

0 <b>Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition</b>	
0 	0 
0 	0 

**Report and Feedback**  
**August 2010**  
**Connecticut**  
**Post-Election Audit Observation**

By

The Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition

October 20, 2010

[www.CTElectionAudit.org](http://www.CTElectionAudit.org)

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	3
Recommendations .....	4
I. Introduction.....	5
A. Citizen Observation: Improvements and Limitations .....	6
B. Purpose of Connecticut’s Random, Post-Election Audits.....	7
C. Background.....	7
II. Analysis .....	8
A. New Concern with the Integrity of the Random District Drawing .....	8
New Recommendations.....	9
B. Procedures Unenforceable, Current Laws Insufficient.....	11
C. Procedures Are Not Being Followed, Understood .....	12
Serious Issue with Ballots in One Municipality.....	14
D. Guidance, Training, and Attention to Counting Procedures Inadequate, Inconsistently Followed.....	16
III. Audit Statistics .....	19
A. Ballot Count and Vote Count Accuracy.....	19
Serious Inaccuracy Issues in Two Municipalities .....	19
IV. Official Audit Report Timeliness.....	20
Appendix A: On Site Supervisor Interviews.....	21
Appendix B: Statistics from Observation Reports .....	22
Appendix C: Recommendations.....	24
I. Independent Audits .....	24
II. Audit Selection, Notification and Reporting .....	24
III. General Provisions .....	25
IV. Audit Procedures.....	26
V. Public Involvement.....	27
VI. Random District Selection Integrity (New Aug 2010 Report) .....	27
Appendix D: Additional Observer Comments.....	28

## Executive Summary

After the August 2010 primary elections, Connecticut conducted its sixth large-scale post-election audit. This was also the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition's sixth large audit observation. The coalition includes the League of Women Voters of Connecticut, Connecticut Common Cause, Connecticut Citizen Action Group, and Connecticut Voters Count. The purpose of the observation was to demonstrate citizen interest in the process, increase citizen involvement in elections, provide feedback to the Secretary of the State and the Legislature on the audit process, and provide members of the public with information necessary to determine their confidence in our elections.

By law, the Secretary of the State is required, in each election, to select at random 10% of Connecticut's voting districts to participate in post-election audits. In a primary election, town clerks of municipalities with selected districts randomly select one race to audit in each district – for each party holding a primary in that district.

In this report, we conclude, based on our observations and analysis of audit reports submitted to the Secretary of the State that the August post-election audits still do not inspire confidence because of:

- failure in the integrity of the random district selection process,
- lack of standards for determining need for further investigation of discrepancies,
- weaknesses in the ballot chain of custody, and
- lack of, consistency, reliability, and transparency in the conduct of the audit.

Each of these items individually could impact the integrity of the statewide post-election audit and calls into question the credibility of the entire post-election audit.

Although most of our general observations and concerns remain, we observed improvements in following audit procedures, in the accuracy of the counting, and in the completion of forms.

However, we caution that this August primary was a much smaller, simpler audit than typical for November elections. There was only one race to count per party, with significantly fewer ballots, no write-in votes, and no cross-endorsed ballots.

We note three serious situations where one municipality did not audit a selected district when ballots could not be located for the counting session, another municipality which could not produce a scanner tape, reported huge differences between the manual counts of ballots and the machine counts of ballots along with more votes in one race than ballots, and one municipality which reported about half as many votes in one race than the scanner counted.

## **New Overall Audit Integrity Concern**

A new concern surfacing this year is the inaccurate list of districts used in the random selection process which is required by law to be based on all of the districts used in the election. This directly impacts the integrity and credibility of the entire post-election audit.

We note continuing failures of audit and chain-of-custody procedures. We emphasize that this report does not question any individual's integrity. However, a safe, credible system of security procedures should not permit a single individual to have any extended opportunity to handle ballots unobserved. Without a credible chain-of-custody, security of the ballots and the integrity of the entire audit are at risk.

Neither the random selection of races nor investigations of discrepancies after the audits are required to be public or noticed to the public. The extent to which they are not noticed, not made public, or are prohibitively difficult to observe, impacts the integrity and credibility of the entire post-election audit.

## **Recommendations**

In our previous reports, the Coalition made recommendations to the Legislature and the Secretary of the State to improve the post-election audit laws, by providing for an independent audit board, improved chain-of-custody procedures, and improved audit <sup>1</sup> procedures. The latest version of those recommendations is updated and included in Appendix C of this report.

One recommendation was added with this report, aimed at resolving the newly recognized integrity issue with the list of districts used for random selection.

Audit procedures continue to present challenges for elections officials. We observed several failures to follow prescribed procedures. Compared to previous observations, we noted less difficulty in implementing efficient and accurate counting methods, and less inaccurate or incomplete reporting. However, we urge caution until similar improvements are observed in the larger, more complex post-election audits in November. We continue to strongly recommend that best practices for effective counting procedures be established. Coalition members and observers would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of such best practices.

Even in these challenging economic times, many of our recommendations can be implemented to strengthen the post-election audits, make them more comprehensive, and provide a more efficient process with enhanced integrity without significant additional expense.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this document we will frequently use the term "audit" when we mean "post-election audit" or "post-election audit counting session". Technically we believe that the whole process encompassing everything from the preservation of records, random drawings, counting in municipalities, the report by the University of Connecticut, and the evaluation of that report by the Secretary of the State would be the "audit". However, for readability we will usually follow the common practice of using "audit" to refer to parts of the whole.

## I. Introduction

After the August 2010 primary elections, Connecticut conducted its sixth large-scale post-election audit. This was also the Connecticut Citizen Election Audit Coalition's sixth large audit observation. The coalition was formed to organize citizens to observe the audits.

