



U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

**FISCAL YEAR 2023
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

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Mission and Vision

Mission

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission helps election officials improve the administration of elections and helps Americans participate in the voting process.

Vision

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission is a trusted, proactive, and responsive federal agency that helps election officials administer and voters participate in elections.

Salaries and Expenses

FY 2021 Enacted		FY 2022 President's Budget		FY 2023 Request	
FTE*	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars
46	\$17,000,000	65	\$22,833,531	78	\$30,087,000

*FTE number for FY 2021 reflects current actual. FY 2022 number reflects President's Budget request. FY 2023 reflects agency need as it relates to the requested PC&B figure.

Election Innovation Grants

FY 2021 Enacted		FY 2022 President's Budget		FY 2023 Request	
FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars	FTE	Dollars
-	-	-	100,000,000	5	\$250,000,000

FY 2023 Priorities

-- Continue to serve as a clearinghouse of voting information by providing election officials and voters with necessary and timely information and materials as they administer and participate in the 2022 midterm election, as well as any elections after.

-- Help the nation administer elections with secure and accessible voting systems by continuing to implement the EAC's most up-to-date Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG), as well as expand and strengthen the testing and certification of voting equipment via field auditors, election technology specialists, and a quality monitoring program of equipment after it leaves the manufacturer.

-- Process, analyze, and release data from the 2022 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS), the agency's instrument used to collect state-by-state data on the administration of federal elections. Additionally, execute studies statutorily mandated by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) that have sat idle due to years of insufficient funding.

-- Make critical investments in advancing agency management and performance, as well as establish dedicated staff aimed at assisting states in complying with voting laws and civil rights voting laws as a matter of focusing on equity advancement.

-- Expand a critically under-staffed Communications department while also furthering the administration's IT modernization agenda through website development and strong network administrators.

-- Revamp the agency's website to expand accessibility and usability, as well as modern tools to display critical data points, voter education material, and tools to assist all agency stakeholders.

-- Administer a competitive Election Innovation Grant funding to states with qualified projects, ensuring funding is utilized efficiently and that states in need of such funding have an opportunity to request it.

Appropriations language

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

**SALARIES AND EXPENSES
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)**

For necessary expenses to carry out the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-252), \$30,087,000, of which \$1,500,000 shall be made available to the National Institute of Standards and Technology for election reform activities authorized under the Help America Vote Act of 2002.

ELECTION INNOVATION GRANTS (appropriation language)

For the establishment of a competitive grants program to foster innovation, enhance processes and procedures, and improve the administration of federal elections, \$250,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2024; of which not to exceed 2 percent shall remain available until September 30, 2028, for the administration and oversight of grants awarded under this heading: Provided, That the Election Assistance Commission shall, consistent with the purposes of the Help America Vote Act of 2002, award grants to States and eligible units of local government on a competitive basis for projects that will have significant national, regional, or local impact in the improvement of the administration of federal elections through innovation, including, but not limited to, election administration; cybersecurity and statistically valid risk-limiting audits; security of election officials and locations; accessibility for voters, including those with disabilities and other specific access needs, and including vote-by-mail, voter education, language proficiency, usability, and voter technology; or other programs to enhance or reliably secure processes and procedures in administering federal elections without meaningfully impairing access: Provided further, That for purposes of this appropriation, the term State has the meaning given such term in section 901 of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21141): Provided further, That for purposes of this appropriation, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall be deemed to be a State: Provided further, That for purposes of this appropriation, an eligible unit of local government is defined as a unit of local government with responsibility for the administration of Federal elections: Provided further, That a grant awarded under this heading shall be for an amount not greater than \$10,000,000, and shall be available for obligation by the State or eligible unit of local government through September 30, 2028: Provided further, That not more than 10 percent of the total amount of funds made available under this heading may be awarded to projects in a single State.

Agency Background and Structure

Congress established the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to help election officials improve the administration of elections and help Americans participate in the voting process. Congress charged the EAC with fulfilling its mission by administering a national election administration clearinghouse that studies election administration practices, provides best practices to the nation, helps voters register to vote and participate in federal elections, manages federal standards for voting systems, tests and certifies voting systems to the national standard, and distributes congressionally appropriated funds to states for the improvement of election administration.

The EAC consists of four presidentially appointed Commissioners, professional staff, and four FACA committees. The majority and minority party each have the authority to recommend two of the four Commissioners who lead the agency, making the EAC a bipartisan commission by statutory mandate.

The EAC's three statutorily mandated FACA committees are the Board of Advisors, the Standards Board, and the Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC). The three groups advise the agency and help develop the EAC's national voting system testing and certification standard, the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG).

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) dictates the membership of the three committees. The Standards Board is a 110-member board consisting of 55 state election officials (the 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) selected by their respective chief state election official, and 55 local election officials selected through a process supervised by the chief state election officials. The Board of Advisors consists of groups representing governors; mayors; state legislatures; secretaries of state; state election directors; county recorders, election officials and clerks; voter advocacy groups; federal agencies; and professionals in the fields of science and technology.

The TGDC helps the EAC develop its Voluntary Voting System Guidelines. It is composed of 14 members appointed jointly by EAC and the Director of the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), who is the chairperson of TGDC.

Additionally, the EAC established a fourth FACA Committee, the Local Leadership Council (LLC), in 2021 to provide expert, unbiased analysis and recommendations to the EAC on local election administration topics. Membership in the LLC consists of 100 members with two members from each state who are currently or recently serving officers of each state's local election official association. The first meeting of the LLC took place on December 10, 2021. the LLC also held its annual meeting in early 2022.

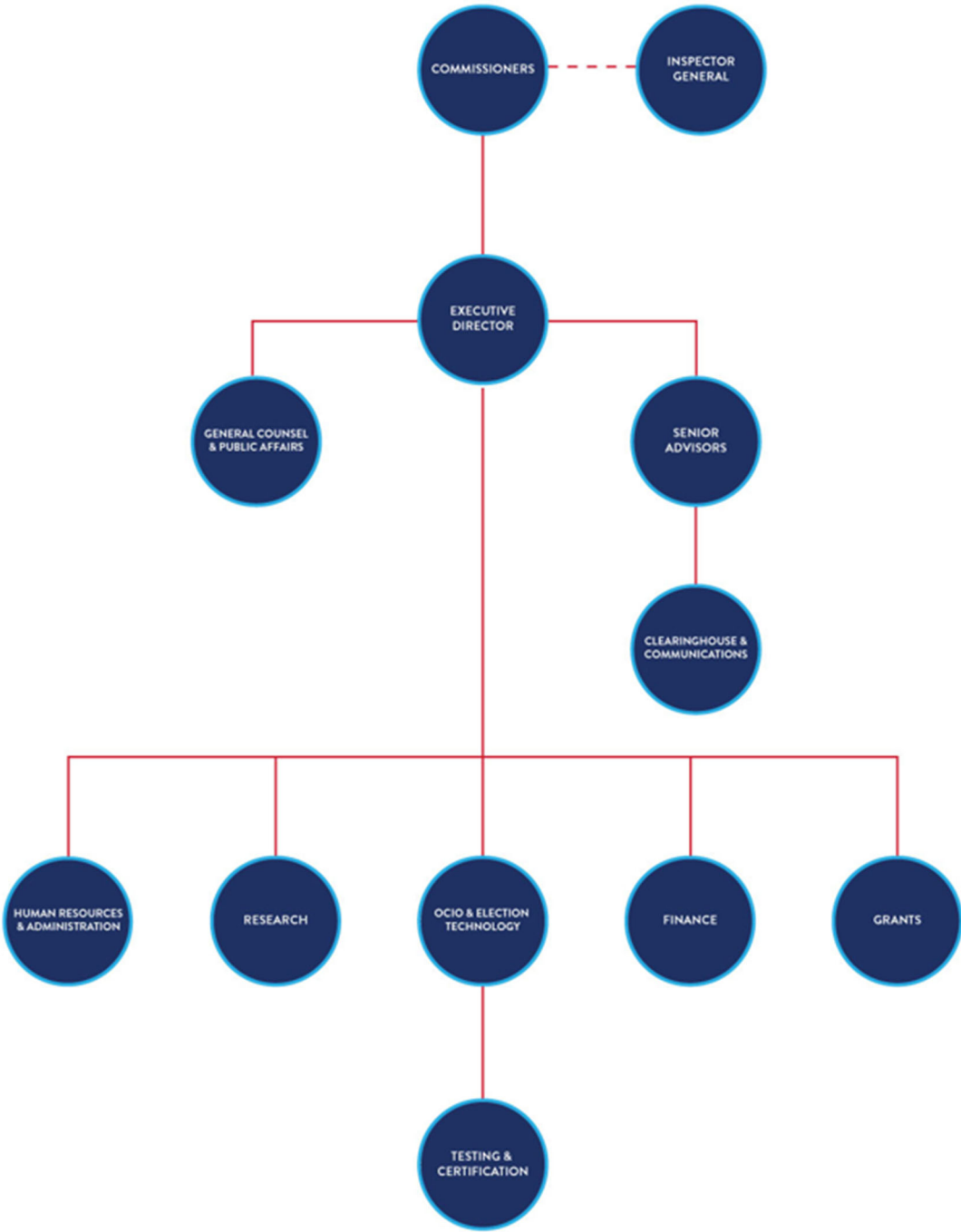
Goals and Structure of Budget Justification

