

A close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in detail. The flag is waving, creating a sense of movement and patriotism.

Making it Count.

A report on improvements in King County Elections

**King County Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division
August 22, 2005 – Dean Logan, Director**



Issues from the 2004 election

- Concern for the timely mailing of military and overseas ballots
- Reports of deceased voters remaining on the voter rolls and casting ballots
- Reports of felons remaining on the voter rolls and voting
- Concerns regarding the enhancement and duplication of ballots that could not be read by the vote counting machines
- Canvassing board standards for determining voter intent
- Variance between the number of ballots cast and the number of voters credited with voting
- Unverified provisional ballots read through poll site vote counting machines
- Incomplete processing of absentee ballots
- Inadequate accountability and reconciliation of absentee ballots





Military & Overseas Ballots

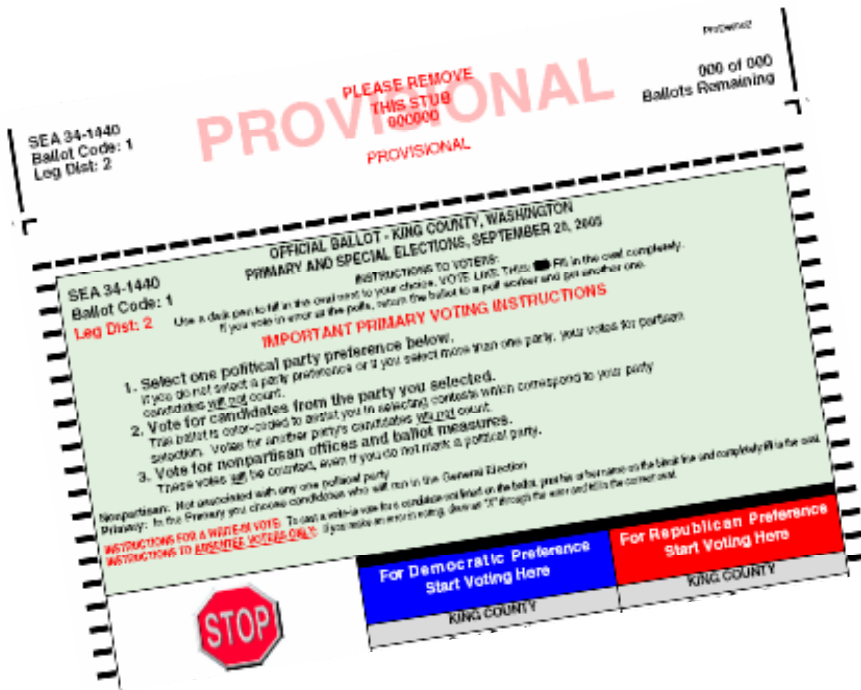
We were among the first in the state to mail out our military, overseas, and out-of-state ballots for the September 20 primary and we've made it easier for these voters to request a fax or e-mail ballot.

- ✓ Met the U.S. Department of Justice recommendation of a minimum 45-day transit period for military and overseas ballots
- ✓ Provide for fax, e-mail, and express mail balloting alternatives
- ✓ Military/Overseas voter-specific information posted on Web site, including an on-line absentee request form
- ✓ Received certificate of bulk mailing from the U.S. Postal Service documenting the on-time mailing of military and overseas ballots
- ✓ Held press conference to emphasize the importance of serving our military and overseas voters





Provisional Ballots



- ✓ Shading on instructions physically distinguishes provisional ballots from regular ballots
- ✓ “PROVISIONAL” printed on stubs
- ✓ Separate timing marks prevent counting in poll site ballot counters
- ✓ Designated provisional poll books, poll workers and processing areas
- ✓ New envelopes with new oath

Provisional ballots now look different from poll ballots and they cannot go through the poll site ballot counting machines.





Updating the Voter Rolls



- ✓ Daily cancellations of voters from newspaper obituaries
- ✓ Countywide mailing – appeal to voters to partner with us in updating records
- ✓ Improved notification and coordination with state and federal court systems
- ✓ Exploring cooperative agreement with King County Vital Statistics for cross-referencing data to identify deceased voters
- ✓ Staff participation on statewide voter registration database local government advisory group
- ✓ Duplicate registration checks within the county and in coordination with the Secretary of State

Cleaning our voter rolls is a top priority. We've canceled more than 850 felons and 6,500 deceased voters based on notifications since last year's election.





Poll Worker Training

We revamped and increased our training – making new training mandatory for all poll workers each election.

In addition to training, poll workers will have new, improved and extensive procedures mailed to them in early September.



