any election for federal office

IRV was implemented to ensure voters in distant or isolated locations were not disenfranchised by the short two-week period between primaries and runoffs. The IRV ballot allows these voters to rank the candidates for each office in a primary. If a runoff is necessary for a particular office (no candidate receives majority), the IRV ballot rankings are used to determine the voter's choice in the Runoff.

The SEC strives to have all ballots available for printing in time to meet the 45-day deadline. In the event that regular ballots are not available by this deadline, the SEC provides UOCAVA voters with a Special Write-In Absentee Ballot (SWAB). In addition, county voter registration offices are encouraged to send an official ballot containing candidate names to voters who may have received a SWAB. In such an event, whichever ballot the voter returns first is counted.

On April 27, 2012 the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resource Activity (DHRA) grant funds to develop and implement an online user application for UOCAVA voters.

V. Agency Administration

Accounts Payable

When an invoice is received, it is reviewed by the Director of Administration and is coded for payment. The Executive Director of the agency reviews the invoice and initials it. The accounts payable clerk processes the payment into the statewide accounting system (the South Carolina Enterprise Information System, SCEIS). This begins the workflow process in the system. The payment is then either approved or rejected by the Director of Administration. The Comptroller General's Office audits the payment, and the information is uploaded and forwarded to the State Treasurer's Office (STO). The STO then sends a check to the agency and the accounts payable clerk mails the check to the respective individual or entity.

Supplement to County Election Commissions and Registration Boards

The SEC receives pass-through funds which are sent to each county registration board/election commission member on a quarterly basis, per Proviso 79.1. In many cases, no other additional compensation is received by the board members. While some counties supplement the state stipend,

most do not. During the 2010 legislative session, funding for the stipend was eliminated. As a result, no funds will be available for the registration board/election commission members in fiscal year 2010-11. Also, Proviso 79.7 requires the SEC to withhold the stipend for board members who fail to complete the SEC's Training and Certification Program or for members who have completed the program, but fail to complete at least one elective per year. Many board members perform other tasks such as providing technical support, attending monthly board meetings, and assisting with the day to day operations in the office. Board members play a critical role in helping to ensure elections are run fairly and efficiently.

Agency Information Technology Support

The Voter Services Division is responsible for the in-house computer network. When problems arise with hardware or software, staff is notified immediately and the situation is addressed. Staff members are empowered to make decisions independently unless the decision requires major budget expenditures.

Election Protest/Appeal Hearings

As part of the election process, candidates are allowed to file an election protest if they feel voting irregularities occurred. Protests for countywide and less than countywide offices are filed with the county election commissions. Protests for federal, statewide, Senate, House of Representatives, and multi-county offices are filed with the SEC. After the county election commission hears a protest and renders a decision, a candidate may appeal to the SEC. Appeals following decisions of the SEC are filed with the S.C. Senate, S.C. House of Representatives, or the S.C. Supreme Court.

Candidate Filing & Certification

The SEC works with the State's certified political parties to coordinate the filing process for all partisan candidates for federal, state, and multi-county offices in special and general elections. Candidates file with their respective state or county parties, depending on the office, during the filing period prescribed by law. Parties certify the names of candidates who have filed to the SEC or county election commission (depending on the office) by deadlines prescribed by law. Once candidates are nominated (by primary or convention, depending on party) they are again certified to the SEC or county election commission prior to deadlines prescribed by law. Agency staff provides information to candidates and parties to help ensure candidates file properly and parties meet certification requirements and deadlines.

The SEC is responsible for receiving the filing paperwork of petition candidates for federal, state, and multi-county offices. A candidate's petition must contain a certain number of valid signatures of active, registered South Carolina voters depending on the geographical area the office represents. The SEC facilitates verification of these petitions by distributing pages to the voter registration offices in the corresponding counties of origin. Each county voter registration office reports their total number of valid signatures to the Agency, and a total is calculated. If the petition contains enough valid signatures, and the candidate is otherwise qualified; the SEC certifies the candidate to be on the ballot. The Agency verifies that petition candidates have filed Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms with the State Ethics Commission. Candidates are also notified that they may be required to file a Campaign Disclosure form with the State Ethics Commission.

The SEC is also responsible for receiving the filing paperwork of candidates for non-partisan multi-county offices, such as some school boards and watershed districts. The SEC collects Statement of Candidacy forms from all candidates who file with the Agency and verifies that SEI forms have been properly filed with the State Ethics Commission. Candidates are also notified that they may be required to file a Campaign Disclosure form with the State Ethics Commission.

Certification of Political Parties

The SEC is charged by law with certifying and decertifying political parties in the State. Political parties seeking certification must submit to the Agency a petition containing the valid signatures of 10,000 active, registered South Carolina voters. The SEC facilitates verification of these petitions by distributing pages to the voter registration offices in the corresponding counties of origin. Each county voter registration office reports their total number of valid signatures to the Agency, and a statewide total is calculated. If the petition contains enough valid signatures, the SEC certifies the party. Certified political parties who do not maintain the requirements outlined in South Carolina Code of Laws Section 7-9-10 must be decertified by the SEC. South Carolina has nine certified political parties: Constitution, Democratic, Green, Independence, Labor, Libertarian, Republican, United Citizens, and Working Families.

