

# 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 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. 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 printing the lists of registered voters for 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 for elections in South Carolina. The SEC administers a mandatory training and certification program for voter registration and election officials. 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. All voter registration and election materials are provided to county election officials, and counties are reimbursed for allowable primary and election expenses.

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.

The members of the SEC 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. Institutional knowledge, skills, and characteristics 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 understand customer needs and anticipate their future desires.
- **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** – 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.

## **Major Achievements of the Fiscal Year:**

### **November 2006 General Election**

The SEC supported counties in conducting a successful and historic general election on November 7, 2006. This was the first statewide general election in which all South Carolina voters cast ballots on a single, uniform voting system. Voters had no significant issues at the polls and overwhelmingly approved of the new voting system. These successes can be attributed to more than two years of training, a far-reaching voter education campaign, vast experience gained with numerous less-than-statewide elections, and the overall efficacy of the system.

### **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 160 county, special, and municipal elections. Existing SEC staff was used to provide this level of support which otherwise would have been supplied by the voting machine vendor for a significantly higher cost.

### **Special Elections**

The SEC supported county election commissions in successfully conducting special elections in State Senate Districts 5, 44 and 46; Solicitor Circuit 14; and for vacancies occurring on the county level. Along with the requirement of certifying the state results, the SEC provided county election commissions with additional support including training, voting system support, and media relations.

### **Voter Education and Outreach**

The SEC's voter education initiative continued to reach thousands of voters throughout the State. This effort is designed to familiarize South Carolina voters with the State's voter registration and election processes and in particular, the touch screen voting system. The HAVA voter education team took the campaign's "Every Vote Matters, Every Vote Counts" message to local government conferences, disability advocacy groups, minority organizations, and numerous fairs, festivals, and other events throughout the State. The Agency also introduced an incentive program, "Every County Counts," to encourage county election commissions to educate voters in their communities. The Agency also carried out campaigns urging voters to update their addresses and to familiarize themselves with constitutional amendment questions prior to the 2006 General Election.

### **Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)**

A system was developed to allow poll workers to access the voter registration list using a laptop at the polling place on Election Day. The voter registration list traditionally has been provided in a printed format. When used in several elections, the EVRL proved to reduce the amount of time it takes to

process voters and was also helpful in determining the correct precinct for voters who arrived at the wrong precinct. The list also allows voter history to be processed more quickly.

### **Election Legislation**

The SEC worked with the General Assembly on several pieces of election legislation passed during the 2007 legislative session. Senate bill 327 requires the Governor to remove county voter registration board and election commission members who do not fulfill their training requirements. House bills 3976 and 4164 bring us closer to combining the voter registration boards and election commissions in all counties by doing so in Calhoun and Hampton. This brings the total number of counties with combined boards to 37. The Agency also provided guidance to legislators as the General Assembly passed Senate bill 99, which requires the SEC and county elections commissions to conduct the 2008 Presidential Preference Primaries.

## Key Strategic Goals

The SEC continually works 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 priorities of the SEC:

Agency Goals	Status and Plans
Prepare for successful statewide primaries and general elections.	The 2006 General Election was the first time the electronic touch screen voting machines were used in a statewide general election. The voting machines met expectations, voters found them easy to use, and poll workers adapted well to the new system.
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 update the election security plan and ensure counties follow established procedures. All voting system election support and training is provided by the SEC.
Maintain the statewide voter registration system	The statewide voter registration system is used by all county boards of voter registration to register voters, track absentee applications and ballots, and assign poll managers to precincts. The system also facilitates placement of voters in the proper election districts and tracks voter participation in elections. The aging legacy system has been in use since 1992 and needs enhancements to meet county needs and federal reporting requirements. The system has seen only moderate updates over the past five years in anticipation of a new statewide voter registration system. A need exists for a new system; and once funding is obtained, work on development will begin.
Providing an Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)	The SEC is providing EVRL software to counties at no charge. This service saves counties thousands of dollars over similar, commercially available software. County election commissions must provide laptops and barcode readers. This modern technology can improve access to the voter registration list for poll workers and produce faster and more accurate records of voter participation in elections. Measurements taken during the test and pilot elections proved that processing of voters was faster, and retention of voter history and updates to the statewide voter registration database were quicker and more efficient. EVRL is currently in development and will be tested in fall 2006.
Provide a 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 and in particular, the new touch screen voting system. There has been a concerted effort during FY2007 to reach senior citizens with the voter education campaign.
Conduct and increase participation in the statewide training and certification program	This is an ongoing program required by state law to train county voter registration board and election commission members and their staffs. Classes are held quarterly in Columbia and regionally. The Agency is exploring the possibility of offering classes online.
Improve accessibility for voters with disabilities	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 state voters unprecedented access. The Agency continues to educate the disabled community on the availability and use of these features. More training is also needed to improve disability awareness among poll workers and county election officials. The Agency also works with county offices to use federal grant money to improve polling places, making them more accessible. Agency staff is constantly surveying county election commissions to gauge the level of progress in improving polling place accessibility.
Assist the SC Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) with legislative priorities	Working with SCARE to draft legislation based on their legislative priorities. The SEC assisted in introducing legislation in January 2007.
Implement the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS)	The Agency will implement the new statewide accounting system, SCEIS, to replace the antiquated Basic Agency Reporting System (BARS) currently in use.

# **Opportunities and Barriers Affecting Agency Mission**

## **Opportunities**

### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

The need exists for a new voter registration and election administration system. This is based on needs identified by county voter registration officials, the 1999 Election Summit, and the 2001 Governors Task Force on Elections. A new, easier-to-use system will utilize advanced technology to make the processing of registered voters and their assignment to proper election districts more efficient, as well as provide additional functionality.

### **Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL) Implementation**

An EVRL was designed to improve the process by which poll workers identify registered voters. This new system has proved to shorten lines at the polls, make it easier for poll managers to locate voters on the list, instantly show if a voter is in the wrong precinct and direct them to the correct precinct, and provide immediate and accurate voter participation statistics. SEC staff is currently working on enhancements to the program.

### **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 retention of experienced workers is continually decreasing. The enthusiasm these young adults exude proves their willingness and ability to continue their service as a poll worker.

### **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. Currently the Agency is working to enact laws that would:

- Set common municipal election dates.
- Set common special election dates.
- Bring the certification deadline for Presidential candidates more in line with certification deadlines for other candidates.
- Allow the SEC to institute a pilot project to gauge the feasibility of vote centers.
- Combine the voter registration boards and election commissions in the 9 counties which remain separate.

### **Online Poll Manager Training**

The SEC is in the process of purchasing a learning management system to be used for statewide poll manager training. Training courses will be designed to supplement in-person training on the county level. Online training allows potential poll managers across the state to access this training resource 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The system will also enable state and county election officials to manage the poll managers' learning of election laws and procedures through tracking and testing.

### **Federal Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant**

The Agency has applied and received approval for a continuing HHS grant totaling \$135,714. These funds are in addition to HHS Grant funds received since 2003. This will provide county election commissions opportunities to further upgrade the accessibility of their polling places for voters with disabilities. In addition to these upgrades, the SEC will work with the Voting Disability Coalition of

South Carolina to produce a video for voters who are deaf or hard of hearing. The video will educate these voters on what to expect at their polling place on Election Day.

## **Barriers**

### **Absence of Third-Year Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Funds**

Failure of the federal government to appropriate funds in the amount of \$8M for the third and final year of HAVA implementation required the HAVA State Plan budget to be modified. This modification included elimination of funding for the development of the new statewide voter registration system and reductions in voter education and outreach efforts.

### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

The statewide voter registration system currently used in South Carolina is an antiquated, legacy system. In General Election years, the system has performed poorly in periods of peak activity and produced unacceptable results. Problems experienced included 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.

