

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Major Achievements During This Fiscal Year:

Primary and Runoff Elections – June 2002

A successful statewide primary was held on June 11, 2002 with a successful runoff held two weeks later on June 25, 2002. Certainly this success was obtained by variables on the county level but also through services and support of the State Election Commission such as poll manager training, ballots and programming provided for counties with certain electronic voting equipment, pre-election ballot review, memoranda detailing statutory duties and responsibilities, availability of Commission staff to assist counties in successfully dealing with problems, and coordination of candidate results transmission and posting to the Internet. Implementation and encouragement to the county election commissions by the SEC on recently passed legislation allowing the use of 16 and 17 year olds as poll manager assistants, increased the dwindling cadre of poll workers and proved to be a positive step toward voter education and future staffing at the precinct level.

Election Legislation

Staff at the SEC worked closely with the General Assembly on passage of several pieces of legislation to benefit elections in the State.

- Three counties legislatively combined their voter registration board and election commission – Edgefield, Fairfield and Florence. These boards, now that they are combined, will be better able to serve the voters in their county by sharing resources and assets.
- Eliminated the need for a special election if only one candidate files to run and no one declares to run as a write-in candidate.
- County Board of Canvassers meet on Friday after the general election to certify results rather than Thursday. This change gives the county board an extra day to perform the numerous administrative duties necessary for the certification.

New Statewide Voter Registration System

The top priority listed from the 1999 Statewide Election Summit and also the 2001 Governor's Task Force on Elections was to update the current statewide voter registration system. Through the support and hard work of the General Assembly, Agency staff, county personnel, and staff from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the Division of Research and Statistics, we were able to develop a good plan and secure funding to develop and implement a new statewide voter registration system. Implementation of the new statewide voter registration system was set for March 2002. However, programming errors and coordinating with other state agencies prevented the SEC from implementing the new voter registration system on time. As of July 2002, many steps toward the final implementation have been completed, including installation of hardware, and the expected date of full installation is January 2003.

Training and Certification Program

As part of a statewide training program for county election officials, the SEC was able to offer 27 regional classes during the fiscal period. A total of 805 participants attended these classes. Four new classes were developed and presented as a result of topic requests from those election officials enrolled in the program.

Training Room

As an effort to save agency dollars on renting conference rooms for training purposes, the agency constructed its own training room for conducting voter registration and election training classes. The SEC purchased furnishings from surplus property funds and is monitoring the cost of the investments versus the cost of renting other conference rooms. In addition, we have partnered with the Office of Human Resources and allow them to use our training room for free and they in turn allow staff from our agency to attend up to four employee development classes per year at no charge. The room is also used by other State agencies in our building at no charge, by the State Board of Canvassers for protest hearings that were formerly held in borrowed conference rooms, and for various other SEC meetings.

Disbursement Vouchers

The number of disbursement journal's (DJ, correction to vouchers) during this fiscal year has been reduced. In the past, the vouchers were prepared by the accounting technician and approved by the Financial Director. If a mistake was found, a DJ would be required. During this fiscal year, the accounting technician began to run a valid transaction register that allows the Financial Director to check the information before it is actually stored in the system. Corrections can then be made before the actual voucher is printed which prevents the need for a DJ.

Agency Mission and Values

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

The SEC maintains the State's computerized statewide voter registration system. The SEC is responsible for printing the lists of registered voters for all elections held in the State. The statewide voter registration system also serves as the source for selection of jurors 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 trains voter registration and election officials, provides voter registration and election materials, prints or provides funding for ballots for all federal offices, statewide offices and constitutional amendments voted on in South Carolina and produces databases and machine ballots for all elections in the State conducted on certain electronic voting systems. The members of the SEC serve as the State Board of Canvassers after elections to certify election returns, to declare candidates elected, and hear protests/appeals that may arise.

The agency values:

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

Key Strategic Goals

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

Agency Goals	Status
New statewide voter registration system	All hardware installed, plan to implement application in January 2003
Prepare for a successful statewide primary and general election.	Successful 2002 Democratic and Republican Primaries
Conduct statewide training and certification program.	27 classes offered in 2001-02. 806 participants. 45 certificates issued.
Improve on accessibility to the voting process by disabled voters.	Involved disabled community in testing of 4 voting systems. Encourage counties to purchase equipment with features for the disabled.
Develop uniform guidelines for all counties to use when determining voter intent.	Cross-functional teams of county and State election officials appointed in April 02 to develop these guidelines.
Develop guidelines for walk-in absentee voting on electronic voting machines.	Guidelines developed by senior management, Agency staff, and county officials. Distributed guidelines at workshop meeting and 10 counties were able to offer this service to their voters in the 2002 primaries.
Move all municipal, special service district and certain school board elections to a common date in the odd numbered years.	Support from election community and Municipal Association was obtained. Legislation was introduced but did not pass the General Assembly.
Develop guidelines for county voter registration boards to visit nursing homes and assisted living facilities for the purpose of absentee voting among the residents.	Legislation was introduced but did not pass the General Assembly.
Eliminate the need for a special election if only one candidate files for the election.	Legislation to eliminate this need successfully passed the General Assembly. This new law will save towns, counties and the State money normally spent to conduct these special elections.
Prepare poster on voter rights and responsibilities.	Poster was created by Agency staff based on the recommendations of a cross-functional team of the Governor's Task Force on Election Reform members.
Assist county offices with the redistricting process.	All House and Senate boundary lines approved. All voters in offices affected by reapportionment were moved to their correct districts before the June primaries.

Opportunities and Barriers Affecting Agency Mission

Opportunities:

Funding for New Voter Registration System

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

Poll Worker Recruitment

One of the biggest problems facing election officials is the ability to recruit and retain qualified people to work a minimum of 13 hours at the precinct level on Election Day. Passage of recent legislation allowing the use of 16 & 17 year olds as poll manager assistants has increased the number of workers available on Election Day. After conducting a survey of counties utilizing this new law in the 2000 General Election, we were able to gather some very positive reasons for using these young people as poll manager assistants. As a result of this survey, many other counties in the State used 16 & 17 year olds in the 2002 primaries.

Voting on the Internet Pilot Program

South Carolina was chosen by the Department of Defense to participate in a pilot program allowing uniformed and overseas citizens to cast their ballot via the Internet during the 2000 General Election. Of the four states chosen to participate, South Carolina was the only state participating on a statewide basis. The project had a 100% success rate and we have already been asked to participate in future pilot programs. This was the first official election in the United States in which ballots were cast using the Internet and the SEC is proud to be part of that history. Agency employees are currently working with the U. S. Department of Defense on participation in a similar voting on the Internet project for the 2004 General Election.

