

Designing and Conducting an Audit of an Election Anomaly



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Anatomy of an Anomaly Investigation

- **When:** 2012 General Election in an Indiana county using a DRE voting system
- **What:** Under-reporting of 3,791 walk-in absentee votes
- **Who:** By Election Officials in January 2014
- **Why:** Vendor provided a report citing “human procedural error by [vendor] technician during the transfer of vote totals from voting system to EMS .

Initiating the Investigation

- Indiana SOS requested investigation by VSTOP
- Determine the root cause of the system behavior that resulted in the anomaly.
- Did the report submitted by Vendor accurately represent the events that led to the incomplete reporting of votes?
- Was there evidence of any physical or digital tampering with the voting system?

Reporting requirements

- Did the SOPs and/or guidelines adequately describe the necessary steps required to process votes
- Were the SOPs correctly executed?
- Recommend processes and procedures to mitigate this problem and avoid its recurrence.

Conducting the Investigation

1. Sequester implicated equipment
2. Assemble Investigatory Team
 - a. VSTOP Team
 - b. External Consultant
 - c. Testing Lab Technical Expert
3. Review and Inspect Vendor and county Operating Manuals and SOPs

Investigation at Site

- Detailed interviews with County Election Officials and Vendor Representative
- Examination of the audit logs of the system
- Review of logs for evidence of any fraudulent activity.

Replication of Anomaly

- Autovote software
- Replicate steps taken by the vendor technician and verify similar results
- Follow vendor recommended steps and verify correct results

Results

- Confirmed system limitation that triggered the error
- Verified Explanation Provided by Vendor
- Found no evidence of fraudulent activity
- Found Vendor documentation did not specify proper procedures

Recommendations

- Revise Operating Manuals and SOPs
- Enhance training of Vendor Personnel
- Enhance training of Election personnel
- Require Reconciliation of vote totals on Election Night (Part of Indiana Election Code as of July 1, 2014)

Questions?