

# Interoperability Working Group Call

December 14, 2017

## Attendees:

Carl Hage  
Ericka Haas  
Herb Deutsch  
Ian Piper  
John Dziurlaj  
John McCarthy  
John Wack  
Lauren Massa-Lochridge  
Neal McBurnett  
Ryan Macias  
Sarah Whitt

## Status Updates:

- When is the next telecon? December 28<sup>th</sup> would be the next date.
  - Several folks are on vacation. John will send out an email closer to the date to see if we want to hold it that day.
- Voter Records Interchange
  - Specification is written – still in internal review within NIST.
  - Received comments about making the introductory material more readable. Made those changes and sent them back out for comment. That's available on the site right now.
  - No feedback on any of the technical issues or with the XML scheme
  - JSON schema is only partially implemented at this point, but it's in the works.
  - Should have specification through review cycle once the rest of the JSON is finished.
  - There are no plans to optimize anything – straight translation from XML to JSON.
- Second Version of Election Results Reporting
  - Essentially done. Still some debate about RCV. Most people who have had experience in implementing it are opposed to adding more in there than what already exists, even though it's optional.
  - Those that are implemented it have found that the number of different elements are confusing to people. The big need is to get it out there.
  - John: would rather not add anything to it at this point.
  - The current specification doesn't have guidance on the type of reports to be issued. It would be helpful to know the elements/structure for a given report. John will send something out to the list to help creating examples – could use input.
- Interoperability Working Group Email
  - The amount of traffic regarding RCV has been tough to keep up with. A number of emails have been long, and sometimes don't have recommendations for changes. It's been hard to boil them down to the actual changes.

- John asks that emails that are sent out are to the point and short. Technical issues should move to the GitHub repository.
  - Thoughts on using GitHub? Is it cumbersome for some?
    - Neal: likes GitHub – people can easily comment and see who thinks what. Easy to read record.
    - Lauren: for deep technical conversations, GitHub is a good option. Also willing to help with those who haven't used GitHub before. Encourages more concise and organized recommendations.
    - Sarah: struggles with keeping up with all of the emails, likes that you have everything in one place with GitHub.
    - John Dziurlaj: line in the sand with GitHub vs. email. Shouldn't be entertaining changes via email (but via GitHub), but could do clarification or best practices over the mailing list.
    - **Consensus:** Use GitHub more frequently and consistently.
- Next VVSG requirements
  - The EAC would like to get the VVSG out without a lot of delay. Working groups are all working on requirements.
  - By about May 2018 we need to have most requirements done so that they can be reviewed by public and TGDC. Doesn't necessarily been polished, but well-enough defined so that they're clear and can be reviewed.
  - General Interoperability Requirements are done – posted on the Twiki. Can still make comments.
  - Requirements by Voting Activity
    - Previously VVSGs have had this, but haven't been strictly organized that way.
    - Last time these were updated was 2012. Current categories are: election programming; ballot preparation, formatting and production; equipment setup; opening polls; casting; closing polls; tabulation; reporting.
    - John would like feedback on these categories, especially those that have been working on Election Modeling. Are these the categories or requirements that should be there, or does something different make sense? Would like to make it as readable and understandable as possible.
  - Programming and Ballot Preparation, Formatting and Production
    - Discussion of "Election Definition Device"
      - Device has a connotation of something physical, not a "module" in software.
      - Might need to rephrase this. There's a push and pull of readability vs. using terms that are more precise.
    - Ryan: EAC/NIST need to map, make correlation between the requirements and the higher-level functions of the VVSG.
      - Requirements and test assertions don't necessarily have to be readable. It's mostly the VVSG that needs to be readable. Making these testable is more important.

- Needs to be more explicit and precise – that could be a database document, for example, not necessarily a document that the general public could read.
- Need to be done in a way so that newer device can still be certified – focus more on the functions that a device could implement.

Next Steps:

- John will send a note about availability for the next telecon, with December 28<sup>th</sup> being a possible date.
- The VRI spec is up on the webpage and still available for comments:  
<https://github.com/usnistgov/VoterRecordsInterchange>
- John will send out an email requesting input for examples of reports/how to use V2 of the Election Night Reporting spec.
- GitHub will be the primary method of communication regarding changes and issues with the specifications (rather than email).
- Group will be reviewing VVSG Requirements by Voting Activity over the next several months.