Providing Electronic Information to Agency Customers

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

One of the services provided by the Agency is the sale of lists of registered voters. This information is provided using several different forms of media, such as peel-off labels and printouts that are produced by the CIO. Because of the availability of new technology we are able to produce this information in-house on compact disks at a considerable savings and a reduction in shipping time to our customers.

Barriers

Poll Manager Training and Compensation

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

Additional Personnel

The Election Services Division is understaffed by one full time employee. Because of this shortcoming, services delivered by this division are limited. If an additional employee were available at least three more counties would receive voting system support and additional poll manager and election officials training could be conducted. Space is available for this employee and additional funding required would be approximately \$30,000 per year in the recurring budget.

Municipal Elections on Common Date

Approximately 250 elections are held in the State per year. These elections are for municipalities, special service districts, and certain school boards. The 1999 Election Summit report revealed that voters do not appreciate these various elections throughout the year and local election officials are not always equipped to conduct the elections. These elections should also be administered by the county election commissions and overseen by the State Election Commission. Legislation was introduced in the S.C. House of Representatives to consolidate all such elections on a common date in the odd numbered year; however, this legislation did not successfully pass the General Assembly.

Use of Inadequate or Older Voting Technology

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

Reliability of Other Agencies for Voter Registration System

Accuracy of the assignment of voters to their proper election districts is reliant upon information received from each county's 911 and GIS offices by the Department of Research and Statistics. It would be extremely helpful to require these local offices to report any changes in their plan to the Department of Research and Statistics to ensure accuracy of assignment of voters to the correct precincts and election districts.

Training and Certification of County Election Officials

Of the 675 election officials in the State only 412 have received their official certification. While some of the remaining numbers are new to the community and currently enrolled in the program, many are not enrolled and have taken few or no classes associated with the certification. Legislation is in place requiring them to complete the training within an 18 month period of their appointment, or reappointment. However, many officials do not adhere to this requirement without penalty. Legislation was introduced to allow the Governor to remove election officials, based on the recommendation of the State Election Commission, for not completing the training program; however, this legislation did not successfully pass the General Assembly.

Unsuccessful Passage of Election Reform Legislation

A major piece of legislation was introduced in 2000 that would eliminate several election related problems in the State. Unfortunately, this legislation was unsuccessful in that it did not pass the State Senate before the General Assembly adjourned for the year. Also, legislation did pass that allows certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates. This new deadline will cause the county election commissions to rush their efforts of getting ballots printed and mailed to absentee voters.

Funding

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

SECTION II – BUSINESS OVERVIEW

The SEC consists of 19 full time and 1 part time employee and has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC.

Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	00-01 Actual Expenditures		01-02 Actual Expenditures		02-03 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$643,987.61	\$606,639.99	\$621,160.08	\$580,495.83	\$659,998.00	\$622,372.00
Other Operating	\$658,180.69	\$658,180.69	\$918,503.18	\$450,099.65	\$1,469,816.00	\$449,116.00
Special Items	\$1,650,747.43	\$1,650,747.43	\$2,202,764.12	\$985,137.06	\$1,185,000.00	\$1,150,000.00
Permanent Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0
Case Services	0	0	0	0	0	0
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$683,950.00	\$683,950.00	\$888,543.76	\$635,775.00	\$1,315,775.00	\$635,775.00
Fringe Benefits	\$166,612.45	\$166,612.45	\$160,288.85	\$151,597.45	\$183,591.00	\$173,591.00
* Non-recurring	\$1,650,747.43	\$1,650,747.43	\$2,188,547.87	\$2,188,547.87	\$1,150,000.00	\$1,150,000.00
Total	\$2,255,268.70	\$2,217,921.08	\$4,791,259.99	\$2,803,104.99	\$4,814,180.00	\$3,030,854.00

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	00-01 Actual Expenditures	01-02 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental	\$1,650,747.43	
Capital Reserve Funds	\$1,425,591.26	\$1,203,410.81
Bonds	0	0

* Note that non recurring figures are not included in grand total because they are already listed in special items.

Key Customers

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

Key Suppliers

Key suppliers for the SEC include the CIO of the Budget and Control Board, Office of Research and Statistics, voting system vendors, the voters and citizens of SC, USC, office of State Budget, office supply companies.

Major products of the State Election Commission are:

Maintenance of Statewide Voter Registration System

Maintain and support South Carolina's statewide voter registration system including additions and changes to the master file as provided by each county's board of voter registration. To provide training and assistance on the statewide voter registration system to county election and voter registration staff through training classes, on-site visits, the web, phone and written documentation.

Training and Certification Program for Election Officials

Administer a statewide training and certification program for election officials as required by the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976. This program consists of components designed to provide information about registration and election laws and procedures.

Conduct of the 2002 Primary and General Election

Oversee and assist with the conduct of the 2002 Primary and General Election and, if necessary, any subsequent special elections. To insure the quality of the election process and the faith and trust the voting public has in the integrity of elections in South Carolina.

Electronic Voting System Support

Provide technical assistance and support to counties using certain electronic voting systems. Provide ballot layout assistance to county and municipal election commissions. Provide election supplies and forms to county and municipal election officials.

