

**S.C. STATE ELECTION COMMISSION  
FISCAL YEAR 2013 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**

**SOUTH CAROLINA**  

---

**ELECTION COMMISSION**

2221 DEVINE STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 5987  
COLUMBIA, SC 29250

# SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The mission of the State Election Commission is to ensure every eligible citizen has the opportunity to register to vote, participate in fair and impartial elections, and have the assurance that their vote will count.**

Over the past decade, the business of conducting elections has become vastly more complex and subject to exceptional scrutiny by voters, candidates, media, and the legal community as never before. This requires everyone involved in the elections process, whether at the municipal, county, or state level, to become more technologically savvy, be better trained, and possess a higher level of election expertise. This is the environment in which the State Election Commission (SEC) must operate and carry out its mission.

As the chief election agency in South Carolina, the SEC is responsible for overseeing the voter registration and election processes in the State. Specifically, the agency is tasked with:

- Maintaining the statewide voter registration system
- Supporting the statewide voting system
- Conducting the Training and Certification Program

Everything that we do as an agency, our programs and our projects, emanates from these responsibilities. The primary mission and goal is to provide the highest level and quality of service possible within our statutory mandates.

The SEC maintains the State’s computerized statewide voter registration system. The system contains voter registration data on every registered voter in South Carolina. All county voter registration offices have online access to the database. The SEC is responsible for providing lists of registered voters for use in all elections held in the State, which averages approximately 300 each year. In combination with the driver’s license file, the system also serves as the source for jury selection lists in the State.

The SEC provides oversight including assistance and advisory services to county and municipal election officials. The SEC administers a mandatory training and certification program for voter registration and election officials. All voter registration and election materials are provided to county election officials and counties are reimbursed for allowable primary and election expenses.

State law mandates the SEC support the statewide voting system. In fulfilling this mandate, the SEC creates election specific database definitions, produces electronic ballots, provides a comprehensive security plan, and conducts training for county election officials and poll managers in the proper use of the system. This support eliminates the need for counties to contract with the vendor for support saving taxpayers more than \$1M each year.

The Agency provides information regarding voter registration and elections to the media, political parties, special interest groups, and citizens. The SEC’s “Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” voter education and outreach initiative is designed to familiarize voters with the State’s voter registration and election processes and to promote participation in elections.

SEC Commissioners serve as the State Board of Canvassers after elections to certify election returns, to declare candidates elected, and to sit in a judicial capacity to hear testimony and rule on protests and appeals.

### ***The Agency values:***

- **Employees** – Human resources are the Agency’s most important assets. The institutional knowledge, skill, and dedication of each employee are vital to the success of services provided. The Agency is committed to ensuring employee satisfaction, training, development, and well-being.
- **Customer Driven Excellence** – To meet customer demand by understanding and anticipating current and future needs.
- **Visionary Leadership** – Motivate employees by setting examples, providing direction, and providing recognition and rewards.
- **Understanding the Future** - Statewide primaries and general elections occur in two year cycles. Needs and other preparations for these two events must be considered in advance.
- **Agility** – Because of the statutory deadlines regarding elections, it is crucial that the Agency meet all deadlines and provide necessary services.
- **Relationships** – Developing positive working relationships 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 the voter registration and election process.

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

#### **2012 Statewide General Election**

The SEC and county election commissions successfully conducted the November 6, 2012 General Election. The SEC created databases and provided election support to 46 county election commissions. Nearly 2 million South Carolinians voted for a variety of offices and questions on the federal, state and local levels. More than 14,000 poll workers and election officials across the state worked diligently to ensure the election was a success.

#### **Election Audits**

The 2012 General Election was the first statewide general election in which the SEC applied a statewide, pre-certification election audit. This auditing process was developed following the 2010 General Election and includes procedures and auditing software. Since 2011, the SEC has conducted audits of all state-level election results and provided auditing services for county and municipal election commissions conducting local elections. Election audits help ensure election results are certified accurately, verify that each ballot was counted, provide enhanced election transparency, and help identify opportunities to run elections more efficiently. The public can now access this data and view reports through the agency website. In FY2013, the SEC continued developing a number of new tools and procedures to help prevent mistakes and identify errors prior to certification of an election. Election Audit training is provided by the SEC. Following the 2012 General Election 44 audits were performed by the SEC. Two audits were performed by county election commissions and validated by the SEC.

#### **New Voter Registration System (VREMS)**

In FY2012, the SEC made historic progress by implementing a new statewide voter registration system. The Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) replaced an antiquated system that had been in place since 1968. The more modern VREMS better utilizes state resources through a windows-based system that more accurately processes voter registrations and election data, and protects voter information. The new functionalities offered in VREMS have allowed each county election and registration office to benefit from real time voter information which translates into better voter services for citizens. The SEC worked through FY2013 training county officials on use of the

new system and identifying needed system changes. The 2012 General Election was the first statewide general election conducted using the new system.

### **Online Voter Registration (OVR)**

On June 18, 2012, the Governor signed into law Act 265, allowing the SEC to create a system for voters to register to vote online. OVR allows voters with Driver's Licenses and ID cards issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to complete and submit a voter registration application through the SEC's website. South Carolina is now one of only 13 states in the nation to have true online voter registration. Each voter's identity is verified electronically by cross-checking information on the application with DMV records. Early in the day on October 2, 2012, just four days prior to the voter registration deadline for the 2012 General Election, the SEC received preclearance for OVR from the U.S. Department of Justice. By 2:00 p.m., OVR was made available to the public. Within 24 hours of its implementation, more than 3,000 citizens had taken advantage of this new application, and more than 25,000 citizens accessed the system during those four days leading up to the deadline. OVR is a major step forward in providing citizens with increased opportunities to register to vote.

### **Photo Identification Legislation**

Legislation requiring voters to present photo ID when voting was signed into law during FY2011. At the time, the Voting Rights Act required changes to state election law to be approved by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) before taking effect. The S.C. Office of the Attorney General (SCAG) submitted the preclearance request in June 2011. In December 2011, DOJ formally objected to the core components of the legislation, blocking its implementation. In February 2012, SCAG filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia seeking preclearance from the Court.

On October 3, 2012, the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia granted preclearance to the Photo ID law, ordering new requirements for showing Photo ID at the polls to take effect on January 1, 2013. The controversial nature of the legislation and confusion surrounding the preclearance process presented significant voter education and public perception challenges for the SEC. The SEC worked to ensure all voters were aware that the new Photo ID requirements were not in effect for the 2012 General Election. In the meantime, the SEC worked to ensure requirements were met leading up to the effective date. The first election held under the new requirements was a special election held in the Town of Branchville, in Orangeburg County, on January 8, 2013. Approximately 100 elections were held under the new requirements in FY2013. Some of the major events and accomplishments in implementation include:

- Identification of approximately 200,000 registered voters who likely did not possess a S.C. Drivers License or Identification Card and a direct mailing to those individuals informing them of the new Photo ID requirements
- Development and implementation of a system to produce Voter Registration Cards with Photographs with nearly 4,000 cards produced from January 1 to June 30
- Coordination and planning of Photo ID seminars conducting by county election officials throughout the state with more than 120 seminars conducted statewide.
- Creation, printing, and distribution of voter education materials
- Planning and execution of more than 100 Photo ID voter education events held by the State and county election commissions throughout the state, including remote picture taking events
- Development of processes and procedures for applying new Photo ID requirements at the SEC, county voter registration and election offices, and polling places
- Development and preparing training materials for county election officials and poll managers
- Conduct of training events for county election officials and poll managers

## **Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT)**

In April 2012 the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) grant funds to design, develop, and implement an online absentee voting application. In September 2012, the SEC successfully implemented the Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT). This new application was designed to allow UOCAVA voters the ability to access and return their ballot for elections containing federal offices, and receive confirmation that their ballot was received in a matter of minutes. The objective of this system is to increase the successful rate of returned ballots from our military and overseas voters while also reducing traditional mailing costs.

## **Legislative Audit Council Report**

The former President Pro Tempore of the S.C. Senate requested the Legislative Audit Council (LAC) conduct a review of the state's voting machines. He was concerned about the reliability of the machines and the lack of a voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT). The LAC set out to evaluate the voting system, identify issues and concerns, determine if training provided to election officials was sufficient, and to look at alternative voting methods. The March 2013 LAC Report "A Review of Voting Machines in South Carolina" found that:

- Retrofitting the state's voting system with VVPAT would cost more than \$17 million
- The statutory requirement that the state's voting system be approved by an EAC-accredited laboratory hinders the state's ability to modify or replace the current voting system
- Providing voters a way to report problems with the voting system on election day and have the issues addressed quickly
- State law should be amended to require that post-election tabulation audits be conducted for all elections before the votes are certified
- Training & Certification program classes should be offered online, on weekends, and at various locations around the state
- The options for voting systems include keeping the current system as is, retrofitting the system with VVPAT, procuring a new system, or approving multiple systems for counties to purchase

## **Election Asset Management System**

In FY2013, the SEC implemented the electronic Asset Management Module of the Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS). Managing assets during an election involves several steps that begin with defining what elections are upcoming that require asset deployments through assembling packages, checking assets out to send to election locations, and checking in assets from election locations. Asset management is a key component to well-run elections. Many county election commissions were lacking reliable election management systems or were using more cumbersome and limited paper-based systems.

## **Training & Certification Program Enhancements**

State law requires the SEC to train and certify county and municipal election officials. The SEC Training & Certification Program consists of numerous classes ranging from election-specific topics to professional development electives. The Program features four separate certification types: county election directors, county commission and board members, county election staff, and municipal election officials. FY2013 enhancements to the program include:

- Increasing the number of classes required for certification of directors and staff
- Implementing knowledge assessments for core classes with a requirement for directors to obtain a passing grade to receive credit for the course
- Requiring directors to retake all core classes prior to December 31, 2014
- Scheduling classes on weekends and at regional locations throughout the state
- Creating new classes and updating core classes

## **Online Training**

The SEC continues to expand use of the agency Learning Management System (LMS). In FY2013, SEC staff worked to update the Online Poll Manager Training program including revisions related to new Photo ID requirements. Development continued the Duties of the Municipal Election Commission class with implementation planned for early FY2014. The LMS is revolutionizing state election training by bringing programs into the digital age. The system is web-based and provides for the creation of an unlimited number of classes, all developed and administered by SEC staff. As a result, poll managers and election officials throughout the state can access this training at any time. While the system is not designed to totally replace in-person training, it adds great flexibility of access for trainees and helps administrators hold users accountable for results.

## **Local Election Support**

In an effort to ensure success of the statewide voting system, the SEC provided voting system support to county election commissions for approximately 200 local elections; including county, special, and municipal elections. The SEC provided the county commission with training, media relations, and voting system support for all elections. Counties realize significant cost savings by taking advantage of voting system services provided by SEC staff, rather than contracting services with the system vendor. The SEC supported the county election commission in conducting special elections and associated primaries in the following state-level special elections:

- U.S. House of Representatives District 1
- State Senate District 41
- State House of Representatives District 17
- State House of Representatives District 68

## **Voter Education and Outreach**

The SEC continued to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections through the Agency's *SC Votes* voter education initiative. The focus of the initiative is ensuring voters are informed about the requirements, processes, procedures, and deadlines associated with voter registration and voting in South Carolina. The SEC continued efforts in FY2013 to educate voters about all general aspects of voter registration and elections. However, efforts shifted in FY2013 to educating voters on the particular requirements of new Photo ID legislation. The initiative includes: educational brochures, posters, videos, outreach at public events, a voter education website ([scVOTES.org](http://scVOTES.org)), social media messaging, and a statewide mass media campaign.

## Key Strategic Goals

As part of the overall goal of improving the State’s election process and maintaining its integrity, the following specific goals are priorities of the SEC:

Agency Goals	Status and Plans
Conduct fair and impartial statewide primaries and general elections	Every other agency goal relates directly to this primary agency goal, and every agency program serves as a means to accomplish it. During FY2013, the SEC successfully conducted the 2012 General Election and several state-level special elections. Preparations were underway for the 2014 election year.
Maintain statewide voter registration system	The Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) was implemented for statewide use in December 2011. VREMS replaced a 44-year-old legacy system used in SC since 1968. VREMS is a Windows-based system used by all county boards of voter registration offices to register voters, track absentee applications and ballots, and assign poll managers to precincts. The system facilitates placement of voters in the proper election districts and tracks voter participation in elections. The SEC continually works to train county election officials on its use, identify improvements, and develop new functionalities.
Support the statewide voting system	The SEC continues to provide Election Support to county election commissions by providing election definitions and training in the proper use of the system. Experienced SEC staff uses specialized software and frequent on-site visits to provide counties assistance with election preparation and Election Day support. The Agency continues to improve training and provide tools to ensure county election officials follow proper election procedures. The SEC provides election audit tools and services that enable county election officials to ensure election results are accurate and identify areas of improvement.
Expand use of Electronic Voter Registration Lists (EVRL)	EVRL reduces the amount of time it takes to process voters and allows voter participation to be processed more quickly and accurately. The SEC provides EVRL software to counties at no charge. This service saves counties thousands of dollars over similar, commercially available software. Implementation of the system requires laptops and barcode readers. The SEC continues to encourage expanded use of EVRL throughout the state and looks for ways to help facilitate this expansion. Use of the system continues to increase. The goal is to implement EVRL statewide. The SEC can aid in this expansion by providing laptops to county election commissions as funding allows.
Expand use of the Learning Management System (LMS)	The LMS is a Web-based e-learning training program administered by the SEC. The LMS can encompass an unlimited number of classes, all developed and maintained by SEC staff. The LMS is currently used to provide online poll manager training, and the SEC is working to increase participation in the program. In FY2013, SEC staff continued development of an online municipal election commission training class – part of a new certification program for municipal election officials that is now required by law. The SEC plans to use the LMS to develop and offer more online training classes in the future.
Increase participation in the Training and Certification Program	This program is mandated by state law to train county voter registration board and election commission members and their staffs. 544 election officials participated in 18 classes held quarterly in FY2013. Classes are held in Columbia, Myrtle Beach, and other regional locations when possible. The Agency works to increase participation in the program, as required by state law. The LMS will eventually be used to offer some program classes online.
Conduct Voter Education and Outreach Program	Continue highly successful voter education and outreach efforts designed to familiarize South Carolina voters with the State’s voter registration and election processes. Voter education efforts are intensified in the months leading up to statewide elections. The SEC focuses on making sure voters have the opportunity to register to vote and the assurance that their vote will count. In FY2013 education efforts shifted focus to ensuring voters are aware of new changes to Photo ID requirements.
Improve accessibility	The SEC works to make voting in South Carolina more accessible to all voters. The audio feature and portability of the State’s new voting terminals provide disabled voters unprecedented access.

Agency Goals	Status and Plans
for voters with disabilities	The Agency continues to work with disability advocates to educate the disabled community on the availability and use of these features. The SEC produces informational materials in various formats designed to meet the needs of voters' specific disabilities. Agency staff surveys county election commissions to measure the level of progress in improving polling place accessibility and to identify areas for improvement.
Assist SCARE with legislative priorities	The SEC provides information to members of the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) on the potential impact of proposed legislation. The SEC works with SCARE membership to draft legislation designed to improve the election process and to request that legislation be introduced.

## **Key Opportunities and Challenges**

### **Opportunities**

#### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

The SEC implemented a new statewide voter registration system in FY2012. The Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) meets critical needs long recognized by state and county voter registration officials. This web-based, user-friendly system makes processing voters far more efficient and provides numerous additional functionalities. This upgrade from a mainframe-based system to a web-based system marks a new age in the administration of voter registration in South Carolina. Opportunities exist to continue training county officials on the system's new functionalities and to identify additional improvements going forward.

