

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the chief election agency in South Carolina, the State Election Commission (SEC) is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the voter registration and election processes in the State. Everything that we do as an agency, our programs and our projects, emanates from these responsibilities. Our primary mission and goal is to provide the highest possible level of service within our statutory mandates.

Major Achievements during This Fiscal Year:

Primary Election – June 2004

The State Election Commission conducted a successful primary election on June 8, 2004, with a runoff held two weeks later on June 22, 2004. We credit this success to the efforts of the county election commissions and to the services and support of the State Election Commission such as training for poll managers and county election staff; providing ballot definition and configuration services to counties with certain electronic voting equipment; conducting pre-election ballot review; distributing memoranda detailing statutory duties and responsibilities; Commission staff assisting counties in successfully dealing with problems; and coordinating candidate results transmission and posting to the Internet.

Election Legislation

The General Assembly passed legislation aimed at providing voter security and privacy:

- Eliminated the requirement of including the applicants social security number on the absentee ballot application
- Prohibits a voter's social security number from being made public by the county voter registration office.

New Statewide Voter Registration System

The General Assembly has funded the development of a new election administration system. To prepare for the system, new hardware and network infrastructure has been installed in the 46 county voter registration offices. After a review of system progress, the SEC identified that there was no detailed design from the Office of the Chief Information Officer and several changes are required. Implementation of the new election administration has been postponed until 2006 to allow adequate time for designing, creating, testing and training for the new system.

Training and Certification Program

As part of a statewide training program for county election officials, the SEC was able to offer 12 classes during the fiscal period. A total of 550 participants attended these classes. Three new classes were developed and presented as a result of topic requests from those election officials enrolled in the program.

The State Election Commission continues to save agency dollars on renting conference rooms for training purposes by using its own training room for conducting voter registration and election training classes. The majority of classes in FY03/04 have been conducted in the new training room. This has eliminated the need for employee travel expenses and room rental charges normally paid for regional classes.

Our partnership with the Office of Human Resources allowing them to use our training room for free while they, in turn, allow staff from our agency to attend up to four employee development classes per year at no charge has proven both beneficial and economical for both agencies. The room is also used by other State agencies in our building at no charge, by the State Board of Canvassers for protest hearings that were formerly held in borrowed conference rooms, and for various other SEC meetings.

Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

In October 2002, President Bush signed the “Help America Vote Act of 2002” (HAVA). The main purpose of this legislation is to improve the election process in the United States by providing federal funds to states to update older voting technologies; provide voter, election official, and pollworker education; and assist disabled voters with better access to and in polling places and voting booths. To date, \$167,000 in federal funding has been disbursed to the counties to improve accessibility to and in the polling places. This Act also provides that every citizen is afforded an opportunity to vote and have their vote counted. The SEC submitted the required State Plan to the Federal Election Commission in September 2003 as to how our state will disburse future federal dollars in order to comply with HAVA. SC stands to obtain approximately \$48 million through 2006 in federal funds to improve voting technology and polling place accessibility.

Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE)

The Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE) was a project conducted by the Department of Defense (DOD) in an effort to provide military and overseas citizens an opportunity to register and vote absentee via Internet. South Carolina was one of the leading participants in the project involving ten states. The project has been cancelled until further notice from the DOD.

Budget Reductions

Like other agencies, the SEC continues to be affected by budget reductions. The SEC has delayed purchasing updated equipment and has reduced the number of training classes and amount of travel required to educate the county voter registration and election officials on voter registration and election laws and procedures. We continue to charge 12 county election commissions which currently use electronic voting systems for database generation and ballot printing services provided by the SEC. The SEC also eliminated employee training classes critical to accomplishing our mission. The SEC has reduced operating expenses for the Voter Services Division by \$400,000 over the last several years. Operating costs have been reduced to the point that customer services are being affected. The budget reduction also affected the county boards of voter registration and elections. The SEC reduced the amount of money sent to the county voter registration and election commission offices to help defray operating expenses. The SEC was also not able to pay the maximum allowed to members serving on the county boards of voter registration and election commission.

Agency Mission and Values

The mission of the State Election Commission is to maintain an accurate database of registered voters in the State and provide services necessary to ensure successful elections in South Carolina.

The SEC maintains the State’s computerized statewide voter registration system. The statewide voter registration system also serves as the source for selection of jurors in the State. The SEC is responsible for printing the lists of registered voters for all elections held in the State which averages approximately 250 each year. The SEC provides oversight including assistance and advisory services to county and municipal election officials for elections in South Carolina. The SEC trains voter registration and election officials, provides voter registration and election materials, prints or provides funding for ballots for all federal offices, statewide offices and constitutional amendments voted on in South Carolina and produces databases and machine ballots for all elections in the State conducted on certain electronic voting systems.

The members of the SEC serve as the State Board of Canvassers after elections to certify election returns, to declare candidates elected, and hear protests/appeals that may arise.

The agency values:

- **Employees** – Human resources are the agency’s most important assets. Their knowledge, skills and characteristics are vital to the success of services provided. The Agency is committed to ensuring their satisfaction, training, development and well-being.
- **Customer Driven Excellence** – To understand customer needs and anticipate their future desires.
- **Visionary Leadership** – Motivate and recognize employees by setting examples, providing direction, recognition and rewards.
- **Understanding the Future** - Our two biggest elections, Primaries and the General Election, occur in two year cycles. Needs and preparations for these two events must be considered in advance.
- **Agility** – Because of the statutory deadlines regarding election days, it is crucial that we meet all deadlines and provide necessary services.
- **Relationships** – Contact 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 voter registration and elections processes.

Key Strategic Goals

The SEC works with municipalities and counties to improve the election process in the State and solicits ways to improve the election process and maintain its integrity. As part of that process improvement, the following long and short-term goals are of priority to the State Election Commission:

Agency Goals	Status
Implement a Uniform Statewide Voting System	Election Systems and Software (ES&S) has been selected following the State's procurement process to supply SC with statewide voting equipment. Fifteen counties will implement the new system for the November 2004 General Election.
Implement the SC HAVA State Plan as required by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA)	HAVA required the SEC to develop a plan outlining how HAVA requirements would be accomplished by South Carolina. The Plan was developed and approved by the Governor. HAVA also requires that the plan be modified each year. The HAVA State Plan Advisory Committee met several times during FY03/04 and requested approval from the Governor.
Establish procedure for receipt of federal funds	Funds were received in FY03 but disbursement did not begin until FY04. Accounts have been established.
New statewide voter registration system	All hardware installed, project delayed due to needed design changes in the program.
Participate in Secure Electronic Registration & Voting Experiment (SERVE) project with U.S. Department of Defense.	Applications were accepted in December 2003 for Uniform and Overseas Citizens to be allowed to vote over the Internet in 16 counties. Due to security concerns, the Department of Defense cancelled the project in early 2004.
Prepare for a successful statewide general election.	Successful June 2004 Republican and Democratic Primary election. Preparations have begun for the 2004 General Election.
Conduct statewide training and certification program.	12 classes offered in 2003-04. 550 participants.
Improve on accessibility to the voting process by disabled voters.	New statewide voting system will ensue in 15 counties. HAVA requires 1 unit per precinct for disabled and the new voting system provides for all counties to meet this requirement
Develop uniform guidelines for all counties to use when determining voter intent.	Guidelines for developing criteria for defining what constitutes a voters intent is underway.
Assist SC Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) with legislative priorities	Working with SCARE to draft legislation based on their legislative priorities. Will assist in introducing legislation in Jan. 2005.
Assist county offices with the redistricting process	New Senate and House lines were approved by U.S. Justice Department in 2003; however, Senate district lines were protested and could not be processed until February 2004. SEC worked with Research & Statistics to assist county election offices with Senate changes.
Successful federal audit of HAVA funds	SEC received federal funds for the 1 st time in the history of elections. These funds will be audited on a State and Federal level. Working to establish proper accounts and track purchased to ensure proper expenditure of these funds.

Opportunities and Barriers Affecting Agency Mission

Opportunities:

Funding for New Voter Registration System

The General Assembly recognized the need for a new statewide voter registration system and provided funding for the development and implementation of this system. A new system will make the processing of registered voters and their proper election district assignments more precise and will also enable the State to conduct elections with better accuracy and reduce the probability of protested elections.

Poll Worker Recruitment

The number of sixteen and seventeen year old poll worker assistants is on the rise. The ability to use these young adults has proven beneficial at a time when recruitment of experienced and older poll workers is continually decreasing. The enthusiasm these young adults exude proves their willingness and ability to continue their service as a poll worker into their adult years.