The coalition includes the League of Women Voters of Connecticut, Connecticut Common Cause, Connecticut Citizen Action Group, and Connecticut Voters Count. The purpose of the observation was to demonstrate citizen interest in the process, increase citizen involvement in elections, provide feedback to the Secretary of the State and the legislature on the audit process, and provide members of the public with information necessary to determine their confidence in our elections.

By law, the Secretary of the State is required, in each election, to select at random 10% of Connecticut's voting districts to participate in post-election audits. In a primary election, town clerks of municipalities with selected districts randomly select one race to audit in each district – for each party holding a primary in that district. On August 18, 2010, Secretary Bysiewicz chose the 10% of districts to audit along with some alternates. Coalition volunteers observed and participated in that random drawing.

The audit counting sessions were required to be conducted between August 25, 2010 and September 15, 2010. Seventy-three (73) districts were selected for audits from the list of districts not exempt from the audits due to close vote recanvasses<sup>2</sup>. The districts performing audits were located in forty-seven (47) municipalities. Originally forty-five (45) municipalities were selected; however, based on inaccuracies in the selection list, several selected districts were not audited and additional municipalities were added from the list of alternate district selections. Since each municipality held two primary elections (one for each party holding a primary), two municipalities elected to split their counting into two separate events by party. Overall, Coalition volunteers observed forty-five (45) counting sessions in forty-four (44) municipalities, providing feedback on the process to the Coalition. These volunteer citizen-observers provided invaluable information and making this report possible. Observers frequently attended audits on short notice, several observed multiple audits and accommodated schedule changes.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance of the Connecticut Secretary of the State's office with this project. We also found Connecticut's registrars of voters welcoming to our participation and candid in generously answering our interview questions.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Connecticut post-election audit law exempts districts with close vote recanvasses from the audit along with any districts subject to a contested election. Alternate districts are selected in the random drawing, in case towns have neglected to report recanvasses to the Secretary of the State or if subsequent election contests exempt additional districts.

## **A. Citizen Observation: Improvements and Limitations**

For this round of audit observations, we made small incremental improvements to our forms which are developed with the *SurveyMonkey* online tool to make the forms and questions clearer based on feedback from past observers. Eighty-five percent (85%) of observer reports were completed using the online form. We are pleased that more and more observers complete the form online with each observation.

We do not claim that all of our raw data is completely accurate, that observers saw everything, or that they interpreted each question consistently. However, when taken as a whole, the observations tell a collective story that is quite consistent and valuable.

We improved and expanded our *Frequently Asked Questions for Observers* document addressing many of the areas that challenged observers in the past, such as, the meanings of terms, e.g. *blind counting*, *overvote*, and *undervote*.

Our efforts at clarity in forms and training continue to pay off with more accurate and complete observations. The Coalition made only a few minor edits to the observers' reports<sup>3</sup>.

Based on an observer's suggestion we have made our Observation Forms, Frequently Asked Questions, and The Secretary of the State's Audit Procedures publicly available at our web site for reference by the public and election officials. Our intention is to extend this public service with a variety of sample worksheets, forms, and tips which may be of use to officials in conducting more organized and accurate audit counting.

Significantly fewer observers volunteered for the August observations than for previous observations, perhaps for the same reasons suggested for low voter turnout in August primaries<sup>4</sup>. Since the counting sessions were much shorter and simpler we chose, for the most part, to assign one observer per counting session so that we could cover as many counting sessions as possible. While successful in geographic coverage, our observers were often not able to observe every aspect of every session.

Without our volunteer observers willing to invest a day—or several days—of their time, to respond to short-notice scheduling, and to observe to the best of their ability, nobody but local election officials would know how post-election audits are conducted in Connecticut. Our observers care about democracy and ensuring that measures are in place to protect the integrity of our elections.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> When an observer's response to a question was in obvious conflict with an expanded comment on that question, indicating to us that our question had been misunderstood, we corrected for the appropriate response. In other cases where the observer's meaning was not as obvious, we followed-up with the observer to make sure our report was as accurate as possible.

<sup>4</sup> Several reasons have been suggested for the lower turn-out, including August vacations, lack of voter interest, and the rise in negative campaigning. 2006 had several contentious, highly competitive primaries held in August; however, the 2010 turn-out was significantly lower.

<sup>5</sup> Upon request of any registrar of voters, the Coalition would be pleased to discuss Coalition observation reports and provide feedback applicable to his or her municipality. In several municipalities, registrars asked observers to provide their feedback at the end of the counting session.

## **B. Purpose of Connecticut's Random, Post-Election Audits**

As stated in the Office of the Secretary of the State's Post-Election Audit Procedures:

*The primary purpose of the hand count audit is to assess how well the optical scan voting machines functioned in an actual election and to ensure that votes cast using these machines are counted properly and accurately.*

*The Principles and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits*<sup>6</sup> includes the following definition and benefits (purposes):

*Well-designed and properly performed post-election audits can significantly mitigate the threat of error, and should be considered integral to any vote counting system. A post-election audit in this document refers to hand-counting votes on paper records and comparing those counts to the corresponding vote counts originally reported, as a check on the accuracy of election results, and resolving discrepancies using accurate hand counts of the paper records as the benchmark. Such audits are arguably the most economical component of a quality voting system, adding a very small cost for a large set of benefits.*

*The benefits of such audits include:*

- *Revealing when recounts are necessary to verify election outcomes*
- *Finding error whether accidental or intentional*
- *Deterring fraud*
- *Providing for continuous improvement in the conduct of elections*
- *Promoting public confidence in elections*

## **C. Background**

All coalition reports covering this and previous audit observations are available at <http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>

The Observation Report form, the Observer Code of Conduct, and detailed data behind statistics in this report are also available at <http://www.CTElectionAudit.org>

---

<sup>6</sup> *Principles and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits*: <http://www.electionaudits.org/principles>, These *Principles and Best Practices* can be used as a benchmark to compare post-election audits to an ideal. This document is a follow-on to the definition from the 2007 Post-Election Audit Summit referenced in our previous reports.

