The Election Validation Project: Increasing Trust in Elections Through Audits, Standards, and Testing

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Public Trust In Elections

“The American electorate deserves a modern, voter-centric election system that runs efficiently and inspires trust in electoral outcomes.”
Power of an idea
Why only audit/test voting equipment? Why not audit and validate other critical components of the election system?

How can we better use post-election data to focus on prevention rather than intervention?
Can audits initiate process improvement?

Election officials should be driving the conversation!

One size does not fit all!
American Institute of CPAs (AICPA)

“One of the challenges that management and auditors face is obtaining **accurate data** in a **usable format** following a **repeatable process**.”

AICPA working group developed **voluntary, uniform audit data standards** that identify key information needed for audits and provide a common framework:

- **data file** definitions and technical specifications
- **data field** definitions and technical specifications
- supplemental questions and data validation routines to help auditors better understand the data and assess its completeness and integrity
Collaborative of State and Local Election Professionals and Subject Matter Experts

- Identify points in the election system for additional pre- and post-election audits
- Provide tools and guidelines for a repeatable process
- Identify key information and data for making improvements and measuring success
- Assistance for implementation
It’s a path... not an immediate destination

- Strong Collaboration
- Terms & Definitions
- Voter Intent Guidelines
- Ballot Storage & Organization
- Ballot Reconciliation
- Random Selection (PRNG)
- Sample Size Based on Margin of Votes
- Ballot Manifest
- Dates & Deadlines
- Paper Ballots & Cast Vote Record
Give me a playbook and I’ll give you an audit...

- Plain language definitions
- Clearly outline necessary steps and timeframes
- Workload calculator
- Checklists
- Tools and templates
- Clearinghouse for information and guidelines
- Collaboration reigns supreme!
How do we deal with some of the more complicated issues like ballots scanned at a precinct polling location or voter anonymity, when we struggle to communicate the core terms?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Batch-Level Comparison Audits</th>
<th>Ballot-Level Comparison Audits</th>
<th>Ballot Polling Audits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batches corresponding to individual precincts or voting machines are randomly selected. The</td>
<td>Individual ballots are sampled, audited, and compared to how each was interpreted in the tabulation.</td>
<td>Individual ballots are sampled and audited, and the audited vote totals are used to assess the tabulation counts and outcomes. Ballot polling does not directly identify mistabulated ballots, but in some cases is the easiest method for verifying contest outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>votes in each selected batch are audited by hand, and the audit counts are compared to the</td>
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<td>original tabulation totals.</td>
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We need to become audit experts!

• Confidently explain our needs and our process to policy makers, voters, vendors, and staff
• Standard nomenclature and definitions matter
• Logistics and process matter
State and local election offices now employ a number of experts...

- Legal
- Communication/Social Media
- Data Analyst
- Information Technology

Why not experts in auditing and quality control?
We need to be pit crews...not cowboys
“Americans can and should expect their electoral system to be a source of national pride and a model to all the world”

– NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FEDERAL ELECTION REFORM, 2001
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