

# 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 State Election Commission is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the voter registration and election processes in the State. Everything that we do as an agency, our programs and our projects, emanates from these responsibilities. 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 printing the lists of registered voters for 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 for elections in South Carolina. The SEC trains voter registration and election officials, provides voter registration and election materials, prints or provides funding for ballots for all federal offices, statewide offices and constitutional amendments voted on in South Carolina, and produces databases and machine ballots for elections in the State conducted using the statewide voting system. The Agency provides information regarding voter registration and elections and initiates voter education efforts. The members of the SEC serve as the State Board of Canvassers after elections to certify election returns, to declare candidates elected, and to hear protests and appeals.

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

- **Employees** – Human resources are the agency's most important assets. Institutional knowledge, skills and characteristics 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 understand customer needs and anticipate their future desires.
- **Visionary Leadership** – Motivate and recognize employees by setting examples, providing direction, recognition and rewards.
- **Understanding the Future** - Statewide Primaries and General Elections occur in two year cycles. Needs and 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** – Contact with county and municipal election officials, the General Assembly, other state and federal agencies, political parties and other special interest groups is vital to the success of voter registration and elections processes.

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

### **June 2006 Primaries and Runoffs**

The SEC supported counties in conducting a successful and historic Primary Election on June 13, 2006. This was the first statewide election in which all South Carolina voters cast ballots on a single, uniform voting system. Voters had no significant issues at the polls and overwhelmingly approved of the new voting system. Another successful statewide election, the Primary Runoff, was held just two weeks later on June 27, 2006. This is a major accomplishment considering South Carolina has the shortest timeframe in the nation between its primaries and runoffs. These successes can be attributed to nearly two years of training, a far-reaching voter education campaign, vast experience gained with numerous less-than-statewide elections, and the overall efficacy of the system.

### **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 100 county, special and municipal elections. Existing SEC staff was used to provide this level of support which otherwise would have been supplied by the voting machine vendor for a significantly higher cost.

### **Special Elections**

The SEC supported county election commissions in successfully conducting a higher-than-average number of special elections in State House Districts 24, 31, 64, 121, and for vacancies occurring on the county level. Along with the requirement of certifying the state results, the SEC provided county election commissions with additional support including training, voting system support, and media relations.

### **Voter Education and Outreach**

The SEC's voter education initiative continued to reach thousands of voters throughout the State. This effort, funded by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), is designed to familiarize South Carolina voters with the State's voter registration and election processes and in particular, the new touch screen voting system. The HAVA voter education team took the campaign's "Every Vote Matters, Every Vote Counts" message to local government conferences, disability advocacy groups, minority organizations, and numerous fairs, festivals, and other events throughout the State. In addition, the Agency organized a Voter Education month in May, made official by proclamations of the Governor and General Assembly.

### **Disability Awareness and Accessibility**

The SEC continues to reach out to voters with disabilities by working with disability advocates to make voting in South Carolina more accessible than ever before. The audio feature of the State's new voting system provides blind voters the opportunity to vote independently for the first time in state history. In addition to the audio ballot, the new voting machines can be removed from the booth for curbside voting and for use by voters in wheelchairs. More than \$222,000 in federal grant money was spent to improve polling places, making them more accessible. The SEC conducted training classes to increase disability awareness and produced a training video for county election officials aimed at improving polling place accessibility. The Agency also developed a large print voter registration application. County election commissions were surveyed to gauge the level of progress in improving access to polling places.

### **ElectionNET Development and Implementation**

In an effort to increase collaboration and improve information sharing among election officials in South Carolina, the SEC leveraged improvements in business processes and advancements in technology to implement ElectionNET, a secure election portal. Training was conducted to

familiarize county and SEC staff with the application. A booth was staffed at the 2006 county election association conference to introduce the technology to the election community at large.

### **Voting System Training**

The SEC developed and conducted voting system training for county voter registration and election officials, Election Day technicians, and poll workers. Classes were developed to compliment training provided by the voting system vendor. Election Readiness classes were developed and conducted to prepare county election officials for tasks related to preparing the voting system for use, testing, security, and reporting of election results. The Agency trained regional voting system technicians, or rovers, who were assigned to assist county personnel with Election Day troubleshooting. Classes were also conducted to train county-employed rovers on how to deal with common, technical voting system issues that may arise on Election Day. Several election security classes were held focusing on dealing with various issues relating to the security of elections with a focus on voting machines. The Agency conducted classes throughout the State training lead poll managers on operating procedures for the electronic voting system. A Primary Readiness Workshop was held in the weeks leading into the June Primary to ensure county election officials were prepared to conduct the first, statewide use of the electronic voting system.

### **Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)**

To avoid legal action, by the U.S. Department of Justice, the SEC worked quickly and diligently with the General Assembly and Attorney General's office to have legislation passed enacting IRV for military and overseas citizens voting in statewide primaries. The legislation satisfied the Justice Department's concern that the two weeks between the State's Primaries and Primary Runoffs were not adequate for the dissemination and return of military and overseas ballots. This legislation requires and IRV ballot to be sent to voters along with their primary ballot. Voters rank the candidates in each race so that in the event of a runoff, their vote can be determined. The SEC promulgated processes and procedures for IRV and provided training for county election officials.

### **Election Legislation**

The SEC worked with the General Assembly to pass several pieces of legislation that improve the administration of elections. Senate bill 185 allows straight party votes on optical scan ballots to include President and Vice President. House bill 3414 allows county election commissions to begin processing absentee ballots at 9:00 a.m. instead of 2:00 p.m. House bill 3831 clarifies the process for designating an alternate polling place when an emergency prevents a polling place from being used. House bill 4494 takes another step toward combining the voter registration boards and election commissions in all counties by doing so in Barnwell. This brings the total number of counties with combined boards to 35.

### **Regional Voter Registration Database Comparison Project**

The SEC embarked on an initiative to eliminate duplicate voter registrations in the State by comparing South Carolina's voter registration database with those of other nearby states. The State's database was first compared with the database of Kentucky, and the results showed 4,132 duplicate registrations. When the State's database was compared with Tennessee's database, 10,080 duplicates were discovered. The SEC is currently working to compare the State's database with those of North Carolina and Georgia as well.

## Key Strategic Goals

The SEC continually works to improve the election process in the State and solicits ways to improve the election process and maintain its integrity. As part of that process improvement, the following long and short-term goals are priorities of the SEC:

| Agency Goals   | Status and Plans   |
|--|--|
| Prepare for successful statewide Primary and General Elections | The 2006 Primary Election was the first election in which the electronic, touch screen voting machines were used statewide. South Carolina experienced no major problems. The SEC is currently preparing for the 2006 General Election.  |
| 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 update the election security plan and insure counties follow recommended procedures. The voting system support provided by the SEC is in addition to services provided by the voting system vendor. In the future, the Agency plans to provide all training and election support services currently provided by the vendor.  |
| Maintain the statewide voter registration system               | The statewide voter registration system is used by all county boards of voter registration to register voters, to track absentee applications and ballots, and to assign poll managers to precincts. The system also facilitates placement of voters in the proper election districts and tracks voter participation in elections. The aging legacy system has been in use since 1992. Enhancements are needed to meet county needs and federal reporting requirements. The system has seen only moderate updates over the past five years in anticipation of a new statewide voter registration system.   |
| Develop a new statewide voter registration system              | A need still exists for a new statewide voter registration system; however, work has been suspended pending funding of the program. At the direction of the CIO, a Rapid Application Development (RAD) approach was adopted to complete the project in December 2005. Although all high-level system components were identified and several components were developed which await testing, and an overall human interface was defined for the system, project deadlines continued to be missed. The SEC and CIO determined that the RAD process was not working as expected and the project implementation date was re-estimated to be 2007. Once funding is secured, a comprehensive requirements definition and a solid system design will be completed. |
| Develop an Electronic Voter Registration List (EVRL)           | This modern technology can improve access to the voter registration list for poll workers and produce faster and more accurate records of voter participation in elections. EVRL is currently in development and will be tested in the fall of 2006.   |
| Provide a 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 and in particular, the new touch screen voting system.  |

| Agency Goals   | Status and Plans   |
|--|--|
| Conduct and increase participation in the statewide training and certification program               | This is an ongoing program required by state law to train county voter registration board and election commission members and their staffs. Twenty-four classes were offered throughout FY2006 with 703 participants. Currently, 195 of the 502 members on the program roster have not completed the program. Of those, there are 40 board/commission members who have never taken a class, or who have not been certified within the time period prescribed by law.   |
| Improve accessibility for voters with disabilities   | 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 state voters unprecedented access. The Agency continues to educate the disabled community on the availability and use of these features. More training is also need to improve disability awareness among poll workers and county election officials. The Agency also works with county offices to use federal grant money to improve polling places, making them more accessible. Agency staff is currently studying county election commission surveys to gauge the level of progress in improving polling place accessibility. |
| Assist the SC Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) with legislative priorities | Working with SCARE to draft legislation based on their legislative priorities. SEC will assist in introducing legislation in January 2007.   |
| Implement the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS)                                   | The Agency will implement the new state standard SCEIS to replace the antiquated Basic Agency Reporting System (BARS) currently in use.  |

## Opportunities and Barriers Affecting Agency Mission

### Opportunities

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

The General Assembly provided funding for the development and implementation of a new voter registration and election management system based on needs identified in the 1999 Election Summit and 2001 Governors Task Force on Elections. A new, easier-to-use system will utilize advanced technology to make the processing of registered voters and their proper election district assignments more efficient as well as provide additional functionality.

#### **Electronic Voter Registration List Implementation**

A software program designed to improve the process by which poll workers identify registered voters is currently being developed and is expected to be complete by fall 2006. This new system will shorten the lines at the polls, make it easier for poll managers to locate voters on the list, instantly show if a voter is in the wrong precinct and direct them to the correct precinct, and provide immediate and accurate voter participation statistics.

#### **Poll Worker Recruitment**

The number of sixteen and seventeen-year-old poll worker assistants is on the rise. The ability to use these young adults has proven beneficial at a time when retention of experienced workers is continually decreasing. The enthusiasm these young adults exude proves their willingness and ability to continue their service as a poll worker.

## **Providing Information Electronically to Agency Customers**

### **Merging of SCVotes.org and the “Legacy Site”**

The SEC is in the process of merging its two public internet sites in an effort to provide information to South Carolina voters in a more user friendly format. When complete, all public information will be disseminated through [www.scvotes.org](http://www.scvotes.org). The legacy site, [www.state.sc.us/scsec/](http://www.state.sc.us/scsec/), features detailed voter registration and election information including results and statistics available on all statewide elections since 1996 and voter participation statistics on all statewide elections since 1984. The site is maintained by the office of the State Chief Information Officer and is updated on request. SCVotes.org is a voter education resource created in September 2004 as part of the implementation of South Carolina’s HAVA State Plan. The purpose of the site is to provide voters with information on all aspects of voter registration and elections in the State. SCVotes.org is built using up-to-date software, making it more appealing to the user than the legacy site. The software used also allows SEC staff, instead of outside technicians, to make updates and perform maintenance. The site is currently being expanded to include all pertinent features of the legacy site.