Category 7 – Results

I. Statewide Voter Registration System

Security and Maintenance

- The SEC maintained a database of approximately 2.9 million active, registered voters.
- The Agency worked with the Division of State Information Technology (DSIT) to ensure the database was securely housed and access was granted to only authorized users.
- Staff worked with counties to import county GIS data to be used to assign voters to their correct districts. This improves what was a manual, time consuming process in the past to be 90% automated and completed in a fraction of the time it would have taken manually. This process realizes a cost savings to the county and State, and provides accurate lists of eligible voters to be used on election day.
- Approximately 850,000 voter records were added or changed during FY2012. This number includes voters registering for the first time, voters moving from one county to another, voters being reactivated who previously had the status of inactive, removal of voters with felony convictions, deaths, voter requests for removal, and moves out of state.

Figure 7.1 shows the number of active, registered voters in the State over a 10 year period. Decreases in numbers of voters in 2008 and 2010 are directly related to the removal of inactive voters after confirmation card mailings.

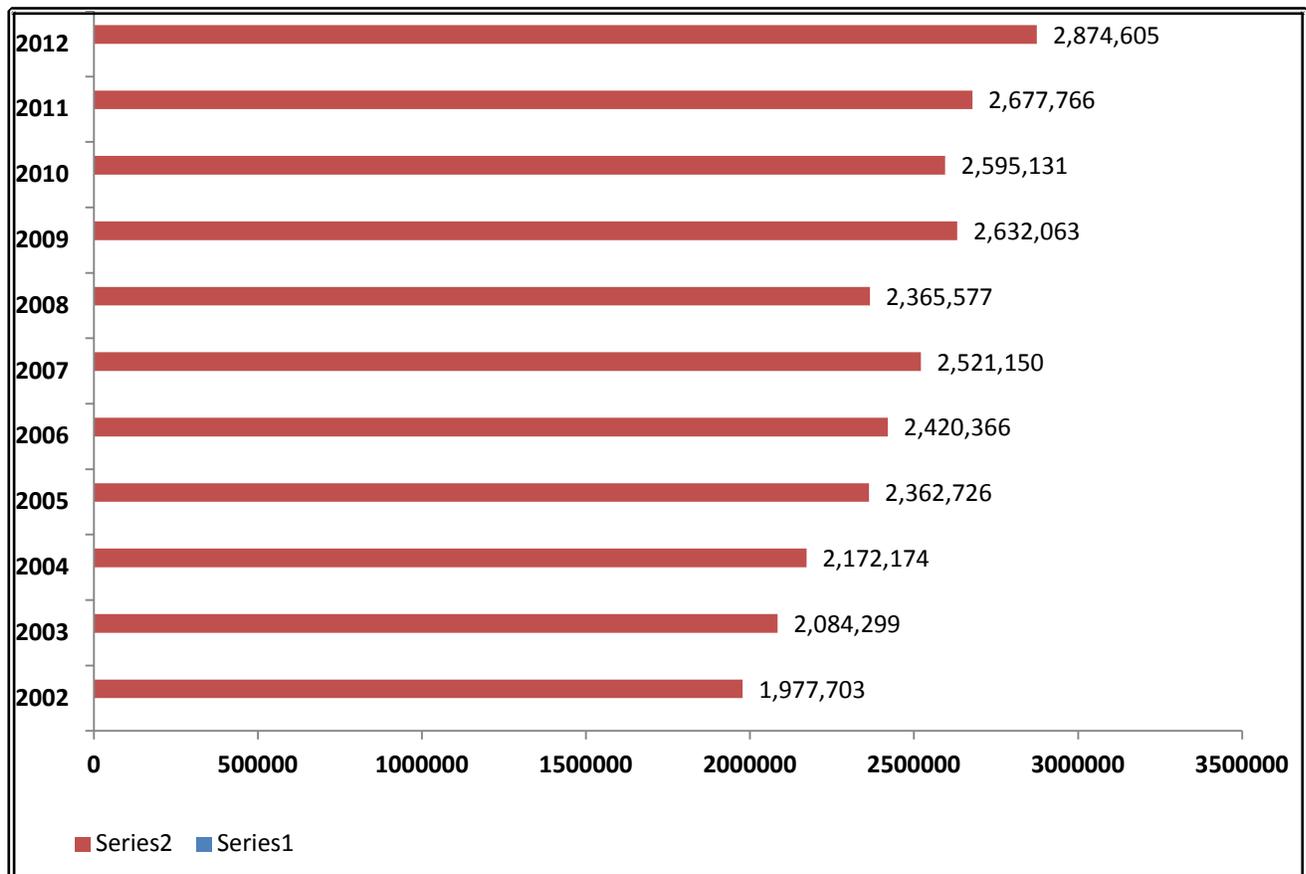


Figure 7.1

Confirmation card mailing

The next confirmation card mailing is scheduled for FY2013.

Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports

- Approximately 150 voter registration lists were printed for elections held in the State during FY2012. Lists ranged in size from small districts to the statewide general election. All lists were delivered on time. The SEC developed and implemented use of a voter registration checklist designed to quickly detect list errors prior to election day.
- The SEC responded to more than 300 requests for lists of registered voters. The lists ranged from statewide lists to lists of voters from specific geographic areas and demographic groups.
- The SEC produced approximately 200 jury lists for county and municipal courts and magistrates.

Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)

Use of EVRL continues to expand throughout the state as the SEC makes improvements to the software. A new version of EVRL featuring major improvements to the software was used for the first time in general election in November 2010. These improvements resulted in improved performance and better customer service at the polling place. New features of EVRL include:

- Networking of multiple laptops in a precinct.
- Inquire Only Mode - poll worker may search for voters but may not record voter participation.
- EVRL screen may be minimized.
- Use of the <ENTER> key to select highlighted action buttons was added.
- Absentee information and new registrations that occur after the EVRL election file was created may be imported at a later date.

Use of the system has increased from 31 counties in FY2011 to 37 counties in FY2012. The SEC has provided 1,576 laptops in recent years to enable counties to use the system. In FY2009, the SEC provided laptops for every precinct with more than 2,000 voters. Figure 7.2 shows counties using EVRL and the number of laptops provided by the SEC in FY2012.

| County | Laptops provided by SEC | County | Laptops provided by SEC |
|--|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Abbeville | 28 | | |
| Aiken | 86 | Greenville | 225 |
| Allendale | 13 | | |
| Anderson | 111 | Greenwood | 91 |
| Beaufort | 93 | Hampton | 4 |
| Berkeley | 51 | Horry | 26 |
| Charleston* | 205 | Kershaw* | 60 |
| Chester | 4 | Lancaster | 22 |
| | | Laurens | 54 |
| | | Lee | 28 |
| | | Lexington | 61 |
| | | | 0 |
| | | Marlboro | 2 |
| | | Oconee | 10 |
| Darlington | 48 | Orangeburg | 73 |
| Dillon | 8 | Pickens | 4 |
| Dorchester* | 122 | Richland | 177 |
| Edgefield | 6 | Spartanburg | 157 |
| | | Union | 30 |
| Fairfield | 4 | Williamsburg | 30 |
| Florence | 14 | York | 99 |
| Georgetown | 50 | | |
| Total laptops provided by SEC – 1,576 | | | |

*County purchased (or rented/borrowed) additional laptops from other sources.

Figure 7.2

Voter Participation Statistics

After every election and primary held in the state, the SEC conducts a process by which each individual voter that participated in the election is given credit for participating. A high speed scanner was used to capture and record participation information using barcode information beside each voter’s name. Statistical reports on the age, race, and sex of voter’s participating in each election are available for analysis concluding this process.

II. Public Information and Training

Public Information

During FY2012, the SEC Public Information Office fielded approximately 8,000 telephone calls, e-mails, letters, and office visits from local and national media, candidates, political parties, county election commissions, county voter registration offices, organizations, and the general public. The Agency actively informed the public through the media and the agency website of news, events, deadlines, statistics, and results relating to all state and multi-county elections. Twenty major press releases were issued in FY2012. The Public Information Office responded to approximately 40 requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. All requested records were provided according to state and federal laws.

Voter Education and Outreach

The SEC worked during FY2012 to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in South Carolina through the Agency’s *SC Votes* voter education initiative. The *SC Votes* campaign theme is “Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” The initiative includes: educational brochures, posters, videos, outreach at public events, a voter education website (scVOTES.org), social media messaging, and a statewide mass media campaign. This effort has been ongoing since 2004, commencing with the implementation of the new voting system. From its inception, the initiative was focused primarily on ensuring voters were informed about the use of the State’s touch screen voting machines. As the State’s voters have become increasingly familiar with the system, focus has shifted to ensuring voters are informed about the laws, procedures, and deadlines associated with the voter registration and voting processes in South Carolina.

The Agency conducted campaigns leading up to the Presidential Primaries and State Primaries designed to inform voters of the importance of registering to vote and making sure their voter registration information is up-to-date. SEC staff worked with statewide media to ensure important election-related information was disseminated to voters in a timely manner. This proactive dissemination of accurate and reliable information contributed greatly to the success of the elections held in FY2012.

Figure 7.3 shows a summary of SC Votes campaign onsite visits.

| SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Events – FY2012 | |
|--|---|
| County | Voter Education Event |
| Statewide | 2012 SC Assisted Technology Expo |
| Statewide | Spartanburg School for the Deaf and Blind |
| Statewide | National Federation of the Blind – State Conference |
| Statewide | 2012 Southeast Regional Black Male Summit |
| Anderson | 2011 Anderson Disability Fair |
| Richland | S.C. Commission for the Blind |
| Richland | Columbia Black Expo 2012 |

Figure 7.3

Election Night Results Reporting (ENR)

ENR is a comprehensive online election results reporting tool designed to meet the public need for improved access to election results. ENR is used primarily to report results of statewide elections and was used for the first time in 2008. Use of ENR continued during the 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries and June Statewide Primaries. Performance of the system has met our expectations and far exceeds performance of past election results reporting methods.