### **Funding for New Statewide Voter Registration System**

The need for a new statewide voter registration system still exists. Work on the project will be restarted once funding is attained. The project originally began in 2001. Requirements for the system and a design of the system were not defined due to a lack of qualified resources within state government with applied project management and systems development experience. As a result, the project has been delayed numerous times over the past four years. After attempting several approaches, it was determined that, to properly develop the new system, further evaluation and work must be done. In order to complete this work, additional funding will be required.

### **Removal of Ineligible Voters/ Confirmation Mailings**

To maintain an accurate list of active registered voters, the SEC removes ineligible voters from the list. 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.

### **Participation in the Training and Certification Program**

Five hundred six election officials in the State are currently required by law to participate in the training and certification program. Participants include voter registration board members, election commission members, and their staffs. Two hundred ninety-seven officials have completed the program and are certified leaving 209 officials not certified. Of the 506 officials, 150 did not attend a class in FY2007. There are 18 officials who have never taken a class. While the Agency has oversight responsibility for training and certification, it has no authority to compel compliance with these requirements. All board members who do not meet the training requirement within the statutory timeframe may be removed by their appointing authority. Legislation was passed in FY2007 that requires the Governor to remove noncompliant board members, but only those members who were appointed after June 18, 2007.

### **Certification Deadline for Presidential Candidates**

Current law allows certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates to be certified. This deadline provides adequate time for neither the state to prepare county

election definitions nor the county election commissions to prepare ballots and meet the federal deadline to mail them to absentee voters.

### **Accounting System**

The current accounting system has been in use for more than 20 years. The antiquated system is not user friendly and produces unreliable results. The South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS) implementation for the SEC has been postponed by the SCEIS team and will likely occur in FY2008. SCEIS will replace the Basic Agency Reporting System (BARS) currently in use.

### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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**

<b>Customer/ Stakeholder</b>	<b>Requirements/ Expectations</b>
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 them 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 the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Research and Statistics, technology consultants, Election Systems and Software, county voter registration and election offices, voters and citizens, Office of State Budget, office supply companies, and printers.

## **Number of Employees and Locations**

The SEC staff consists of 18 full-time and one part-time employee and has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC. One position is unclassified and 17.5 positions are classified. The Executive Director is the only position in the Agency that is exempt from grievance rights

## **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**

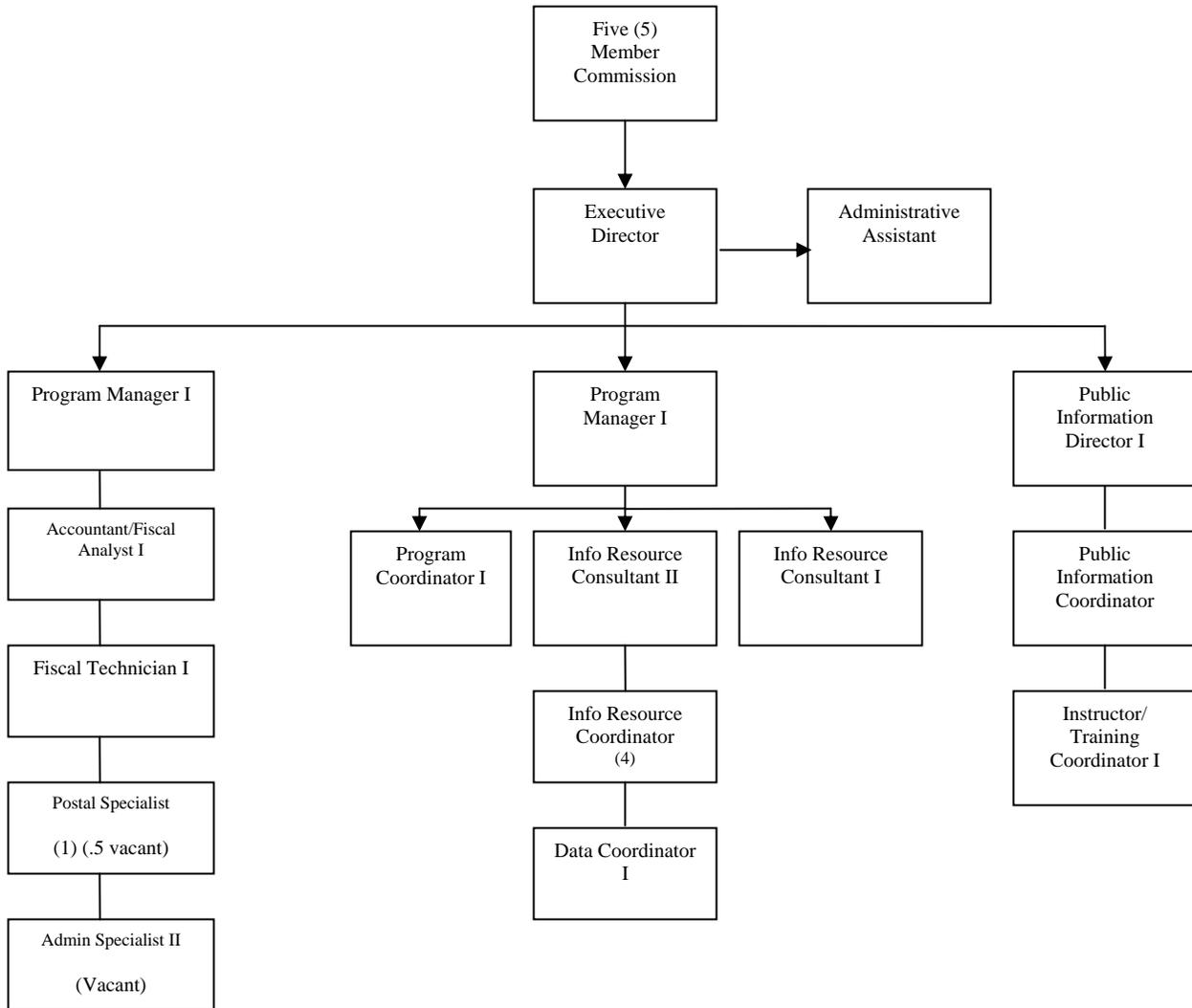
- Educating voters so that they have an understanding of the voter registration and election processes, including how to register to vote and how to vote using the electronic voting machines. Through voter education, the Agency works to build and maintain confidence in the State's voter registration and elections processes.
- Developing consistent procedures and setting standards to be followed by 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, particularly when it comes to human resources and updating our operational capacity.
- 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 Structure



## Expenditures/ Appropriations Chart

### Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	05-06 Actual Expenditures		06-07 Actual Expenditures		07-08 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$704,091*	\$645,387*	\$686,377*	\$569,341*	\$751,809	\$711,809
Other Operating	\$1,394,362	\$390,891	\$646,175	\$463,080	\$657,744	\$407,044
Special Items Permanent Improvements	\$1,202,976**	\$223,415**	\$644,567**	\$644,567**	\$135,000	\$0
Case Services Distributions to Subdivisions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fringe Benefits	\$515,014	\$515,014	\$515,014	\$515,014	\$515,014	\$515,014
Non-recurring	\$218,225	\$24,116	\$186,466	\$33,086	\$229,033	\$214,033
	\$0	\$0	\$5,170,390***	\$70,967***	\$6,556,560	\$192,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,034,668</b>	<b>\$1,798,823</b>	<b>\$7,848,989*</b>	<b>\$2,296,055</b>	<b>\$8,845,160</b>	<b>\$2,039,900</b>

\* Commissioner per diem funds are included in these figures.

\*\* Special primaries/elections and training are included in these figures.

\*\*\* Statewide primary, general election (non capital reserve) and HAVA expenditures included in these figures.

### Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	05-06 Actual Expenditures	06-07 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$1,029,451	\$500,000
Capital Reserve Funds	\$0	\$2,054,419
Bonds	\$0	\$0

## Major Program Areas

Program	Major Program Area	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	Key Cross
Number	Purpose	Budget Expenditures	Budget Expenditures	References for Financial Results
01010000/ Administration	Oversees the Agency's policies & procedures, provides leadership, support, financial services, other related administrative services	State: \$418,062 Federal: \$0 Other: \$66,666 Total: \$484,728 % of Budget: 12	State: \$368,180 Federal: \$0 Other: \$221,530 Total: \$589,709 % of Budget: 11	Figure 7.13 Figure 7.15 Figure 7.16
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: \$380,171 Federal: \$0 Other: \$74,562 Total: \$454,733 % of Budget: 12	State: \$541,597 Federal: \$0 Other: \$78,602 Total: \$620,199 % of Budget: 11	Figure 7.1 Figure 7.2 Figure 7.3 Figure 7.14
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: \$118,467 Federal: \$0 Other: \$25,212 Total: \$143,679 % of Budget: 4	State: \$123,509 Federal: \$0 Other: \$10,908 Total: \$134,418 % of Budget: 2	Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6 Figure 7.7 Figure 7.8 Figure 7.9 Figure 7.10 Figure 7.11 Figure 7.12
30010000/ Aid to Subdivisions	Provides a supplement to county board members/also provides aid to county for local registration board expense	State: \$513,889 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$513,889 % of Budget: 13	State: \$515,014 Federal: \$0 Other: \$ Total: \$515,014 % of Budget: 6	
95050000/ Benefits	Employee Benefits	State: \$127,220.14 Federal: \$0 Other: \$29,238.89 Total: \$156,459.03 % of Budget: 4	State: \$153,380 Federal: \$0 Other: \$33,086 Total: \$186,466 % of Budget: 3	

**Remainder of expenditures**

	<b>FY 05/06</b>	<b>FY 06/07</b>
	<b>Budget Expenditures</b>	<b>Budget Expenditures</b>
Primaries held during the year to fill vacancies	State: \$0 Federal: \$0 Other: \$68,367 Total: \$68,367 % of Budget: 5	State: \$0 Federal: \$0 Other: \$633,658 Total: \$633,658 % of Budget: 12

# SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE CRITERIA

## Category 1 - Leadership

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** 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, mentoring, and opportunity to improve their job performance.
- 1.1d** 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.
- 1.1e** 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.

<b>EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM</b>		
<b>Courses</b>	<b>Number Completed</b>	<b>Number Enrolled</b>
Executive Institute	2	0
Certified Public Manager	4	0
Associate Public Manager	5	0
Human Resource Professional Development	1	0
Public Professional Development	1	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 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.

- 1.1f** 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 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** Through encouragement and example, senior leaders participate in professional, election, and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. Many agency employees participate in the United Way State Employees Charitable Campaign. 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

<b>Program Number and Title</b>	<b>Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Related FY2006 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)</b>	<b>Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures</b>
	<b>Support Statewide Voting System</b> —Provide system support during local and statewide elections.		III. p.42 Figure 7.14
20010000/ Voter Services	<b>Statewide Voter Registration System</b> —Maintain and support the State’s voter registration system.	Provide training and assistance to county voter registration and election commission staff through training classes, onsite visits, and oral/written documentation.	I. p.33 Figure 7.1 Figure 7.2 Figure 7.3
	<b>Conduct of Elections</b> —Oversee and assist with conduct of primary election and ensure the quality of the election process	Provide oversight, consultative feedback, and training to county election commissions on election process and election law.	Figure 7.2 Figure 7.3 Figure 7.9 Figure 7.10 Figure 7.11 Figure 7.12
25000000/ Public Information/ Training	<b>Training and Certification</b> —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.	II. p.35 Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6 Figure 7.7 Figure 7.8
	<b>Implementation and Enforcement of Help America Vote Act</b> —Successfully implement and insure compliance with this federally mandated act	Develop and execute a plan to track the progress of various projects to ensure compliance with federal guidelines and deadlines.	IV. p.44

**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 a percentage value as it relates 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.

**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 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.

The management team also meets 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.

**3.4** 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.

For example, during the 2006 General Election, some voters thought they had registered to vote at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV); but due to operator errors, the applications were not processed. To accommodate these voters and get them registered, DMV worked with the SEC on a daily basis to look up their records and properly process them. The Agency continues to work with the DMV to ensure proper procedures are followed.

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

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

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. The Agency involves customers in the process of developing and improving its services.

## 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.

**4.2-4.3A** 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 is 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. For example, the SEC produced a weekly statistical printout that was mailed to each county voter registration office. County offices were surveyed to determine the validity of the weekly mail out, and it was determined that the counties do not need these reports as often. Based on this finding, reports are now mailed every other week at a cost savings of \$2500 per year.

**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 only 18 employees who are 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** 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 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.
- 5.4** Employee training and development is updated as necessary to allow the Agency to carry out its action plans.
- 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 problems as they arise.
- 5.6** 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. Employees often use their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

**5.7** 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.

**5.8** 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 new 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

The SEC is responsible for maintaining and ensuring security of a database of over two million registered voters in the State. Each county voter registration office is securely connected to a computer in Columbia which houses the statewide database of registered voters. The county voter registration offices add new registered voters and make changes to existing voter records within their county.

### Voter Registration System Processes

- Provide county boards of voter registration with a list of eligible voters for each election held in the State.
- Maintain an accurate history of election participation for each registered elector.
- Remove voter's names from the list of active, registered voters who have died, moved, been convicted of felonies or crimes against the election laws, or who have otherwise become ineligible.
- Provide technical support to the county boards of voter registration in the proper use of the statewide voter registration system. Limited support is also offered on computers and printers.
- Provide voters online access to information regarding the status of their voter registration.
- Provide voters online access to information regarding the status of their absentee ballot.
- Provide voters online access to information regarding the status of their provisional ballot.
- Provide forms and materials used for voter registration offices.
- Conduct confirmation mailing to verify the address of voters who have not participated in recent elections. Voters who are no longer residing at the address and do not vote in two consecutive general elections are placed on inactive status.
- Provide lists of current registered voters and lists of voters who participated in a particular election to agency customers.
- On a yearly basis, the SEC combines the voter registration file with the drivers license file to create a jury pool list. The SEC provides this list for a nominal fee to clerks of court and chief magistrates to be used for the selection of jurors.
- Update system to enhance performance and conform to changing laws and policies.
- Compare database with those of other states to detect dual registrations.

## II. Public Information and Training

### 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.

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.

Agency staff travels 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 FY2007, counties requested SEC assistance due to staff turnover within many county election offices. SEC staff was able to assist by answering questions and providing training.

### **Training and Certification Program**

All county election and voter registration officials and staff members are required by statute to complete the 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.

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.

### **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.

The SEC website, [www.SCVotes.org](http://www.SCVotes.org), is updated frequently based on input from agency customers and staff. Election results for all general elections, statewide primaries, and special elections for state offices are posted on the site as soon as they are available. Voters, candidates, poll workers, and news media use the site to find valuable information relative to their concerns. This site is reviewed on a monthly basis to determine whether changes are necessary to better serve these customers.

## **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 website, [www.SCVotes.org](http://www.SCVotes.org), is maintained in house by SEC staff and its purpose is to educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in the State. The site was created in September 2004 as part of the implementation of the HAVA State Plan. Some features of the site are:

- The latest information on the statewide voting system
- A downloadable "1-2-3 Vote" video demonstrating how to use the voting machines
- A downloadable voter registration application
- Frequently asked questions about voter registration and elections
- Spanish-language instructions for the electronic voting machines
- Voter registration and election results and statistics

## **Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration**

The SEC administers a federal four-year grant from the 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 its use. County election commissions, with the help of the disabled community, assess their polling places and identify needed improvements. Once a county makes a request, the SEC reviews the request and determines whether the request meets grant requirements. If approved, the county pays for the work to be completed and sends the Agency the required documentation for reimbursement.