### **Agency Intranet**

In an effort to increase collaboration and improve information sharing among all those involved in supporting elections in South Carolina, the SEC has leveraged improvements in business processes and advancements in technology to implement ElectionNET, an election community intranet. This secure, web-based resource has improved election administration by promoting collaboration enabling the sharing of information among members of the South Carolina election community. ElectionNET includes such things as: press releases, memos, technical bulletins, reference guides, policy manuals, electronic forms, discussion forums, training calendars, and election-related news feeds. This resource has improved the quality, timeliness, efficiency and effectiveness of communications; provided an electronic document repository; and reduced the costs of producing and mailing paper-based communications. While the implementation of ElectionNET has realized many improvements, the potential for this resource to be fully utilized presents an opportunity for far greater success.

### **Election Legislation**

Each year, the SEC, on behalf of 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. Currently the Agency is working to enact laws that would:

- Set common municipal election dates.
- Set common special election dates.
- Bring the certification deadline for Presidential candidates more in line with certification deadlines for other candidates.
- Allow the SEC to institute a pilot project to gauge the feasibility of vote centers.
- Combine the voter registration boards and election commissions in the 11 counties which remain separate.

### **Federal Health and Human Services (HHS) Grant**

The Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Grant, a federal four-year grant program, has helped improve access for voters with disabilities by providing funding for polling place upgrades, training, and education. By the end of FY2006, the SEC and county election officials had used less than half (\$222,289) of the \$542,039 grant. The grant provides funding in four areas: 1) improving physical accessibility to polling places, 2) providing opportunities for equal access and participation, 3) training of election officials, 4) providing accessible information. While improvements made with

these grant monies have greatly improved access, the potential exists to accomplish much more if county election commissions take full advantage of this opportunity.

## **Barriers**

### **Funding for Agency Operations**

The SEC is obligated by state and federal mandates to provide certain services. Agency operating funds have been reduced by 40% over the last five years. Twenty-four percent of the Agency's general fund budget is made up of funds distributed directly to county registration and election commissions. In the coming year, the Agency is expected to provide election definition services to 40 counties, up from 16 this past year, representing a 200% increase in service obligations. The lack of funds is an ongoing barrier to successfully meeting the scope and quality requirements of these statutory service obligations. Further, limited agency operating funds force the Agency to focus only on short-term objectives and not on more strategic initiatives.

While the overall workload of the Agency has increased, the Agency continues to feel the effects of budget reductions over the last several years which drastically reduced personal services funding for the Agency. Parts of the budget reductions were absorbed through a Reduction in Force (RIF) and staff at the Agency has been reduced to an absolute minimum. To absorb the remaining cuts, several positions remain vacant requiring other agency employees to perform without any increase in compensation those mandatory duties associated with the vacant positions.

With the implementation of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and a new statewide voting system, the Agency is faced with a need for employees with new or more advanced skills than previously required. Further, in the past two years, 1/3 of agency staff has resigned to take positions at other agencies with higher pay or better benefits and less workload. It is likely this trend will continue.

The increased skills requirements and loss of institutional knowledge as employees leave the Agency increases the risk that there will be problems with elections. In order to recruit and retain people who have the required skills, additional funding in the personal services area is essential.

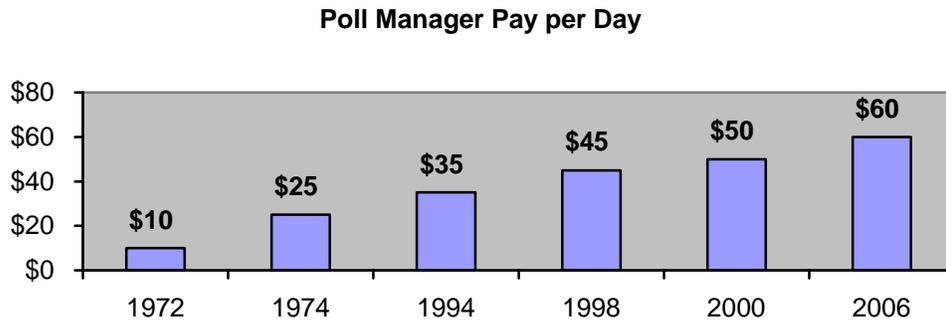
Due to the impact of previous years' budget reductions the following actions were taken:

- Positions remain vacant within the Agency that are desperately needed to fulfill state and federally mandated services.
- The SEC was forced to reduce the amount of money sent to the county voter registration and election commission offices to help keep those offices open.
- County boards of voter registration and election commission members were not paid the maximum they are allowed by law.
- The SEC has drastically reduced operating costs to the point that future cuts could prevent the SEC from meeting its minimum statutory services obligations to its customer.

### **Poll Manager Training Methods and Inadequate Compensation**

Within the 30 day period prior to a statewide election, approximately 18,500 poll managers must be trained by county election commissions. Because of the short timeframe and large number of managers to be trained, classes are taught in larger groups. This method of training is less effective than training in smaller groups.

Poll manager pay has increased slowly over the past 30 years and has remained the same over the past six years. During FY2007, poll manager pay will increase to \$60 per day. Inadequate pay inhibits recruitment and retention of skilled poll managers.



### **Absence of Third-Year Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Funds**

Failure of the Federal Government to appropriate funds in the amount of \$8M for the third and final year of HAVA implementation required the HAVA State Plan budget to be modified. This modification included elimination of funding for the development of the new statewide voter registration system and reductions in voter education and outreach efforts.

### **Statewide Voter Registration System**

The statewide voter registration system currently used in South Carolina is an antiquated, legacy system. In 2004, the system performed poorly in periods of peak activity and produced unacceptable results. Problems experienced included inadequate storage for absentee voting records resulting in system outages and long lines of voters at county offices, inaccurate voter registration certificates produced for counties performing a reassignment of voters to new precincts, and official voter registration lists that did not contain the names of all registered voters eligible to vote in the election.

### **Funding for New Statewide Voter Registration System**

The need for a new statewide voter registration system still exists. Work on the project will be restarted once funding is attained. The project originally began in 2001. Requirements for the system and a design of the system were not defined due to a lack of qualified resources within state government with applied project management and systems development experience. As a result, the project has been delayed numerous times over the past four years. After attempting several approaches, it was determined that, to properly develop the new system, further evaluation and work must be done. In order to complete this work, additional funding will be required.

### **Removal of Ineligible Voters/ Confirmation Mailings**

To maintain an accurate list of active registered voters, the SEC removes ineligible voters from the list. To remove these voters, the Agency must send a confirmation mailing to each voter for verification. Because of the federal requirement for this to be a first class mailing with a postage-paid reply card, this effort is very costly.

### **Lack of Participation by County Election Officials in the Training and Certification Program**

Five hundred two election officials in the State are currently required to participate in the training and certification program. Participants include voter registration board members, election commission members, and their staffs. Of those, 307 have completed the program. However, 117 of those members who have completed the program have not kept their certification current by taking at least

one class per year. Of the 105 officials who have not completed the program, most are working to complete it. However, there are 40 board or commission members who have either never taken a class or have not completed their certification with the statutory time period. Legislation is in place requiring them to complete the training within an 18 month period of their appointment, or reappointment; although many officials do not adhere to this requirement. While the Agency has oversight responsibility for training and certification, it has no authority to compel compliance with these requirements.

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

Current law allows certification of Presidential candidates 25 days after the deadline for all other candidates to be certified. This deadline does not provide adequate time for county election commissions to obtain ballots and mail them to absentee voters.

### **Accounting System**

The current accounting system has been in use for more than 20 years. The antiquated system is not user friendly and produces unreliable results. The South Carolina Enterprise Information System SCEIS will be implemented in July of 2007 to replace the Basic Agency Reporting System (BARS) currently in use.

### **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. For example, based on a review of last year's report, the Agency this year took a methodical, holistic view of the election support services provided to the counties 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 election and 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.

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

- Administer a mandatory, statewide training and certification program for county election officials and their staff. This program consists of components designed to provide information about registration and election laws and procedures and lectures to increase administrative, management or professional skills.

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

- Oversee and assist with the conduct of the Primary, General 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 election support services and technical assistance related to the statewide voting system to counties.
- 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.

#### **Educational Services**

- Provide specialized training in conduct of elections and election laws of South Carolina to poll workers, county election commissions, 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 voting process with a particular emphasis placed on the proper use of the new electronic voting machines.

**Public Information**

- Provide information on voter registration and election participation statistics on all elections held within South Carolina.
- 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**

- Implement processes to meet and maintain the requirements of the HAVA State Plan as required by federal legislation. A document has been established to chart the progress of plan goals.
- Track the progress of various projects associated with the implementation. This tracking is updated on a monthly basis.
- 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 them 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 Defense, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and Federal Election Commission. | To follow federal 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 and 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 the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Research and Statistics, technology consultants, Election Systems and Software, county voter registration and election offices, voters and citizens of SC, Office of State Budget, office supply companies, and printers.

## **Number of Employees and Locations**

The SEC staff consists of 17 full-time and one part-time employee and has one operating location at 2221 Devine Street in Columbia, SC. One position is unclassified and 16.5 positions are classified.

## **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, 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 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 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.

