

**Secretary of State's Task Force
on Uniform Poll Worker Training Standards
Tuesday September 14, 2004 Meeting Minutes**

1:40 p.m.: Chairwoman Freddie Oakley called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Freddie Oakley, Bonnie Hamlin, Ernest "Chuck" Ayala, Luana Horstkotte, Mary Jungi, and Neal Kelley.

Task Force Members Gerry Washington, Steve Rodermund, Steven Weir, Deborah Martin, Elliot Petty, Barbara Jones, Kathay Feng, Connie McCormack, and Maria de la Luz Garcia attended via teleconference.

The following Secretary of State staff members were present: Marc Carrel, John Mott-Smith, Casey Elliot, and Rachel Zenner.

Yolo County staff member Tom Stanionis was also present.

Item I: Freddie Oakley welcomed all members and noted that much progress had been made from the previous meeting. She then introduced Maria Mindlin of Transcend.

Item II: Maria Mindlin presented a Power Point demonstration relating to plain language translation with emphasis on readability. Before the presentation began, Secretary of State Kevin Shelley joined the meeting.

The Secretary welcomed the task force, explaining how it came to be (see SB610), the desire for uniform standards, and the importance of the Task Force's work for present and future elections.

Ms. Mindlin continued her presentation, outlining detailed, attractive, and effective ways of document display. She discussed the readability checklist distributed to Task Force members and presented before and after examples of plain language use on Secretary of State printed materials, such as Provisional Ballots and Poll Worker recruitment flyers.

It was noted that the materials had not yet been effectively field-tested. Task Force member Feng noted that the implementation of equipment imagery on printed materials would be an effective way to help voters recognize and know the functions of Polling Place equipment on election day.

Mr. Carrel brought up whether there may be an issue with over simplification, to which Ms. Mindlin responded that most agencies have uniform standards to follow. Mr. Mott-Smith also raised the issue of web-accessibility of the documents, to which there was no clear answer.

Item III:

Teresa Favuzzi of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers reviewed disability etiquette for poll workers. She discussed the Independent Living Resource Center pamphlet that was distributed to all Task Force members, emphasizing the importance of poll workers asking the disabled what one can do to assist in the voting process and moving beyond assumptions. Ms. Favuzzi also made mention of the importance of having the disabled participate in training sessions.

Chairwoman Oakley suggested the Secretary of State's office produce Public Service Announcements dealing with disabled voters in the future. It was also noted that clarification of the voting process needs to be made for all: senior citizens, immigrants, the disabled, etc. One approach proposed is to have public displays of voting equipment prior to elections and allow the public to familiarize themselves with said equipment.

Item IV:

Kim Alexander, President of the California Voter Foundation spoke to the Task Force on the topic of election security. She stated the non-partisan, non-profit nature of her organization and their support of using technology in the democratic process.

Ms. Alexander expressed her concerns of election security, specifically with poll workers. She noted that the general lack of confidence in the use of modern technology and problems with poll worker recruitment and their knowledge of polling place functions. A procedures manual or web site would help to eliminate suspicions of polling places and workers. Methods and procedures that vary from county to county need to be detailed to the public. Poll workers also must be sure to let voters know their right to cast a paper ballot in counties that use touch screen voting systems.

In order to ease the public on voting security, Ms. Alexander stated that chains of custody need to be used when dealing with voting equipment and procedures for handling provisional ballots must be standardized. Poll workers need to have telephone access to county registrar offices should questions or problems arise. Ms. Alexander believes that the hiring of better trained poll workers as inspectors and auditors would also be a step to improve security in the electoral process.

Task Force Member Feng suggested that detailing ballot handling for the public (that is, what happens to a person's ballot after it has been cast)

would help voters understand the process in a more detailed fashion and, in effect, ease concerns about security.

Item V: Recommendations from the Task Force were distributed to members. Discussion was postponed until the next meeting in order to give all members time to review the issues and form reactions and comments.

Item VI: Task Force Member Weir mentioned the Poll Closing guide helps to fill the gap with the close of polls, but fails to outline the transport of ballots from the polling place.

Chairwoman Oakley stated that a documentation of the voting process for the public needs to be made available in order to not solely rely on the knowledge of poll workers. Mr. Carrel suggested incorporating My Vote Counts! with this idea.

Task Force Member Feng suggested a question and answer page of commonly asked questions associated with electronic voting be made available online for the public.

Item VII: Anne West of San Bruno was on hand for public comment. She made clear her difficulties of obtaining information on the electoral process through her county's poll workers. Her concerns lay in resource communication to the public, polling place procedure observation, and information dissemination. Item VI addressed many of her concerns.

3:50 p.m.: Chairwoman Oakley adjourned the meeting.