

SOUTH CAROLINA

ELECTION COMMISSION

October 2025

AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF DORCHESTER COUNTY'S BALLOT RECONCILIATION WORKSHEETS FROM THE NOVEMBER 2022 GENERAL ELECTION

The mission of the South Carolina State Election Commission (SEC) is to ensure every eligible citizen can register to vote and participate in fair and impartial elections, knowing that every vote counts and every vote matters.

Pursuant to S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3), the SEC is authorized to conduct audits of county boards of voter registration and elections to ensure those boards' compliance with applicable state or federal laws or SEC policies, procedures, or standardized processes regarding the conduct of elections or the voter registration process by all persons involved. These audits are conducted by the SEC's Audit Division.

Additionally, S.C. Code §7-3-25(A) authorizes the SEC to identify any compliance failures and establish and implement a corrective action to remedy such failures. Recommendations in this report will require implementation of a corrective action plan that is developed by the county and approved by the SEC's Audit Division.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

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Summary of Results

For the November 2022 General Election, 74% of Dorchester County's ballot reconciliation worksheets were completed, and 29% were reconciled. On most of the worksheets that were partially completed, this was due to the lack of a requirement from the State Election Commission (SEC) to fill every field, even if zero. For the 71% of the county's worksheets that were not reconciled, this was due to different factors, including data entry errors and electronic pollbook (EPB) connectivity issues. Adequately completing and reconciling these worksheets for each polling location may give greater assurance that all valid ballots were included in the election results.

Background

As defined by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, ballot reconciliation is the method in which election officials keep track of each ballot that has been printed or issued to a voter. Tracking the number of ballots printed, used, and unused during an election cycle ensures election officials have accounted for every ballot created and the election results include every valid ballot cast.

In South Carolina, printed paper ballots were not common until the state's current voting equipment was implemented in all 46 counties in 2020. Prior to then, the state used a direct recording electronic, or DRE, as part of its voting system. A DRE is a vote capture device in which ballots are displayed, selections are made, and results are stored all via electronic format. The exceptions to this were the ballots printed for voters whose right to vote had been challenged at the precinct or who had moved but were still allowed to vote and the printed ballots used in emergency situations. Since these ballots were the only ballots in paper form, these were the only ballots that could be accounted for at the time.

South Carolina's transition in February 2020 to a paper-based voting system, with 100% printed paper ballots, significantly altered the process of accounting for ballots. In preparation for the change to this new system, the SEC developed a ballot reconciliation worksheet in September 2019 to account for and reconcile ballots supplied, used, not used, and lost as well as the number of voters who voted. Over the last five years, there have been minor updates to the worksheet, but it remains generally the same as the September 2019 version. Figure 1 below is an image of the ballot reconciliation worksheet used during the 2022 November General Election. It is important to note that a description of the worksheet and the terms used within are included in the analysis that follows.

Figure 1: S.C. State Election Commission's Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

County _____ Precinct _____ Date _____

Ballots Supplied		
A	Ballot Cards (Completed by County Office)	
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Completed by County Office) (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
C	Additional Ballot Cards	
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
		Total 1

Ballots Used		
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Number displayed on the Scanner/DS200)	
F	Provisional Ballots (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots/Envelopes)	
G	Spoiled Ballots (Ballot Cards + Hand-Marked Paper Ballots)	
		Total 2

Ballots Not Used		
H	Ballot Cards	
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)	
		Total 3

Voters Checked In		
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB)	
K	Paper Poll List (Include Provisionals NOT entered in the EPB) (DO NOT Include Curbside Poll List)	
		Total 4

Total 2 + **Total 3** = (Should equal Total 1)

Total 4 + **G** = (Should equal Total 2)

Explain any discrepancies:

Are you returning any Emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Do NOT include Provisional or Failsafe Provisional ballots)

SEC FRM 1150-202208

every vote matters.
every vote counts.