## **Key Strategic Challenges**

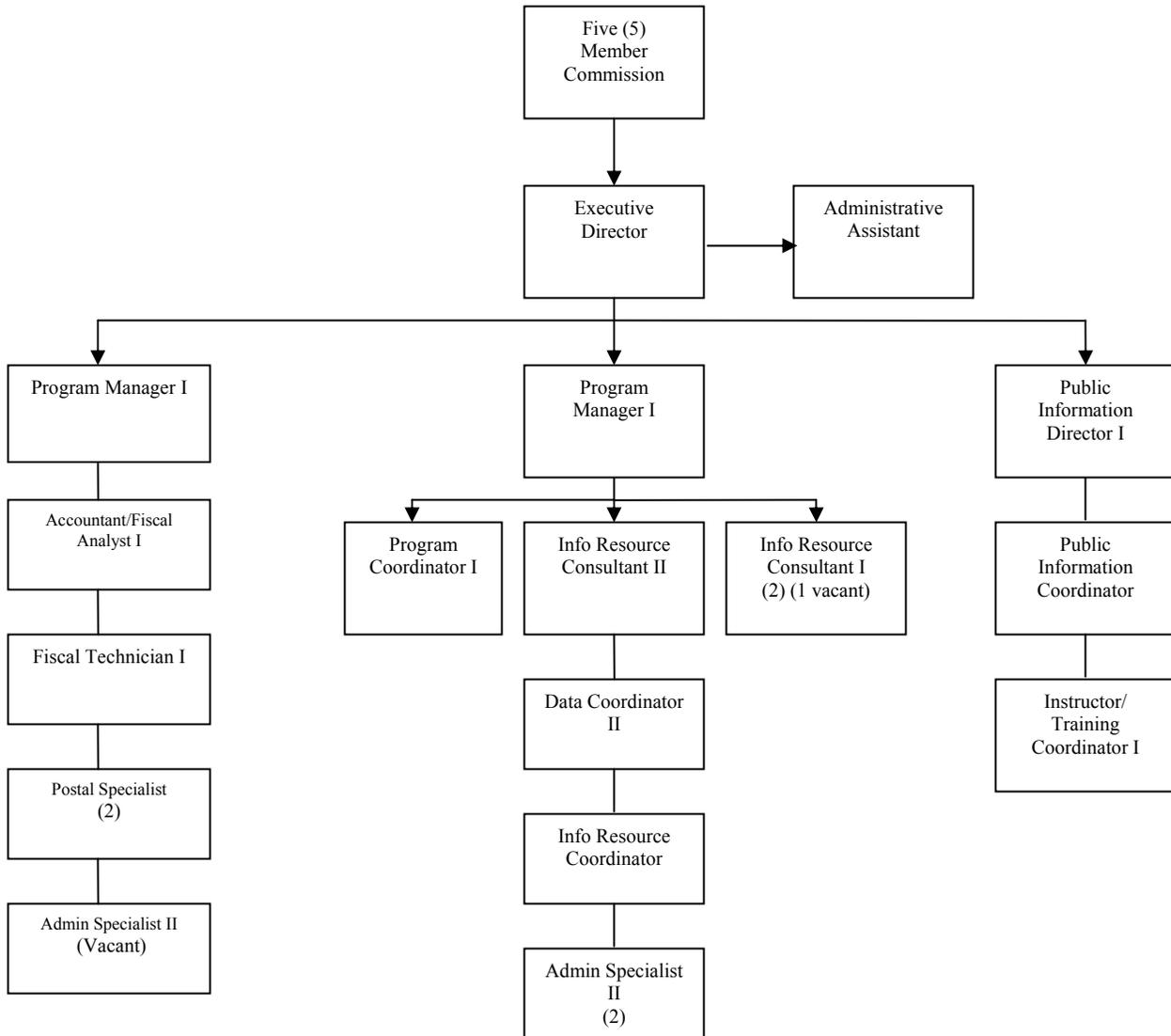
- Educating voters so that they have an understanding of the voter registration and election processes, including how to register to vote and how to vote using the electronic voting machines. Through voter education, the Agency works to build and maintain confidence in the State's voter registration and elections processes.
- Developing consistent procedures and setting standards to be followed by 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, particularly when it comes to human resources and updating our operational capacity.
- 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
- 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

# Organizational Structure



## Expenditures/ Appropriations Chart

### Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

| Major Budget Categories                     | 04-05 Actual Expenditures |                    | 05-06 Actual Expenditures |                    | 05-06 Appropriations Act |                    |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
|   | Total Funds               | General Funds      | Total Funds               | General Funds      | Total Funds              | General Funds      |
| Personal Service                            | \$570,118                 | \$462,298          | \$704,091*                | \$645,387*         | \$749,098                | \$649,098          |
| Other Operating                             | \$377,103                 | \$360,527          | \$1,394,362               | \$390,891          | \$661,489                | \$405,789          |
| Special Items Permanent Improvements        | \$34,519,952*             | \$700,000          | \$1,202,976**             | \$223,415**        | \$135,000                | \$0                |
| Case Services Distributions to Subdivisions | \$0                       | \$0                | \$0                       | \$0                | \$0                      | \$0                |
| Fringe Benefits                             | \$513,889                 | \$513,889          | \$515,014                 | \$515,014          | \$515,014                | \$515,014          |
| Non-recurring                               | \$156,459                 | \$127,220          | \$218,225                 | \$24,116           | \$239,091                | \$209,091          |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>\$2,392,498</b>        | <b>\$507,366</b>   | <b>\$0</b>                | <b>\$0</b>         | <b>\$3,335,000</b>       | <b>\$0</b>         |
|   | <b>\$38,530,019</b>       | <b>\$2,671,300</b> | <b>\$4,034,668*</b>       | <b>\$1,798,823</b> | <b>\$5,634,692</b>       | <b>\$1,778,992</b> |

\* Commissioner per diem funds are included in these figures.

\*\* Special primaries/elections, training and HAVA funds are included in these figures.

### Other Expenditures

| Sources of Funds      | 04-05 Actual Expenditures | 05-06 Actual Expenditures |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Supplemental Bills    | \$0                       | \$1,029,451               |
| Capital Reserve Funds | \$0                       | \$0                       |
| Bonds                 | \$0                       | \$0                       |

## Major Program Areas

| Program                                      | Major Program Area   | FY 04/05   | FY 05/06   | Key Cross   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Number                                       | Purpose  | Budget Expenditures  | Budget Expenditures  | References for Financial Results  |
| 01010000/<br>Administration                  | Oversees the Agency's policies & procedures, provides leadership, support, financial services, other related administrative services   | <b>State:</b> \$379,679.20<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$55,624.30<br><b>Total:</b> \$435,303.50<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 11 | <b>State:</b> \$418,061.83<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$66,666.36<br><b>Total:</b> \$484,728.19<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 12 |   |
| 20010000/<br>Voter Services                  | Oversees implementation of new voter registration system project, maintenance of the database of all registered voters in the State, manages evaluation of voting system certifications, maintenance of agency computer network  | <b>State:</b> \$353,056.62<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$68,772.51<br><b>Total:</b> \$421,828.13<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 11 | <b>State:</b> \$380,171.10<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$74,561.76<br><b>Total:</b> \$454,732.86<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 12 | Figure 7.1<br>Figure 7.2<br>Figure 7.3<br>Figure 7.9<br>Figure 7.15   |
| 25000000/<br>Public Information/<br>Training | Training & certification program oversight which includes a common curriculum to include core courses on the duties and responsibilities of county registration boards and county election commissions and electives to promote quality service and professional development | <b>State:</b> \$90,088.76<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$14,537.27<br><b>Total:</b> \$104,626.03<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 3   | <b>State:</b> \$118,466.69<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$25,212.04<br><b>Total:</b> \$143,678.73<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 4  | Figure 7.4<br>Figure 7.5<br>Figure 7.6<br>Figure 7.7<br>Figure 7.8<br>Figure 7.9<br>Figure 7.10<br>Figure 7.11<br>Figure 7.12<br>Figure 7.13<br>Figure 7.14 |
| 30010000/<br>Aid to Subdivisions             | Provides a supplement to county board members/also provides aid to county for local registration board expense   | <b>State:</b> \$513,889<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$0<br><b>Total:</b> \$513,889<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 13               | <b>State:</b> \$515,014<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$<br><b>Total:</b> \$515,014<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 13                |   |
| 95050000/<br>Benefits                        | Employee Benefits  | <b>State:</b> \$127,220.14<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$29,238.89<br><b>Total:</b> \$156,459.03<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 4  | <b>State:</b> \$194,109.51<br><b>Federal:</b> \$0<br><b>Other:</b> \$29,238.89<br><b>Total:</b> \$218,225.42<br><b>% of Budget:</b> 6  |   |

**Remainder of expenditures**

|  | <b>FY 03/04</b>  | <b>FY 04/05</b>  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <b>Budget Expenditures</b>   | <b>Budget Expenditures</b>   |
| Primaries held during the year to fill vacancies | State: \$0<br>Federal: \$0<br>Other: \$160,086.36<br>Total: \$160,086.36<br>% of Budget: 5 | State: \$0<br>Federal: \$0<br>Other: \$68,367.06<br>Total: \$68,367.06<br>% of Budget: 2 |

# SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF BALDRIGE AWARD CRITERIA

## Category 1 - Leadership

The Agency has five commissioners who meet monthly, or at other times when 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 produce and complete the request in a timely manner. For long-term direction, department directors, with staff, gather information, assess needs, develop a plan, and a time-line is set for completion of the project. This time-line is stressed to each individual involved in achieving the long-term goal or direction. For example, the 1999 Election Summit, 2001 Governor's Election Task Force, and 2002 HAVA State Plan all recommend or require a statewide uniform electronic voting system. The agency deployed and communicated this long-term direction by hiring a consultant to assist with gathering information from customers and developing an RFP for the new system. A timeline was developed for a phased-in approach to implementation of the new system and staff was alerted that, when the system is chosen, they would be trained on various aspects of the system and would assist with installation and training of the system in counties in South Carolina.
- 1.1b/c** Performance and values expected of employees are communicated through employee evaluations and staff meetings. Employees are expected to perform both effectively and efficiently. Employees performing below agency expectations are counseled and provided with the necessary resources, mentoring, and opportunity to improve their job performance.
- 1.1d** Senior staff properly train and empower employees to make decisions and take actions directly related to their job and within their boundaries that satisfy customers on first contact and that provide better agency business results. Employee innovation is encouraged to improve agency services to customers with recognition to employees whose ideas increase agency productivity or reduce agency expenditures.
- 1.1e** Staff development and training is a crucial part of the Agency's vision for the future. Through workshops, retreats, and employee teams, employees are provided with the tools, resources, and opportunities to develop ways to enhance customer service to the benefit of the Agency. Employees are encouraged to complete levels of higher learning and are offered flextime to accommodate their schedules. Funding is provided for classes offered through the Budget and

Control Board and other training opportunities that relate directly to improving employee skills and performance. Figure 1.1 depicts the level of employee development programs in which agency employees have been involved.

**EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

| <b>Courses</b>                          | <b>Number Completed</b> | <b>Number Enrolled</b> |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Executive Institute                     | 2                       | 0                      |
| Certified Public Manager                | 3                       | 1                      |
| Associate Public Manager                | 5                       | 0                      |
| Human Resource Professional Development | 0                       | 1                      |
| Public Professional Development         | 0                       | 1                      |

**Figure 1.1**

The South Carolina Executive Institute is primarily for state government officials with executive levels of responsibility and authority. The Institute is administered by the State Budget and Control Board and offers an annual curriculum tailored for public sector leaders and 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 Public Professional Development (PPD) Program is a new certification developed for professional/technical staff to enhance their ability to work with teams, gain presentation skills, and manage priorities.

- 1.1f** Before new employees are hired, each submitted to a State Law Enforcement Division background check. All employees are expected to act in an ethical manner that meets established and expected standards for professional and personal behavior. Problems with unethical behavior are immediately addressed as they occur. Written ethical policy provided by the Budget and Control Board is followed by 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 a day’s time, if possible.
- 1.3** 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. The SEC, every fiscal year, submits a budget request to the State Budget Office. The agency then appears before the House Ways and Means and the Senate Finance to justify such requests. 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 obtaining legal information and regulations from the SC Election Laws. 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 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 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.

