New Suggestions for CO SOS 3/30 Comparison Risk-Limiting Audit: Step-By-Step
Mark Lindeman and RLA advocates, 4/10/2017

This document "marks up" the Secretary of State's office's step-by-step document with some suggested changes. It is being submitted both as a PDF and as a Microsoft Word document for convenience in accepting or rejecting individual suggestions.

Comparison Risk-Limiting Audit: Step-By-Step
March 30, 2017

Timeline

October 23rd – County appoints audit board

November 7th – Election Day

November 11th – Veteran's Day

November 16th – Counties submit ballot manifests and CVRs

November 17th – SOS sends audit information to counties

November 18th – Audit begins

November 20th – County reports initial audit results to SOS

November 21st – SOS provides audit feedback to the counties

November 22nd – Counties submit final audit report to SOS

November 23rd – Thanksgiving

November 24th – Canvass deadline

Pre-Audit
County responsibilities
1. Appoint bi-partisan audit board

2. Define batch size

3. Define county-specific processes

SOS responsibilities
1. Identify contests subject~~Select contest(s)~~ to audit to mandatory risk limits. ~~statewide or countywide~~

2. Define risk ~~limit~~ limits for contests subject to mandatory risk limits (e.g., 5%).~~limit~~

Audit

1. County keeps ballots in the same order in which they are scanned or imprints ballots

2. County creates ballot manifest (county ID, scanner ID, batch number, and number of ballots in the batch), and secures and stores ballots

3. County prints summary report and compares that to the ballot manifest to ensure that the number of ballots cast are the same

4. ~~County exports CVR by 11:59 PM on the 9th day after the election~~

~~5.~~4. County submits ballot manifest and CVR to the SOS by 11:59 PM on the 9th day after the election

5. On the 10th day after the election, for each county, the SOS determines the sample size based on the countywide and statewide contests (if any exist) with the smallest margins. If no statewide or countywide contest exists, the SOS determines the county's sample size based on the intra-county contest that received the most votes, but the minimum sample size will be 16.

6. On the 10th day after the election, the SOS uses a public process to obtain a random seed ~~forand RLA~~ software to randomly select numbers. The SOS associates these random numbers with ballot manifest entries and publishes a list of randomly selected ballot manifest entries. The list should be sufficiently long to accommodate an expansion of the ~~ballots to~~ audit due to discrepancies found.~~and sends the information to the counties~~

~~7.~~ The audit~~Audit~~ board retrieves the selected ballots (based on the list and sample size), records and sends to the SOS their interpretation of vote selections for the contests on each sampled ballot. For these sampled ballots, contests with no mandatory risk limit will be opportunistically audited. This must be completed ~~the ballots, and compares them to the CVR~~

~~8.~~7. ~~County reports results of RLA to the SOS~~ by 5:00 PM on the 13th day after the election

8. When each set of vote interpretations from a particular sample ballot are received, SOS software compares the counties' reported results of audited ballots to corresponding CVRs and reports any discrepancies.

9. By 8am on 14th day after the election, SOS determines whether additional auditing is needed. If so, SOS increments the number~~sends county a list~~ of ~~additional~~ ballots each county must~~to~~ retrieve and inspect from the existing list of ballot manifest entries.

10. By 5pm on 15th day after the election, county audit board retrieves additional sampled ballots, records and sends to the SOS their interpretation of the vote selections for specified contests on each sampled ballot.

11. County investigates and reports discrepancies~~audit results~~ and other pertinent data to SOS at the end of the audit.

Post-Audit

SOS Responsibilities

1. Issue reports to counties and public summarizing audit findings including discrepancy rates and types of discrepancies.

County responsibilities

1. Evaluate audit results.
2. Recommend improved practices for election administration and for conducting audits.