Source: S.C. State Election Commission

State Law and SEC Requirements

While state law only requires ballot reconciliation for election day, the SEC’s standardized operating procedures mandate this process for absentee and early voting as well. However, the scope of our audit was limited to election day ballot reconciliation, specifically for the 2022 November General Election. Therefore, the following sections provide an overview of the legal requirements for ballot reconciliation and the SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet as they pertain to election day.

Overview

S.C. Code §7-13-1150 requires poll clerks—the lead poll managers—to account for all ballots delivered to them and return the number of ballots supplied, spoiled—ballots that were defaced or marked in error—unused, voted, and lost, if any. S.C. Code §7-13-1410 requires poll managers to count the number of individuals who voted as well as unused and spoiled ballots. Between the two sections of the law, a poll clerk must account for ballots supplied, ballots used—including spoiled and lost ballots—ballots unused, and voters who voted. This accounting of ballots is also referred to as ballot reconciliation.

By Voting Type and Election Type

In the abovementioned sections of state law, the use of the terms poll clerk and precinct suggest that ballot reconciliation is performed by a clerk at a precinct, which only occurs on election day. As for election type, Title 7 of the S.C. Code of Laws applies to all types of elections—primary, general, special, and runoff. As such, ballot reconciliation is required to be performed for all types of elections. Because these worksheets are intended to ensure all valid ballots in an election have been cast, they are to be completed prior to a county’s certification—a statement by the county’s board of canvassers that election results are a true and accurate accounting of all votes cast in a particular election.

Overview of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet

The SEC’s ballot reconciliation worksheet is intended to be used by poll clerks to document, by precinct, the total ballots supplied, used, unused, and voters who voted. This worksheet accounts for these required components and contains two formulas, which are meant to ensure the appropriate values reconcile with each other. The following describes each section of the worksheet and the terms used.

Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Top Portion

The top three-fourths of the worksheet contains 11 rows labeled A–K to record ballots supplied, used, and not used and voters checked in. Note, the worksheet accounts for voters who voted in the section “Voters Checked In,” as only voters who voted are checked in at a polling location. Specifically, rows A–K include the following:

ROW	ACCOUNTS FOR	INCLUDES
A	Ballots Supplied	Ballot Cards
B		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
C		Additional Ballot Cards
D		Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
E	Ballots Used	Ballots Scanned
F		Provisional Ballots
G		Spoiled Ballots
H	Ballots Not Used	Ballot Cards
I		Hand-Marked Paper Ballots
J	Voters Checked In	Electronic Pollbook
K		Paper Poll List

Rows A–B are completed by county office staff, and rows C–K are completed by the poll clerk after the polls close. The terms used in the worksheet and referenced in the table above are defined below.

BALLOT CARD

The paper cardstock provided to a voter for the purpose of recording his vote selections using a ballot-marking device (definition below).

BALLOT-MARKING DEVICE

A piece of voting equipment that allows a voter to electronically select valid contest options and then produces a human-readable paper ballot. Ballots are not cast on this device.

HAND-MARKED PAPER BALLOT

A paper ballot marked by hand by a voter using a blue or black pen. A hand-marked paper ballot is used at the polling location for emergency voting, via an emergency ballot, and provisional voting, via a provisional or failsafe provisional ballot (definitions below).

EMERGENCY BALLOT

A hand-marked paper ballot used in the event the ballot-marking device is inoperable or otherwise unavailable. Generally, these ballots are cast at the polling location.

PROVISIONAL BALLOT

A hand-marked paper ballot used when a voter's eligibility to vote is challenged, which may occur, for instance, if he has already received a ballot in the mail but insists on voting at a polling location.

FAILSAFE PROVISIONAL BALLOT

A hand-marked paper ballot used when a voter has moved from one precinct to another within the same county and failed to update his address or has moved from one South Carolina county to another within 30 days of the election.