As established and detailed in the EAC's strategic plan, the EAC's operations and offices are aligned to address the Commission's congressional mandates to serve as a clearinghouse of information on voting; test and certify voting systems; administer and maintain the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) voter registration form; assist states with administration of HAVA funds; and report to Congress on NVRA and Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voting activity.

The EAC's current strategic plan sets forth three strategic goals and 10 strategic objectives. The three strategic goals are as follows:

1. Strengthen American elections through the development and implementation of responsive and dynamic voting system guidelines and cyber resources for election officials;
2. Encourage improvements to election administration through the development and distribution of resources that assist election officials in modernizing American elections; and
3. Create operational excellence throughout agency management and programming.

U.S. Election Assistance Commission Organization Chart



This organizational chart is currently operational but is pending a final vote by Commissioners.

Fiscal Year 2021 Accomplishment Highlights

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is a trusted, proactive, and responsive bipartisan federal commission that helps election officials administer and voters participate in elections. Established by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), the EAC provides funds to state election offices to improve and strengthen security around federal elections, serves as the nation's clearinghouse for information on election administration, conducts the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) and other studies, develops the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG), accredits testing laboratories and certifies voting systems, and administers the National Mail Voter Registration Form in accordance with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. From coast-to-coast, the EAC is providing services for state and local election officials and the voters they serve. Among the EAC's most notable accomplishments during Fiscal Year 2021 are the following:

HAVA Grants

In 2018, it had been eight years since the EAC last received HAVA grant funding. Between 2018 and 2020 the EAC received over 1.1 billion in grants funds. The grant funds did not come with an increase in operations funding to support administration and oversight. The workload, however, was significantly greater especially as the CARES funds came with a 20-day reporting requirement for grantees and a 23-day reporting requirement to Congress by the EAC after each primary and the general election. The EAC pursued Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval to ensure that the required reporting was standardized to the reduce reporting burden across grant recipients. The agency implemented official mid-year reporting for all HAVA grants in Q3 of FY 2021. Multiple training events were held to support the reporting requirements for CARES, and Federal Financial and Progress reporting for all HAVA grants. The emphasis of training at critical compliance points led to improved and increased reporting compliance. Grants staff reviewed over 700 financial and progress reports in FY 2021 including the 56 CARES 20-day reports from the General Election.

The Grants Office developed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), written guidance, and webinars to train grantees on the use of CARES funding and Election Security funds. The team responded to a high volume of inquiries regarding allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary expenditures and funding activities.

CARES funding was only available to states until December 31, 2020, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus for the 2020 federal election cycle. Per HAVA, states have until March 2022 to meet the matching requirements. To ensure any unexpended federal funds and unexpended federal interest is returned prior to closeout, the EAC stood up a debt collection and closeout process for the CARES grant. Training was provided to grantees on the upcoming closeout process and guidance was published to the EAC website. In FY 2021, half the expected unexpended CARES funds were recovered ahead of the project end date of March 2022 and 21 grants were closed.

In Q3 FY 2021, the EAC decided to make the Grants program into a standalone office to reflect the importance of the function at the agency. The Office of Grants Management now reports directly to the Executive Director. Additional personnel changes included hiring a full-time Grants

Specialist to oversee and support the increased grantmaking responsibilities for the agency and recruiting a second Grants Management Specialist with a start date anticipated in FY 2022.

In Q4, the EAC selected HHS' GrantSolutions grants administration software as a service to improve and automate its grants administration functions so more time can be spent for strategic activities and technical support to grantees. Utilization of a grant system will reduce grantee time spent on administrative activities and free up staff time to execute and oversee grant activities. Up to this point, the Grants staff has been manually administrating and responding to inquiries regarding HAVA funding. All processing of applications, issuance of awards, review of reports and extraction and data mining of emails and PDF documents is handled by staff without a grants system to house and automate these functions. The GrantSolutions award management system will allow EAC to standardize financial assistance management procedures and increase transparency, accountability, and oversight for financial assistance funding. With a grant system, staff can develop better technical assistance training for award management, best practices, audit readiness, and education on federal assistance grants administration. The EAC conducted a fit gap analysis with GrantSolutions in September 2021 to assess current business processes against system capabilities and options. The EAC anticipates fully deploying the system by FY 2023 ahead of the next annual report deadline of December 29, 2022.

Strengthening Election Security and Voter Confidence

The EAC understands that voter confidence can be enhanced when election officials and their federal partners adequately prepare for and respond to election security challenges. As demonstrated in the 2020 elections, such challenges include election disinformation campaigns, malicious attempts to breach voter registration databases and other election systems, the use of ransomware, and other emerging and evolving threats to election infrastructure.

As the agency positioned to communicate directly with election officials across the country, the EAC played an early and leading role in establishing trust and open lines of communications between state and local leaders and the federal government entities that work on election security. The EAC drove the development of the election security working group that eventually became the election infrastructure subsector's Government Coordinating Council (GCC). Led by the EAC chair on the GCC executive committee, GCC members include the EAC chairperson and vice chair, as well as three state election officials and three local election officials drawn from the EAC's federal advisory committees. The EAC's remaining two commissioners serve on the GCC as ex officio members. In addition to the EAC's work with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish the GCC, the Commission supported establishing the Sector Coordinating Council (SCC) comprised of private election equipment manufacturers and vendors.

Beyond the GCC and SCC, the Commission takes a multifaceted approach to helping state and local election officials strengthen election security. This work includes testing and federally certifying voting systems, providing hands-on training and technical assistance on IT management and post-election audits, producing security-focused resources, and disseminating security best practice information and checklists to state and local election officials.

Election Technology, Advancing VVSG 2.0

As states seek to invest in the purchase of new voting equipment, election leaders are continuing to turn to the EAC's Testing and Certification Program as a key resource in ensuring the nation's voting systems are tested to confirm the secure and accurate tabulation of ballots. This includes seeking information about how best to develop Requests for Proposals, information on the systems currently certified, and implementation of the next iteration of the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines, which is known as VVSG 2.0.

The EAC took a number of steps in FY 2021 and 2022 to advance VVSG 2.0, following the unanimous vote of the Commissioners to adopt the new standards on February 10, 2021. These steps included: developing and publishing test assertions for requirements; creating and disseminating for feedback a VVSG lifecycle policy; creating an end-to-end verifiable voting system protocol properties and scope document to launch the evaluation process of these new election technologies; and working with the NIST National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) to update their manual in preparation for accrediting voting system test laboratories (VSTLs) to VVSG 2.0.

The EAC anticipates at least one VSTL will apply for accreditation to the VVSG 2.0 standard by the end of Q1 of 2022. When a VSTL obtains VVSG 2.0 accreditation, this allows the new program manuals to go into effect and also allows the VVSG lifecycle policy to be fully implemented. After a number of rounds of feedback from the EAC's stakeholders and the public, the EAC anticipates approval of a final version of the VVSG lifecycle policy by the end of Q1 2022.

In addition to the work being done to advance VVSG 2.0, the EAC also began a pilot testing program for electronic poll books (e-poll books) with a public hearing conducted on November 17th, 2021, and draft security and accessibility requirements being available by the end of Q1 2022. The EAC plans to run the pilot with two candidate systems throughout 2022 with an evaluation period immediately after to determine next steps. The goal is to create a set of standards that can be used by the EAC or states to test and certify the security and accessibility of their e-poll book products.