Educational Services

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

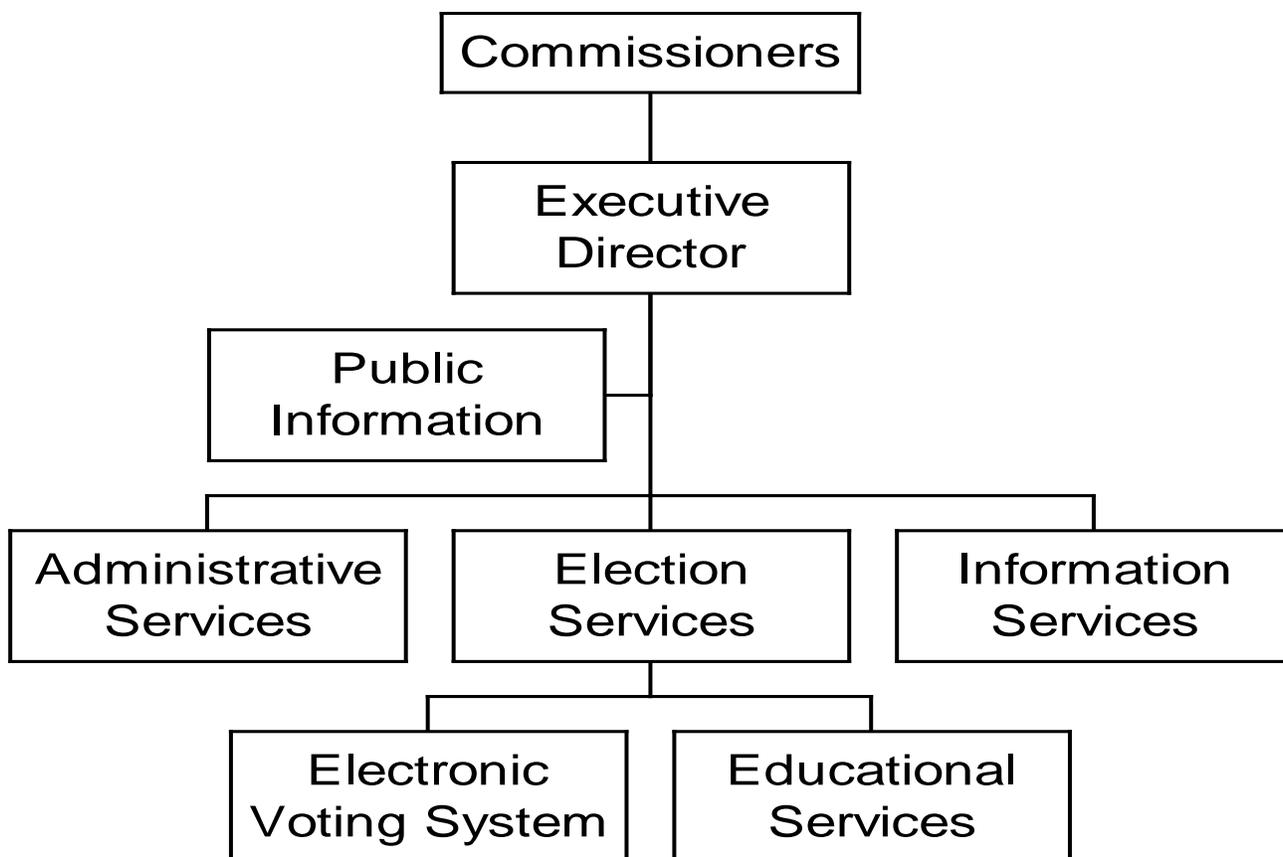
Sale of Lists of Registered Voters

Upon request and payment of fees, provide the names of registered voters to candidates for public office, the general public and other governmental agencies. Statistical information on past elections is also distributed upon request and payment of fees.

Providing Public Information

Registration statistics and information on past elections are available and distributed upon request.

State Election Commission Organizational Structure



Section III – Elements of Malcolm Baldrige Award Criteria

Category 1 - Leadership

The agency has five commissioners who meet monthly, or whenever necessary, to set policy for the agency based on its mission. They also set goals and approve major projects. Additionally, the commissioners are extremely supportive of agency initiatives.

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

The agency is involved, at least peripherally, in each of the 200-250 elections held each year in this state. Significant planning is required for the statewide primary elections and general elections in even numbered years. Management must anticipate deadlines and 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. All members of the management team carry pagers and are available 24 hours a day.

1.1a Short and long-term directions are based on customer needs, election schedules, election law changes, and changes in technology. For short-term direction, if a customer has an immediate need it is evaluated and delegated to the staff member who has the skills to produce and complete the request in a timely manner. For long-term direction, department directors, with staff, assess needs, develop a plan, gather information, and a time-line is set for completion of the project. This time-line is stressed to each individual involved in achieving the long-term goal or direction. For example, our long-term direction several years ago was to upgrade and modernize the statewide voter registration system. We deployed and communicated this long-term direction by gathering information from customers, other state agencies, and various computer suppliers. Once the information was gathered, a plan was developed and a time-line development and implementation schedule for a new statewide voter registration system was established.

1.1b/c Performance and values expected of employees are communicated through employee evaluations and staff meetings. Employees are expected to perform both effectively and efficiently. Employees performing below agency expectations are counseled and provided with the necessary resources and mentoring to improve their job performance.

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

1.1e Staff development and training is a crucial part of the agency's vision for the future. Through workshops, retreats, and employee teams, employees are provided with the tools, resources, and opportunities to develop ways to enhance customer service to the benefit of the

agency. Employees are encouraged to complete levels of higher learning and are offered flextime to accommodate their schedules. Tuition assistance is provided for college/university-based programs. Funding is provided for classes offered through the Budget and Control Board and other training opportunities that relate directly to improving employee skills and performance. Figure 1.1 depicts the level of employee development programs in which agency employees have been involved.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM		
Courses	Number completed	Number enrolled
Executive Institute	2	
CPM	2	2
APM	6	1

Figure 1.1

1.1e All employees are expected to behave in an ethical manner that meets established and expected standards for professional and personal behavior. Problems with unethical behavior are immediately addressed as they occur. Written ethical policy provided by the Budget and Control Board is followed by this agency.

1.2 Senior leaders establish and promote a focus on agency customers through a variety of learning and listening methods. A focus plan has been established to conduct an employee survey to determine the majority of dissatisfied/satisfied employees within the agency. The intent of this survey is to give senior leaders an idea on ways to keep key employees and improve and maintain a high morale within the agency. Senior staff are also available to speak with customers when requested. An “unwritten” policy is in place for staff to promptly return all phone calls and reply to all letters within a day’s time, if possible.

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

1.4 Employee feedback is sought by Senior Management to determine their own effectiveness as leaders. This feedback is gained through an open-door policy, regular staff meetings, evaluation forms, Edge 360 Management Profile, and other profiles completed as part of training classes offered by the Budget and Control Board.

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.

1.5 The agency determines the impact of its services through surveys, verbal/written communication, and focus group meetings. In 1999, the agency conducted a statewide election summit that disclosed the impact of services and rendered valuable solutions to current and future problems. As part of the summit, 45 counties conducted a local election summit in their county. Participants included individuals who wanted to improve the voter registration and election process. Participants were asked what improvements could be made to the current voter registration and election processes. Reports containing those improvements were compiled from each county and submitted to the State Election Commission. A final report combining the local level summit and a statewide summit was compiled into one report and used for strategic planning.

