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Subject: VVPAT Audits in Camden and Bibb Counties

Camden County – November 16 and 17

The audit began at about 9:00 am with Mr. Don Williams, one of the team members, instructing the group on the procedures to be followed. Then, they divided into two teams and began the process.

The first two canisters that were opened were continuation tapes from the two machines requiring tape changes on Election Day. We could not verify the totals from this audit until we audited the first canister from these two machines. The process was quite slow on these two tapes since they were learning how to progress through the audit process. However, we were able to clear up some questions from both teams as they progressed through these tapes.

As the day went on and throughout the next day, the audit went fairly smoothly. As we verified the tally sheets to the results tapes printed on Election Day, we found that there were some races that did not exhibit the same totals. When this occurred, that team would pass the tape to the opposite team, and they would audit those races with discrepancies. We followed this process until we were able to verify the results from the printed results tapes. The teams found that the main cause for these discrepancies were rejected ballots being tallied as voted ballots. Another area that caused some question was cancelled ballots. It was determined that the cancelled ballot did not print any ballot choices, and therefore, did not require any action.

The audit process in Camden County found that the manual tally was able to verify the totals printed on the results tapes for each unit. While this process sometimes required multiple audits, it was determined that the totals produced from both the VVPAT and those determined from the upload of results from the unit's memory card were the same. The manual audit of the tapes by individuals was tedious, time consuming, and resulted in discrepancies due to human error.

Some of the other questions/concerns of the audit teams were:

1. The sheet used on Election Day to record the canister information for each TS unit should allow space to record multiple seal numbers for those units that require tape changes throughout the day. This would allow the canister to be better arranged so that the tapes could possibly be audited at the same time making the verification to the results tapes easier.
2. Rejected instructions should be expanded to include cancelled ballots.
3. Procedures for counting jammed ballots should be included in the procedures for conducting the audit. In some instances, part of the ballot could be verified while a portion was illegible. We were unclear on whether to account for those votes that were able to be determined or not count any votes cast on that ballot. One member of the team pointed out that by not being able to verify the last portion of the ballot, you could not be certain whether the ballot was cast or rejected. When I contacted the State Election Office, we were instructed not to count any votes cast on a jammed ballot. We did, however, tally the number of jammed ballots on each tape on the top portion of the audit tally sheet. In all cases, we were able to determine that the count discrepancies correlated with the number of jammed ballots for that particular tape.
4. During the audit process, one of the teams was concerned about what appeared to be a pattern for several ballots cast. For these ballots, it seemed that the voters stopped voting at the same race and picked up voting at the same race further through the ballot. There was also a contested race between the stop and restart point. They requested that this situation be included in the report to State Elections.
5. Auditors also requested a better way to unroll and re-roll the tapes. This was a time consuming process that they felt should or could be handled more efficiently.