



**The International Association of Clerks,
Recorders, Election Officials and
Treasurers(IACREOT)**

**TASK FORCE REPORT FOR THE
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION
ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

September 4, 2013 Philadelphia, PA

WHO WE ARE

The International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers(IACREOT) was founded in 1971 by a group of government officials who wanted a professional organization which would provide a forum for the free exchange of information, resulting in improved standards for serving the public, and an organization which would speak with a unified voice on matters of importance to its members. Over the past 41 years, IACREOT has grown in both membership and purpose. Professionalism in public service, openness and good fellowship became goals of our organization. Today, IACREOT is one the most successful, well-respected organizations in the United States, with over 1500 active members, representing local, state, provincial, national and international associations and agencies.

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THE TASK FORCE MISSION

IACREOT President Joanne Rajoppi appointed an IACREOT TASK FORCE to gather responses and produce a report for the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.

The Task Force included the following members: John Carbone, Esq., Chair (New Jersey); Robert Balink (CO); Kelly Bateman (IL); Rich Chrismer (MO); Dana DeBeauvoir (Tx); Rob Hammons (AR); Sharon Harrington (FL); Mike Kem (KY); Mary Melfi (NJ); Noah Praetz (IL); Jamie Shew (KS); Linda von Nessi (NJ); and Michael Winn (TX).

IACREOT wishes to extend its thanks to the following members who assisted the Task Force on its report: Mary Jane Arrington, Osceola ,Florida; Rich Chrismer, St Charles, MO; Christa Coffey , Tippecanoe County, IN; Elaine Flynn, Middlesex County, NJ; Bruce Clark Kankakee County, Illinois; Mary DePelteau ,Calvert County MD; Gilda Gill and Paul Reed ,Salem County, NJ; Lynn Ledford, Gwinett County, GA; Bill Cowles, Orange County, Florida; Karen Wainscott, Cedar County, MO; Carol Lawler and Carol Gurney, Medina County, OH; Dana DeBeauvoir, Travis County TX; Stan Whitehurst, Webster County MO; Pat M Gardner, Pacific County WA; and, Glenda Mott, Laclede County MO

IACREOT's Thoughts and Concerns on Implementation of Recommendations and New Procedures

- Always remember that election officials are umpires and not players in the political process

- The art of successful election administration is preserving order amid change and preserving change amid order.

- An election is a process and not just a singular event on one day

- There should be no do-overs, such that and failure or faltering in implementation in an election which affects the confidence of the electorate and the democratic process

- All measures must main the current bi-partisan political control and oversight for confidence and engagement

- Neither confuse lack of failure with success nor confuse lack of identified problems with an efficient system

- Seek no or low cost solutions first – we know there will be little money for great plans

- Avoid the need for statutory or regulatory change or enactment of solutions – delays implementation

- Ensure that any recommendation can be replicated everywhere
- Ensure that any recommendation can be changed, updated and tweaked
- Ensure that any recommendation can be modified for local laws or limitations
- Ensure that any recommendation continues and accurate and secure result
- Ensure that any recommendation will be efficient and reliable
- Ensure that any recommendation and is scalable in its use and implementation
- Ensure that any recommendation can generate and engender the greatest access for voting, turnout, yet avoids issues of security and tampering resulting in voter dilution
- Ensure that any recommendation can maintains a transparency and building of confidence in the voters
- Ensure that any recommendation be implemented in a transparent public process and allows the witnessing of the public to gain and maintian confidence and acceptance

- Simple is better to start with and then engraft more – eases fear of change with voters and issues of retraining the election workers

- Ensure that any recommendation we don't ignore that which works, but rather restructure, reinvent, retrench, remake, reduce, replace, restrict, reform, rewind, retain

- Ensure during planning design and implementation you have repeatedly consulted, communicated with, and sought the cooperation of the stakeholders, officials, voters, and political organizations.

IACREOT MEMBERSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

Polling Places:

- Concerns over polling place located in school
 - Student safety, parking, and building access
 - Preference is if a school is used, there should be no classes or students.
- Need for universal, standardized and better signage for polling place locations and in multiple languages, both exterior and interior
- Crowd control and polling place access (e.g. campaign workers, advocates, cake sales and other events at schools, churches and community centers)
- Polling places buried inside of buildings requiring signs and arrows
- Use of dedicated greeters at entrance areas for directions, questions, and expediting
- Polling place locations and delays/availability-online interactive website to learn where to vote with linked directions and maps; website updates on delays and availability of quick access and no delayed voting;
- Twitter and texting of real time polling location waiting times-voters signs up; make available to the political parties, candidates, campaigns, advocates, and news media

Electronic and Interactive Poll/Registration Books:

- Use of Electronic Poll Books (ELP) at vote centers and polling places
- Use of ELP with wireless access
- Use of ELP locally with access/use in that polling district and voter look up access for other districts
- Use of linked ELP to prevent multiple voting
- Use of ELP to allow voters to vote at any polling place or vote center

- Use of ELP while voters are in line to verify and update information to be up loaded post-election
- Use of ELP easier and more efficient up-load of voting history and up-dates post-election

Vote Centers:

- Vote centers and satellite absentee/early voting laws and process
- Vote centers and ELP means there is no wrong place to vote: vote anywhere
- Early voting at “Super Centers”, such as sporting arenas and convention venues: ease of access, parking, location, and security.