1.6 Priorities for improvement are based on immediate needs identified from various situations that arise. For example, the SEC experienced numerous problems in the 2000 primaries with regard to political party deadlines and submissions. Using data gathered from these instances, the SEC prepared a checklist and conducted 3 meetings with all political parties prior to the 2002 primaries. 150 people participated in these meetings.

1.7 Through encouragement and example, senior leaders promote employee participation in election organizations and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. Employees are encouraged to assist organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) by serving on committees and helping with association events.

Category 2 - Strategic Planning

2.1 The Agency strategic plan is developed based on the goals of the agency. Senior management met twice during the year to determine and fine-tune these goals. Goals are based on the agency mission and what is required of the SEC by South Carolina statute. A staff member from the John DeLa Howe School, who is trained in this area and is an examiner for the Governors Quality Award, assisted the agency in all aspects of its strategic planning process. In return for this assistance, the agency returned the favor by assisting John De La Howe with their internal customer survey.

Customer expectations and needs are determined through surveys, focus group meetings, and in person communication.

To ensure accomplishment of agency goals, resources available in state government are evaluated based on employee skills and available technology. A plan is then developed by senior leaders to implement the specific project. When developing and teaching new Training and Certification Program classes, office staff and county personnel are reviewed based on their

skills and availability to teach the classes. They are then empowered to develop a curriculum and conduct the training for that class.

2.2 Customer and supplier needs, the Agency mission, and the South Carolina Statute determine the goals of the agency. Once the goals are determined, they are placed on a scorecard that is reviewed monthly by senior management and Commission members. Departmental managers communicate the results of this scorecard with the appropriate staff members in their department.

2.3 Strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures are communicated to employees and commissioners through a series of meetings. This information is listed on a scorecard that is distributed at the above-mentioned meetings.

Category 3 - Customer Focus

3.1 Key Customers of the SEC include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, the legislature, special interests and advocacy groups, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, and those who purchase lists of registered voters.

3.2 & 3.3 Customers are determined by recognizing those who request information and services from the agency and whether the agency can fulfill the request. For example, the executive director and management team meet quarterly with an advisory committee consisting of election officials from all over the state. This committee serves as a liaison between all county election commissions and voter registration boards in the State and the SEC. By taking this approach, the management team is able to speak directly with one of our biggest customers and then lead and train agency employees to meet the customer's needs. They have also been extremely valuable in establishing needs for statutory changes and fine-tuning programmatic focus.

The management team also meets regularly with political parties, advocacy groups, and members of the legislature to discuss issues affecting the operation of this agency. The SEC is interested in customer input on agency performance so that it may implement procedures, if needed, to improve customer focus. The SEC listens to what the customer needs and, if valid, put forth its best effort to meet that need in the quickest way. For example, the Executive Director and a Commissioner met with the Chiefs of seven Native American Tribes to discuss their concerns related to identification of Native Americans on the registration rolls and voting in South Carolina. As a result of this meeting, the database of registered in voters in South Carolina was updated to reflect the correct race designation of these voters.

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

3.5 The Agency implements several methods to gather levels of customer satisfaction including:

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

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

3.6 Positive relationships with customers are built by being courteous to them, providing them with the service they expect, and involving them in the process of developing or improving processes.

Category 4 - Information and Analysis

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

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

4.3 Voter registration data entered into the Statewide Voter Registration System by county offices is used to compile statistical reports on a weekly, quarterly and yearly basis. This information contains breakdowns of the number of registered voters by age, race, sex, and election districts. Weekly update reports of changes made to the system are printed and mailed every Monday to all 46 counties using the system. The county offices then use these reports to verify changes they made to the system. Quarterly and yearly reports are distributed within 24 hours of their receipt from the CIO.

4.4 A comparison of the voter registration lists used in all elections is made within ten days of receipt of that list in the office. The comparison 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 rectify the situation.

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

Other divisions use various tables and recording notebooks to track efficiency and effectiveness methods. For example, the Electronic Voting Systems 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.

Category 5 - Human Resources

5.1 Motivation of employees is done informally through verbal conversations and mentoring. Formal motivation is achieved through practices such as flex time, agency retreats, promotions from within, and providing resources to perform the necessary job duties and monetary increases and bonuses when the agency budget allows. Our compensation system is based on available funding and internal equity. If money is available in the Agency budget, employee salary increases are given for performance, additional job duties, or completion of certain training programs. Regular staff meetings, verbal surveys, written surveys, observation, and feedback during evaluations are used to determine employee satisfaction and motivation.

Our rewards and recognition program is based on a peer nominated approach. Employees are nominated quarterly by their peers for outstanding service performed based on the agency's goals and mission. From those nominees, an employee of the quarter is chosen and recognized at a luncheon, breakfast or other gathering. At the gathering, the employee is rewarded with a plaque. Each year an employee of the year is chosen from the employee of the quarter recipients and their name is engraved on a larger plaque in the office lobby. Additionally, we recognize the outstanding registration/election office, official, and newcomer from the various counties in the state. These peer-nominated awards are presented annually at the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials conference.

5.2 Through meetings, workshops, training classes, phone and in-person conversations with our customers, we determine their needs and their expectations of this agency. By identifying these needs we are able to address them and develop or improve current programs to ensure customer satisfaction. These developments and improvements are executed using the most modern and economically feasible means available. Many times, development training of employees is needed to accomplish these program improvements. Employees are encouraged to attend advanced schooling and also to attend any training offered to help them better perform their job duties. Extra training is also encouraged for substandard performance when it is incurred.

While we are a small agency with only 20 employees, we are a strong group dedicated to the mission of the agency. Cross training and cross functioning are both supported and used frequently in the agency. All employees of the agency participate in the training and certification program either by teaching, preparing materials, or through administrative processes.

5.3 SEC employee performance management system gives management an opportunity to acknowledge good performance and provide resources and advice to improve on substandard performance and areas of weakness. This process is demonstrated through the annual employee evaluation and by addressing problems as they arise. Weekly and quarterly staff meetings are also used to obtain and address this information.

5.4 There is no formal or informal assessment method to measure employee well being, satisfaction and motivation at this time. We plan to introduce an in-house employee survey during the coming year.

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

The Electronic Voting Systems Division produces ballots using large architectural plotters that require very heavy rolls of paper. Because of this extra weight, back braces are provided for staff to use while lifting the paper. Aprons and latex gloves are also provided for staff for use when working with ink cartridges necessary for these plotters. Employees using computers on a regular basis are provided with larger monitors containing screen filters, keyboards designed to prevent hand injury, and stands to hold data to be processed.