The SEC continues to receive very positive feedback from the public, candidates, parties, academics, government officials, and the media. The 2010 General Election ENR site was recognized as a “2011 Notable State Document” by the State Library. The award program recognizes the top ten “exemplary documents” published during the previous calendar year. The State Library recognized the site for its importance to providing transparency in state government and commended the SEC for its commitment to providing open access to election information.

SEC staff uses feedback from users to identify areas where the software can be improved to provide even faster and more detailed access to election results. Major improvements over past results reporting methods include:

- User-friendly, aesthetically pleasing graphical interface
- Map views of election results on the state, county, and precinct levels
- Allows county election commissions to transmit partial results
- Results made available sooner than with past methods
- Downloadable, customizable reports in several file formats
- Real-time results reporting
- Serves as historical repository for past results
- Immediate voter turnout estimates

scVOTES.org

Each year, significant increases in the number of visits to the agency’s website occur during periods surrounding a major election year events. The number of visits can be attributed to the publicity of the website and the usefulness of the information found there.

Figure 7.4 shows information regarding activity on scVOTES.org in FY2012. The number of page views peaked during the January Presidential Preference Primaries with nearly 10,000 unique visitors during the week of January 8, 2012. The site also experienced significant increases during the municipal elections of November 2011 and the weeks leading up to and during the June 2012 Statewide Primaries and Runoffs.

Figure 7.5 shows the pages receiving the most views in FY2012.

scVOTES.org Visitors by Week: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012



Figure 7.4

| ScVOTES.org – Top Ten Most Viewed Pages of FY2012 | | |
|--|--|-------------------|
| | Page | Page views |
| 1 | Home Page | 143,186 |
| 2 | County Voter Registration Office Contact Information | 40,878 |
| 3 | Voter Registration Information & Application | 35,975 |
| 4 | Candidate Information | 19,455 |
| 5 | Updating Your Voter Registration | 18,495 |
| 6 | Election Results | 16,403 |
| 7 | Check Your Voter Registration | 11,765 |
| 8 | Absentee Voting Information | 10,216 |
| 9 | Schedule of Elections | 9,955 |
| 10 | 2012 Candidate Lists | 9,930 |

Figure 7.5

Voters with Disabilities

With HAVA’s particular focus on improving voting access for people with disabilities, the SEC continues to reach out to this segment of voters. The Agency worked with disability advocates throughout the state, including Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities and Disability Action Centers, to educate voters and improve the process so that voting in South Carolina is more accessible than ever before.

1. Conducted voter education events to help ensure voters with disabilities are aware of and know how to use the state voting system’s accessibility features, including the audio ballot and voting machine portability. The audio ballot provides blind voters the opportunity to vote independently for the first time in state history.
2. Trained poll workers to ensure they are also aware of these features, they know how to use them, and they are sensitive to the needs of voters with disabilities.
3. More than \$160,000 in federal grant money was used on polling place upgrades. (see Figure 7.9)
4. SEC staff identified counties who had polling place disability issues and who had not previously taken advantage of federal accessibility grant funding. The Agency worked with these counties to suggest uses for, and provide access to, these funds.
5. The Agency continues to distribute a training video for county election officials aimed at improving disability awareness and polling place accessibility. This video is also available on the agency website.
6. A webpage for voters with disabilities is maintained on the agency website. The page features information on assistance at the polls, curbside voting, special instructions for voters who are deaf, a large-print voter registration application, and videos for voters with disabilities.
7. The SEC conducted training and certification classes aimed at increasing disability awareness.
8. A Braille brochure containing voter registration and voting information was made available to members of the blind community. The agency is working with the National Federation of the Blind of S.C. to update the Braille brochure.
9. Large type polling place material was made available.
10. SEC staff worked with S.C. Protection & Advocacy to gauge the level of progress in improving access to polling places.

Training

Training and Certification Program

The SEC is required by state law to conduct a training and certification program that county election commissioners, voter registration board members, and their staffs must complete to gain certification.

Required core classes and elective classes are held on a quarterly basis. There are 542 election officials who are required by law to complete the program and become certified. Of the required participants, 402 members are certified, 116 members are not certified, and there are 24 vacancies.

Nineteen classes were held in FY2012. A total of 485 participants attended these classes held in Columbia and Myrtle Beach. Classes are taught by SEC staff and guest instructors, including county election commission and voter registration office staff, other governmental agency staff, and professional trainers. In FY2012, 22 participants completed course work to obtain their certification.

Act 191 of 2010 requires each Municipal Election Commissioner and staff to also complete a training and certification program administered by the SEC. The first classes of the Municipal Election Commission (MEC) Training Program were offered in January 2011. Thirty-three municipalities are registered in the online poll manager training system as of June 30, 2012.