#### **Online Voter Registration (OVR)**

OVR allows citizens who have a valid S.C. Driver's License or a S.C. Identification Card issued by the S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to register to vote or update their registration through the agency website. South Carolina is one of only 13 states to have online voter registration. OVR statistics from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2013 show online voter registrations now outnumber county in-office registrations. Opportunities exist to promote use of OVR over other traditional voter registration applications further reducing processing time and increasing cost savings for counties.

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

EVRL was designed to improve the process by which poll workers process voters on election day. The use of EVRL along with the new Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) allows for more prompt processing of voter history compared to using the paper voter registration list still in use across the state. Additionally, expanded implementation of EVRL will shorten lines at the polls on Election Day plus be a more efficient use of poll workers time. Voters are provided better service at the polls resulting from features within this system to more readily assist them and to address registration matters with less delay. Opportunities exist to expand EVRL usage to all polling places throughout the state and to enhance existing EVRL software.

#### **Learning Management System (LMS)**

The LMS is a web-based tool used to conduct online training classes. The system allows users to access training 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The system enables county election officials to track a poll manager's progress and evaluate the poll manager's knowledge of the process. The first class developed for the system was poll manager training, designed to supplement in-person training on the county level. This class was in the process of being updated in FY2013 to include new Photo ID requirements. Development of a second LMS course, Duties of the Municipal Election Commission, continued in FY2013 with implementation planned for early FY2014. Opportunities exist to expand the



use of online poll manager training among county users and to expand the number of courses offered through the system.

### **Poll Worker Recruitment**

State law allows for sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to serve as assistant poll managers. Numbers of these young poll managers are on the rise throughout the state. The assistant poll manager program has proven beneficial at a time when retention of experienced workers is continually decreasing. The enthusiasm and ability of these young adults to perform this civic duty has been a great benefit to elections in South Carolina. An opportunity exists to recruit even more of these young poll managers to help ensure the preservation of good elections in the State for posterity.

### **Election Legislation**

Each year the SEC, in cooperation with the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE), works with the General Assembly to enact legislation to improve the election and voter registration process in South Carolina. The Agency advocates legislative changes that would:

- Fine tune new candidate filing requirements
- Pass regulations to require post-election audits
- Allow for early voting (no excuse absentee voting)
- Delete the requirement for witness signature on mail-in absentee ballots
- Remove the statutory requirement that the state's voting system be approved by an EAC-accredited laboratory as recommended by the Legislative Audit Council
- Define filing and certification requirements for Lieutenant Governor beginning in 2018 when candidates will appear jointly with Gubernatorial candidates for the first time
- Reduce requirements for publishing costly legal notices in newspapers
- Set uniform municipal election dates
- Set uniform special election dates
- Bring certification deadline for President in line with certification deadline for other candidates
- Allow the SEC to institute a pilot project to gauge the feasibility of vote centers
- Combine voter registration boards and election commissions in counties where they are separate
- Remove obsolete language from Title 7

### **Challenges**

#### **Agency Funding**

Every SEC program is directly related to three core Agency functions, all mandated by state law:

- Maintaining the statewide voter registration system
- Supporting the statewide voting system
- Conducting the Training and Certification Program

Budget reductions taken in prior years have left the agency severely underfunded in recurring personal services and operating funds resulting in a potential for serious, detrimental effects in providing mandated core services. The Agency included a request for recurring personal services and operating funds in the FY2014 budget request. Funding was not provided in the current budget and the Agency continues to struggle to meet the state required mandates for voter registrations and conducting elections. While funds received by the SEC are used to support all elections held throughout the state, restoration of general personal services and operating funds would eliminate the need for the SEC to rely on funds appropriated for statewide primaries and general elections to pay for daily operations of the agency and would thereby reduce the risk of a deficit in statewide primary and general election funds.

In an effort to reduce operating costs, the SEC has taken the following actions:

- Of 19.5 authorized positions, two full-time and one part-time position have been left vacant
- Greatly reduced travel
- Reduced out of office staff training opportunities
- Negotiated lower rates from service providers
- Eliminated agency cell phones

The current base funding is having a negative effect on these core functions in a variety of ways:

- Voter Registration System Maintenance – Budget reductions could lead to the inability to pay the Department of State Information Technology (DSIT) to maintain, protect, and enhance the Voter Registration and Election System (VREMS) used statewide. This could lead to potential discontinuation of service. Without proper maintenance, voter registration records would be in jeopardy of not being current, potentially disenfranchising qualified voters and opening the door to voter fraud. Proper funding would allow the agency to conduct a confirmation card mailing which corrects inaccurate addresses and preserves the voting rights of people who may have moved but did not update their address.
- Voting System Support – As a result of staff shortages, the remaining support staff has experienced a tremendous increase in workload. Increased workload results in two major liabilities: 1) an increase in potential for ballot preparation errors, and 2) an increase in compensatory leave time (“comp time”). Ballot preparation errors can lead to protests, overturned elections, and the cost of new elections. Exorbitant comp time can have a negative effect on employee morale. Oftentimes, employees do not have the opportunity to take advantage of this leave time. Furthermore, comp time can be (and has been) taken away if not used in a timely manner. Low employee morale has led to a high turnover rate in these key positions.
- Training & Certification Program – Currently, there are no general operating funds for this program as a result of budget reductions taken several years ago. Funding is required to efficiently run the program. The largest expense is for staff charged with administration of the program. Other program costs include outside instructors, travel, course supplies, and training venues. Some of these costs are defrayed by course fees received from participants. Recent changes to state law have resulted in the added responsibility of providing training to municipal election officials throughout the state. Additional cuts would have a severe impact on the ability of the SEC to provide an adequate number of certification classes to county election officials. Officials conducting voter registration and elections without proper training and information can lead to poor voter service, violations of state election law, and overturned elections.

### **Replacing the Statewide Voting System**

The statewide voting system was implemented in November 2004 at a cost of approximately \$34 million, funded mostly through a federal grant. The system includes more than 12,000 touch screen voting machines, more than 2,000 touch screen voting machines with audio ballot capabilities for the visually impaired, optical ballot scanners for absentee by mail ballots, and other peripheral equipment. The life expectancy of the system is 15 years. However, signs in the marketplace point to the availability of replacement parts potentially reducing the actual lifespan. The State faces two challenges in replacing the system: one is legislative and the other is budgetary.

S.C. Code of Laws §7-13-1620 requires a voting system be approved by the SEC and certified by a testing laboratory accredited by the federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC). Currently, Congress is debating the future of the EAC, and commissioners who have left the agency have not been replaced. The lack of commissioners has crippled the agency and prevented the approval of the next iteration of voting system standards. Election system vendors are waiting on new standards before

manufacturing new voting systems. In March 2013, the Legislative Audit Council (LAC) reported that the statutory requirement for the state's voting system to be approved by an EAC-accredited laboratory hinders the State's ability to modify or replace the current voting system. Amending state law to allow the SEC to follow its own certification process without EAC involvement would free the State from the current bureaucratic gridlock.

Despite the uncertainty in the marketplace, the SEC has begun planning for the eventual purchase of a new voting system. Over the past two fiscal years, the Agency made budget requests to establish a fund to purchase a voting system once new standards have been adopted. These initial requests were for \$5 million. Both requests were denied. The actual cost of a new voting system will not be known until new voting system standards are adopted and new systems are developed.

### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

The SEC successfully implemented the new Voter Registration and Elections Management System (VREMS) in FY2012 as a replacement to the previous legacy system. Overall security of a computer-based voter registration system and an election management system including personally identifiable information is a great concern. Providing increased security enhancements will require increased funding for hardware, software, ongoing security monitoring, and staff training. These unanticipated enhancements were recently identified in a security audit by Deloitte and Touche. These enhancements will require recurring resources, to include full-time information technology security positions.

### **Rising Cost of Confirmation Mailings**

To maintain an accurate list of active registered voters, the SEC works to identify inactive voter records in the statewide voter registration database. The agency also participates in a program wherein it compares its voter registration list with lists of a number of other states to determine if voters on the S.C. list are also registered in other states. While this program has no cost, other more-sophisticated matching programs exist that would allow comparisons with an even greater number of states. However, those programs are funded by member states. To archive voters identified through these programs, the Agency must send a confirmation mailing to each voter for verification. These efforts are costly due to the federal requirement for this to be a first class mailing with a postage-paid reply card, but the mailing is necessary in order to maintain the integrity of the voter registration rolls.

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

More than 500 county election officials in the State are required by law to gain certification through the SEC's Training and Certification Program. Participants include voter registration board members, election commission members, and their staffs. One hundred sixteen officials are not certified. Certification ensures election officials have the necessary knowledge to properly conduct elections. While the Agency has oversight responsibility for the program, it has no authority to compel compliance. Legislation was passed in FY2007 that requires the Governor to remove members who do not gain certification within the statutory timeframe, but this applies only to those members who were appointed after June 18, 2007. The SEC notifies the Governor and legislative delegations of non-compliant board members. As a result, participation has improved but is still inadequate. As a result of Act 191 of 2010, each Municipal Election Commission (MEC) member and their staffs are also required to complete a training and certification program administered by the SEC. The SEC is working to increase certification of MEC members.

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

Current law sets the deadline for certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates. This deadline provides an inadequate amount of time for the SEC and county election commission to prepare ballots and voting machine databases and to meet the federal 45-day deadline to mail absentee ballots to military and overseas citizens.

## **Use of Accountability Report to Improve Organizational Performance**

Throughout the year, the SEC prepares and gathers information to present in the accountability report. By preparing this yearly report, the Agency is able to compare and address any changes that have been made. By performing this self-critique, agency leaders are able to determine where improvements are needed to better meet the needs of agency customers. It also helps determine what improvements should be made. The Agency uses each yearly report to take a methodical, holistic view of the services provided to customers in order to identify, develop, and implement process improvements to increase the quality and efficiency of those services.

## **SECTION II – ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE**

### **Major products and services of the State Election Commission**

#### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

- Maintain and support South Carolina’s statewide voter registration system including additions and changes to the master file as provided by each county’s board of voter registration.
- Provide training and assistance on the statewide voter registration system to county voter registration staff through training classes, on-site visits, the Web, phone, and written documentation.
- Produce up-to-date lists of registered voters on a statewide, countywide, or specific election district basis upon customer’s request and payment of fees. Lists of registered voters are also available by voter demographics. In addition to current registered voters, historical lists are available of voters who participated in past elections.
- On a yearly basis, combine the voter registration file with the drivers license file and provide a list to be used by clerks of court and chief magistrates for the selection of jurors.

#### **Conduct of the Primary and General Elections**

- Oversee and assist with the conduct of primaries, general elections, and special elections; and if necessary, any subsequent protests or appeals.
- Insure the quality of the election process and the faith and trust the voting public has in the integrity of elections in South Carolina.
- Provide election supplies and forms to county and municipal election officials.

#### **Election Support Services Program**

- Provide counties with election support services and technical assistance related to the statewide voting system.
- Provide databases and ballot layout assistance to county and municipal election commissions.
- Provide election security oversight and guidance to counties.
- Act as a liaison between counties and the voting system vendor.

#### **Training and Certification Program for Election Officials**

- Administer a mandatory, statewide training and certification program for county voter registration and election officials and their staffs. Program components are designed to provide information about registration and election laws and procedures, as well as to sharpen management skills and other professional practices.

#### **Educational Services**

- Provide specialized training in the conduct of elections and state election law to poll workers, county election officials, and municipal election commissions.
- Provide county and municipal election officials assistance with ballot layout and proofing.

#### **Voter Education and Outreach**

- Conduct a continuing voter education initiative to ensure South Carolina voters are knowledgeable about the voting process. This effort covers the entire voter registration and election process with a particular emphasis placed on the proper use of the new electronic voting machines.

#### **Public Information**

- Provide results and statistics on elections held within the State.
- Provide information on current election law and policies.

- Respond to inquiries and requests from the public, media, candidates, political parties, elected officials, and other governmental agencies.

**Program Management of the HAVA State Plan**

- Maintain the requirements of the HAVA State Plan as required by federal legislation
- Track the progress of various projects with HAVA.
- Manage program vendors and program financials.

**Key Customers and Stakeholders**

<b>Customer/ Stakeholder</b>	<b>Requirements/ Expectations</b>
Citizens of South Carolina	To have the opportunity to register to vote, participate in fair and impartial elections, and have the assurance that their vote will count.
County boards of voter registration and election commissions	To provide necessary training and support to carry out their missions.
S.C. General Assembly	To follow state law regarding conduct of elections and provide input for recommended legislative changes.
Municipal election commissions	To provide necessary training and support to carry out their missions.
Political Parties	To provide information and guidance regarding the election process, to hold fair and impartial elections, and to ensure everyone’s votes are counted.
Candidates/ Elected officials	To provide information and guidance regarding the election process, to hold fair and impartial elections, and to ensure everyone’s votes are counted.
Other state agencies	To work with other agencies to provide citizens the opportunity to register to vote and to process information received when a voter is no longer eligible to vote.
Federal agencies such as the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and Federal Election Commission.	To follow federal laws and guidelines and provide military and overseas citizens the opportunity to register and vote.
Those who purchase lists of registered voters	To provide accurate voter registration lists at a fair price within a reasonable time period of the request.
News media	To provide accurate information relative to the election process in a clear, concise, and timely manner.
Special interest and advocacy groups	To provide access to voter registration and voting to their constituents.

**Key Suppliers and Partners**

Key suppliers to the SEC include county voter registration and election offices, the State Budget & Control Board, the Division of State Information Technology, Office of Research and Statistics, Office of Human Resources, Office of State Budget, technology consultants, Election Systems and Software, voters and citizens, office supply companies, and printers.

**Number of Employees and Locations**

The SEC, when fully staffed, consists of 19 full-time employees and one part-time employee. One position is unclassified and 18.5 positions are classified. Two and one-half positions were left unfilled

during FY2013 due to lack of funding. The Agency utilizes temporary employees and contract workers to meet daily operational demands and responsibilities in critical areas. The Executive Director is the only position in the Agency that is exempt from grievance rights. The Agency has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC.

## **Regulatory Environment**

Agency leaders maintain regulatory accountability by strictly following state and federal law. The Agency operates in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Voter Registration Act of 1993, the Help America Vote Act of 2002, and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act. The voting system used in South Carolina meets requirements of the S.C. Code of Laws and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG). The Agency adheres to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines on employee safety and well-being and state and federal guidelines on the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. State audits are conducted, and the Agency follows accounting procedures as outlined and audited by the State Auditor's Office. HAVA established the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to oversee funds distributed to the states to update voting technology, provide voter education, and accessibility to polling places. The SEC follows recommendations set forth by the EAC in order to receive federal funding. Federal audits are conducted in order to assure proper distribution of federal funds. The SEC strictly adheres to their policies and procedures on properly handling and distributing federal funds.

