



Standards Board Newsletter

August 2015
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Executive Board of the Standards Board

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U.S. Election Assistance Commission

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Letter from the Chair

Why We Need Updated Voting System Standards

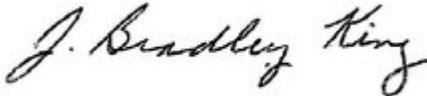
On Tuesday, December 13, 2005 (almost ten years ago), the U.S. Election Assistance Commission adopted the current Voluntary Voting System Guidelines. Since the adoption of the guidelines, technology has changed in ways we could not have possibly imagined. Just to illustrate how much, check out what has happened since December 13, 2005.

On that date:

- The Los Angeles Times printed an article titled “Proof that the Real Estate Bubble Hasn’t Burst”.
- iPhones did not exist (they were introduced in 2007).
- Amazon Kindle did not exist (it was also introduced in 2007)
- The personal DNA testing kit (now used for a wide variety of purposes, including medical diagnoses and genealogy) did not exist (it was introduced in 2008).
- New Horizons had not started its journey to Pluto. (It was launched in the next month, January 2006).

Any item produced using technology from 2005 is in need of a thorough overhaul today (assuming that replacement parts and software upgrades are even available). Although we have now made some incremental progress in updating the VVSG, we must continue this work by both a thorough review of the existing standards and by taking this opportunity for “out-of-the-box” thinking regarding the organization of the standards, as well as their content.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to our progress so far in updating the Standards. Please be willing and prepared to share your own thoughts and enthusiasm as we move forward.



Brad King, Chair

Standards Board Executive Board Meets August 20 Receives Information on New TGDC Working Groups

During its monthly conference call, the Executive Board received updates from Board members and our Designated Federal Officer (DFO).

Board members were advised that new TGDC public working groups will be established to assist with the TGDC’s work on the VVSG.

After the Executive Board’s conference call, Commissioner Matt Masterson, who serves as the DFO for the TGDC, provided the following information about these new TGDC public working groups:

“At the July, 20-21 TGDC meeting EAC and NIST introduced a new working structure for the VVSG development process. The new process will utilize public working groups to inform the development of the next version of the VVSG. Public working groups are something that NIST has successfully used in a variety of areas to help develop standards and receive broad based buy in from various communities as standards are being worked on as opposed to seeking that buy-in after the fact. The creation of the working groups was done as a direct response to feedback received from the EAC Standards Board as well as the National Association of State Election Directors which indicated that the prior VVSG development process was inefficient and did not allow input throughout the process instead soliciting comment from the Standards Board and non-TGDC members only after most of the work had been done. Additionally, the prior process did not take full advantage of the many election officials and other subject matter experts across the country who were willing to volunteer their time and offer their input during the development process. The public working groups address all of those concerns by encouraging all interested individuals to get involved from the beginning through a

Committee Reports

Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines (VVSG) Committee

Paul Lux, Chair of the Standards Board VVSG Committee, reported that the committee met by conference call on August 3. Paul noted that on this conference call, Bob Giles provided an excellent overview of the July TGDC meeting. Paul urged Standards Board members to watch the videos of the presentations found at <http://www.nist.gov/itl/vote/presenations-tgdc-meeting-july-20-21-2015.cfm>, and suggested that members make a particular effort to view the presentations by Mary Brady, Manager of the Voting Program at NIST.

Paul indicated that individual VVSG Committee members had begun work on several topics (or were preparing to do so), including Usability and Accessibility Issues (Nikki Baines Charlson, State MD and Robert Dezmelyk, Local NH); Verification and Software Independence; and Security (Lance Gough, Local IL and A.J. Starling, Local TN). Paul also advised that there was extensive discussion by VVSG Committee members concerning the EAC's Development Goals for VVSG, and that he was preparing a draft letter to the TGDC from the VVSG Committee regarding those goals.

The next conference call meeting of the Standards Board VVSG Committee will be conducted October 19, 2015.

Committee members:

- Paul Lux (FL), Local, Chair
- Nikki Baines Charlson (MD), State
- Robert Dezmelyk (NH), Local
- Lance Gough (IL), Local
- Keith Ingram (TX), State
- Brandon Johnson (SD), State
- Marian Schneider (PA), State
- A.J. Starling (TN), Local
- Reynaldo Valenzuela Jr. (AZ), Local

EAC August 12-13 Data Summit; Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS): Creation of Standards Board EAVS Committee

Chairwoman Christy McCormick reported that the EAC's "Data Summit – How Good Data Can Help Elections Run Better" held earlier this month at American University had gone very well, and suggested that members view videos of this event, particularly the individual "Summit Talks" at http://www.eac.gov/eac_election_data_summit_%e2%80%94_how_good_data_can_help_elections_run_better/.

She noted there was widespread agreement that EAVS needs to be easier to complete, and that having the survey be "self-populating" would be a distinct improvement over the use of Excel spreadsheets to compile data.

Chairwoman McCormick emphasized that no changes were being considered for the post-2016 survey, but that the development of future surveys would provide an opportunity for input by state and local election administrators. Executive Board members discussed the particular need for feedback from officials from smaller jurisdictions, who may have less access to the technical resources and assistance available to larger jurisdictions.

She concluded by noting that the Standards Board could provide valuable input to the EAC regarding the future of EAVS. Members considered the possibility of creating a "Standards Board EAVS Committee" to provide an avenue for feedback regarding the survey to reach the EAC from all Standards Board members, from both large and small jurisdictions. The Executive Board will take up this question at its September 17 meeting.