Provisional and failsafe provisional ballots are not counted on election day. Instead, they are stored in individual sealed envelopes and kept separate from ballots that have been cast; these are the envelopes referred to in row F on the worksheet. After the polls close but prior to certification, the voter's eligibility is reviewed, and a determination is made to either accept or reject these ballots based on this review by the county board of canvassers. Accepted ballots are then counted.

SCANNER/DS200

A piece of voting equipment used to read the voter selections from a ballot card or a hand-marked paper ballot. Ballots are cast on this device.

SPOILED BALLOT

A ballot that has been defaced or marked in error. For example, a voter may make a selection by mistake and then return the ballot to a poll clerk for a second ballot. The term "spoiled" is then written on the back of the ballot and retained for records. State law also refers to a spoiled ballot as a soiled, marred, and defaced ballot.

ELECTRONIC POLLBOOK

A piece of election equipment in the form of a tablet that contains the electronic version of the voter registration list, which is used to determine whether a person is eligible to vote in an election and in the precinct. These pollbooks also have the ability to capture a voter's signature, which is evidence that a voter took the voter's oath. Ballots are not cast on this device.

PAPER POLL LIST

A form containing the voter's oath and signatures of voters who have taken the voter's oath. Paper poll lists are used when the electronic pollbooks are not available or when voters must be checked in manually.

Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet Bottom Portion

The bottom one-fourth of the worksheet contains the reconciliation portion, which is also to be completed by the poll clerk. Line 1, as follows, is intended to reconcile the number of used and unused ballots with the total ballots supplied.

Line 1: Total 2 Total 3 Total 1
 (Ballots Used) + (Ballots Not Used) = (Ballots Supplied)

Line 2 below is intended to reconcile the number of voters checked in with the number of ballots used.

Line 2: Total 4 G Total 2
 (Voters Checked In) + (Spoiled Ballots) = (Ballots Used)

Beneath the reconciliation formulas, there is a space to address any issues, including ballots that were lost or unscanned.

Worksheet Color Coding

For ease of completion, ballot reconciliation worksheets are meant to be printed in color. Four different colors are used for Totals 2 through 4 as well as for spoiled ballots:

Color	Corresponds to	
None	Total 1	Ballots Supplied
Yellow	Total 2	Ballots Used
Blue	Total 3	Ballot Not Used
Orange	Total 4	Voters Checked In
Green	Row G	Spoiled Ballots

Each color at the top of the worksheet has a corresponding color at the bottom, where reconciliation is performed. These colors are meant to assist the user in transferring the data from the top to the correct field at the bottom. It is important to note the color yellow for Total 2 and the color orange for Total 4 can often appear similar in appearance when printed.

Sample and Results

We reviewed a random sample of ballot reconciliation worksheets from the November 2022 General Election for Dorchester County to determine whether they were adequately completed and reconciled. For this election, the county completed its worksheets by polling location. Per S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets are to be completed by precinct (see Appendix A). However, since counties, at times, consolidate multiple precincts into a single polling location, we conducted our analysis by polling location. For this election, the county had 37 polling locations. The random sample included 31 of the 37 polling locations, and the results were calculated at a 99% confidence level with a margin of error of ± 10 percentage points. Therefore, these results can be generalized about all Dorchester County polling locations during the 2022 General Election.

For this review, the term “completed” meant rows C–K contained values. If a field in rows C–K was blank, zero was assumed unless zeros were used elsewhere on the worksheet. The total boxes for each section (Total 1, Total 2, Total 3, and Total 4) were not included within the definition of completed, as they were a separate method of counting ballots and voters to what was presented in rows C–K. Additionally, the term “reconciled” meant the addition in Line 1 and the resulting value in N equaled the value in Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied), and the addition in Line 2 and the resulting value in Q equaled the value in Total 2 (Total Ballots Used).