Voting on the Internet - Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE)

When this project is restarted by the Department of Defense, South Carolina will be one of ten states participating in the SERVE project. This project will provide UOCAVA and military citizens the opportunity to facilitate the absentee voting process by allowing participants to vote over the Internet.

Providing Electronic Information to Agency Customers

By using the agency Web site, which is maintained by staff in the Office of the State Chief Information Officer (CIO), we are able to post Primary and General election returns on the Internet immediately upon their receipt. While our staff is very limited in number and we answer requests for this information as soon as possible, this Internet posting of results is of great benefit to the news media, candidates, and the general public because they can monitor the information as it is posted.

Another service is the availability of the voter registration by mail application electronically. The voter registration application is located on the SEC web page and is a convenience for potential voters. Potential voters are able to download and print the application on-line. Many counties direct applicants to this form saving the printing and postage cost to both the State and counties. The web page is currently being examined as a source for other forms used by both the public and county personnel.

In addition, information regarding the sale of lists of registered voters is found on our website, including pricing of lists. This information is provided using several different forms of media, such as peel-off labels and printouts that are produced by the CIO. This information is also produced in-house on compact disks that provide a considerable savings and reduction in shipping time to our customers as opposed to having this service provided by the CIO.

Election Legislation

Election reform legislation was introduced in 2003 that will eliminate several election related problems in the State. Legislation passed in 2002 and was approved by the U.S. Justice Department in 2003 to eliminate the need for a special or municipal election if only one candidate files to run for the office involved. This new law has saved approximately \$6000 in costs associated with the election process.

HAVA Federal Funding

Congress passed the Help America Vote Act in 2002 and allocated funding for each state to implement the Act. If fully funded, South Carolina will receive approximately \$48 million dollars to bring the State into compliance with the Act. SC has received over \$2.1 million as incentive to replace all punch card voting systems in the eleven counties currently using this voting equipment. Ten of the eleven counties will be replacing the punch card system prior to the November general election. Sumter County has opted to wait until after the November 2004 general election to replace their punch card voting system and implement the new electronic voting equipment.

Health & Human Services (HHS) Grant

In October, the State Election Commission received \$167,271 in grant funds from the Federal Health & Human Resources. This grant is part of the Help America Vote Act of 2003 funding for disabled voters. This money has been distributed to county election commissions to make polling places more accessible for the disabled. This accessibility includes adding ramps, widening doors, handicap parking signs and spaces, and walkway accessibility.

Use of Accountability Report to Improve Organization Performance

Throughout the year, the SEC prepares and gathers information to present in the accountability report. By preparing this yearly report, we are able to compare and address any changes that have been made. By critiquing our own work, we are able to see where improvements need to be made to meet and where we are meeting the needs of our customers. It also allows us to determine which course of action should be taken to improve our services.

Barriers

Poll Manager Training and Compensation

- The number of registered voters in the State drives the cost of elections. County Election Commissions are required, statutorily, to appoint and train poll managers for each election according to these numbers. Often times, this training is not adequate and very limited. While the SEC has conducted this training in the past by using the S.C. Educational Television Network, it has been determined that training is much more effective when conducted in-person on a local level with smaller groups. The SEC offers a training program to the county election officials through which several capable persons in the county would be trained extensively on election laws and Election Day procedures. These individuals would then train the remaining poll managers in their county. The State Election Commission supports that a mandatory requirement for this type of training would be beneficial to enhance the knowledge and abilities of poll managers in the State. This program has been positively implemented in Greenville County and has greatly enhanced the quality of elections conducted in that county.
- Poll manager pay has not increased over the past 6 years and it is still below minimum wage. This causes problems with recruitment and retention of poll managers. Potential poll workers have indicated the low salary keeps them from working as a poll manager.
- Funding for poll managers is the largest amount of the budget requested to conduct a statewide primary or general election. This funding has always been available and adequate in the past and would need to be continued for all future elections to ensure their success.

Funding and Budget Reductions

Although the agency did not have to eliminate any further positions this fiscal year, the workload continues to increase with no ability to fund any additional personnel. Current employees are continually asked to accept additional job duties, with no increase in compensation. Morale has been affected because of the increase in hours worked to accomplish the additional tasks. Also, employees who would normally be participating in training programs were not allowed to participate this year because funding was not available.

Sustaining the ability to provide services to our customers with shrinking financial resources is a constant concern. Budget reductions will be a barrier for continuing education for employees, conducting customer surveys, updating equipment, providing necessary supplies for the work environment, and will create a lag time in response to public inquiries for agency information.

Municipal Elections on Common Date

Approximately 250 elections are held in the State each year. These elections are for municipalities, special elections, special service districts, and school boards. The 1999 Election Summit report revealed that voters think there are too many elections throughout the year and local election officials are not always equipped to conduct the elections. These elections should also be administered by the county election commissions and overseen by the State Election Commission. Legislation was introduced, but did not pass, in the S.C. House of Representatives to consolidate all such elections on a common date in the odd numbered year.

Use of Inadequate or Older Voting Technology

As we witnessed in the 2000 General Election in Florida, future election problems could be incurred in the 24 counties in the State currently using punch-card or central count optical scan ballot systems. While these systems are adequate and generally well administered, they utilize older and much less advanced technology that allows for the possibility of voter error and inaccurate vote totals. The newer, more advanced technology available would accommodate voting for the disabled and also prevent voter inaccuracies such as overvotes, undervotes, and ballot intent. The disabled population in our State is hindered from voting because of the level of voting technology currently in use in the State.

Legislation was introduced in 2003 to mandate a statewide electronic voting system and also change the wording in SC election laws to recognize that newer voting systems should no longer be classified as machines but classified as voting systems. This legislation, unsuccessful in 2004, would have assisted with implementation of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).

Reliability of Other Agencies for Voter Registration System

Accuracy of the assignment of voters to their proper election districts is reliant upon information received from each county's 911 and GIS offices by the Office of Research and Statistics.

Training and Certification of County Election Officials

While some election officials in the state are currently enrolled in the training program, many are not enrolled and have taken few or no classes associated with certification. Legislation is in place requiring them to complete the training within an 18 month period of their appointment, or reappointment. However, many officials do not adhere to this requirement. It has been the request of the State Election Commission for passage of legislation to allow the Governor, based on recommendation from the State Election Commission, to remove any election officials who have not completed the training program. At this time, legislation has not been passed to allow for this provision.

Election Legislation

Legislation was passed in 2001 that allows certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates. This new deadline will cause the county election commissions to rush their efforts of getting ballots printed and mailed to absentee voters. This new law needs to be addressed to allow the county election commissions time to print their ballots and distribute absentee ballots, especially for those military absentee voters serving overseas. Hopefully, this legislation will be reintroduced in 2005 to revise this law.

Use of Accountability Report to Improve Organization Performance

Throughout the year, the SEC prepares and gathers information to present in the accountability report. By preparing this yearly report, we are able to compare and address any changes that have been made. By critiquing our own work, we are able to see where improvements need to be made to meet and where we are meeting the needs of our customers. It also allows us to determine which course of action should be taken to improve our services.

SECTION II – BUSINESS OVERVIEW

The SEC consists of 17 full time and 1 part time employee and has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC

Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	02-03 Actual Expenditures		03-04 Actual Expenditures		04-05 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$571,590	\$535,791	\$582,994	\$499,587	\$572,829	\$475,203
Other Operating	\$1,011,098	\$412,564	\$518,195	\$356,564	\$2,117,852	\$357,152
Special Items	\$5,187	\$0	\$99,866	\$0	\$700,000	\$700,000
Permanent Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Case Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$635,775	\$635,775	\$610,228	\$610,228	\$515,014	\$515,014
Fringe Benefits	\$157,035	\$147,961	\$157,034	\$132,860	\$196,392	\$171,392
Non-recurring	\$1,938,080	\$0	\$2,378,193	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$4,318,766	\$1,732,092	\$4,346,513	\$3,977,434	\$4,102,087	\$2,218,761

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	01-02 Actual Expenditures	02-03 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$2,102,359	\$2,378,193
Capital Reserve Funds	\$4,593	\$0
Bonds	\$0	\$0

Interim Budget Reductions

Total 01-02 Interim Budget Reduction	Total 02-03 Interim Budget Reduction
\$118,907	\$12,129