Technology:

- Use GIS for voter polling place locations and printable on line directions
- GPS tracking of voting equipment delivery, elections day and return
- Voting with phone apps, scan to voting machine
- With the leap frogging and exponential change in technology and systems be wary of marrying a vendor or a system-dating is better.

Electronic Voter Registration Data Bases:

- On line voter registration and links from other governmental agencies with verification and security
- On line registration and face-to-face verification before voting
- Regionally or nationally electronically linked voter registration database to update, transfer, avoid duplicate voting and secure registration process
- Concern and with lack of new voting technology beyond aging DRE machines, OTS hardware and software, proprietary and non-open source ware, systems that do not communicate with others, technology platforms which become outdate, unsupported or vendor ceases doing business

All Mail Elections:

- All mail elections in one state has increased voter turnout, eased administration and simplified conduct of elections
- Commensurate savings of costs with no need for polling places, machines, and workers
- Problems with USPS and their handling of mail and distribution centers

Identified Submissions and Statements from IACREOT Election Officials

I. Dana DeBeauvoir, Travis County TX:

1. Pre-Voted Ballots to Scan in at Polls – “Pre-Voted Ballots-Scan, Don’t Re-enter your Candidates (attached)
2. Smart Phone Voting (attached)
3. Vote Centers – How to Make Them Politically East and Cost-Neutral (attached)

II. Rich Chrismer, St Charles, MO:

1. Perfect Polling Place Design and Layout
 - a. Direct and Corral voters into designated areas
 - b. Ensure Voter privacy and non-interference from other voters, workers, and common polling places
 - c. Ensure proper flow of voter through process and out of polling place
 - d. Break down voter registry books in various alphabetical considerations based on polling district size
 - e. Greeter designated and stationed at poll entrance
 - f. Three sample layouts (attached)

III. Robert Balink, El Paso County, CO

1. Mail-in Ballot Elections
 - a. Counting and Tabulation Flow Chart
 - b. Analysis of Cost Savings
 - c. Mail in Ballot Benefits and Advantage
2. Function and Benefits of Greeters at Polling Places

3. DRE Count of Paper Ballots vs. Hand Count of Ballots-Where is the Accuracy?:
 - a. November 2007 General Election - verification and confirmation of results for all candidates in randomly selected election districts
 - b. Double Re-count of Districts by Machines resulted in same results
 - c. Hand Count of Districts by three differing counting methods
 - d. Results (attached)
 - e. Conclusions:
 - i. Hand Counts appear to be less not more accurate
 - ii. DRE machines may misread, fail to read, or reject ballots which are not “conforming” in markings, visual distinction, or alignment yet remained more accurate
 - iii. Hand Count is more subjective e.g. visually examining voter intent and markings
 - iv. In more than 74% of the hand counted election districts, the hand count produced a differing result than the machine count, yet the machine count was more reliable.

IV. Kelly Batemen, Chicago Board of Elections, Cook County Illinois

1. The number, location, management, operation and design of polling places

This was an issue. The budget departments of the Board’s funding agencies encouraged reducing precincts. Based on historic data for overall turnout, minus anticipated participation in Early and Absentee Voting, we strived to provide one precinct per projected 400 Election Day voters. Because of the dual impact of re-districting, this did tax our system during the morning hours. Even so, there were no reports of voters waiting more than 45 minutes to an hour to be processed and vote, and even those cases were relatively rare.

2. The training, recruitment and number of poll workers;

This was not a major issue. By law, the Board utilizes Republican and Democratic committeemen/committeewomen appointees, but augments those appointees with over-the-counter applicants and high-school and college judges. We did not experience a shortage of election judges. However, in hindsight, one area where there could have been more focus in training was in re-districting and the impact on voters' polling places.

3. Voting accessibility for uniformed and overseas voters

This was not an issue. With financial support through a grant from the FVAP, the Chicago Election Board offered a system for UOCAVA voters to access and mark their ballots online, then print those voted ballots and return them to the Board with support documents. The Board had success and absolutely no problems in this area.

4. The efficient management of voter rolls and poll books

This was an issue. The paper poll books did not give poll workers the ability to direct the voters who were in the wrong polling places. Instead, the judges in a given precinct only had a list of people who were in the poll book in that precinct. For this and other reasons, the Board of Elections is looking to adopt electronic poll books. Given how the Election Code is growing increasingly complex, the electronic poll books also would help judges provide consistent instructions to voters when there are questions about those voters' registrations or when they might need to cast a provisional ballot. The electronic poll books also would afford a real-time connectivity so that the Board could monitor for instances where precincts might need assistance or direction.