## **Key Strategic Challenges**

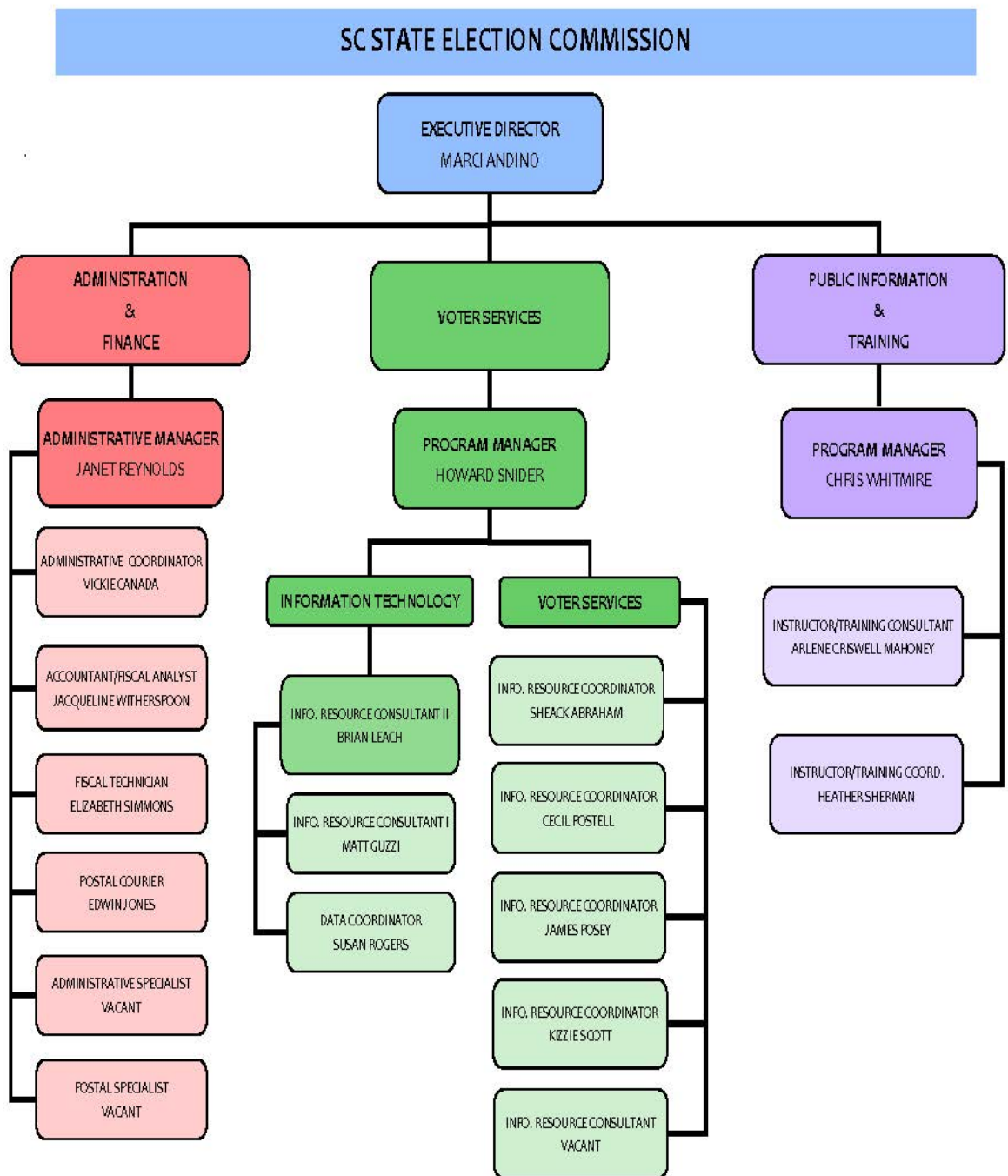
- Educating voters so that they have an understanding of the voter registration and election processes, including how to register to vote and how to vote using the electronic voting machines. Through voter education, the Agency works to build and maintain confidence in the State's voter registration and elections processes.
- Developing consistent procedures and setting standards for county election officials.
- Educating county election officials on state laws and established procedures and encouraging them to adhere to these rules.
- Securing funding necessary to complete our goals. Adequate funding is necessary to obtain the human resources necessary for full operational capacity and to update outdated technologies.
- Adapting our policies and practices to conform to ever changing state and federal mandates.

## **Performance Improvement System**

Senior leaders regularly review the following performance measures and set policy or take steps to ensure improvement:

- Error rate and efficiency of election databases and ballots provided by the Voter Services department
- Election day problems and phone calls incurred versus amount and content of training provided prior to election day
- Examination of voting system audit data to identify trends and areas of improvement
- 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 produced weekly, quarterly, and yearly

# State Election Commission – Organizational Chart – June 30, 2013





# Appropriations/ Expenditures Chart

## Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures		FY 12-13 Actual Expenditures		FY 13-14 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Services	\$ 649,569	\$ 585,008	\$ 760,619	\$ 695,796	\$ 454,727	\$ 390,930
Other Operating	\$ 105,619	\$ 90,929	\$ 250,477	\$ 246,646	\$ 636,020	\$ 420,117
Special Items	\$ 73,112	\$ -	\$4,055,603	\$2,981,719	\$ 4,335,000	\$ 3,000,000
Permanent Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Case Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$ 415,983	\$ 415,983	\$ 386,109	\$ 386,109	\$ 533,000	\$ 533,000
Fringe Benefits	\$ 195,623	\$ 171,642	\$ 243,763	\$ 217,934	\$ 246,806	\$ 220,806
Non-recurring	\$3,143,585	\$ 76,575	\$2,548,113	\$ 438,721	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	\$4,583,491	\$1,340,137	\$8,244,684	\$4,966,924	\$ 6,205,553	\$ 4,564,853

## Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures	FY 12-13 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$ 262,153	\$ -
Capital Reserve Funds	\$ 1,019,016	\$ 1,721,200

## Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures		FY 12-13 Budget Expenditures		Key Cross References for Financial Results*
		State:	Federal:	State:	Federal:	
01010000/ Admin	Oversees the Agency's policies & procedures, provides leadership, support, financial services, other related administrative services	State:	\$ 314,012	State:	\$ 274,797	
		Federal:		Federal:		
		Other:	\$ 79,251	Other:	\$ 68,655	
		Total:	\$ 393,262	Total:	\$ 343,452	
	% of Total Budget:		15%	% of Total Budget:		17%
20010000/ Voter Services	Oversees maintenance of the database of all registered voters in the State, creates databases for elections, and maintenance of agency computer network	State:	\$ 277,387	State:	\$ 529,093	Figure 7.1 Figure 7.2 Figure 7.3
		Federal:		Federal:		
		Other:		Other:		
		Total:	\$ 277,387	Total:	\$ 529,093	
	% of Total Budget:		22%	% of Total Budget:		27%
25000000/ Public Info./ Training	Oversees training & certification program to include a common curriculum to include core courses on the duties of county board members & electives to promote quality service & professional development	State:	\$ 84,539	State:	\$ 138,551	Figure 7.4 Figure 7.5 Figure 7.6 Figure 7.7 Figure 7.8 Figure 7.9
		Federal:		Federal:		
		Other:	\$ 24,255	Other:	\$ 11,003	
		Total:	\$ 108,793	Total:	\$ 149,554	
	% of Total Budget:		6%	% of Total Budget:		8%
30010000/ Aid to Sub- divisions	Provides a supplemental to county board members. Also provides aid to county for local registration board expense.	State:	\$ 415,983	State:	\$ 386,109	Figure 7.10
		Federal:		Federal:		
		Other:		Other:		
		Total:	\$ 415,983	Total:	\$ 386,109	
	% of Total Budget:		16%	% of Total Budget:		19%
95050000/ Benefits	Employee Benefits	State:	\$ 171,642	State:	\$ 217,934	
		Federal:		Federal:		
		Other:	\$ 23,981	Other:	\$ 25,828	
		Total:	\$ 195,623	Total:	\$ 243,763	
	% of Total Budget:		10%	% of Total Budget:		12%

Remainder of Expenditures:	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures		FY 12-13 Budget Expenditures	
	State:	Federal:	State:	Federal:
	\$ 338,728		\$ 3,420,440	
	\$ 1,748,396		\$ 2,075,819	
	\$ 2,386,487		\$ 2,817,835	
	\$ 4,473,610		\$ 8,314,093	
	% of Total Budget:		% of Total Budget:	

## Fines & Fees Report

State law requires each state agency to provide and release to the public via their website a report of all aggregate amounts of fines and fees the agency charged and collected in the prior fiscal year.

SEC Fees Collected – FY2012	Amount	Source	Applicable Statutes
Training & Certification Program Fees	\$7,700	County/Municipal board members/staff	Proviso 79.7
Sale of Lists	\$78,736	Candidates, political parties, clerks of court, public	7-3-20, Proviso 79.4
Sale of Publications	\$55	Various	Charge actual cost of printing per publication
Filing Fees for Special Elections	\$69,424	Candidates	7-13-40
Filing Fees for Statewide Primaries	\$5,936	Candidates	7-13-40
Refunds of Primary Filing Fees to Political Parties	\$(14,365)	Candidates	7-13-40

## **SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE CRITERIA**

### **Category 1 – Senior Leadership, Governance, and Social Responsibility**

The Agency has five commissioners, who meet monthly and when otherwise necessary to set policy for the Agency based on its mission. The commission sets goals and approves major projects. Additionally, the commissioners are extremely supportive of agency initiatives.

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

The Agency is involved to some degree in approximately 300 elections held each year in the State. Significant planning is required for the statewide primary elections and general elections conducted in even numbered years. Management must adhere to deadlines and anticipate possible problems as well as have a clear vision of information and actions that will be expected of the Agency for each election. Staff are instructed and provided with the necessary tools to complete this task. This is crucial to the successful conduct of elections.

- 1.1a** Short and long-term directions are based on customer needs, election schedules, election law changes, and changes in technology. For short-term direction, if a customer has an immediate need it is evaluated and delegated to the staff member who has the skills to address the need in a timely manner. For long-term direction, department directors and staff gather information, assess needs, develop a plan, and set a time-line for completion of the project. This time-line is stressed to each individual involved in achieving the long-term goal or direction.
- 1.1b/c** Employee performance expectations and organizational values are communicated through employee evaluations and staff meetings. Employees are expected to perform both effectively and efficiently. Employees performing below agency expectations are counseled and provided with the necessary resources, mentoring, and opportunity to improve their job performance.
- 1.1d** Potential employees submit to a State Law Enforcement Division background check before they are hired. All employees are expected to act in an ethical manner that meets established standards for professional and personal behavior. Problems with unethical behavior are immediately addressed as they occur. Written ethical policy provided by the Budget and Control Board is followed by the Agency.
- 1.2** Senior leaders establish and promote a focus on agency customers through a variety of learning and listening methods. Senior staff is also available to speak with customers when requested. An “unwritten” policy is in place for staff to promptly return all phone calls and reply to all letters within one business day, if possible.
- 1.3** The Agency determines the impact of its services through an agency e-mail service, an election community intranet, surveys, verbal/written communication, and focus group meetings. The SEC has an agency e-mail listed on the agency website where the public may submit questions, comments, or concerns/complaints on any voter registration or election related subject. Replies to these e-mails are made within 3-4 working days, depending on the information submitted and requested. Replies to written and oral requests are made within 2 days.

The SEC conducts surveys after each training class for feedback on any improvements that need to be made in the content or distribution of information.

- 1.4** Senior leaders maintain fiscal accountability by following guidelines outlined by the Comptroller General's office on paying agency bills from the proper fiscal year budget and meeting all deadlines to pay such bills. Every fiscal year, the SEC submits a budget request to the State Budget Office. The Agency then appears before the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee to justify the request. The Agency also undergoes external audits from the State Auditor's office. Formal internal audits are not conducted; however, informal audits are a part of agency business controls. For example, request for money must be in written form and properly released and authorized from the Finance Director and Executive Director.

Senior leaders maintain legal accountability and protection from lawsuits by closely following state election law. The SEC obtains legal opinions and assistance from the Attorney General's office or, when necessary, private attorneys on information that is not addressed in the laws. While agency leaders understand that any opinions issued from the Attorney General's office are non-binding, they rely on their in-depth knowledge and legal expertise regarding certain legal matters.

Agency leaders maintain regulatory accountability by strictly following state and federal law. The Agency operates in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Voter Registration Act of 1993, and the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The voting system used in South Carolina meets requirements of the S.C. Code of Laws and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG). The Agency adheres to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines on employee safety and well-being and state and federal guidelines on the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. State audits are conducted, and the Agency follows accounting procedures as outlined and audited by the State Auditor's Office. HAVA established the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to oversee funds distributed to the states to update voting technology, provide voter education, and accessibility to polling places. The SEC follows recommendations set forth by the EAC in order to receive federal funding. Federal audits may be conducted in order to assure proper distribution of federal funds; therefore, the SEC strictly adheres to their policies and procedures on properly handling and distributing federal funds.

- 1.5** Senior leaders regularly review the following performance measures and set policy or take steps to ensure accuracy:

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

- 1.6 Senior Management determines their effectiveness as leaders through feedback from respective employees. This feedback is gained through an open-door policy and regular staff meetings. Quarterly or monthly meetings are held to take suggestions on improving department processes. Verbal communication is encouraged and expected if an employee is dissatisfied or feels that their supervisor can help improve his/her performance.
- 1.7 Agency staff engages in succession planning through coaching, training and development, and promoting from within. Employees are encouraged to go back to school or take classes to gain knowledge and skills that will prove valuable to the Agency in the future. The SEC faces a unique challenge to succession planning due to the size of the Agency. Many departments do not have the depth necessary to train competent successors.
- 1.8 Priorities for improvement are based on immediate needs identified from various situations that arise. For example, due to the federal funding from the 2002 Help America Vote Act, it was identified that SC could afford to replace all voting equipment currently used statewide, much of which was antiquated and not reliable. Agency staff worked with various interests groups to gather input on what types of features were needed on a new voting system (i.e., ear phones for the blind). These features were specified in a request for proposal for election machine vendors and must have been met in order to offer their equipment.
- 1.9 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. Budget restrictions require staff to seek opportunities with no registration fee or out of town travel when possible. Figure 1.1 depicts the level of employee development programs in which agency employees have been involved. No employees are currently enrolled due to a lack of funding.

<b>EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS</b>		
<b>Courses</b>	<b>Number Completed</b>	<b>Number Enrolled</b>
Executive Institute	1	0
Certified Public Manager	1	2
Associate Public Manager	4	0
Human Resource Professional Development	1	0
Certified Election/Registration Administrator	0	4
Election Security	1	0
Leadership Institute	1	0
SEC Certification Program	5	13

**Figure 1.1**

The South Carolina Executive Institute existed primarily for state government officials with executive levels of responsibility and authority. The Institute was administered by the State Budget and Control Board and offered an annual curriculum tailored for public sector leaders designed to meet evolving needs of governmental leaders in South Carolina.

The Certified Public Manager™ (CPM) program is a nationally accredited management development program for public managers. The CPM designation is a professional credential that involves intensive study, practice, application, and testing to prepare public managers for the challenges of today's and tomorrow's workplace. This program, developed by the S.C. Budget and Control Board's Office of Human Resources, was accredited by the National CPM Consortium in 1996.

The Associate Public Manager™ (APM) offers new or experienced supervisors the skills and knowledge to help them stay on top of the latest supervisory techniques and achieve success in today's changing workplace.

The Human Resource Professional Development (HRPD) Program is designed for HR professionals to enhance their skills in continuing education focusing on HR practices and developing skills in specific technical areas.

The Certified Election/ Registration Administrator (CERA) program is continuing professional education specializing in voter registration and elections administration conducted by the Election Center and Auburn University. It is intended for those who want to demonstrate their dedication to excellence through a career-long commitment to improving their skills and staying at the top of this profession.