Information Technology Improvements

Throughout 2021, the EAC continued to implement improvements to its information technology (IT) infrastructure. These include abilities to gain greater visibility into the health of all EAC endpoints, whether operating in a remote environment or utilizing our on-premises network. In May of 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14028 mandating all Federal Civilian Executive Branch agencies take measures to improve the cybersecurity posture of their organizations. One of the principal requirements of the Executive Order is to transition our infrastructure to a Zero Trust Architecture. The EAC has developed a plan to implement a Zero

Trust Architecture and will likely need additional funding and expertise to fully realize the transition.

In addition to Executive Order 14028, a number of binding operational directives (BODs) and OMB memoranda have been issued related to improving cybersecurity. In particular, BOD 22-01 requires the EAC to remediate vulnerabilities with known exploitations within 14 days of publishing on a CISA maintained list. This requirement has caused the EAC to accelerate existing plans for automated vulnerability detection and remediation and we are currently able to meet the timelines set out by CISA. Implementation of additional OMB guidance related to logging and multi-factor authentication is also ongoing throughout 2022.

Finally, as part of the EAC's move from the Silver Spring, MD office to the Judiciary Square office in Washington, DC, all previously existing on-premises IT infrastructure has been decommissioned and moved to the cloud. The only remaining technologies are those required to provide internet and telecommunications capabilities at the office location and do not contain any data or processing capabilities. The new office space will provide greatly improved abilities to conduct public hearings, roundtables, and other events utilizing modern video and audio distribution capabilities.

Conducting Essential Research on Election Administration and Infrastructure

In August 2021, the EAC released the 2020 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) Comprehensive Report and dataset. The biennial EAVS is the agency's flagship research initiative, collecting nationwide data on election administration from nearly 6,500 local election jurisdictions across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. The EAVS collects state-by-state, jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction data on a wide variety of election administration topics, including voter registration, military and overseas voting, domestic civilian by-mail voting, polling operations, provisional ballots, voter participation, and election technology. EAVS data is utilized by countless stakeholders in the election community, including members of Congress, legislative staff, federal officials, journalists, academics, advocates, and election officials themselves. In today's environment of heightened concerns regarding cybersecurity in elections, EAVS data is increasingly being used by intelligence analysts, members of the national security community, and other stakeholders who are working to secure U.S. election infrastructure.

The EAC hosted an Election Data Forum, in August 2021, after the release of the 2020 EAVS report and its submission to Congress. The event convened state and local election officials, their federal partners, and other key election stakeholders to discuss EAVS findings and leveraging data-driven practices to improve election administration.

EAC initiatives to improve the EAVS have focused on three interrelated goals: to reduce response burden; to strengthen data quality and completeness; and to make the data more accessible and useful, particularly for election officials. Respondents to the 2020 EAVS continue to have the option of completing the EAVS online, along with the option of using the traditional EAVS data collection template. The EAC plans to transition to a fully online survey experience in the coming years.

As part of the agency’s efforts to make EAVS data more accessible and useful, the EAC released individualized 2020 EAVS Data Briefs for each state and territory in January 2022. The briefs are snapshots of key EAVS data points. Complementing these efforts, the EAC also released the 2020 EAVS Data Interactive. The EAVS Data Interactive is an online tool that allows visitors to explore, visualize, and compare election jurisdictions’ EAVS responses.

The EAC is currently preparing to administer the 2022 EAVS. Since the completion of the 2020 EAVS, the EAC has conducted needs assessments and user testing with several states on how the 2020 EAVS went and on how the 2022 EAVS can be improved. The EAC, as of this writing, is going through the OMB approval process for the 2022 EAVS, accepting public comments, and making updates to the survey instruments.

Election Accessibility

The EAC continues to support language accessibility in elections and has done so since its inception in 2002. This includes creating glossaries and phrase books of common election terminology, providing Help America Vote Act funds to states to improve language accessibility, and offering the National Mail Voter Registration Form in 21 languages.

In addition, the EAC continues to actively engage voters with disabilities and advocacy groups focused on accessibility. This included distributing copies of the EAC’s disability voting rights pamphlet, which uses plain language to spell out federal voting rights for persons with disabilities in large print and Braille. EAC Commissioners and staff also participated at key stakeholder events focused on voting for persons with disabilities, including a February 2021 Legislative Seminar with the American Council of the Blind.

In February 2021, the EAC released the “Disability and Voting Accessibility in the 2020 Elections” comprehensive national report. The EAC conducted this study with Rutgers University to identify advancements and gaps in accessibility for voters with disabilities. A public, virtual roundtable on accessibility lessons learned from the 2020 election was also held in February to discuss the results and get feedback from election officials and advocates. In further commitment to supporting voters with disabilities, the EAC hired a Senior Subject Matter Expert (SME) that infuses accessibility best practices in all EAC work products.

Clearinghouse

Established by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), the EAC is charged with serving as a clearinghouse for election administration information. In 2021, the EAC created a Clearinghouse department within the Executive Director’s office, to ensure the agency can meet this mission. Made up of former election officials, experts in election administration, election law, and accessibility, the Clearinghouse department expanded in 2021 to include six Senior Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The department now has over 40 years of combined experience administering elections at the county and city level.

The SMEs collectively produced various products to address timely and pressing needs of election

officials. These resources included a best practices guide to assist election officials with chain-of-custody procedures, a Testing and Certification 101 document, an FAQ toolkit, a Guide to Redistricting, and an updated Glossary of Election Terminology to provide standardized election definitions for nearly 1,300 election terms in 21 languages.

In March 2021, the EAC announced the 2020 Clearinghouse Award winners, also known as the “Clearie” Awards, for best practices in election administration. The EAC launched the Clearies in 2016 to further the clearinghouse mandate and to promote best practices in elections while celebrating the accomplishments of election officials.

The award categories include innovation in election administration; improving accessibility for voters with disabilities; best practices in recruiting, training, and retaining poll workers; and creative and original “I Voted” sticker design. The EAC also announced a new category in 2021 for innovation in election cybersecurity and technology. Winners were selected by two independent panels of election officials from the EAC’s advisory boards with the EAC Commissioners serving as judges for the sticker category.

Honorees included jurisdictions of varying sizes, from large states with more than 8 million registered voters to townships of around 75,000 voters. Many of the programs were adapted or created in response to the pandemic, but the concepts behind them can help voters for years to come.

The EAC continued to add more state-specific resources to its website, directing voters to trusted sources for voter registration, options to cast a ballot, and contact information for where they are registered.

Operating Plan Summary

Salaries and Expenses	FY 2021 Enacted	FY 2022 President's Budget	FY 2023 Request
Full-Time Equivalent Staff (FTE)	46	65	78
Payroll – Personnel Compensation	5,219,737	6,605,492	8,451,563
<i>Subtotal Personnel Compensation</i>	<i>5,219,737</i>	<i>6,605,492</i>	<i>8,451,563</i>
Personnel Benefits	1,764,170	2,870,925	3,662,098
<i>Subtotal PC&B</i>	<i>6,983,907</i>	<i>9,476,417</i>	<i>12,113,661</i>
Travel / Transportation of Things	45,969	500,000	600,000
Rent, Communications, Equipment Rentals	391,634	682,309	682,309
Printing, Reproduction	15,084	24,000	25,000
Other Services	7,555,527	10,321,304	14,969,694
NIST	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Supplies and Subscriptions	93,709	129,578	90,000
Equipment	340,615	195,528	100,000
Financial Transfers (OIG)	3,776	4,395	6,336
<i>Subtotal, Non-personnel</i>	<i>9,946,315</i>	<i>13,357,114</i>	<i>17,973,339</i>
FY 2021 Year-End Unobligated	69,778		
Total Salaries and Expenses	17,000,000	22,833,531	30,087,000

U.S. Election Assistance Commission
Fiscal Year 2023 Congressional Budget Justification

Election Innovation Grants	FY 2021 Enacted	FY 2022 President's Budget	FY 2023 President's Budget¹
Full-Time Equivalent Staff (FTE)	-	-	5
Full-Time Staff	-	-	5
Payroll Full-Time Personnel	-	-	532,350
Personnel Benefits	-	-	228,150
<i>Subtotal PC&B</i>	-	-	<i>760,500</i>
Travel	-	-	27,300
Other Services	-	-	815,000
Supplies and Subscriptions	-	-	4,000
Grants	-	100,000,000	245,000,000
<i>Subtotal, Non-personnel</i>	-	-	<i>1,606,800</i>
Total Election Innovation Grants	-	100,000,000	246,606,800

¹ Reflects operating plan for first year of five-year funding. Payroll costs include five full-time staff, as well as necessary split-pay funding for other agency personnel contributing to program administration.