Major Program Areas

Program Number	Major Program Area Purpose	FY 02-03 Budget Expenditures	FY 03-04 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: \$324,666.24 Federal: \$0 Other: \$50,810.94 Total: \$375,477.18 % of Budget: 12	State: \$351,700.15 Federal: \$0 Other: \$61,956.58 Total: \$413,656.3 % of Budget: 25	
20010000/ Voter Services	Oversees implementation of new voter registration system project, maintenance of the database of all registered voters in the state, manage evaluation of voting system certifications, maintenance of agency computer network	State: \$424,223.33 Federal: \$0 Other: \$ Total: \$424,223.33 % of Budget: 14	State: \$384,376.05 Federal: \$0 Other: \$47,009.08 Total: \$431,385.13 % of Budget: 26	Figure 7.2 Figure 7.7 Figure 7.8
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: \$ Federal: \$ Other: \$5,583.45 Total: \$5,583.45 % of Budget: <1	State: \$ Federal: \$ Other: \$13,210.54 Total: \$13,210.54 % of Budget: 1	Figure 7.3 Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6
30010000/ Aid to Subdivisions	Provides a supplement to county board members/also provides aid to county for local registration board expense	State: \$635,775 Federal: \$0 Other: \$ Total: \$635,775 % of Budget: 21	State: \$610,288.80 Federal: \$0 Other: \$ Total: \$610,228.80 % of Budget: 37	
95050000/ Benefits	Employee Benefits	State: \$147,961.44 Federal: \$0 Other: \$8,977.51 Total: \$156,938.95 % of Budget: 5	State: \$132,860.08 Federal: \$0 Other: \$24,174.26 Total: \$157,034.34 % of Budget: 10	

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds:

Special Primaries/35000000

Remainder of expenditures	FY 02-03	FY 03-04
	Budget Expenditures	Budget Expenditures
Primaries held during the year to fill vacancies	State: \$168,873.12 Federal: \$0 Other: \$24,665.03 Total: \$193,538.15 % of Budget: 6	State: \$ Federal: \$0 Other: \$99,866.74 Total: \$99,866.74 % of Budget: 6

Key Customers

Customers of the SEC include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, the legislature, special interests and advocacy groups, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, other state agencies, Federal agencies such as Department of Defense and Federal Election Commission and Election Assistance Commission, and those who purchase lists of registered voters.

Key Suppliers

Key suppliers for the SEC include the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Research and Statistics, technology consultants, voting system vendors, the voters and citizens of SC, University of South Carolina, Office of State Budget, office supply companies, and printers.

Major products of the State Election Commission are:

Maintenance of 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. To provide training and assistance on the statewide voter registration system to county election and voter registration staff through training classes, on-site visits, the web, phone and written documentation.

Training and Certification Program for Election Officials

Administer a statewide training and certification program for county election officials. Completion of the training program is mandatory for members of the county voter registration boards, election commissions and their staff. This program consists of components designed to provide information about registration and election laws and procedures and lectures to increase administrative, management or professional skills.

Conduct of the Primary and General Elections

Oversee and assist with the conduct of the Primary and General Elections and, if necessary, any subsequent special elections. To insure the quality of the election process and the faith and trust the voting public has in the integrity of elections in South Carolina.

Electronic Voting System Support

Provide election support services and technical assistance to counties using the two electronic voting systems supported by the SEC. Provide databases and ballot layout assistance to county and municipal election commissions. Provide election supplies and forms to county and municipal election officials.

Educational Services

Provide specialized training in conduct of elections and election laws of South Carolina to poll workers, county election commissions, and municipal election commissions. Assist county and municipal election officials with ballot layout procedures.

Sale of Lists of Registered Voters

Upon request and payment of fees, provide the names of registered voters to candidates for public office, the general public and other governmental agencies. Produce up-to-date lists of registered voters on a statewide, countywide or specific election district basis. 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.

Providing Public Information

Voter registration and election participation statistics are available on all elections held within South Carolina since 1984.

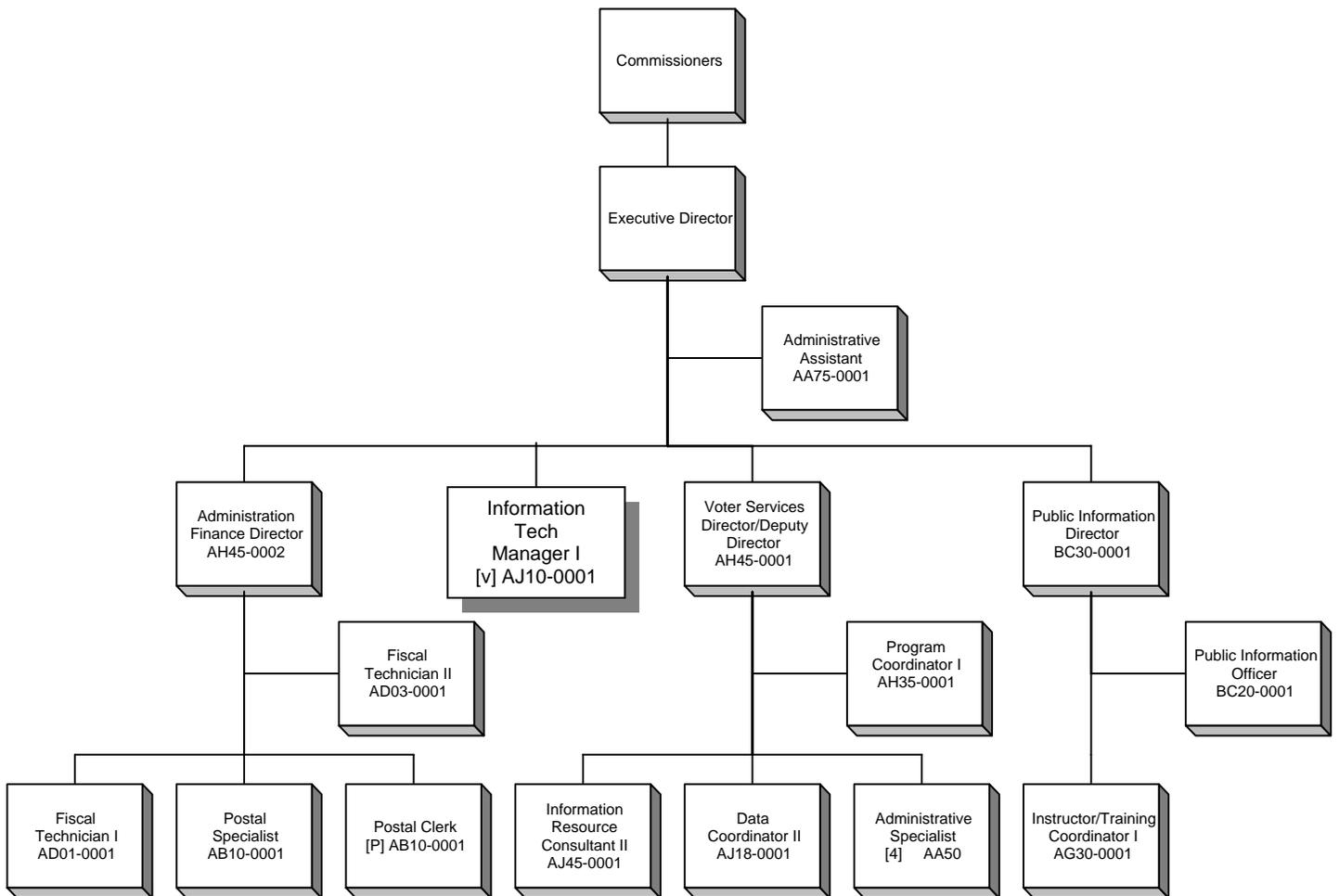
Oversight of the HAVA State Plan

The SEC is required to implement processes to accomplish the goals of the HAVA State Plan. A document has been established to track the progress of various projects associated with the implementation. This document is monitored and updated on a monthly basis.

Jury Rolls

Each year, the voter registration file is combined with the drivers license file and provided to clerks of court and chief magistrates to be used for the selection of jurors.

State Election Commission Organizational Structure



Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1 - Leadership

The agency has five commissioners who meet monthly, or at other times when 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 this 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 this State guide the team.

The agency is involved, at least peripherally, in approximately 250 elections held each year in this 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 produce and complete the request in a timely manner. For long-term direction, department directors, with staff, assess needs, develop a plan, gather information, and a time-line is set for completion of the project. This time-line is stressed to each individual involved in achieving the long-term goal or direction. For example, the 1999 Election Summit, 2001 Governor's Election Task Force, and 2002 HAVA State Plan all recommend or require a statewide uniform electronic voting system. We deployed and communicated this long-term direction by hiring a consultant to assist with gathering information from customers and developing an RFP for the new system. A timeline was developed for a phased-in approach to implementation of the new system and staff was alerted that, when the system is chosen, they would be trained on various aspects of the system and would assist with installation and training of the system in counties in South Carolina.