Figure 7.6 shows the classes offered in FY2012, the number of times they were offered, and the number of participants. Figure 7.7 shows participation of board members and staff in each county.

| Training and Certification Classes (County) | Times Offered | Total Participants |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Duties of the Voter Registration Board | 3 | 67 |
| Self-Empowerment Through Accountability | 3 | 88 |
| Budgeting and Election Reimbursement | 2 | 54 |
| Duties of the Election Commission | 2 | 49 |
| Dealing with Difficult People | 1 | 26 |
| Disability Awareness and Accessibility | 1 | 28 |
| Election Security | 1 | 30 |
| Generational Edge | 1 | 19 |
| Managing Multiple Projects, Priorities and Deadlines | 1 | 30 |
| Office Procedures | 1 | 17 |
| Team Building Skills | 1 | 20 |
| Training Poll Managers | 1 | 27 |
| “Who Moved My Cheese” | 1 | 30 |
| Training & Certification Classes (Municipal)* | Times Offered | Total Participants |
| Protest Hearings | 1 | 19 |
| Online Poll Manager Training – Both County and Municipal | Times Offered | Total Participants |
| Online Poll Manager Training | Year Round | 1,508 |

* Protest Hearings and Duties of the Municipal Election Commission were schedule to be offered on March 26, 2012, however there were less than 10 registrants for each class. 10 registrants is the minimum number required for each class.

Figure 7.6

| Participation in the Training and Certification Program – FY2012 | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| County | Board Members Allowed | Members Certified | Staff Members | Staff Certified |
| ABBEVILLE | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| AIKEN | 7 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| ALLENDALE | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| ANDERSON | 7 | 4 | 8 | 7 |
| BAMBERG | 7 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| BARNWELL | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| BEAUFORT | 9 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| BERKELEY | 9 | 9 | 4 | 4 |
| CALHOUN | 10 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| CHARLESTON | 9 | 9 | 12 | 11 |
| CHEROKEE | 10 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| CHESTER | 8 | 7 | 3 | 3 |
| CHESTERFIELD | 9 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| CLARENDON | 10 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| COLLETON | 9 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| DARLINGTON | 7 | 7 | 3 | 3 |
| DILLON | 10 | 4 | 2 | 1 |

| Participation in the Training and Certification Program – FY2012 | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| County | Board Members Allowed | Members Certified | Staff Members | Staff Certified |
| DORCHESTER | 7 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| EDGEFIELD | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| FAIRFIELD | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| FLORENCE | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| GEORGETOWN | 9 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| GREENVILLE | 10 | 9 | 10 | 5 |
| GREENWOOD | 10 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| HAMPTON | 9 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| HORRY | 10 | 9 | 4 | 4 |
| JASPER | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| KERSHAW | 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| LANCASTER | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| LAURENS | 9 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| LEE | 9 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| LEXINGTON | 9 | 8 | 5 | 3 |
| MARION | 9 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| MARLBORO | 7 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| MCCORMICK | 5 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| NEWBERRY | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| OCONEE | 5 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| ORANGEBURG | 7 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| PICKENS | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| RICHLAND | 5 | 4 | 18 | 8 |
| SALUDA | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| SPARTANBURG | 10 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| SUMTER | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| UNION | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| WILLIAMSBURG | 10 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| YORK | 8 | 8 | 5 | 5 |

Figure 7.7

Training Workshops

In addition to the training and certification program, staff in the Public Information and Training division coordinates training provided by the SEC to poll managers and election officials. These training workshops are scheduled upon request and are designed to supplement training received on the local level. Figure 7.8 shows classes held during FY2012 and the number of customers serviced.

| Training Classes and Workshops | Total Events | Total Participants |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| County Election Official Workshops | 2 | 213 |
| Onsite municipal and poll manager training | 1 | 12 |
| TOTAL | 3 | 225 |

Figure 7.8

Poll Manager Training

The SEC supports county election commissions with guidance and resources to help train poll managers as required by law. The 60-page Poll Managers Handbook was revised and redistributed in May 2012. The handbook is printed and distributed to county election commissions and is available for download from the agency website, scVOTES.org. The SEC provides training materials, including a PowerPoint presentation, to help county election commissions conduct in-person poll manager training. Upon request, SEC staff will assist county officials with conducting in-person training. The SEC also provides an online Poll Manager Training Program (see Learning Management System below).

Polling place supplies to be used in the 2,112 polling places throughout the state during the 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries and June 2012 Statewide Primaries were created, produced, and distributed to all 46 counties. Supplies include change of address forms, provisional ballot envelopes,

constitutional amendment flyers, voter information posters, accessibility signs, directional signs, curbside parking signs, and other supplies required for poll managers to properly conduct election day operations.

Learning Management System (LMS)

The LMS is a Web-based e-learning training program administered by the SEC. The LMS can encompass an unlimited number of classes, all developed and maintained by SEC staff. While the system is not designed to totally replace in-person training, it adds great flexibility of access for trainees and helps administrators hold users accountable for results.

