



VoteCal Discovery Sessions
February 9 – March 11, 2010
Week 4 Discovery Session Notes

Day 10 – Project Overview Presentation

Project Overview Presentation

Consensus Recommendations:

1. The counties have requested a sandbox environment to test or practice in the system.
2. The counties have again expressed their desire to receive the architectural diagrams as soon as they are available. This is especially time-sensitive for counties who outsource their IT and security services. This will be sent out as a draft with potential regional meetings to follow.
3. Counties who have volunteered to be pilot counties: Fresno, Stanislaus, Contra Costa, Riverside, possibly Los Angeles.
4. Once the VoteCal system is live, counties would like some sort of newsgroup, listserv, or website which county users can access to check on the system's status and determine if a problem is local or statewide. They would prefer that this also contains a way for counties to interact/contribute information and not just receive information.

Lessons Learned from Calvoter & Interim Solution:

5. Additional documentation, particularly around precise technical instructions, should be enhanced. This will help county users to troubleshoot issues.
6. Where appropriate, make a direct connection between an SOS IT person and a county IT person. Relaying through Elections business staff can complicate otherwise easy questions/answers.
7. Lack of clarity on HAVA/policy issues initially led to data issues (for CalVoter = too many Fatal Pends). Also, vagueness in rules (system and policy) between EMS and CalVoter resulted in bad data and clean-up efforts. Resolve all known policy issues in advance, and have a contingency plan for issues that arise at Deployment.
8. Lack of visibility through the user interface of systems (e.g. viewing messages identifying downstream automated actions initiated by a user action) or ability to act through the user interface (e.g. manually clear a flag) led to investigation and data changes directly in the database, which prevents traceability.
9. Testing should include "real" data, larger volumes of data and cross-county data, in order to better predict and resolve the problems that may occur at Deployment.
10. Multiple communication methods are needed throughout project planning and after deployment to meet the needs of all users within county. This includes both "push" and "pull" communications, and communications directed at different audiences (e.g. Elections business vs. IT).

Lessons Learned from Other States/Other Systems:

11. On the SAWS project: a portal was used to communicate critical system-wide messages to users, as well as provide links to documentation and system/environment URL's.
12. In Wisconsin: there were many issues with the number of match cases which were generated on Day 1. A plan was devised to help counties prioritize and set milestones to reduce the number of work items.
13. In Illinois: the process of contracting with EMS vendors and counties added nine months to the schedule, some counties did not meet the readiness requirements, there was a wider variety of EMS systems in use by counties (including some counties using custom configurations or older releases), data conversion standards were based on too little sample data (surprises during conversion).
14. In Washington: scheduling and travel were issues for the schedule, they had to meet HAVA requirements immediately and worked in phases that were spaced apart, the public (voter interest groups) was a factor in project planning, list maintenance was an issue, creating new batches of list maintenance work items needed to be more in tune with the election schedule.
15. In Texas: bandwidth was an issue, needed better definitions of data (i.e. what an effective registration date meant) and consistency between EMS vendors.
16. In Ohio: there were a "crushing" number of duplicates and a phone call was required to resolve each, there was a lot of bad data sitting in queues waiting to be processed, there was inconsistency between counties in resolving data.
17. Generally the counties and EMS vendors expressed appreciation for a bottom-up statewide voter registration system that allows for local contingencies, and for the collaborative nature of the project.
18. Recognized that each user has their own 'hot button' issue that is preventing or allowing them to achieve buy-in. There needs to be multiple communication channels so that the majority of users can get their questions answered, even if they aren't of wide interest.



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UC 01.15.01 – Process Failed IDV Retry Job

Updates to Documentation:

19. Add steps from the voter registration use cases, including the IDV steps.

UC 02.01.01 – Search Voter through Web Application

(No further decisions or items for follow-up)

UC 02.02.01 – Search Voter through EMS Interface

(No further decisions or items for follow-up)

UC 03.45.01 – Create Duplicate Match Case Manually

(No further decisions or items for follow-up)

UC 04.19.01 – Create or Update Vote-by-Mail Ballot Record

Consensus Recommendations:

20. The counties have requested the capability to configure the date when a vote-by-mail ballot will be sent out for each election.

Update to Use Case:

21. Replace “when mailed” and “ballot sent” with “issued” where appropriate.

UC 05.26.01 – Modify Affidavit Issuance Record

(This was previously noted by Catalyst as a “wishlist” function as currently presented. No significant decisions or items for follow-up)

BP10 – Process DMV COA Records

Updates to Use Case:

22. Add steps to indicate that the DMV signature will be sent with the DMV COA information.

Day 11 – DMV COA, NCOA-CASS, Online Voter Registration

UC 03.21.01 – Process DMV COA Record File

Consensus Recommendations:

23. The DMV signature should be sent to VoteCal with the DMV COA information. The COA work item should indicate that a signature is available to retrieve through the EMS.
24. If a DMV COA has been matched to a voter record and the COA address matches the voter’s active record, the match record should be discarded. Note that an exact match may be infrequent without local correction/standardization of address.
25. DMV COA should not be matched against Cancelled voters.
26. Work items related to the DMV COA will contain information about the previous address, the source of the COA (DMV), whether the related duplicate match case is pending/rejected (for multiple matches only), and whether the work item was also sent to another county (for multiple matches only).
27. A DMV COA match case which matches multiple records, potentially in multiple counties, will be sent to all counties owning the respective records. The Proposed Approach is outlined below.