1.1b/c Performance and values expected of employees 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 and mentoring to improve their job performance.

1.1d Senior staff properly train and empower employees to make decisions and take actions directly related to their job and within their boundaries that satisfy customers on first contact and that provide better agency business results. Employee innovation is encouraged to improve agency services to customers with recognition to employees whose ideas increase agency productivity or reduce agency expenditures.

1.1e 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. Funding is provided for classes offered through the Budget and Control Board and other

training opportunities that relate directly to improving employee skills and performance. Figure 1.1 depicts the level of employee development programs in which agency employees have been involved.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Courses	Number completed	Number Currently Enrolled
Executive Institute*	2	0
CPM**	3	0
APM***	5	0
PPD****	0	1

Figure 1.1

*The South Carolina Executive Institute is primarily for state government officials with executive levels of responsibility and authority. The Institute is administered by the State Budget and Control Board and offers an annual curriculum tailored for public sector leaders and 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 Public Professional Development (PPD) certification is designated to help agencies develop professional staff and enhance their ability to work with teams, gain presentation skills, and manage priorities.

1.1e All employees are expected to act in an ethical manner that meets established and expected 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 this 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 a day’s time, if possible.

1.3 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. Our agency, every fiscal year, submits a budget request to the state Budget Office. Our agency then appears before the House Ways and Means and the Senate Finance to justify such requests. Our agency also undergoes external audits from the State Auditor’s office. Internal audits are not conducted; however, 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 obtaining legal information and regulations from the SC Election Laws. 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 we understand that any opinions issued from the Attorney General's office is non-binding, we rely on their in-depth knowledge and expertise on analyzing various situations and value their opinion and ideas on proceeding in certain legal issues.

Elections are not a regulated industry. Agency leaders maintain regulatory accountability by strictly following requirements at both federal and state levels. This includes adhering 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. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) established the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to oversee funds distributed to the states to update voting technology, provide education, and accessibility to polling places. The SEC follows recommendations set forth by this agency in order to receive federal funding. Some recommendations include upgrading those counties currently using the punch card voting machines with electronic voting equipment, adoption of a uniform statewide voting system, and the formation of a statewide plan to be submitted to the EAC for approval on use of federal funds. 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.

1.4 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 mailouts and ensures their prompt delivery

1.5 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.

1.6 The agency determines the impact of its services through an agency e-mail service, surveys, verbal/written communication, and focus group meetings. The SEC has an agency e-mail listed on our

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, but less than 15 as allowed by the Freedom of Information Act.

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.

The SEC invited members of the public and special interests groups were invited to participate in a forum conducted by the SEC on implementing a new voting system. The public was then advised on the system selected, the services the system offered, and the risks that were involved in purchasing this system and the improvements the system would make in updating and improving the election process.

1.7 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 now afford to replace all voting equipment currently used statewide, much of which is antiquated and not reliable. Agency staff worked with various interests groups to gather input on what type of features was 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.

1.8 Through encouragement and example, senior leaders participate in professional, election, and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. Employees are encouraged to assist organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) and helping with association events.

Category 2- Strategic Planning

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures
	Statewide Voting System- implement a uniform statewide voting system prior to the November 2006 General Election.	Election Systems and Software (ES&S) has been selected following the state's procurement process to supply SC with statewide voting equipment. Fifteen counties will implement the new system for November 2004 General Election.	Figure 7.8
20010000/ Voter Services	Statewide Voter Registration System- Maintain and support SC's statewide voter registration system and the master file	Provide training and assistance to county voter registration and election commission staff through training classes, onsite visits, and oral/written documentation.	
	Conduct of Elections- Oversee and assist with conduct of primary election and ensure the quality of the election process	Provide training to county election commissions on election process and election law.	
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 day-to-day office procedures and preparing for election day.	Figure 7.3 Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6
	Oversight of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)- successfully implement this federally mandated act	Develop a plan to track the progress of various projects to ensure compliance with federal guidelines and deadlines.	

2.1 The Agency strategic plan is developed based on the goals of the agency. Goals are based on the agency mission and statutory requirements. Customer expectations and needs are determined through surveys, focus group meetings, and in person communication.

2.2 Our key strategic objectives are to maintain the statewide voter registration system, implement a statewide voting system, train county election and voter registration officials, conduct elections, and oversee implementation of the Help America Vote Act as mandated by the federal government.

2.3 To ensure accomplishment of agency goals, resources available in state government are evaluated based on employee skills and available technology. A plan is then developed by senior leaders and counties to implement the specific project. When developing and teaching new Training and Certification Program classes, office staff and county personnel are reviewed based on their skills and availability to teach the classes. They are then empowered to develop a curriculum and conduct the training for that class.

2.4 Our key plans/initiatives are to ensure that county election commissions and voter registration officials are well trained in conducting the voter registration and election process. This includes training and assisting election officials and poll workers on the new statewide voting system.

2.5 Strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures are communicated to employees and commissioners through a series of meetings. This information is listed on a scorecard that is distributed at the above-mentioned meetings. The goals of the Agency are determined by customer and supplier needs, the Agency mission, and the South Carolina statute. Once determined, goals are placed on a scorecard that is reviewed monthly by senior management and Commission members. Departmental managers communicate the results of this scorecard with the appropriate staff members in their department.

2.6 Not available

Category 3 - Customer Focus

3.1 The SEC determines our key customers based on those who contact our office requesting or seeking specific election related information and/or services. We consider key customers of the SEC to include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, the legislature, federal election agencies, special interests and advocacy groups, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, and those who purchase lists of registered voters.

3.2 & 3.3 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 quarterly with an advisory committee consisting of 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 our 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.

The management team also meets regularly with political parties, advocacy groups, and members of the legislature to discuss issues affecting the operation of this agency. The SEC is interested in customer input on agency performance so that it may implement procedures, if needed, to improve customer focus.

The SEC assesses needs and, determines how to best meet the needs in a cost effective and timely manner.

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

3.5 The Agency implemented several methods to determine levels of customer satisfaction including:

- Evaluations from training programs
- On-site visits with county offices
- Attend voting system users group meetings
- Customer comment/survey cards
- Advisory committee meetings with customers

The SEC is dedicated to continuous improvement in the voter registration and elections processes. By using the avenues outlined above, the goal is to provide the best possible service to customers of this agency.

Positive relationships with customers are built by providing accurate and timely information with good customer service. We involve customers in the process of developing and improving our services.

Category 4 - Information and Analysis

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

4.2 The State Election Commission's key measures include:

- the statewide voting system
- implementation of the Help America Vote Act
- election legislation
- electronic voting system support
- election official and poll manager training

4.3 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 decision. All voter registration data is tracked using our 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.

4.4 Data analysis is used to determine the validity of a process and support decision making by capturing the pertinent data over a period of time and then evaluating all data and options to improve the process. For example, the State Election Commission produced a weekly statistical printout that was mailed to each county voter registration office. We surveyed the counties to determine the validity of the weekly

mailout and learned that the counties did not need these reports as often. Based on this outcome, we now mail reports every other week at a cost savings of \$2500 per year.

4.5 A review 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.

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (Motor Voter) requires the SEC to track each agency required to give assistance to customers desiring to register to vote to ensure that they are complying with the Act by asking clients if they would like to register to vote. This tracking is done by reviewing weekly reports and comparing trends and fluctuations in the numbers of voters assisted. When a problem is discovered the proper county election official or other agency is contacted immediately.

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.

4.6 It is well known that employees who have been working in an agency the longest usually have gained the most knowledge regarding that agency. When an employee who has been working for the agency for an extended period of time vacates their position it is easy to fill the vacant position, but impossible to retain the knowledge that leaves with that employee. It takes time and money to retrain new personnel. No set plan has been established to manage employee/organizational knowledge

Category 5 - Human Resources

5.1 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. Our 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, written surveys, observation, and feedback during evaluations are used to determine employee satisfaction and motivation.

Our 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 luncheon, breakfast or other gathering. At the gathering, the employee is rewarded with 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, we recognize 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.

5.2 Through meetings, workshops, training classes, phone and in-person conversations with our customers, we determine their needs and their expectations of this agency. By identifying these needs we are able to address them and develop or improve current programs 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 also to attend any training offered to help them better perform their job duties. Extra training is also encouraged for substandard performance when it is incurred.

While we are a small agency with only 17 employees, we are a strong group dedicated to the mission of the agency. Cross training and cross functioning are both supported and used frequently in the agency. All employees of the agency participate in the training and certification program either by teaching, preparing materials, or through administrative processes.

5.3 SEC employee performance management system gives management an opportunity to acknowledge good performance and provide resources and advice to improve on substandard performance and areas of weakness. This process is demonstrated through the annual employee evaluation and by addressing problems as they arise.