Figure 2 below provides a diagram of what was considered completed and reconciled on the worksheet. Note, information in red was added to the diagram to distinguish otherwise unidentified fields and sections of the worksheet.

Figure 2: Worksheet Diagram for the Definition of Completed and Reconciled

County _____ Precinct _____ Date _____

Ballots Supplied	
A	Ballot Cards (Completed by County Office)
B	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Completed by County Office) (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)
C	Additional Ballot Cards
D	Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)
Total 1	
Ballots Used	
E	Ballots Scanned (Ballot Cards and Emergency Ballots) (Number displayed on the Scanner/DS200)
F	Provisional Ballots (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots/Envelopes)
G	Spoiled Ballots (Ballot Cards + Hand-Marked Paper Ballots)
Total 2	
Ballots Not Used	
H	Ballot Cards
I	Hand-Marked Paper Ballots (Emergency/Provisional + Failsafe Provisional)
Total 3	
Voters Checked In	
J	Electronic Poll Book (EPB)
K	Paper Poll List (Include Provisionals NOT entered in the EPB) (DO NOT Include Curbside Poll List)
Total 4	

Line 1 Total 2 **L** + Total 3 **M** = **N** (Should equal Total 1)

Line 2 Total 4 **O** + G **P** = **Q** (Should equal Total 2)

Explain any discrepancies:

Are you returning any Emergency ballots that have not been scanned? Yes ☐ No ☐
(Do NOT include Provisional or Failsafe Provisional ballots)

Poll Clerk Signature: _____ Time: _____

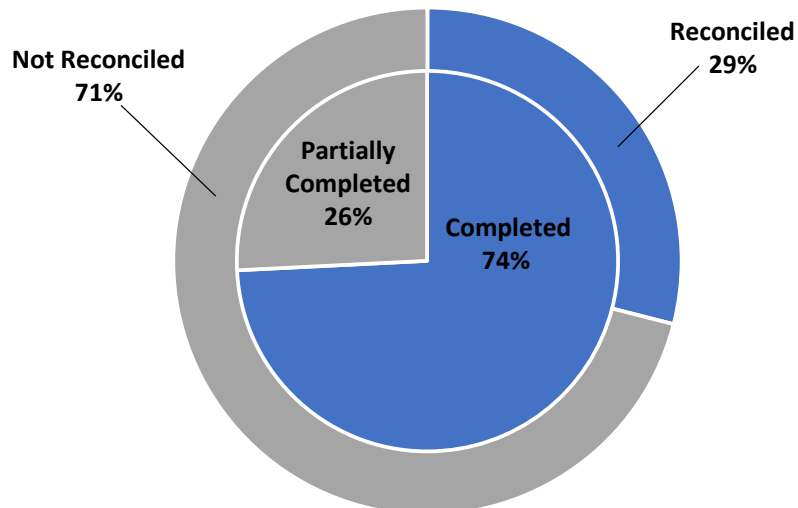
SEC FORM 1150-202208

**every vote matters.
every vote counts.**

Source: South Carolina State Election Commission

For Dorchester County, 74% (23/31) were completed, and 26% (8/31) were partially completed. Overall, the worksheets did not reconcile with 29% (9/31) reconciled and 71% (22/31) not reconciled. Figure 3 below provides a breakdown of completed and reconciled worksheets for the county.

Figure 3: Overall Completion and Reconciliation Status of the Worksheets



Source: Analysis of Dorchester County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

