COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK
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DEAN C. LOGAN
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

July 10, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor
William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Dean C. Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
Dean C. Logan

JUNE 3, 2008 STATEWIDE DIRECT PRIMARY ELECTION REPORT

At the June 10, 2008 Board meeting, by motion of Supervisor Don Knabe, your Board asked that the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk:

1. Review the successes and areas for improvement in conducting elections in Los Angeles County; and

2. Report back to the Board in 30 days with a full analysis of the June 3, 2008 Statewide Direct Primary Election.

Background

The June 3, 2008 Statewide Direct Primary Election in Los Angeles County ran well. 812,308 voters cast ballots in the county's 4,783 voting precincts. With 4,027,819 registered voters for the election, 20.17 percent voted.

The "double bubble" ballot which presented challenges during the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary was redesigned so that nonpartisan cross over voters no longer have to mark an additional position to signify their crossover party choice. We had no instances of complaint, concern, or voter confusion regarding this issue during the June election.

With Board approval, the RR/CC implemented a Help Desk program and an Online Poll Worker Training program. This report discusses the details of these innovative projects later. Both were extremely helpful in the conduct of the election and both offer increased capacity and capabilities for expanded use in the November Presidential General Election. We are confident that they will continue to assist us in conducting more efficient and effective elections.

Further, our county employee and student specialty poll worker programs – in addition to the Board approved poll worker incentive program – resulted in successful recruitment and placement of 23,537 Inspectors, Coordinators and clerks serving in each of our precincts for the June election.

Report Overview

The report begins with the RR/CC's pre-election activities and discusses our outreach and education programs, our poll worker recruitment programs, voter registration figures and our stakeholder outreach plan.

It continues with our Election Day activities that include the AskED automated Help Desk support system and statistics regarding phone calls and problem resolution, a summary of polling place issues, our media updates and press coverage of the election, and comparative statistics regarding election results reporting on election night.

Next, we discuss our post-election canvass activities which include the number of provisional ballots processed after Election Day, our 1 percent manual tally report, and our post-election audit requirements. The report concludes with commentary on our needs assessments as we move ahead to the November Presidential General Election.

Pre-Election Activities

A. Voter Outreach and Education Activities

Voter education is the key to informing an eligible electorate, including new citizens, on how to properly register and vote so ballots/votes can be counted. The election official's primary role is to provide the opportunity for eligible electors to register and vote; inform registered voters of available voting options and ballot choices; and applicable law changes.

Consistent with this purpose the RR/CC continuously looks for ways to enhance existing programs. Adequate funding to support outreach program efforts is always an issue. Identifying available funding resources, (i.e. federal/state grant programs, etc.) for providing supplemental staffing, mass production/distribution of voter educational material and purchasing promotional items and volunteer recognition awards for outreach partners/volunteers is a challenge.

Plans are in progress to administer an aggressive year-round program by establishing a more proactive partnership with membership of the Community Voter Outreach Committee (CVOC). CVOC members will be actively encouraged to attend certification classes for training on how to properly assist persons in registering to vote. Partnering with major broadcasting companies and embarking on other high visibility outreach efforts will be priorities for the upcoming Presidential General Election.

Our Outreach team registers voters, recruits poll workers, distributes Vote by Mail (VBM) applications and accepts completed Permanent Vote by Mail (PVBM) and VBM applications. Our Voter Registration Outreach Unit has recruited nearly 600 poll workers, registered almost 2,000 voters, accepted 700 VBM applications and attended over 100 events in the last fiscal year.

B. Voter Information Campaign

As in prior elections, the RR/CC placed voter outreach/education advertisements in local newspapers and issued press releases regarding voter education, outreach and all election-related matters including public notice regarding vote tabulation and canvassing

activities. We produced Public Service Announcements (PSA) with local radio stations and participated in media interviews with local television and radio stations as well as meeting with print reporters and editorial boards for minority language publications.