5.4 There is no formal or informal assessment method to measure employee well being, satisfaction and motivation at this time.

5.5 A custodial staff provided by the Budget and Control Board Building Services Division maintains the work environment. Supervisory personnel report unsanitary conditions to the proper authorities immediately. We also comply with OSHA and state fire marshal regulations.

The Voter Services Division produces ballots using large architectural plotters that require very heavy rolls of paper. Because of this extra weight, back braces are provided for staff to use while lifting the paper. Aprons and latex gloves are also provided for staff for use when working with ink cartridges necessary for these plotters. 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.

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

- The S.C. Association of Registration and Election Officials
- The Society of Certified Public Managers
- Executive Institute Alumni
- S.C. State Government Improvement Network
- Government Finance Officers Association
- SC Information Technology Directors Association
- State Agency Training Consortium
- CPM Advisory Board
- International Personnel 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. Employees often use their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

Category 6 - Process Management

Statewide Voting System

The South Carolina HAVA State Plan required the Agency to implement a statewide voting system to bring the State into compliance with the Help America Vote Act. The selection process for the system to be used was through a Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP was developed with the help of a consulting firm, staff from the Information Technology Management Office, and county election officials. Vendor protests of this RFP resulted in a re-solicitation which was finalized on August 3, 2004 and the contract was awarded on August 4, 2004 to Election Systems & Software.

All staff of the agency were involved in this project at one time or another. The goal of this Agency was to eliminate the use of punch card voting systems in the State by November 2004.

Voting System Support

Databases and ballots for 16 counties, using the two electronic voting systems supported by the SEC, are designed using specialized software. The election laws of South Carolina and information specific to the election govern the design of this information. Software and voting machine hardware updates are subject to the certification procedures outlined in the election laws of South Carolina. Once a vendor has complied with these procedures, the SEC may use the updated versions. New peripheral technology is explored and reviewed constantly by personnel in our agency Election Services Division and resources pertinent to this division are discussed and evaluated before purchases are made. If the evaluation determines that the upgrade in technology will benefit the Agency and its customers, and if funding is available, the change is incorporated.

The Election Services Division has a formal policy of delivering all databases and ballots no later than two weeks prior to the date of the election. In the case of larger counties, such as Charleston, Spartanburg, and Horry, ballots are delivered as soon as possible with a goal of no later than three weeks prior to the election. With the exception of elections with special circumstances, such as candidate withdrawal and lawsuits, the goals are met by having a well-stocked supply of paper and other materials needed, overtime of full-time personnel.

Division personnel are in constant contact with suppliers of the software, specialized supplies, and mailing supplies needed. Contact with voting system vendors is done by phone for immediate resolution and through semi-annual users group meetings for items that need discussion and input from other customers. Supplies such as ballot paper and ink are stored in the office and inventoried 6 months prior to any major election. If inventory is deemed low, new supplies are ordered so that they will arrive in a timely manner. Contact with suppliers is maintained through monthly newsletters, phone, and e-mail.

Voting System Certification

The State Election Commission is responsible for examination and certification of voting equipment before it can be purchased by any county in the State. Voting System vendors must complete national qualification testing based on the Federal Election Commission's voting system standards before applying for certification in South Carolina. Application packages are received with a fee of \$1000 for 1st time certifications and \$500 for all upgrades to existing certified systems. Once the application and fee are

received, staff at the SEC begin testing the system against election laws in the State and observing the system in use in at least two precincts in a live election in the State. Once the examination and test election are complete, the system is presented to the Commissioners of the SEC for certification.

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 may request training in any of these areas by phone or through written communication. Once the request is made SEC staff arrange for the time and place of the training based on the customer's schedule. The majority of this training is conducted during evening hours.

Periodic election law changes require changes to materials used in various training programs and on Election Day. These election law changes are tracked by the agency's Public Information Officer and reported to staff responsible for updating materials and forms. Prior to every primary and general election, if not needed before, these changes are reviewed and incorporated into forms and materials supplied by this office. 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.

Staff from the agency travel regularly to county offices to provide assistance. These trips are also used to obtain feedback and new ideas from customers that would benefit the election process. In 2003/2004, several counties requested SEC staff assistance due to a loss of leadership with no one available to carry out the duties of the Directors' position in the voter registration/election office. SEC staff were able to assist by recommending individuals who recently retired from the Director position in other counties and also by providing assistance with training and questions.

Training and Certification Program

All county election and voter registration officials and designated staff members are required by statute to complete the Training and Certification Program provided by the SEC. SEC staff, county staff personnel, staff from other state and federal agencies, and professional trainers conduct components for this program. Classes are offered on a regular basis at annual conference. Updates to the training classes are made as needed due to election law changes, procedural changes, and information gathered by written surveys given at the end of each class.

Once the classes are scheduled, agency staff prepare a calendar of deadlines for class preparation. Registrations for classes are received up until the day of the class. Because of this last minute 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 modify and improve future training classes. The cost of this program is borne by a \$15 registration fee paid by each participant.

Statewide Voter Registration System

The State Election Commission is responsible for maintaining a database of over two million registered voters in the State. Each county voter registration office is connected to a computer in Columbia at the CIO which houses the statewide database of registered voters in the State. The individual county voter registration offices are enabled to add registered voters to this database and make changes to their county's file. Processes for which this agency is responsible are:

- Operate and maintain the statewide voter registration system
- Provide voter registration lists to the county boards of voter registration for each election held in the State
- Maintain accurate voter history for each registered elector
- Remove names of voters who have died, moved, been convicted of felonies or crimes against the election laws or otherwise become ineligible as electors
- Provide technical support to the county boards of voter registration in the proper use of the statewide voter registration system on an as needed basis. Limited support is also offered on computers and printers.
- Provide forms and materials used for voter registration offices
- Serve as liaison with the CIO to maintain the current election results reporting system and make any updated changes as needed
- Conduct National Voter Registration Act confirmation mailing as needed

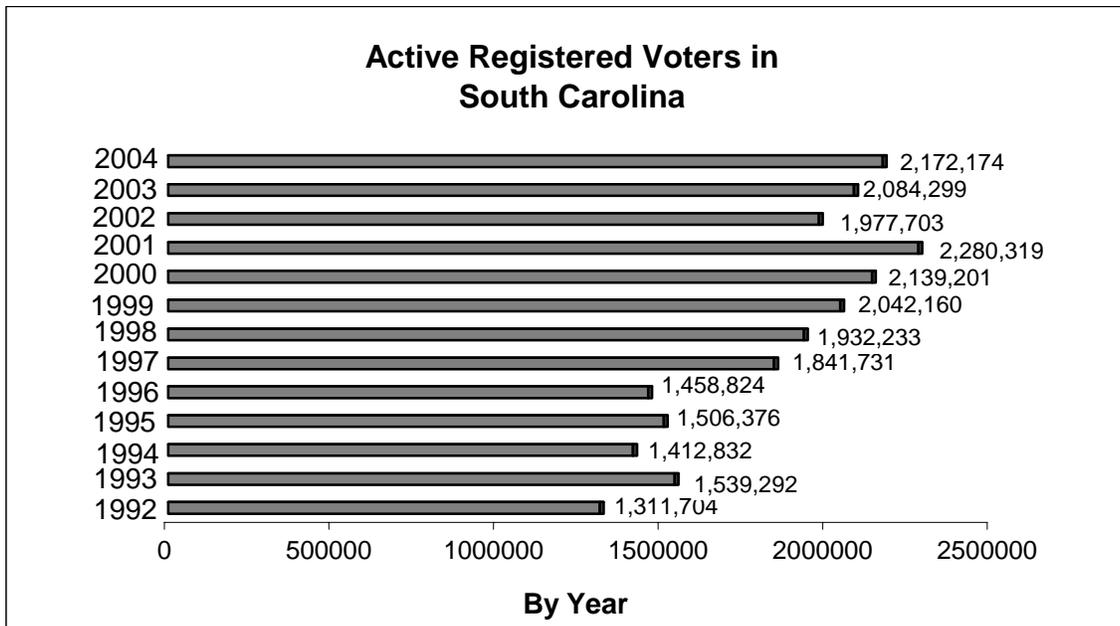


Figure 6.1

Between 1997-2001 there was a steady increase in the number of registered voters. The increase in voter registration numbers can be attributed to the convenience of voter registration sites, including several state agencies. Figure 6.1 shows this steady increase in voters through 2001. In 2002, however, the number of registered voters declined. Prior to 1995, the SEC was allowed to remove (purge) voters from the voter registration file if they had not voted in two general elections or in any

municipal election in between. In 1993, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) was passed which prohibits voters from being purged from the voter registration file for failure to vote. The NVRA, however, mandates that after a cycle of two general elections, if no activity has been made to a voter's registration record or they have not voted in any election in-between, then the voter can be sent a confirmation card that requires the voter to respond to the county voter registration board. If the county voter registration board does not receive a response, the voter is made "Inactive" on the voter registration file. The voter's name will still remain on the voter registration list for the following two general elections. After a cycle of two more consecutive general elections, if the voter still has no activity on the voter registration record, the voter is then removed from the voter registration file. The decrease in voter registration numbers for 2002 can be attributed to the SEC's 2001 confirmation mailing described above and outlined in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. There were 420,856 confirmation cards mailed to voters throughout the State. Over 315,200 voters who were mailed a confirmation card did not respond to the mailing and were placed on 'inactive-moved' status on the statewide voter registration system.

