



DIEBOLD ACCUVOTE-TOUCH SCREEN VOTING SYSTEM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: *What is the background and history on how Maryland got to be where it is with the Diebold AccuVote-Touch Screen Voting System?*

ANSWER: As a result of the controversy surrounding the 2000 Presidential Election, legislation was enacted by the Maryland General Assembly that gave the State Board of Elections (SBE), in consultation with the Local Boards of Elections (LBEs), the authority to select and certify a uniform, statewide voting system. After reviewing the different types of voting systems, SBE selected a Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting system as the statewide, uniform voting system.

The DRE voting system was chosen because it is the most accurate and accessible voting system on the market today. With a DRE voting system, there are **no** questions of voter intent. A voter cannot vote for more than one candidate for an office, all voters – including blind and visually impaired voters – are able to vote a secret ballot, and the ballots can be easily translated into multiple languages to comply with federal minority language requirements. The technology used in DRE voting systems is the same technology used for electronic banking at ATMs, has been tested by independent testing authorities and by states across the country, and has a proven record of accuracy and security.

After a lengthy and extensive evaluation process, SBE selected the Global Election Systems DRE voting system. Diebold, Inc., a leading supplier of ATMs and other banking technologies, subsequently purchased Global Election Systems, Inc. The Diebold AccuVote-TS voting system is a touch screen system, meaning that the voter touches the screen to select the candidate of his or her choice. The voter has the opportunity to review his or her choices before casting a ballot and using a headset and keypad, blind voters or voters with visual impairments can cast a secret ballot for the first time.

On October 29, 2002, President Bush signed the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). This landmark legislation requires each state to have, by January 1, 2006, a minimum of one voting system in each polling place that is accessible for voters with disabilities. To date, the DRE voting system is the only certified voting system that is accessible for voters with disabilities.

Maryland implemented the AccuVote-TS voting system in Allegany, Dorchester, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties for the 2002 elections. Nineteen counties are implementing the voting system for the 2004 elections, and the remaining jurisdiction (Baltimore City) will implement for the 2006 elections.



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QUESTION: *What is the State's position with respect to the report issued by Avi Rubin and the risk assessment performed by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)?*

ANSWER: The report issued by Avi Rubin and his colleagues made incorrect assumptions. While Mr. Rubin and his colleagues are computer experts, they are not election experts and, as a result, failed to consider the laws, processes, and election officials that surround the election process and protect the integrity of your vote.

- ✓ The Diebold AccuVote-TS voting unit is a stand-alone unit and IS NEVER connected to the Internet.
- ✓ The Diebold AccuVote-TS voting unit does NOT have a curtain; while side screens provide the voter with privacy while casting his/her vote, the voter is observed at all times by election judges from different political parties.
- ✓ The Diebold AccuVote-TS unit has a public counter that records the number of votes cast on the unit, and throughout the Election Day, this number is compared to the number of voters who showed up at the polling place to vote. Any discrepancy would be identified.
- ✓ In order to affect election results, multiple people in the election preparation process (over six different entities ranging from the vendor to the Independent Testing Authorities to the independent third party contractors to election officials at the state and local level) would have to be in collusion and have the knowledge of the more than 600 ballot styles in Maryland.
- ✓ The source code Mr. Rubin and his colleagues analyzed was NOT the source code used in Maryland and will NEVER be used in Maryland.
- ✓ After analyzing the source code, Mr. Rubin and his colleagues failed to find any instances of coding that would have altered the way a vote was recorded on the AccuVote-TS voting unit.

In response to Mr. Rubin's report and to ensure that the voting system used in Maryland was secure, the State of Maryland hired SAIC to perform a risk assessment on the Diebold AccuVote-TS Voting System and the laws and processes that govern and surround the election process. To SBE's knowledge, a risk assessment had never been conducted on a voting system and the processes that surround it, and SBE welcomed the findings of this fair and comprehensive analysis.

The risk assessment identified threats and vulnerabilities and recommended mitigation strategies to minimize the identified threats and vulnerabilities. As a result of the risk assessment, SBE implemented an action plan to mitigate the identified threats and vulnerabilities and has already completed 16 of the 23 action items. Diebold has added security keys and passwords that have been tested and implemented, and unofficial election results will be encrypted before transmission. The remaining action items will be completed before the 2004 Primary Election.



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QUESTION: *Why did the State select a Direct Recording Electronic voting system?*

ANSWER: The DRE voting system was chosen because it is the most accurate and accessible voting system on the market today. With a DRE voting system, there are **no** questions of voter intent. A voter cannot vote for more than one candidate for an office, all voters – including blind and visually impaired voters – are able to vote a secret ballot, and the ballots can be easily translated into multiple languages to comply with federal minority language requirements. The technology used in DRE voting systems is the same technology used for electronic banking at ATMs, has been tested by independent testing authorities and by states across the country, and has a proven record of accuracy and security.

Allegany, Dorchester, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties implemented the voting system for the 2002 elections. These jurisdictions implemented the voting system first because they were using the most outdated voting systems in the State – the lever machine and punch card voting systems. By comparing the number of voters who did not vote for the highest contest on the ballot, the advantages of the DRE voting system are clear. In Montgomery County, there were 2,862 “no votes” in the 2000 Presidential Election when it used a central count, punch card voting system. There were **zero** “no votes” in the polling place in the 2002 Gubernatorial Election, and in the 2004 Presidential Election, there will be **zero** “no votes” in the polling place. This means that more voters had their votes recorded as they intended than under the prior voting system. Like no other voting system used today, the DRE voting system provides the voters with the most secure and accurate voting.