C. Vote By Mail Statistics and Timeline

In accordance with State law, we accepted VBM applications from April 10, 2008 and continued through May 27, 2008. The RR/CC mailed 639,507 VBM ballots during this period and processed 353,313 returned ballots, constituting 44 percent of all ballots cast and 55 percent return rate on Vote by Mail ballots issued.

D. Poll Worker Recruitment

Poll worker recruitment began in April and continued through the week before the election. The RR/CC recruited and placed 23,557 poll workers, Inspectors and Coordinators. Of those, 2,925 were students and 3,262 were County employees. Student and County poll worker recruitment efforts resulted in record numbers in both categories. The Board-approved poll worker incentive bonus also helped recruitment efforts and will remain an essential component of recruitment efforts for the November 4, 2008 Presidential General Election.

E. Voter Registration

Our voter registration efforts are ongoing. Voter registration takes place at community events throughout the County. The RR/CC staffs parades, festivals, community meetings and new citizen ceremonies. We implemented the following procedures to ensure registrants are aware of registration rights and are afforded the opportunity to register to vote.

- Staff distributes voter registration forms to individuals, answers questions and provides assistance to enable applicants to accurately complete registrations.

- Signs are posted in prominent areas and staff makes frequent announcements reminding citizens to complete, review, and submit their voter registration forms. Citizens residing in other counties are informed that their voter registration forms will be forwarded by RR/CC to the appropriate counties.

- Staff provides assistance to candidates with specific needs (i.e. disabled, vision impaired, wheelchair dependent, etc.); Armed Forces members who may be unaware of their registration and voting options while serving overseas, including during wartime; multilingual citizen candidates whose primary language is other than English.

- Voter registration forms collected are then transported by RR/CC staff to the Norwalk Elections Office for immediate processing.

The expanded program approach provides multiple opportunities for citizens to register to vote. Enhancements to the program have significantly increased the quantity of citizens registering to vote. The RR/CC processed 225,858 registrations from February, 2008 through the close of registration for the June Primary Election on May 19, 2008. During the last week of registration we processed 19,140 new registrations.

The RR/CC has an active New Citizen registration program. Staff visits naturalization ceremonies and conducts voter education and registration. The number of new citizen registrants has increased nearly 60 percent from 2005 and efforts are being developed to expand the program. Plans are in progress for development of a user-friendly "New Citizen Registration & Voting" information pamphlet covering basic voter registration and Vote by Mail application requirements for naturalized citizens in English and translated in VRA required languages.

In conjunction with the close of registration for the June 3, 2008 Primary Election, the RR/CC hosted voter registration events throughout the County in each of the Supervisorial Districts on May 19, 2008. The events included extended hours and visibility to allow eligible citizens opportunity to register to vote before the midnight deadline on the final day to register.

F. Stakeholder Involvement

As previously stated, the "double bubble" ballot was redesigned and voter outreach and educational materials were revised to include the new procedures. The revised cross over ballot eliminated the need for voters to mark an additional bubble to secure their votes for partisan candidates. In previous primaries, nonpartisan voters choosing to cross over to another party were required to mark their ballot twice – once for the party they intended to cross over to and again for their candidate choice. The new nonpartisan cross over ballot was revised as a result of a partnership between the RR/CC and a Cross Over Voting Working Group made up of community members from organizations representing a diverse cross section of Los Angeles County voters. These groups also had extensive background and experience in voter education and outreach efforts.

Participants in the working group included representatives from the California Secretary of State's office; the Los Angeles County Democratic, Republican and American Independent parties; the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), California Common Cause, the Courage Campaign, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), the League of Women Voters, the African American Voter Registration and Education Project (AAVREP) and the disability community.

Election Day Activities

A. AskED Help Desk Support System

The RR/CC's new automated Help Desk system was implemented for the June 3 election. Department staff was consulted about Help Desk topics which included projected election-day calls requiring information and problem resolution. Staff attended training sessions several weeks before Election Day and was required to utilize knowledge acquired as part of their daily job functions.

On Election Day, front line phone staff received initial calls and either resolved them or escalated them to designated personnel for final resolution. We received 5,299 calls on Election Day. 73 percent of these were resolved immediately and 26 percent were escalated for follow up. The chart that follows shows a breakdown of the call type and

the action taken. The "Operator Resolution" column shows the percentage of calls resolved immediately.