- 1.4** 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

**1.5** 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.

**1.6** 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.

**1.7** 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.

**1.8** Through encouragement and example, senior leaders participate in professional, election, and various charitable organizations through monetary donations and volunteer opportunities. Employees are encouraged to assist organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Registration and Election Officials (SCARE) and helping with association events.

## Category 2- Strategic Planning

| <b>Program Number and Title</b>              | <b>Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective</b>   | <b>Related FY2006 Key Agency 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.  |   | III. p.45<br>Figure 7.4<br>Figure 7.5<br>Figure 7.15   |
| 20010000/<br>Voter Services                  | <b>Statewide Voter Registration System</b> —Maintain and support SC’s statewide voter registration system.  | Provide training and assistance to county voter registration and election commission staff through training classes, onsite visits, and oral/written documentation. | I. p.35<br>Figure 7.1<br>Figure 7.2<br>Figure 7.3  |
|  | <b>Conduct of Elections</b> —Oversee and assist with conduct of primary election and ensure the quality of the election process                                   | Provide oversight, consultative feedback, and training to county election commissions on election process and election law.   | Figure 7.2<br>Figure 7.3<br>Figure 7.4<br>Figure 7.8<br>Figure 7.9<br>Figure 7.10<br>Figure 7.11<br>Figure 7.15<br>Figure 7.16 |
| 25000000/<br>Public Information/<br>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 day-to-day office procedures and preparing for election day.        | II. p.38<br>Figure 7.4<br>Figure 7.5<br>Figure 7.6<br>Figure 7.7   |
|  | <b>Implementation and enforcement of Help America Vote Act</b> —Successfully implement and insure compliance with this federally mandated act                     | Develop and execute a plan to track the progress of various projects to ensure compliance with federal guidelines and deadlines.                                    | IV. p.47<br>Figure 7.15  |

**Figure 2.1**

- 2.1** The Agency strategic plan is developed based on the goals of the Agency. Goals are based on the agency mission and statutory requirements. Customer expectations and needs are determined through surveys, focus group meetings, and in-person communication.
- 2.2** The Agency’s key strategic objectives are to maintain the statewide voter registration system, implement a statewide voting system, train county election and voter registration officials, oversee the conduct elections, and manage the implementation of the HAVA State Plan as mandated by the federal government’s Help America Vote Act.
- 2.3** To ensure accomplishment of agency goals, resources available in state government are evaluated based on employee skills and available technology. A plan is then developed by senior leaders

and counties to implement the specific project. When developing and teaching new Training and Certification Program classes, office staff and county personnel are reviewed based on their skills and availability to teach the classes.

- 2.4** The Agency's key plans/initiatives are to ensure that county election commissions and voter registration officials have the skills to successfully complete voter registration and election processes. This includes training and assisting election officials and poll workers on the new statewide voting system.
- 2.5** Strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures are communicated to employees and commissioners through a series of meetings. This information is listed on a scorecard that is distributed at the above-mentioned meetings. The goals of the Agency are determined by customer and supplier needs, the agency mission, and the South Carolina statute.

## Category 3 - Customer Focus

**3.1** The SEC determines key customers based on those who contact the Agency requesting or seeking specific election related information and/or services. Key customers of the SEC include the citizens of South Carolina, county boards of voter registration and election commissions, the legislature, federal election agencies, special interests and advocacy groups, municipal election commissions, political parties, candidates, those who purchase lists of registered voters, and the media.

**3.2 & 3.3** Customers are determined by recognizing those who request information and services from the Agency and whether the Agency can fulfill the request. For example, the executive director and management team meet quarterly with an advisory committee consisting of election officials from all over the State. This committee serves as a liaison between all county election commissions and voter registration boards in the State and the SEC. By taking this approach, the management team is able to speak directly with one of 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.

The management team also meets regularly 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 focus. The SEC assesses needs and determines how to best meet them in a cost effective and timely manner.

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

For example, during the 2006 Primary, there were some voters who thought they had registered to vote at the Department of Motor Vehicles; but, due to operator errors, the applications were not processed. To accommodate these voters and get them registered, DMV worked with us on a daily basis to look up their records and properly process them. The Agency continues to work with the DMV to ensure proper procedures are followed.

**3.5** The Agency implemented several methods to determine levels of customer satisfaction including:

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

The SEC is dedicated to continuous improvement in the voter registration and elections 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 good customer service. The Agency involves customers in the process of developing and improving its services.

## 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** The State Election Commission's key measures include:
- conduct successful statewide Primary and General Elections
  - develop a new voter registration system to meet the needs of county and state users
  - maintain and support the statewide voter registration system
  - increase participation by county election officials in the statewide training and certification program
  - improve voter awareness of elections and accessibility to polling places and voting machines for votes with disabilities
- 4.3** 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.
- 4.4** Data analysis is 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. For example, the SEC produced a weekly statistical printout that was mailed to each county voter registration office. County offices were surveyed to determine the validity of the weekly mail out, and it was determined that the counties do not need these reports as often. Based on this finding, reports are now mailed every other week at a cost savings of \$2500 per year.
- 4.5** 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.

- 4.6** Employees with the greatest longevity within an organization usually possess the most technical and institutional knowledge. When an employee leaves their position, their accumulated

knowledge is not retained by the organization. Significant time, money and resources are expended training new or retraining existing personnel to fill the knowledge void.

The SEC is addressing the management of employee organizational and institutional knowledge management within the Agency by leveraging technology available through its new intranet. A growing, searchable electronic repository of agency policies, processes, reference materials, employee desk procedures, tools, and historical documentation is available to all agency employees. The SEC is focused on effective knowledge management.

## Category 5 - Human Resources

- 5.1** Motivation of employees is done informally through verbal conversations and mentoring. Formal motivation is achieved through practices such as flex time, agency retreats, promotions from within, and providing resources to perform the necessary job duties and monetary increases and bonuses when the agency budget allows. 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.

- 5.2** 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 also to attend any training offered to help them better perform their job duties. Extra training is also encouraged for substandard performance when it is incurred.

The SEC is a small agency with only 17 employees who are 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** 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 problems as they arise.
- 5.4** 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.
- 5.5** A custodial staff provided by the Budget and Control Board Building Services Division maintains the work environment. Supervisory personnel report unsanitary conditions to the proper authorities immediately. The Agency also complies with OSHA and state fire marshal regulations.

The implementation of the new 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 are also provided for working with the ink cartridges necessary for the plotters.

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

**5.6** 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. Employees often use their lunch hour to provide volunteer services for these programs.

# Category 6 - Process Management

## I. Statewide Voter Registration System

The SEC is responsible for maintaining and ensuring security of a database of over two million registered voters in the State. Each county voter registration office is securely connected to a computer in Columbia which houses the statewide database of registered voters. The county voter registration offices add new registered voters and make changes to existing voter records within their county.

### Voter Registration System Processes

- Provide county boards of voter registration with a list of eligible voters for each election held in the State
- Maintain an accurate history of election participation for each registered elector
- Remove names of voters who have died, moved, been convicted of felonies or crimes against the election laws or otherwise become ineligible as electors from the list of active, registered voters
- Provide technical support to the county boards of voter registration in the proper use of the statewide voter registration system on an as needed basis. Limited support is also offered on computers and printers.
- Provide forms and materials used for voter registration offices
- Conduct confirmation mailing to verify the address of voters who have not participated in recent elections. Voters who are no longer residing at the address and do not vote in two consecutive general elections are placed on inactive status.
- On an ongoing basis, lists of current registered voters or voters who participated in a particular election are provided to customers
- On a yearly basis, the SEC combines the voter registration file with the drivers license file to create a jury pool list. The SEC provides this list for a nominal fee to clerks of court and chief magistrates to be used for the selection of jurors.
- Update system to enhance performance and conform to changing laws and policies
- Compare database with those of other states to detect dual registrations

## II. Education and Public Information

### 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.

Periodic election law changes require changes to materials used in various training programs and on Election Day. These election law changes are tracked by the Agency's Public Information Officer and reported to staff responsible for updating materials and forms. Prior to every primary and general election, if not needed before, these changes are reviewed and incorporated into forms and materials supplied by this office. Changes needed as a result of a suggestion from office staff or 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. These trips are also used to obtain feedback and new ideas from customers that would benefit the election process. In FY2006, counties requested SEC assistance due to a loss of leadership caused by turnover in the director's position within many county election offices. SEC staff was able to assist by recommending individuals who recently retired from the Director position in other counties and also by providing assistance with training and questions.

## **Training and Certification Program**

All county election and voter registration officials and staff members are required by statute to complete the 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.

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.

## **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; 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 a number of publications including the bi-annual Election Report.

The SEC web page, [www.state.sc.us/scsec](http://www.state.sc.us/scsec), is updated frequently based on input from agency customers and staff. This site is reviewed on a monthly basis to determine any other necessary changes. Key information available on the site includes:

- General election results (1996-Present)
- Voter participation statistics (1996-Present)
- Voter registration statistics (1984-Present)
- Current election information such as filing and registration deadlines, polling place locations and key election dates

- Voter registration application
- The ability of a registered voter to access their voter registration information and determine the districts in which they are qualified to vote
- Provisional ballot status check enabling a voter to verify if their ballot was counted and if not, the reason it was not counted
- Voters participating in an election through the absentee process can access information to track the issuance and receipt of applications and ballots
- Schedules containing key dates and deadlines for upcoming elections
- Information for candidates concerning the election process
- Help America Vote Act (HAVA) compliance information

## **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.”

A website, [www.scvotes.org](http://www.scvotes.org), is maintained in house by SEC staff and its purpose is to educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in South Carolina. The site was created in September 2004 as part of the implementation of the HAVA State Plan. Some features of the site are:

- The latest information on the statewide voting system and the voter education and outreach program
- A downloadable “1-2-3 Vote” video demonstrating how to use the voting machines
- A downloadable voter registration application
- Frequently Asked Questions that answer many questions regarding voter registration and elections
- Spanish-language instructions for the electronic voting machines

## **Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration**

The SEC administers a federal four-year grant from the Department of Health and Human Services. The Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Grant has helped improve access for voters with disabilities by providing funding for polling place upgrades, training, and education. The grant provides funding in four areas:

1. Improving physical accessibility to polling places
2. Providing opportunities for equal access and participation
3. Training of election officials
4. Providing accessible information.

The SEC makes the availability of this funding known to counties and encourages its use. County election commissions, with the help of the disabled community, assess their polling places and identify needed improvements. Once a county makes a request, the SEC reviews the request and determines whether the request meets grant requirements. If approved, the county pays for the work to be completed and sends the Agency the required documentation for reimbursement.

### **III. Statewide Voting System**

#### **Implementation**

To bring the State into compliance with the Help America Vote Act, the South Carolina HAVA State Plan required the Agency to implement a statewide voting system. The Agency employed external, independent consultants utilizing an established methodology to gather from the various stakeholders the requirements for a statewide voting system, develop a Request for Proposal (RFP), and manage the solicitation process on behalf of the SEC. The Agency utilized established state procurement processes and staff from the Information Technology Management Office to conduct the solicitation and engaged county election officials as part of the evaluation team. Vendor protests of the original solicitation and contract award resulted in a re-solicitation which concluded on August 4, 2004 with a contract award for a statewide voting system and implementation services to Election Systems & Software.