- ✓ 3-hour mandatory training for primary
- ✓ More than 90 separate classes for more than 3,000 workers
- ✓ Professional training consultant assisted in preparing training teams
- ✓ Pilot project introducing decision support software for poll workers and phone bank operators

ELECTION DECISION SUPPORT
Precinct: ADDISON 001

Voter Lookup:

First Name (optional):

Last Name (required):

Date of Birth (required):
Month Day Year
Sep 1 2004

SEARCH


BACK MENU AUDIO HELP





Improved Security



- ✓ Voter identification is required at the polls 
- ✓ We've installed video surveillance cameras and keycard access systems to heighten security at King County Elections' facilities

- ✓ Continued use of uniformed security on election night and during ballot tabulation activity
- ✓ Ballot enhancement has been eliminated – standardized procedures for duplication are in place
- ✓ Security plan has been documented





Ballot Reconciliation

NEW Reports Required

Preliminary report at certification includes the number of:

- Total registered voters
- Total ballots counted
- Provisional ballots issued, counted and rejected
- Absentee ballots issued, counted and rejected
- Federal write-in ballots counted
- UOCAVA (military and overseas) ballots issued, counted and rejected

30-day post certification report includes the number of:

- Registered voters
- All voters credited
- Poll, absentee, and provisional voters credited
- Federal write-in voters credited
- UOCAVA voters credited
- Other information related to reconciliation of ballots counted to voters credited





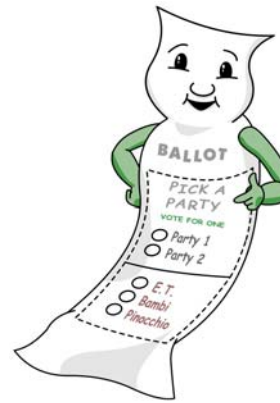
Standardizing Procedures

Newly updated procedures:

- ✓ 2005 Poll Worker Guidebook
- ✓ Canvassing Board Policies and Procedures
- ✓ Absentee Ballot Processing Procedures
- ✓ Voter Registration Processing Workflow
- ✓ Media Management Plan
- ✓ Security Plan

Standardized processes:

- ✓ Signature verification standards
- ✓ Ballot duplication & voter intent standards



- Ballot Format
- Voter Instructions
- Outreach Messages
- Voting Options

We're standardizing procedures with other Puget Sound counties to limit confusion.





Quality Control & Assurance

Absentee Ballots

- ✓ All envelopes drilled with holes to ensure staff can see, remove and count all ballots
- ✓ Zip ties will be placed through the holes in empty envelopes prior to storing for the retention period
- ✓ Daily accounting reports will track absentees from receipt through tabulation
- ✓ Consistent signature verification standards have been adopted

Polling Place Ballots

- ✓ All base units have been designated with internal and external numbered identification tags
- ✓ Poll workers will record identification numbers during poll closing procedures to ensure all ballots have been removed from base units
- ✓ Troubleshooters will conduct a double-check of all base units following the election
- ✓ Improved poll reconciliation

Our **NEW** Quality Assurance Team starts in September.