Completion of Worksheets

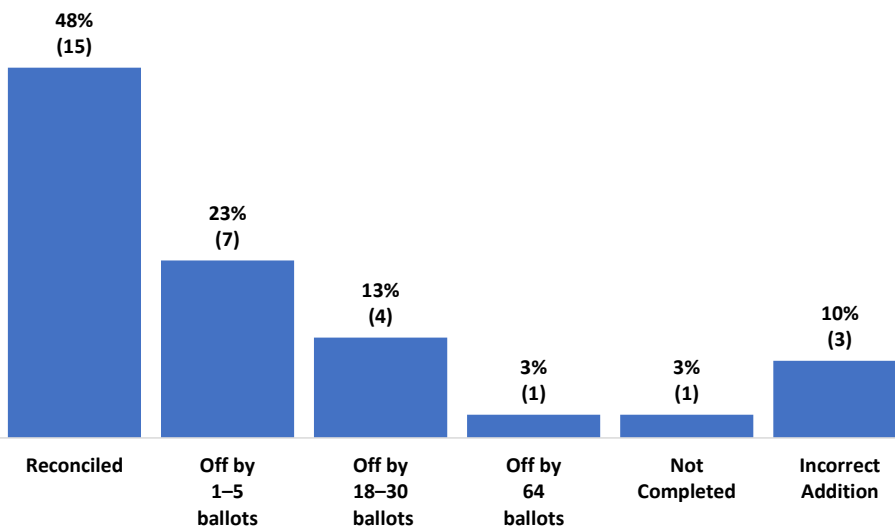
In most cases in which the worksheets were partially completed, one or more fields were left blank, but other fields on the same sheet contained zeros. The most common fields left blank were rows C (Additional Ballot Cards), D (Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots), and K (Paper Poll List/Voters Checked In). If the user had filled in zeros in these rows, then 94% (29/31) of the worksheets would have been completed. The State Election Commission's (SEC) instructions for the worksheet did not require a user to fill all fields. However, as a third-party reviewer, it was difficult to discern if an empty field was an oversight or intentional. Requiring a value for all fields on the worksheet will likely improve clarity to all users. In December 2024, a recommendation was made to the SEC to require a value, even if zero, be written in each of the worksheet's rows.

The remaining 6% (2/31) of partially completed worksheets were missing a single value. One was missing a value for row H (Ballots Cards Not Used). The other was missing a value for row J (Electronic Pollbook/Voters Checked In). According to a county election official, since February 2022, the county has been providing training on the ballot reconciliation worksheet beyond what is offered by the SEC to poll clerks. The training includes hands-on, individual sessions to ensure poll clerks can complete and reconcile the worksheets. Additionally, since February 2022, a check-in process on election night has been implemented to ensure all required paperwork is collected and checked for completion. Continuing this training and worksheet review process will likely improve completion.

Reconciliation of Line 1

As for reconciliation, 48% (15/31) reconciled on Line 1, and 48% (15/31) did not. Another 3% (1/31) were not completed. Figure 4 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 1.

Figure 4: Reconciliation Status of Line 1



Source: Analysis of Dorchester County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

For 5 of worksheets off by 1–5 ballots and 2 of the worksheets off by 15–30 ballots, this may be due to the ballot packaging process, which weighs rather than counts the ballots, and could, therefore, be off by $\pm 2\%$; a package of 250 could be over or under by as many as 5 ballot cards. If county staff and poll clerks count the ballot packages and not the individual ballot cards, the values in rows A–D could be incorrect and, therefore, cause Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied) to be incorrect. For 1 of the worksheets off by 15–30 ballots, the polling location appeared to be supplied 22 more ballot cards than was stated on the worksheet. For the other worksheet off by 15–30 ballots, the polling location appeared to be supplied 18 fewer ballot cards, which while not a ballot package size, could possibly be accumulated from the 25 packs of 50 ballot cards that was stated on the worksheet.

According to a county election official, at the time of the November 2022 General Election, county staff counted blank ballot cards by hand before sending them to the polling locations. In addition, poll clerks were trained to count the ballot cards and ensure the totals listed on the worksheets were correct. In fact, 32% (10/31) of the worksheets had some indication from poll workers that the totals in rows A and B were incorrect. It is important to note that the county has a DS450—a high-speed tabulation device, which counts ballots at a rate of 75 per minute—in its office; this device could be used to count individual ballot cards before sending them out to

polling locations. Continuing to count individual ballot cards, as well as having poll clerks count individual ballot cards again at the polling locations will likely reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied. Additionally, continued poll clerk training on counting individual ballot cards and ensuring the totals listed are accurate may improve reconciliation.

