

VOTING INFORMATION SCORE

Challenges and Opportunities for Performance-Based Election Auditing

Forum Agenda

Day 1:

3:00 – 3:15 **Introduction and Welcome**

Michael Caudell-Feagan and Paul Gronke

3:15 – 4:00 **Data standards in Federal Agencies**

The idea for this session comes from Toby's concept memo written in preparation for a proposal for the bidder's forum and Paul's talking points for Rosemary Rodriguez. The topic concerns the kinds of data collection standards and requirements for federal data collection, and how they differ from the standard expectations for survey research.

I'm sure we can find others to speak to this issue, perhaps people who work on human resources issues at the DoD or someone from the Census (Gronke has contacts in both).

Toby Moore

[Contact Toby for other candidates?]

4:00 – 4:45 **Capacity-Building and Organizational Development at the EAC**

Next we turn to a second set of general issues: how do we build an agency from scratch under conditions of serious political stress and public scrutiny? What about the political conditions surrounding the creation of the EAC will make building an effective agency particularly challenging? What kinds of opportunities exist for the agency and how can they best take advantage of those opportunities? Are there historical examples to which we can compare the EAC?

I have chosen Urahn here because of her testimony before Congress and also because of her position at the Center on the States. Mann could crank out a thoughtful memo and has the advantage of good historical knowledge, but he's not particularly deep into this area. Ray would be great, but will he be worried about political repercussions?

Susan Urahn and/or Tom Mann

[performance auditing person? – Doug Chapin]

[academic who studies bureaucracies?]

[Ray Martinez would be great but can he do this politically?]

4:45 – 5:15 **Characteristics, Challenges, and Opportunities of Election Data (this may become two sessions)**

This session moves from general issues of capacity building and federal data collection to the specifics of elections data. What sort of hurdles have elections officials encountered when trying to collect and report election administration information and election results? What sort of message would they send to the election reform and scholarly communities?

Some suggestions that we should have a separate “academics and analysts” session on demand side and elections official session on supply side.

I have chosen Herron because it draws him into our orbit and I think he’s really smart; he’s also worked on number of court cases using precinct level data. Obviously, we’d want a good thoughtful group of elections officials here. Not sure what sort of “other” we’d want. Is this where we put in Kim Brace?

Michael Herron – Dartmouth

[Election Official—Dana DeBeauvoir (Travis Cty, TX) or Trey Grayson (KY) or Trey Granger (Montgomery Cty, AL) ?]

Break before cocktails and dinner.

6:30 Cocktails

7:00 Dinner

[Performance auditing speech here?]

Day 2:

8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 **Introduction to Day 2 Sessions: EAC Data Collection**
Possible to get someone from the EAC? Doug Chapin?

The focus of the second day is on specific areas of data collection, organized generally but not restricted by the content of the proposed EAC election administration and voting survey.

8:45 – 9:30 **Statewide Registration and Voter Files**

EAC Data Items 1-4b, Statutory Review 2, 6-10

This first session deals with the basics of the statewide voter registration files. What is the essential information that should be provided by states in these files? How accessible should this information be? How are actives and inactives handled state by state? We want to avoid McDonald’s hobby horses on file accuracy—this is important, but it not something that is relevant at this state of data review. We just want to know, accurate or not, are the basic data elements being collected and are aggregate numbers being

reported.

I think it's necessary to have McDonald play a role here; he is as experienced as anyone in this area. Mann is a list targeting person who works a lot with reg files, as is Heutte. Mann is a Yale ABD. The other names came from the previous list—McGuire worked with Sabre; Monaghan came from an NAS list and works for Soc Security.

Michael McDonald

Chris Mann – MHSC Partners or Fred Huette

[Pen: vendor or election official? – Paddy McGuire or Peter Monaghan]

9:30 – 10:15 **NVRA**

EAC Data Items 5-9, Statutory Review 2, 11-15

We turn next to a related registration issue: how are citizens added to the rolls? NVRA mandates a set of procedures by which citizens are supposed to be registered, but some advocates (e.g. Project Vote) claim that these mandates are not being followed. Certainly, past EAC surveys indicate that we don't have good data to tell whether the mandates are being followed or not.

Slater is an obvious candidate in this area. I chose Nickerson to bring him into the fold; he works primarily on turnout but has done some work on youth registration drives (mainly experimental work). He may not be up on the specifics of NVRA but his empirical sensibilities are very good. Thoughts on an election official?