FY 2023 Budget Request Highlights

In November 2022, the nation will administer and participate in the 2022 midterm election. The EAC's FY 2023 budget justification highlights the agency's plans to continue to help election officials efficiently and effectively administer secure and accessible elections by developing and sharing best practices, as well as research and report election administration data. The agency's budget submission also looks to build on its recent growth and make key investments in areas that have been underfunded and neglected for years, such as initiating several statutorily required election studies and piloting a much-needed audit program for voting systems. Additionally, the EAC looks to strategically apply critical administrative funding internally to advance agency equity and diversity, enhance agency management and performance, and make substantial improvements in the areas of cybersecurity, communications, and web development.

The EAC is also excited to propose a competitive grants program in 2023 aimed at promoting innovation in the area of election administration. Compared to the past practice of formula grants, this program looks to efficiently distribute much-needed funding to those states that specifically request it and propose qualified projects in the areas of voting technology, cybersecurity and other security safeguards, election accessibility, language proficiency, voter education, usability, and other innovative proposals in the area of election administration. This approach aims to ensure election funding is strategically targeted to those that need the project funding.

Voting System Audits / Election Technology Requirements

As a part of its FY 2023 budget request, the EAC requests funding to pilot field inspections of certified voting systems and post-manufacturing audits of voting system equipment. This would allow the EAC to ensure configurations of fielded EAC certified systems are compliant and that voting system equipment adheres to manufacture supply chain risk management strategies and manufacturing specifications. These requests are in direct support of HAVA and the administration's cybersecurity priority. It is critical that the EAC have adequate funding to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of certified voting systems that are in the field. To perform the required quality monitoring the EAC requires in its current manual, adequate staff must be placed regionally to provide support to election offices throughout the nation. The current EAC program does not have dedicated personnel to perform hash value checks or other anomaly detection on behalf of election officials to ensure the integrity of the EAC testing and certification program.

Additionally, the EAC aims to establish specialty requirements and guidelines specific to equipment used for election support technology that are not necessarily covered under VVSG, such as electronic pollbooks, voter registration databases, and ballot delivery systems. As part of this initiative, the EAC intends to hire election technology specialists dedicated to executing these election support technology efforts. In addition, the EAC will fund expert contractors to assist with the development of these new programs covered in HAVA.

Lastly, to improve the EAC Testing and Certification program the EAC seeks to invest funds in the procurement of systems that allow for efficient vulnerability disclosure programs and software that allows for robust tracking of testing and certification of all voting systems or their components. The EAC would need to procure software, hardware, and services to enhance the programs record keeping

and allow for both secure and efficient handling of reported bugs and anomalies, and the remediation of these bugs as needed. As the only national testing and certification program, the EAC needs specialized software to track all models of systems and where they are in the lifecycle of voting systems.

Communications / Web Development

As a part of its FY 2023 budget request, the EAC requests funding to acquire necessary legislative affairs staff to assist the agency in mission-critical responsibility of tracking necessary legislation from not only a federal level, but also a state level. Legislation at the federal and state levels often impacts how elections are administered by requiring new systems, changing deadlines, and updating processes. Each state is different and election officials often rely on the expertise of other officials to implement and communicate election administration changes to voters and local officials. The EAC, in its Clearinghouse function, compiles and promotes best practices to help election officials administer secure, accurate and accessible elections. Elections are also decentralized, and to adequately understand the nuances of each state and updates that impact election administration, additional legislative staff is needed to help assist officials and America's voters.

In addition to legislative staff, the EAC also requests funding to expand the communications department staff with additional writers and social media staff. It is paramount to the EAC mission that the EAC produce documents in plain language and provide materials that are truly valuable. Without researching trends, obtaining feedback, having a robust strategy to disseminate work product, and having expert communication specialists on board, the EAC risks not getting critical information out to its stakeholders in a timely and practical manner. These staff members will help the agency develop additional resources that fit the needs of election officials and make sure officials are aware of the wide range of EAC resources available. Additional communications staff will increase the agency's capacity and the effective distribution of agency materials.

In support of the Administration's FY 2023 goal of IT modernization, the EAC also plans to improve the EAC's website. That includes acquiring necessary web developers to develop new tools and evaluate how to ensure the website is organized and accessible so any visitor can find the information they are looking for. In support of the same goal, the EAC requests funding to redevelop its website to further the agency's core mission of providing assistance to the electorate. The volume of information on the EAC's website is extensive. A redesign of the website will ensure this information can reach voters, election officials, and other stakeholders. For example, the EAC's website includes extensive state-by-state grants reporting and voting information, local jurisdiction information on poll worker recruitment and voting systems, and a growing number of in-depth reports and resources on a variety of election administration topics. The content of the agency's website will continue to grow and as it does, we need to make sure this primary tool for the agency is not only informative and fits the needs of stakeholders but is also secure and accessible to all visitors.

The EAC also plans to utilize the necessary developers to create tools and apps that provide for better training for election officials and better voter education for voters. These tools, in combination with an updated EAC website, will allow the agency to provide information in new, streamlined, and accessible ways. To make the website more friendly to diverse groups of people, the EAC plans to translate useful best practices in multiple languages, continue to ensure 508 compliance, and implement a new modern website and applications customized for the EAC's unique mission.

The EAC partners with the General Services Agency (GSA) on vote.gov. As the subject matter experts on elections, the EAC helps GSA update the site and provides guidance on elections and voting. Executive Order 14019 on Promoting Access to Voting orders the modernization of vote.gov. As part of that order, GSA is coordinating with the EAC to modernize and improve the user experience. As the mission of vote.gov expands, so will the EAC's role in supporting that effort. Additional funds are being requested to expand the EAC's capacity to provide subject matter expertise and other technical assistance to support the GSA-hosted vote.gov. Having a one stop shop for trusted information is important to help combat the spread of mis- and dis-information. Funds utilized to allow the EAC to assist GSA in expanding vote.gov will provide an immediate benefit to the voting public.

Statutorily Mandated HAVA Studies

The EAC requests funding for three statutorily mandated studies outlined in the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) that have gone unaddressed in recent years due to low funding and staffing levels. These include:

1. **HAVA Sec 241(b)(11): Federal and State laws governing the eligibility of persons to vote:** The EAC will complete a periodic research study that will examine federal and state laws used to determine individuals that are qualified and eligible to vote in any election. This study will explore standards, practices, and procedures applied under such law or laws with the intent of providing stakeholders with up-to-date guidance and best practices for future implementation.
2. **HAVA Sec 241(b)(13): Laws and procedures used by each state concerning recounts, what constitutes a vote, and contesting ballots:** The EAC will conduct a periodic research study that will examine states' laws and procedures used to govern: a) recounts of ballots cast in elections for federal office; b) contests of determinations regarding whether votes are counted in such elections; and c) standards that define what constitutes a vote on each type of voting equipment used in the state to conduct elections for federal office. This study will be conducted with the intent of identifying best practices (as identified by the Commission) that are used by states with respect to the recounts and contests. Through this study, the EAC will also explore whether or not there is a need for more consistency among state recount and contest procedures used with respect to elections for federal office.
3. **HAVA Sec 244: Study and Report on Voters Who Register by Mail and Use of Social Security Information:** The EAC will complete a study of the impact of section 303(b) on voters who register by mail. This study will examine of the impact of section 303(b) on: a) first time mail registrant voters who vote in person, including the impact on voter registration, b) the accuracy of voter rolls, including preventing ineligible names from being placed on voter rolls and ensuring that all eligible names are placed on voter rolls, c) existing state practices, such as the use of signature verification or attestation procedures to verify the identity of voters in elections for federal office, and an analysis of other changes that may be made to improve the voter registration process, such as verification or additional information on the registration card.

