



★ VIRGINIA ★
STATE BOARD *of* ELECTIONS

Project Charter

Secure Return of Voted Overseas Military Absentee Ballots

Secure Electronic Return of Voted Military-Overseas Absentee Ballots

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Project

The State Board of Elections is required to provide instructions, procedures, services, security assessment, and security measures for the secure return, by electronic means, of voted absentee military –overseas ballots based on the State Senate Bill SB-011 which was passed by the 2014 General Assembly. The bill summary as passed reads:

Absentee voting and procedures; secure return of voted military-overseas ballots. Requires the State Board of Elections to provide instructions, procedures, services, a security assessment, and security measures for the secure return by electronic means of voted absentee military-overseas ballots from uniformed-service voters outside of the United States. The bill requires the State Board to develop and update annually a security assessment and security measures to ensure the accuracy and integrity of such votes. The State Board is directed to convene a working group for the development of the initial instructions, procedures, services, security assessment, and security measures, and the working group is required to submit an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly beginning January 1, 2016, on the feasibility and cost of implementation of the secure return of such military-overseas ballots. Additionally, the State Board is directed to work with federal, state, local, and other appropriate entities to establish best practices for uniformed-service voter authentication and identification and for the secure return of such military-overseas ballots. The provisions of this bill amending § 24.2-706 will not become effective unless reenacted by the 2016 Session of the General Assembly. This bill is identical to HB759.

Purpose of the Project Charter

This project charter will provide an understanding of the project, the reason for the project and its justification. The Project Charter will be reviewed by the project team and approved. The final approval will be the Commissioner of the Department of Elections.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Objective

The objective of this project is to develop a means by which to provide the secure return, electronically, of voted ballots of military-overseas voters with an annual report to document the security assessment and security measures to ensure the accuracy and integrity of voted military-overseas absentee ballots beginning January 1, 2016.

Scope

The scope of this project is to

- Identify and convene a working group

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- With the working group, develop and provide the initial instructions, procedures, services, security assessment, and security measures for securing the return of military-overseas ballots
- Work with federal, state, local, and other appropriate entities to establish best practices for uniformed-service voter authentication and identification and for the secure return of such military-overseas ballots
- Develop a report on the feasibility and cost of implementing a process to ensure the secure return of voted military and overseas absentee ballots
- Submit and update this report annually to the Governor and General Assembly beginning January 1, 2016

Meetings

Based on Virginia Code § 24.2-625.1, the purpose of the meetings for this initiative complies with the definition in the code granting permission to hold closed meetings for these discussions.

B. The State Board of Elections or a local electoral board **may hold a closed meeting pursuant** to the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act for the purpose of **discussing protocols for maintaining the security of ballots or voting and counting equipment**, or risk assessments of specific local electoral procedures, **where discussion of such matters in open meeting would compromise the security of any election**. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize a closed meeting to discuss any breach of security in the conduct of an election.

Proposed Meeting Schedule

Date	Purpose
April , 2015	Initial presentation and options Discussion
July , 2015	Finalize direction
Mid November 2015	Approve final recommendation

Major Milestones

- All working group representatives identified and confirmed
- Working group representatives convened

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- Appropriate members of federal, state, local and other entities identified to establish best practices for uniformed-service voter authentication and identification and for the secure return of military-overseas ballots
- Security assessment and feasibility developed
- Instructions, procedures, and services necessary for securing return of voted military-overseas ballots documented
- Best practices for military-overseas voter authentication and identification documented
- Feasibility and implementation cost report

Major Deliverables

- Security assessment and feasibility of the secure return of voted military-overseas ballots
- Instructions, procedures, and services necessary for securing return of military-overseas ballots
- Best practices for military-overseas voter authentication and identification
- Feasibility and implementation cost report

Assumptions

A representative mix of appropriately qualified professionals can be identified who are willing and able to participate on the working group with sufficient frequency.

Technology exists to provide a secure return of military-overseas ballots electronically.

Constraints

Input from working group is limited to their collective availability to meet.

The deliverables of this project will become effective only if the bill requiring them is reenacted by the 2016 Session of the General Assembly.

BUSINESS NEED OR OPPORTUNITY

The goal of this project is to comply with Senate Bill 11 as passed by the 2014 General Assembly to ensure that all authentic ballots cast by military-overseas voters within the deadline can be counted without dependence on the movement of mail in foreign countries or the U.S. and absent of the threat of fraud.

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PROJECT CHARTER ACCEPTANCE

Approvers for Department of Elections

Edgardo Cortes, Commissioner
Department of Elections

Date

Matt Davis, Chief Information Officer
Department of Elections

Date