The agency provides information and guidance to county election commissions to promote use of the system and to make navigation of the system more user-friendly. The SEC provides a quick start guide for first-time users. Frequently asked questions and answers were forwarded to counties upon request. The agency continues to work to increase participation in the program.

An online municipal election commission training class will be the second application of the LMS. In FY2010, the General Assembly passed Act 191 which requires each municipal election commissioners and staff to complete a training and certification program administered by the SEC. SEC staff continues development of a Duties of the Municipal Election Commission class, one of three required for certification. This class will be available to users in FY2013.

Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) Training

Beginning in September of 2011, the SEC began offering training classes for the roll out of the new statewide Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS). Classes were held locally in Columbia with simultaneous classes being offered regionally in Beaufort, Florence, Greenville and York. Experienced staff members from each of the regions were asked to attend extensive training in Columbia covering subjects including a new system overview, voter registration, demographics, absentee voting and election set-up. State-wide there were 60 sessions offered in the month of September.

Agency Intranet

ElectionNET features more than 500 users and more than 5,000 pages of content. Approximately 600 new pages of content were posted to the site in FY2012. The site remains an indispensable tool for distribution of information, training, and collaboration with county election officials.

Telephone Messaging System

The SEC continued use of the One Call Now telephone messaging system during the 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries and June 2012 Statewide Primaries. Agency staff and county election officials used the system to deliver numerous telephone messages to thousands of recipients. All messages were delivered within minutes. For example, a message can be delivered to all 2,112 polling places in the state in less than 30 minutes. SEC and county election officials use the service by dialing a 1-800-number, recording a message, and selecting a user group to which the message is to be delivered. Groups include county election commission and voter registration board members, county directors, voter registration and election staff, poll clerks, poll managers, voting machine technicians, and others. The system then calls each number stored in the phone bank and delivers the message to the selected group(s). The system is an indispensable tool for addressing election day emergencies and other time sensitive situations. Features of the system include:

- Delivers recorded messages
- Can be used to gather feedback and conduct surveys
- Pre-record messages can be delivered at a specific time. For instance, we may pre-record a message to call all clerks at 7:05 am and ask the clerk to press 1 if the precinct is open for voting.

- The online user dashboard has a graphical display so that you may immediately see a picture of your county with the results of your questions displayed by color coded precincts.
- System continues to call if the phone number was busy or went to voice mail.

Ballot Review and Approval

Public Information and Training division (PITD) staff reviewed more than 1,500 ballot combinations to be used throughout the state in the 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries and June 2012 Statewide Primaries. Staff also reviewed additional ballots for various local and special elections held throughout the state in FY2012. Ballots were reviewed for accuracy and compliance with state law and the Agency’s Ballot Standards Document. The Ballot Standards Document was reviewed by a Ballot Standards Committee made up of SEC staff, and changes were made as necessary to comply with state law and ensure uniformity of ballots throughout the state.

Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration

The SEC applied for and received a federal grant providing \$1,309,033 over a nine-year period from October 1, 2003, through September 30, 2012. This grant is earmarked for improving access for voters with disabilities through polling place upgrades, training, and education. At the beginning of Federal Fiscal Year 2012 (October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012), the SEC had \$76,180 remaining in unliquidated obligations.

During Federal Fiscal Year 2012, five counties and one vendor were reimbursed \$76,180 to provide paved handicapped parking, parking signs, ramps, curb cuts, handrails, accessible entrances, curbside voting communicators, and various cones and markers at polling places. No additional grant monies remain, and the SEC does not anticipate receiving any future grant money under this program. Figure 7.9 shows the number of precincts improved and monies reimbursed to counties in FY2012.

| HHS Grant Administration – FY2012 | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------------------|
| County | Precincts | Amount Reimbursed in FY2012 |
| Laurens | 4 | \$2,917.87 |
| Sumter | 5 | \$3,320.75 |
| Greenwood | 5 | \$5,046.00 |
| Richland | 10 | \$45,343.90 |
| Union | 1 | \$14,750.00 |
| Chernoff Newman (Disability Access Signs) | n/a | \$4,801.48 |
| Total | | \$76,180.00 |

Figure 7.9

III. Statewide Voting System

Voting System Support

The Voter Services Division (VSD) provided comprehensive voting system support for all 46 counties. Agency staff continually works on various initiatives to strengthen and expand that level of support. Each VSD staff member is assigned a region in the State and is familiar with the needs of the counties in their particular region. As the State has transitioned from older voting systems to a more technically advanced system, the level of technical skills required for VSD staff members has dramatically increased. SEC managers have, through hiring and position reclassification, transitioned the division’s staff from one with more clerical-based skills to a staff with an advanced skill set. Providing this high-level service to county election commissions results in considerable cost savings compared to contracting with the system vendor.

Election Definition

To conduct any election using the state’s voting system, there must be developed a set of data that includes precincts, offices, districts, and candidates. This data set and associated voting system settings and configurations are referred to as an “election definition.”