## II. Analysis

In this report, we conclude, based on our observations and analysis of audit reports submitted to the Secretary of the State that the August post-election audits still do not inspire confidence because of:

- failure in the integrity of the random district selection process,
- weaknesses in the ballot chain of custody, and
- lack of standards for determining need for further investigation of discrepancies,
- weaknesses in the ballot chain of custody, and
- lack of consistency, reliability, and transparency in the conduct of the audit.

Each of these items individually could impact the integrity of the statewide post-election audit and calls into question the credibility of the entire post-election audit.

Although most of our concerns remain, compared with previous reports of post-election audits, some improvements continue to be observed:

- There were improvements in following audit procedures.
- There were improvements in the accuracy of the counting and the completion of forms.

However, we caution that this was a much smaller, simpler audit than typical for November elections. There was only one race to count per party, with significantly fewer ballots, no write-in votes, and no cross-endorsed ballots. A more realistic comparison will be between our next observation in November 2010 and our previous observation in November 2009.

### ***A. New Concern with the Integrity of the Random District Drawing***

A new concern uncovered this year is the inaccurate list of districts used in the random selection process which is required by law to be based on all of the districts in use for the election or primary. This directly impacts the integrity and credibility of the entire post-election audit.

In our last report, we noted that the public has no reliable mechanism for checking the accuracy of the districts used in the random selection process. Checking with the Secretary of the State's Office indicated that they do not have a list of districts that is guaranteed to be up to date.

Unfortunately, our concerns were realized in this audit when non-existent and ambiguously identified districts were chosen to be audited. The selection process also may not have included some districts used in the election. We specifically note the following problems and concerns:

- Two districts selected in one municipality were completely non-existent according to the registrars. That municipality was not audited. The districts were apparently from an old list compiled prior to changes and consolidation. From

the municipality's web site, it also appears that at least one current district was not included in the districts eligible to be selected in the drawing.

- In another municipality two districts were selected which are currently polling places, but the district numbers currently associated with polling places differ from those actually in use. The municipality chose to audit the named polling places.
- In several municipalities the polling place audited was a different location than the one selected by the Secretary of the State. The municipalities at some point had moved the polling place locations.
- In another municipality, the official Audit Report listed the districts audited by number only, while the districts selected by the Secretary of the State included only polling place name.

When districts move or are identified in various ways – with and without district numbers, with and without polling place location- it can be challenging to almost impossible to verify that the list of polling places for the drawing is accurate or that the selected district is actually the one audited.

After the fact, it is possible to discover non-existent districts that were selected, but it would be quite challenging to identify districts not included in the selection list from the 169 towns. In either case, there is no current established legal or procedural means to restore the integrity of an audit based on a discovered inaccuracy.

An accurate, verifiable list of districts for selection is critical to the integrity of the audit. Missing or incorrectly specified districts can be the result of error or deliberate action on the part of election officials. If all discovered inaccuracies in the list are dismissed as errors, then the opportunity is opened for the cover-up of error and fraud by deliberately excluding some districts or through an ambiguity providing the opportunity to steer the audit away from particular districts.

If the list is not publicly verifiable, then we can only estimate the number of errors and ambiguities in the whole list based on those discovered during the selection. In this audit, the selected list included at least approximately 5% non-existent districts (2 no longer polling places and districts, and at least 2 polling places with incorrect district numbers). We have no way of estimating how many existing districts were not included in the list.

### **New Recommendations**

There are several ways in which the list could become publicly verifiable and more accurate, with mechanisms for establishing audit integrity in the case errors are discovered, we recommend the following:

1. Registrars should be required to maintain an accurate list of districts and polling places with the Secretary of the State for inclusion in the Central Voter Registration System (CVRS). The Secretary of the State should be required to provide a list of districts extracted from the CVRS as of Election Day for public

review at the random district drawing.

2. Municipal clerks are now required by statute (9-322a) to submit district results of each election to the Secretary of the State's office sixty (60) days after each election and the Head Moderator is required to submit consolidated election results for the municipality shortly after the election and after recanvasses.

We recommend that the Municipal Clerk sixty (60) day report be eliminated<sup>7</sup>. Instead copies of each district totals and copies of all closing scanner tapes from the election or primary should also be submitted with the Head Moderator's report shortly after the election or primary. Provisions for later amended reports should also be included based on errors or corrections discovered. The Secretary of the State should be required to provide the district reports for public review at the random district drawing.

3. All listings of voting districts should be required to include district numbers, so that if districts are moved in an emergency, the district can be unambiguously identified by municipality and number.
4. If omissions, non-existent districts, or ambiguities are discovered after the drawing, they must be, by law, resolved in away that restores the integrity of the audit. For instance, when selected districts are ambiguous, audit integrity could be restored by auditing all possible districts for such ambiguities; or when districts are omitted from the drawing integrity could be restored by auditing those districts.

*Note: We also considered recommending that registrars be required to send lists of districts to the Secretary of the State before each election and the Secretary of the State be required to use that list for the audit random drawing. However, this would be less reliable and more difficult to enforce than the above recommendations.*

Based on the recommendation, there should be no significant cost increase in requiring district results earlier, they are part of the District Moderator's report submitted on election night to the Head Moderator and are required for calculations required on the Head Moderator's report.

As an additional benefit, this recommendation would conform Connecticut's audit to the commonly recognized audit integrity requirement<sup>8</sup> that all results be committed to and available before district random selection.