QUESTION: *Are the DRE voting systems tested?*

ANSWER: Yes. The voting system goes through a rigorous set of tests that are performed by the Independent Testing Authorities (ITAs) – one for the software (source code) and one for the hardware. The ITAs are certified by the Federal Election Commission and follow the Voting System Standards. The ITA tests to ensure that the voting system accurately tallies votes and that the hardware is impervious to destructive handling and magnetic devices. Maryland receives the executable software directly from the ITA, not from Diebold.

In addition to the testing performed by the Independent Testing Authorities, the State of Maryland conducts tests on each voting unit before it can be certified for use in the State. The pre-certification tests are defined by the Federal Elections Commission and can be found at www.fec.gov.

An independent contractor hired by the State and overseen by state and local election officials tests **each** and **every** voting unit before the unit is accepted for use in Maryland. **Each** and **every** voting unit is tested just before an election to ensure that the voting unit



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records and tabulates votes accurately. This pre-election testing is performed on a real ballot with the internal clock in the voting unit set for the date of election day. A post-election test is also conducted to verify tabulation and accuracy are correct.

QUESTION: *How can I be assured that my vote is protected?*

ANSWER: There are numerous checks and balances in the election process. There is rigorous and comprehensive testing performed on the hardware and software of the voting system and on **each** and **every** voting unit before the election as well as testing after the election.

While the computers on which votes are recorded and tabulated are important, the election officials administering the elections are equally important. Maryland's election officials are committed public servants who fully believe in the democratic process and the right of every individual to exercise the right to vote. Their integrity is beyond reproach. Additionally, Maryland's Election Judges are chosen for their trustworthiness and high integrity. They take an Oath of Office to uphold the public trust. These are the same judges in whom you have placed your trust for years and years.

QUESTION: *How is the vote audited?*

ANSWER: Throughout Election Day, election judges match the number of votes cast on the voting units against the total number of voters who entered the polling place to vote. Any discrepancy will be noted. Post-election auditing is included in the Canvass process. Prior to the Election, the local board identifies 10% of the precincts that will be audited. One hundred percent of the memory cards are re-run through the accumulation process and compared to the Election Night. The votes cast on each voting unit (public counter) are compared once again to the number of Voter Authority Cards signed by the voters who came to the polling place and cast their votes on the ballot. The individual totals tape from each unit will be matched to the memory cards for each unit for the precinct.

QUESTION: *How are election results posted for poll watchers?*

ANSWER: A small printer, much like the one used in adding machines, is attached to the voting unit. It is in a locked compartment during voting hours. After the polls close, the Chief Election Judge prints the vote totals for each candidate in each contest. After the election judges sign the printed report, the report is posted on the wall, as has been done in the past.

QUESTION: *How are "write-in" names read?*

ANSWER: The Chief Election Judge has the option to print the "write-in" votes, which will include the "write-in" names for each contest in which there are "write-in" entries.



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If this report is not printed and posted at the polling place, the local board of elections will capture the “write-in” votes when the official election results are reported from each voting unit’s memory card.

QUESTION: Is a sample ballot sent out to voters in advance of Election Day?

ANSWER: Yes. A sample ballot will be mailed approximately 30 days prior to Election Day. Voters are encouraged to fill out the sample ballot with their choices prior to arriving at the polling place. This will contribute to streamlining the process on Election Day.

QUESTION: How is a Recount handled?

ANSWER: There are three ways to conduct a recount on the AccuVote-TS voting system. An individual requesting a recount may choose (1) an automated recount of the central system; (2) an automated recount of the ballot images; or (3) a manual recount of the ballot images.

- (1) The automated recount of the central system involves creating a recount database in the central computer and then rereading the memory cards from the each AccuVote-TS voting unit affected by the recount.
- (2) The automated recount of the ballot images is done by reading each vote cast on each AccuVote-TS voting units from the precincts affected by the recount and recording each vote cast on the unit’s recount tally sheet. This continues until all voting units affected are recounted.
- (3) The manual recount of the ballot images is done by printing the ballot images from each of the voting units affected by the recount. Once the ballot images are printed, a team of election officials manually counts the printed ballots.

QUESTION: What about a judge who might want to use the encoder to continue to encode cards and slip them in for multiple votes for a particular candidate?

ANSWER: There are at least two Election Judges in each polling place, one from each major political party (Republican and Democrat) who ensure the integrity of the vote. They not only observe and assist voters but they also ensure that other election judges are not interfering with the election process and are ensuring the integrity of the election. The other election judges would certainly notice and report an election judge that votes multiple times throughout the day.

In order to receive an activated Voter Access Card, the voter must first sign a Voter Authority Card. This Voter Authority Card is put in a receptacle behind the voting unit on which he/she votes. The voting unit displays a count of the number of times ballots



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were cast. During the day and after the polls close, the number of “Voter Authority Cards” are counted and compared to the number of ballots cast on the voting unit. Any discrepancy will be noted. Reconciliation occurs during the Canvassing process that is performed by the Chief Election Judges and observed by the local board of elections members. The Canvass is open to the public.