



SVRS Project Newsbrief

Wisconsin State Elections Board

January 2005

Newsbrief #1

Project History

Legislative Request for Study	July 2002
Help America Vote Act	Oct. 2002
State Plan Signed	Aug. 2003
Statewide Study	May 2003
Municipality Focus Groups	Jan. - Mar. 2004
Request for Proposal	May 2004
Vendor Selection	Sept. 2004

Recent & Upcoming Events

Project Start	Nov. 2004
Data Conversion Meetings for Municipalities with existing Voter Registration Systems	Jan. 2005
System Configuration and Process Design Meetings with Standards Committee	Jan. - May 2005
County/Municipality Preparation Meetings	Feb. - Aug. 2005
Manual Data Entry Meetings for Municipalities without Voter Registration Systems	May 2005
Training	Aug. - Nov. 2005
Go-Live of Statewide Voter Registration Components	Late 2005
Go-Live of Election Management Components	Early 2006

SVRS – Full-Speed Ahead

Imagine...when Wisconsinites head to the polls in 2006, most will experience something like never before. In many locations, voters will be registered and have their names on a poll list for the first time ever. Poll workers and municipal clerks will be able to quickly look up information about voters and more easily help them find their proper polling location, even on election day. This is the future in Wisconsin, and it is less than one year away. Together with municipal and county clerks, the Wisconsin State Elections Board (SEB) is moving full-speed ahead to achieve this future with the development and implementation of the State Voter Registration System (SVRS).

Driven by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), SVRS provides for a single, statewide voter registration system and will effectively maintain a list of all Wisconsin registered voters. SVRS replaces nearly 300 distinct systems currently used in municipalities throughout the state. SVRS also provides a technical solution for municipalities who currently do not have an automated system or a voter registration list. SVRS provides 1 place, 1 software application, 1 user interface, 1 database for all of Wisconsin elections officials to share and use in collaboration. Ultimately, SVRS will improve the electoral process by streamlining procedures and standardizing policies. SVRS will also help municipalities share information and facilitate fair, open, and error-free elections.

In the coming months, you will hear more about SVRS. The SVRS Team is working



SEB's SVRS Team (Not all team members present)

for you to develop the core system; the team will also work directly with you to help prepare you for the new system. This includes training on the software and standardized procedures/policies, converting your electronic or hard copy information, facilitating Memorandum of Understanding between partnerships, help desk functionality, and on-going communications.

Again, SVRS is moving full-speed ahead and gaining momentum. Communication is critical, and the SVRS Team will be reaching out to you regularly. So, be on the look-out for:

- E-mail for sending meeting invitations, notices, updates, etc.
- Quarterly newsletters
- SEB website – <http://elections.state.wi.us>
- Webcast presentations
- Meetings and presentations (in Madison and other locations throughout the State)
- Telephone conversations and conference calls

The SEB and SVRS Team look forward to working with you to make this a successful endeavor for the voters of the State of Wisconsin!

We'd like to hear from you...

Have questions about HAVA or your role in the State Voter Registration System Project? Want to update your contact information with SEB? Feel free to contact us by e-mail or telephone. We will respond directly to you and may include your comment and/or question in upcoming newsletters, web site updates, or frequently asked questions (FAQs). Please contact us at svrs@seb.state.wi.us or (608) 266-0395.



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A Quick Reminder About HAVA

Following the 2000 Presidential Election, the nation's voting process was thoroughly studied by legislators, scholars, citizen groups and many others. These studies helped form a consensus around the need to ensure and preserve the integrity of the election process.

Hundreds of legislative items were introduced in Congress and state legislatures, including 25 separate bills in Wisconsin, to change the way elections are administered. Members of the election community worked with Congress to secure passage of legislation that maintained state/local control over the administration of elections while establishing minimum standards to ensure public confidence in the voting process.

As a result, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). The Act addresses improvements to voting systems and voter access. It includes requirements for a centralized voter registration database, privacy and independence in the voting process, access for people with disabilities and voter outreach.

Under HAVA, each state was required to submit a plan describing how the state will meet

the HAVA requirements. Wisconsin's plan was developed in 2003 with input from the legislature, local election officials, and the public.

HAVA provides a unique opportunity to add to Wisconsin's electoral tradition and develop a strong partnership between state and local election officials. Under HAVA, the State Elections Board, in cooperation with county and municipal election officials, will ensure that Wisconsin elections follow procedures that guarantee that each individual vote counts and that the electorate's will prevails. The shared vision is for Wisconsin's electoral elections to be open, fair, impartial and free from error.

Key components of Wisconsin's HAVA implementation plan include the following.

- Design and implement a computerized statewide voter registration system that is the single database of all registered voters.
- Purchase and deploy voting equipment that meets HAVA standards.
- Increase access to the election process for people with disabilities

through specially designed voting systems, improvements to facilities, training of elections staff and enhanced public outreach. This will include an evaluation of every polling place to identify barriers to accessibility and full voter participation.

- Implement a comprehensive program that informs voters about Wisconsin's election process including where to obtain information on the voting process, how to correct ballots, how to request replacement ballots, and how to obtain relief for possible violations or irregularities in the administration of state and federal election procedures.
- Implement a toll-free telephone line that allows voters to check the status of their provisional ballots, determine whether or not their ballot was counted and enable electors to report possible voting fraud and voting rights violations.
- Train all election officials including chief inspectors, municipal and county clerks, along with State Elections Board staff.