5.6 Most employees participate in the United Way and Good Health Appeal programs. Other volunteer programs by agency staff are:

- Christmas adopt-a-family
- blood donations to the Red Cross
- Meals on Wheels
- Sistercare Christmas assistance
- school mentoring
- Salvation Army – 4 members rang the bell at Christmas
- Food drives

Many employees are also actively involved in church related activities and work related activities such as the S.C. Association of Registration and Election Officials, the Society of Certified Public Managers, S.C. State Government Improvement Network, Government Officers Finance Organization, and S.C. Association of Data Processing Directors. Many employees often use their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

Category 6 - Process Management

Voting System Support

Databases and ballots for 18 counties using electronic voting systems are designed using specialized software. The election laws of South Carolina and information specific to the election govern the design of this information. Software and voting machine hardware updates are subject to the certification procedures outlined in the election laws of South Carolina. Once a vendor has complied with these procedures, the SEC may use the updated versions. New peripheral technology is explored and reviewed constantly by personnel in our agency Information Services Division and resources pertinent to this division are discussed and evaluated before purchases are made. If the evaluation determines that the upgrade in technology will benefit the Agency and its customers, and if funding is available, the change is incorporated.

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

Division personnel are in constant contact with suppliers of the software, specialized supplies, and mailing supplies needed. Contact with voting system vendors is done by phone for immediate resolution and through semi-annual users group meetings for items that need discussion and input from other customers. Supplies such as ballot paper and ink are stored in

the office and inventoried 6 months prior to any major election. If inventory is deemed low, new supplies are ordered so that they will arrive in a timely manner. Contact with suppliers is maintained through monthly newsletters, phone, and e-mail.

Educational Services

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

Periodic election law changes require changes to materials used in various training programs and on Election Day. These election law changes are tracked by the agency 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 our customers are also incorporated at this time. Supplies and printing are secured using State procurement procedures and distributed to county offices via UPS, interagency mail service, and personal delivery.

Staff from the Election Services Division travel regularly to county offices to provide assistance. These trips are also used to obtain feedback and new ideas from customers that would benefit the election process. After the 2000 general election, one staff member was able to help Sumter and Oconee counties streamline their punchcard absentee system. This streamlined procedure will be communicated to other counties using this voting system as well.

Training and Certification Program

All county election or voter registration officials and designated staff members are required by statute to complete the Training and Certification Program provided by the SEC. SEC staff, certain county staff personnel, staff from other state and federal agencies, and professional trainers conduct components for this program. Classes are offered on a regular basis and are conducted regionally so that participants do not have to travel a long distance. Updates to the training classes are made as needed due to election law changes, procedural changes, and information gathered by written surveys given at the end of each class.

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

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

training classes. The cost of this program is borne by a \$15 registration fee paid by each participant.

Prior to 2002, these classes were held in rented or borrowed meeting space. Because the SEC now has its own training room, the majority of these training classes were held in that training room, therefore, saving the SEC approximately \$5000 in room rental fees.

Statewide Voter Registration System

The State Election Commission is responsible for maintaining a database of approximately 2 million registered voters in the State. Each county voter registration office is connected to a computer in Columbia at the CIO which houses the master file of registered voters in the State. The individual county voter registration offices are enabled to add registered voters to this database and make changes to their county's file. Processes for which this agency is responsible are:

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

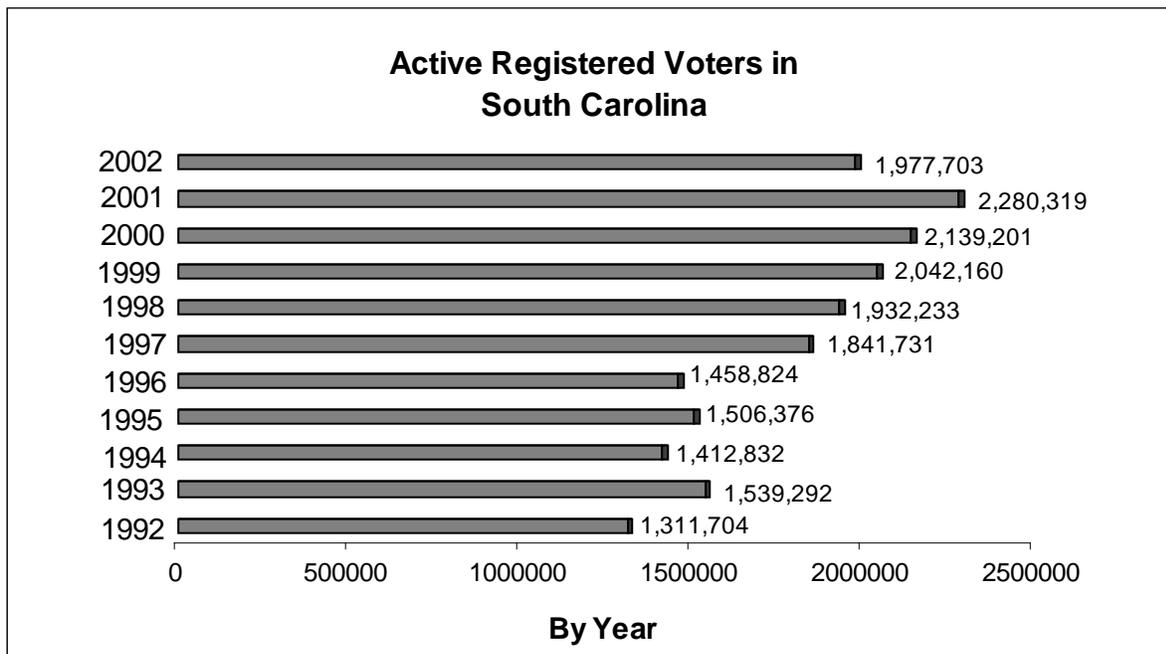


Figure 6.1

Between 1997-2001 there was a steady increase in the number of registered voters. The increase in voter registration numbers can be attributed to the convenience of voter registration sites, including several state agencies. Figure 6.1 shows this steady increase in voters through 2001. In 2002, however, the number of registered voters declined. Prior to 1995, the SEC was allowed to remove (purge) voters from the voter registration file if they had not voted in two general elections or in any municipal election in between. In 1993, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) was passed which prohibits voters from being purged from the voter registration file for failure to vote. The NVRA, however, mandates that after a cycle of 2 general elections, if no activity has been made to a voter's registration record or they have not voted in a municipal election in-between, then the voter can be sent a confirmation card that requires the voter to respond to the county voter registration board. If the county voter registration board does not receive a response the voter is made "Inactive" on the voter registration file. The voter's name will still remain on the voter registration list for the following two general elections. After a cycle of two more consecutive general elections, if the voter still has no activity on the voter registration record, the voter is then removed from the voter registration file. The decrease in voter registration numbers for 2002 can be attributed to the SEC's 2001 confirmation mailing described above and outlined in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. There were 420,856 confirmation cards mailed to voters throughout the State. Over 315,200 voters who were mailed a confirmation card did not respond to the mailing and were placed on 'inactive-moved' status on the statewide voter registration system.