5. Voting machine capacity and technology;

This was not an issue. The equipment functioned properly. However, the Board is examining moving to a newer inventory of optical-scan ballot processors that would provide greater security and an audit trail of ballot-counting logic (by imaging the ballots at the time they are cast), and more reliability in the tabulation/transmission of results at the close of the polls.

6. Ballot simplicity and voter education;

This was not a major issue. The ballots in Chicago were long because of the judicial retention system in Illinois. In Chicago, most ballots had six dozen or more judicial-retention contests – in addition to the contests for elective office and referenda. However, Chicago had none of the expansive referenda questions that caused super-long ballots like those that reportedly contributed to delays elsewhere in the United States.

7. Voting accessibility for individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency and other special needs;

This was not an issue. The Election Board has worked closely with community groups devoted to assisting voters of different abilities, and there is strong familiarity with the balloting equipment the Board acquired through HAVA.

8. Management of issuing and processing provisional ballots in the polling place on Election Day;

This was an issue, but could have been worse. In 2012, the City of Chicago was required to re-district all of its wards (the primary political and voting subdivision), and, by extension, all of its voting precincts. This process coincides with a presidential election only once every 20 years. When it happens, it contributes to voters going to the wrong polling places. As noted earlier (see Item 4 above), the paper poll books provided poll workers with information *only* for the voters in that precinct. The Chicago Election Board took steps to mitigate this problem through: a mailing to all voter households; public announcements with the news media; a multi-lingual web platform for finding your polling place; and a text-message system to identify your polling place based on your address. As a result, overall voter turnout of voters in the correct precincts was higher in 2012 than it was in 2008. However, we feel we can and will do more to reduce provisional balloting in the future.

9. The administration of absentee ballot programs;

This was not an issue. This was the first Presidential Election in Illinois with “no-excuse” absentee voting, and there were no significant problems with absentee ballots under this new regimen. Additionally, next year,

Illinois will be offering voters the ability to request absentee ballots online. The Chicago Election Board similarly does not expect problems with delivering and receiving absentee ballots with that new option.

10. The adequacy of contingency plans for natural disasters and other emergencies that may disrupt elections.

This was not an issue. Although the Chicago Election Board is prepared to contend with a natural disaster or other emergency, this was not an issue as it was in the states impacted by Super-Storm Sandy.

11. Initiatives:

- a. Poll Books vs Electronic Poll Books - The Chicago Election Board currently is seeking to implement a combination of electronic poll books and a newer generation of ballot scanners.
- b. Recruitment and Training of Poll Workers - The Chicago Election Board leads the nation in engaging young people as poll workers with as many as 4,000 high school and college students serving as election judges or equipment technicians. Chicago has had virtually no vacancies in poll worker ranks for the last seven years. This project has involved partnerships with a private organization, Mikva Challenge, as well as the public and parochial schools to coordinate the recruitment and training of students to serve.
- c. On-Line Ballot to Mark and Print - The Board began providing an on-line ballot-marking system to help UOCAVA voters. The UOCAVA voters then could print out and mail in their voted ballots. UOCAVA turnout, in terms of returned ballots, met or exceeded the participation rates for locally registered voters.
- d. GPS Equipment Tracking - The Board implemented GPS tracking of equipment carriers to ensure accurate deliveries.
- e. Transparent and On-line Election Day Questions and Complaints - The Board implemented a database to log all Election Day calls related to questions and complaints raised by voters, poll workers, campaigns and poll.
- f. “Super Center” (Sporting and Convention Venues) Voting Centers - The Board also wants to look to implement the use of a

“Super Center” such as a sporting or convention facility for the final days of Early Voting, when participation always peaks and the 51 Early Voting sites operate beyond capacity. During the final days of Early Voting, it is common for a dozen sites to remain open for three to four hours after the scheduled closing time to process every voter who was in line at closing time.

V. Mary Melfi, Hunterdon County, NJ and John M. Carbone, Esq. Ridgewood, NJ, IACREOT Task Force Chairman.

New Jersey’s 2012 General Election Response to Hurricane Sandy

1. Disasters and Planning (attached)
2. Summary of issues and governmental actions (attached)
3. Executive Orders for Implementation (attached)
4. Fairleigh Dickenson Mind Pole Survey “ Assessing the Effects of Sandy on the Election: the Dog that Didn’t Bark” November 21, 2012 (attached)

VI. Noah Praetz, Cook County Clerk, IL

1. Managing Lines
2. Measuring Lines
3. Planning for Lines
4. Early Voting and mail voting
5. Registrations
6. Election “ERIC”
7. Accessibility
8. Ballot design
9. Poll workers