The Public Professional Development (PPD) Program was developed for professional/technical staff to enhance their ability to work with teams, gain presentation skills, and manage priorities.

The Leadership Institute at Columbia College prepares women to assume leadership within their professions and communities, to lead innovation and change throughout their lives, and to be effective in a global society.

- 1.10** Managers properly train and empower employees to make decisions and take actions within the boundaries of their job duties that satisfy customers and produce better business results. Employee innovation is encouraged in an effort to improve agency services to customers. Recognition is given to employees whose ideas increase agency productivity or reduce agency expenditures.
- 1.11** Through encouragement and example, senior leaders participate in professional, election, and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. In FY2012, SEC staff members contributed to the United Way during the organization's State Employees Campaign raising approximately \$500 to help improve their community. Employees are encouraged to be active in industry organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE).

## Category 2- Strategic Planning

<b>Program Number and Title</b>	<b>Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Related FY2013 Key Action Plan/Initiative(s)</b>	<b>Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures</b>
	<b>Support Statewide Voting System</b> —Provide system support during local and statewide elections.	Provide voting system training and assistance to county election officials by preparing election-specific databases.	III. p.50-52
20010000/ Voter Services	<b>Statewide Voter Registration System</b> —Maintain and support the State’s voter registration system.	Provide maintenance and security of statewide voter registration system. Manage performance and enhancements to the system, ensuring conformity to new and existing laws and policies.	I. p.40-42 Figures 7.1 – 7.3
	<b>Conduct of Elections</b> —Oversee and assist with conduct of primaries and elections and ensure the quality of the election process	Provide oversight, consultative feedback, and training to county election commissions on election process and election law.	I. p. 40-42 II. p. 42-50 III. p. 50-52 IV. p. 52-53 V. p. 53-55 Figures 7.1-7.11
25000000/ Public Information/ Training	<b>Training and Certification</b> —Administer program consisting of components designed to provide information about registration and election law and procedures	Provide training to county election and voter registration offices, staff, and commissioners on conduct of voter registration and election processes.	II. p. 42-50 Figure 7.8-7.9
	<b>Implementation and Enforcement of Help America Vote Act</b> —Successfully implement and ensure compliance.	Develop and execute a plan to track the progress of various projects to ensure compliance with federal guidelines and deadlines.	II. p. 42-50 III. p. 50-52 IV. p. 52-53 Figure 7.4-7.9

**Figure 2.1**

**2.1** Our strategic planning process is guided by the Agency Director based on the goals of the Agency. Goals are based on the agency mission and statutory requirements. The Director includes ideas and input from departmental heads and other employees in pertinent areas. Being a small agency makes it easier to assemble key players and develop a plan, taking into consideration all risks, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

**2.2-2.4** Action plans are developed and tracked using an agency project management site (PMO). The Agency PMO is a website that enables users to plan projects by organizing each task associated with the project. Each task is assigned an owner and a percentage value related to its importance in completing the project. As each task is completed, the program produces a percentage complete number for the project. The PMO also features a messaging system allowing users to communicate and collaborate on projects. It also features a calendar module for planning purposes. The PMO enables the Agency Director and departmental directors to track the status of projects and action items through the PMO.

- 2.5** The objective of enforcing the provisions of the Help America Vote Act allows us to address the strategic challenge of educating voters by funding a comprehensive voter education campaign. The training and certification objective addresses the challenge of developing consistent procedures and educating county election officials. The challenge of funding for employees with an elevated technical skill level is addressed as part of the objective of supporting the statewide voting system.
- 2.6** Our strategic planning process is evaluated on its effectiveness in developing a plan that is carried out in a way that adequately addresses our strategic goals. Our strategic planning process is constantly evaluated and updated to conform to changing needs.



## Category 3 - Customer and Market Focus

**3.1** The SEC identifies key customers based on statutory requirements and observation of the groups and individuals requesting specific election related information or services. Key customers of the SEC include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, elected officials, federal election agencies, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, those who purchase lists of registered voters, special interest and advocacy groups, and the media.

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 regularly with election officials from all over the State. This committee serves as a liaison between all county election commissions and voter registration boards in the State and the SEC. By taking this approach, the management team is able to speak directly with one of the Agency's biggest customers and then lead and train agency employees to meet the customer's needs. They have also been extremely valuable in establishing needs for statutory changes and fine-tuning programmatic focus.

**3.2-3.4** The SEC uses traditional and technological methods to listen to customers and learn what adaptations are necessary to meet their changing expectations. One way this is done is through the Agency's intranet site, ElectionNET. This is a growing, searchable electronic repository of a vast array of information including agency policies, processes, reference materials, tools, and historical documentation. This repository is the primary mechanism for one of our largest customer groups, county election officials, to seek information, conduct business, and make complaints. The SEC's public website, scVOTES.org, is the primary source for information for the general public. It also provides the public with a mechanism to make complaints by providing contact information for the SEC and county voter registration and election offices.

The management team also communicates with political parties, advocacy groups, and members of the legislature to discuss issues affecting the operation of the Agency. The SEC is interested in customer input on agency performance so that it may implement procedures, if needed, to improve customer service. The SEC assesses needs and determines how to best meet them in a cost effective and timely manner. Methods of determining levels of customer satisfaction include:

- Voter feedback through various communications
- Evaluations from training programs
- On-site visits with county offices
- Voting system users group meetings
- Advisory committee meetings with customers

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

**3.6** The SEC is dedicated to continuous improvement of the voter registration and elections processes. By using the avenues outlined above, the goal is to provide the best possible service to customers of the Agency. Positive relationships with customers are built by providing accurate and timely information with excellent customer service.

## Category 4 - Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management

**4.1** The Agency decides which systems to measure based on the agency mission and key products and services. These measurements show trends for future planning and display areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**4.2-3** A review of voter registration lists used in all elections is concluded within ten days of receipt. The review checks for discrepancies and errors made at the precinct level on Election Day. If errors are found, the proper county election officials are notified immediately so that they can correct improper procedures or identify areas to reinforce through training.

Federal law requires the SEC to work with agencies providing voter registration assistance to their clients. The SEC reviews reports for inconsistencies in the number of voters assisted and contacts agencies when discrepancies are discovered.

Other divisions use various tables and recording notebooks to track efficiency and effectiveness methods. For example, the Voter Services Division keeps a manual log of when sample ballots are mailed to a county election commission, when they are returned, and the number of errors contained in the information. If errors are found on the agency end of the transmission, steps are taken to reduce those errors in the future.

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

**4.5** Data analysis and election audit tools are used to determine the validity of a process and supports decision making by capturing the pertinent data over a period of time and then evaluating all data and options to improve the process. County offices were surveyed to determine existing gaps in services and future needs.

**4.6** If a system, process or procedure is found to be inadequate or deficient; the problem is addressed immediately to lessen any impact in the short term. The issue is also addressed through the strategic planning process so that it can be improved or corrected in a more permanent way through changes in the particular system, process or procedure.

**4.7** Employees with the greatest longevity within an organization usually possess the most technical and institutional knowledge. When an employee leaves their position, it is important to retain as much of their accumulated knowledge as possible. Significant time, money, and resources can be expended to fill the knowledge void through training new personnel or retraining existing personnel. The SEC is addressing the management of employee organizational and institutional knowledge management within the Agency by leveraging technology available through its new intranet (ElectionNET). This is a growing, searchable electronic repository of agency policies, processes, reference materials, employee desk procedures, tools, and historical documentation that is available to all agency employees.

## Category 5 - Workforce Focus

- 5.1** Agency work is organized and managed on a departmental basis. Each department manager distributes work based on employee skills. During the past several years, the Agency has transitioned from heavily clerical work to work that requires more technical skills. Employees are hired and trained based on these current needs.
- 5.2** The SEC is a small agency with 17 employees (19.5 allowable) dedicated to the mission of the Agency. Cross training and cross functioning are essential to achieve the mission of the Agency. In some instances, the size of the Agency hinders cross training because many positions require a skill set that is not readily available.
- 5.3** When a vacancy occurs, employees inside the Agency are encouraged to apply. Management uses the South Carolina E-Recruitment System to find potential employees with necessary skill sets. In the past, staff performed primarily administrative and data entry functions. We now require a much more technical skill set, and position salaries have not been adjusted to reflect this demand. Another barrier is the extreme workload placed on employees during times of peak demand, particularly during statewide election preparation.
- 5.4** There is an advantage in the small number of SEC employees when it comes to evaluation of workforce capability and capacity. Managers work very closely with their employees and are acutely aware of their skills and competencies. Having a small number of employees also makes the agency very sensitive to changes in staffing level demands. Changes in demands cannot always be absorbed by current staff; and many times, it is necessary to hire temporary and contract employees.
- 5.5** SEC employee performance management system gives management an opportunity to acknowledge good performance or provide resources and advice to improve on substandard performance. This process is demonstrated through the annual employee evaluation and by addressing specific situations as they arise.
- 5.6** Being a small agency, the SEC has no internal leadership program, but the Agency takes advantage of external leadership programs such as the Executive Institute, the Leadership Institute, and the certification programs offered through the State Office of Human Resources. See Category I, Figure 1.1.
- 5.7-10** Employee training and development is updated as necessary to allow the Agency to carry out its action plans. Constantly changing demands placed on voter registration and election requires ongoing training and development. Through meetings, workshops, training classes, phone, and in-person conversations with agency customers, needs and expectations of the Agency are determined. Once identified, new processes or programs are created, or existing ones are improved, to ensure customer satisfaction. These developments and improvements are executed using the most modern and economically feasible means available. Many times, development training of employees is needed to accomplish these program improvements. Employees are encouraged to continue their education and to attend any training offered to help them better perform their job duties. Extra training is also encouraged when performance is substandard.
- 5.11** Motivation of employees is done informally through verbal conversations and mentoring. Formal motivation is achieved through practices such as flex time, agency retreats, promotions from within, and providing resources to perform the necessary job duties and monetary increases and bonuses when the agency budget allows. The Agency's compensation system is based on available funding and internal equity. If money is available in the agency budget, employee salary increases are given for performance, additional job duties, or completion of certain training programs. Regular staff meetings, verbal surveys, observation, and feedback during evaluations

are used to determine employee satisfaction and motivation.

The Agency's rewards and recognition program is based on a peer-nominated approach. Employees are nominated quarterly by their peers for outstanding service performed based on the Agency's goals and mission. From those nominees, an employee of the quarter is chosen and recognized at a breakfast or luncheon and awarded a plaque. Each year an employee of the year is chosen from the employee of the quarter recipients and their name is engraved on a larger plaque in the office lobby.

Additionally, the SEC recognizes the outstanding registration/election office, official, and newcomer from the various counties in the State. These peer-nominated awards are presented annually at the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials conference.

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

- S.C. Association of Registration and Election Officials
- National Association of State Election Directors
- Election Assistance Commission Standards Board
- Election Center
- The Society of Certified Public Managers
- Executive Institute Alumni
- SC State Government Improvement Network
- Government Finance Officers Association
- SC Information Technology Directors Association
- State Agency Training Consortium
- CPM Advisory Board
- International Public Management Association
- Human Resources Advisory Committee
- SC Assistive Technology Advisory Committee

Most employees also participate in the United Way and Good Health Appeal programs. Other volunteer programs by agency staff include Christmas adopt-a-family, blood donations to the Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, Sistercare Christmas assistance, school mentoring, Salvation Army, local soup kitchens, and food drives. Some employees have even used their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

- 5.12** There is no formal assessment method to measure employee well being, satisfaction and motivation at this time. Informal assessments are conducted through open-door conversations and regular office visits by management staff. The agency encourages a work-life balance.

#### **SEC Employee Wellness Initiatives**

During FY2013 the following practices and activities included: Advising employees to stay home if sick until 24 hours after they no longer have symptoms

- Preparing for extended employee absences and for continuation of essential functions
- Educating employees about proper cough and sneeze hygiene
- Providing education regarding hand hygiene and providing hand sanitizers
- Routinely cleaning surfaces that are likely to have frequent hand contact

- Encouraging sick employees at higher risk of flu complications to seek medical attention
- Encouraging all Agency and county employees to get vaccinated
- Distributing flu prevention posters to county officials for display in offices and polling places

**5.13** The SEC has attempted to establish career paths to enable employees to advance within the Agency. Cross training of employees is done agency wide. A limited amount of workforce planning has been done, but the size of the Agency and the varied skills sets of its employees, makes a specific, agency wide plan impossible.

**5.14** A custodial staff provided by the Budget and Control Board Building Services Division maintains the work environment. Employees report any unsanitary conditions to custodial staff and/or other appropriate authorities immediately. The Agency also complies with OSHA and state fire marshal regulations.

The implementation of the electronic voting system has made the workplace safer by eliminating the need for large rolls of paper. Before the new system, SEC employees created ballots using large architectural plotters that require very heavy rolls of paper. Because of the extra weight, back braces were provided for staff to use while lifting the paper. Aprons and latex gloves were also provided for working with the plotter ink cartridges.

Employees using computers on a regular basis are provided with larger monitors containing screen filters, keyboards designed to prevent hand injury, and stands to hold data to be processed.

# **Category 6 - Process Management**

## **I. Statewide Voter Registration System**

### **New Voter Registration System**

During FY2013, the SEC conducted its first Presidential General Election using the new statewide Voter Registration & Election Management System (VREMS). This system was implemented in December 2011 and is an easier-to-use, windows-based system that makes the processing of registered voters and their assignment to proper election districts far more efficient. System security features include encrypted data, multiple levels of user authentication to access the system, and various hardware and software controls. The system is housed at the Department of State Information Technology (DSIT).

### **Photo Voter Registration Cards**

The SEC and county voter registration offices began issuing voter registration cards with photographs in November 2012, as required under the new Photo ID law. To receive a photo voter registration card, registered voters visit their county voter registration office, identify themselves (provide name, date of birth, and last four digits of their Social Security Number), and have their photograph taken. The photo is stored with the voter's record in the statewide voter registration system. The county voter registration office prints a paper voter registration card with a photo and provides it to the voter immediately. The SEC then prints the plastic voter registration card with a photo, mails the card to the county voter registration office, who then distributes the card to voters in the county. Both the paper and plastic cards are permanent and do not expire. The voter registration cards are also portable, so that when a voter moves and registers in another county, the photo voter registration card can continue to be used in that county.

### **Online Voter Registration**

In June 2012, state law was amended allowing the SEC to create a system for voters to register to vote online. OVR allows voters with Driver's Licenses and ID cards issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to complete and submit a voter registration application through the SEC's website. Each voter's identity is verified electronically by cross-checking information on the application with DMV records. Processing voter registration applications through OVR requires far less staff time than traditional paper applications and provides citizens with increased opportunities to register to vote.

### **Security and Maintenance**

The SEC is responsible for maintenance and security of the statewide voter registration database, which currently contains more than 2.9 million active, registered voters. The Agency works with DSIT to provide housing for the database, regulate user access, and provide physical security. The SEC manages performance and enhancements to the system, ensuring conformity to new and existing laws and policies.

Each county voter registration board has online access to the database. On a daily basis, the boards add new registered voters and make changes to existing voter records within their county. The Agency provides the boards with technical support and training in the proper use of the system. The SEC provides the boards with necessary forms and materials to conduct voter registration.

Public access to the database is provided through the Agency's website, an in-office public access computer, county voter registration offices, and statistical reports. Through scVOTES.org, voters can

access their voter registration record and information regarding the status of their absentee and/or provisional ballots.