## **Ballot Review and Approval**

All ballots for use in statewide primaries and general elections must be reviewed and approved by SEC staff before county officials print official ballots. These proof sheet ballots are mailed or faxed to the Public Information and Training Division for review and then returned to the county within 48 hours. While it is not required, many county and municipal election commissions send their sample ballots to the Agency for review prior to printing of official ballots.

## **III. Statewide Voting System**

### **Database Definition, Ballot Layout and Election Support**

Most election definition databases to support the electronic voting system are designed and defined by personnel in the Agency's Voter Services Division (VSD) using specialized software. Five counties define their own databases. State election law and information specific to a particular election govern the design of these databases. New peripheral technology associated with the voting system is explored and reviewed constantly by VSD personnel, 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 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 withdrawal and lawsuits, the goals are met by defining databases well in advance of receiving candidate names. This early delivery is accomplished by following strict procedures for performing quality assurance tests, receiving approval from counties, and completing the database once the candidate names are received.

VSD staff is knowledgeable and available for phone and limited on-site support to users of the voting system. In addition to calling a toll free number for the voting system vendor, users are able to contact Division staff for assistance. Division staff also conducts periodic security assessments and provides advice to users in areas where the state security plan is not followed. 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 constant 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.

### **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. Application packages are received with a fee of \$1,000 for first time certifications and \$500 for all upgrades to existing certified systems. Once the application and fee are received, staff at the SEC begins testing the system using a pre-defined process based on state election laws. Once the examination and test election are complete, the system is presented to SEC Commissioners for certification.

Since the State requires 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 Help America Vote Act (HAVA)**

The "Help America Vote Act of 2002" (HAVA) was signed by President Bush on October 29, 2002. 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 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 each year thereafter.

Once the State Plan was submitted, an implementation plan was developed to monitor the status of all tasks required. This plan was updated and posted monthly on the agency website at [www.SCVotes.org](http://www.SCVotes.org). Full compliance with HAVA was required by January 2006.

Federal Law requires each state to develop a long-range State Plan for HAVA implementation and provides funding to assist the state in implementation. The South Carolina State Plan provides a description of current election procedures, outlines how South Carolina has met or will meet the new requirements mandated by HAVA, and outlines changes South Carolina has made since release of the initial State Plan to bring the State into compliance with HAVA. The State Plan is updated and refined as necessary over time, to reflect election law changes and future plans. The State Plan reflects strategic objectives of great importance to every voter in South Carolina: implementation of a statewide uniform electronic voting system, support for disabled voters in every precinct in the State, enhancements to election administration, and training for voters, poll workers, and election officials. Building on current capabilities, the goal is to offer a higher level of service with increased ease of use, convenience, and consistency in every precinct across the State.

## **V. Agency Administration**

### **Agency Information Technology Support**

The Voter Services Division is responsible for the in-house, personal computer-based 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.

### **Accounts Payable**

When an invoice is received, the accounts payable clerk processes a voucher. The voucher and electronic copy are sent to the State Comptroller General where the information is uploaded and forwarded to the State Treasurer. 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.

### **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 62.2. In many cases, no other additional compensation is received by the board members. While some counties supplement the state stipend, most do not. 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, and they should be compensated accordingly.

## **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 Senate, House of Representatives, or the South Carolina Supreme Court.

## **Candidate Filing**

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 SEC also accepts Statement of Candidacy forms from candidates for director of multi-county watershed districts. The SEC collects Statement of Economic Interest forms from all candidates who file with the Agency and forwards the forms to the State Ethics Commission. Candidates are also provided a Campaign Disclosure form with instructions to complete it and return it to 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.

# Category 7 – Results

## I. Statewide Voter Registration System

### Voter Registration System Processes

- The SEC maintained and secured a database of more than 2.5 million registered voters.
- 144 voter registration lists were printed for elections held in the State during FY2007. All 144 voter registration lists were delivered on time.
- Voter history was captured from all 144 of the voter registration lists used.
- SEC staff removed 308,291 voters from the State’s list of active, registered voters due to reasons including felony conviction, death, move to another state, and request for removal.
- The SEC responded to 509 customer requests for lists of registered voters.
- The SEC produced 179 jury lists for county magistrates and clerks of court.

The current voter registration system has been in use since 1992. Enhancements are needed to meet county needs and federal reporting requirements. The system has seen only moderate updates over the past six years in anticipation of a new statewide voter registration system.

Figure 7.1 shows the number of active, registered voters in the State by year. Fluctuations in the numbers are due in part to the removal of voters who are no longer qualified. Figure 7.2 shows a breakdown of the voter registration lists printed by election type. Figure 7.3 reflects the number of voter registration lists printed by month.

