

# State of Wisconsin \ Elections Board

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Government Accountability Board Members

**FROM:** Barbara A. Hansen  
SVRS Project Director

**DATE:** For December 10, 2007 Board Meeting

**SUBJECT:** Report on Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) Project



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This report describes the SVRS Team activities with the project focusing on this fall that includes topics regarding Application and Business Process Training, Communications, Data Quality, Deployment-Clerk Support, Help Desk, Accenture Application, HAVA Interfaces and Staffing.

- **Application and Business Process Training**

This fall, SVRS staff conducted several SVRS Initial Application Training classes in West Bend, Marinette, Wausau, Elkhorn, Madison and Ladysmith. Advanced training was also conducted in West Bend for new SVRS Self-Providers in Washington County.

The training team began a nine week SVRS Application Training series the week after Thanksgiving, which will conclude the week prior to the February 19, 2008 Spring Primary and Presidential Preference. Initial Application and Election Management training classes have been scheduled in several regions to accommodate new clerks and staff or provide a “refresher” to those who feel they need it. Advanced training classes – Election Management, Absentee Process and Reports, Labels & Mailings – have been scheduled statewide and have been well received by the clerks.

The SEB’s Web-Based Elections Training System (WBETS) continues to move forward. To accomplish our vision of SEB staff managing the WBETS site, the Training Officers, Help Desk Supervisor and several Elections Specialists took a week long training class with instructors from the University of Wisconsin-Extension to learn “Captivate,” the primary software used to capture application screens and animations. Participants were trained in the overall process of training module development, their roles and responsibilities in providing content to the UW-Extension and managing users and content in the WBETS site.

SVRS Specialists are surveying the clerks in their respective regions to determine their interest in Business Process Workshops for new clerks and staff or anyone interested in reviewing the voter registration process. One such workshop was held on December 7, 2007 in Grand Chute. Workshops will be scheduled to be held over the next several months and continue into spring.

- **Communications**

The Elections Board issued three monthly *Election Updates* to local election officials by e-mail and posted them to the SEB website at <http://elections.wi.gov>. A hard copy of the updates is sent to clerks who do not have e-mail. The monthly communication to the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance about the SVRS project also was sent at the beginning of each month.

The SEB Help Desk continued to distribute a weekly *Tip of the Week* giving clerk users valuable reminders about using SVRS.

Kevin Kennedy responded to a series of questions and concerns at a Milwaukee City Council Steering and Rules Committee meeting on November 29.

- **Data Quality**

Data quality continues to be monitored. The Data Quality staff has provided information to the SVRS staff working with clerks on data clean-up tasks. The SVRS Staff and clerks have made significant progress. For example, the number of voters with a default date of birth in SVRS declined from 204,091 on August 31, 2007, to 161,978 on December 7, 2007. In addition, staff has responded to 20 requests for data from SVRS in the past 3 months.

### ***SVRS Statistics at a Glance***

For the last 4 statewide elections using SVRS, as of December 7, 2007:

- April 3, 2007 Voter Participation Entered into SVRS: 868,404 voters from 1,890 municipalities.
- April 3, 2007 Election Day Registrations Entered into SVRS: 31,429 from 1,674 municipalities.
- February 20, 2007 Voter Participation Entered into SVRS: 308,964 voters from 1,882 municipalities.
- February 20, 2007 Election Day Registrations Entered into SVRS: 6,129 from 726 municipalities.
- November 7, 2006 Voter Participation Entered into SVRS: 2,166,727 voters from 1,894 municipalities.
- November 7, 2006 Election Day Registrations Entered into SVRS: 415,508 from 1,883 municipalities.
- September 12, 2006 Voter Participation Entered into SVRS: 699,154 voters from 1,888 municipalities.
- September 12, 2006 Election Day Registrations Entered into SVRS: 74,978 from 1,747 municipalities.
  
- Total Voters Records: 4,182,444 (Active = 3,338,802 Inactive = 757,891 Cancelled = 85,745).
- Total Address Ranges in SVRS: 347,612.
- Total Voter History Records in SVRS: 22,859,496.
- Total Absentee Applications in SVRS: 86,501.

The Data Quality staff conducted the comparison of a list of felons provided by the Department of Corrections (DOC) against the voters in the February and April 2007 election events. The comparison yielded matches to 15 voters for the February primary and 46 matches for the April Spring Election. Five persons matched in both February and April, for a total of 56 persons. The process provides for DOC to review the list of potential matches to verify their felon status. Through this review, 6 persons were removed. Following the DOC review, 50 names were presented to municipal clerks so that they could check their records for accuracy and remove any persons who had not voted. Finally, 43 names were sent to 18 district attorneys. The district attorneys have 40 days to respond to the SEB with the status of their investigation.

SEB staff has met with DOC and DET staff to plan the many exchanges of information currently required by statute for the ineligible (felon) lists to be provided for use in the polling places and the clerk's office, and for the lists used for the voter comparison in preparation for the upcoming 2008 election events.

