

SOUTH CAROLINA

ELECTION COMMISSION

October 2025

AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF McCORMICK 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
1122 Lady Street
Suite 500
Columbia, SC 29201

scVOTES.gov

COMMISSIONERS
Hon. Dennis W. Shedd
Chairman

JoAnne Day

Clifford J. Edler

Vacant

Scott Moseley

Jenny Wooten
Interim Director

Thomas Nicholson
General Counsel

Courtney Phillips
Director of Audit

Hugo Albergaria
Audit Manager

Table of Contents

Summary of Results 1

Background 1

State Law and SEC Requirements 3

Overview of the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet 3

Polling Locations and Results 7

Recommendations 13

Figures

 Figure 1: S.C. State Election Commission’s Election Day Ballot Reconciliation Worksheet 2

 Figure 2: Worksheet Diagram for the Definition of Completed and Reconciled 8

 Figure 3: Overall Completion and Reconciliation Status of the Worksheets 9

 Figure 4: Reconciliation Status of Line 1 10

 Figure 5: Reconciliation Status of Line 2 11

Appendices

 Appendix A: Objective, Scope, and Methodology 14

 Appendix B: McCormick County Comments..... 15

Summary of Results

For McCormick County's ballot reconciliation worksheets from the November 2022 General Election, 64% were completed, 36% were partially completed, 18% were reconciled, and 82% were not reconciled. Of the worksheets that were partially completed, this was partly due to the lack of a requirement from the State Election Commission (SEC) to fill every field, even if zero. For the worksheets that did not reconcile, this was due to incompleteness, not counting and verifying blank ballot cards, not accounting for unused hand-marked paper ballots, and not using the paper poll list or counting signatures from the paper poll list. 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.

$$\text{Line 2:} \quad \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 4} \\ \text{(Voters Checked In)} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{G} \\ \text{(Spoiled Ballots)} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} \text{Total 2} \\ \text{(Ballots Used)} \end{array}$$

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.

Polling Locations and Results

We reviewed a random sample of ballot reconciliation worksheets from McCormick County for the November 2022 General Election to determine whether they were adequately completed and reconciled. For this election, the county completed its worksheets by precinct, and all were available for review. Per S.C. Code §7-13-1150, ballot reconciliation worksheets are to be completed by precinct. 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 11 polling locations. Using survey design and data analysis tools, to obtain a 99% confidence level with a margin of error of ± 10 percentage points, all polling locations were analyzed.

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: _____

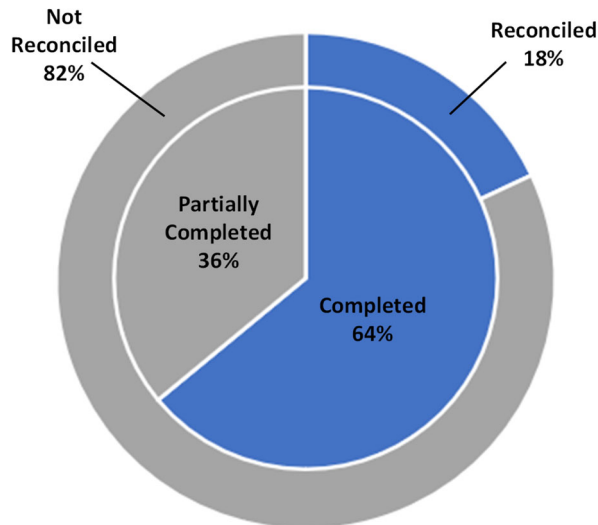
SEC FRM 1150-202208

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

Source: S.C. State Election Commission

The results are as follows: regarding completion, 64% (7/11) were completed, and 36% (4/11) were partially completed. Regarding reconciliation, 18% (2/11) were reconciled, and 82% (9/11) were not reconciled. These numbers are illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Overall Completion and Reconciliation Status of the Worksheets