The SEC keeps the database current by removing the names of voters who have died, moved, been convicted of felonies or crimes against the election laws, or who have otherwise become ineligible. Records that need to be made inactive are identified in several ways:

- Data from DMV on individuals who have surrendered their SC Driver's License to another state
- Death reports from DHEC's Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Reports of convictions from federal and state courts
- Registration reports from other states
- Database comparisons with other states to detect dual registrations
- Requests directly from voters
- Confirmation card mailings

### **Confirmation Card Mailings (CCMs)**

CCMs are conducted pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act and are designed to maintain voter registration database records by correcting inaccurate addresses and to preserve the voting rights of people who may have moved but did not update their address. The SEC sends postage paid return addressed post cards to voters who have not participated in at least one election for a specified time period. The post card asks the voter to confirm their address or provide their new address by returning the card. Voters who do not respond are flagged. Flagged voters who do not vote within two general election cycles after being flagged are made inactive.

## **Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports**

The SEC is responsible for producing eligible voter registration lists for every election held in the State and providing those lists to the appropriate county boards of voter registration. These lists are used on election day to assist poll managers in determining voter eligibility before a ballot is issued. Lists are provided approximately 10 days prior to any election.

This eligible voter registration list traditionally has been provided in printed and CD format. The SEC also provides an electronic poll book that allows poll workers to use a laptop computer to access the voter registration list at the polling place on Election Day. The Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL) reduces the amount of time it takes to process voters:

- Poll Managers can search for voters by name or voter registration number
- Poll Managers no longer have to flip the pages of a poll list to find a voter
- Reading bar code on voter registration card decreases processing time and increases accuracy

EVRL helps determine the correct precinct for voters more quickly:

- EVRL will display the voters appropriate ballot style to the poll manager, thereby reducing the chance of giving a voter the wrong ballot
- EVRL will list all voters in all precincts within a county; therefore, if a voter shows up at the wrong precinct, the poll manager can use the system to direct the voter to the correct precinct

EVRL allows voter participation history to be processed more quickly and accurately:

- EVRL reduces the chance that a poll manager will mark the wrong person as voted
- Voter participation records can be updated in the Voter Registration and Election Management System within days upon receipt compared to weeks with the paper list

The SEC provides training, databases, and some equipment to county voter registration boards and election commissions to facilitate use of EVRL in elections.

The Agency provides customers with various other lists of voters that are also produced from the voter registration database. These are many times referred to as “voter registration lists,” but are not to be confused with the official eligible voter registration lists described above. These lists are available broken down by geographical region (statewide, county, precinct, district), by demographic (age, sex, race), and by participation in a particular election or primary.

Various statistical reports on voter registration and voter participation are also made available to agency customers. These reports show numbers of registered voters at a given time or numbers of voters who participated in a particular election. These numbers are also available broken down by geographical region and demographic. Reports are produced at regular intervals (annually, quarterly, and weekly) and special reports are available on request.

The SEC is also responsible for providing jury pool lists to clerks of court, chief magistrates, and municipal courts to be used in jury selection. Jury pool lists are created by combining the names in the voter registration database with those in the drivers license file.

## **Voter Participation Statistics**

After every election and primary held in the state, the SEC conducts a process by which each individual voter that participated in the election or primary is given credit for participating. By giving each voter credit, the Agency is able to make sure voters who are participating in elections are kept on the list of active, registered voters; and identify voters who are not participating in elections for inclusion in confirmation card mailings (see “Security & Maintenance”). This process also allows the SEC to produce voter participation lists and statistical reports (see “Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports”).

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

### **Public Information**

On a daily basis, the public information staff interacts with the general public; local, state and national media; elected officials; candidates; political parties; county voter registration and election offices; the U.S. Department of Justice; and others. The staff completes surveys and responds to requests for information via letter, e-mail, telephone, and personal appearance. The Public Information and Training Division also produces informational publications including the bi-annual Election Report.

### **Voter Education and Outreach**

The SEC is committed to providing education and outreach to voters. It is imperative for voters to be knowledgeable about voter registration and election processes in the State to ensure that the Agency’s mission of conducting successful elections is accomplished. This commitment to voter education is consistent with the Agency’s voter education message—“Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” The Agency continues to deliver this message to voters in various ways through its *SC Votes* voter education and outreach initiative.

### **Election Night Results Reporting**

The SEC uses an online tool called Election Night Results (ENR) to report results for all statewide general elections and primaries. ENR is available to users through [scVOTES.org](http://scVOTES.org). This tool not only provides public access to results on election night, but serves as an historical repository available throughout the year. ENR provides visitors with a graphical view of in-depth state and county results. Users are presented with a breakdown of votes received for a candidate by contest. Maps illustrate the counties or precincts reporting, voter turnout, and results by county or precinct. A reporting area allows interactive report creation and the ability to download detailed reports. As county election commissions compile precinct-level results, they are electronically transmitted to the SEC. The SEC aggregates and reports each county’s state and local results in real time via the ENR Web interface.



## **scVOTES.org**

The SEC website, [scVOTES.org](http://scVOTES.org), is designed to provide clear, accurate, and timely information to the general public on all aspects of voter registration and elections in the State. The site is maintained in house by SEC staff. Voters, candidates, poll workers, and news media use the site to find valuable information relative to their concerns. This site is reviewed on a weekly basis to determine whether changes are necessary to better serve customers. Site design, features, and functionality are kept up-to-date with current Web technologies.

## **Social Media Messaging**

The SEC uses Facebook and Twitter to rapidly disseminate election information to end users, particularly during times leading up to important dates and deadlines and after important changes to election procedures. While all voters are not social media users, the viral nature of these media make them essential for reaching other influencers who regularly interact with our target audiences. Follow “scvotes” on Facebook and Twitter.

## **Training**

### **Training & Certification Program**

County and municipal voter registration and election officials and staff members are required by statute to complete a Training and Certification Program provided by the SEC. SEC staff, county election commission staff, other governmental agency staff, and professional trainers conduct component classes of this program. Classes are offered on a quarterly basis and at the annual conference. Updates to the training classes are made as needed due to election law changes, procedural changes, and information gathered by feedback from participants. Some future classes may be conducted online through the agency Learning Management System.

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

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

### **Educational Services**

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

A Learning Management System (LMS) is used to conduct online training classes as a supplement to in-person instruction. This training resource allows user access 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The LMS also enables state and county election officials to manage a user’s progress through tracking and testing functions in the system. The first application of the system is the online Poll Manager Training Program. Development of a second application, a municipal elections training

course, continued in FY2013. The LMS will be used in the future to conduct additional classes, including training and certification program classes.

Periodic election law changes require changes to materials used in various training programs and on Election Day. These election law changes are tracked and cataloged by staff in the Public Information & Training Division. Prior to every primary and general election, if not needed before, these changes are reviewed and incorporated into various forms and materials supplied by this office including the Poll Managers Handbook, the voter registration and election laws handbook, the Municipal Election Handbook, and the Voter Registration and Election Commission Handbook. Changes needed as a result of a suggestion from office staff or customers are also incorporated at this time. Supplies and printing are secured using state procurement procedures and distributed to county offices via UPS, interagency mail service, and personal delivery.

Agency staff travels regularly to county offices to provide assistance. Onsite visits are also used to obtain feedback and new ideas from customers that would benefit the election process. The SEC also provides support and training in response to staff turnover within county election offices.

### **Ballot Review and Approval**

The SEC serves as the final reviewer for all ballots used in statewide primaries and general elections, as well as special elections for state-level and multi-county offices. The Agency also assists county and municipal election commissions by serving as a final reviewer of ballots for local elections. This review ensures ballots are designed in compliance with state law and ballot standards established by the SEC. The review includes making sure ballots have correct spelling, appropriate ballot headings, and the proper listing of candidates, offices, and questions. Ballot standards are reviewed and revised as necessary by a Ballot Standards Committee made up of SEC staff. The SEC strives for no later than a 48 hour turn-around time for approval. This ballot review and approval process conducted by the Public Information and Training Division is part of the overall election definition process described in the next section.

## **III. Statewide Voting System**

### **Voting System Support**

VSD staff is knowledgeable and available for phone and on-site support to users of the voting system. Division staff also conducts periodic needs and security assessments and provides advice to users in areas where the security can be improved. Software upgrades to the system in all counties are performed by VSD staff, and assistance with firmware upgrades is provided where needed. Division personnel are in contact with suppliers of the software, specialized supplies, and mailing supplies needed. Contact with voting system vendors is made by phone for immediate resolution and through users group meetings for items that need discussion and input from other customers.

VSD staff develops and conducts voting system training classes on an as needed basis. Classes cover topics such as voting system software, voting system preparation, results accumulation, and technical support.

### **Election Definition**

Election definition is a process by which software is used to build a database containing election-specific information such as precincts, offices, and candidates. From this database, ballots are produced for voting machines and optical scan paper ballots. The election definition database also allows for integrated reporting of all election results, from voting machines and paper ballots. Staff in the Agency's Voter Services Division (VSD) performs this election definition process for most counties and elections held throughout the state. By providing this service to county and municipal

election commissions, they are able to significantly reduce election costs. Seven counties define their own databases for most elections.

VSD has a formal policy of delivering all databases and ballots within two weeks after receiving election specific information. With the exception of elections with special circumstances, such as candidate withdrawals and lawsuits, the goals are met by performing preliminary work on databases well in advance of receiving candidate names. This early delivery is accomplished by following strict election definition procedures.

Election Definition procedure summary:

- County election commission (CEC) submits election information.
- SEC builds election database.
  - Database passes initial Quality Assurance (QA).
  - Ballots created, proofed, and tested.
  - SEC performs final database QA.
  - Ballots sent to CEC for approval.
- CEC reviews ballots, requests changes if necessary, and approves ballots.
- CEC orders printing of absentee, emergency, and failsafe ballots; orders audio files to be produced; and prepares and tests voting system for election.

### **Election Auditing & Support**

The SEC provides county election commissions with the tools and training necessary to conduct election audits prior to certification of elections:

- Pre-certification audit procedures
- Voting system auditing software
- Voting system auditing training classes
- Asset management system to track all voting system inventory
- Checklists for poll managers and county election officials
- Certification of county voting system technicians
- Training materials
- Validating election audits performed by counties
- Performing election audits if counties elect not to perform them themselves

### **Voting System Certification**

The SEC is responsible for examination and certification of any upgrades to the current voting system. Prior to seeking certification in South Carolina, the voting system vendor must complete national qualification testing at an independent laboratory based on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's voting system guidelines. Once the federal examination and test are complete, the system can be presented to SEC Commissioners for certification.

Because the State utilizes one system of voting, the SEC no longer tests voting systems from various vendors but maintains a list of hardware, software, and firmware associated with the statewide voting system vendor.

## **IV. Administration of Federal Election Requirements**

### **Help America Vote Act of 2002(HAVA)**

HAVA aims to improve the administration of elections in the United States, primarily through:

- Providing funds to improve the election administration process, technology related to elections, replacement of punch card voting systems, and assistance to disabled voters

- Establishing a federal presence for election assistance
- Providing that every citizen has the opportunity to vote and have their vote counted
- Offer training to voters, poll workers, and election officials on voter registration and the election day process

Each state in the nation was required to submit a State Plan to the federal government outlining steps that would be taken to achieve HAVA compliance. A diverse group of approximately 50 people were appointed to the HAVA State Plan Task Force. The group consisted of members from the Senate and House of Representatives, Office of Research and Statistics, Office of the State Chief Information Officer, Governor's office, both political parties, NAACP, Palmetto Project, League of Women Voters, disability community, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, and staff from the SEC. The plan was delivered to the Federal Election Commission in September of 2003 and has been updated yearly as necessary.

## **Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)**

The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) requires states to provide special procedures to military and overseas citizens to help facilitate voter registration and absentee voting. Persons protected by this Act are:

- members of the United States Uniformed Services and merchant marine;
- their family members; and
- United States citizens residing outside the United States.

Citizens covered under UOCAVA are allowed to:

- register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot by completing a single form
- send and receive voting materials by fax and email
- receive an Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) ballot at the time they receive ballots for a primary
- receive their ballot at least 45 days prior to the date of any election for federal office

IRV was implemented to ensure voters in distant or isolated locations were not disenfranchised by the short two-week period between primaries and runoffs. The IRV ballot allows these voters to rank the candidates for each office in a primary. If a runoff is necessary for a particular office (no candidate receives majority), the IRV ballot rankings are used to determine the voter's choice in the Runoff.

The SEC strives to have all ballots available for printing in time to meet the 45-day deadline. In the event that regular ballots are not available by this deadline, the SEC provides UOCAVA voters with a Special Write-In Absentee Ballot (SWAB). In addition, county voter registration offices are encouraged to send an official ballot containing candidate names to voters who may have received a SWAB. In such an event, whichever ballot the voter returns first is counted.

On April 27, 2012 the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resource Activity (DHRA) grant funds to develop and implement an online user application and ballot delivery system for UOCAVA voters. The Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT) was implemented in FY2013.

## **V. Agency Administration**

### **Accounts Payable**

When an invoice is received, it is reviewed by the Director of Administration and is coded for payment. The Executive Director of the agency reviews the invoice and initials it. The accounts payable clerk processes the payment into the statewide accounting system (the South Carolina Enterprise Information System, SCEIS). This begins the workflow process in the system. The

payment is then either approved or rejected by the Director of Administration. The Comptroller General's Office audits the payment, and the information is uploaded and forwarded to the State Treasurer's Office (STO). The STO then sends a check to the agency and the accounts payable clerk mails the check to the respective individual or entity.

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

The SEC receives pass-through funds which are sent to each county registration board/election commission member on a quarterly basis, per Proviso 79.1. In many cases, no other additional compensation is received by the board members. While some counties supplement the state stipend, most do not. Also, Proviso 79.7 requires the SEC to withhold the stipend for board members who fail to complete the SEC's Training and Certification Program or for members who have completed the program, but fail to complete at least one elective per year. Many board members perform other tasks such as providing technical support, attending monthly board meetings, and assisting with the day to day operations in the office. Board members play a critical role in helping to ensure elections are run fairly and efficiently.

## **Agency Information Technology Support**

The Voter Services Division is responsible for maintaining the agency's computer network. When problems arise with hardware or software, staff is notified by DSIT or agency staff members to address the issue.

## **Election Protest/Appeal Hearings**

As part of the election process, candidates are allowed to file an election protest if they feel voting irregularities occurred. Protests for countywide and less than countywide offices are filed with the county election commissions. Protests for federal, statewide, Senate, House of Representatives, and multi-county offices are filed with the SEC. After the county election commission hears a protest and renders a decision, a candidate may appeal to the SEC. Appeals following decisions of the SEC are filed with the S.C. Senate, S.C. House of Representatives, or the S.C. Supreme Court.

## **Candidate Filing & Certification**

The SEC works with the State's certified political parties to coordinate the filing process for all partisan candidates for federal, state, and multi-county offices in special and general elections. Candidates file with their respective state or county parties, depending on the office, during the filing period prescribed by law. Parties certify the names of candidates who have filed to the SEC or county election commission (depending on the office) by deadlines prescribed by law. Once candidates are nominated (by primary or convention, depending on party) they are again certified to the SEC or county election commission prior to deadlines prescribed by law. Agency staff provides information to candidates and parties to help ensure candidates file properly and parties meet certification requirements and deadlines.