Agency Information Technology Support

The Voter Services Division is responsible for the in-house, personal computer based network. When problems arise with hardware and software, staff in the division are notified immediately and they address the situation on a needs priority basis. Staff members are empowered to make decisions independently unless the decision requires major budget expenditures.

Agency Web Site – www.state.sc.us/scsec

The SEC web page is maintained by the CIO and is updated frequently based on customer input given to our Voter Services Division verbally or in writing, frequent calls requesting duplicate information, and changes in information. This site is reviewed on a monthly basis to determine any other changes necessary. We recently updated the site to make it accessible for individuals with physical disabilities and are now Bobby compliant. Key information available on the site is:

- Statistical information on the numbers of voters participating in past elections
- Current election information such as polling place locations, dates and deadlines for voters, candidates, the news media, and county election officials
- Voter registration application. **We were the first state in the nation to post this application on the Web.**
- Election schedules
- Information on how to become a candidate and the political process generally
- Individual voter information
- Ability for those voters who cast an absentee or provisional ballot to check the status of their ballots to see if their ballot was counted and if not, why not.

Accounts Payable

When an invoice is received, the accounts payable clerk processes a voucher within three days of receipt. The voucher and electronic copy (disk) is sent to the Comptroller General's Office. The Comptroller General's office loads the information from the disk and sends the information to the Treasurer's Office. The Treasurer's Office then sends a check to the agency where the check number is recorded and the accounts payable clerk mails the check to the respective individual or entity.

Meetings are held with the BARS (Basic Accounting Reporting System) personnel at USC and various agencies in an attempt to either modify the current accounting system or switch to another system through USC that will offer many more options and newer technology for all modules including accounts payable. A State Election Commission staff member serves on the committee and will be working with USC to develop and implement an improved accounting system.

Sale of Lists Program

The State Election Commission's Sale of Lists Program provides customers with the names and addresses of registered voters in various formats on CD, disks, peel off labels, printed lists, and magtapes. Voter history information may also be obtained on tapes and CD's. Other private companies and political parties offer the voter registration files, but the State Election Commission file is the most up-to-date because it is connected to the real-time registration files of all 46 county boards of voter registration. In the past, the CIO prepared the CD's for the State Election Commission. Beginning in May 2001, the employee who processes the orders for the Sale of Lists Program started preparing the CD's in-house. This was made possible by purchasing new, more advanced computer equipment. This revenue-generating program fully funds the salary of the full time employee who works with the program and one part time permanent position in the State Election Commission mailroom.

Supplement to county election commissions and registration boards

The SEC provides a supplement to each county registration board/election commission member on a quarterly basis. The supplement is funded at a rate of \$1,000 per member, per year. In the FY00 Appropriations Act, the amount per member was increased to \$1,500, but the General Assembly did not fund the increase. Therefore, boards with more than eight members do not receive the full \$1,500 supplement per member. In the past, members were paid the full amount quarterly even if they did not serve for the entire quarter. Because of a shortage of funds, at the beginning of FY02, the SEC began disbursing the funds at the end of the quarter instead of the beginning of the quarter. This allows the SEC to pro-rate the supplement to the members who do not serve for the entire quarter, and will also eliminate double payments which have occurred in the past when a member left during the quarter and someone replaced the member during the same quarter.

Election Protest Hearings

As part of the fair election process, candidates are allowed to protest an election if they feel they lost an election due to irregularities. Protests for countywide and less than countywide offices are filed and heard on the county level and then appealed to the State Election Commission while protests for federal, statewide, Senate, House of Representatives, and multi-county offices are filed directly with the State Election Commission. Once an appeal or protest has been properly filed, the Commission of five members convenes in a judicial capacity to hear the protest. Once a decision has been made, candidates have an option to appeal to the South Carolina Supreme Court.

Administration of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

On October 29, 2002, President Bush signed the "Help America Vote Act of 2002," (HAVA).

This legislation 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 ensure HAVA compliance. Although the Act was not signed by the President until October, SEC staff began working on the State Plan in August of 2002 in anticipation of this signing. 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. This group, divided into five teams, held seven planning meetings to develop this Plan. The final plan, delivered to the federal election commission outlines how SC will implement programs. SC HAVA State Plan implementation project was developed to track programs needed to bring SC into HAVA compliance. The final plan was delivered to the Federal Election Commission in September of 2003.

Once the State Plan was finalized, an implementation plan was developed to monitor the status of all tasks required. This plan was updated and posted monthly on our agency website at <http://www.state.sc.us/scsec/hava.htm>. Full completion is required by November 2006.

Each year, the State is required to make revisions to the State Plan to reflect any completions or additions. A smaller State Plan Advisory Team was appointed to perform this task. The Committee met during the Spring and the 2004 revision was delivered to the Federal Election Assistance Commission in August 2004.

South Carolina is ahead of other states in meeting the requirements in the Help America Vote Act. South Carolina was required to make minor changes in the voter registration database in order to comply with HAVA requirements. Many states had not even created a statewide voter registration database and were required to request a waiver from the federal government to extend time for compliance with this requirement.

Category 7 – Business Results

Poll Worker Pay

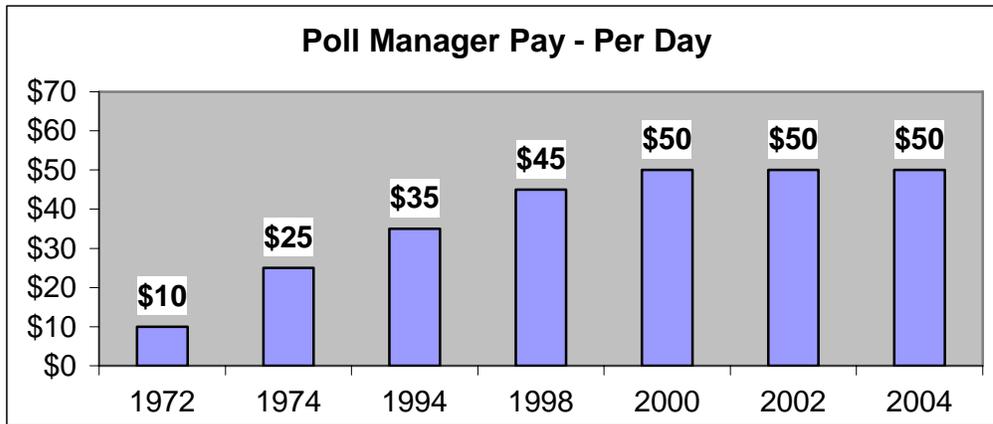


Figure 7.1

The 1999 Election Summit indicated that one reason for the decline in poll worker recruitment was because of the minimal amount of pay for this job. The SEC requested an increase in poll worker pay to \$55.00 but was unsuccessful due to the State’s budget situation. Poll worker pay is a priority of the SEC as well as the S.C. Association of Voter Registration & Election Officials. Figure 7.1 above reflects the slow increases in poll manager pay over the past 30 years.

Voting System Certification

Staff in the Voter Services Division continually examine and test voting equipment for certification in the State. Figure 7.2 shows a breakdown of those vendors seeking certification during the FY03/04.

Vendor Name	Date Tested	Date Certified
Microvote – MV464 Upgrade	8/27/03	10/15/03
Diebold – Upgrades	7/24/03-8/18/03	10/15/03
Hart Intercivic – Upgrades	10/22/03 – 11/4/03	11/5/03
ES&S – Upgrades	11/24/03 – 11/25/03	1/20/04
Diebold – Upgrades	12/2/03 – 12/5/03	1/20/04
Microvote – Upgrade	5/17/04 – 5/18/04	5/19/04

Figure 7.2

Ballot Review and Approval

All ballots for use in statewide primaries and general elections must be reviewed and approved by agency staff before the county officials can print their necessary official ballots. These proofsheets are mailed or faxed to the Election Services Division for review and then returned to the county within 48 hours. While it is not required, most county and municipal election commissions send their sample ballots to us for review prior to printing of official ballots.