Issue Type	Escalated	Resolved	Total	Operator Resolution %
FIND Polling Place	49	1503	1557	**96.53%**
Other	25	360	391	**92.07%**
Voter Registration Issues	50	450	502	**89.64%**
Closing Procedures	3	13	16	**81.25%**
Voting Procedures	23	96	120	**80.00%**
General Questions	63	260	327	**79.51%**
Voter Registration Changes	33	118	151	**78.15%**
Vote by Mail Issues	83	302	387	**78.04%**
Voter Issues	28	98	128	**76.56%**
Multilingual Assistance	18	41	59	**69.49%**
Coordinator Issues	76	163	242	**67.36%**
Media Calls/Media On-Site	10	15	25	**60.00%**
Gray Reader (PBR)	241	213	471	**45.22%**
Blue Audio Ballot Booth(ABB)	42	36	85	**42.35%**
Disabilities/Accessibility	6	5	14	**35.71%**
Packing Supplies / CIC	40	22	63	**34.92%**
Polling Place/Pollworker	295	166	480	**34.58%**
Opening Polls: Set-up/Staff	268	66	345	**19.13%**
Poll Watchers / Electioneering	14	2	16	**12.50%**
Voter Fraud Calls	3	0	3	**0.00%**
Total	1370	3929	5299	**73.00%**

B. Polling Place Issues

Based on statistics derived from the reporting component of the AskED automated Help Desk System 99.9 percent of polling places opened on time at 7:00 AM. Although there were some instances of polling places opening late these were minimal and were resolved quickly. Inspectors were directed to call into the RR/CC Polls Unit to report that their polling places were open. The system offered a free flow of communication so issues were identified and resolved expeditiously.

C. Online Poll Worker Training

The RR/CC implemented a new Online Poll Worker Training program in for the June 3 election. As part of the full implementation, county employees and community poll workers who serve as Precinct Coordinators were required to take the full online training course and pass an assessment test in order to be placed on Election Day. 733 coordinators took the full class with 93 percent or 683 passing with a required score of 80 percent or better. There were also 1,000 poll workers who visited the site and took at least one course. Poll workers were not required to visit the site as part of their training but staff encouraged them to familiarize themselves with the program and to complete an interactive survey to inform the RR/CC on the usability and accessibility of the new training tool. The training site had over 10,000 hits.

D. Media Updates

In conjunction with the June 3 Statewide Direct Primary Election, the RR/CC Media Information Unit instituted a new reporting function that includes frequent press releases and Election Day media updates. All media information is sent via fax and email to media outlets and to Board Press Deputies throughout the day. The chart below displays the time and content of each release for the June election.

Press Release	Content
Polls Open	Announces polls are open from 7:00 AM until 8:00 PM
Voter Turnout Sampling	Announces turnout figures based on random sample reporting
Voter Turnout Sampling - Updated	Announces turnout figures based on random sample reporting
Results Reported	Statewide Primary Election semifinal report issued

E. Election Night Reporting

All ballots cast in polling places were delivered to the RR/CC Headquarters where they were scanned and processed through the MTS central vote tabulation system. VBM ballots that were received prior to 8:00 PM on election night were prepared, processed and counted beginning at 8:01 PM. Ballots were received throughout the evening and ballot processing ended when all polling place ballots were received and counted. The RR/CC's reporting system produces Press Bulletins every 20 minutes until completed. The table below shows the times and percentages of ballots counted for the June 3 and February 5 elections.

Time	Percentage of Ballots counted -- June 3	Percentage of ballots counted -- February 5
8:00 (PM)	29%	8%
10:00	32%	9%
10:20	36%	12%
10:40	44%	18%
11:00	51%	23%
11:20	59%	31%
11:40	69%	38%
12:00 (AM)	81%	45%
12:20	86%	49%
12:40	93%	53%
1:00	95%	56%
1:20	99%	63%
1:40	100%	69%
2:00	N/A	75%
2:20	N/A	81%
2:40	N/A	86%
3:00	N/A	94%
3:30	N/A	99%
4:00	N/A	100%

It is clear based on the statistics above that reporting times are proportional to voter participation. Turnout in the June Statewide Direct Primary was 20.17 percent while turnout for the February 5 Presidential Primary was 55.27 percent. While staffing levels remain the same for each election, the number of ballots to be processed differs resulting in later reporting times.