The Agency engaged external resources using an established project management methodology to plan, execute, and manage the statewide voting system implementation including refinements to agency support services processes and staff development and training. Because of the procurement delays, the Agency had only 89 days prior to the general election to install voting equipment so it was decided to implement the voting system in two phases. To meet the HAVA requirements regarding punch card voting systems and address the significant time constraints, 15 counties, most of which were using punch card systems, were included in Phase I. All 15 counties successfully used the new statewide voting system in the November 2004 General election. Voting system equipment has been deployed in all Phase II counties, successfully implemented, and used in the 2006 statewide primaries as well as municipal, special and other elections.

Implementation consisted of delivery of voting machines, associated equipment, training, and distribution of various materials and documentation. On-site project management at both the state and county level were provided to ensure successful implementation. Personnel at the Agency was trained and provided a limited level of support to users of the system during the primaries and various local elections.

Deployment statewide of the new voting system was realized by April 1, 2005 and the system has been used in numerous special and municipal elections since that time. Full implementation of the statewide voting system was realized with the 2006 Primaries.

#### **Database Definition and Ballot Layout**

Election definition databases for elections held using the statewide electronic voting system are defined and designed by SEC personnel using specialized software. The election laws of South Carolina and information specific to the election govern the design of these databases. New peripheral technology associated with the voting system is explored and reviewed constantly by personnel in the Voter Services Division, and resources pertinent to this division are discussed and evaluated before purchases are made. If the evaluation determines that the upgrade in technology will benefit the Agency and its customers, and if funding is available, the change is incorporated.

The Voter Services Division 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 withdrawal and lawsuits, the goals are met by defining databases well in advance of receiving candidate names and following strict procedures to complete, receive approval from counties, and complete the database once the candidate names are received.

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

### **Voting System Certification**

The SEC is responsible for examination and certification of voting equipment. Prior to seeking certification in South Carolina, voting system vendors must complete national qualification testing at an independent laboratory based on the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's voting system guidelines. Application packages are received with a fee of \$1,000 for 1st time certifications and \$500 for all upgrades to existing certified systems. Once the application and fee are received, staff at the SEC begins testing the system using a pre-defined process based on state election laws. Once the examination and test election are complete, the system is presented to the Commissioners of the SEC for certification.

Since South Carolina requires only one system of voting, the SEC no longer tests voting systems from various vendors and only maintains a list of hardware, software and firmware associated with the statewide voting system.

### **Ballot Review and Approval**

All ballots for use in statewide primaries and general elections must be reviewed and approved by SEC staff before the county officials can print their necessary official ballots. These proof sheet ballots are mailed or faxed to the Public Information and Training Division for review and then returned to the county within 48 hours. While it is not required, many county and municipal election commissions send their sample ballots to the Agency for review prior to printing of official ballots.

## **IV. Administration of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)**

The "Help America Vote Act of 2002" (HAVA) was signed by President Bush on October 29, 2002. This legislation 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 final plan was delivered to the Federal Election Commission in September of 2003 and has been updated each year thereafter.

Once the State Plan was finalized, an implementation plan was developed to monitor the status of all tasks required. This plan was updated and posted monthly on the agency website at <http://www.state.sc.us/scsec/hava.htm>. Full compliance with HAVA was required by January 2006.

Federal Law requires each state to develop a long-range State Plan for HAVA implementation and provides funding to assist the state in implementation. The South Carolina State Plan provides a description of current election procedures, outlines how South Carolina has met or will meet the new requirements mandated by HAVA, and outlines changes South Carolina has made since release of the initial State Plan to bring the State into compliance with HAVA. The State Plan is updated and refined as necessary over time, to reflect election law changes and future plans. The State Plan reflects strategic objectives of great importance to every voter in South Carolina: implementation of a statewide uniform electronic voting system, support for disabled voters in every precinct in the State, enhancements to election administration, and training for voters, poll workers, and election officials. Building on current capabilities, the goal is to offer a higher level of service with increased ease of use, convenience, and consistency in every precinct across the State.

## **V. Agency Administration**

### **Agency Information Technology Support**

The Voter Services Division is responsible for the in-house, personal computer-based network. When problems arise with hardware or software, staff is notified immediately and the situation is addressed. Staff members are empowered to make decisions independently unless the decision requires major budget expenditures.

### **Accounts Payable**

When an invoice is received, the accounts payable clerk processes a voucher. The voucher and electronic copy are sent to the Comptroller General's Office where the information is uploaded and forwarded to the Treasurer's Office. The Treasurer's Office then sends a check to the Agency where the check number is recorded and the accounts payable clerk mails the check to the respective individual or entity.

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

Per Proviso 62.2, the SEC receives pass-through funds which are sent to each county registration board/election commission member on a quarterly basis. In many cases, no other additional compensation is received by the board members. While some counties supplement the state stipend, most do not. 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 can provide a critical role in helping to ensure elections are run fairly and efficiently and they should be compensated accordingly.

### **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 commission. 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 Senate, House of Representatives or the South Carolina Supreme Court.

# Category 7 – Business Results

## I. Statewide Voter Registration System

### Voter Registration System Processes

- Maintained and ensured security of a database of more than 2.4 million registered voters.

Figure 7.1 shows the number of active, registered voters in the State by year. Fluctuations in the numbers are due in part to the removal of voters who are no longer qualified.

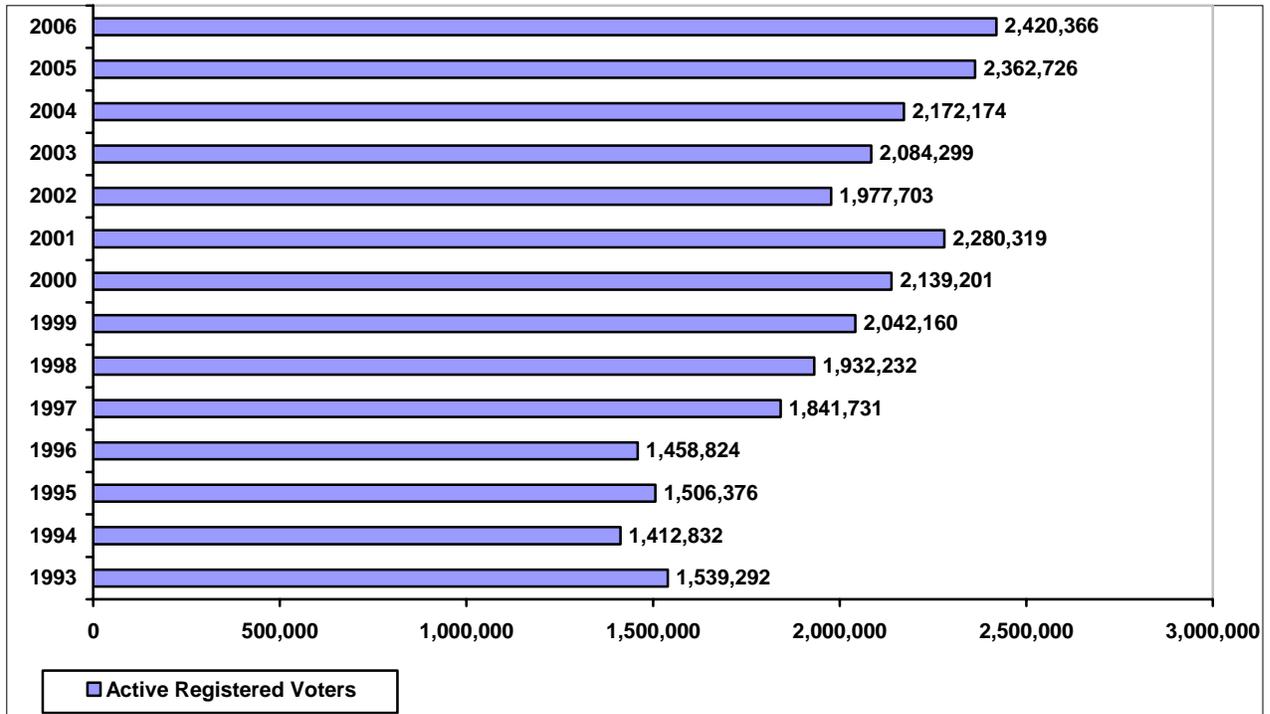


Figure 7.1

- 314 voter registration lists were printed for elections held in South Carolina during this fiscal period.
- All 314 voter registration lists were delivered in time for use in the election.

Figures 7.2 and 7.3 reflect the number of voter registration lists printed by type and by month.

### Voter Registration Lists Printed by Election Type

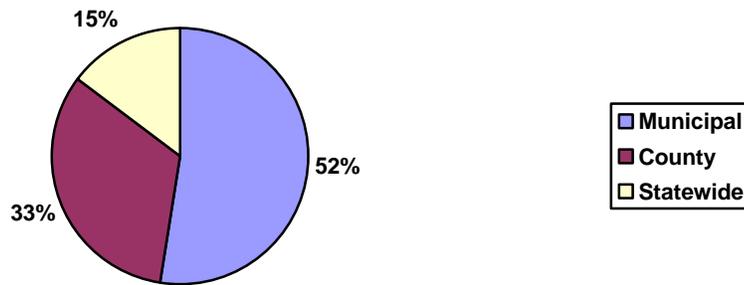


Figure 7.2

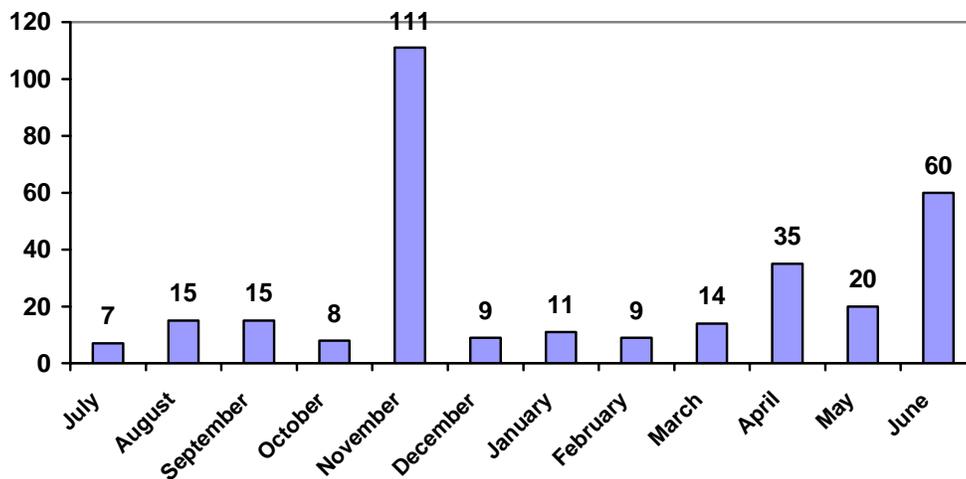


Figure 7.3

- Voter history was captured from 308 of the voter registration lists used. Six voter registration lists were not returned by county election commissions.
- The statewide voter registration system is designed to allow voters casting provisional ballots to determine if their ballot was counted through the agency website.
- SEC staff determined that 50,966 voters had become ineligible to vote due to conviction of a felony, death or moving to another state. Once reported, these voters are removed from the active database.
- The SEC responded to 500 customer requests for lists of registered voters.
- The SEC produced 92 jury lists for county magistrates and clerks of court.