For 2004 Primary Election:

175 ballot styles reviewed

30 ballots approved with undetected errors

100 ballot styles reviewed and returned to the County Election Commission within 48 hours

Educational Services Training

Staff in the Educational Services & Public Information Division continually provide training to poll managers and Election officials. Figure 7.3 shows a breakdown of those classes held during the FY03/04 and the number of customers serviced.

Training Completed	Total Events	Total Participants
County Poll Manager Workshops	8	600
County Election Commission Workshops	7	70
Municipal Poll Manager Workshops	7	90
Municipal Election Commission Workshops	6	28

Figure 7.3

Ten protests were filed statewide for the June 8, 2004 primary with 6 being appealed. Three protests were overturned.

Failsafe Voting

As a result of programming changes to the statewide voter registration system this year, we are able to determine how many people voted using the Failsafe procedure. This procedure allows voters who have moved to another precinct within their county or from one county to another within 30 days of the election, but failed to change their address with the appropriate voter registration office, to cast a ballot. Prior to the 1993 National Voting Rights Act, these people would not have had an opportunity to vote.

New Statewide Voter Registration System

The 1999 election summit identified a need for a new voter registration system. A cross departmental team reviewed a Statewide Voter Registration System in Arkansas which was developed by the University of Arkansas and discovered the system was more technologically advanced than our current system but it did not meet the needs of SC. The agency's long relationship with the CIO, their the ability to have in-state development and support, and the fact that the costs would be \$750,000 less, the agency decided to retain the partnership with CIO and allow them to develop and support the new system. Through partnerships with the CIO, Office of Research and Statistics, and county voter registration board officials a needs assessment was conducted and a plan for implementation of the new system was developed. The implementation was reviewed and determined that several design changes are required, therefore, implementation of the project has been postponed until January 2006.

Agency Web Site

On the evening of the 2004 Primary Election, the SEC Web page was updated every three minutes with election results transmitted from the 46 counties in the State.

Each year there is a significant increase in the number of visits to the Web site – especially surrounding an election. The number of visits can be attributed to the publicity of the web site and the information posted on the site. Various news media personnel and many of our key customers, including private

citizens interested in tracking elections, have expressed their appreciation for the information available on the Web. Below are charts depicting these increases in site visits.

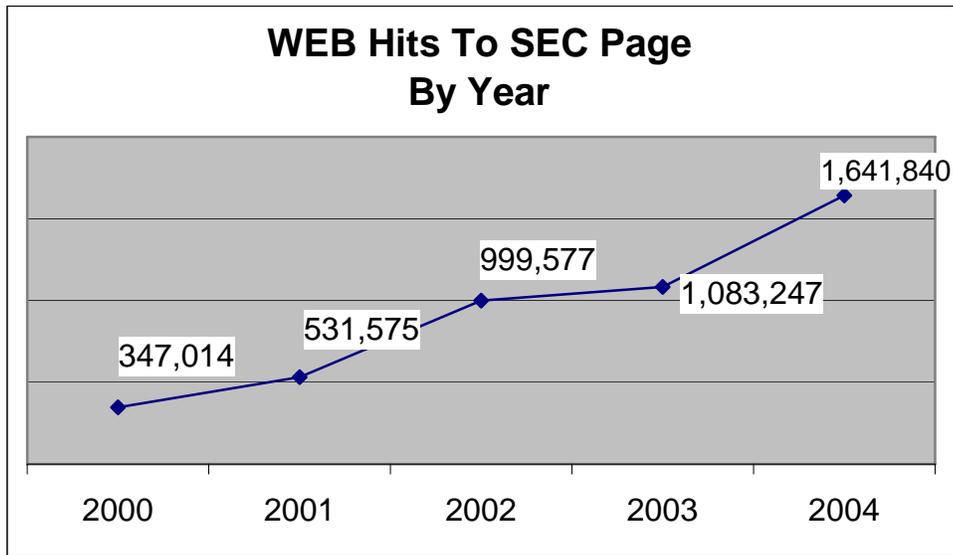


Figure 7.4

**Monthly WEB Page Hits
July 2003- June 2004**

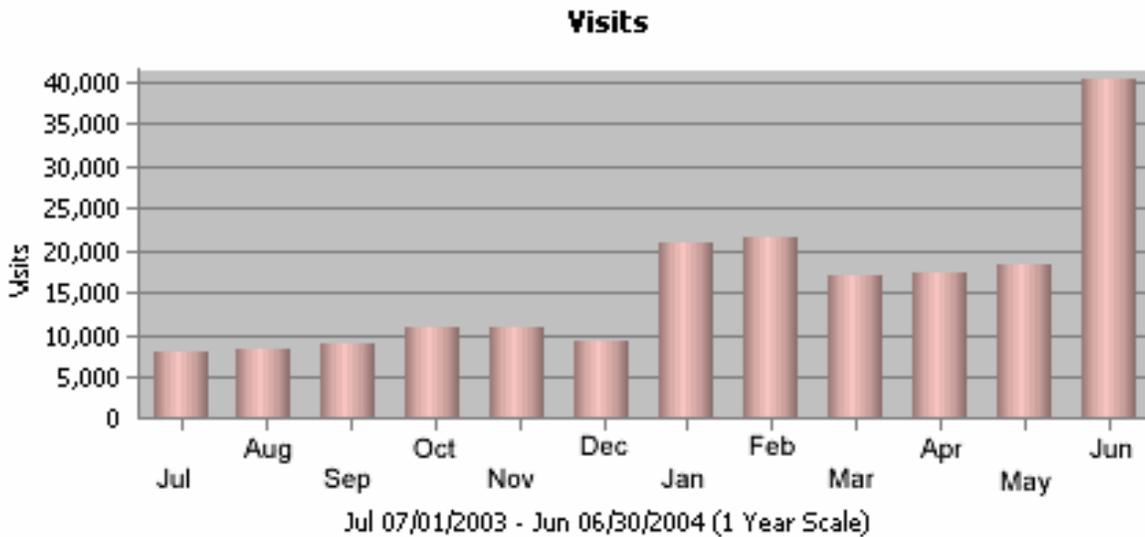


Figure 7.5

Public Information

As a result of the election problems in Florida after the 2000 general election, several staff members fielded calls from various study groups and reporters from around the nation. This information was not tracked on a regular basis but members of the CalTech/MIT task force reported that South Carolina has the best absentee voting procedures and records in the nation.

Voting System Support

Databases and ballots were provided for all regularly scheduled elections and special elections. By providing this service to our customers at no charge, our customers are able to reduce election costs and provide voter education opportunities that might not be feasible or possible if this service was provided by other sources. Organizational and school ballots are used as an educational tool for school age students by providing mock elections. This tool will have lasting results as these individuals grow into adults and become registered voters in our state.

All ballots and databases were mailed to the county offices within two weeks prior to the primary election. The following statistics are for services delivered by the Voter Services Division for this fiscal year:

- ❖ 13 counties serviced in the State
- ❖ 102 election databases created
- ❖ 3 on-site training classes and users group meetings held
- ❖ 3224 ballots plotted @ \$.60 per ballot = \$1934.00
- ❖ 3400 ballots copied @ \$.10 per ballot = \$340.00

Figure 7.7 depicts actual costs of these services versus the costs incurred if a vendor or commercial firms had provided these services.