David Nickerson – Notre Dame?

Michael Slater – Project Vote

[Pen: election official or EAC rep here?]

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:15 **Voting Technology and Election Administration**

EAC Data Items 14-17, 25a-28, Statutory Review (none)

This session deals with what be deemed the mechanics of democracy: what machines are being used, how many and in what locations. This is an area of the survey that was an utter disaster last time, and I'm not sure the new format is much of an improvement.

Alvarez has written about this topic and has thought a lot about it. He should be brought to the conference if possible. McClure is the CEO of Hart/Intercivic. I've seen him at a conference and he's kind of cranky in a good way. Not sure he cares much about data reporting. Any other election officials or vendors?

Michael Alvarez

Neil McClure

[Pew: is there an activist like Kim Alexander or a reporter who would fit in here?]
[Pew: is there a good election official or vendor who would fit in here?]

11:15 – 12:00 **UOCAVA**

EAC Data Items 10-13, Statutory Review (none)

One of the more challenging data sections in the EAC survey, for both 2004 and 2006, was UOCAVA. Many states say flat out that they have great difficulty tracking UOCAVA voters, and there are federal regulations that make the problem even worse. But who works on this area? It is a relatively small but politically influential segment of the population. OVF is the obvious candidate here, and I went through their governing board. Martinez and McDonald both are on their boards, and Thad Hall has worked with their data. I'm struggling to come up with other names of people who could participate productively.

Ray Martinez?

[Pew or EVIC: Peter Miller list of states that did a particularly good job on UOCAVA includes FL, GA, ID, MO, MT, ND, OH, TX]
Thad Hall

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:45 **Election Results**

EAC Data Items 18a-19, 25a-25e, 29 Statutory Review 2, 16, 22

To many, the most fundamental data element of all—election results—and ironically one that plays a relatively small role in the EAC survey. Should the survey include a much more substantial section on federal election results? Should they ask about overvotes (they seem willing) and undervotes (many states refuse to acknowledge their existence)? Do we want turnout and if so, from what source (poll books, highest office, etc)?

Karen McDonald or Charles Stewart would be great here. Clark Benson uses these data extensively and can speak particularly to the problems of collecting these data in New England, MI, and WI. I thought someone from a state that either reports lots of data or has faced some challenges in data might be a good addition—Weir, someone from OH or FL.

Karen McDonald, Charles Stewart

Clark Benson

[Stephen Weir (Contra Costa County, CA), or someone from OH or FL]

1:45 – 2:30 **Alternative Ballots (Absentee, Early, and Provisional)**

EAC Data Items 20-24, Statutory Review 2, 4, 16-21

Not completely Gronke's home ballpark, this really comprises a number of disparate areas: early voting, absentee voting, and provisional ballots. They

EAC has really backed away from trying to collect detailed data on non-precinct votes cast prior to election day, which really reflects the inability of states to report that information. Is that OK? Should the EAC consider collecting this information in the future? Is it enough to just know how many ballots came from precincts, absentee, and “other”?

Provisionals are an important but separate area, and I think Foley has the most to say about them. We may wish to lengthen this session and make it into two 40 minutes segments. How are provisional’s accepted and when are they rejected? Do states track this information at all (at present, for many, the answer is “no.”).

The list of possible participants here is probably too long. Haas works on signature verification for Pitney Bowes and may not have much to say about absentee ballot data. WA and NC were chosen because both have lots of absentee ballots (and do a good job reporting on them).

Paul Gronke

Ned Foley

Martha Kropf

John Fortier

Bertrand Haas – Pitney Bowes

Nick Handy – WA or someone from NC

2:30 – 3:15

Open Discussion: Looking Forward to the Next Four Years

Closing session, wrap up conversation. What did we miss? What we hope to see the EAC do in the next two years, next four years? Remind people about the public comments process. Discuss compendium / volume.

I have Becker in here because he has to do something right? Schaefer is the head of some vendor’s trade group and should be able to say something about what is coming down the pike. Anyone has a politico in mind?

David Becker?

Paul Gronke? Heather Gerken?

Michelle Schaefer – Sequoia Systems

[Pew: journalist or politico?]

3:14-4:30

People can get out of here and catch 5 pm departing flights.