In addition, this study will explore the feasibility and advisability of using Social Security identification numbers or other information/identifiers compiled by the Social Security Administration to establish voter registration or other election law eligibility or identification

requirements, including the matching of relevant information specific to an individual voter, the impact of such use on national security issues, and whether adequate safeguards or waiver procedures exist to protect the individual identity of a voter.

Advancing Agency Management and Performance

As the EAC continues to grow, maintaining a quality management and performance curriculum will be critical in the next few years for EAC leadership and staff. The EAC aims to do its part to further the administration's FY 2023 priority of Advancing Agency Management and Performance with consulting services to assist with performance management and the potential development of measurable performance metrics for the agency. Leadership training and performance management guidance to the agency will be critical in the short term, and the EAC has included in its FY 2023 budget request funding for these investments.

Advancing Equity

Unlike larger agencies, the EAC does not currently have an Office of Civil Rights (OCR) or an equivalent office focused on equity and diversity. The agency aims to fill this void by assigning dedicated staff tasked with advising, representing, and assisting the EAC's Executive Director, Office of Human Resources, and Office of General Counsel on civil rights and equal opportunity matters. These matters relate both internally to the EAC and externally to states and other stakeholders. For example, the individual will ensure:

- The continued promotion of equal employment opportunities in the recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of a highly skilled, diverse, and effective workforce.
- Equal access and compliance with internal civil rights programs and services affecting EAC employees and applicants for employment.
- Equal access and compliance with external civil rights programs and services relating to the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries of Help America Vote Act (HAVA) programs receiving federal financial assistance through EAC, including assisting states in complying with voting laws and civil rights voting laws.

It is important that the work of the EAC's equity-focused personnel is in alignment with the goals of the agency, which are as follows:

- Strengthen American elections through the development and implementation of responsive and dynamic voting system guidelines and cyber resources for election officials;
- Encourage improvements to election administration through the development and distribution of resources that assist election officials in modernizing American elections; and
- Create operational excellence throughout agency management and programming.

Cyber Access and Security Program

In FY 2023, the EAC will continue to build on its Cyber Access and Security Program, providing cybersecurity support both to internal EAC operations and external customers. FISMA documentation

and compliance functions as well as technical cybersecurity expertise are provided by the program in support of the EAC's IT operations. Externally, the program provides training, best practices, and other materials to assist election officials, voters, and others improve the cybersecurity posture of their systems, practices, and procedures. The program works with other federal partners through the Government Coordinating Council to ensure its products are focused and relevant and do not duplicate the efforts of other agencies.

Competitive Election Innovation Grants

The EAC requests \$250,000,000 for grants under the Election Innovation Grants program with a 2%, not to exceed \$5,000,000, administrative reserve to be available and used by the EAC to implement, administer, and oversee the funds over the life of the competitive grant program. The EAC aims to foster an environment of innovation in the areas of voting technology, cybersecurity and other security safeguards, comprehensive election accessibility, language proficiency, voter education, usability, and other areas. This approach will foster innovation and enhance processes and procedures in the administration of federal elections.

The 2020 federal election cycle saw unprecedented challenges, including a worldwide pandemic, but also an adverse shift in voter confidence fueled by a wave of misinformation. This placed additional strain on voters and election officials, with consequences for ballot access and future participation. The EAC aims to take a proactive approach by distributing resources on a competitive basis to those States and eligible local government that can provide innovative solutions to issues surrounding the administration of federal elections.

The Election Innovation Grants program will allow the EAC to distribute funds in a competitive manner to ensure this initiative supports projects that foster innovation, enhance processes, and address emerging needs. Emerging needs can include ensuring physical safety of election officials and sites, accelerating modernization of voting systems, creative use of information technology, promotion of voter access (including vote by mail), safeguarding the voting experience for all voters, including those with disabilities or other needs, veterans, those facing language barriers and overseas voters, and supporting projects to combat election process misinformation, including pilot initiatives. These programs will advance election administration with innovative approaches and the latest technology, as well as explore new trends and processes that can be replicated to improve the field overall.

Under this program, the EAC will solicit, review, and award all funds by the end of the availability period. Grant funds will be available to grantees for a period of three years. EAC will adhere to evaluation criteria weighted on the quality of the proposal, project design, demonstrated capacity of the applicant to deliver, potential scalability and replicability, the long-term impact of the project, and the cost-effectiveness of proposed activities. The EAC will also consider compliance history and past performance for any applicants who have or had prior EAC funding. Proposals that emphasize funding by the State to local election jurisdictions will be prioritized. An analysis of current preexisting HAVA funding available for the proposed activity and/or demonstrated funding gaps will also be considered a factor in selection.

Mandatory Formula Grants

In addition, the Budget proposes legislation to support critical state and local election infrastructure, through a significant and sustained Federal investment to improve equitable access and ensure our elections are secure. The legislation will provide \$10 billion in 2023, to be expended over ten years through formula grants administered by the Election Assistance Commission, to enable crucial election-related capital investments such as upgrades to registration databases, voting systems, and physical structures; support recruitment, training, and retention of election workers; improve physical and cyber security; and improve voters' access to reliable elections.

Budgetary Changes: President's Budget Request, FY22-23
(In whole dollars)

Personnel Compensation and Benefits: +\$2,637,244

Assumes full annualized rate for existing personnel, those assumed under the FY 2022 President's Budget, and an FY 2023 increase of 13 FTE with associated cost of living adjustment.

Travel: +\$100,000

Increase assumes post-COVID travel will resume.

Other Services: +\$4,648,390

Includes contracts and other services reflected in the FY 2023 budget request, such as website enhancements, pilot for voting equipment audit, and cyber training/IT modernization programs.

Miscellaneous: -\$132,165

Equipment: -95,528

Supplies: -39,578

Printing & Reproduction: +\$1,000

Financial Transfers: +\$1,941

Grants: +145,000,000

Includes grants to States aimed at improving election administration, cybersecurity or other security safeguards, security of election officials, accessibility for voters with disabilities and other access needs, including vote-by-mail, voter education, language proficiency, usability, voter technology, or other programs to enhance processes and procedures in administering federal elections.

Budget Requests and Performance Measures by Strategic Goal

The EAC's request is presented in terms of its three strategic goals. The full strategic plan can be found on the EAC's website (<https://www.eac.gov/about-eac/operations>):

1. Strengthen American elections through the development and implementation of responsive and dynamic voting system guidelines and cyber resources for election officials;
2. Encourage improvements to election administration through the development and distribution of resources that assist election officials in modernizing American elections; and
3. Create operational excellence throughout agency management and programming.

Strategic Goal 1

Strengthen American elections through the development and implementation of responsive and dynamic voting system guidelines and cyber resources for election officials.

Staff from the Clearinghouse, Communications, Office of the General Counsel, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Research, and Testing and Certification Divisions collaborate toward the success of Goal 1. Objectives and success indicators for the goal are as follows:

OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the goal include continuing to evolve the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines and related policies, developing programs under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to bolster security and accessibility standards of election technology, and leveraging and expanding the EAC's existing technical expertise to provide timely resources to increase the security posture of critical infrastructure including voting systems, e-poll books, and other areas.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

The anticipated success indicators of the goal are the yearly review of the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG) for potential updates, the certification of a VVSG 2.0 compliant system, the successful piloting of a program for e-poll book testing and certification leading to the creation of a permanent program, conducting a pilot program for other election supporting technology, the creation of an online training system with courses focused on election cybersecurity fundamentals, and the successful cybersecurity defense of 2022 midterm and 2024 presidential elections.

1. *Audit of Field Voting Systems, Manufacturing, & Election Supporting Technologies Standards Development*

Under HAVA, the EAC is responsible for assisting states with improvements of voting systems through the distribution of federal funds and by creating and administering a voluntary voting system testing and certification program. The Testing and Certification program creates and maintains standards against which voting systems can be tested, works with EAC-accredited voting system test labs to test voting systems against these standards, and certifies voting systems that successfully pass these tests. This standard is called the VVSG). States' use of this standard and the EAC's accompanying testing and certification program are voluntary, but most states choose to use the standard or its testing program in whole or in part. The VVSG helps states and localities, which are

charged with selecting their own voting systems, select high-quality, secure, and accessible voting systems with confidence.

