



EAC Decision on Request for Interpretation 2015-05 (Touchscreen Technology)

VVSG 1.0 Volume 1: 3.2.3.c Dexterity

VVSG 1.1 Volume 1: 3.3.4.d Enhanced input and control characteristics

Date:

December 11, 2015

Question:

Is it acceptable to use capacitive screen technology requiring human touch if assistive devices are provided to activate the screen?

Section of Guidelines:

VVSG 1.0 V1: 3.2.3.c

3.2.3.c Dexterity

The voting process shall be accessible to voters who lack fine motor control or use of their hands.

The accessible voting station controls shall not require direct bodily contact or for the body to be part of any electrical circuit.

Discussion: This requirement ensures that controls are operable by individuals using prosthetic devices

VVSG 1.1 V1: 3.3.4.d

3.3.4.d Enhanced input and control characteristics

These requirements specify the features of the Accessible Voting Station (Acc-VS) designed to assist voters who lack fine motor control or use of their hands.

The Acc-VS controls shall not require direct bodily contact or for the body to be part of any electrical circuit.

Discussion: This requirement ensures that controls are operable by individuals using prosthetic devices.

Discussion:

There are two forms of touchscreen technology: capacitive and resistive. Capacitive touchscreen displays rely on contact with a conductive object, such as human contact. Resistive touchscreen displays rely on pressure applied by any source. Legacy voting systems have mostly, if not entirely, used resistive touchscreen technology. Capacitive touchscreens are found on most consumer products and do not work without human body contact. Devices are now commercially available with built-in permanent tips to activate capacitive screens in place of human contact to accommodate all users with or without a disability. Such devices, a stylus for example, are commonly used with commercial tablets, cellular devices, and other technologies.

Conclusion:

Today's technology utilizes capacitive screens with tools to accommodate all users. In order to support all voters, manufacturers can incorporate the use of capacitive screens if they supply a stylus or other device with built-in permanent tips that activate capacitive screens. Such devices must be supplied alongside the voting equipment and all device specifications must be included in the Technical Data Package with enough information for the jurisdiction to order and use devices as needed. The EAC will review manufacturer materials to ensure enough information is provided to properly utilize given devices.

Applicability:

Effective upon final publication.