The SEC is responsible for receiving the filing paperwork of petition candidates for federal, state, and multi-county offices. A candidate's petition must contain a certain number of valid signatures of active, registered South Carolina voters depending on the geographical area the office represents. The SEC facilitates verification of these petitions by distributing pages to the voter registration offices in the corresponding counties of origin. Each county voter registration office reports their total number of valid signatures to the Agency, and a total is calculated. If the petition contains enough valid signatures, and the candidate is otherwise qualified; the SEC certifies the candidate to be on the ballot. The Agency verifies that petition candidates have filed Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms with the State Ethics Commission. Candidates are also notified that they may be required to file a Campaign Disclosure form with the State Ethics Commission.

The SEC is also responsible for receiving the filing paperwork of candidates for non-partisan multi-county offices, such as some school boards and watershed districts. The SEC collects Statement of Candidacy forms from all candidates who file with the Agency and verifies that SEI forms have been properly filed with the State Ethics Commission. Candidates are also notified that they may be required to file a Campaign Disclosure form with the State Ethics Commission.

### **Certification of Political Parties**

The SEC is charged by law with certifying and decertifying political parties in the State. Political parties seeking certification must submit to the Agency a petition containing the valid signatures of 10,000 active, registered South Carolina voters. The SEC facilitates verification of these petitions by distributing pages to the voter registration offices in the corresponding counties of origin. Each county voter registration office reports their total number of valid signatures to the Agency, and a statewide total is calculated. If the petition contains enough valid signatures, the SEC certifies the party. Certified political parties who do not maintain the requirements outlined in South Carolina Code of Laws Section 7-9-10 must be decertified by the SEC. South Carolina has nine certified political parties: Constitution, Democratic, Green, Independence, Labor, Libertarian, Republican, United Citizens, and Working Families.

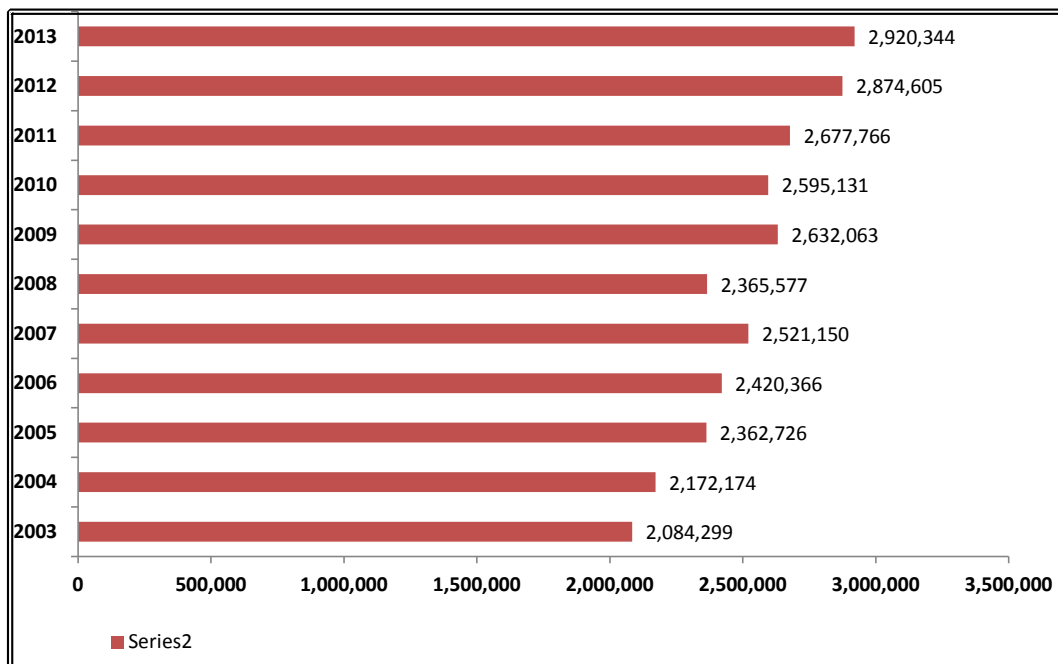
# Category 7 – Results

## I. Statewide Voter Registration System

### Security and Maintenance

- The SEC maintained a database of approximately 2.9 million active, registered voters.
- The Agency worked with the Division of State Information Technology (DSIT) to ensure the database was securely housed and access was granted to only authorized users.
- Approximately 640,000 voter records were added or changed during FY2013. This number includes voters registering for the first time, voters moving from one county to another, voters being reactivated who previously had the status of inactive, removal of voters with felony convictions, deaths, voter requests for removal, and moves out of state.

Figure 7.1 shows the number of active, registered voters in the State over a 10 year period. Decreases in numbers of voters in 2008 and 2010 are directly related to archiving inactive voters after confirmation card mailings.



**Figure 7.1**

### Confirmation card mailing

The next confirmation card mailing is scheduled for FY2014.

## Photo Voter Registration Cards

The SEC and county voter registration offices began issuing voter registration cards with photographs in November 2012, as required under the new Photo ID law. 3,829 photo voter registration cards were issued in FY2013. Figure 7.2 shows the number of photo voter registration cards issued in each county from November 2012 through the end of FY2013.

County	Cards Issued	County	Cards Issued	County	Cards Issued
Abbeville	123	Dillon	117	Lexington	42
Aiken	140	Dorchester	37	McCormick	6
Allendale	27	Edgefield	19	Marion	342
Anderson	18	Fairfield	19	Marlboro	62
Bamberg	11	Florence	215	Newberry	7
Barnwell	36	Georgetown	79	Oconee	1
Beaufort	293	Greenville	37	Orangeburg	370
Berkeley	39	Greenwood	29	Pickens	26
Calhoun	5	Hampton	69	Richland	405
Charleston	446	Horry	101	Saluda	6
Cherokee	2	Jasper	78	Spartanburg	27
Chester	13	Kershaw	4	Sumter	122
Chesterfield	20	Lancaster	52	Union	16
Clarendon	57	Laurens	14	Williamsburg	28
Colleton	32	Lee	61	York	40
Darlington	136				
<b>Total Photo VR Cards issued statewide in FY2013 – 3,829</b>					

Figure 7.2

## Online Voter Registration (OVR)

OVR allows voters with a Driver's License or DMV ID card to complete and submit a voter registration application through the SEC's website. South Carolina is now one of only 13 states in the nation to have true online voter registration. Early in the day on October 2, 2012, just four days prior to the voter registration deadline for the 2012 General Election, the SEC received preclearance for OVR from the U.S. Department of Justice. By 2:00 p.m., OVR was made available to the public:

- Within 24 hours of implementation: more than 3,000 applications
- First four days (prior deadline for the 2012 General Election): more than 25,000 applications
- October 2012 – June 2013: Nearly 40,000 applications

## Voter Registration Lists & Statistical Reports

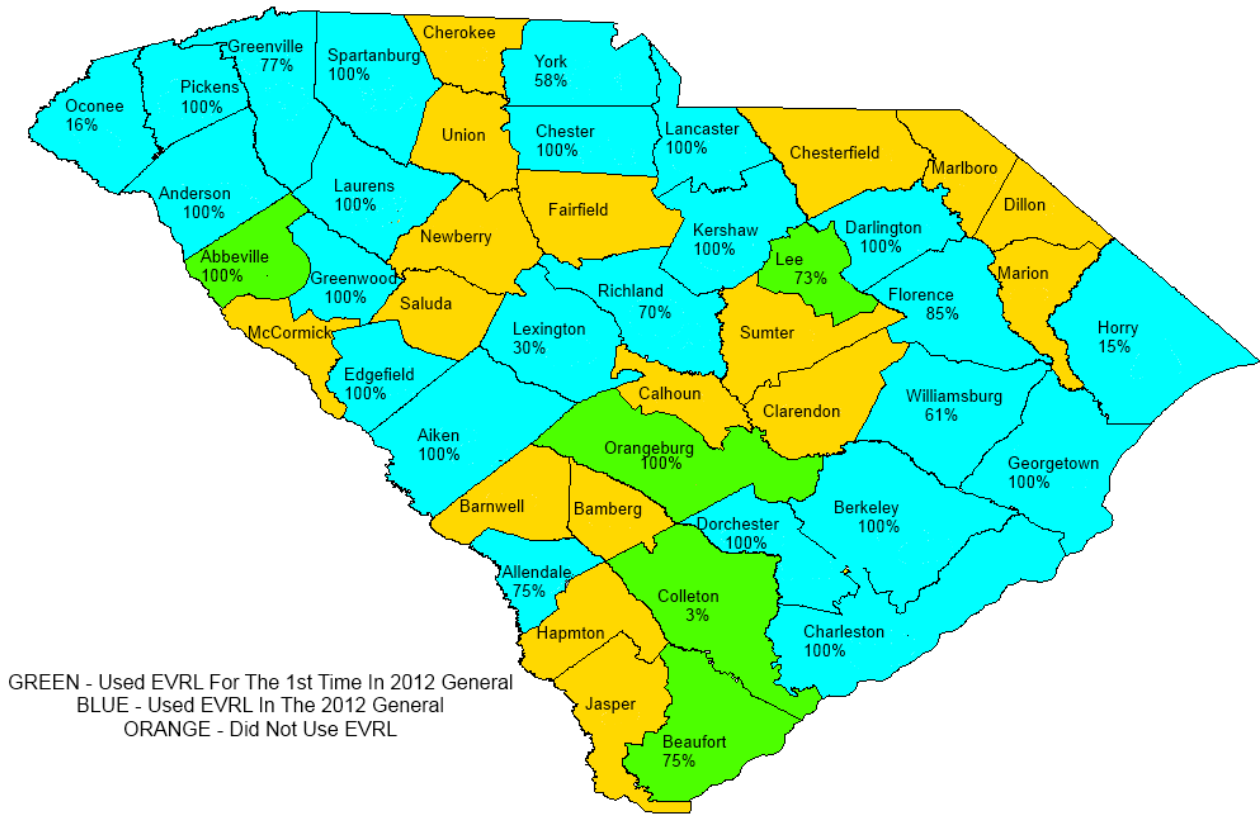
- Approximately 200 voter registration lists were printed for elections held in the State during FY2013. Lists ranged in size from small districts to the statewide general election. All lists were delivered on time. The SEC developed and implemented use of a voter registration checklist designed to quickly detect list errors prior to election day.
- The SEC responded to more than 200 requests for lists of registered voters. The lists ranged from statewide lists to lists of voters from specific geographic areas and demographic groups.
- The SEC produced nearly 200 jury lists for county and municipal courts and magistrates.

### Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)

Use of EVRL continues to expand throughout the state as counties train poll workers and receive laptops to implement the system. Five counties used EVRL for the first time in the 2012 General Election. While use of the system continues to increase and 65% of counties now use EVRL to some extent, Figure 7.3 shows only 37% of the counties use EVRL in all polling places. This means the majority of polling places throughout the state are not taking advantage of this technology.



## EVRL Usage - 2012 General



**Figure 7.3**

### Voter Participation Statistics

After every election and primary held in the state, the SEC conducts a process by which each individual voter that participated in the election is given credit for participating. A high speed scanner was used to capture and record participation information using barcode information beside each voter’s name on paper voter registration lists. Participation data from electronic poll books was uploaded to the system. Statistical reports on the age, race, and sex of voter’s participating in each election are available for analysis concluding this process.

## II. Public Information and Training

### Public Information

During FY2013, the SEC Public Information Office fielded approximately 8,000 telephone calls, e-mails, letters, and office visits from local and national media, candidates, political parties, county election commissions, county voter registration offices, organizations, and the general public. The Agency actively informed the public through the media and the agency website of news, events, deadlines, statistics, and results relating to all state and multi-county elections. Ten major press releases were issued in FY2013. The Public Information Office responded to approximately 30 requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. All requested records were provided according to state and federal laws.

## Voter Education and Outreach

The SEC worked during FY2013 to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in South Carolina through the Agency’s *SC Votes* voter education initiative. The *SC Votes* campaign theme is “Every Vote Matters. Every Vote Counts.” The initiative includes: educational brochures, posters, videos, outreach at public events, a voter education website (scVOTES.org), social media messaging, and a statewide mass media campaign. This effort has been ongoing since 2004, commencing with the implementation of the new voting system. From its inception, the initiative was focused primarily on ensuring voters were informed about the use of the State’s touch screen voting machines. As the State’s voters have become increasingly familiar with the system, focus has shifted to ensuring voters are informed about the laws, procedures, and deadlines associated with the voter registration and voting processes in South Carolina.

In FY2013, the SEC revised all voter education brochures, printed the brochures, and distributed them to all county voter registration and elections offices.

Campaigns leading up to the 2012 General Election were designed to inform voters about:

- the status of pending Photo ID legislation
- the importance of registering to vote and methods of registering to vote
- making sure voters keep their voter registration information up-to-date
- making sure voters were aware of absentee requirements, processes, and deadlines
- encouraging voters to familiarize themselves with the candidates and questions on the ballot

After the 2012 General Election, voter education efforts shifted to informing voters of the requirements of the new Photo ID legislation that became fully effective on January 1, 2013. Efforts aimed to inform voters about:

- The types of Photo IDs required to vote
- How to get a Photo ID
- The “Reasonable Impediment” exception for those who can’t get a Photo ID
- What options are available for voters who forget to bring their Photo ID to the polls

Photo ID voter education efforts consisted of

- Conduct of Photo ID seminars conducting by county election officials throughout the state
- Remote Photo ID picture taking events at locations outside of the voter registration office
- Creation, printing, and distribution of voter education materials
- Dissemination of information through the agency website and social media messaging

Figure 7.4 shows a summary of SC Votes campaign onsite visits.