In FY 2023, the EAC plans to pilot a Testing and Certification Audit Program, including the hiring of field auditors and quality monitoring specialists to add support for its Quality Monitoring Program. Under the authority of HAVA, the EAC also plans to establish specialty requirements and guidelines specific to equipment used for election supporting technologies such as electronic pollbooks, voter registration databases, and ballot delivery systems. Hiring election technology specialists and contract support is required to support and execute this effort.

In addition to voting system certification and laboratory accreditation, the EAC and its 110-member Standards Board, 37-member Board of Advisors, and 14-member Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC) continue to work together to update and implement voluntary testing guidelines for voting systems.

2. Cyber Access and Security Program

The EAC will continue to build on its Cyber Access and Security Program, providing cybersecurity support both to internal EAC operations and external customers. FISMA documentation and compliance functions as well as technical cybersecurity expertise are provided by the program in support of the EAC's IT operations. Additionally, the EAC will continue to bolster its cyber defenses to achieve full zero-trust capability. Externally, the program provides training, best practices, and other materials to assist election officials, voters, and others improve the cybersecurity posture of their systems, practices, and procedures. The program works with other federal partners through the Government Coordinating Council to ensure its products are focused and relevant and do not duplicate the efforts of other agencies

The FY 2023 Request

For FY 2023, the EAC requests funds to meet its congressional mandates to create, manage, and administer voluntary voting system standards and accompanying testing and certification program as well as provide resources that help election officials administer elections and help Americans participate in the voting process. Specifically, the EAC will:

- Continue an election audit program to assist election administrators with conducting post-election audit pilots, compliance audits, and developing best practice guides.
- Produce and publish best practice resources such as toolkits, videos, educational tools, blogs, and white papers on topics including developing and maintaining complex online registration databases, set up and use of accessible voting equipment, registering to vote, training and managing poll workers, and cybersecurity.
- Continue to implement VVSG 2.0, which includes expanding efforts to support additional testing of voting systems and regular functionality review as technology advances.

Strategic Goal 2

Encourage improvements to election administration through the development and distribution of resources that assist election officials in modernizing American elections.

Staff from the Clearinghouse, Communications, Finance, Office of the General Counsel, Grants, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Research, and Testing and Certification Divisions collaborate toward the success of Goal 2. Objectives and success indicators for the goal are as follows:

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the goal are to serve as a clearinghouse of election best practices by continually creating resources that help election officials improve the administration of elections and help voters participate in elections, increase confidence in America's elections and transform the common understanding of election administration through commissioning innovative research, and effectively and efficiently distributing federal resources to EAC stakeholders.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Congress charged the EAC with acting as the nation's clearinghouse of election administration information by a) crafting and managing a national voluntary standard and testing program for voting system testing and certification, b) collecting and publishing information and research on election administration information and data, and c) collecting and distributing election administration best practices. In Strategic Goal 2, the EAC fulfills these mandates by using its expertise to build and manage these clearinghouse and grants resources.

In FY 2023, the EAC will continue to expand the nation's comprehensive understanding of American election administration by managing and maintaining the nation's clearinghouse of election administration information and practices, analyzing 2022 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) data, conducting research of best practices and emerging topics in election administration in areas such as cybersecurity, accessibility, language access, and technology, and effectively distributing federal resources to stakeholders.

The success indicators for the clearinghouse of information on election administration are the use of EAC resources by election officials, the production and release of resources on top priorities as identified by EAC advisory boards, steady growth of engagement with the agency by election officials via newsletters and social media, and an increase in the use of the EAC website.

Additionally, anticipated success indicators of this goal include an analysis of EAVS data that produces insights into U.S. election administration; successful creation of tools to make responding to EAVS and analyzing EAVS data easier; increases in the number of entities providing information, research, and data related to U.S. election administration; and the ability to better design EAC assistance products for the agency's stakeholders.

Through its activities under this goal, the agency works to ensure the resources and expertise of the EAC and the broader federal government are distributed effectively, efficiently, and responsibly. In the last three years, Congress has appropriated \$1.2 billion of federal funds for the improvement of election administration including a focus on election security. Congress designated the EAC to administer, monitor and audit these funds. In furtherance of this goal, the success indicators of the distribution of federal resources are the timely and accurate disbursement of funds, the resolution of audit findings, the timely closing of grants, and accurate and complete financial reporting.

The election administration space continually moves at a fast pace as it is increasingly

interconnected due to increased scrutiny from the media and national security efforts such as DHS's Critical Infrastructure framework. For these reasons, the EAC plans to continue extensive work under Strategic Goal 2 into FY 2023 in order to best serve the nation.

Note: The EAC's OIG activities impact the EAC's work under strategic goal 2. The EAC's OIG request is detailed starting on page 27.

1. Clearinghouse

Congress charged the EAC with building and maintaining a national clearinghouse of election administration information and best practices. Maintaining this clearinghouse requires the EAC to regularly research current election administration practices, pressing election administration issues, and needs, as well as collect best practices from across the country. Previously, the EAC produced nation-leading resources on risk limiting audits, critical infrastructure, language access, accessibility for voters with disabilities, and general election security for states, localities, and voters.

As the only federal agency that focuses on the whole of elections, the EAC's clearinghouse work serves as a powerful central hub and single "go-to" location for election officials and voters as they work to improve the administration of and participate in in their elections. EAC stakeholders regularly use these resources to improve the administration of their elections, educate voters, and generally increase voters' confidence in the nation's elections. State and local election officials, Congress, other federal agencies, and voters regularly leverage these EAC resources.

In FY 2023, the EAC will continue to add best practices resources that focus on topics such as cybersecurity, contingency planning, absentee and mail voting, and other topics that emerge during the 2020 and 2022 elections. The EAC collects these best practices through hearings, in-person and virtual meetings, leveraging its advisory boards' extensive knowledge and experience, commissioner led hearings, and an innovative annual contest. Through each of these means, the EAC learns from the diversity of approaches taken by the nation's thousands of election jurisdictions and helps the rest of the nation learn from their peers. These election administration best practice areas regularly include:

- Poll worker recruitment, management, and training;
- Voter registration list management;
- Polling place management;
- Procurement of voting and voter registration systems;
- Data collection and management;
- Accessibility for voters with disabilities; and
- Access for voters with limited English proficiency.

Additionally, the EAC will continue its work with the Local Leadership Council (LLC), a fourth FACA committee established in 2021, to provide unbiased analysis and recommendations to the EAC on local election administration topics. Membership in the LLC consists of 100 members with two members from each state who are currently or recently serving officers of each state's local election official association.

The clearinghouse is hosted on the EAC's website, <https://www.eac.gov>, and it contains best

practices, research, instructional videos, and white papers on a wide variety of topics such as voter registration, voter registration list management, poll worker recruiting and management, staff training, voting system information, election system procurement help, risk limiting audits and critical infrastructure, and cybersecurity. These resources are essential to the nation as its election officials face the new and ever-evolving cybersecurity threats. Election officials regularly look to the EAC as a starting place when understanding new issues and the EAC is dedicated to ensuring that when election officials look for help defending their cyber systems they are provided with what they need.

The EAC's website is a popular resource for voters and election officials as they seek help in either participating in or improving elections. On the EAC's website, the agency hosts downloadable copies of all current and legacy resources. The most popular set of resources on the EAC's website is the agency's resources for voters, particularly voter registration. Every day, voters and potential voters come to the EAC's website to learn how to register to vote. Information like dates and deadlines, links and other updates requires regular monitoring to make sure the information provided is accurate. In 2020, the EAC added more information for registration and options to cast a ballot as well as information about becoming a poll worker. This request includes funds for continued maintenance of the EAC's website and other similar digital outreach platforms.

In FY 2023, the EAC will continue to host election information and best practices on its public facing website, undertake a redesign to enhance the usability and functionality of the website, hold events and hearings, and it will continue to meet its congressional mandate by researching further topics.

2. Election Administration & Voting Survey and subsequent congressional report

Congress mandates that the EAC study a number of election administration topics, and the EAC must study others to effectively carry its charge as the national clearinghouse. The additional topics that the EAC chooses to study are selected based on legislative mandates and the current and expected future needs of election officials and voters.