Further, the timeframe for closing the polls, completing the accountability paperwork, transporting the ballots to the Check-In Centers and then on to Norwalk are processes that are time consuming regardless of voter turnout. In order to ensure that the chain of custody is transparent and accountable these procedures are prioritized over the speed of delivery and reporting of results.

Once the ballots are checked in, inspected and delivered to the MTS room, the card readers perform efficiently and timely; however the system is dependent on the quality and accountability of the ballot inspection and processing procedures that must take place prior to tabulation.

Post Election Day Activities

A. Post Election Ballot Counting

Post election ballot counting takes place after every election. Provisional ballots cast in precincts during Election Day must be opened and voters' registration status verified

before the ballots can be counted. There were 23,560 provisional ballots cast in the June 3 election and 22,015, or 93 percent, were valid. The table below shows when the ballots were received from processing, whether they were counted or not, and the cumulative number of provisional envelopes received.

Date Envelopes Received	Number of Envelopes Received	Cumulative Envelope Count	Cumulative No Count Envelopes	Total Envelopes Received
6/6	6,250	6,250	0	6,250
6/7	6,650	12,900	0	12,900
6/8	4,600	17,500	0	17,500
6/9	3,631	21,131	0	21,131
6/10	329	21,460	1,485	22,945
6/11	355	21,815	1,519	23,334
6/12	63	21,878	1,524	23,402
6/13	0	21,878	1,532	23,410
6/14	0	21.878	1,532	23,410
6/16	27	21,905	1,533	23,438
6/24	110	22,015	1,545	23,560

B. Mandated 1 Percent Manual Tally

Post-election vote canvassing activities included the legally-required manual count of all ballots from a randomly selected 1 percent of precinct and Vote By Mail ballots. This process involved hand counting in excess of 12,300 ballots in 119 precincts.

The RR/CC is also responsible for conducting an additional 10 percent manual recount if votes in a contest or contests are less than one half of a percentage point apart. There were no races that fell into this category for the June election.

Random precinct selection and hand counting are open to election observers. Observers for the June election included candidates for office, political party representatives and election protection advocates.

Needs Assessment

Although the June election went well, we must remain diligent about executing current programs and implementing new ones.

We must continue to focus our resources on poll worker recruitment and training. While our county employee and student programs remain vibrant and the poll worker incentive program has helped, there are areas in Los Angeles County that are typically hard to recruit in. Additionally, there will be an increasing need for bi-lingual poll workers for the November Presidential General Election. We are assessing our programs for the November election and will concentrate on staffing all of our polling places, particularly in these areas.

Additionally, we will expand our online poll worker training program to require all coordinators and inspectors to take the full course and pass an assessment test. We will augment our

standard training program with the online training system so it becomes a recognized training tool – for our trainers as well as for our poll workers.

With the expectation of record-breaking voter turnout in the November Presidential General Election, we must be vigilant in ensuring transparency and accountability in the administration of the election, while directing efforts and more efficiency to achieve timely reporting of election results. Likewise, preparing candidates, the media and the public in advance of what to expect in terms of timeframes for vote count reports and post-election canvassing activities is important.

Stakeholder engagement with our Community Voter Outreach Committee (CVOC) as well as with voting integrity activists and other community advocacy groups is necessary to ensure open communication and partnership with voter information and education and with Election Day poll monitoring programs. These groups and individuals can assist the RR/CC with identifying vulnerabilities and potential Election Day problems in advance of the election. In the short months remaining before the historical 2008 Presidential General Election, the RR/CC will review post-election reports, poll worker survey data, and feedback from individual voters and community groups as part of the Department's pre-election preparations.