Issues & Decisions To Be Resolved:

28. Between NCOA work items and DMV COA work items, there should only be one work item open at a time for a single voter. The DMV COA will generally take precedence over the NCOA work item, but details need to be finalized. (To SOS and Catalyst)
29. Confirm that DMV COA’s out-of-county should be Cancelled and not Inactive, because they are considered a first-party notification and applicability of Election Code Section 2203 and NVRA Code 3.3. (To SOS, CACEO Business Process Committee)



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30. Determine whether all currently active/inactive voter records will be run through IDV to find/validate a driver license number. Historical information may contain invalid DL numbers, since they predated the IDV process. (To SOS)
31. Determine which mailing(s) should be sent for out-of-county moves ('Sorry we missed you' VRC or 8(d)(2)), particularly on multiple match scenarios. (To SOS, CACEO Business Process Committee)
32. Determine under which scenarios the mailings should be sent to the new vs. old address. (To SOS, CACEO Business Process Committee)

Proposed Approach for Multiple Matches on DMV COA Record – Send Work Items to Multiple Counties

This scenario is invoked when a DMV COA record is received that cannot be matched with high confidence to only a single record. Two or more potential matches are identified. The DMV COA record may match both (unresolved duplicate), match neither (a new voter), or match only one. This process will use human review to determine which (if any) records it matches, and prioritize review of unresolved potential duplicates.

- A. Receive DMV COA record – appears to match two voter records (active/inactive records only). Send work item to county of record for both voters.
 - a. Work item should note whether the potential duplicate is still pending or was previously rejected. Also will note the other county/counties that also received a work item for this DMV COA.
 - b. Include a link to the full voter record / voter activity history for review purposes.
- B. If one county accepts the change, and it is an in-county move, that county “wins” and commits the COA address change. The work item for the second county is closed with no action.
 - a. A VNC is sent immediately upon the first county accepting change.
 - b. If the first action is a county rejecting the change, it will remain on the second county’s work item list.
- C. If one county ‘accepts’ that it is their voter, but it is out-of-county move, they will process their change (i.e. cancelling the voter). However, the work item in the second county will NOT be cancelled.
 - a. First county takes action to cancel with reason of out-of-county move (county has option to inactivate instead)
 - b. Mailing: confirming as out-of-county either flags the record for either an 8(d)(2) to old address or flags the record for mailing a new blank VRC to new address (see open Policy Decision above)
- D. If the second county still has the work item to consider (either rejected or determined to be out-of-county move by the first county):
 - a. Accept voter and in-county, send VNC
 - b. Accept voter but out-of-county, inactivate/cancel voter and send mailing (see open Policy Decision)
 - c. Reject that this is their voter and close work item
- E. If both counties reject, wait for both to reject (close both work items) before sending any mailings.
 - a. Send to voter at new address (1 mailing only) – DMV COA Failed Transaction notification (“Sorry We Missed You”) with blank VRC – from SOS. Return address to new county.
 - b. Note that the DMV COA still appears on the voter activity history, but noted as a rejection.
- F. In all cases, re-open any previously dismissed match cases (does nothing to existing pending duplicates – doesn’t bump to top of queue, unless EMS does this), which provides the “losing” county with the option to consider that situation in the context of duplicate (not in the context of COA).
 - a. Initiate immediately (don’t wait for either/both county to respond to COA)
 - b. ‘Surviving’ record will be the one with latest activity, which may be the processing of the DMV COA. Counties still have the option to “flip” or defer to the other county.

UC 03.22.01 – Process DMV COA Work Item

Updates to Use Case:

33. Open policy decisions on cancel/inactivate and mailings impact this use case.
34. Proposed “multiple match” scenario impacts this use case.
35. Update: in step 5.3.4: change "8(d)(2)" to "VNC".

UC 03.32.01 – Process NCOA-CASS Record File

Updates to Use Case:

36. Remove step 2.3. All addresses, regardless of commercial or residential will be sent to the counties. There may be a flag for the counties to decide whether or not this is automatically applied to the records.
37. Update step 2.7: This should reflect “NCOA notice”, not “DMV COA notice”



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UC 03.33.01 – Process NCOA Work Item

Updates to Use Case:

38. Add an alternate flow to the use case to reflect how mailing address changes are treated. This should reflect similar functionality to a residential address change, without the same precincting issues.
39. Update step 5.2: Either create a new branch or add a note to indicate that NCOA's with no forwarding addresses should be treated differently from NCOA's with new out of county addresses.