---

<sup>7</sup> We are unaware of any reason for such report be filed by the Municipal Clerk rather than the Registrar and the reason for a sixty (60) day delay. The information is available on election night. In special circumstances such as discovered transcription errors, recanvasses, court ordered recounts, or audit discrepancies there may well be justification for filing corrected forms.

<sup>8</sup> *Principles and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits*: <http://www.electionaudits.org/principles> Practice 4.c and *Report on Election Auditing by the Election Audits Task Force of the League of Women Voters of the United States* [http://www.lwv.org/Content/ContentGroups/Membership/ProjectsTaskforces/Report\\_ElectionAudits.pdf](http://www.lwv.org/Content/ContentGroups/Membership/ProjectsTaskforces/Report_ElectionAudits.pdf)  
Page 14

## ***B. Procedures Unenforceable, Current Laws Insufficient***

As we have noted in previous reports, discussions with representatives of the Secretary of the State's Office and the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) indicate that many, if not all, of the post-election audit procedures, including those covering chain-of-custody, are unenforceable. There is no incentive for following the procedures and no penalty for disregarding them.

We note that the adherence to prescribed chain-of-custody and ballot security procedures varies widely among audited districts. Laws that govern the sealing of ballots, memory cards, and tabulators after an election are unclear. Ballots are not uniformly maintained in secure facilities and access to these storage facilities is not reliably logged or recorded, even though two individuals are required to be present when these facilities are accessed. In many towns, each registrar could have individual, unsupervised access to the sealed ballots, and in many towns, several other individuals have such access. The lack of uniform security of the ballots diminishes confidence in the integrity of the ballots which are the basis for the data reported in an audit.

We emphasize that this report does not question any individual's integrity. However, a safe, credible system of security procedures should not enable a single individual to have any extended opportunity to access ballots unobserved.

Some responses to our questions surveying election officials as part of the audit:

*Who has access to the ballot storage area and keys to the storage area? - registrars and deputies [A response typical of many municipalities, while many also limit access to either registrar]<sup>9</sup>*

*How is the ballot storage area secured? - Combination Lock.*

*Who has access to the ballot storage area and keys to the storage area? - Town Clerk and Registrars*

*According to interview, [registrars] have repeatedly asked for secure storage in budget but have been denied. They used to store election materials in basement but then it got flooded so they stopped storing things in basement. Ballots are stored under the registrar's desk behind boxes; no sign-in or other security procedure for safeguarding- only registrars and janitor have keys to office.*

---

<sup>9</sup> All comments in this document from observers and officials have been edited for length, spelling, grammar, and to make meanings clear.

## **C. Procedures Are Not Being Followed, Understood**

The Secretary of the State's Office continues to publish incrementally improved audit procedures for each election, often basing those improvements on suggestions from Coalition members. However, they are frequently not followed, are not enforced, and, as noted previously, may not be enforceable. Additionally, the procedures still lack detailed guidance in efficient methods of counting that provide accurate and observable results. See Section D below.

In early 2010 the Secretary of the State's Office initiated a joint effort between representatives of their office, the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut (ROVAC), Coalition representatives and others. Several improvements were made to the official audit procedures based on this initiative; however, more extensive improvements await consolidation, review, and agreement. We applaud the motivation for the initiative and would like it to reach full fruition.

For this election, unfortunately, in a laudable effort to produce procedures that do not have to change for each election type, the procedures included incomplete directions for selecting races under all conditions. The directions omitted were for primary elections, the very type of election held in August. Although corrected by a subsequent email note, this caused confusion in several municipalities, resulting in unnecessarily doubling the races counted.

Our observations indicate that some towns do a good job of using the procedures in the audit, following each step in order, and enhancing them with effective detailed counting methods. However, in other towns, there is no evidence that election officials are referencing or following the procedures. Some who attempt to follow the steps do not seem to understand them and appear to be reading the procedures for the first time at the start of the session.

Problems uncovered in this observation include: incorrectly completed forms, notification issues, chain-of-custody problems, transparency, and actions contrary to procedures and the law.

### Notification to Selected Towns and to the Public

We recognize an improvement in notification of towns by the Secretary of the State's Office. As in past audits, some towns reported they had not been officially notified of their selection for audit for several days after the district random selection.

Procedures require that municipalities provide the Secretary of the State's Office with three business days' notice of the schedule. We note continued progress in this area, yet there is still room for improvement:

- Most towns selected for the audit set their date several days in advance. By early in the audit period we had all the audit dates. This is a significant improvement.
- Obtaining dates for all the towns still takes a significant amount of work, especially in contacting small towns with limited office hours for the Registrars of Voters

Office. We call all towns daily, starting two days after the drawing, until we have an audit date.

- Even with the cooperation of the Secretary of the State's Office, which notifies us when it is notified by municipalities, we learn the vast majority of audit dates and times from calling the registrars.
- For this election, we realized that there is no reliable mechanism for the public (or the Coalition) to be notified when an alternate district is required to hold an audit counting session. We discovered some changes when, in response to our calls, registrars indicated they were no longer required to audit a district. In another case our only indication was the Audit Report submitted by the municipality and provided to us by the Secretary of the State's Office after the audit.

#### Incorrectly Completed Forms and Incomplete Audit Counting

Reviewing the seventy-two (72) district reports submitted by forty-six (46)<sup>10</sup> municipalities to the Secretary of the State, we note that;

- Six (6) reporting forms were not accurately completed. Without complete information, it is difficult to create comprehensive statistics or to depend on the audits as a vehicle for assessing the voting machines' accuracy and correct programming.
  - Two (2) towns did not fill in the appropriate columns on the form
  - Three (3) towns did not provide overall ballot count totals counted as part of the audit, as required or filled in obviously incorrect numbers.
- Six (6) towns counted more races and contests than the minimum one per party
  - Four (4) counted three Republican races based on incorrect/ambiguous procedures, which led officials to interpret that counting all Federal races plus one other race was required.
  - Two (2) counted all races for both parties in the primary.