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

Completion of the Worksheets

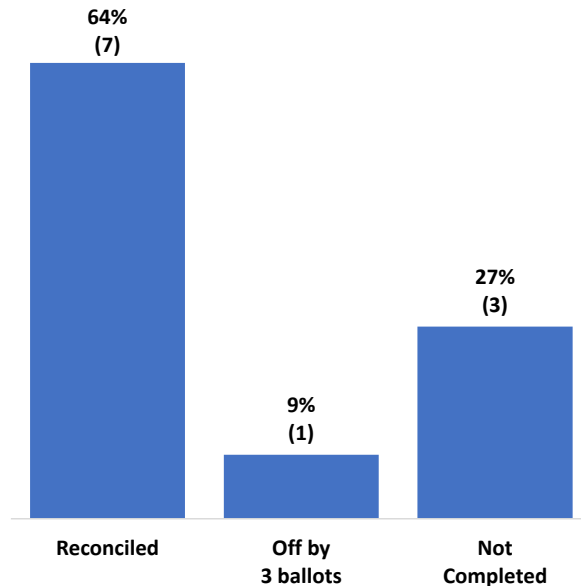
For two of the four partially completed worksheets, one or more fields were blank despite other fields being marked zero. One was missing a value in row C (Additional Ballot Cards) and row D (Additional Hand-Marked Paper Ballots), while the other was missing a value in row C only. If the user had filled in zeros in these rows, then these 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 fields.

For the remaining two worksheets, there were values missing for rows C–K, which could not be explained by blank values indicating zero. According to a county election official, in 2022, ballot reconciliation worksheets were inspected by county staff or members of the board on election night once they were brought in by poll clerks. However, if these worksheets were inspected, they were not updated to include the missing information. Having county staff or board members, during its review process, complete blank worksheets based on returned election materials—including results from the voting equipment (row E), provisional ballot envelopes (row F), spoiled ballots (row G), unused ballots (rows H and I), paper poll lists (row K)—and the turnout report (row J), which is the data logged by the host server that shows the count of voters who were issued voting credit, can improve the completion of these worksheets.

Reconciliation of Line 1

For Line 1, 64% (7/11) of the worksheets reconciled, 9% (1/11) did not, and 27% (3/11) were not completed. Figure 4 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status of Line 1.

Figure 4: Reconciliation Status of Line 1



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

The worksheet off by three ballots did not reconcile due to a data entry error, incorrect addition, and not counting individual ballot cards. Using Scanner/DS200 data, we updated the worksheet with the correct value for ballots scanned (row E) and then added in the values for total ballots used; this total was incorrectly added by the poll clerk. As such, the result of Line 1 was off by one ballot compared to Total 1 at the top of the worksheet. This is likely a result of not counting individual ballot cards. It is important to note, the ballot card packaging process weighs rather than counts ballot cards and could, therefore, cause packages to 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 row A and row C could be incorrect and, therefore, cause Total 1 (Total Ballots Supplied) to be incorrect.

Due to turnover in the director's role, it is unclear whether county staff counted individual ballot cards prior to sending them out to polling locations for the 2022 General Election. Under its current director, the county counts individual ballot cards to confirm the amount of ballot cards supplied. Continuing to count the individual ballot cards supplied and then having the poll clerk verify the amount written down by the county office will likely ensure this number is accurate. And again, having county staff or board members check returned election results from the voting

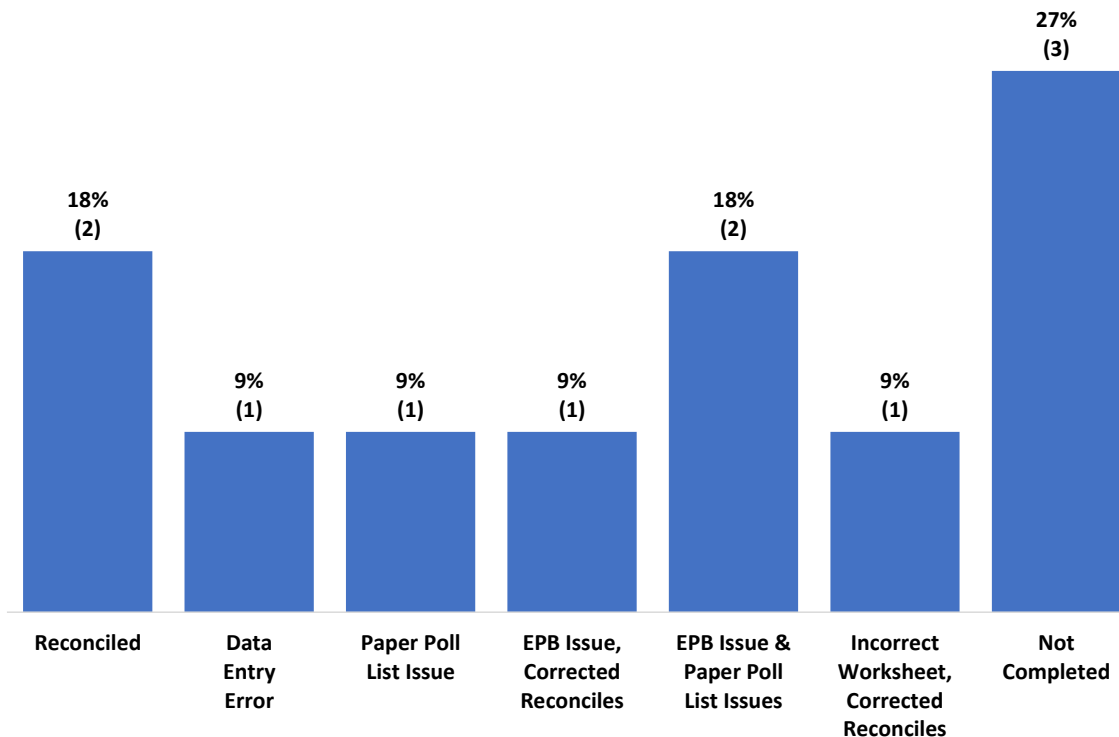
equipment as well as the addition on the worksheet during its review process may improve reconciliation.