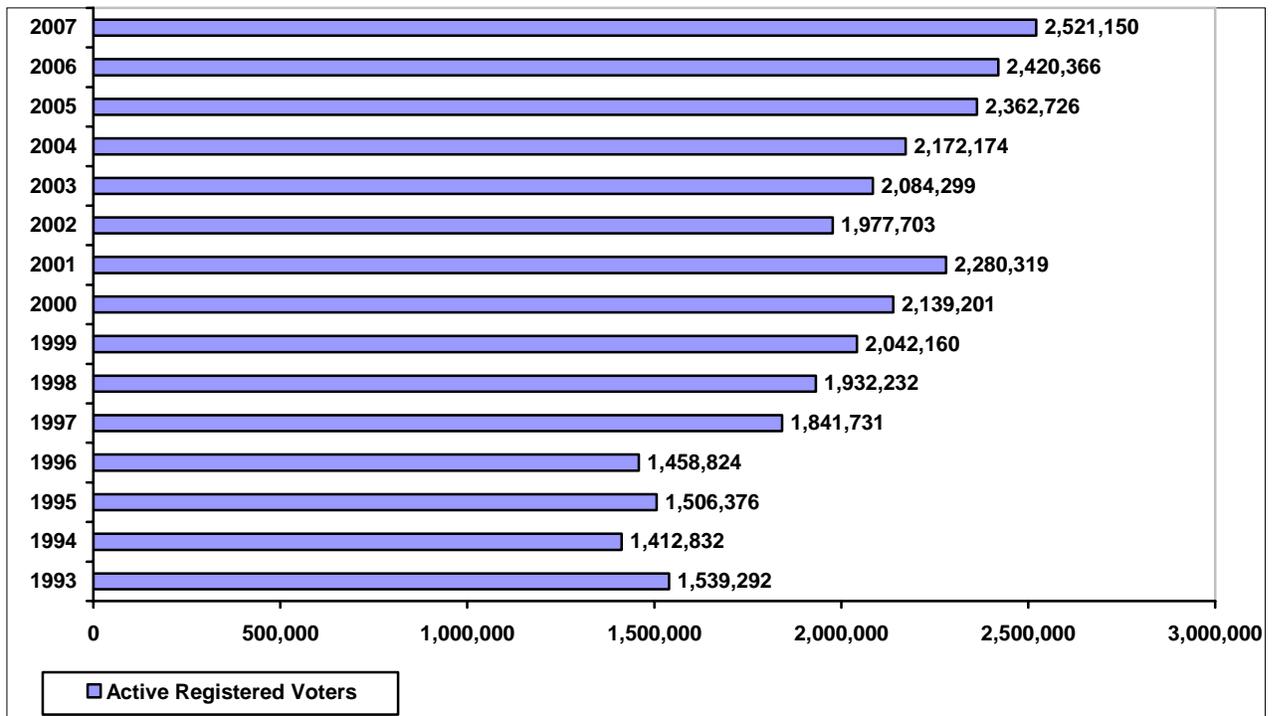


Figure 7.1

### Voter Registration Lists Printed by Election Type

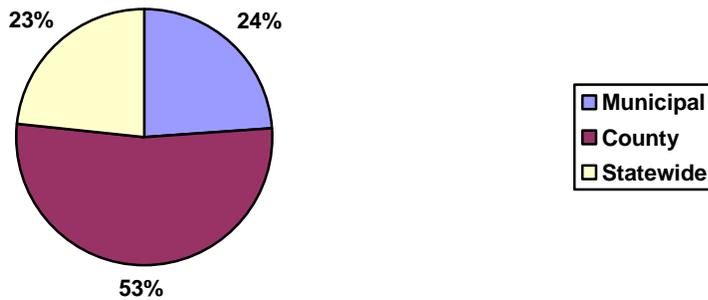


Figure 7.2

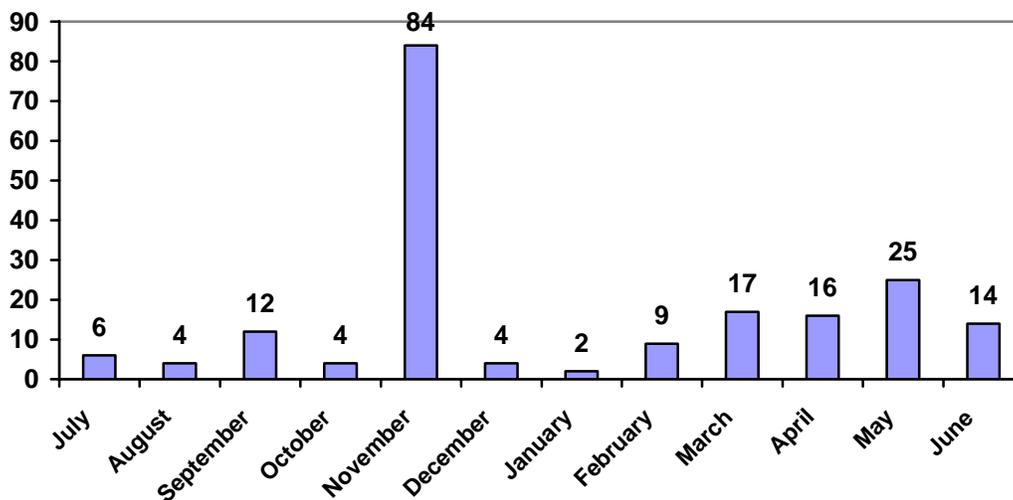


Figure 7.3

### Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)

During FY2007, an EVRL system was developed that allows poll workers to access the voter registration list using a laptop computer at the polling place. This system was designed so poll workers could more easily locate voters, determine voter ballot style, and capture voter participation. The system was used in five elections in the fiscal year, and proved to decrease the amount of time necessary to process voters. In a parallel test of the system versus the use of the printed list, it was determined that the average time poll workers took to locate and process voters on the EVRL was more than five minutes shorter than the time it took to process voters using the manual method. This is a significant time savings that could alleviate problems experienced in some polling places in past elections where voters stood in line for hours before voting.

Another benefit of the system is poll workers can direct voters to their correct precinct if they arrive at the incorrect precinct to vote. Since this list is in an electronic format, the poll manager has the capability to search the database and within seconds, inform the voter of their correct precinct and polling location. Without EVRL, a poll worker would have to call the voter registration office to get the information. EVRL proved particularly helpful in the 2006 Town of Mt. Pleasant General

Election where a re-precincting project had just taken place, and a number of voters arrived at their old precinct to vote.

Not only does EVRL benefit voters by streamlining the polling place procedure, but it also benefits the voter registration board by decreasing the number of telephone calls to their office on Election Day. This allows office staff to focus more time and resources on resolving other issues.

## **II. Public Information and Training**

### **Public Information**

During FY2007, the SEC Public Information Office fielded approximately 6,000 calls, e-mails, letters, and office visits from local and national media, candidates, political parties, county election commissions, county voter registration offices, and the general public. The public and media were actively informed of news, events, deadlines, statistics, and results relating to all state and multi-county elections. Nineteen major press releases were issued through the public information office in FY2007. The Agency conducted campaigns leading up to the 2006 General Election to inform voters of the importance of updating their voter registration information, and to ask that voters familiarize themselves with the nine constitutional amendment questions prior to Election Day. Many newspapers and broadcast news stations provided helpful information to voters and positive coverage of the voting system. Newspapers printed instructions on how to vote using the electronic voting system, and SEC staff appeared on television news programs to demonstrate the voting machine. This proactive dissemination of accurate and reliable information contributed greatly to the success of the 2006 General Election.

### **SCVotes.org – Legacy Site Merger**

The SEC completed the merger of its older legacy site, [www.state.sc.us/scsec](http://www.state.sc.us/scsec), with the current, more user-friendly portal, [www.SCVotes.org](http://www.SCVotes.org). All information once contained on the legacy site can now be found on the new site. Customers who attempt to visit the legacy site are automatically redirected to SCVotes.org. Completion of the merger not only provides easier access to more information, it eliminates the confusion that resulted from the necessity of operating two sites at once during the merger. Information found on the site includes:

- General election results (1996-Present).
- Voter participation statistics (1996-Present).
- Voter registration statistics (1984-Present).
- Current election information such as filing and registration deadlines, polling place locations and key election dates.
- Voter registration instructions and application.
- County voter registration board and election commission contact information.
- The ability of a registered voter to access their voter registration information and determine the districts in which they are qualified to vote.
- Provisional ballot status check enabling a voter to verify if their ballot was counted and if not, the reason it was not counted.
- Voters participating in an election through the absentee process can access information to track the issuance and receipt of applications and ballots.
- Schedules containing key dates and deadlines for upcoming elections.

- Information for candidates concerning the election process.
- Information for poll workers, including the poll manager’s handbook and training videos.
- Help America Vote Act (HAVA) compliance information.

On the evening of the 2006 General Election, [www.SCVotes.org](http://www.SCVotes.org) was updated with election results as they were transmitted to the Agency from the 46 counties. Voters, candidates, news media, and other interested parties used the site to obtain results. 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 usefulness of the information found there.

Figure 7.4 shows information regarding activity on the site in FY2007. Figure 7.5 reflects how activity on the site increases in the months leading up to a General Election. Figure 7.6 shows the pages receiving the most views in the 2006 calendar year.

SCVotes.org - Activity				
Month	Unique Visitors	Visits	Pages	Hits
July	3,138	5,546	17,715	103,264
August	3,985	7,150	21,580	152,406
September	6,886	12,695	44,454	299,503
October	23,738	41,033	217,583	1,321,751
November	48,951	79,243	375,392	2,889,019
December	2,526	5,406	23,604	130,768
January	2,620	5,486	41,714	165,269
February	2,437	5,917	26,905	138,408
March	2,604	6,553	31,290	156,559
April	2,594	6,495	32,418	147,545
May	3,025	6,610	32,211	181,309
June	4,560	8,806	38,467	253,145
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>190,940</b>	<b>903,333</b>	<b>5,938,946</b>

Figure 7.4

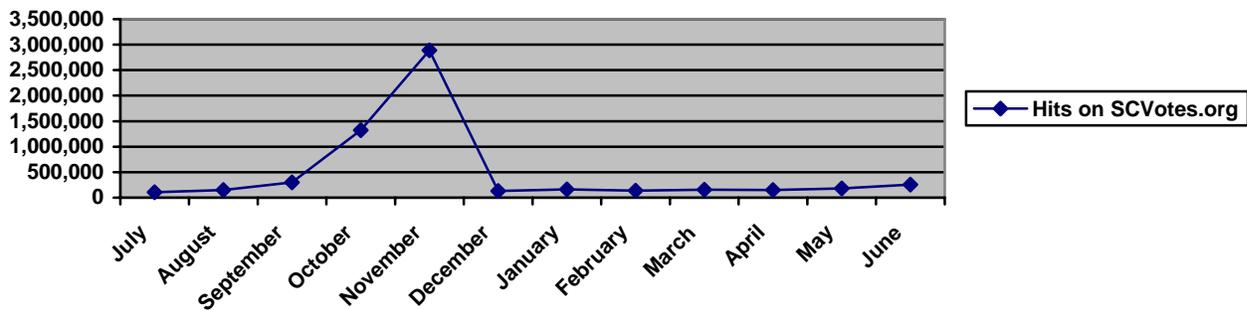


Figure 7.5

<b>SCVotes.org – 10 Most Viewed Pages of 2006*</b>	
<b>Page</b>	<b>Views</b>
Homepage	169,399
Voter Registration Information & Form	60,357
Search	34,229
2006 Constitutional Amendments	33,980
How to Vote/ Absentee Voting	30,692
2006 Constitutional Office Candidates	14,088
Candidate Information	13,782
2006 U.S. House Candidates	9,855
2006 S.C. House Candidates	9,664
2006 Solicitor Candidates	6,233