#### Multiple Chain of Custody Concerns

In several observations<sup>11</sup>, observers expressed concerns with the chain of custody in the several ways. Overall, in eight (8) municipalities, observers expressed overall concerns with the chain of custody, including:

- One (1) town sealed ballots via a sticky note.
- Two (2) observations noted that ballots were delivered to the audits in cardboard boxes without numbered tamper evident seals.
- One (1) unsealing of the ballots was conducted without access to the moderator's report, so that the seal number could not be verified as the same seal applied on Election Night.
- One (1) observation report noted that the ballots are stored under the registrar's desk.

---

<sup>10</sup> As of the date of this report, one municipality had not provided a report to the Secretary of the State's Office, however the unofficial report collected by our observer was used. Another municipality did not audit one district and thus provided on less report than required.

<sup>11</sup> Although we observed a total of forty-five (45) counting sessions, we did not observe every attribute of every audit: Some questions did not apply in some audits; observers could not fully observe audits that continued beyond one day etc.

Selected observer comments:

*The Ballots were in the machine stand and the seal was like a sticky note that came off intact without any effort - it was in no way a tamper resistant seal. When machine tender/counter resealed the machine he complained that the post-it note type seal was tough to get to stick. It kept falling off onto the floor.*

*One Registrar arrived with the ballots.*

*No seal number on the tape sealing the box inside the canvas ballot bag. Also, there was no public announcement of the seal number on the canvas bag, or comparison to a number on the Moderator's return...Where were the ballots stored after the election? - In a storage room within the town hall on shelves...Locked*

*The ballots were tape sealed in a cardboard box. The moderator returns listed the seal numbers on the tabulator unit and the carrying case...Ballots were returned to the cardboard box and re-taped. No Seals*

### **Serious Issue with Ballots in One Municipality**

One serious issue in one district in one municipality deserves note in this audit: Several districts in one town were selected, but in one case in the municipality, the ballot bag contained only blank ballots. From our observer:

*I was told that ballots were kept in the room where the audit occurred. However, unused ballots apparently go to a different storage site, and the first bag opened contained unused ballots. I was told that the actual ballots must have gone back to the other storage facility and that the moderator "must have sealed the wrong bag... To my knowledge no one made the Elections Division of the Office of the SOTS aware of this as the Audit Procedure Manual mandates should be done "immediately."*

In subsequent discussions with the registrar, she reported that a novice moderator in a multiple district polling place had sealed all voted ballots in one bag and all unused ballots in another bag. The Secretary of the State's Office had checked-off this district as returning a report and did not notice the report was missing until it was pointed out by the coalition.

### Transparency

The Secretary of the State's Audit Procedures state that observers should be allowed to view every aspect of the proceedings. Once again, we point out that the random selection of races is performed in a separate event from the audit and, unlike the counting session, the race drawing is not required by law to be public. However, a public drawing requirement appears in the Secretary of the State's Post-Election Audit Procedures.

We appreciated that several towns held their race selection publicly at the beginning of the audit.

All aspects of the audit and as much as possible of the entire selection process should be transparent, open to the public, and publicized in advance in an easily accessed announcement. The audit procedures distributed by the Secretary of the State recommend these practices. Audit credibility would be enhanced if the race selection were part of the Secretary of the State's random selection of districts or was required to be announced and held publicly in each selected municipality.

In one municipality we had one issue with observability which was quickly resolved:

*Before the audit started registrar said I had to sit in seats at side of room. I insisted that she follow the procedures which said I could get close enough to see the marks on the ballot. She insisted that [lawyer in SOTS Office] said at the ROVAC training that I could not get that close and if I intimidated the counters I must move<sup>12</sup>. Once the audit began I moved close enough to observe everything and the issue was not raised again.*

In late January, after the November 2008 audit, and again after the November 2009, there were post-audit investigations conducted by the Secretary of the State's Office, recounting ballots in several towns where large discrepancies were reported or reports were incomplete. Those investigations were not announced publicly and not open to public observation. The transparency and confidence in the official state audit report would be enhanced, if such investigations were announced and open to the public.

---

<sup>12</sup> Note: Neither the Coalition or the observer is saying what the SOTS Official said. This is what the observer reported the registrar said.

## D. Guidance, Training, and Attention to Counting Procedures Inadequate, Inconsistently Followed

### Audit Organization and Counting Procedures:

Observers expressed concerns that many of the audits were not well organized. Compared to November 2009 there were improvements across the board, some moderate and some significant, yet overall unsatisfactory to provide an accurate and credible audit.

<b>Observer Concern</b>	<b>Aug 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
Concerns that the auditing was not well organized.	32% <sup>13</sup>	39%
Concerns with the integrity of the counting and totaling process.	11%	15%
Concerns that the manual count was inaccurate.	9%	51%
Concerns that the results on the reporting forms were inaccurate.	16%	18%
Audits with counts that did not originally match, the votes or ballots were recounted a second time	100%	60%
The supervisor attributed discrepancies in ballot counts to "human error" on the official audit report forms	0%	22%

Table 1: Observer concerns with organization and counting procedures

Sample observer comments indicating concerns:

*Instructions were given before everyone showed up and may be why the [counters for one party] did not follow instructions. Supervisors did not oversee the counters so while they reminded counters to check each other's work they were unaware that the [counters for one party] were sorting 4 piles of ballots into a single pile for each candidate so no one was checking anyone's work. The closing seal number was left blank for [one district's] report'; the closing seal number for [one district] was recorded on [another district's] closing seal number on [another report] was left blank.*

*"Two eyes" method never used. Lack of clear procedures would be more troublesome with larger voter turnout and more races audited. One audit team member chit-chatted while the Moderator spoke. [One party's] audit team had trouble counting and understanding the system, in spite of the tiny number of ballots they were responsible for counting.*

<sup>13</sup> All percentages in this table and the following tables are percentages of the observations of a particular item. Typically an observer answers Yes, No, N/A, or Not Observed. Thus the percentage is typically based on the total of Yes and No answers.