For the remaining two worksheets that were off by one–five ballots, this was due to data entry errors. Using data from the Scanner/DS200 and reports on provisional ballots—a type of hand-marked paper ballot—on both worksheets, the ballots scanned (row E) was overcounted by one. Using the corrected data, both the worksheets reconciled. As mentioned above, the county office now has a check-in and review process for ballot reconciliation worksheets during which reconciliation is checked with the poll clerks. Coupling this review process with returned election materials (i.e., returned results from the voting equipment and provisional ballots) will likely improve reconciliation.

For the 2 remaining worksheets off by 15–30 ballots, this was due to not accounting for used and unused hand-marked paper ballots. On 1 of these worksheets, the clerk wrote that zero hand-marked paper ballots were used (row F) and zero were unused (row I), despite receiving 30 of these ballots (rows B and D). Similar accounting occurred on the other worksheet. For both worksheets, if the clerks had accounted for used and unused hand-marked paper ballots, the lines would have reconciled. Poll clerk training that highlights the importance of accounting for used and unused hand-marked paper ballots may help improve reconciliation.

For the worksheet off by 64 ballots, the clerk did not accurately account for:

- Supplied hand-marked paper ballots in row B (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Supplied).
- Unused ballot cards in row H (Ballot Cards Not Used).
- Unused hand-marked paper ballots in row I (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Not Used).

For the hand-marked paper ballots, the county office wrote that 30 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied. However, notes from the clerk stated that actually 90 hand-marked paper ballots were supplied, and then 50 were taken for use at another location. This left the precinct with 40 hand-marked paper ballots, but the worksheet was not updated in rows B (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Supplied) and I (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Not Used) to reflect this, resulting in an imbalance.

For the unused ballot cards, the clerk noted 710 ballots were used, 2 ballots were spoiled, and 241 ballot cards were not used; with 1,000 ballot cards supplied, 47 ballot cards were not accounted for. The worksheet states that the precinct was supplied “20 PKs (50’s).” With 47 ballot cards not accounted for, it may be that the precinct was supplied one less package

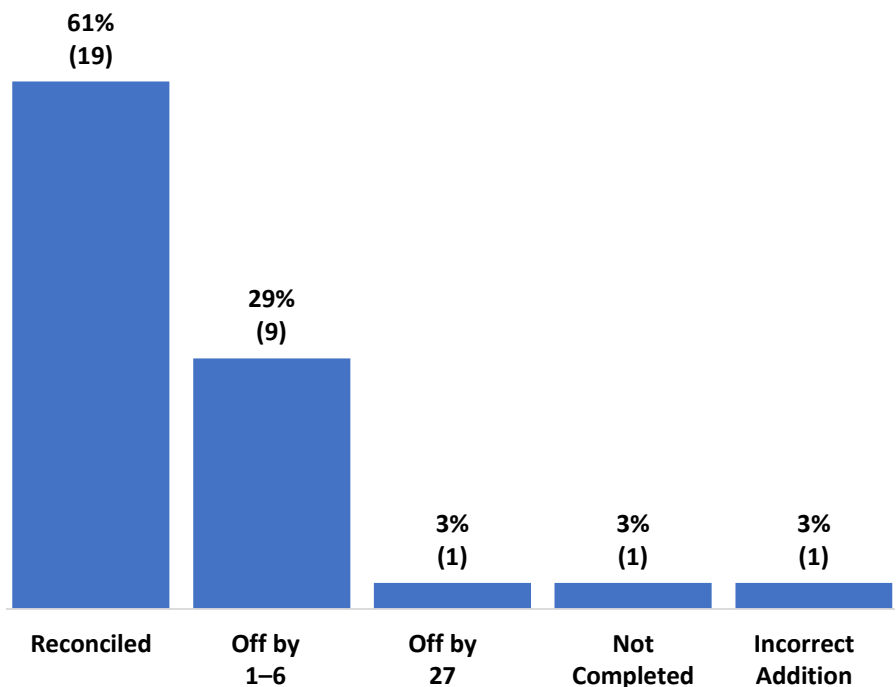
than stated. As previously stated, counting individual ballot cards in the office and poll clerk training that highlights the importance of accounting for hand-marked paper ballots will likely reduce miscounts in the number of ballots supplied and unused.