During FY2012, VSD staff created approximately 250 election definitions for elections held throughout the state. Each definition was reviewed by staff for quality assurance following strict election definition procedures. Staff creates definitions for all elections held in most counties. Seven counties created their own definitions for some elections.

All paper ballots and voting machine ballots produced from these definitions were reviewed by SEC staff for quality assurance and adherence to ballot standards. Staff delivered all election definitions at least five weeks prior to associated elections. The SEC provides election definition services at no cost to counties by leveraging in-house resources. If the voting system vendor had defined all elections in FY2012, it would have cost the State and counties more than \$1.5 million.

Master Database Maintenance

Each county has a master database from which election definitions are created. The master database is a data set containing information defining how precincts, polling locations, voting equipment identifiers, and office titles and districts are all related. Master Database maintenance is an ongoing effort to ensure that the SEC has an accurate database of all county data sets. This procedure helps streamline the election definition process and identify errors in databases well in advance of elections, saving critical time and resources needed in the weeks before an election.

Voting System Documentation Updates

The SEC regularly updates two manuals associated with conducting elections using the statewide voting system: the Election Definition Guide (EDG) and the Election Preparation & Results Accumulation Guide (EPRAG). The EDG is a manual developed by the SEC providing instructions on creating an election definition. The EPRAG is designed for use by county election officials to prepare voting system components after the database is delivered. SEC staff worked to identify necessary changes and improvements and to edit and distribute updated versions of the guides.

Voting Equipment Preparation & Election Day Support

After election definitions are delivered, the SEC continues to provide first tier voting system support to all 46 counties. VSD staff provides assistance, when needed, in preparation of voting machines for elections, election day troubleshooting, and in retrieval and tabulation of election results. During the FY2012, SEC staff was called to assist county election officials in troubleshooting election preparation and results accumulation issues via phone and email. VSD staff provides one-on-one training upon request and are available daily to county officials for telephone/email support.

Voting System Certification

No voting systems were certified or decertified by the SEC in FY2012.

IV. Administration of Federal Election Requirements

Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA)

South Carolina is currently HAVA compliant.

FY2012 HAVA activities include:

- Approximately \$76,180 in U.S. Department of Health & Human Services grants issued to county election commissions for accessibility upgrades to polling places
- Training classes, workshops, and meetings were held to relay election information to county election officials, poll managers, and voters

- Continuation of voter education and outreach program
- Management of HAVA funds following federal requirements

Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

The SEC recognizes the importance of protecting the voting process for military and overseas voters and works to ensure these voters have a fair opportunity to vote in each election. Nationally, South Carolina is viewed as very friendly to military and overseas voters and receives high ranks from UOCAVA advocacy groups for the specific laws and policies that facilitate voting by this group.

In April 2012, the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) grant funds to design, develop, and implement an on line absentee voting application. This new application would be designed to allow UOCAVA voters the ability to cast and deliver their ballot and receive confirmation in a matter of minutes. The objectives of this system will be to increase the successful rate of returned ballots from our military and overseas voters while also reducing traditional mailing costs. Implementation of the system was planned to occur prior to the 2012 General Election.

V. Agency Administration

Accounts Payable

Poll Manager Reimbursement

The primary cost of conducting any primary or election is poll manager pay. The SEC reimburses county election commissions for poll manager pay in all federal, state, and county elections. Figure 7.10 shows the number of poll managers and student poll managers paid in FY2012 for the 2012 Presidential Preference Primary, the 2012 Statewide Primaries, and various local elections. Note that some poll managers who worked the 2012 Statewide Primaries were not paid in FY2012, but will be paid in FY2013.

| Poll Manager Reimbursement--FY 2012 | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| County | Poll Managers (PM) | Reimbursed for (PM) | Student (PM) | Reimbursed for Student (PM) | Reimbursed for Additional Training | Total Reimbursed |
| Abbeville | 42 | \$6,420 | 2 | \$240 | | \$6,660 |
| Aiken | 226 | \$31,080 | 9 | \$1,080 | | \$32,160 |
| Allendale | 24 | \$3,120 | 0 | \$ - | | \$3,120 |
| Anderson | 416 | \$47,100 | 15 | 1,620 | | \$48,720 |
| Bamberg | 40 | \$6,360 | 0 | | | \$6,360 |
| Barnwell | 72 | \$10,080 | 0 | | | \$10,080 |
| Beaufort | 294 | \$39,900 | 2 | \$240 | | \$40,140 |
| Berkeley | 283 | \$33,720 | 0 | | | \$33,720 |
| Calhoun | 40 | \$5,400 | 2 | \$240 | | \$5,640 |
| Charleston | 568 | \$74,460 | 58 | \$6,960 | | \$81,420 |
| Cherokee | 119 | \$16,260 | 0 | | | \$16,260 |
| Chester | 61 | \$9,420 | 0 | | | \$9,420 |
| Chesterfield | 95 | \$12,420 | 1 | \$ 120 | | \$12,540 |
| Clarendon | 54 | \$8,040 | 0 | | | \$8,040 |
| Colleton | 185 | \$19,920 | 4 | \$480 | | \$20,400 |
| Darlington | 132 | \$17,760 | 1 | \$120 | | \$17,880 |
| Dillon | 61 | \$8,520 | 1 | \$ 120 | | \$8,640 |
| Dorchester | 184 | \$24,420 | 1 | \$120 | | \$24,540 |
| Edgefield | 50 | \$6,660 | 0 | | | \$6,660 |
| Fairfield | 64 | \$9,000 | 6 | \$720 | | \$9,720 |
| Florence | 208 | \$29,460 | 10 | \$1,200 | | \$30,660 |

