EAC Decision on Request for Interpretation 2008-08
2002 VSS Vol. I, Glossary
2005 VVSG Vol. I, Glossary

Date:
August 1, 2008

Question(s):

Should a component such as automatic bar code readers be considered part of a voting system and be tested as such?

Section of Standards or Guidelines:

VSS/VVSG Glossary
A Voting system is defined as: The total combination of mechanical, electromechanical or electronic equipment (including the software, firmware, and documentation required to program, control, and support the equipment) that is used to define ballots; to cast and count votes; to report or display election results; and to maintain and produce any audit trail information; and the practices and associated documentation used to identify system components and versions of such components; to test the system during its development and maintenance; to maintain records of system errors and defects; to determine specific system changes to be made to a system after the initial qualification of the system; and to make available any materials to the voter (such as notices, instructions, forms or paper ballots).

Background:

An automatic bar code reader (ABCR) has been claimed by the manufacturer as not covered under the definition of a voting system and therefore not subject to testing, including the accuracy test. The ABCR is described by the voting system manufacturer as: “…a device that audits and recounts the printout generated by the (DRE VVPAT) printer. The automatic bar code reader device interfaces with ABCR software installed on a PC to generate reports based upon the scanned barcodes from the (DRE VVPAT) printout.”
**Conclusion:**

An Automatic Bar Code Reader is considered part of voting system based on the definition of a voting system. Specifically, the Automatic Bar Code Reader “supports” the system and is used to produce audit trail information, therefore it must be included as part of the testing of a voting system.

**Effective Date:**

Immediately upon publication and distribution.