Agency Information Technology Support

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

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

The SEC web page is maintained by the CIO and is updated as needed based on customer input given to our Information Services Division verbally or in writing, frequent calls requesting duplicate information, and changes in information. This site is reviewed on a monthly basis to determine any other changes necessary. We are currently in the process of updating the site to make it accessible for individuals with physical disabilities and plan to complete this project by November 2002. Key information available on the site is:

- Statistical information on the numbers of voters participating in past elections
- Current election information such as polling place locations, dates and deadlines for voters, candidates, the news media, and county election officials
- Voter registration application. **We were the first state in the nation to post this application on the Web.**
- Election schedules
- Information on how to become a candidate and the political process generally
- Individual voter information

Accounts Payable

Invoices are received in the office. The accounts payable clerk then processes a voucher within three days of receipt of the invoice. Voucher is sent to the Comptroller General's Office. We also put the information from the voucher on a disk and send it with the voucher. The Comptroller General's office loads the information from the disk and sends this information to the Treasurer's Office. The Treasurer's Office then sends a check back to the agency where the check number is recorded and the accounts payable clerk mails the check to the respective individual or entity. Meetings are currently being held with the BARS (Basic Accounting Reporting System) personnel at USC and various agencies in an attempt to either modify the current accounting system or switch to another system through USC that will offer many more options and newer technology for all modules including accounts payable. A State Election Commission staff member is on several of the committees and will be working with USC in an attempt to develop and implement an improved accounting system.

The SEC received bills requesting election expense reimbursement from county election commissions in an untimely manner in the past. The Finance Director of the SEC has attempted to correct the problem by sending memos to the counties advising them of the situation and requesting that they send reimbursement requests sooner. Proviso 62.2 was added in the 2003 Appropriations Act that allows the SEC to deduct 10% from bills received more than 30 days following the election. Bills for reimbursement of statewide general election expenses are paid with either primary or general election carry-forward funds and not general fund appropriations.

Billing errors or errors in the sale of list program, are dealt with immediately. Errors are tracked and addressed daily.

Sale of Lists Program

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

Supplement to county election commissions and registration boards

The SEC sends a supplement to each county registration board/election commission member on a quarterly basis. The supplement is funded at a rate of \$1,000 per member, per year. In the FY00 Appropriations Act, the amount per member was increased to \$1,500, but the General Assembly did not fund the increase. Therefore, those boards that have over eight members do not receive the full \$1,500 supplement per member. In the past, members were paid the full quarterly amount even if they did not serve for the entire quarter. Because of a shortage of funds, at the beginning of FY02, the SEC Finance Director started disbursing the funds at the end of the quarter instead of the beginning of the quarter. This allows the SEC to pro-rate the

supplement to the members who do not serve for the entire quarter, and will also eliminate double payments which have occurred in the past when a member left during the quarter and someone replaced the member during the same quarter.

Category 7 – Business Results

Poll Worker Pay

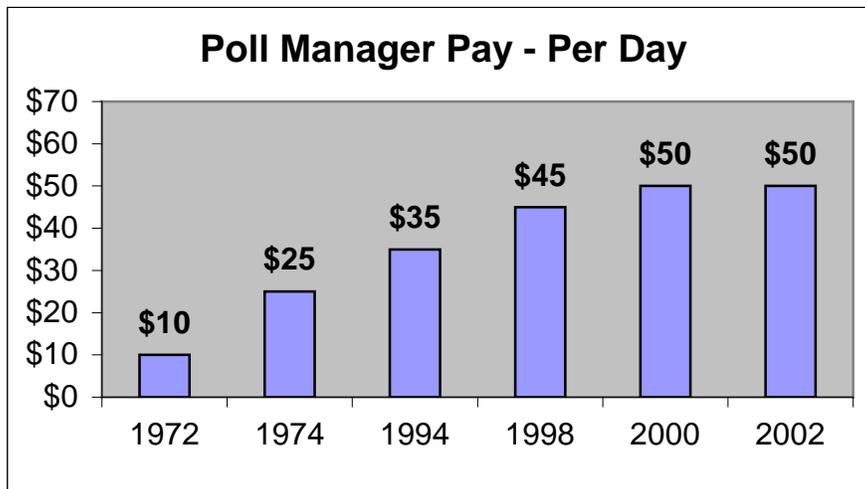


Figure 7.1

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

Sale of Lists of Voters on Compact Disk

Prior to May 2001, purchased lists of registered voters on CD were prepared by the Budget and Control Board, Office of Information Services at a rate of \$64.75 per hour. By upgrading a computer in-house with newer technology, staff at the agency was able to start preparing these CD's at a rate of \$14.28 per hour. The SEC was able to track the justification of producing in-house compact disks by recording the time necessary to produce each CD multiplied by an estimated hourly rate including personnel and resources. Figure 7.2 depicts the projected cost of \$15,491 for OIR to prepare the CD's versus the actual cost of \$2,956 for the SEC to prepare the CD's. Preparing CD's in-house has saved the agency \$11,535.

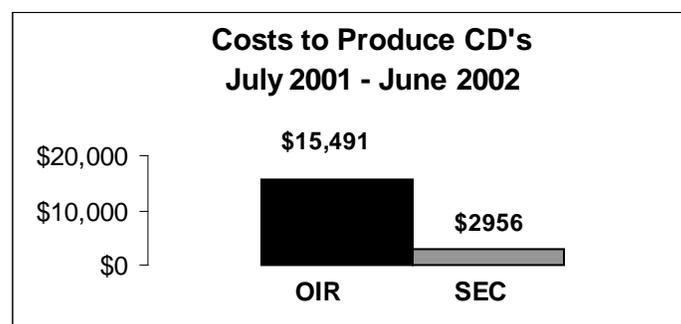


Figure 7.2

Ballot Review and Approval

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

For 2002 Primary:

140 ballot styles reviewed

30 ballots approved with undetected errors

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

Educational Services Training

Staff in the Election Services Division continually provide training to poll managers and Election officials. Figure 7.3 shows a breakdown of those classes held during the FY01/02 and the number of customers serviced.