<b>SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Events – FY2013</b>				
<b>County</b>	<b>Voter Education Event</b>	<b>Voting Machine Touches</b>	<b>Voter Registrations</b>	<b>Photos Taken</b>
Statewide/ Lexington	2013 S.C. Assistive Technology Expo	27	16	10
Statewide/ Spartanburg	Spartanburg School for the Deaf and Blind	95	4	0
Statewide/ Newberry	2012 S.C. Young Leaders Forum, People with Disabilities	55	22	0
Aiken	H. Odell Weeks Activities Center - Photo ID Event	3	8	6
Allendale	2013 Allendale Cooter Festival	26	11	4
Allendale	Allendale/ Fairfax Leisure Center - Photo ID Event	4	6	19
Anderson	2012 Access Anderson Disabilities Expo	58	43	0
Anderson	2012 Anderson Senior Solutions Expo	61	0	0
Bamberg	Town of Denmark Photo ID Event	9	14	6
Bamberg/Cal houn/Orange	2012 Bamberg/Calhoun/Orangeburg Job Fair	31	22	4

**SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Events – FY2013**

<b>County</b>	<b>Voter Education Event</b>	<b>Voting Machine Touches</b>	<b>Voter Registrations</b>	<b>Photos Taken</b>
burg				
Bamberg	Bamberg Job Corps Voter Education Day	88	4	0
Barnwell	2013 Barnwell Job and Health Fair	18	21	3
Barnwell	Williston Town Hall - Photo ID Event	4	1	4
Beaufort	St. Helena Public Library - Photo ID Event	16	58	19
Beaufort	Hilton Head Public Library - Photo ID Event	12	52	26
Beaufort	Bluffton Art and Shrimp Festival 2013	109	21	0
Charleston	2013 Charleston Black Expo	43	18	9
Charleston	Awendaw Town Hall - Photo ID Event	27	28	40
Charleston	Ridgeville Community Center - Photo ID Event	7	6	4
Charleston	The Old Ashley Baptist Association Photo ID Event	0	39	14
Charleston	Goose Creek Photo ID Event	0	19	14
Charleston	Hanahan Town Hall - Photo ID Event	0	2	1
Chester	Richburg Fall Festival 2012	39	6	0
Colleton	Colleton Rice Festival 2013 - Walterboro	28	21	16
Colleton	Colleton County Job Fair	5	16	1
Fairfield	2012 Fairfield Job Fair	65	2	0
Florence	Town of Lake City - Photo ID Event	6	10	19
Florence	Florence Co. Public Library, Florence - Photo ID Event	8	28	18
Florence	2012 Florence Pecan Festival	84	11	0
Georgetown	Georgetown Voter ID Event - Winyah Auditorium	18	27	23
Greenville	2013 Greenville / Upstate Black Expo	27	40	16
Hampton	71st Hampton County Watermelon Festival 2013	13	13	26
Horry	Bucksport Voter ID Event - James Frasier Community Center	14	30	6
Jasper	Palmetto Electric Annual Meeting 2013 - Photo ID Event	44	43	18
Laurens	2012 Squealin' on the Square BBQ Festival	58	134	0
Lee	Lynchburg Town Hall - Photo ID Event	17	11	24
Lexington	Dutch Fork High School Voter Education Event	26	41	0
Lexington	Midland Technical College, Airport, Voter Education Day #1			
Lexington	Midlands Technical College, Airport, Voter Education Day #2	49	112	0
Lexington	2012 31st Annual Peanut Party Festival	31	46	0
Lexington	ITT Technical College Voter Education Event	32	33	0
Lexington/ Richland	2013 Midlands Job Fair	27	21	8
Marion	2012 Golden Leaf Festival – Mullins	39	48	0
Marlboro	McColl Town Hall - Photo ID Event	12	10	29
McCormick	2012 McCormick Gold Rush Festival	42	59	0
Orangeburg	SC State Football Game Voter Registration Drive	49	116	0
Orangeburg	2012 7th District AME Church Conference	66	98	0
Richland	S.C. Commission for the Blind Voter Education Event	48	7	0
Richland	Columbia Jubilee of Heritage Festival	38	28	0
Richland	2012 Voter Education Month Kick-off, State House	18	56	0
Richland	Lower Richland County/ Hopkins Adult Activity Rec. Center - Photo ID Event	37	79	24
Richland	2013 Columbia Black Expo	39	48	8
Richland	South University Voter Education Event	49	96	0
Richland	Francis Burns United Methodist Church Voter Education Event	38	42	0
Richland	Dreher High School Voter Education Event	32	36	0
Richland	Midlands Technical College, Beltline, Voter Education Day	49	69	0
Richland	Columbia International University Voter Education Day	38	69	0
Richland	Fortis College Voter Education Day	29	28	0
Richland	CMRTA Transit Station – Voter Education	38	28	0
Richland	Limestone College Voter Education Day - Columbia Campus	52	62	0
Richland	University of Phoenix Voter Education Event	22	35	0

<b>SC Votes Voter Education Campaign Events – FY2013</b>				
<b>County</b>	<b>Voter Education Event</b>	<b>Voting Machine Touches</b>	<b>Voter Registrations</b>	<b>Photos Taken</b>
Richland	Richland Northeast High School - Voter Education Event	19	29	0
Richland	USC Main Campus - Voter Education Event	0	117	0
Richland	SC State Fair – Senior Day - WLTX Booth – Voter Education Event	53	6	0
Union	2012 Union County Fair – Senior Day	70	3	3
Williamsburg	2013 Santee Electric Co-op Annual Meeting	24	21	14
Total Events: 66		2,228	2,347	436

**Figure 7.4**

### **Election Night Results Reporting (ENR)**

ENR is a comprehensive online election results reporting tool designed to meet the public need for improved access to election results. ENR is used primarily to report results of statewide elections. Performance of the system has met our expectations and far exceeds performance of past election results reporting methods.

The SEC continues to receive very positive feedback from the public, candidates, parties, academics, government officials, and the media. The 2012 General Election ENR site was recognized as a “2013 Notable State Document” by the State Library. The award program recognizes the top ten “exemplary documents” published during the previous calendar year. The State Library recognized the site for its importance to providing transparency in state government and commended the SEC for its commitment to providing open access to election information.

SEC staff uses feedback from users to identify areas where the software can be improved to provide even faster and more detailed access to election results. Major improvements over past results reporting methods include:

- User-friendly, aesthetically pleasing graphical interface
- Map views of election results on the state, county, and precinct levels
- Allows county election commissions to transmit partial results
- Results made available sooner than with past methods
- Downloadable, customizable reports in several file formats
- Real-time results reporting
- Serves as historical repository for past results
- Immediate voter turnout estimates

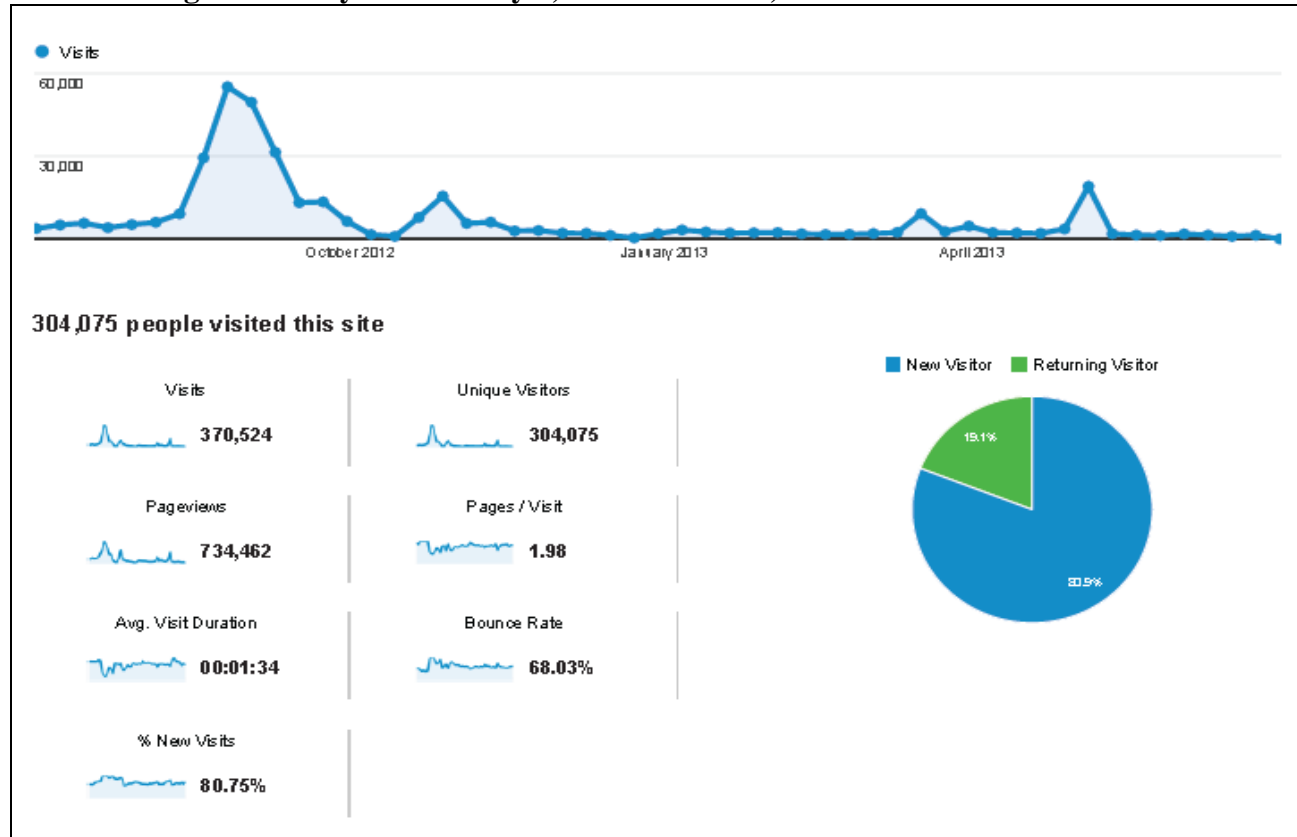
### **scVOTES.org**

Each year, significant increases in the number of visits to the agency’s website occur during periods surrounding major election-year events. The number of visits can be attributed to the publicity of the website and the usefulness of the information found there.

Figure 7.5 shows information regarding activity on scVOTES.org in FY2013. The number of page views peaked during the weeks following the June Primaries and petition filing deadlines. The site also experienced significant increases during the weeks leading up to the 2012 General Election.

Figure 7.6 shows the pages receiving the most views in FY2013.

**scVOTES.org Visitors by Week: July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013**



**Figure 7.5**

<b>scVOTES.org – Top Ten Most Viewed Pages of FY2013</b>		
	<b>Page</b>	<b>Page views</b>
<b>1</b>	Home Page	190,246
<b>2</b>	Online Voter Registration & Information	54,164
<b>3</b>	County Voter Registration Office Contact Information	49,268
<b>4</b>	Absentee Voting	24,505
<b>5</b>	Updating Your Voter Registration	20,710
<b>6</b>	2012 Candidate Lists	16,288
<b>7</b>	Historical Election Results	14,522
<b>8</b>	How to Vote	10,216
<b>9</b>	Candidate Information	9,353
<b>10</b>	Upcoming Elections	8,735

**Figure 7.6**

**Voters with Disabilities**

With HAVA’s particular focus on improving voting access for people with disabilities, the SEC continues to reach out to this segment of voters. The Agency worked with disability advocates throughout the state, including Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities and Disability Action Centers, to educate voters and improve the process so that voting in South Carolina is more accessible than ever before.

1. Revised the “Access for All Voters in SC” brochure, reprinted, and distributed to county election commissions.
2. Conducted voter education events to help ensure voters with disabilities are aware of and know how to use the state voting system’s accessibility features, including the audio ballot and

voting machine portability. The audio ballot provides blind voters the opportunity to vote independently for the first time in state history.

3. Trained poll workers to ensure they are also aware of these features, they know how to use them, and they are sensitive to the needs of voters with disabilities.
4. The Agency continues to distribute a training video for county election officials aimed at improving disability awareness and polling place accessibility. This video is also available on the agency website.
5. A webpage for voters with disabilities is maintained on the agency website. The page features information on assistance at the polls, curbside voting, instructions for voters who are deaf, a large-print voter registration application, and videos for voters with disabilities.
6. The SEC conducted training and certification classes aimed at increasing disability awareness.
7. A Braille brochure containing voter registration and voting information was made available to members of the blind community. The agency is working with the National Federation of the Blind of S.C. to update the Braille brochure.
8. Large type polling place material was made available.
9. SEC staff worked with S.C. Protection & Advocacy to gauge the level of progress in improving access to polling places.

## Training

### Training and Certification Program

The SEC is required by state law to conduct a training and certification program that county election commissioners, voter registration board members, and their staffs must complete to gain certification. Required core classes and elective classes are held on a quarterly basis. There are 544 election officials who are required by law to complete the program and become certified. Of the required participants, 402 members are certified, 105 members are not certified, and there are 37 vacancies.

### Program Enhancements

FY2013 enhancements to the program include:

- Increasing the number of classes required for certification of directors and staff
- Implementing knowledge assessments for core classes with a requirement for directors to obtain a passing grade to receive credit for the course
- Requiring directors to retake all core classes prior to December 31, 2014
- Scheduling classes on weekends and at regional locations throughout the state
- Creating new classes and updating core classes

Eighteen classes were held in FY2013. A total of 504 participants attended these classes held in Columbia and Myrtle Beach. Classes are taught by SEC staff and guest instructors, including county election commission and voter registration office staff, other governmental agency staff, and professional trainers. In FY2013, 33 participants completed course work to obtain their certification.

Thirty-eight municipalities are registered in the online poll manager training system as of June 30, 2013. This is an 8% increase from the previous year.

Figure 7.7 shows the classes offered in FY2013, the number of times they were offered, and the number of participants. Figure 7.8 shows participation of board members and staff in each county.

Training and Certification Classes (County)	Times Offered	Total Participants
Absentee Balloting and Registration	2	52
Budgeting	2	52
Customer Service	2	54
Conflict Resolution and Management	1	30
Core Leadership Skills	1	29
Critical Thinking and Decision Making	1	40

Duties of the Election Commission	1	29
Duties of the Voter Registration Board	1	27
Ethics in Government	1	29
Introduction to Management Concepts	1	27
Managing Multiple Projects, Priorities and Deadlines	1	30
Minutes and Meetings	1	29
Protest Hearings	1	28
Office Procedures	1	22
<b>Training and Certification Classes (County)</b>	<b>Times Offered</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
You Retweeted My Tweet and Now It's Viral	1	26

Figure 7.7

Participation in the Training and Certification Program – FY2013				
County	Board Members Allowed	Members Certified	Staff Members	Staff Certified
ABBEVILLE	7	3	3	1
AIKEN	7	4	4	1
ALLENDALE	7	5	2	1
ANDERSON	7	6	8	7
BAMBERG	7	7	1	1
BARNWELL	7	6	4	3
BEAUFORT	9	5	8	8
BERKELEY	9	9	4	3
CALHOUN	10	10	2	2
CHARLESTON	9	9	16	8
CHEROKEE	10	8	1	1
CHESTER	8	7	3	3
CHESTERFIELD	9	7	2	2
CLARENDON	9	8	3	2
COLLETON	9	8	2	2
DARLINGTON	7	7	3	3
DILLON	10	3	2	2
DORCHESTER	7	5	6	5
EDGEFIELD	7	7	2	2
FAIRFIELD	7	5	2	2
FLORENCE	7	4	3	3
GEORGETOWN	9	6	3	2
GREENVILLE	10	9	9	7
GREENWOOD	10	8	4	3
HAMPTON	9	3	3	1
HORRY	10	8	4	4
JASPER	9	5	2	2
KERSHAW	7	6	2	2
LANCASTER	7	5	2	1
LAURENS	9	7	3	2
LEE	9	5	2	2
LEXINGTON	9	8	4	2
MARION	9	8	2	2
MARLBORO	7	5	3	2
MCCORMICK	5	1	2	1
NEWBERRY	7	2	2	2
OCONEE	5	5	2	1
ORANGEBURG	7	5	3	0
PICKENS	7	5	2	1
RICHLAND	5	3	17	11
SALUDA	7	4	1	0
SPARTANBURG	10	6	8	7
SUMTER	7	5	4	2
UNION	8	5	1	1
WILLIAMSBURG	10	8	4	4
YORK	8	8	5	5

Figure 7.8

## Training Workshops

In addition to the training and certification program, staff in the Public Information and Training division coordinates training provided by the SEC to poll managers and election officials. These training workshops are scheduled upon request and are designed to supplement training received on the local level. Figure 7.9 shows classes held during FY2013 and the number of customers serviced.

<b>Training Classes and Workshops</b>	<b>Total Events</b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
County Election Official Workshops	2	204
Photo ID Workshop	1	114
Directors Professional Development Sessions	2	90
Onsite municipal and poll manager training	9	266
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>674</b>

**Figure 7.9**

## Poll Manager Training

The SEC supports county election commissions with guidance and resources to help train poll managers as required by law. The 56-page Poll Managers Handbook was revised and redistributed in January 2013. The handbook is printed and distributed to county election commissions and is available for download from the agency website, [scVOTES.org](http://scVOTES.org). The SEC provides training materials, including a PowerPoint presentation, to help county election commissions conduct in-person poll manager training. Upon request, SEC staff will assist county officials with conducting in-person training. The SEC also provides an online Poll Manager Training Program (see Learning Management System below).