The current voter registration system has been in use since 1992. Enhancements are needed to meet county needs and federal reporting requirements. The system has seen only moderate updates over the past five years in anticipation of a new statewide voter registration system.

## New Statewide Voter Registration System

The need for a new statewide voter registration system still exists. The statewide voter registration system currently used in South Carolina is an antiquated, legacy system. The system has performed poorly in periods of peak activity and has produced unacceptable results. Problems experienced include inadequate storage for absentee voting records resulting in system outages and long lines of voters at county offices, inaccurate voter registration certificates produced for counties performing voter precinct reassignments, and official voter registration lists that did not contain the names of all registered voters eligible to vote in the election.

A project to develop a new system originally began in 2001. Work on the project will be restarted once funding is attained. Requirements for the system and a design of the system were not defined due to a lack of qualified resources within state government with applied project management and systems development experience. As a result, the project has been delayed numerous times over the past four years. After attempting several approaches, it was determined that, to properly develop the new system, further evaluation and work must be done. In order to complete this work, additional funding will be required.

## II. Education and Public Information

### Educational Services

ElectionNET, the agency’s election community intranet, grew rapidly in FY2006. On July 1, 2005, the site was in its infancy with just a handful of users, primarily made up of SEC employees. By June 30, 2006 there were nearly 300 users from all 46 counties, and 1,772 posts had been made to the site. Figure 7.4 shows the increase in activity from inception.

| ElectionNET 12/1/05 – 6/30/06* |                 |                  |           |           |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Month                          | Unique visitors | Number of visits | Pages     | Hits      | Bandwidth |
| Dec 2005                       | 88              | 657              | 16800     | 112663    | 257.23 MB |
| Jan 2006                       | 101             | 1065             | 110195    | 264145    | 500.14 MB |
| Feb 2006                       | 162             | 1354             | 325336    | 557466    | 1.16 GB   |
| Mar 2006                       | 270             | 2262             | 413208    | 765373    | 1.47 GB   |
| Apr 2006                       | 289             | 1893             | 304337    | 586249    | 1.21 GB   |
| May 2006                       | 317             | 2173             | 389815    | 820646    | 1.92 GB   |
| Jun 2006                       | 417             | 2921             | 552648    | 1157897   | 3.09 GB   |
| Total                          | 1,644           | 12,325           | 2,112,339 | 4,264,439 | 9.60 GB   |

**Figure 7.4**

\*Due to a software change, statistics are unavailable for the period 7/1/05 to 11/30/05.

Staff in the Public Information and Training division coordinates training provided by SEC staff to poll managers and election officials. Figure 7.5 shows a breakdown of those classes held during the FY2006 and the number of customers serviced.

| <b>Training Completed</b>                      | <b>Total Events</b> | <b>Total Participants</b> |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| County Poll Manager Workshops                  | 3                   | 225                       |
| County Poll Manager Voting Machine Workshops   | 46                  | 1,035                     |
| County Election Commission Workshops           | 2                   | 156                       |
| County Election Comm. Voting Machine Workshops | 4                   | 27                        |
| County Rover Training                          | 3                   | 17                        |
| Municipal Poll Manager Workshops               | 5                   | 107                       |
| Municipal Election Commission Workshops        | 2                   | 8                         |

**Figure 7.5**

## **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. Twenty-four classes were held in FY2006. A total of 703 participants attended these classes held in Columbia, Greenville, Charleston, Darlington, 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 January, 27 election officials were presented with certificates of certification after completing the program over the previous year. Figure 7.6 shows class descriptions, number offered, and the number of participants.

| <b>Class Offered</b>                          | <b>Times Offered</b> | <b>Total Participants</b> |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Absentee Registration/Balloting               | 3                    | 81                        |
| Budgeting and Election Reimbursement          | 3                    | 72                        |
| Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training | 2                    | 65                        |
| Duties of the Election Commission             | 2                    | 57                        |
| Duties of the Voter Registration Board        | 2                    | 60                        |
| Election Security                             | 2                    | 70                        |
| Office Procedures                             | 1                    | 31                        |
| Communication Skills                          | 1                    | 32                        |
| Legislative Process and Relations             | 1                    | 29                        |
| Freedom of Information Act                    | 1                    | 31                        |
| Media Relations                               | 1                    | 25                        |
| Time & Stress Management                      | 1                    | 29                        |
| Ethics in Government                          | 1                    | 26                        |
| Elections A – Z                               | 1                    | 27                        |
| Protest Hearings                              | 1                    | 36                        |
| Election Challenges and Opportunities         | 1                    | 32                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>24</b>            | <b>703</b>                |

**Figure 7.6**

There are 502 election officials who are required by law to complete the program and become certified. 307 have completed the program. However, 117 of those members have not kept their certification current by taking at least one class per year. Of the 105 members who have not completed the program, most are working to complete it. However, there are 40 board or commission members who have either never taken a class or have not completed their certification within the statutory time period. Figure 7.7 shows the level of participation of commission and board members and their staffs in each county.

| COUNTY       | COMMISSION MEMBERS ALLOWED | MEMBERS CERTIFIED | STAFF MEMBERS | STAFF CERTIFIED |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| ABBEVILLE    | 7                          | 4                 | 1             | 1               |
| AIKEN        | 7                          | 7                 | 4             | 4               |
| ALLENDALE    | 7                          | 4                 | 0             | 0               |
| ANDERSON     | 7                          | 5                 | 5             | 2               |
| BAMBERG      | 7                          | 6                 | 1             | 0               |
| BARNWELL     | 7                          | 2                 | 2             | 0               |
| BEAUFORT     | 9                          | 4                 | 9             | 7               |
| BERKELEY     | 9                          | 2                 | 5             | 4               |
| CALHOUN      | 10                         | 8                 | 2             | 1               |
| CHARLESTON   | 9                          | 4                 | 10            | 5               |
| CHEROKEE     | 10                         | 7                 | 2             | 1               |
| CHESTER      | 8                          | 2                 | 2             | 0               |
| CHESTERFIELD | 8                          | 5                 | 2             | 0               |
| CLARENDON    | 10                         | 3                 | 3             | 2               |
| COLLETON     | 9                          | 5                 | 2             | 1               |
| DARLINGTON   | 7                          | 7                 | 3             | 3               |
| DILLON       | 9                          | 1                 | 1             | 1               |
| DORCHESTER   | 7                          | 5                 | 6             | 2               |
| EDGEFIELD    | 6                          | 2                 | 2             | 1               |
| FAIRFIELD    | 7                          | 3                 | 2             | 2               |
| FLORENCE     | 7                          | 4                 | 5             | 3               |
| GEORGETOWN   | 8                          | 3                 | 2             | 2               |
| GREENVILLE   | 10                         | 3                 | 7             | 6               |
| GREENWOOD    | 10                         | 4                 | 4             | 2               |
| HAMPTON      | 7                          | 3                 | 2             | 2               |
| HORRY        | 10                         | 6                 | 5             | 5               |
| JASPER       | 7                          | 2                 | 1             | 1               |
| KERSHAW      | 7                          | 3                 | 2             | 1               |
| LANCASTER    | 7                          | 5                 | 1             | 1               |
| LAURENS      | 9                          | 9                 | 3             | 1               |
| LEE          | 9                          | 7                 | 2             | 2               |
| LEXINGTON    | 7                          | 4                 | 5             | 2               |
| MARION       | 8                          | 6                 | 2             | 2               |
| MARLBORO     | 7                          | 4                 | 2             | 1               |
| MCCORMICK    | 5                          | 4                 | 2             | 2               |
| NEWBERRY     | 7                          | 5                 | 2             | 2               |
| OCONEE       | 5                          | 5                 | 2             | 2               |
| ORANGEBURG   | 9                          | 7                 | 4             | 1               |
| PICKENS      | 7                          | 4                 | 2             | 1               |
| RICHLAND     | 10                         | 8                 | 3             | 3               |
| SALUDA       | 7                          | 6                 | 1             | 1               |
| SPARTANBURG  | 6                          | 6                 | 7             | 6               |
| SUMTER       | 8                          | 5                 | 3             | 3               |
| UNION        | 8                          | 7                 | 1             | 1               |
| WILLIAMSBURG | 9                          | 2                 | 2             | 2               |
| YORK         | 8                          | 4                 | 4             | 4               |

**Figure 7.7**

## Public Information

During FY2006, the SEC Public Information Office fielded approximately 5,000 calls, e-mails, letters and office visits from local and national media, candidates, political parties, county election commissions, county voter registration offices and the general public. This dissemination of accurate and reliable information contributed greatly to the success of the 2006 Primary Elections.

The public and media were actively informed of news, events, deadlines, statistics, and results relating to all state and multi-county elections. Twenty-five major press releases were issued through the public information office in FY2006.

On the evening of the 2006 Primary Election, the SEC Web page, [www.scvotes.org](http://www.scvotes.org), was updated with election results as they were transmitted to the Agency from the 46 counties. Voters, candidates, news media, and other interested parties used the site to obtain results. Each year there is a significant increase in the number of visits to the Web site – especially surrounding an election. The number of

visits can be attributed to the publicity of the web site and the information posted on the site. Figures 7.8 and 7.9 show information regarding activity on the site.

