

Blue Suede News

Update on ELECTION Voter Information System June 2005

Conversion jump starts "kickoff"

Wednesday, April 13, 2005, 15 pilot counties, secretary of state staff and Election Systems and Software (ES&S) convened a conversion kickoff meeting in Topeka at the State Capitol. Fifty people attended the meeting to kick off the project.

ES&S provided demonstrations of the current software that will be installed in Kansas by January 1, 2006. The demo helped inform the pilot counties about features and functions of the new system.

Some of the topics discussed included voter registration, election management, advance voting, petition verification and election worker management.

Robert Lloyd, conversion department manager for ES&S, discussed the process the pilot counties, and eventually all counties, will undergo to convert all existing election data into ELVIS. ES&S has experience in successfully converting elections data in county and statewide environments. Data conversion activities have begun and will continue until all 105 counties are live on ELVIS.

The time frame for implementation is extremely tight and critical to ELVIS being successful for Kansas. The deadline is January 1, 2006, and we are on target to meet the deadline. We look forward to the successful implementation of this system.

Counties rockin' to ELVIS

The pilot counties recently participated in requirements-gathering sessions with key ES&S staff. All 15 pilot counties were able to carve time out of their busy schedules to participate in this critical session that will ensure HAVA compliance in 2006. Through their hard work, the pilot group made every attempt to address the unique needs of their county and counties similar to theirs. The group focused on updating correspondence and poll books, and clarifying state law requirements.

Notice of Disposition: A standard set of data elements was identified by the pilot group for the Notice of Disposition (ID Card in the ELVIS application). A listing of required data and optional data was identified for inclusion on the card. ES&S is finalizing the data layout on the card and the SOS office will be reviewing it with the Postal Service in June. Each county will be able to customize the standard card stock size with county-specific information on the back with items such as the county

Continued on page 2

IN THE SPOT LIGHT

Conversion kickoff	Page 1	Featured staff	Page 3
Counties rockin'	Page 1	Techology requirements	Page 4
Questions & answers	Page 3	Calendar of events	Page 4

seal, county web site, etc. This Notice of Disposition adheres to the postcard size and the corresponding postal rate.

Confirmation Notice: The Confirmation Notice has been designed after the standard prescribed by the State and in use by many Kansas counties today. The pilot group identified both required and optional information here as well. The Notice of Confirmation Card will have two parts to it. The first part of the notice is sent to the registrant requesting an update, and the second part is sent back to the county, confirming the voter's address.

Notice of Appointment: The pilot group defined a standard format for the Notice of Appointment letter and incorporated a section where user-defined text may be incorporated for each county. The registrant's assigned precinct will be printed on the Notice of Appointment.

Election Worker Recruitment Notice: The pilot group opted to model this notice after Sedgwick County's card stock, and ES&S is in the process of customizing this to meet the requirements defined by the group.

Poll Books (Rosters): The pilot group worked long and hard to come up with a required set of information for ES&S to incorporate on the poll book for Kansas. Optional data was identified as well, and ES&S is in the process of designing the poll book to incorporate as many of these items as possible. The poll book indicates which registrants are advance voters. Special consideration was given to printing information on the poll book upside down so that both the poll worker and the voter can read the information easily.

State Law: The SOS staff held independent sessions with ES&S to identify and clarify the Kansas state law requirements. One requirement of particular note was that registrants moving into a county for the first time are required to show ID.

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The pilot counties representing you are listed below in the two groups in which they will be implemented. A big round of thanks to these 15 counties for their hard work on behalf of the state of Kansas!

Pilot Group One

Ellis
Lyon
Riley
Saline
Sherman
Stanton
Wyandotte
Sedgwick

Pilot Group Two

Barton
Clay
Cloud
Crawford
Johnson
Miami
Shawnee

Questions & Answers!

*Editor's note: Each month we will be using this section for the most frequently asked questions and answers regarding ELVIS.

Q. Will the secretary of state's office purchase new computers for counties as part of the ELVIS implementation?

A. No. It will be the responsibility of each county to have the minimum computer specifications in place prior to going live on ELVIS.

Q. Will the secretary of state's office purchasing new scanners for counties as part of the ELVIS implementation?

A. No. Scanners are optional for those counties who wish to use the technology of scanning documents. The purchase will be the responsibility of each county.

Q. What is the monthly cost for counties to access ELVIS?

A. There will be no cost to counties to access ELVIS until January 1, 2007. At that point, counties will be responsible for paying maintenance and support costs. The secretary of state's office continues to work to get the best price possible and will communicate that cost once it has been established.

Q. Where will training take place for ELVIS?

A. The secretary of state's office is working with ES&S to identify regional training facilities to reduce travel expenses for counties. Currently, the number and location have not been established.

Featured staff: Brad Bryant

Brad Bryant has been a member of the secretary of state's office since 1987. He started working on a state census project in 1987 and in 1993, took over as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Elections and Legislative Matters. Brad enjoys his job. He likes the fact his background is well suited for his current position. He has a master's degree in political science from the University of Kansas.

Brad has been recognized as a leader in elections. Brad has been elected as the treasurer for the National Association of State Elections Directors. Because of the way the organization is structured, he will move up to serve as president of that association in a couple of years.

Brad is originally from Concordia, Kansas. He is married to Nancy Bryant, who serves as the Chief of Staff for the secretary of state's office. Together, they have four children, Jason, Nikki, Matt and Stephanie. When he is not at the office, Brad enjoys watching and playing sports and playing and listening to music. Some of his favorite teams include the Kansas City Chiefs, Royals and all KU sports teams.

Brad has a quick piece of advice about the ELVIS project. "ELVIS is a big project. There is no easy way to get it done, but it will work best if we all do what we have to do in a timely manner. It all has to be done eventually."

Technology requirements for using ELVIS

There are three components to ensure good performance when you use the ELVIS system. Two of these will be provided by the state: a secure, high-speed network connection and a central system with good performance. The third component is controlled by the county: your workstation.

Minimum workstation requirements for ELVIS:

Recommended Desktop: Pentium 4 Workstation with a speed of 2.0GHz and a 40GB drive.

Operating System Software: Windows

2000, Windows XP with Service Pack 2.

Monitor: Color PC Monitor with 1024 x 768 with 256-color capability (almost all monitors already have this).

Memory: 256 megabytes of system RAM.

Browser: Internet Explorer Version 5.5 with Service Pack 2 or higher.

Virus Protection Software Recommendation: Symantec Corporate Norton Antivirus.

For best performance we recommend using the Windows XP operating system whenever possible and 512 megabytes of system RAM.

UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS 2005

June 13-17

Sanborn Institute for County Clerk Certification

December 2005

Midwest Election Officials Conference in Kansas City