Training Completed	Total Events	Total Participants
County Poll Manager Workshops	8	280
County Election Commission Workshops	24	90
Municipal Poll Manager Workshops	10	70
Municipal Election Commission Workshops	6	24

Figure 7.3

As a result of these workshops, 464 people received extensive training on election laws and processes. As a result, no protests were filed for any elections held in those jurisdictions where training was held and very few calls were received on election day from these jurisdictions.

Failsafe Voting

Because of new programming changes to the statewide voter registration system this year, we were able to determine how many people voted using the Failsafe procedure. This procedure allows voters who have moved to another precinct within their county or from one county to another within 30 days of the election, but failed to change their address with the appropriate voter registration office, to cast a ballot. Prior to the 1993 National Voting Rights Act, these people would not have had an opportunity to vote. Four thousand three hundred seventy one people voted failsafe in the 2000 general election and 770 people voted failsafe in the 2002 primary election. Without the failsafe voting procedure in effect, these voters would not have been able to cast their ballot on election day.

New Statewide Voter Registration System

The 1999 election summit identified a need to re-write the current software program of the voter registration system. The current system was designed in the 70's and updated 10 years ago. In the beginning, a cross departmental team reviewed a Statewide Voter Registration System in Arkansas which was developed by a private vendor. The team discovered that, while the Arkansas system was technologically advanced than our current system, it was not as complete. Based on a 32 year successful relationship between our agency and the CIO, the ability to have in-state development and support, and the fact that the costs would be \$750,000 less, the Agency

decided to retain the partnership with CIO and allow them to develop and support the new system. Through partnerships with the CIO, Division of Research and Statistics, and several county voter registration board officials, we were able to establish a needs assessment and develop a project plan for implementation of the new system. The project is on schedule and the expected date of completion is January 2003. Current status of this project is as follows:

- On-site surveys to determine wiring requirements for new equipment in 28 counties were completed in June 2001.
- Two meetings were held with county voter registration boards to determine their desires in a new system.
- Cooperation was fostered with Research and Statistics allowing the agency to link to their E-911 and GIS data to determine voting districts of electors.
- Surveyed all 46 counties to determine what equipment they currently had in place. This equipment was replaced with new equipment compatible with the new system.
- Funding obtained from the General Assembly to be combined with available carry forward funds.
- Hardware (PC's, printers, scanners) were provided for all 46 counties

Agency Web Site

On the evening of the 2002 primaries, the SECWeb page was updated every 3 minutes with election results transmitted from the 46 counties in the State. There were 32,640 visits to this site on election night.

Each year there is a significant increase in the number of visits to the Web site – especially during election time and on election night. The number of visits can be attributed to the publicity of the web site and the information posted on the site. Various news media personnel and many of our key customers, including private citizens interested in tracking elections, have expressed their appreciation for the information available on the Web. Below are charts depicting these increases in site visits.

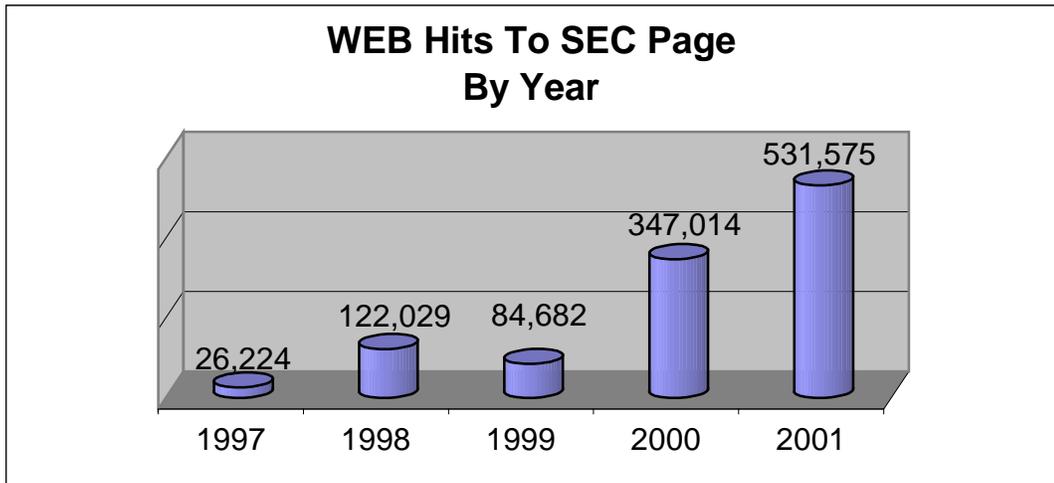


Figure 7.4

Monthly WEB Page Hits July 2001- June 2002



Figure 7.5

Training & Certification Program

Through focus groups and written surveys, participants in this training program often express the desire for components on specific topics. Based on these requests, the classes listed below were developed and offered in this fiscal period.

New Components for 2001-2002

- Projecting a Professional Image
- How Adults Learn
- Computer Concepts
- Office Procedures

Other classes requested from surveys during this fiscal period and currently in the development stage are:

- Elections from A-Z

Washington, Iowa, and Virginia have all used our program as a benchmark for starting or improving programs in their state. These states have requested copies of our program and staff has been in contact with Iowa State Election officials by phone to answer additional questions and give advice.