\*Calendar Year

**Figure 7.6**

## **Voter Education and Outreach**

The SEC worked during FY2007 to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in South Carolina. The Agency’s efforts continued to pay particular attention to ensuring voters were informed about the use of the State’s electronic voting machines. This focused voter education effort, *SC Votes*, has been ongoing since 2004, when the SEC issued an RFP for a campaign to commence in conjunction with the implementation of the new voting system. The *SC Votes* campaign promotes the theme “Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” The initiative includes: educational brochures, a “How to Vote” video and literature, direct mail, an outreach program, a voter education website, and a statewide mass media campaign.

Figure 7.7 shows an overview of *SC Votes* campaign activity. Figure 7.8 shows a breakdown by county of each event visited.

<b>SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Overview– FY2007</b>	
Voter Education Events	110
Voting Machine Demonstrations	9,630
Counties Visited	33
Statewide Events	11
Voter Registration Applications Distributed	468

**Figure 7.7**

<b>SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Events – FY2007</b>			
<b>County</b>	<b>Voter Education Event</b>		
Statewide	Municipal Assoc. of S.C. Conf. S.C. State Fair (3 days) Charleston Black Expo. Columbia Black Expo.	S.C. Assoc. of Counties Conf. SCARE Conf. S.C. Assistive Tech. Expo. 2007 CERA Expo for Teacher Recruitment	National Federation of the Blind – S.C. Convention Columbia International Fest.
Abbeville	AME Conf. Series- St. James AME Church		
Allendale	Allendale Cooter Fest.		
Bamberg	Bamberg Job Corps		
Barnwell	Fall Heritage Fest.	41 <sup>st</sup> Governor's Frog Jump	
Beaufort	Beaufort Water Fest.		
Charleston	Patriot's Point 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Celebration Hollywood Fire Station House Island Heritage Fest.	Women's Conf. 2007 Trident Tech. Institute	McClellanville Lowcountry Shrimp Fest.
Cherokee	S.C. Peach Fest. Mighty Moo Fest.	Bethel Baptist Church – Golden Celebration Luncheon	Cherokee County Adult/Community Education
Chesterfield	Pageland Watermelon Fest.		
Clarendon	28 <sup>th</sup> Annual Striped Bass Fest.		
Dorchester	AME Conf. Series – Bethel AME Church		
Edgefield	Heritage Fest. Jubilee	Ridge Peach Fest.	
Fairfield	Fairfield Council on Aging		
Florence	AME Conf. Series – Mt. Zion AME Church	S.C. Tobacco Fest.	
Georgetown	Georgetown Harbor Fest.		
Greenville	7 <sup>th</sup> Annual Fest. Independencia of Colombia		
Greenwood	Fest. of Discovery Promised Land Fire Dept. Ware Shoals Catfish Fest.	Piedmont Technical College Mt. Zion Baptist Church	AME Conf. Series – Morris Chapel Baptist Church
Hampton	Hampton Co. Watermelon Fest.		
Horry	Awendaw Blue Crab Fest. 'Round the Fourth Fest.	Aynor Harvest Hoe-Down Fest.	Loris Bog-off Fest.
Kershaw	Kershaw Council on Aging		
Lancaster	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual MCIC International Fest.	Andrew Jackson Birthday Celebration	
Lee	Lee County Cotton Fest.		
Lexington	Lexington County Peach Fest. Brookland Baptist Health & Wellness Center Health Fair	Fest. to Highlight the Health Brookland Baptist Church – Black Male Conf.	Irmo Okra Strut
Marion	Golden Leaf Festival		
Marlboro	Ebenezer United Methodist Church	Beaver Dam Baptist Church – Women's Day	Greater White Creek Baptist Church
McCormick	Gold Rush Festival		
Newberry	Pleasant Grove AME's Church Bazaar Newberry Council on Aging	Little Mountain Reunion Fest. AME Conf. Series - Miller Chapel AME Church	Prosperity's Hoppin' Whitmire Party in the Pines
Orangeburg	AME Conference Series - Butler Chapel AME Church	41 <sup>st</sup> Governor's Frog Jump	
Richland	28 <sup>th</sup> Annual Jubilee Fest. of Heritage Columbia's Greek Festival MCEPD Resource Fair Main Street Latin Festival Benedict College Student Election Sparkleberry Country Fair Life Changing Ministries	National Federation of the Blind – Columbia SC Commission for the Blind - Columbia (Bull Street) 8th Annual Hispanic Health Issues Conf. (2 days)	SCSSA - New Voters Project & Press Conf. Sallie Mae's Nationwide Bus Tour NAACP - USC Voter Education & Registration meeting AGAPE Church of God in Christ
Saluda	Ridge Spring Harvest Festival	Saluda Shopping Center	Saluda Council on Aging
Spartanburg	Piedmont State Fair (2 days)		
Sumter	Sumter County Fair (2 days)		
Union	Voter Awareness Education Day	Union County Fair	
Williamsburg	AME Conf. Series – Bethel AME Church	Santee Electric Coop.	

**Figure 7.8**

## **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. Some accomplishments include:

1. Conducted voter education 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 \$253,616 in federal grant money was used on polling place upgrades, training, and education. (see p.42)
4. The SEC conducted training classes as part of the training and certification program aimed at increasing disability awareness.
5. The Agency distributed a training video for county election officials aimed at improving disability awareness and polling place accessibility. This video was also made available on the agency website.
6. The *SC Votes* voter education tour visited disabled communities throughout the State. These demonstrations showed use of the ADA voting unit and its Braille-embossed navigation buttons to support visually impaired voters. The curbside accessibility of the machine to voters with physical limitations was also demonstrated.
7. A page dedicated to voters with disabilities was added to the agency website. The page features information on assistance at the polls, curbside voting, and special instructions for voters who are deaf. There is also a downloadable large-print voter registration application.
8. A Braille brochure containing voter registration and voting information was made available to members of the blind community.
9. Large type polling place material was made available.
10. County election commissions were surveyed 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. Seventeen classes were held in FY2007. A total of 571 participants attended these classes held in Columbia, Charleston, 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 January, 27 election officials were presented with certificates for completing the program over the previous year.

There are 506 election officials who are required by law to complete the program and become certified. 297 members have completed the program and are certified leaving 209 members not certified. Of the 506 members, 150 members did not attend a class in fiscal year 2006. There are 18 members who have never taken a class.

Figure 7.9 shows the classes offered in FY2007, the number of times they were offered, and the number of participants. Figure 7.10 shows the level of participation of commission and board members and their staffs in each county.

<b>Training and Certification Classes*</b>	<b>Times Offered</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
Redistricting/Reprecincting	2	77
Parliamentary Procedures	2	54
Duties of the Voter Registration Board	2	47
Budgeting and Election Reimbursement	1	42
Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training	1	40
Duties of the Election Commission	1	35
Office Procedures	1	25
Diversity in the Workplace	1	40
Legislative Process and Relations	1	50
Ballot Layout	1	31
ElectionNET	1	22
Election Security	1	35
Team Building Skills	1	43
Protest Hearings	1	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>571</b>

\* Due to 2006 General Election, there were no October classes.