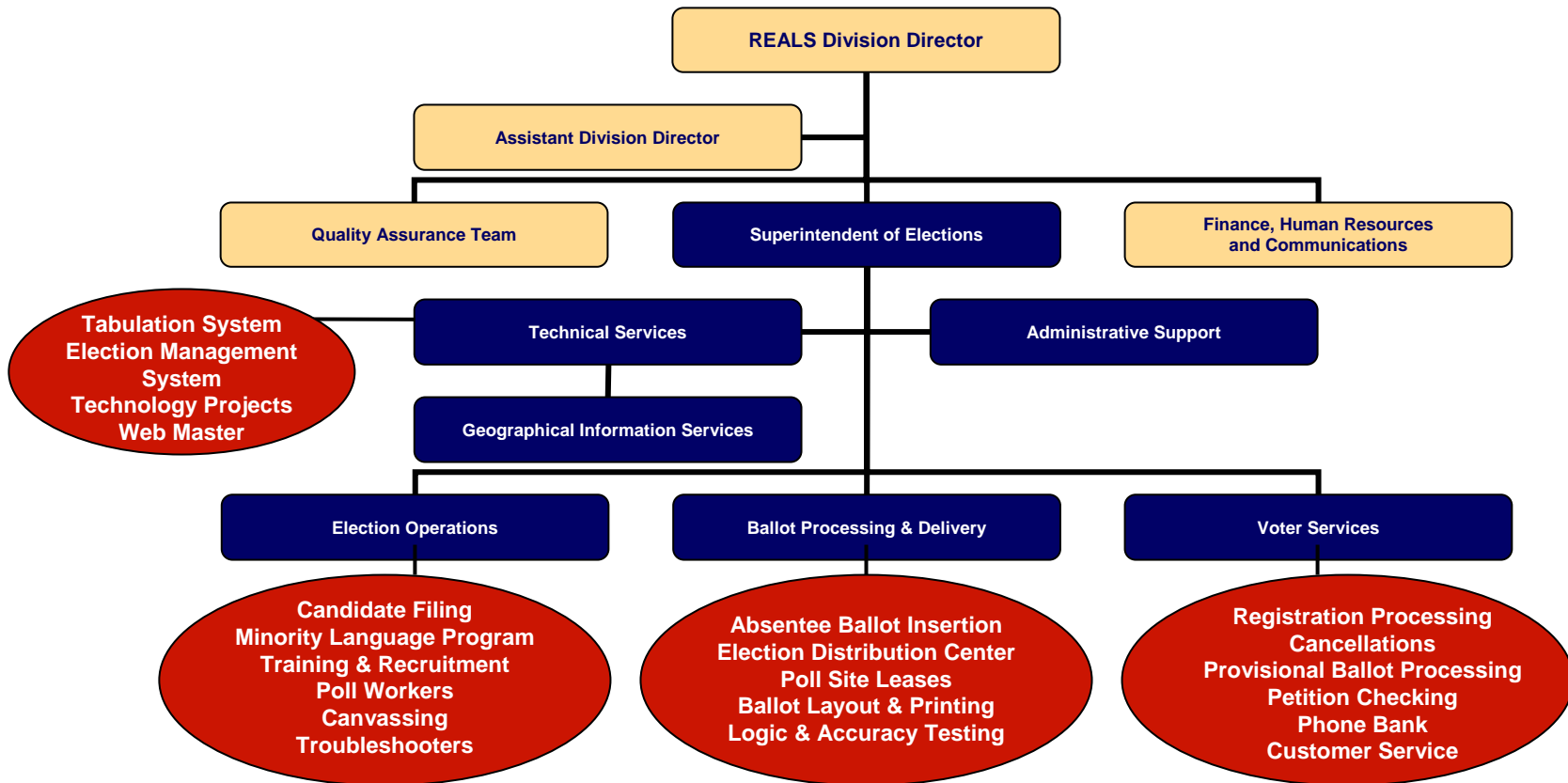
Management & Organization

- ✓ Support from within county to backfill critical vacancies
 - Procedures documentation
 - Communications
 - Poll Worker training
- ✓ Extensive training opportunities
 - Election Management System
 - Voter Registration applications
 - Desktop applications
 - Cross-training and tours of other counties election operations
- ✓ Aggressive recruitment and placement for new positions
 - Quality Assurance Team
 - Administrative Support and Production Staff
- ✓ Improved communication
 - Weekly e-update
 - Success Saturday!
- ✓ Established quality assurance team
 - Coordinator & Analyst positions
- ✓ New standards for temporary and seasonal staff
 - Minimum skills testing
- ✓ Expanded technical support
 - Established Technical Services Unit
- ✓ Prepared a 2005-06 Business and Operating Plan





Management & Organization



We value all members of our organization for all are equally important.





Legislative Issues

In the aftermath of the close gubernatorial election, there were many pieces of election-related legislation passed at the state level. Some key changes remain in need of action.

- ✓ **Moving the date of the primary**

Editorial boards and election administrators across the state agree on the need to lengthen the period of time between our state primary and the General Election.

- ✓ **State reimbursement of even-year election costs**

This would eliminate the local government subsidy of statewide elections.

- ✓ **Local option vote-by-mail**

The new local government authorization to move to vote-by-mail should be more flexible to allow counties to transition to vote-by-mail. The current law is an all or nothing option.

Timely implementation of the federally mandated statewide voter registration database is key to more adequately addressing issues related to the integrity of the voter registration rolls.





Quick Facts about the Primary



- ✓ Absentee ballots and local voters' pamphlets will be mailed August 31
- ✓ Voters must pick a party first and stick with that same party throughout the partisan portion of the ballot
- ✓ Voted absentee ballots must be returned or postmarked by the date of the election – September 20
- ✓ August 20 was the last day to register to vote through the mail and still be eligible to vote in the primary. In-person registration continues at the Elections Office through September 3
- ✓ The Canvassing Board will certify the primary on September 30
- ✓ 34.2 percent voter turnout projected





Facts about King County Elections

- ✓ 1 million plus active registered voters
- ✓ 2,573 voting precincts
- ✓ 532 polling locations
- ✓ 583,765 permanent absentee voters
- ✓ 6,400 military and overseas ballots issued to more than 64 countries
- ✓ 4,150 out-of-state ballots issued
- ✓ Multiple ballot formats required
 - Regular ballots
 - Chinese-language ballots
 - Provisional ballots
 - Chinese-language provisional ballots
 - Absentee ballots
 - Chinese-language absentee ballots
- ✓ Five working locations
 - Admin Building – 5th Floor
 - Admin Building – 2nd Floor
 - Mail Ballot Operations Satellite
 - Election Distribution Center
 - Bank of America Tower – 20th Floor
 - Seeking additional leased space
- ✓ Multiple external review processes
 - Independent Elections Task Force
 - Citizens' Election Oversight Committee
 - Independent Council Audit
 - Outside Personnel Investigator
- ✓ Average six elections per year