For the remaining three worksheets that were not reconciled on Line 1, this was due to addition errors on rows H (Ballot Cards Not Used) and I (Hand-Marked Paper Ballots Not Used) on two of the worksheets, and ballot card counting errors on the other. These led to addition errors on Line 1. Had the correct numbers been used, Line 1 would have reconciled. As mentioned above, there is already a workpaper review process in place, and coupling it with returned election materials may help to reduce addition errors and improve reconciliation.

Reconciliation of Line 2

On Line 2, 61% (19/31) of the worksheets reconciled, and 35% (11/31) did not. Another 3% (1/31) were not completed. Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 2.

Figure 5: Reconciliation Status of Line 2



Source: Analysis of Dorchester County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets, 2022 General Election

For the first of the worksheets off by 1-6 ballots, the issue occurred due to there being one more voter checked in than ballots voted, according to Scanner/DS200 data, provisional ballot reports, and turnout data—data logged by the electronic pollbook (EPB) host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit. When a checked in voter receives

a ballot but does not cast it, there are three scenarios that may occur: a voter may return the ballot to a poll manager, abandon the ballot during the voting process, or leave the precinct with the ballot. Per the 2022 General Election poll manager handbook, when a voter:

- Returns his ballot, the poll manager needs to spoil the ballot and cancel the voter's participation in the EPB; this would not cause a reconciliation imbalance.
- Abandons his ballot during the voting process and does not inform the poll managers, they must assume the voter intended to cast the ballot. Two poll managers must place the ballot in the Scanner/DS200. This would not cause a reconciliation imbalance.
- Leaves with his ballot, the poll manager who is the exit monitor—the poll manager who instructs voters on how to scan their ballots and provides “I Voted” stickers—needs to alert the voter. However, it can be difficult to always know if a checked in voter has left with his ballot or stop a voter from taking his ballot; this could cause a reconciliation imbalance. Under this circumstance, noting such a situation in the notes section on the worksheet is the only option to the poll clerk.

Again, incorporating a worksheet review process, prior to certification, that checks returned election materials, such as Scanner/DS200 data, provisional ballots, and turnout report data may help resolve these imbalances. Additionally, providing poll clerk training on following the steps listed in the poll manager handbook for handling when a voter receives a ballot but does not cast it may help resolve these imbalances.

For three of worksheets off by 1–6 ballots, this was likely due to data entry errors. The number of ballots scanned (row E) was overstated by one ballot on one worksheet, and the provisional ballots (row F) used was overstated by one ballot on two worksheets. This was evident after updating the worksheets with Scanner/ DS200 data, provisional ballot report data, and turnout data. Again, incorporating a worksheet review process, prior to certification, that checks returned election materials (e.g. results from the voting equipment and returned provisional ballots) may help resolve these imbalances.

For another three worksheets off by 1–6 ballots, there were more voters checked in than ballots voted. Using turnout data, the total voters checked in was overstated by the clerks on the worksheets by two, four, and six voters. Using the turnout data, Line 2 would have reconciled.