*The audit was really not supervised, each team did things its own way based on their reading of the procedures. I did not observe the ballots being taken to the room or returned to storage but the greater concern was the total inadequacy of the seals placed on the machines. I also cringed each time one of the registrars told the counters how many votes they had to "find" for the counts to match - and both registrars did this repeatedly.*

**Need for Dual Verification**

Observers noted that audit counting procedures requiring “two eyes”, i.e., dual verification of counts, were frequently ignored. When a large number of ballots are counted by a single individual, miscounts can require tiring recounts and unnecessary investigation. When single individuals count hundreds of ballots or votes, errors are almost inevitable. This time more municipalities used the stacking method in counting a single race, yet a lower percentage verified the count. Here results are mixed, yet unsatisfactory, when compared to November 2009. .

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Aug 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
When using the <i>hash mark</i> counting method, a second official did verify that votes <i>were read</i> accurately by the first official.	74%	47%
When using the <i>hash mark</i> counting method, a second official did verify that hash marks <i>were recorded</i> accurately.	65%	49%
When using the <i>stacking</i> method a second official did verify that votes were stacked correctly.	69%	83%
When using the <i>stacking</i> method a second official verify that each stack was counted accurately.	75%	86%

Table 2: Observations of dual verification

**Blind Counting**

Blind counting is a method of counting without pre-conceived knowledge of the expected outcome. When counting teams know the tabulator totals or know the differences between their counts and the machine totals, there is a natural human tendency to make the hand count match the machine count. This tempts counters to take shortcuts and seek cursory explanations for discrepancies which, in turn, lowers the credibility of the process and undermines confidence in the audit results. Here we see moderate, yet still unsatisfactory, improvements over the November 2009 audits.

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Aug 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
Counters were not aware of ballot or race counts from the election while they were counting	67%	57%
When counts were off, counters were not informed of the level of difference while they were recounting	38%	33%

Table 3: Observations of blind counting

Some observers' comments<sup>14</sup>:

*It appeared to me that they were more concerned with having the ballot and vote totals match what the machines reported rather than actually recording what they counted by hand without bias towards the machine totals.*

*After the first count, counters were told that they were off by 4 votes from the machine total. A discussion ensued about potentially mismarked ballots and which ones were or were not possibly responsible for the discrepancy. Eventually, the ballots were recounted and the total matched the second time.*

*Officials let counters know how many votes they needed to 'find' in every instance of a discrepancy.*

*One team referenced the Tally Sheet from Election night. They recounted their votes until the figures agreed.*

#### Confusion in Definitions of Ballots with Questionable Votes

There continues to be confusion in the definitions of "ballots with questionable votes" (marks that the machine may have misread) and those ballots that should be considered "undisputed":

- On the official reporting form, some towns fail to classify any ballots as having any questionable votes.
- There is often confusion between differences in voters' intent that would not be recognized by the scanner and marks that may or may not have been read by machine.
- Observers report a wide variety of interpretations, counting methods, and classification methods. In some towns counting ballots with questionable votes are left to individual teams; in others they are counted by the supervisors; often the frustration and uncertainty of questionable ballot counting leads to much confusion in the totaling of votes.

There is a need for further examples of questionable votes, clarification of ambiguities, and instructions on how to classify and count questionable votes in the procedures.

Overall there was less confusion with questionable votes in this election and fewer such votes. We hope this is a positive trend but it may be a function of the simpler, smaller number of ballots and races counted.

---

<sup>14</sup> Additional relevant comments are contained in the appendix.

### III. Audit Statistics

#### A. Ballot Count and Vote Count Accuracy

In previous reports we have noted large numbers of differences between optical scanner counts and manual counts in the audits. This time there was one district with large reported differences in vote counts representing 200 of the 218 vote differences. However, the number of districts with such differences was significantly reduced during this audit. We hope this represents a general improvement, however, this may well be the result of a much simpler, smaller audit. Primaries have no cross-endorsed candidates, no write-in votes, audit only one vote for one race per ballot, and there are far fewer ballots. We will reserve judgment until after the larger, more complex November 2010 election audit observation.

	<b>Aug 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
Candidate vote counts <sup>15</sup>	35507	321779
Differences	218	1211
Differences per 1000 vote counts	<b>6.14</b>	<b>3.76</b>

Table 4: Total vote count accuracy

<b>Count Difference</b>	<b>% Of All Counts Aug 2010</b>	<b>% Of All Counts Nov 2009</b>
0	98.0%	56.6%
1-3	1.0%	30.9%
4-6	0.5%	7.6%
7-9	0.0%	1.9%
>10	0.5%	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 5: Distribution by Difference of Candidate Counts between Hand-Counted Votes and Machine-Counted Votes.

It is difficult to realistically compute and compare ballot count accuracy. In each audit several towns report large errors that obviously cannot be accurate as machine or hand counts.

#### Serious Inaccuracy Issues in Two Municipalities

<sup>15</sup> This table reflects all the audit reports as of the date of calculation based on all the audit reports received from the Secretary of the State's Office, augmented by several reports collected by observers from municipalities where reports were not received from the Secretary of the State's Office.