Three worksheets did not reconcile because Line 1 was not completed. Two were missing needed information to determine reconciliation. A third was completed in the top portion, yet the user did not transcribe any values from the top to the bottom of the worksheet in Line 1. If he had, the worksheet would have reconciled. As indicated above, county staff stated the worksheets are inspected after being brought in at the end of election night, but the incompleteness of this worksheet and the two others was not addressed despite this effort. Ensuring all fields on all worksheets are completed and values are transcribed from the top to the bottom of the worksheet during the county's worksheet review process can resolve these issues.

Reconciliation of Line 2

For Line 2, 18% (2/11) reconciled and 82% (9/11) did not reconcile. Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the reconciliation status for Line 2.

Figure 5: Reconciliation Status of Line 2



EPB= Electronic Pollbook

Note: Off by 1% due to rounding.

Source: Analysis of McCormick County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets
2022 General Election.

The table below provides a description of the issues that caused the nine worksheets to not reconcile on Line 2.

# OF WORKSHEETS	MAIN ISSUE	ISSUE DESCRIPTION
1	Data Entry Error	This worksheet did not reconcile due to a data entry error. On this worksheet, 108 ballots were scanned (row E) and 108 voters were checked in on the electronic pollbook (EPB) in row J. The user noted zero voters were checked in on the paper poll list yet also stated that 50 provisional ballots were used. Since the voters checked in on the EPB equaled the ballots scanned and there were zero voters checked in on the paper poll list, it is likely that the user incorrectly wrote down the <i>unused</i> provisional ballots—a type of hand-marked paper ballot—in the section for <i>used</i> hand-marked paper ballots. If the user had included the unused hand-marked paper ballots in the correct row (row I), then the line would have reconciled. Again, ensuring county election officials, during its worksheet review process, correct the worksheets, if necessary, based on returned election materials (e.g., returned hand-marked paper ballots) can correct this issue.
1	Paper Poll List Issue	This worksheet had one more ballot voted than voters checked in due to either not using or counting signatures from the paper poll list. Specifically, there were 82 voters checked in, but 83 ballots scanned. Furthermore, zero hand-marked paper ballots were noted as used. As such, either one voter did not sign the paper poll list, or the count of signatures was not added to the worksheet. Again, ensuring county election officials, during its worksheet review process, correct the worksheets, if necessary, based on returned election materials (e.g., returned paper poll lists) can correct this issue.
1	Electronic Pollbook Connectivity Issue, Corrected Reconciles	<p>This worksheet had more voters checked in than ballots voted due to EPB connectivity issues. Specifically, the worksheet overstated the EPB count by one voter. Using turnout report data, the total voters checked in was overstated by one by the clerk on the worksheet.</p> <p>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 in 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. Ensuring the county's worksheet review process checks and corrects, if necessary, the worksheets against the turnout report data can help prevent reconciliation imbalances.</p>
2	Electronic Pollbook Connectivity & Paper Poll List Issues	These worksheets had more voters checked in than ballots voted due to EPB connectivity issues and not using or counting signatures from the paper poll list. On one worksheet, the voters checked in was overstated by one voter according to turnout report data. As stated above, EPB connectivity issues can cause overstatements of voters checked in. However, the poll clerk also appeared to double count the voters checked in: once on the EPB and again on the paper poll list. Specifically, the clerk noted 218 voters checked in on the EPB and 216 also written down as checked in on the paper poll list; note, only 217 ballots were voted. If the double count of voters checked in on the paper poll list is removed, row J (Voters Checked In on the EPB) is corrected with the turnout report data,