It is important to note that EPBs can have connectivity issues at polling locations, which can, at times, cause devices to display incorrect totals for voters checked at the polling location. However, the accurate log of checked-in voters is recorded in the turnout data. It is uncertain if the impact of these connectivity issues was known at the time of this election. Again, incorporating a worksheet review process, prior to certification, that checks turnout report data may help resolve these imbalances. For

one of the worksheets off by 1–6 ballots, this was due to the clerk checking “Yes” for returning emergency ballots that had not been scanned, which would account for why the worksheet did not reconcile.

Lastly, for the following worksheets, there were more ballots voted than voters checked in:

- The remaining worksheet off by 1–6 ballots.
- The worksheet off by 27 ballots. This worksheet also included unused hand-marked paper ballots in Total 2 (Ballots Used), which caused the larger imbalance.
- The worksheet with an addition error.

This was evident after examining Scanner/DS200 data, provisional ballot reports, and turnout data. For these worksheets, voters were either not checked in on the paper poll list or the signatures from the paper poll list were not counted on the worksheet. Again, a worksheet review process, prior to certification, that checks the paper poll list and turnout report data may help resolve these imbalances.

Recommendations

1. The Dorchester County Voter Registration and Elections Office should add to its hands-on, individual poll clerk training sessions a focus on:
 - Completing the worksheets.
 - Counting and verifying the individual ballot cards listed.
 - Procedures for when a voter receives a ballot but does not cast it.
2. The Dorchester County Voter Registration and Elections Office should count individual ballot cards before sending them to its polling locations.
3. The Dorchester County Voter Registration and Elections Office should modify its worksheet review process to one that, prior to certification, checks and corrects, where necessary, for issues such as addition errors, the worksheets against returned election materials such as:
 - Provisional ballot envelopes.
 - Paper poll lists.
 - Results from the voting equipment.
 - Host server turnout report data for voters checked in.

Appendix A: Objective, Scope, and Methodology

This report provides the results of our compliance audit of the Dorchester County Voter Registration and Elections Office and its use of the ballot reconciliation worksheet. We conducted this audit under the provision of S.C. Code §7-3-20(D)(3). The review period for the audit was for the November 2022 General Election, and the objective was to determine whether precinct ballot reconciliation worksheets from this election were adequately completed and reconciled. To conduct this audit, we used a variety of sources of evidence, including:

- Federal and state laws.
- S.C. State Election Commission (SEC) policies and procedures.
- SEC training materials.
- Interviews with and surveys of county election officials.
- Information from South Carolina and other state agencies as well as the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.
- Contracts and information from Election Systems & Software and its vendor, Printelect.
- Ballot reconciliation worksheets.

Criteria used to evaluate compliance was based on federal and state laws and agency policies, procedures, and training material. We reviewed internal controls in several areas, including SEC policies and procedures; county policies, procedures, and practices; and agency training. Our findings are detailed in this report.

Issue for Further Review

During our examination of the ballot reconciliation worksheets, we identified a potential legal compliance issue that requires further review. Specifically, in the November 2022 General Election, several counties consolidated multiple precincts into a single polling location.

Pursuant to S.C. Code §7-7-10, while counties are authorized to establish multiple polling places within a precinct, the statute does not grant authority to consolidate multiple precincts into a single polling location. Additionally, under S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets must be completed at the precinct level.

Due to time constraints, we were unable to conduct a comprehensive analysis of this issue. However, it is briefly addressed here and is the reason our analysis was conducted by polling location rather than by individual precinct.

Appendix B: Dorchester County Comments

Hi Hugo,

I apologize for the delayed response regarding the 2022 ballot reconciliation audit report. I want to emphasize that I am comfortable with whatever the final report reflects. Our office continues to provide consistent training to poll managers on the proper completion of these forms, and while we recognize that mistakes may occasionally occur, they are expected given that this type of work is not something our poll managers perform daily.

We remain committed to improving our processes and reinforcing proper procedures through ongoing training.

Thank you for your work in preparing the report and for your patience in awaiting my response.

Sincerely,

Kizzie



(Kizzie M. Scott)