## Learning Management System (LMS)

The LMS is a Web-based e-learning training program administered by the SEC. The LMS can encompass an unlimited number of classes, all developed and maintained by SEC staff. While the system is not designed to totally replace in-person training, it adds great flexibility of access for trainees and helps administrators hold users accountable for results.

The agency provides information and guidance to county election commissions to promote use of the system and to make navigation of the system more user-friendly. The SEC provides a quick start guide for first-time users. Frequently asked questions and answers were forwarded to counties upon request. The agency continues to work to increase participation in the program.

With the changes that were implemented to the new Photo id law in South Carolina, the online system has been enhanced and updated to reflect the most current changes.

## Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS) Training

In FY2013, the SEC continued offered training classes for the new statewide Voter Registration and Election Management System (VREMS).

## Agency Intranet

ElectionNET features more than 500 users and more than 6,000 pages of content. Approximately 500 new pages of content were posted to the site in FY2013. The site remains an indispensable tool for distribution of information, training, and collaboration with county election officials.

## Telephone Messaging System

The SEC continued use of the One Call Now telephone messaging system during the 2012 General Election. Agency staff and county election officials used the system to deliver numerous telephone messages to thousands of recipients. All messages were delivered within minutes. For example, a message can be delivered to all 2,112 polling places in the state in less than 30 minutes. SEC and county election officials use the service by dialing a 1-800-number, recording a message, and selecting a user group to which the message is to be delivered. Groups include county election



commission and voter registration board members, county directors, voter registration and election staff, poll clerks, poll managers, voting machine technicians, and others. The system then calls each number stored in the phone bank and delivers the message to the selected group(s). The system is an indispensable tool for addressing election day emergencies and other time sensitive situations. Features of the system include:

- Delivers recorded messages
- Can be used to gather feedback and conduct surveys
- Pre-record messages can be delivered at a specific time. For instance, we may pre-record a message to call all clerks at 7:05 am and ask the clerk to press 1 if the precinct is open for voting.
- The online user dashboard has a graphical display so that you may immediately see a picture of your county with the results of your questions displayed by color coded precincts.
- System continues to call if the phone number was busy or went to voice mail.

### **Ballot Review and Approval**

Public Information and Training division (PITD) staff reviewed more than 1,000 ballot combinations to be used throughout the state in the 2012 General Election. Staff also reviewed additional ballots for various local and special elections held throughout the state in FY2013. Ballots were reviewed for accuracy and compliance with state law and the Agency's Ballot Standards Document.

## **III. Statewide Voting System**

### **Voting System Support**

The Voter Services Division (VSD) provided comprehensive voting system support for all 46 counties. Agency staff continually works on various initiatives to strengthen and expand that level of support. Each VSD staff member is assigned a region in the State and is familiar with the needs of the counties in their particular region. As the State has transitioned from older voting systems to a more technically advanced system, the level of technical skills required for VSD staff members has dramatically increased. SEC managers have, through hiring and position reclassification, transitioned the division's staff from one with more clerical-based skills to a staff with an advanced skill set. Providing this high-level service to county election commissions results in considerable cost savings compared to contracting with the system vendor.

#### **Election Definition**

To conduct any election using the state's voting system, a set of data must be created that includes precincts, offices, districts, and candidates. This data set and associated voting system settings and configurations are referred to as an "election definition."

During FY2013, VSD staff created more than 250 election definitions for elections held throughout the state. Each definition was reviewed by staff for quality assurance following strict election definition procedures. Staff creates definitions for all elections held in most counties. Seven counties created their own definitions for some elections.

All paper ballots and voting machine ballots produced from these definitions were reviewed by SEC staff for quality assurance and adherence to ballot standards. Staff delivered all election definitions at least five weeks prior to associated elections. The SEC provides election definition services at no cost to counties by leveraging in-house resources. If the voting system vendor had defined all elections in FY2013, it would have cost the State and counties approximately \$2 million.

#### **Master Database Maintenance**

Each county has a master database from which election definitions are created. The master database is a data set containing information defining how precincts, polling locations, voting equipment

identifiers, and office titles and districts are all related. Master Database maintenance is an ongoing effort to ensure that the SEC has an accurate database of all county data sets. This procedure helps streamline the election definition process and identify errors in databases well in advance of elections, saving critical time and resources needed in the weeks before an election.

### **Voting System Documentation Updates**

The SEC regularly updates manuals associated with conducting elections using the statewide voting system: the Election Definition Guide (EDG) and the Election Preparation & Results Accumulation Guide (EPRAG), and the Ballot Standards Document (BSD). The EDG is a manual developed by the SEC providing instructions on creating an election definition. The EPRAG is designed for use by county election officials to prepare voting system components after the database is delivered. The BSD sets standards for uniform appearance of ballots throughout the state. SEC staff worked to identify necessary changes and improvements and to edit and distribute updated versions of the guides.

### **Voting Equipment Preparation & Election Day Support**

After election definitions are delivered, the SEC continues to provide first tier voting system support to all 46 counties. VSD staff provides assistance, when needed, in preparation of voting machines for elections, election day troubleshooting, and in retrieval and tabulation of election results. During the FY2013, SEC staff was called to assist county election officials in troubleshooting election preparation and results accumulation issues via phone and email. VSD staff provides one-on-one training upon request and are available daily to county officials for telephone/email support.

### **Election Audits**

The 2012 General Election was the first statewide general election in which the SEC applied a statewide, pre-certification election audit. This auditing process was developed following the 2010 General Election and includes procedures and auditing software. Since 2011, the SEC has conducted audits of all state-level election results and provided auditing services for county and municipal election commissions conducting local elections. In FY2013, the SEC began the process of developing regulations to require county election commissions to conduct audits prior to certification of elections. The SEC continues developing the audit tool and related procedures to help county election officials and poll managers guard against mistakes and identify errors prior to certification of any election. These tools and procedures include:

- Pre-certification audit requirements for county election commissions
- Voting system auditing software
- Voting system auditing training class
- Asset management system to track all voting system inventory
- New and improved checklists for poll managers and county election officials
- Certification of county voting system technicians
- Updated training materials stressing the importance of key election procedures

Audit support was provided to the counties for the following local elections:

- Aiken Municipal
- Town of Winnsboro
- Florence County Council Special Election
- Florence County Democratic Primary
- Lake City Municipal
- Timmonsville Water Sewer
- Horry County Council (Primary, Runoff and General)
- City of Forest Acres
- Richland County School Board District 1
- Maysville Town Council

## Voting System Certification

No voting systems were certified or decertified by the SEC in FY2013.

## IV. Administration of Federal Election Requirements

### Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA)

South Carolina is currently HAVA compliant.

FY2013 HAVA activities include:

- Training classes, workshops, and meetings were held to relay election information to county election officials, poll managers, and voters
- Continuation of voter education and outreach program
- Management of HAVA funds following federal requirements

### Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

The SEC recognizes the importance of protecting the voting process for military and overseas voters and works to ensure these voters have a fair opportunity to vote in each election. Nationally, South Carolina is viewed as very friendly to military and overseas voters and receives high ranks from UOCAVA advocacy groups for the specific laws and policies that facilitate voting by this group.

### Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT)

In April 2012 the SEC was awarded \$1,744,410 in Defense Human Resources Activity (DHRA) grant funds to design, develop, and implement an on line absentee voting application. In September 2012, the SEC successfully implemented the Electronic Voting Accessibility Tool (EVAT). This new application was designed to allow UOCAVA voters the ability to access and return their ballot for elections containing federal offices, and receive confirmation that their ballot was received in a matter of minutes. The objective of this system is to increase the successful rate of returned ballots from our military and overseas voters while also reducing traditional mailing costs.

## V. Agency Administration

### Accounts Payable

#### Poll Manager Reimbursement

The primary cost of conducting any primary or election is poll manager pay. The SEC reimburses county election commissions for poll manager pay in all federal, state, and county elections. Figure 7.10 shows the number of poll managers and student poll managers paid in FY2013 for the 2012 Statewide General Election.

County	Poll Manager Reimbursement – 2012 General Election					Total Reimbursed
	Poll Managers (PM)	Reimbursed for (PM)	Student (PM)	Reimbursed for Student (PM)	Reimbursed for Additional Training	
Abbeville	60	\$ 8,700.00	6	\$ 720.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 10,820.00
Aiken	397	\$ 52,860.00	119	\$ 13,920.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 74,280.00
Allendale	46	\$ 6,600.00	1	\$ 120.00	\$ -	\$ 6,720.00
Anderson	434	\$ 57,480.00	90	\$ 10,800.00	\$ 7,300.00	\$ 75,580.00
Bamberg	61	\$ 8,880.00	21	\$ 2,520.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 12,700.00
Barnwell	86	\$ 11,760.00	5	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 13,860.00
Beaufort	491	\$ 63,780.00	91	\$ 10,920.00	\$ 5,800.00	\$ 80,500.00
Berkeley	461	\$ 58,680.00	18	\$ 2,160.00	\$ -	\$ 60,840.00

<b>Poll Manager Reimbursement – 2012 General Election</b>						
<b>County</b>	<b>Poll Managers (PM)</b>	<b>Reimbursed for (PM)</b>	<b>Student (PM)</b>	<b>Reimbursed for Student (PM)</b>	<b>Reimbursed for Additional Training</b>	<b>Total Reimbursed</b>
Calhoun	64	\$ 8,340.00	3	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 9,900.00
Charleston	1,224	\$ 152,850.00	215	\$ 25,740.00	\$ 11,300.00	\$ 189,890.00
Cherokee	182	\$ 24,360.00	4	\$ 480.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 26,040.00
Chester	87	\$ 12,540.00	3	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,110.00	\$ 14,010.00
Chesterfield	119	\$ 16,260.00	0	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 18,760.00
Clarendon	106	\$ 15,000.00	0	\$ -	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 17,200.00
Colleton	141	\$ 19,500.00	4	\$ 480.00	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 23,180.00
Darlington	267	\$ 34,740.00	31	\$ 3,720.00	\$ -	\$ 38,460.00
Dillon	115	\$ 15,060.00	3	\$ 360.00	\$ -	\$ 15,420.00
Dorchester	355	\$ 45,600.00	18	\$ 2,160.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 53,960.00
Edgefield	83	\$ 10,500.00	8	\$ 960.00	\$ 900.00	\$ 12,360.00
Fairfield	89	\$ 12,780.00	10	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 15,180.00
Florence	445	\$ 57,660.00	29	\$ 3,480.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 61,440.00
Georgetown	251	\$ 32,940.00	6	\$ 720.00	\$ -	\$ 33,660.00
Greenville	1,048	\$ 135,360.00	180	\$ 21,600.00	\$ 15,100.00	\$ 172,060.00
Greenwood	294	\$ 38,580.00	18	\$ 2,160.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 44,240.00
Hampton	87	\$ 11,640.00	0	\$ -	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 13,340.00
Horry	656	\$ 86,520.00	7	\$ 840.00	\$ -	\$ 87,360.00
Jasper	96	\$ 13,140.00	19	\$ 2,280.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 16,820.00
Kershaw	201	\$ 26,940.00	10	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 31,540.00
Lancaster	146	\$ 19,200.00	5	\$ 600.00	\$ -	\$ 19,800.00
Laurens	188	\$ 25,140.00	20	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 30,740.00
Lee	83	\$ 12,060.00	4	\$ 480.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 14,740.00
Lexington	663	\$ 85,560.00	33	\$ 3,900.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 91,860.00
McCormick	42	\$ 6,300.00	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,300.00
Marion	116	\$ 15,120.00	14	\$ 1,680.00	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 18,500.00
Marlboro	108	\$ 12,960.00	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,960.00
Newberry	111	\$ 15,720.00	5	\$ 600.00	\$ 2,900.00	\$ 19,220.00
Oconee	162	\$ 22,080.00	3	\$ 360.00	\$ 3,100.00	\$ 25,540.00
Orangeburg	310	\$ 40,440.00	0	\$ -	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 45,840.00
Pickens	362	\$ 47,610.00	9	\$ 1,020.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 53,630.00
Richland	777	\$ 101,100.00	13	\$ 1,560.00	\$ 12,400.00	\$ 115,060.00
Saluda	66	\$ 9,780.00	2	\$ 240.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 11,820.00
Spartanburg	532	\$ 70,500.00	64	\$ 7,680.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 78,780.00
Sumter	418	\$ 54,300.00	17	\$ 2,040.00	\$ 5,800.00	\$ 62,140.00
Union	113	\$ 15,720.00	4	\$ 480.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 18,200.00
Williamsburg	138	\$ 19,020.00	3	\$ 360.00	\$ -	\$ 19,380.00
York	778	\$ 99,480.00	132	\$ 15,840.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 122,820.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,059</b>	<b>\$ 1,711,140.00</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>\$ 149,100.00</b>	<b>\$ 137,210.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,997,450.00</b>

**Figure 7.10**

## **Election Protest & Appeal Hearings**

The State Board of Canvassers (SBC) hears appeals of county-level protests heard first by county election commissions and hears protests for state-level offices filed directly with the SEC. The SBC heard three protests and five appeals after the 2012 General Election. Figure 7.11 shows details and outcomes of these protests and appeals.

## Protests

Office	Protestant	Other Candidates	Decision
State Senate District 45	Leilani Bessinger	Clementa Pinckney	Protest denied. Election results stand.
State Senate District 25	John Pettigrew, Jr.	Shane Massey	Dismissed due to lack of standing. Election results stand.
State House District 53	Richie Yow	Phil Powell Ted Martin Vick	Protest Denied. Election results stand.

## Appeals

Office	Appellant	Other Candidates	Decision
Georgetown School Board District 6	Peggy Wheeler-Cribb	Richard Kerr	Appeal granted. Decision of Georgetown County Election Commission overturned. Election results stand.
Lexington County Council District 3	Darrell Hudson	Kent Collins Scott Adams Wes Howard Anthony Keisler	Appeal denied. Decision of Lexington County Election Commission upheld. Election results stand.
Berkeley County Council District 3	Henry Hank Niles, Jr. Robert O. Call, Jr.	Ken Gunn	Appeal denied. Decision of Berkeley County Election Commission upheld. Election results stand.
Richland County Sales Tax Referendum	Michael Letts		Appeal denied. Decision of Richland County Election Commission upheld. Election results stand.
Richland County Council District 8	Michael Letts	James Manning	Appeal withdrew.

Figure 7.11

## Candidate Filing & Certification

On May 2, 2012, the S.C. Supreme Court, as a result of a lawsuit over the proper filing of Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms, ruled that any candidate who did not simultaneously file a complete, paper copy of his SEI form at the time he filed with his political party should, in effect, be decertified by his political party, unless the candidate fell under an exemption in the law for public officials who had a current SEI form already on file. Political parties responded by decertifying numerous candidates on May 4, 2012. Throughout the remainder of FY2012, political parties continued decertifying candidates as additional litigation ensued. A number of candidates withdrew in lieu of being decertified. The ruling ultimately resulted in the removal of approximately 250 candidates from 2012 Statewide Primary and General Election process.

A side effect of this mass decertification of candidates was an exponential increase in the number of candidate petitions filed with the SEC as many of those decertified candidates sought ballot access by petition. The petition filing deadline was noon, July 16, 2012. On average, the SEC receives fewer than five candidate petitions in a general election year. In FY2013, the SEC received 44 petitions, 13 for State Senate and 31 for State House of Representatives. Thirty-eight of those petitions were found to be valid. Across the state, county election commissions accepted 121 petitions from candidates for partisan, local offices.

## Certification of Political Parties

No political parties were certified or decertified in FY2013.