| Poll Manager Reimbursement--FY 2012 | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| County | Poll Managers (PM) | Reimbursed for (PM) | Student (PM) | Reimbursed for Student (PM) | Reimbursed for Additional Training | Total Reimbursed |
| Georgetown | 115 | \$16,020 | 1 | \$120 | | \$16,140 |
| Greenville | 649 | \$87,480 | 0 | | | \$87,480 |
| Greenwood | 146 | \$20,940 | 5 | \$600 | | \$21,540 |
| Hampton | 58 | \$8,040 | 0 | | | 48,040 |
| Horry | 532 | \$68,040 | 1 | \$120 | | \$68,160 |
| Jasper | 47 | \$7,260 | 0 | | | \$7,260 |
| Kershaw | 116 | \$16,620 | 0 | | | \$16,620 |
| Lancaster | 81 | \$12,240 | 1 | \$60 | | \$12,300 |
| Laurens | 118 | \$16,260 | 0 | | | \$16,260 |
| Lee | 67 | \$9,240 | 1 | \$120 | | \$9,360 |
| Lexington | 411 | \$55,380 | 15 | \$1,800 | | \$57,180 |
| McCormick | 37 | \$4,320 | 0 | | | \$4,320 |
| Marion | 57 | \$7,920 | 2 | \$240 | | \$8,160 |
| Marlboro | 60 | \$8,280 | 0 | | | \$8,280 |
| Newberry | 85 | \$11,880 | 0 | | | \$11,880 |
| Oconee | 112 | \$15,900 | 3 | \$360 | | \$16,260 |
| Orangeburg | 142 | \$20,280 | 8 | \$960 | | \$21,240 |
| Pickens | 169 | \$23,880 | 2 | \$240 | | \$24,120 |
| Richland | 376 | \$52,740 | 13 | \$1,560 | | \$54,300 |
| Saluda | 47 | \$6,720 | | | | \$6,720 |
| Spartanburg | 268 | \$37,680 | 0 | | | \$37,680 |
| Sumter | 278 | \$37,620 | 8 | 960 | | \$38,580 |
| Union | 71 | \$9,900 | 0 | | | \$9,900 |
| Williamsburg | 98 | \$13,380 | 0 | | | \$13,380 |
| York | 364 | \$47,580 | 3 | \$360 | | \$47,940 |
| Total | 7,722 | \$1,035,120 | 175 | \$20,760 | | \$1,055,880 |

Figure 7.10

Election Protest & Appeal Hearings

The State Board of Canvassers hears appeals of county-level protests heard first by county election commissions and hears protests for state-level offices filed directly with the SEC. No protests or appeals were filed with the SEC in FY2012.

Candidate Filing & Certification

The filing period for partisan candidates seeking office in the 2012 General Election was noon, March 16, 2012, to noon, March 30, 2012. Agency staff provided guidance to political parties, candidates, and county election commissions in a good faith effort to ensure filing was conducted according to state law. Three hundred sixty-two candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, State Senate, State House of Representatives, and Solicitor filed with the county and state-level political parties. The Republican and Democratic parties certified their candidates to the SEC prior to the noon, April 10, 2010, deadline as required by law for primary candidates. Parties nominating by convention provided copies of filing forms to the SEC as required by law. The SEC provided lists of filed candidates to the public through scVOTES.org.

On May 2, 2012, the S.C. Supreme Court, as a result of a lawsuit over the proper filing of Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms, ruled that any candidate who did not simultaneously file a

complete, paper copy of his SEI form at the time he filed with his political party should, in effect, be decertified by his political party, unless the candidate fell under an exemption in the law for public officials who had a current SEI form already on file. Political parties responded by decertifying numerous candidates on May 4, 2012. Throughout the remainder of FY2012, political parties continued decertifying candidates as additional litigation ensued. A number of candidates withdrew in lieu of being decertified. The ruling ultimately resulted in the removal of approximately 250 candidates from 2012 Statewide Primary and 2012 General Election ballots.

Certification of Political Parties

The Americans Elect Party was certified as an official political party in South Carolina in April 2012. The Party gained certification by submitting a petition that contained in excess of 10,000 signatures of active, registered South Carolina voters. The SEC managed the process of checking those petition signatures. Each county voter registration office was sent its portion of the petition and provided with instructions on checking the signatures and reporting the results to the SEC.