BP18 – Online Voter Registration

Updates to Use Case:

40. The "Email Notification process" should be in the VoteCal swim lane, not the EMS swim lane.
41. The 10.02.01 Register to Vote Online use case should include steps to describe step 21 of the BP map, when a work item is deferred to another county.

Issues & Decisions To Be Resolved:

42. There is a question as to how long voters who would eventually be Declined should remain in a Pending status. The counties introduced the scenario where they have made attempts to contact the voter and have not received any response. (To SOS, CACEO Business Process Committee)

UC 10.07.01 – Verify Voter Identity Online

Updates to Use Case:

43. Update step 6: The use case should be updated to include a common first names match.

UC 10.01.01 – Verify Voter Registration Online

Consensus Recommendations:

44. Capital and lower case letters will be stored as they are entered. For DISPLAY PURPOSES, they may be displayed in all upper-case.

Issues & Decisions To Be Resolved:

45. The counties asked how much information should be displayed. While the group agreed to at least display information the user entered as part of the search criteria, there was a question around whether additional information should be displayed to help confirm that the record corresponds to the voter (i.e. Last Name). (To SOS, CACEO Business Process Committee)

Updates to Use Case:

46. Update step 3: First Name should not be a required field. This is sensitive to those counties that have some voter records which do not contain first names.
47. Add to step 7: The system should at least display information the user has entered. This is in case the voter makes a typo.
48. Update to all search-related use cases and matching-related use cases: The search should be case-insensitive, spacing-insensitive, and hyphen-insensitive.

BP19 – DMV Voter Registration

Updates to Use Case:

49. Update step 12: "Voter Record" should be changed to "Work Item".
50. The "Email Notification process" should be in the VoteCal swim lane, not the EMS swim lane.
51. The "Voter Notification Card process" should be in the VoteCal swim lane, not the EMS swim lane.
52. Add: When the signature is received by VoteCal, it should be stored in the EMS as well.
53. Add: State Update Record (Transfer) to the types of state updates.

UC 01.16.01 – Process DMV Registrations and COA's

Updates to Use Case:

54. This use case will be rewritten into multiple use cases.
55. The use case should include County User in the list of Actors.
56. Include steps to describe step 20 of the BP map, when a work item is deferred to another county.
57. Include that the signature received from the DMV should be stored in the EMS as well.



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58. Clearly specify that the new registration will be sent to the new county

UC 03.42.01– Accept or Reject Duplicate Voter Match Case

(No further decisions or items for follow-up)

Day 11 – Summary of County Use of EMS vs. VoteCal, Discovery Session
“Decisions and Action Items”

Summary of County Use of EMS vs. VoteCal

Issues & Decisions To Be Resolved:

59. The counties have expressed a preference toward having the duplicate match case, felon match case, and death match case work items display in their local EMS (via API from VoteCal). At the very least, there should be a link to navigate the user to the appropriate work item VoteCal screen from within the EMS. This may require a separate log-in to access the VoteCal system. (To SOS, Catalyst and EMS Vendors)
60. The counties have expressed a preference to be able to modify confidential voter status in the EMS as well as in VoteCal. This requires consideration of the ability to secure this information in the EMS (including all back-ups of data). (To EMS vendors and Catalyst)

Discovery Session “Decisions and Action Items”

Consensus Recommendations:

61. If a user logs on to a new terminal while being logged in elsewhere, the system should log the user out of the previous session.
62. Counties have reiterated the request to access to the SOS administrators’ report of all user activity.
63. A statewide search in the EMS should be reflected in the EMS activity logs.
64. The ROR should be certified by whoever currently certifies the record (not necessarily the Registrar or Assistant Registrar).
65. Cancelled voters should be captured on a go-forward basis only (historic cancellations will not be brought in at the time of implementation of VoteCal, but may be brought in through a single process at a later time).
66. The current business process for same day registration & issuing a ballot when the EMS is down is to issue a vote-by-mail ballot (not provisional).
67. Initial data entry required for HAVA compliance, such as entering confidential voters who were not previously entered into the system, should be reimbursable by HAVA. (SOS advised that Ongoing data entry and business processes required for HAVA compliance will not be reimbursable by HAVA.)
68. ‘Public Safety’ confidential voters who lose their status under EC §2166.7(c) should simply become Active, if no other response is received from the voter.
69. There should be an ability to delete a voter record, for those confidential voters who no longer want their record to exist in the system after their status has expired.
70. Counties have indicated that they currently do not follow up for voters who do not mark the check boxes indicating they are 18 years of age or U.S. citizens if they had voter records on file which were Active.
71. A voter’s UID will only be changed if the voter re-registers. Periodic IDV sweeps are not planned.
72. The SOS should have a standard timeline for when VIG’s are mailed out. The SOS should keep counties informed of this timeline.
73. Match criteria should not be a business process issue. This should be done by SOS, Catalyst, and the EMS vendors with input from the counties as to previous best practices.