

Colorado Election Model: Challenges and Unintended Consequences

June 5, 2014

Recent Projects

Over the past four years, Colorado has been involved in the following projects:

Implemented	Implementing
Online Ballot Delivery	Risk-Limiting Audit (testing at Arapahoe County)
Ballot on Demand	Electronic Pollbook (developing in house)
Election Night Reporting	Uniform Voting System (awaiting SOS recommendation)

Colorado Voting System Certification

Colorado voting system certification in a nutshell...

1. In 2007, CO re-tested voting systems from four vendors: ES&S, Hart, Premier (formerly Diebold), and Sequoia
2. Statutes and Rules that govern CO voting system certification: C.R.S 1-5-601.5, 1-5-608.5, 1-5-615, 1-5-616, and Rule 21.
3. CO is not required to use EAC-certified equipment
4. The baseline standard is the 2002 Voting System Standards (VSS)
5. Vendor must pay for testing
6. CO may use federal standards promulgated after January 1, 2008 as long as they meet or exceed the 2002 VSS
7. CO may consider either procedures used or adopted by county clerk and recorders or best practices recommended by equipment vendors
8. CO may request a federally accredited laboratory to undertake the testing of a voting system or may use and rely upon the testing of a voting system already performed by another state or a federally accredited laboratory upon satisfaction of several conditions outlined in C.R.S. 1-5-608.5

Certification

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

- Rule revisions
- Resolving ambiguous requirements
- Serving as a mediator in the testing process
- Playing hot potato with testing systems

Ballot on Demand

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

- Rushed roll-out
- SOS staff turnover
- County training
- Under Colorado's new election model, counties that initially resisted implementing BOD now see its utility

Election Night Reporting Challenges and Unintended Consequences

- Compiling data from 4 different voting systems into single interface
- County training

Risk-Limiting Audit

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

- Colorado received funding from an EAC grant
- County participation
- Lack of testing
- Budget
- Time constraints
- Available technology

Electronic Pollbook

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

- 2013 RFP resulted in “no award” decision – no existing market solution.
- In-house development of web services application to simplify user interface and achieve real-time communication with SCORE.
- Phase 1 of development will be completed and implemented for 2014 General Election.

Uniform Voting System

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

Uniform Voting System

- Uniform Voting System Advisory Committee Recommendation:
 - Catalog of services for entire system
 - Depending on funding, propose a voluntary phase-in pilot in 2015, followed by statewide roll out in 2017.
 - Survey of counties revealed that 75% of counties want or need ongoing end-to-end technical support
 - Less than 10 counties have reserved funds for upgrades or new system, about half of these are ready to buy now
 - Needed to go through a full year before counties would know what they need under 1303 before we made a decision.
 - Public UVS Advisory Committee's recommendation was nearly the same
- The Colorado Voter Access and Modernization of Elections Commission (COVAMEC) was created by HB 1303, and may play a part in getting legislation and funding to implement UVS

House Bill 1303-What it Says

In 2013, the Colorado Legislature passed House Bill 1303, which changed the way Colorado votes. Some of the highlights of this bill include:

- Eligibility requirements: Electors must affirm they reside in Colorado for 22 days immediately prior to the election, and at their current residence in the precinct on Election Day
- Same day registration: Eligible applicants can register to vote, and existing electors registered anywhere in the state can change their addresses or otherwise update their registration records, up until 7:00PM on Election Day
- NCOA list maintenance: Counties must scrub their registration lists against NCOA data provided by SOS on monthly basis
- Mail ballot model: Active electors are automatically issued a mail ballot 22-18 days before the election. Electors retain the right to surrender their mail ballots and vote in-person at Voter Service and Polling Centers.
- Vote centers: Depending on the election, Voter Service and Polling Centers (VSPCs) must be open 8-15 days before Election Day, and must provide the following services:
 - Voter registration and updates
 - Issuance of original or replacement mail ballots of the proper style to any county elector
 - Issuance of in-person ballots of the proper style to any county elector

House Bill 1303-What it Means

- Same day registration: Registration data from 2013 Coordinated Election did not indicate a partisan advantage resulting from same day registration.
- Electronic pollbook: Voter registrations are 100% portable between counties. There is no minimum residency period within a particular county or precinct, or other voter registration deadline. Voter registration records are now dynamic, not static. This requires pollbook solution to exchange data in real time with statewide voter registration database (SCORE). Real-time access to statewide database also provides:
 - Driver's license and state ID verification via data exchange with Department of Revenue
 - Felon check with data provided by Department of Corrections
 - Death records check with data provided Department of Public Health and Environment
- Mail ballot/vote center model: Implements uniform model on statewide basis.
 - Under prior law and depending on the election, counties could choose to conduct mail ballot, vote center or polling place elections.
 - Now, voters can vote by mail ballot or go to any VSPC in the county to register, update their records and receive a replacement mail or in-person ballot.
 - Elimination of precinct polling places substantially reduces the amount of voting equipment required by most counties.
 - Mail ballot model increases the need for robust central count solutions.

Questions?

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Voting Systems Website:

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/VotingSystems/VSHomePage1.html>