**Figure 7.9**

<b>Participation in the Training and Certification Program – FY2007</b>				
County	Commission Member Allowed	Members Certified*	Staff Members	Staff Certified*
ABBEVILLE	7	5	1	1
AIKEN	7	7	4	2
ALLENDALE	7	6	0	0
ANDERSON	7	2	5	2
BAMBERG	7	6	1	0
BARNWELL	7	2	2	0
BEAUFORT	9	7	7	6
BERKELEY	9	2	5	4
CALHOUN	10	8	2	1
CHARLESTON	9	5	14	4
CHEROKEE	10	4	2	1
CHESTER	8	2	2	0
CHESTERFIELD	9	5	2	0
CLARENDON	10	3	3	1
COLLETON	9	5	2	2
DARLINGTON	7	7	2	2
DILLON	9	1	3	1
DORCHESTER	7	6	6	5
EDGEFIELD	7	2	2	1
FAIRFIELD	7	4	2	1
FLORENCE	7	3	5	2
GEORGETOWN	9	3	3	2
GREENVILLE	10	6	7	6
GREENWOOD	10	3	4	2
HAMPTON	7	5	2	1
HORRY	10	6	5	5
JASPER	9	5	2	1
KERSHAW	7	2	2	1
LANCASTER	7	6	1	1
LAURENS	9	8	2	1
LEE	9	5	2	2
LEXINGTON	7	3	4	2
MARION	7	5	1	1
MARLBORO	7	5	2	0
MCCORMICK	5	4	1	1
NEWBERRY	7	5	2	0
OCONEE	5	5	1	1

<b>Participation in the Training and Certification Program – FY2007</b>				
County	Commission Member Allowed	Members Certified*	Staff Members	Staff Certified*
ORANGEBURG	7	7	3	1
PICKENS	7	4	2	1
RICHLAND	10	8	2	2
SALUDA	7	7	1	1
SPARTANBURG	6	5	7	4
SUMTER	7	4	3	3
UNION	8	6	1	1
WILLIAMSBURG	9	1	2	2
YORK	8	6	4	3

**Figure 7.10**

### 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 7.11 shows a breakdown of those classes held during the FY2007 and the number of customers serviced.

<b>Training Classes and Workshops</b>	<b>Total Events</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
County Poll Manager Workshops	10	270
County Poll Manager Voting Machine Workshops	16	355
County Rover Training	2	10
Municipal Poll Manager Workshops	3	33
Municipal Election Commission Workshops	4	86

**Figure 7.11**

### Agency Intranet

ElectionNET, the Agency's election community intranet, continued to grow in FY2007 and emerge as an indispensable tool for distribution of information, training, and collaboration. At its inception in June 2005, the site was primarily a testing ground with just a handful of users, mostly SEC employees. By June 30, 2007, there were 325 users from all 46 counties, who had posted 2,696 stories and comments on the site. Figure 7.12 shows information regarding activity on the site in FY2007.

<b>ElectionNET Activity – FY2007</b>				
Month	Unique Visitors	Visits	Pages	Hits
July	288	2,027	265,980	547,508
August	381	2,811	357,928	683,746
September	324	2,101	316,353	617,360
October	318	2,029	331,616	573,531
November	350	2,359	403,116	750,646
December	251	1,377	235,400	428,629
January	232	1,707	354,456	623,949
February	346	1,897	376,925	752,543
March	322	2,127	426,037	875,912
April	210	1,865	399,059	754,404
May	219	1,911	366,780	674,555
June	277	1,817	350,658	613,403
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>24,028</b>	<b>4,184,308</b>	<b>7,896,186</b>

**Figure 7.12**

## Ballot Review and Approval

The SEC assists county election commissions and municipalities by serving as a final reviewer for ballots. 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. The SEC strives for no later than a 48 hour turn-around time for approval.

During FY2007, staff in the Public Information and Training division reviewed approximately 50 ballots for special and municipal elections held throughout the State.

Staff reviewed approximately 600 ballot styles for the 2006 General Election. County election commission staff submitted copies of absentee ballots and screenshots of voting machine ballots via e-mail. The ballots were then examined for errors and returned with corrections to be made when necessary. This process was repeated until a group of error-free ballots was produced for a county, and the ballots were approved.

## Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration

The SEC applied for and received a federal grant providing \$677,753 over a four-year period from October 1, 2003, through June 19, 2007. This grant is earmarked for improving access for voters with disabilities through polling place upgrades, training, and education. In FY2007, 14 counties and the SEC were reimbursed \$253,616 to provide paved handicapped parking, parking signs, ramps, curb cuts, handrails, accessible entrances, and various cones and markers at 139 polling places. Figure 7.13 shows the number of precincts improved and monies reimbursed by county in FY2007.

<b>HHS Grant Administration – FY2007</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Precincts</b>	<b>Amount Reimbursed in FY2007</b>
Abbeville	14	\$15,537.26
Bamberg	1	\$27,131.19
Charleston	1	\$26,999.00
Colleton	5	\$21,131.99
Dorchester	49	\$6,307.96
Fairfield	8	\$33,205.75
Georgetown	1	\$6,194.09
Greenwood	10	\$10,951.70
Lexington	3	\$20,849.06
McCormick	1	\$8,500.00
Oconee	3	\$47,801.00
Sumter	24	\$4,221.50
Union	1	\$7,100.00
Williamsburg	18	\$17,455.99
SEC	n/a	\$229.10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>\$253,615.59</b>

**Figure 7.13**

### **III. Statewide Voting System**

The Voter Services Division continually works on various process improvement initiatives. As the State has transitioned from older voting systems to a more technically advanced system, it has been necessary for SEC staff to transition from one with more clerical-based skills to a staff with an advanced skill set. The following initiatives were taken during this fiscal period:

- Division staff was re-organized to match skills with tasks.
- After retirement of an employee in an administrative position, the position was re-classified to a more needed technical position, and an employee with a higher skill set was hired.
- A vacant position was re-classified to hire an employee with a higher technical skill set.
- Forms were created to allow users to enter vital election information through the agency Intranet rather than hand written forms used in the past. These new fill-in forms are faster, easier to use, and eliminate errors experienced with previous methods.

#### **Database Definition**

Databases containing election specific information such as offices, candidate names, and districts on a ballot are defined by SEC personnel with skills and training necessary to use the specialized software associated with the system. These databases are used to import information into electronic voting machines used in each election. By providing this service to county and municipal election commissions at a minimal charge, they are able to significantly reduce election costs. For the 2006 General Election, database definition was performed by the voting system vendor. This was a contractual obligation that was satisfied in November 2006. As of December 2006, SEC staff accepted this responsibility in its entirety. Five counties chose to define their own databases. During FY2007, SEC staff defined 104 databases. Each database was reviewed by a separate staff member for quality assurance, and all were delivered within five weeks prior to Election Day. If the voting system vendor had defined these 104 databases, it would have cost the State and counties \$209,318. In future years, this cost savings will be much greater as the SEC begins defining databases for statewide elections.

#### **Support and Training**

On-site Election Day support to county offices is not a requirement of the SEC. However, during the transition period between vendor supported implementation to complete installation, personnel in the Voter Services division were able to offer this support. Staff made 13 on-site visits to county offices, and 16 training sessions were conducted by SEC staff.

#### **Voting System Certification**

The SEC certified an upgrade to the State's current voting system software in FY2007. An application for certification of Unity Version 3.0.1.1 was submitted in March 2007, and an examination process followed. Figure 7.14 shows a timeline of that certification process.