In the one district: The official Audit Report indicates 1703 machine counted ballots but only 688 manually counted ballots counted in the audit. In that same audit report 188 ballots are listed for one party with a total of 254 votes in the race audited for that party. The huge difference may represent poor counting procedures and lack of understanding of the audit procedures, however, we have no way of determining the accuracy of the audit nor of the official reporting of results. Our observer's comments:

*They never counted the ballots first...One team referenced the Tally Sheet from Election night. They recounted their votes until the figures agreed... Checking was done to the Tally Sheet off the Moderator's report not the machine tape... I did not observe a machine tape, only the Moderator's return with the Tally Sheet. When I asked if they had a machine tape, I was told no by one of the Registrars. When I asked if there was a tape in the ballot bag, I was told no... I have concern about the number entered on the "LT Gov"*

These results may represent incompetence. However, incompetence uninvestigated transparently leaves an opening to cover-up fraud and error. The Secretary of the State's Office had reviewed district results, yet apparently did not notice these large differences until it was pointed out by the coalition.

In one of the last district reports provided to the Secretary of the State's Office: In one district in one municipality which audited three districts there was a significant difference between the machine counts in one race and the hand count reported. For two candidates the machine counted 262 and 154 votes while the hand counts were 132 and 78 votes for those same candidates.

#### **IV. Official Audit Report Timeliness**

We also note what seem to be unnecessary delays in the timeliness in the availability of official reports- delays, which, if discrepancies are discovered, may hinder or preclude changes in time for subsequent elections.

- Municipal counting was required to be complete by September 15, 2010, however, several municipalities did not return forms to the Secretary of the State's Office until at least October 15, 2010
- The University of Connecticut (UConn) is required by law to create a report after each post-election audit, typically these reports are released at least five months after post-election audits.<sup>16</sup>

We continue to recommend that the law be changed to require that reports be completed, submitted to the Secretary of the State, and made public within a specified time after each election or primary.

---

<sup>16</sup> The Nov 2009 Election report was released April 2010; the Nov 2008 Election report was released May 2009; the Aug 2008 Primary report has yet to be released; and the February 2008 Presidential Primary report was released Oct 2008: <http://voter.engr.uconn.edu/voter/reports/>  
10/20/2010

## Appendix A: On Site Supervisor Interviews

One page of our observation report forms, titled *Interview On Site Supervisor(s)*, is used to gain information on several aspects of the election and post-election audit processes.

UConn memory card audit reports<sup>17</sup> and anecdotal reports<sup>18</sup> indicated significant problems with memory cards malfunctioning with what UConn characterizes as “Junk Data”. Our survey results are consistent with other reports.

We asked election officials about memory card problems experienced. Our survey indicates similar levels of problems as reported in the UConn<sup>19</sup> testing of memory cards:

<b>Question Asked Officials</b>	<b>Aug 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2009</b>
Were there any memory card problems during pre-election testing or on Election Day?	46%	41%

Table 6: Memory card problems reported by officials

As in previous observations most comments by officials indicated that they would like the audits eliminated, to remove from eligibility municipalities that have recently been audited, and the number of districts audited in municipalities with many districts reduced. They also requested more training and more guidance in counting procedures.

Unfortunately, the integrity of the audit requires a random selection with no districts exempted from selection. In a 10% audit considering basic mathematics, municipalities with over 10, 20, or 30 districts should not be surprised if they have districts selected almost every time and frequently more or less than 10% of their districts.

The Coalition strongly agrees with the need for more training, whether provided by the Secretary of the State, ROVAC, or developed by concerned registrars and citizens.

---

<sup>18</sup> See: <http://www.ctvoterscount.org/?p=111> for summary and links to reports from Dori Smith of TalkNationRadio.

<sup>19</sup> UConn VoTeR Center: <http://voter.engr.uconn.edu/voter/Reports.html>. Due to the nature of the collection/selection of cards for the UConn, studies they do not represent a true random sample of the memory cards.

## Appendix B: Statistics from Observation Reports

<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA / Not Observed</b>
Were the ballots delivered to the site by at least two individuals?	71% <sup>20</sup>	4%	24%
Were the ballots under the observation of at least two individuals at all times during the observation?	93%	4%	2%
Were you permitted to observe that ballot container seals were not tampered with?	98%	0%	2%
Were the ballot container seals intact?	93%	2%	4%
Were you able to see the seals and the seal numbers on the Moderator's Return?	93%	2%	4%
Did the supervisor review the state audit procedures with the counting team?	53%	38%	9%
Did the supervisor clarify procedures for everyone before beginning to count ballots?	67%	24%	9%
Did supervisor review the ballot and vote counting procedures in detail with the counting team(s)?[e.g. The role of each person on a team. Size of batches? Two officials should check each vote and hashmark etc.]	58%	33%	9%
Was the total number of BALLOTS counted before the VOTES were counted for races?	61%	39%	0%
Were the ballots counted by each team such that a 2nd election official verified each count?	64%	33%	2%
If multiple teams counted ballots, was the totaling independently verified by a second election official?	56%	27%	18%
IF HASHMARKING USED: Did a second official observe that each vote was read accurately?	38%	13%	49%
IF HASHMARKING USED: Did a second official make duplicate hashmarks OR observe that each hashmark was recorded accurately?	33%	18%	49%
IF STACKING/PILES USED: Was the vote counting process such that two election officials verified each vote was stacked as marked?	56%	24%	20%
IF STACKING/PILES USED: Were the stacks of ballots counted such that two election officials verified that each stack was counted accurately?	60%	20%	20%
IF HASHMARKING USED: Were you permitted to see that each vote was read accurately?	53%	0%	47%
IF HASHMARKING USED: Were you permitted to see that each hashmark was recorded accurately?	53%	0%	47%
IF STACKING/PILES USED: Were you permitted to see that each vote was placed in a correct stack?	82%	2%	16%
IF STACKING/PILES USED: Were you permitted to see that the count of ballots in piles was accurate?	82%	2%	16%
Were counters kept unaware of the election totals for the ballots or races they were counting until counting and recounting each race was finally complete?	64%	31%	4%
If initial counts were off, were counters kept unaware of the exact and approximate level of difference? [e.g. No indication was given of the amount the count was off]	29%	47%	24%