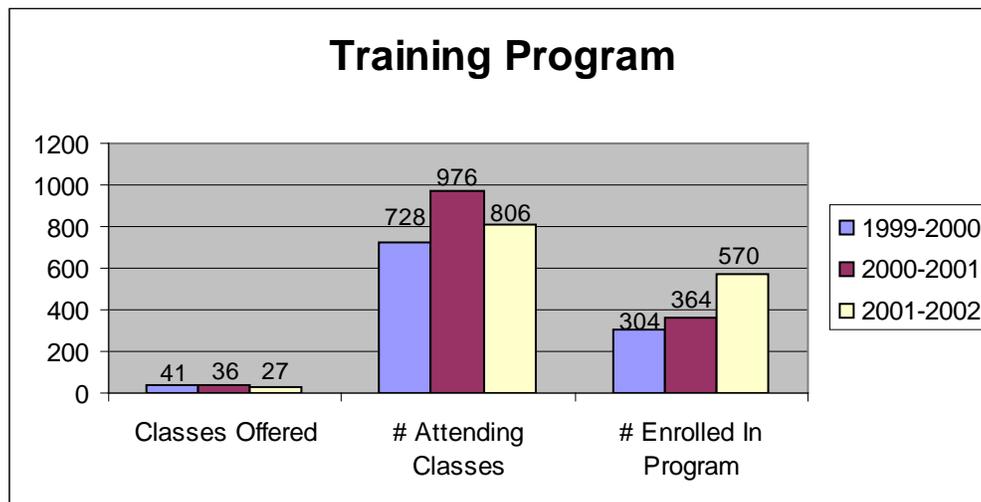


Figure 7.6

Public Information

Because of events that happened in Florida after the 2000 general election, several staff members fielded calls from various study groups and reporters from around the nation. This information was not tracked on a regular basis but members of the CalTech/MIT task force informed us that **South Carolina has the best absentee voting procedures and records in the nation.** We also learned from an attorney working with one of the various lawsuits that we have the best statistics in the nation. Both of these success stories can be attributed to our statewide voter registration system and dedication of State Election Commission staff and county voter registration offices to provide precise and accurate information on the absentee voting procedures and to provide accurate statistics on voter turnout and election results.

Electronic Voting System Ballot Shipping

Ballots and databases prepared for all elections for the 14 counties using Danaher Voting equipment are normally shipped using United Parcel Service (UPS). By partnering with the

Budget and Control Board’s Interagency Mail Service (IMS) and satellite state government offices in each county such as DSS and the Division of Motor Vehicles, we were able to start shipping this information via the IMS delivery system. Figure 7.7 below reflects a savings of \$418.06 by using this method for shipping ballots. In addition to the cost savings, IMS delivers mail overnight which is advantageous to our customers as they work with statutory deadlines.

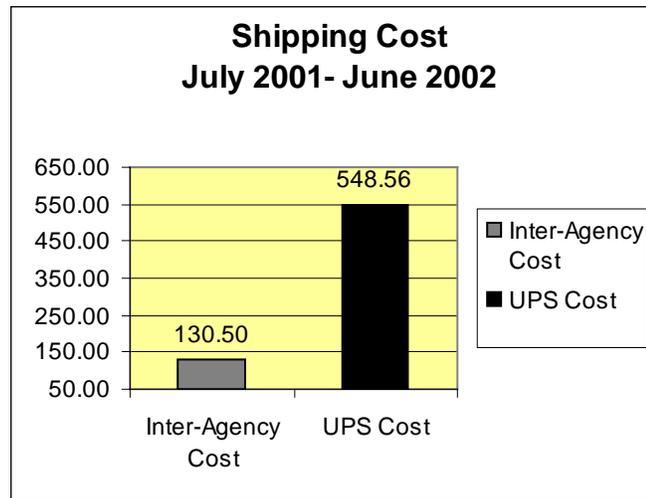


Figure 7.7

Voting System Support

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

All ballots and databases were mailed to the county offices within two weeks prior to the general election. The following statistics are for services delivered by the Electronic Voting System division for this fiscal year:

- ❖ 18 counties serviced in the State
- ❖ 146 election databases created
- ❖ 7 on-site training classes and users group meetings held
- ❖ 3467 ballots plotted @ \$.60 per ballot = \$2080.20
- ❖ 2689 ballots copied @ \$.10 per ballot = \$268.90

Figure 7.8 depicts actual costs of these services versus the costs incurred if a vendor or commercial firms had provided these services.

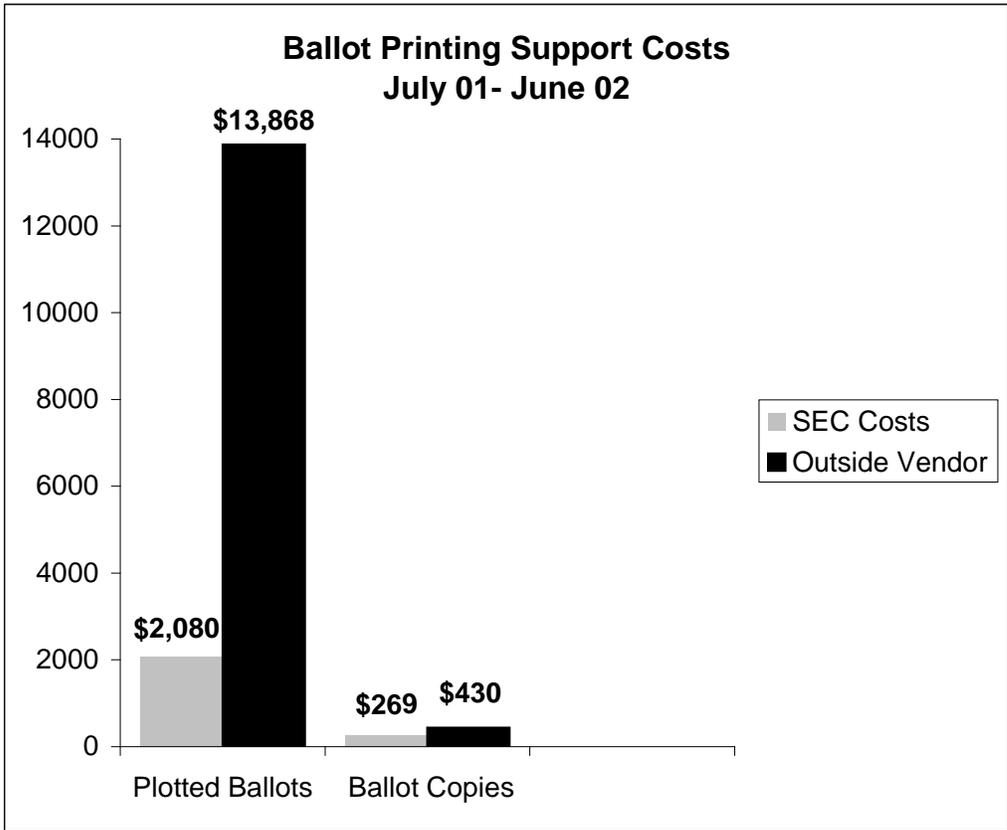


Figure 7.8