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Total Hits (12/1/05 - 6/30/06)</b>              | 1,295,973                     |
| <b>Voter Registration Form Downloads</b>           | 2,849 (printing costs saved)  |
| <b>Instructional Video Views (7/1/05 -6/30/06)</b> | 1,617                         |
| <b>English Instructions Views</b>                  | 3,014                         |
| <b>Spanish Instructions Views</b>                  | 1,902                         |
| <b>Voter Frequently Asked Questions Views</b>      | 2,264                         |
| <b>Absentee Voting Information Views</b>           | 2,229                         |
| <b>Cost of Ownership</b>                           | \$117/year (.002 cents/visit) |

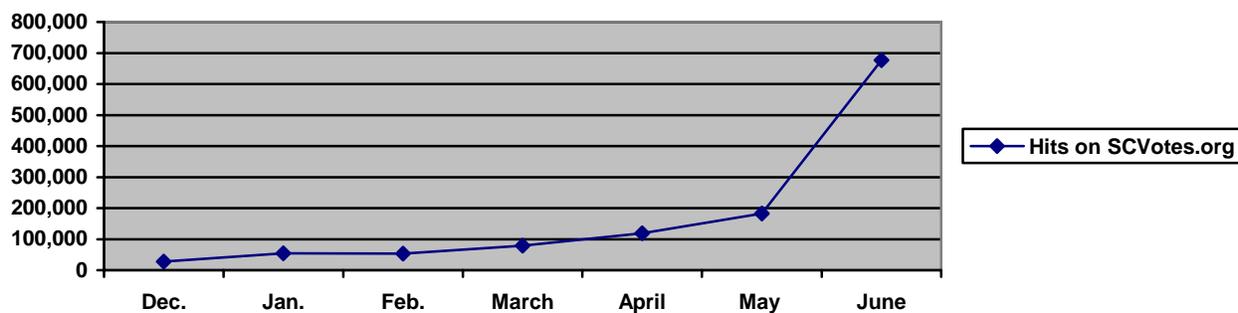
**Figure 7.8**

| <b>SCvotes.org 12/1/05 – 6/30/06*</b> |                        |                         |              |             |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>Month</b>                          | <b>Unique visitors</b> | <b>Number of visits</b> | <b>Pages</b> | <b>Hits</b> | <b>Bandwidth</b> |
| <b>Dec 2005</b>                       | 929                    | 2202                    | 4962         | 27638       | 343.51 MB        |
| <b>Jan 2006</b>                       | 1543                   | 3169                    | 7987         | 54213       | 469.10 MB        |
| <b>Feb 2006</b>                       | 1454                   | 2908                    | 8325         | 53129       | 545.71 MB        |
| <b>Mar 2006</b>                       | 2024                   | 3618                    | 11462        | 79258       | 724.65 MB        |
| <b>Apr 2006</b>                       | 2618                   | 4577                    | 18999        | 119342      | 2.68 GB          |
| <b>May 2006</b>                       | 4584                   | 7612                    | 27974        | 182251      | 2.54 GB          |
| <b>Jun 2006</b>                       | 13792                  | 23678                   | 95349        | 676878      | 11.41 GB         |
| <b>Total</b>                          | 26,944                 | 47,764                  | 175,058      | 1,192,709   | 19.77 GB         |

**Figure 7.9**

\*Due to a software change, statistics are unavailable for the period 7/1/05 to 11/30/05.

Figure 7.10 reflects the increase in activity on SCVotes.org leading up to the June Primaries.



**Figure 7.10**

Many of the Agency’s key customers, including private citizens interested in tracking elections and the news media, have expressed their appreciation for the information available on SCVotes.org as well as the Agency’s legacy site, [www.state.sc.us/scsec](http://www.state.sc.us/scsec). The legacy site contains the following:

- General Election results (1996-Present)
- Voter participation statistics (1996-Present)

- Voter registration statistics (1984-Present)
- Current election information such as filing and registration deadlines, polling place locations and key election dates
- Voter registration application
- The ability of a registered voter to access their voter registration information and determine the districts in which they are qualified to vote
- Provisional ballot status check enabling a voter to verify if their ballot was counted and if not, the reason it was not counted
- Voters participating in an election through the absentee process can access information to track the issuance and receipt of applications and ballots
- Schedules containing key dates and deadlines for upcoming elections
- Information for candidates concerning the election process
- Help America Vote Act (HAVA) compliance information

Figure 7.11 depicts these increases in site visits leading up to the June Primaries.

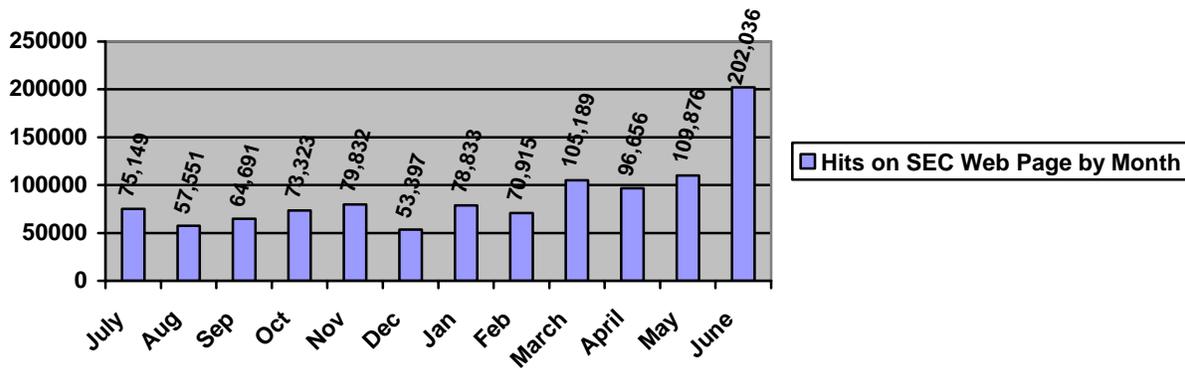


Figure 7.11

### Voter Education and Outreach

The SEC worked during FY2006 to reach out and educate voters on all aspects of voter registration and elections in South Carolina. The Agency’s efforts continued to pay particular attention to ensuring voters were informed about the use of the new electronic voting machines. This focused voter education effort, *SC Votes*, has been ongoing since 2004, when the SEC issued an RFP for a campaign to commence in conjunction with the implementation of the new voting system. The effort has been financed entirely by HAVA funds. The *SC Votes* campaign promotes the theme “Every Vote Matters, Every Vote Counts.” The initiative includes: educational brochures, a “How to Vote” video and literature, direct mail, an outreach program, a voter education website and a statewide mass media campaign. Figures 7.12 and 7.13 show results and details of the *SC Votes* voter education and outreach program.

|                               |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Voter Education Events        | 120    |
| Voting Machine Demonstrations | 23,092 |
| Counties Visited              | 35     |
| Statewide Events              | 6      |

Figure 7.12

| County       | Voter Education Events  |  |  |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| Statewide    | Municipal Assoc. of S.C. Conference<br>S.C. Assoc. of Counties Conference<br>Women's Expo 2005<br>NAACP S.C. Conference | S.C. State Fair<br>Native American Conference<br>S.C. Democratic Party Meeting<br>S.C. Assistive Technology Expo | S.C. G.O.P. State Convention<br>Voter Ed. Mo. Kickoff- Statehouse<br>Black Expo 2006<br>American Legion State Conference |
| Allendale    | Cooter Festival   |  |  |
| Bamberg      | Piggly Wiggly- Bamberg  | Piggly Wiggly- Denmark   | Bamberg Antique Treasure Festival  |
| Barnwell     | Reid's Grocery  |  |  |
| Beaufort     | Beaufort Water Festival<br>Republican Party Annual Meeting  | Yemassee Shrimp Festival   | Gullah Festival  |
| Berkeley     | Goose Creek Library<br>Goose Creek Recreational Center  | Hanahan Library  | Santee Cooper Canal/Museum Fest  |
| Charleston   | Stone Soul Picnic<br>McClellanville Lowcountry Shrimp Festival  | S.C. Women's Baptist Education & Missionary Convention<br>Black Expo 2006  | Sweetgrass Basket Festival- Mt. Pleasant   |
| Chester      | Food Lion- Chester  |  |  |
| Chesterfield | Fisher Hill Community Church- Cheraw<br>31 <sup>st</sup> Annual Spring Festival- Cheraw                                 | Pee Dee Baptist Church- Cheraw   | Chesterfield YMCA  |
| Clarendon    | Striped Bass Festival- Manning  | Manning Judicial Center  |  |
| Darlington   | 18 <sup>th</sup> Annual Sweet Potato Festival   | NASCAR Dodge 500   |  |
| Dillon       | Dillon County Courthouse  |  |  |
| Dorchester   | Ridgeville Art & Cultural Festival  | YMCA Flowertown Festival- Summerville  |  |
| Edgefield    | Mine Creek Baptist Church- Johnston   | Edgefield Town Hall  | Ridge Peach Festival- Trenton  |
| Fairfield    | Rock Around the Clock- Winnsboro  | Food Lion- Winnsboro   |  |
| Florence     | Tobacco Festival  |  |  |
| Georgetown   | Georgetown Harborwalk Festival  |  |  |
| Hampton      | Hampton County Courthouse<br>Estill Fall Festival   | Brunson Town Hall  | Hampton Watermelon Festival  |
| Horry        | Aynor Hoe-Down<br>Loris Bog-Off   | United Auto Workers Retirees Meeting- Myrtle Beach   | 'Round the Fourth Festival- Conway   |
| Jasper       | Piggly Wiggly- Hardeeville  | Piggly Wiggly- Ridgeville  | Palmetto Electric Co-Op Annual Meeting- Ridgeland  |
| Lancaster    | Indian Spring Festival  | Lancaster City Hall  |  |
| Laurens      | Squealin' on the Square BBQ Fest  | Laurens County Fair  | Mt. Carmel AME Church- Gray Court  |
| Lee          | Lee County Cotton Festival- Bishopville   | Magnolia Festival- Lynchburg   | First Presbyterian Church- Bishopville   |
| Lexington    | 32 <sup>nd</sup> Irmo Okra Strut<br>Mid-Carolina Electric Co-Op Annual Meeting  | S.C. Poultry Festival- Batesburg- Leesville  | Ritmo de la Serie (River Concert)- West Columbia   |
| McCormick    | 30 <sup>th</sup> Gold Rush Days   | MACK Park- McCormick   |  |
| Marion       | 23 <sup>rd</sup> Golden Leaf Festival   | Fox Trot Festival  | Piggly Wiggly- Marion  |
| Marlboro     | Greater White Creek Baptist Church- Wallace<br>Ebenezer United Methodist Church- Bennettsville                          | Beaver Dam Baptist Church- Wallace   | Bennettsville Courthouse   |
| Newberry     | Little Mountain Reunion Festival<br>Newberry Summer Fest  | Prosperity Hoppin' Fest<br>Newberry Courthouse   | Party in the Pines- Whitmire   |
| Orangeburg   | Orangeburg City Admin. Bldg.<br>Orangeburg Wellness Celebration   | Clafin College<br>S.C. Legislative Black Caucus- O.C. Tech. College  | Festival of Roses  |
| Pickens      | Pickens Azalea Festival   |  |  |
| Richland     | Jubilee Festival of Heritage<br>KISS 98.5 Sky-Show – Tom Joyner<br>Columbia Senior Center<br>CMRTA Bus Transfer         | The State Newspaper<br>Columbia Black Tie Network:<br>Voting is Power<br>Richland Co. Election Commission        | Killian Community Center<br>Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce- Get Out the Vote<br>Control Ritmo- Live Radio Show     |
| Saluda       | Festival in the Park<br>Ridge Spring Harvest Festival   | Saluda County Courthouse   | Ridge Spring Town Square   |
| Sumter       | AKA Health Forum  | Sumter Mall  | Iris Festival  |
| Williamsburg | Santee Electric Co-Op Annual Meeting- Kingstree   |  |  |
| York         | International Festival at St. Anne's Catholic Church- Rock Hill   |  |  |

Figure 7.13

The Agency organized a Voter Education month in May, made official by proclamations of the Governor and General Assembly, to focus our efforts leading into the June Primary. Many newspapers and radio and television news stations provided positive coverage of the voting system focusing on its historic first statewide use and improved access for voters with disabilities. Many papers printed instructions on how to vote using the new voting system, and SEC staff appeared on television news programs to demonstrate the machines.