		<p>and the number of spoiled ballots is correctly transcribed into Line 2, the line reconciles.</p> <p>The other worksheet was also overstated by the clerk by ten voters per the turnout report data. After updating with the correct data, there were eight more ballots voted than voters checked in, suggesting that either the clerk did not have voters sign the paper poll list, or the count of signatures was not added to the worksheet. As stated above, checking the worksheets against the turnout report data during its worksheet review process can correct these issues.</p>
1	Incorrect Worksheet, Corrected Reconciles	<p>This worksheet was completed on an out-of-date version of the worksheet. This dated version of the worksheet was in use for a one-month from September—October 2019. It contained an additional row that was not present on the 2022 version: ballots used not scanned. This appears to be an attempt to include voted ballots that could not be scanned at the polling location. However, the name of this row is similar to row H (Ballot Cards Not Used). The similarity of these row names appears have confused the poll clerk when completing the worksheet. Due to director turnover, it is unclear how a dated version of the worksheet came to be used. Ensuring poll clerks are provided the current ballot reconciliation worksheet for an election can improve reconciliation.</p> <p>However, by applying values from the dated worksheet for ballots supplied, provisional ballots used and unused, and total signatures on the paper poll list to the 2022 version of the worksheet and then adding in Scanner/DS200 and electronic pollbook data, the line reconciled.</p>
3	Not Completed	<p>For these worksheets, the line was not completed. One of these worksheets was mostly blank and did not contain enough information to evaluate reconciliation. A second worksheet was also missing values that were needed to determine reconciliation. A third worksheet was off by two after correcting it with the turnout report data and transcribing the values from the top of the worksheet to the bottom. This suggests that either the clerk did not have voters sign the paper poll list, or the count of signatures was not added to the worksheet. As stated earlier, having county staff complete blank worksheets using returned election materials and turnout data can improve reconciliation.</p>

Recommendations

1. The McCormick County Voter Registration and Elections Office should, during its worksheet review process:
 - Complete blank rows and/or worksheets based on returned election data, including results from the voting equipment, provisional ballot envelopes, spoiled ballots, unused ballots, and paper poll lists.
 - Check and correct the addition, if necessary.
 - Compare the worksheet to the host server turnout report data and make corrective edits to the worksheets, as needed.
2. The McCormick County Voter Registration and Elections Office should ensure that it uses the current version of the ballot reconciliation worksheet.

Appendix A: Objective, Scope, and Methodology

This report provides the results of our compliance audit of the McCormick 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.

Appendix B: McCormick County Comments

Regarding the South Carolina Election Commission's In-Depth Review of McCormick County's Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets for the November 2022 General Election, the following items are submitted for clarification and response:

Since the 2022 General Election, there has been complete turnover in the McCormick County Voter Registration and Elections Office. There is a new Director, new Clerk, and several new Board Members. Therefore, it is nearly impossible for us to go back and address the issues raised by the State Election Commission's (SEC) review of an election and associated processes that was held nearly 3 years ago.

We have responded to numerous questions and requests for information from the SEC to the best of our ability based on resources and information available to us. Additionally, we reached out to the former Director for clarification on some issues as well.

Although it was not a requirement of the SEC at the time of the 2022 General Election, we agree that specific line items on the Ballot Reconciliation Worksheets (BRW's) that were left blank should have been filled in with a zero for clarity. This would have resulted in those BRW's being viewed as completed by the SEC although again it was not part of the instructions or guidelines from the SEC at the time.

It appears that a number of BRW's that had issues can be traced to poll worker error or oversight, incorrect addition, or using the incorrect form. At the time of the November 2022 General Election, poll worker training was conducted by former staff members of this office and not the SEC as is the current practice. Perhaps more focus on training with the BRW's, with the involvement of the SEC, would have improved this process for this election.

It is currently the policy of this office to hand count all blank ballots for accuracy before they are recorded on the BRW's and sent to the Polling Locations for Election Day. These totals are also verified by the Poll Clerk prior to opening the polls. Additionally, there is one staff member and 2 Board Members who are responsible for checking the BRW's and tally sheets periodically during Election Day and at the end of the day when the BRW's are returned to the office. The staff member and Board Members work directly with the Poll Clerk to address any issues or questions. Poll workers are also given examples of completed BRW's (as provided by the SEC) to assist with properly completing the BRW's or clarify any potential questions or issues.

We look forward to working with the SEC to improve on this process for future elections.