



EAC Decision on Request for Interpretation 2010-06

(DRE Accessibility Requirements and Other Accessible Voting Stations)

Date:

June 18, 2010

Question(s):

Shall ballot marking devices be tested to the same accessibility standards of DRE machines under the guidelines found in Section 3 of the VVSG?

Section of Standards or Guidelines:

2005 VVSG, v1.0, Volume I, Section 3 - Usability and Accessibility Requirements

Background:

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA), Section 301 (a)(3)(B), requires the use of at least one direct recording electronic (DRE) voting system or other voting system equipped for individuals with disabilities at each polling place. HAVA requires that the voting process shall be accessible to individuals with disabilities in such a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation, including privacy and independence, as for other voters. The voting process includes access to the polling place, instructions on how to vote, initiating the voting session, making ballot selections, review of the ballot, final submission of the ballot, and getting help when needed.

As a result of the accessibility requirement, voting system vendors have developed ballot marking devices (BMD) to serve as accessible voting stations for individuals with disabilities. The BMD is used with an optical scan voting systems in a polling place in lieu of an accessible DRE system. These ballot marking devices provide an accessible user interface for optical scan ballots in order to meet the usability and accessibility requirements.

Conclusion:

Any voting system seeking certification as an Accessible Voting Station must be tested to and meet the accessibility requirements of the VVSG v1.0, Volume I, Section 3, Usability and Accessibility Requirements. These requirements apply equally to DREs and/or accessible voting stations, such as ballot marking devices, seeking such certification.

Effective Date:

For all systems without an approved test plan.