- **Deployment – Clerk Support**

The Elections Specialist continued to provide clerk support by responding to calls made to the SEB Help Desk regarding use of SVRS and election management business processes. They also supported the municipal and county clerks who had 18 special elections since the last Board meeting, 13 of which were on November 6.

SVRS staff supported the City of Madison as they purged over 11,000 registrants who had not voted in the city for the last 4 years. Likewise, support was given to the City of Waukesha as they purged over 2,000 registrants following the same process.

The Elections Specialists continued to support User Acceptance Testing for the new code drop of the application software. They attended status meetings several times a week to help define and articulate potential issues with the new version.

The Elections Specialists assisted with tracking in SVRS the participation of clerks attending the new Municipal Clerk Training and attended the training sessions throughout the state.

SEB continues to provide onsite support to the City of Milwaukee as they prepare for next year's elections. Assistance has been provided in identifying and correcting several data quality issues. Ongoing support in generation of reports to meet data requests as well as internal needs has continued. An Elections Specialist continues to provide reports for City staff necessary for the massive voter registration card filing and scanning project. Other areas of support have included performing the purge process, absentee application updating, providing input for creation of absentee central count process and assistance in generating mailings for college campuses and nursing homes to verify addresses of registered voters.

- **Help Desk**

The SEB Help Desk is now supporting over 1,381 active users in 1,851 municipalities and 72 counties statewide for all levels of SVRS needs. Problem ticket volume for issues escalated to the

SEB Level 2 Help Desk has been stable since September 1, with calls focused on local level special elections and voter list maintenance. Many calls were received regarding setting up local school board races and referendums, candidate filing questions and poll worker questions. This increased level of support involves not only Help Desk staff but also the Elections Specialist and Functional Team members.

On an ongoing basis, many of the SEB Help Desk calls consist of clerks requesting to have passwords reset, having forgotten them over the summer months. There also has been an upsurge in Workstation Certification requests as clerks get back into election work and realize that their new computer will not access SVRS. More clerks are using SVRS again as they begin to prepare for the 2008 Presidential Primary. The SEB Help Desk continues to audit and update clerk information within SVRS, updating email addresses and contact information submitted by new clerks.

The following is a breakdown of the calls received by the State Elections Board Help Desk for the fall of 2007.

#### September 2007

- Total Tickets Open: 185
- Total September Tickets Remaining Open: 14
- Tickets Closed 9/1/07 to 9/30/07: 169
- September Call Volume: 183

#### October 2007

- Total Tickets Open: 205
- Total October Tickets Remaining Open: 29
- Tickets Closed 10/1/07 to 10/31/07: 248
- October Call Volume: 277

#### November 2007

- Total Tickets Open: 222
- Total November Tickets Remaining Open: 35
- Tickets Closed 11/1 to 12/1: 293
- November Call Volume 11/1 to 12/1 - 328

Call volume is 19% over our initial estimate for this time period.

#### • **Accenture Application**

Since July of 2007, Accenture has delivered three new code drops of the application, versions 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4. Version 6.3 was delivered on September 14. This version included a short list of targeted fixes to address problems that were discovered during the User Acceptance Testing of version 6.2. SVRS version 6.3, successfully tested by SEB staff, was installed for use by SVRS users on October 20. Upon installation, the Department of Administration/Division of Enterprise Technology (DET) staff encountered problems with the fixes to reports that were included in this

version. DET staff worked on the problems so that these report fixes were finally available to users on November 19. Meanwhile, SVRS version 6.4 arrived on October 26. Version 6.4 includes fixes to several reports, and an upgrade to the underlying SVRS database management system from SQL Server 2000 to SQL Server 2005. It also includes a handful of other miscellaneous fixes. DET staff is working on a necessary database operating system upgrade required before version 6.4 can be installed in the test environment. Once this is complete, DET will install version 6.4. Then version 6.4 will undergo testing by SEB staff before it can be made available to users.

- **Status of HAVA Required Interfaces**

The HAVA required interfaces were retested during the User Acceptance Testing of version 6.3. The Department of Transportation (DOT) interface still does not include the full functionality required by the SEB. Meanwhile, SEB staff is working with DET to create a plan for moving the DOT interface into Production, and is developing workarounds for the functionality that is not yet provided in the system. SEB staff is also developing the training and roll-out plan for this interface.

Defects were still encountered with the Department of Corrections and Department of Health and Family Services interfaces. These interfaces also still lack the full functionality required by the SEB. Due to these issues, SEB is not planning to move these interfaces into Production at this time. Further work will need to be done before these interfaces will be usable by the clerks.

- **Staffing**

Staff has received approval to recruit for 1 SVRS Elections Specialist and 3 Information Technology Specialists to assist in support of the application and its users.

As we plan for the future, attention needs to be paid to the fact that 17 project positions on the team will expire in October 2008 just before the November Presidential Election.