The EAC administers and oversees the biennial Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS), the only comprehensive collection and report of data on election administration and voting systems of its kind. Through the EAVS, the EAC surveys the 50 States, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The survey, performed in conjunction with the Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), collects data for more than 400 variables related to voter registration, military and overseas voting, absentee ballots, polling places, poll workers, and provisional ballots. The survey data is used by election officials, academics, and others to improve their methods, metrics, and tactics in serving voters and maintaining voter registration lists. EAVS falls under the President's Management Agenda goal to leverage data as a strategic asset. The data collected in EAVS provides a unique perspective in election administration that can drive program decision making within the agency. The EAC looks forward to using data to enhance program areas that can produce more resources for election officials and voters. Currently, the EAC has limited resources to further synthesize the data and to provide more meaningful reports.

Much of the data collected through EAVS is congressionally mandated. The EAC uses the survey to

help inform Congress on the impact of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) on the administration of elections for federal offices, and on the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). The EAC also uses the survey data to develop reference guidance for state election officials.

3. Monitoring and Providing Technical Assistance on Federal Grant Funds to Ensure Improvements to the Administration of Federal Elections

Under HAVA, the EAC is responsible for awarding, monitoring and providing technical assistance to state and territory election offices. This work expanded dramatically beginning in 2018 with new appropriations for Election Security and CARES grants. The EAC's grant portfolio doubled from about 100 grants to over 200. The EAC ensured these funds were distributed to states expeditiously and is mandated to oversee, monitor and provide technical assistance on their use. The EAC's Inspector General also audits the states' use of the funds, and EAC staff members provide technical assistance to the states as they design and implement their plans to use the federal funds. EAC staff members monitor the use of the funds by the states through semi-annual progress and financial reports.

For 2023, the EAC's work to monitor and provide technical assistance to these grantees will continue. We will continue to oversee expenditure of the funds and must increase our capacity to conduct on-site monitoring of compliance with post award administration of federal funds and assistance and provide technical assistance to those states with staff turnover in person. The EAC must invest in a system of record with functionality to improve end-to-end grant lifecycle processes, enhance efficiencies and provide for better performance measurement, data collection, and analysis to drive decisions and follow up actions for the current and any future federal grant funding.

The FY 2023 Request

For FY 2023, the EAC requests funds to continually meet its congressional mandate to serve as the national clearinghouse of election administration information by doing the following:

- Analyze EAVS data and conduct additional research on cyber security programs and other areas of election administration that will assist with decision -making on the state and federal level.
- Produce and publish best practice resources such as videos, educational tools, blogs, and white papers on topics including developing and maintaining complex online registration databases, set up and use of accessible voting equipment, registering to vote, training and managing poll workers, and cybersecurity.
- Provide regular staff-level contact with election officials to collect and share information.
- Conduct forums, town halls, webinars, and hearings to gather information about potential best practices and information pertinent to election administration by bringing together election officials, technology innovators, individuals with disabilities, accessibility equipment and voting system manufacturers, academics, computer programmers and security experts, voting system standards developers, and website developers and designers.
- Explore and study how states are using congressionally appropriated HAVA funds.
- Initiate three statutorily mandated HAVA studies.
- Administer a competitive Election Innovation Grant to applicants with qualified projects, ensuring funding is utilized efficiently and those in need of such funding have an opportunity

to request it.

- Improve Vote.gov by providing technical assistance to GSA in order to enhance voter-facing information, as well as engaging in promotional activities supporting anti-disinformation campaigns.
- Revamp the EAC's website and streamline existing clearinghouse resources for election officials.

Strategic Goal 3

Create operational excellence throughout agency management and programming.

Staff from the Clearinghouse, Communications, Finance, Office of the General Counsel, Grants, Human Resources and Administration, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Research, and Testing and Certification Divisions collaborate toward the success of goal 3. Objectives and success indicators for the goal are as follows:

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the goal are to increase customer service to key stakeholders and partners, update internal structures and policies to optimize performance, develop and continue to manage internal structures and tools that produce a culture of innovation and a driven workforce, and continue to build a skilled, diverse, and effective workforce.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

The anticipated success indicators of the goal are the existence of interagency programs that provide unique value or generate efficiencies; continuing compliance with federal regulations and mandates; and internal strategic planning capacity development at the division and programmatic levels.

The EAC is dedicated to functioning as a modern, strategic agency supported by qualified, innovative professionals who help the agency achieve its mission in an efficient and impactful manner. Through Strategic Goal 3, the agency reaffirms its dedication to being good stewards of public funds, contributing positively to the federal government, and continuing to build and operate an agency that is diverse and impactful. The agency has been historically underfunded. In recent years the agency has received incremental funding allowing for the improvement of its operational structure. The EAC aims to create operational excellence by increasing customer service to key stakeholders, updating internal structures and policies to optimize performance, maximizing minimal resources, and building a skilled, diverse, and effective workforce.

1. Advancing Agency Management and Performance

As the EAC continues to grow, maintaining a quality management and performance curriculum will be critical in the next few years for EAC leadership and staff. The EAC aims to do its part to further the administration's FY 2023 priority of Advancing Agency Management and Performance by procuring consulting services to assist with performance management, and the potential development of measurable performance metrics. Leadership training and performance management guidance to the agency will be critical in the short term and the EAC has included in its FY 2023 budget request funding for these investments.

2. *Advancing Equity*

The agency intends to hire dedicated staff tasked with advising, representing, and assisting the EAC's Executive Director on civil rights and equal opportunity matters that ensure:

- The elimination of barriers that prevent individuals from realizing their full potential.
- The promotion of equal employment opportunities in the recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of a highly skilled, diverse, and effective workforce.
- Equal access and compliance with internal civil rights programs and services affecting EAC employees and applicants for employment.
- Equal access and compliance with external civil rights programs and services relating to the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries of Help America Vote Act (HAVA) programs receiving federal financial assistance through EAC.

3. *Cyber Access and Security Program*

The EAC will continue to build on its Cyber Access and Security Program, providing cybersecurity support both to internal EAC operations and external customers. FISMA documentation and compliance functions as well as technical cybersecurity expertise are provided by the program in support of the EAC's IT operations. Additionally, the EAC will continue to bolster its cyber defenses to achieve full zero-trust capability. Externally, the program provides training, best practices, and other materials to assist election officials, voters, and others improve the cybersecurity posture of their systems, practices, and procedures. The program works with other federal partners through the Government Coordinating Council to ensure its products are focused and relevant and do not duplicate the efforts of other agencies

The FY 2023 Request

For FY 2023, the EAC requests funds to create operational excellence throughout agency management and programming by doing the following:

- Procuring services to implement performance management assistance including the development of performance metrics.
- Provide leadership training and performance management guidance to agency staff.
- Hire dedicated staff to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in EAC agency operations.
- Utilize dedicated staff to advise on compliance with external civil rights programs and services related to the agency mission.
- Expand the Cyber Access and Security Program to support internal operations including compliance and training, and to advance the EAC to full zero-trust capability.

Attachment A

Office of Inspector General

BACKGROUND

The United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC) is a bipartisan Commission created and authorized by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). The Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established by HAVA and the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act), as amended, to provide independent and objective reporting to EAC and Congress through its audit and investigative activities.

Charged with the identification and prevention of waste, fraud, and abuse of federal resources, the OIG strives to promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness in EAC programs and operations. To accomplish this goal, the OIG conducts regular audits of recipients of grant funds distributed by the EAC, annual audits of EAC's operations, and periodic reviews and audits of EAC program operations and transactions. In addition, the OIG conducts investigations in response to allegations against EAC, its grant recipients, or other third parties involved in EAC programs.

THE BUDGET IN SUMMARY

The OIG's fiscal year (FY) 2023 request of \$1,920,018 includes \$6,336 as a transfer to the Council of Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) in keeping with the provisions of the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008. The request also includes \$21,250 for costs associated with training and professional development for the OIG's full-time employees.

OIG ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

The OIG primarily engages in three activities or projects: 1) auditing EAC's grant programs, 2) conducting audits of EAC's internal programs and operations, and 3) conducting investigations in relation to EAC's operations and of grant recipients or other third parties related to EAC programs.

Auditing Grant Programs

Section 902 of HAVA gives EAC and other agencies making a grant or payment the authority to conduct audits of any recipients of HAVA funds. EAC is further authorized to conduct regular audits of funds distributed under HAVA. The OIG conducts those audits.

Until 2017, the OIG focused on auditing the grants distributed to states under Title II of HAVA. These grants represented the vast majority of grant funds distributed by the EAC through fiscal year 2010.