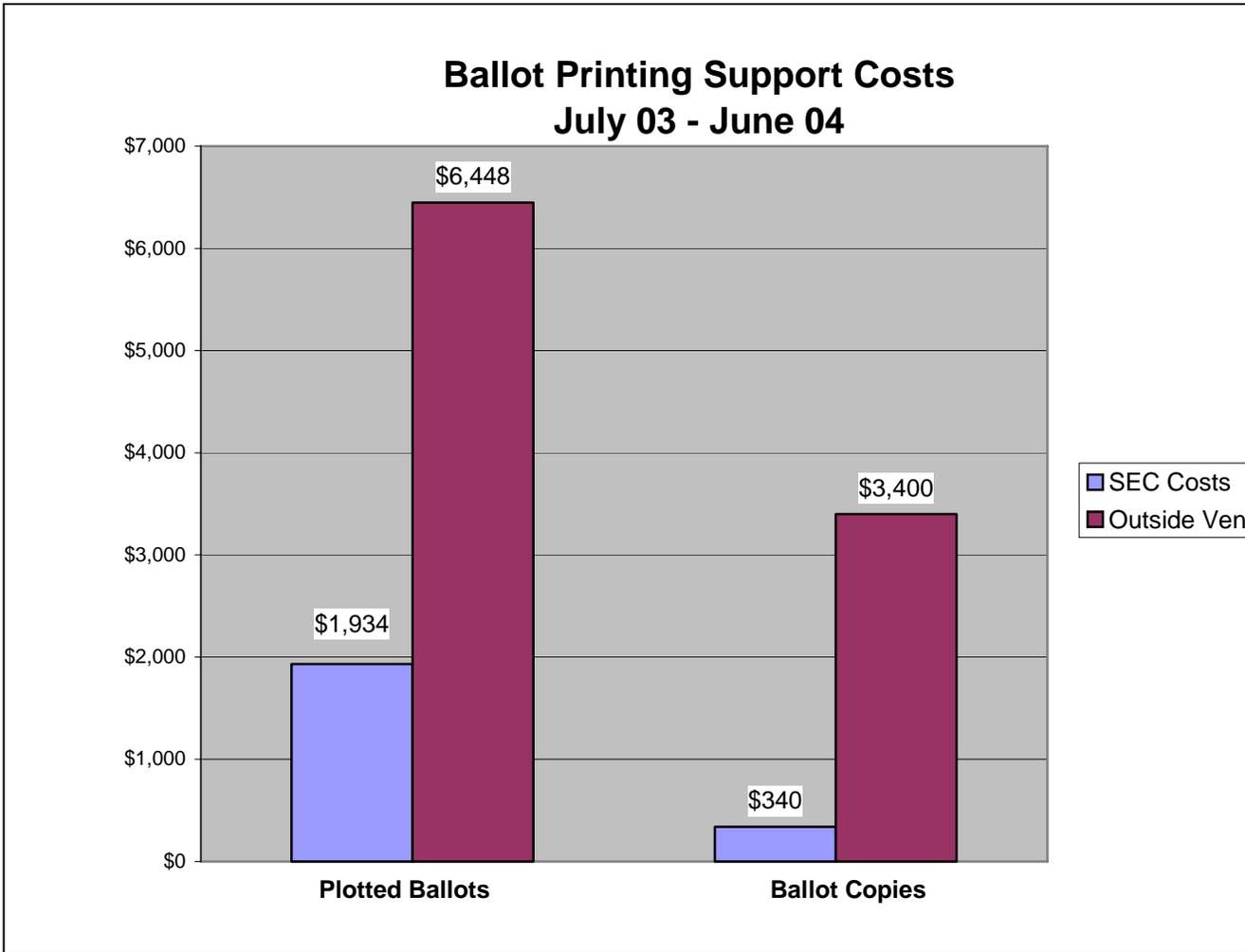


Figure 7.7

Budget Reductions

Due to continuing State Government budget reductions, the following actions were taken:

- One FTE was eliminated using our reduction in force policy
- Office space was consolidated
- Reduced the amount of money sent to the county voter registration and election commission offices to help keep those offices open
- County boards of voter registration and election commission members were not paid the maximum they are allowed by law
- Drastically reduced operating costs to the point that future cuts will affect customer services.

Protest Hearings

Following the 2004 Primary Election, there were ten protests filed statewide with 6 being appealed to a higher court. Three protested elections were overturned and a special election will be conducted to fill those seats. It is the responsibility of the respective political party to conduct hearings on protests filed in the primary election. All appeals are filed either with the court or state executive political party (depending on the office), or with the court.

Primary Election 2004 Education and Outreach Issues

Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

The HAVA State Plan Task Force met during the 2003/2004 fiscal year to develop a state plan outlining how South Carolina will implement requirements of HAVA. The South Carolina State Plan provides a description of current election procedures and outlines how South Carolina will meet the new requirements mandated by HAVA. The State Plan will be updated each year to reflect election law changes and future plans.

As required by the HAVA State Plan, the following items were completed during this fiscal period:

- Statewide Voting System RFP – Following state procurement code, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a statewide uniform voting system was developed using input gathered from county election officials. Vendor protests of this RFP resulted in a re-solicitation which was finalized on August 3, 2004 and the contract was awarded to Election Systems & Software on August 4, 2004.
- A toll free phone was installed for voters to call and find out if their provisional ballot was counted
- Access was added to the SEC website to allow voters to check the status of their provisional ballot
- Procedure for accepting identification for voters who register by mail was implemented and necessary fields were added to the statewide voter registration system to track military and overseas citizens
- Questions about citizenship and age were added to the voter registration by mail application
- Accounts were established through the State Comptroller General's office for receipt and disbursement of HAVA funds. These accounts contain federal funds, state funds, and interest accrued on those funds.
- An "open book" test was distributed to all counties for use with poll manager training
- Training programs were revised to highlight the provisional balloting procedure and the voter ID procedure
- The poll manager handbook was revised and restructured to enhance training and usability
- An RFP was developed to hire a public relations company to assist with voter education
- Partnerships were formed with advocacy groups such as Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, the SC School for the Deaf and Blind, and the SC Association for the Deaf to determine needs of disability groups in the State and to work together on meeting those needs.
- www.scvotes.org was created to provide the public with election information. This site is fully accessible for the disabled.
- The SEC worked with 29 county election commissions to use HAVA grants to update/renovate polling place throughout the State to provide accessibility.
- An administrative complaint procedure was developed and distributed to all county election officials in addition to being added to the SEC website.
- An advisory team of 10 people was appointed to oversee changes to the State Plan. This team met in the spring to discuss revisions to the State Plan. The final 2004 version of the State Plan was delivered to the Election Assistance Commission in August 2004.

Statewide Voting System

The following is a timeline of events concerning the implementation of a statewide voting system as referenced in the above section concerning the Help America Vote Act. A contract was awarded after many months of preparation. Work began in June 2003 to prepare an Request for proposal to solicit a statewide voting system. In October 2003, the RFP was solicited for bids; in February 2004, the SEC received six proposals from election vendors; in June 2004, the RFP was re-solicited in response to filed protests; in August, 2004, the SEC enters into official contract with Election Systems and Software.

Date	Event
6/03	Uniform Statewide Voting System (USVS) requirements gathering workshops with core group for state and county election subject matter experts.
7/03	Regional requirements gathering workshops for county election officials were conducted in Columbia, Greenville and Florence.
7/28/03	RFP completed based on information gathered at requirements gathering workshops.
10/10/03	State Procurement Information Technology Management Office (ITMO) initiates solicitation for a Uniform Statewide Voting system for the State Election Commission.
10/21/03	Held bidders conference for potential offerors.
10/27/2003	Protests to RFP received.
11/21/03	SC Chief Procurement Officer conducts a protest hearing and subsequently denies the METS Corporation protest.
12/12/03	METS Corporation appeals to the SC State Procurement Panel the SC Chief Procurement Officer's decision to deny their protest.
1/14/04	State Procurement Review Panel Conducts appeal hearing and upholds the Chief Procurement Officer's denial of the METS Corp protest.
2/9/04	Proposals are received from six potential offerors
2/10/04 –	Proposals evaluated by eight member evaluation committee comprised of
3/12/04	county and State election subject matter experts.
3/23-25/04	Selected offerors present oral presentations to the eight member evaluation committee and demonstrate the Voters With Disability (VWD) units to
	representative from the disabled community.
4/12/04	Intent to award a contract to Election System & Software is made.
4/27/04	Four offerors filed protests to the Intent to Award
5/9/04	Based on events of protest hearing, the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) issues a determination that re-solicitation of the RFP is necessary.
6/23/04	State Procurement Review Panel conducts an administrative review hearing of appeals to the CPO determination that re-solicitation is necessary. The Panel upholds the decision of the CPO.
6/9/04	ITMO initiates re-solicitation of the RFP.
6/24/04	A protest to the re-solicitation is received from Palmetto Unilect, LLC. Upon receipt of this protest, the CPO rules that suspension of the RFP is not necessary.
7/9/04	Proposals to the RFP Re-solicitation are received from three potential offerors: Diebold Election Systems, Election Systems & Software, and Palmetto Unilect, LLC. Palmetto Unilect, LLC's proposal is determined to be non-responsive due to failure to supply a bid bond as required in the solicitation.
7/10/04	An evaluation team of 5 county and State election subject matter experts

7/19/04	begin the process of evaluating the proposals. Intent to Award a contract for USVS is issued to Election Systems & Software
8/4/04	SEC enters into a contract with Election Systems & Software (ES&S). ES&S ships two demonstration units to all 15 counties in implementation Phase I of the contract.

Figure 7.8