If you have feedback for the Executive Board regarding the Standards Board EAVS Committee and particularly if you would be interested in serving on such a committee, please contact any member of the Executive Board before September 17.

Coming Soon to Your Monitor or Laptop: EAC Website being Upgraded

Thanks to several Standards Board members who responded to a special invitation from the EAC to provide important “early” feedback for the development of a project plan for improvements to the EAC website.

The EAC has begun working to both improve its existing website and eventually implement a new website. EAC staff is working with its contractor (Americaneagle) to review reports and recommendations for short term website improvements and to explore additional analytical tools to install on the site to give better insight into what works and what can be changed.

Some of the specific improvements to the current website under discussion concern accessibility and Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act, which requires federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities; a Search/Tagging and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Audit; Google Analytics Optimization and Custom Dashboard; Conversion Points and Tracking; Heat Mapping & Travel Mapping; and “Responsive Sites” for the current website. EAC staff has also discussed “Mobile Optimization” for its new website.

The EAC continues to seek your suggestions regarding the website, and has posted an additional feedback page to specifically allow for Standards Board and Board of Advisors members and other election officials to share their recommendations.

Based on feedback from you and from EAC staff, and data from Google Analytics on website user traffic, the EAC will update its initial draft project development document to take the next steps towards making the wealth of information on the EAC website more accessible to everyone.

Message from the Board of Advisors; Committees Appointed:

Please see the following message from Linda H. Lamone, Chair of the Board of Advisors:

Like the Standards Board, the Board of Advisors has several committees that are delineated either by the Help America Vote Act or the Board's Bylaws. The current membership is listed below. Please contact the chair of a respective committee if you would like to serve or provide input to the committee.

Resolution Committee

- Neal Kelley, Chair (Neal.Kelley@rov.ocgov.com)
- Barbara Bartoletti
- Gregory Moore
- Patricia Timmons-Goodson
- Michael Winn

Voting System Standards Committee

- Chris Thomas, Chair (ChristopherT@michigan.gov)
- Matt Boehmer
- Jim Dickson
- Marc Guthrie
- Neal Kelley
- Tim Mattice
- Wendy Noren
- Tom Schedler
- Michael Winn

Parliamentarian

- Michael Yaki

Bylaws Committee

- Sarah Ball Johnson, Chair (sbJohnson@springsgov.com)
- Denise Merrill
- Richard Pilger
- Michael Yaki

Proxy Committee

- Wendy Noren, Chair (wnoren@boonecountymo.org)
- David Blount
- Jan Kralovec

Technical Guidelines Development Committee

- Linda Lamone
- Helen Purcell

In addition, I have created two more committees to look at two issues highlighted in the transition report that was submitted to the Election Assistance Commission. The committee chairs would welcome your input and I know Shane would also welcome additional members for his EAC Clearinghouse Committee.

EAC Clearinghouse Committee

- Shane Schoeller, Chair (sschoeller@greencountymo.org)
- Chris Thomas

State Voter Registration Systems Committee

- Kathyrne Harper, Chair (Howard.County@sos.mo.gov)
- Matt McCullough
- Wendy Noren
- Barbara Simons

“The World is Run by Those Who Show Up!”

No one knows who first voiced this piece of wisdom in about 1980, but it remains true today.

Your next chance to help run the world is to consider serving on the Standards Board’s EAC Clearinghouse Committee.

At our Williamsburg meeting, we shared valuable ideas for improving the work and the focus of the Clearinghouse. The Standards Board has stepped up this opportunity to provide its input regarding the role that the Clearinghouse plays in carrying out the responsibilities and goals of the EAC by creating the Clearinghouse Committee.

If you have an interest in the work of the Clearinghouse and can commit some of your time and energy to serve as a Clearinghouse Committee member, please send an email to the Designated Federal Officer for the Standards Board at CMcCormick@eac.gov or any member of the Executive Board.

We would be glad to hear from you, particularly before our next scheduled Executive Board meeting on September 17. Your service on this (and any other Standards Board) committee will certainly be appreciated.

Next Standards Board Meeting Date: Tentatively April 15, 2016

In its most recent conference call, the Executive Board decided to tentatively set the date for the next meeting of the full membership of the Standards Board on April 15, 2016. The Board noted that the time needed for the TGDC to make progress in its work, and federal policies requiring a 90 day advance notice for the meeting, made the previously discussed dates of October 2015 or January 2016 either impractical or impossible.

The Board also discussed the difficulties faced by members in states who are conducting presidential primaries, during the weeks immediately before or after that date. Almost all of these states are in the Northeastern U.S., but also include Indiana and Wisconsin. As one method for reducing the hardship on those members, the Board has asked EAC staff to research the possibility of conducting the meeting in a Northeastern city to reduce travel time for members from that region.

However, the Board recognizes that the unpredictable nature of the 2016 presidential election year may make it impossible for some members to travel at all during the lengthy primary season. We will continue to gather information and will keep you informed as we know more.

Announcements

Executive Board Conference Call

- Thursday, September 17, 2015, 3 p.m. EDT

Standards Board VVSG Committee Conference Call

- Monday, October 19, 2015

Technical Guidelines Development Committee Meeting

- Tentatively set for December 2015

Standards Board Meeting

- Tentatively set for Friday, April 15, 2016, location TBD

Thanks to Amy Miller from the Indiana Secretary of State's office for her assistance with the production of this newsletter.