In fiscal year 2018, EAC received an appropriation in the amount of \$380 million in formula grants to the States to improve the administration of elections for federal office, including to enhance technology and make election security improvements. The OIG began auditing these HAVA Election Security Fund grants in fiscal year 2019. In December 2020, the EAC received \$425

million in appropriations for additional election security grant funding. In March 2020, under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the EAC received \$400 million in grant funding to provide the States with additional resources to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 federal election cycle.

Starting FY 2021, the OIG's grant audits included the states' expended portions of the total \$1.2 billion distributed since 2018, including any funds expended from the funding distributed through 2010. States are generally selected for audit based on the OIG's risk assessment, which evaluates a variety of factors, such as prior audit outcomes, funding received and spent, and other factors.

The OIG's mission to ensure economy, efficiency and integrity in the use of funds is not limited to conducting audits. The OIG has also worked with the EAC to help educate states on the requirements that are associated with audits of federal funding.

In the coming fiscal years, the OIG will continue to work to protect the federal investment in the electoral process and to promote economy, efficiency, and integrity in EAC grant programs through its audits and collaborative work with EAC management.

Investigations

When allegations are made concerning the misappropriation of HAVA funds, the OIG is responsible for investigating those allegations. The OIG has instituted activities to improve and increase information available to EAC employees and the general public about how and when to make complaints of fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement. The OIG has a website that includes the ability to file an on-line complaint via an electronic form or by sending an email directly to the OIG. In addition, the OIG manages a hotline number. Complainants can also reach the OIG regarding allegations concerning EAC programs and operations when reporting fraud, waste, and abuse via IGNET.gov and Oversight.gov.

The OIG does not currently employ an investigator. The OIG has an interagency agreement with Department of Interior OIG for investigative services when issues arise that require an investigation.

Internal Audits

The OIG is also responsible for conducting reviews, audits, and investigations of EAC's internal policies, procedures, and actions. These audits assess the efficiency of EAC's operations and its compliance with governing statutes and regulations, including compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), the Digital Accountability and Transparency (DATA) Act, and the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act. The OIG contracts with independent public accountants to conduct many of these audits, including the annual audit of the EAC's financial statements.

OIG GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In FY 2023, the OIG will continue to monitor spending by EAC grant recipients, auditing EAC programs and operations, and investigating allegations concerning EAC programs as needed.

The OIG is currently staffed by two full-time employees, the Inspector General and an Audit Director. We anticipate hiring additional audit staff in 2022 to address the workload increases stemming from the increase in grant audits, EAC's restructuring of its grant management procedures, and other audit requirements. The OIG's increase in staffing resources will allow the OIG to regularly issue grant audit reports and perform reviews of EAC's internal operations, supporting the President's vision to restore the public trust in the federal government by keeping the public informed about the States' use of federal funding, and the efficiency and effectiveness of EAC operations.

The current budget request includes funding for the Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General, Audit Director and one additional staff member. The OIG will continue to use contract auditors in FY 2023 to supplement the capacity of its audit staff in fulfilling its expanding oversight responsibilities. The OIG will also rely on interagency agreements with other OIGs for investigative and legal services.

GOAL 1: *Protect the Federal investment in our electoral system.*

The federal government has made a sizable investment in the American electoral system. Congress had appropriated \$3.25 billion in grant funds to the States for improvement of election infrastructure and processes through 2010 and, since 2018, an additional \$1.2 billion to States for election security and pandemic response grants.

The OIG relies primarily on contract auditors to conduct audits of the grants to the States, and the OIG performs the required oversight in accordance with the Inspector General Act of 1978 to ensure its contract auditors are performing audits that are compliant with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS) and all other applicable federal requirements.

For FY 2023, we anticipate increasing the audit coverage of state grant audits by contracting for grant audits during the fall and summer. These audits will cover all grant funding that has been issued or reissued to the States by EAC, including the States required matching funds for all applicable grant awards.

GOAL 2: *Promote economy, efficiency and integrity in EAC programs and operations.*

A critical portion of the OIG mission is to promote economy and efficiency in government programs and operations and to detect and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in government programs and involving government resources. The OIG fulfills this portion of its mission by conducting audits and evaluations of EAC operations. The audits include statutorily required audits such as an annual audit of financial statements and a review of compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). While these two audits cover a large portion of EAC's operations on an annual basis, the OIG also conducts discretionary risk-based audits and evaluations of programs or specific EAC transactions to promote integrity in EAC programs and operations.

The OIG is also charged with investigating waste, fraud and abuse in EAC programs and operations. To meet this requirement, the OIG provides the public and EAC employees the ability to file complaints via telephone, email, an on-line complaint form, and U.S. mail. The methods for filing a

complaint to the OIG are communicated to those persons involved with EAC and its programs, as well as those impacted by those programs to ensure they know how and where to make complaints of fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement. The OIG communicates these methods via its webpage, contractual clauses, and audit reports.

Complaint submissions as well as information from audits and evaluations can identify potential civil or criminal wrongdoing. When the OIG identifies potential wrongdoing, it can initiate an investigation. In these instances, the OIG will continue to rely upon interagency agreements with other offices of Inspector General to conduct investigations of fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement.

GOAL 3: *Effectively communicate successes and opportunities for improvement.*

The OIG uses various tools to communicate with the EAC, Congress, and the general public concerning the status of EAC's programs and operations as well as the OIG's activities in conducting audits, evaluations, and investigations. The OIG issues reports following each formal engagement, regardless of type. Reports are disbursed to the entity that is the subject of the audit or evaluation, as well as the EAC and, when appropriate, oversight and appropriations committees of Congress. All Semiannual Reports to Congress, reports of Top Management Challenges, and reports that contain recommendations are posted to the EAC OIG website and to Oversight.gov.

The OIG produces semi-annual reports to Congress in each fiscal year. Those reports summarize the audit, evaluation, and investigation reports issued by the OIG during the relevant six months. The report also includes statistics such as recommendations outstanding, the amount of costs that were questioned, as well as how much in federal funding could be put to better use as a result of OIG reports.

The OIG also uses technology to communicate with its stakeholders and the public. The OIG manages a website where it makes information available concerning its operations, issued reports, rights and protections for whistleblowers, as well as an on-line form for making complaints of fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement.

In FY 2023, the OIG will continue its outreach efforts to keep EAC, Congress and the public informed of the OIG's activities as well as its reviews of EAC programs and operations.

GOAL 4: *Effective and efficient OIG operations.*

As the OIG evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of EAC programs and operations, it is important for the OIG to ensure that its operations are effective and efficient, including having the needed policies, procedures and practices to underpin its operations. In FY 2023, we will continue to implement modules of our audit management software to continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of OIG operations. Specifically, we plan to implement technology that will allow EAC management, and the OIG improve the efficiency of tracking, updating, and reporting on the status of OIG report recommendations. The current funding request includes continued support for the OIG's audit management software tool.

The FY 2023 funding request also includes salary and benefits for additional staff to assist the IG in covering the increased workload created by the new election security and pandemic response grant funding and to provide continuity in the OIG activity in the event of vacancies. The additional staffing also accounts for increases in expected training costs.

The OIG will focus on advancing equity within OIG operations by providing a supportive working environment including providing professional education and training for its employees. All OIG employees will be required to meet the continuing education requirements applicable under the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards.

The OIG also participates in the CIGIE peer review program by conducting peer reviews of other OIGs and by undergoing triennial peer reviews as well. These peer reviews provide additional assurance that the work of the EAC OIG meets or exceeds the highest professional standards.

OIG BUDGET REQUEST BY OBJECT CLASS				
		FY 2021 Enacted	FY 2022 Requested	FY 2023 Request
	Salaries and Benefits			
11.1	Full-time permanent	407,221	540,545	563,724
11.9	Total personal compensation	407,221	540,545	563,724
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	150,627	199,071	212,783
	Contractual Services and Supplies			
21	Travel, training and oversight	15,000	21,250	21,250
24	Printing and reproduction	1,000		-
25.2	Other services	507,746	639,285	1,055,925
25.3	Other purchases of goods and services from Government accounts	55,000	56,000	56,000
26	Supplies and materials	2,000	2,454	2,000
	Acquisition of Assets			-
31	Equipment	2,000	2,000	2,000
94	Financial Transfers	3,776	4,395	6,336
	Total Program	\$ 1,144,370	\$ 1,465,000	1,920,018