<b>Voting System Software Upgrade Certification Process - FY2007</b>	
<i>Date</i>	<i>Action Performed</i>
3/7/07	Application for Certification Received
4/16/07 – 4/18/07	Examination and testing of system begins with vendor demonstration of changes
5/1/07	All questions resulting from initial examination were answered by vendor
5/1/07 – 5/20/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful mock election conducted for purposes of testing all aspects of the system from initial set-up to election night reporting</li> <li>• Election definition performed for a municipal, primary and school election. These test were successful as to functionality of voting systems as required by the South Carolina Code of Laws</li> </ul>
6/22/07	Certification approved by the State Election Commission

**Figure 7.14**

## **IV. Administration of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)**

The South Carolina State Plan provides a description of current election procedures, outlines how South Carolina has met the requirements mandated by HAVA, and outlines changes South Carolina has made since release of the initial State Plan to bring the State into compliance with HAVA. Information from the Federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC) indicated that The State Plan was not required to be updated unless major material changes were made to the plan. However, the South Carolina plan will be updated to reflect accomplishments during FY2007. South Carolina is currently HAVA Compliant.

FY2007 HAVA Activities:

- Full installation of statewide voting system
- Approximately \$253,616 in HHS grants issued to county election commissions for accessibility upgrades to polling locations
- Training, workshops, and on-site meetings to relay election information to county election officials, voters, poll managers, and voters
- Management of HAVA funds following federal guidelines
- Continuation of voter education and outreach program

## **V. Agency Administration**

### **Accounts Payable**

In FY2007, a total of 1,125 vouchers were processed. Of the vouchers processed, 102 were for Primary/Runoff Elections, 14 were for special elections, 206 were for the general election, 58 were HAVA transactions, and the remainder was for various expenses paid from general and other funds.

### **Poll Manager Reimbursement**

Figure 7.15 breaks down the number of poll managers and student poll managers by county, including how much each county was reimbursed.

<b>Poll Manager Reimbursement – FY2007</b>						
<b>County</b>	<b>Poll Managers (PM)</b>	<b>Reimbursed for PM</b>	<b>Student PM</b>	<b>Reimbursed for Student PM</b>	<b>Reimbursed for Additional Training</b>	<b>Total Reimbursed</b>
Abbeville	78	10,800			2,400	13,200
Aiken	429	57,000	48	5,760		62,760
Allendale	42	6,300	1	120		6,420
Anderson	413	54,900	58	6,960	11,500	73,360
Bamberg	51	7,560	7	1,240	2,600	11,400
Barnwell	85	11,640	6	720	3,000	15,360
Beaufort	417	58,680		9,960	11,100	79,740
Berkeley	325	41,320	7	780		42,100
Calhoun	69	12,180	4	480		12,660
Charleston	868	114,700	76	9,100	3,000	126,800
Cherokee	162	25,020	15	1,800	3,000	29,820
Chester	97	12,960	11	1,320		14,280
Chesterfield	141	17,940			5,300	23,240
Clarendon	96	13,020	81	4,860		17,880
Colleton	112	15,720	15	1,800	3,700	21,220
Darlington	241	30,540	6	720		31,260
Dillon	131	20,780	1	120		20,900
Dorchester	392	58,570			8,400	66,970
Edgefield	114	10,860	2	240		11,100
Fairfield	94	12,540	2	340	4,200	17,080
Florence	273	48,660	4	480		49,140
Georgetown	191	15,060	5	780		15,840
Greenville	867	112,860	137	16,440	25,700	155,000
Greenwood	271	33,900	1	120	4,620	38,640
Hampton	94	10,560			3,400	13,960
Horry	528	70,140	62	7,440	21,800	99,380
Jasper	71	10,140	12	1,500		11,640
Kershaw	255	25,800	10	1,200	5,900	32,900
Lancaster	186	24,600	5	600		25,200
Laurens	190	24,360	16	1,020		25,380
Lee	80	11,280	2	120	4,400	15,800
Lexington	680	85,800	36	4,320	13,300	103,420
Marlboro	113	14,000			2,900	16,900
McCormick	36	5,580			2,000	7,580
Marion	99	12,960	4	480	3,400	16,840
Newberry	126	15,660	2	240		15,900
Oconee	151	20,160	15	1,800	6,000	27,960
Orangeburg	297	38,500	61	7,320	6,120	51,940
Pickens	333	44,800	15	1,950		46,750
Richland	949	115,800	139	16,680	15,700	148,180
Saluda	71	10,380	11	1,420	3,200	15,000
Spartanburg	440	58,980	120	9,600		68,580
Sumter	341	44,100	70	8,400	10,700	63,200
Union	118	16,320	15	2,500	2,750	21,570
Williamsburg	149	20,340	1	120	5,400	25,860
York	505	64,740	40	15,600	11,800	92,140
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,771</b>	<b>\$1,548,510</b>	<b>1,123</b>	<b>\$146,450</b>	<b>\$207,290</b>	<b>\$1,902,250</b>

**Figure 7.15**

**Supplement to County Election Commissions and Registration Boards**

Full funding for the approximately 400 voter registration and election commission board members was not appropriated in FY2007. Each board member should receive a \$1,500 annual supplement with a \$12,500 cap for each county. In counties with more than eight board members, the cap prevents the members from receiving the full \$1,500 supplement. The SEC has requested Proviso 62.2 be amended to remove the cap, and full funding for this budget priority be provided.

**South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS)**

SCEIS is a new common accounting system being implemented for all South Carolina agencies. The funds to implement the system have been encumbered. The SEC was originally scheduled to implement the new system in July 2007. However, the implementations schedule has been revised by the SCEIS team. We anticipate implementation in FY2008.

**Agency Information Technology Support**

The Agency conducted a cost-benefit analysis of providing agency computer network support in house or outsourcing the support. This analysis showed it would be more beneficial to contract this support through the State CIO. Currently, the agency server is housed in a secure environment and maintained by the CIO.

**Election Protest/Appeal Hearings**

The SEC, in its capacity as the State Board of Canvassers, is required by law to hear testimony and render decisions on election protests filed in state and federal elections. State law also requires the Board to hear testimony and render decisions on appeals of county boards of canvassers’ decisions. In FY2007, the Board heard one appeal of a decision made by the Charleston County Board of Canvassers. Figure 7.16 shows the specifics of the hearing and the decision of the Board.

<b>Election Protests and Appeals – FY2007</b>	
<b>Protest/Appeal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>Kevin Wilburn vs. Kershaw County</b> (Appeal, December 5, 2006)	Denied the appeal and sustained the decision of the Kershaw County Board of Canvassers as modified.
<b>Jerry Horton vs. Kershaw County</b> (Appeal, December 5, 2006)	Denied the appeal and sustained the decision of the Kershaw County Board of Canvassers.
<b>Michael Visnich vs. Horry County Election Commission</b> (Appeal, December 11, 2006)	The appeal for Local Question #1 was denied. The appeal for Local Question #2 was granted, the results were declared void, and a new election was ordered.
<b>Danny Stacy vs. Dennis Moss</b> (Protest, December 14, 2006)	Denied the protest and sustained the results of the November 7, 2006 House District 29 election.

**Figure 7.16**

## **Candidate Filing**

One petition for a state office was filed with the SEC in FY2007. Michael Letts filed a candidate petition for State House of Representatives District 79 (Richland & Kershaw) prior to the filing deadline for the 2006 General Election. The petition was found to be valid and Michael Letts was listed as a petition candidate on the ballot. The Agency also accepted the filing of 16 candidates for the office of director in seven separate multi-county watershed districts.

## **Certification of Political Parties**

Two political parties were certified by the SEC in FY2007. The Working Families Party was certified in July 2006. The Labor Party was certified in September 2006. Each party submitted a petition, and through the petition verification process, each petition was determined to contain valid signatures in excess of the required 10,000. South Carolina now has nine certified political parties: Constitution, Democratic, Green, Independence, Labor, Libertarian, Republican, United Citizens, and Working Families.