## **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, making numerous improvements that make voting in South Carolina more accessible than ever before.

1. The audio feature of the State's new voting system provides blind voters the opportunity to vote independently for the first time in state history.
2. The new voting machines can be removed from their booths for curbside voting and for use by voters in wheelchairs.
3. More than \$222,000 in federal grant money was used on polling place upgrades, training, and education. (see p.43)
4. The SEC conducted training classes as part of the training and certification program aimed at increasing disability awareness.
5. The Agency produced a training video for county election officials aimed at improving disability awareness and polling place accessibility.
6. The *SC Votes* voter education tour visited disabled communities throughout the State. These demonstrations showed use of the ADA voting unit and its Braille-embossed navigation buttons to support visually impaired voters. The curbside accessibility of the machine to voters with physical limitations was also demonstrated.
7. The Agency developed a large print voter registration application.
8. A Braille brochure containing voter registration and voting information was made available to members of the blind community.
9. Large type polling place material was made available.
10. County election commissions were surveyed to gauge the level of progress in improving access to polling places.

## **Federal Health and Human Services Grant Administration**

The SEC applied for and received a federal grant providing \$542,039 over a four-year period from October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2006. This grant is earmarked for improving access for voters with disabilities through polling place upgrades, training, and education. In FY2006, 11 counties were reimbursed \$171,669 to provide paved handicapped parking, parking signs, ramps, curb cuts, handrails and accessible entrances at polling places in 126 precincts. The SEC was reimbursed \$33,138 to produce an accessibility training video and provide doorstops for more than 2,000 polling places throughout the state. In FY2005, six counties were reimbursed \$25,982 for improvements in 16 precincts. \$311,250 of the grant remains. Figure 7.14 shows the number of precincts improved and monies reimbursed by county.

| <b>County</b> | <b>Precincts</b> | <b>Amount Reimbursed in FY2006</b> |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Barnwell      | 15               | \$6,676                            |
| Colleton      | 6                | \$14,380                           |
| McCormick     | 1                | \$3,063                            |
| Marlboro      | 2                | \$14,820                           |
| Newberry      | 3                | \$31,500                           |
| Oconee        | 1                | \$11,350                           |
| Saluda        | 2                | \$1,898                            |
| Sumter        | 24               | \$6,657                            |
| Union         | 3                | \$32,093                           |
| Williamsburg  | 8                | \$46,660                           |
| York          | 61               | \$2,573                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>126</b>       | <b>\$171,669</b>                   |

**Figure 7.14**

### **III. Statewide Voting System**

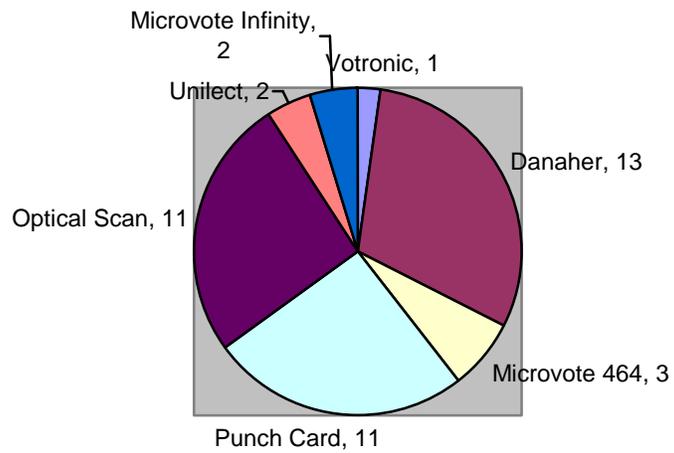
#### **Implementation**

The primary focus in 2006 was the execution of a voting system training plan and on-site support of the new voting system for various small municipal elections scheduled in many South Carolina counties.

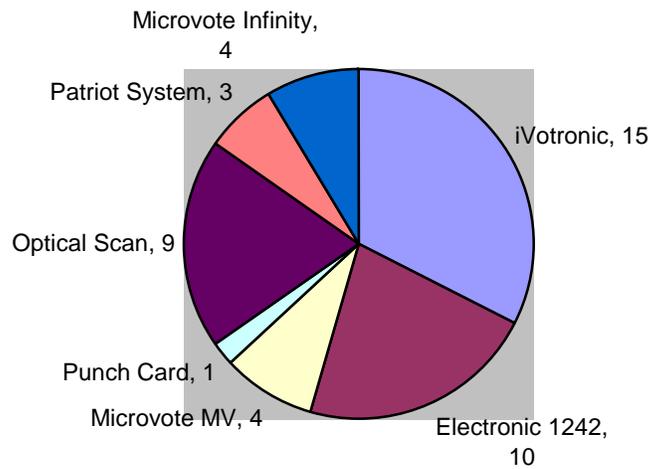
- Meetings were held with Clarendon, Williamsburg, and Cherokee Counties on election preparation and planning using the voting system.
- Three regional training classes covering voting system operations and security were conducted in June 2006. These classes were held in Newberry, Walterboro, and Florence so that customers would have a short travel time.
- Five hands-on training classes for counties were presented in Columbia and Florence on the machine setup, testing, security, and election results reporting aspects of the voting system.
- Various processes were reviewed and refined into 'best practices' as counties throughout the State gained experience with the new voting system.
- Planning and preparations have begun for the first statewide General Election, scheduled for November, 2006.

South Carolina's first statewide election using the new voting system was held on June 13, 2006 and a statewide run-off election was held on June 27, 2006. Both Elections were successful. Figure 7.15 shows the distribution of use of various voting systems over the years and the migration toward a uniform system.

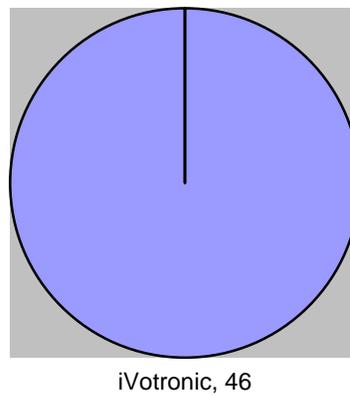
## Voting Systems - 2002



## Voting Systems - 2004



## Voting Systems - 2006



**Figure 7.15**

## **Database Definition and Ballot Layout**

Databases containing election specific information such as offices, candidate names, and districts on the ballot are created by SEC personnel with skills and training necessary to use the specialized software associated with the system. By providing this service to county and municipal election commissions at a minimal charge, they are able to significantly reduce election costs.

During this fiscal period:

- 93 election databases were created by SEC staff. All databases were delivered within 2 weeks prior to Election Day.
- 81 on-site visits to county offices and training sessions were conducted by SEC staff.

## **Ballot Review and Approval**

The SEC assists county election commissions by serving as a final reviewer for ballots. This review includes making sure ballots have correct spelling, appropriate ballot headings, and the proper listing of candidates, offices, and questions. The SEC strives for no later than a 48 hour turn-around time for approval.

For the 2006 Primary Election, the SEC reviewed 121 ballot styles. Of the 121 ballots styles reviewed, 32 were approved without any errors while 89 contained detectable errors. These errors were corrected, and the ballots styles were approved.

## **Voting System Certification**

Staff in the Voter Services Division continually examine and test voting equipment for certification in the State. Since the implementation of a statewide voting system, no upgrades or certifications have been sought.

## **IV. Administration of Help America Vote Act (HAVA)**

The HAVA State Plan Task Force met during FY2006 and updated the State Plan outlining how South Carolina has implemented and will maintain requirements of HAVA. The South Carolina State Plan provides a description of current election procedures, outlines how South Carolina has met the requirements mandated by HAVA, and outlines changes South Carolina has made since release of the initial State Plan to bring the State into compliance with HAVA. The State Plan was updated with FY2006 information prior to the deadline required by HAVA.

South Carolina is currently HAVA Compliant.

The major change to the 2005 State Plan is a revised budget due to the failure of the federal government to appropriate funds for the third and final year of HAVA implementation. Despite an estimated \$8 million shortfall, South Carolina is and will be in full compliance with HAVA as scheduled.

FY2006 HAVA Activities:

- Implementation and training associated with statewide voting system
- Approximately \$172,000 in HHS grants issued to county election commissions for accessibility upgrades to polling locations

- Training, workshops, and on-site meetings to relay election information to county election officials, voters, poll managers, and voters
- Management of HAVA funds following federal guidelines

## V. Agency Administration

### Agency Information Technology Support

The Agency conducted a cost-benefit analysis of providing agency computer network support in house or outsourcing the support. It was decided to be more beneficial to contract this support through the State CIO. Currently, the agency server is housed in a secure environment and maintained by the CIO.

### Accounts Payable

In FY2006, a total of 1,069 vouchers were processed. Of the vouchers processed, approximately 325 were for the Primaries and Primary Runoffs, approximately 70 were HAVA transactions, and the remainder was for expenses paid from general and other funds.

The SEC has experienced a high number of voucher corrections in the past. Procedures have been implemented in an effort to reduce the number of corrections to vouchers.

### South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS)

SCEIS is a new common accounting system being implemented for all South Carolina agencies. The SEC was advised by the Comptroller General's Office that the Agency's non-recurring cost for full implementation of the system is \$57,482. The projected implementation date for the Finance/Purchasing module for the Agency is July 2007. The SEC has set aside the funds required to implement this system. No recurring costs are anticipated.

### Supplement to County Election Commissions and Registration Boards

Full funding for the approximately 400 voter registration and election commission board members was not appropriated in FY2006. Each board member should receive a \$1,500 annual supplement with a \$12,500 cap for each county. In counties with more than eight board members, the cap prevents the members from receiving the full \$1,500 supplement. The SEC has requested Proviso 62.2 be amended to remove the cap and full funding for this budget priority be provided.

### Election Protest/Appeal Hearings

The commission is required by law to hear election appeals from the county level and any election protests for statewide, senate district and house district elections. In FY2006, the Commission convened in its capacity as the State Board of Canvassers to hear one appeal of a decision made by the Charleston County Election Commission. Figure 7.14 shows the specifics of the hearing and the decision of the Board.

| Protest/Appeal  | Decision   |
|---|--|
| <b>W. J. "Joey" Douan vs. Colleen Condon</b><br>(Appeal, August 22, 2005) | Upheld the decision of the Charleston County Election Commission sustaining the election |

Figure 7.16