<sup>20</sup> Due to rounding, totals in each row add to 99% to 101%

August 2010 Connecticut Post-Election Audit Observation

<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA / Not Observed</b>
Were votes on questionable ballots ruled upon separately race by race for reporting as questionable votes in the Audit Report? [Rather than all votes on every questionable ballot classified as questionable]	71%	7%	22%
Were votes on such ballots ruled upon prior to the tallying of votes for each race AND counts not adjusted based on knowledge of the results of the total count for each race?	58%	24%	18%
Did elections officials find a match between machine counts and manual counts the first time they tried?	38%	60%	2%
Did elections officials try to resolve mismatched counts by counting again?	60%	7%	33%
Did elections officials try to resolve mismatched counts by changing counting teams?	22%	42%	36%
Did elections officials resolve mismatched counts by the end of the audit?	62%	9%	29%
Were you able to confirm that hashmarks for each team and batch were tallied accurately? (i.e You could confirm that the number of hashmarks matched the total for each group of hashmarks.)	60%	0%	40%
Were you able to confirm that the number of ballots from multiple teams/batches was tallied accurately?	80%	7%	13%
Were you able to confirm that the number of votes from multiple teams/batches was tallied accurately?	84%	2%	13%
Did elections officials record counts, including unresolved discrepancies if any, on official forms by the end of the audit?	93%	4%	2%
Were you given an opportunity to have a copy or make a copy of the official forms?	91%	4%	4%
Did the ballot counts on the signed optical scanner tape(s) printed at the end of election-day match the tape ballot count reported on the audit report form(s)?	78%	0%	22%
Did the race counts on the signed optical scanner tape(s) printed at the end of election-day match the machine tape race counts reported on the audit report form(s)?	73%	7%	20%
Could you confirm that ballots were returned to their proper containers?	96%	0%	4%
Were the ballot containers resealed?	96%	2%	2%
Were seal numbers recorded correctly on forms?	91%	4%	4%
Do you have any concerns over the way the room was laid out?	2%	96%	2%
Do you have any concerns that the auditing was not well-organized?	31%	67%	2%
Do you have any concerns with the integrity of the counting and totaling process?	11%	87%	2%
Do you have any concerns that the manual count was inaccurate?	9%	89%	2%
Do you have any concerns that the officially reported information is inaccurate?	16%	82%	2%
Do you have any concerns with the transparency/observability of the process?	4%	93%	2%
Do you have any concerns with the chain-of-custody?	18%	78%	4%
Were there any ballot related problems on election day?	11%	82%	7%
Were there optical scanner related problems on election day?	16%	78%	7%
Were there any memory card problems during pre-election testing or on election day?	42%	49%	9%
Were there any other significant events, actions, or occurrences before during or after the election that could affect integrity or where procedures could not be or were not followed?	4%	89%	7%

## **Appendix C: Recommendations**

Each of our previous reports included recommendations and updated recommendations to the Legislature and the Secretary of State. We have added on recommendation, VI, to the previous list.

### **I. Independent Audits**

The current system of the conduct of audits by individual towns lacks consistency, accuracy, and professionalism. A nonpartisan, independent audit board or professional team of independent auditors should conduct the audits.

However, if audits continue to be conducted by local officials, we recommend the measures below to improve the security and integrity of Connecticut's election outcomes. Many of these same recommendations would apply if an independent audit board were established, with the board performing many of the audit functions now performed by or recommended to the Secretary of the State.

### **II. Audit Selection, Notification and Reporting**

\* This section would also apply to independently-conducted audits

#### **A. Amend PA 07-194 on selection and notification to:**

1. require that the Secretary of the State randomly select the races to be audited during the same public event as the random selection of districts or was required to be announced and held publicly in each selected municipality. In elections where federal and/or constitutional statewide offices appear on the ballot, at least one such race should be randomly selected from those federal races on the ballot and one race selected from statewide races on the ballot.
2. require that races randomly selected for audit be chosen by the Secretary of the State for all districts.
3. require that towns selected for audit be officially notified of their selection in a legally acceptable form, including an immediate posting of the list of audit sites on the Secretary of the State's Website.
4. require that towns provide ample notice of the scheduling and location of post-election audits to the Secretary of the State and on their municipal websites or local newspapers. We urge the Secretary of State's office to review how other states are establishing and publicizing the schedule of audits and race selection to ensure maximum public notice and transparency.

B. Amend PA 07-194 to mandate deadlines for:

1. random selection of audit locations
2. completion of audits
3. municipalities to report audit results to the Secretary of the State's office

C. Amend PA 07-194 on reporting to:

1. mandate a deadline for completion of required UConn reports and require that those reports include statistical data on deviations from the standards set in the audit law and reports on any incomplete or missing audit data
2. mandate timely publication of a final comprehensive report of each statewide audit and require that the report include local statistics and analysis from local audit report forms, elections officials' and observers' (if any) observations, and conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the audit. The report should be readily available to the public

D. Amend PA 07-194 on reporting to:

- require that audit reports be compared to the machine tapes and election night or final amended reports to assure that the correct machine tape counts are recorded.

### **III. General Provisions**

A. Procedures that will yield trusted audits must be specified in law or regulation and must be made enforceable by the State Elections Enforcement Commission. Procedures should also provide a mechanism for the Secretary of State's office to report irregularities to appropriate authorities such as the State Elections Enforcement Commission.

B. The Secretary of State's Office should:

1. establish mechanisms and controls to audit the audits (log, detect and take action on errors) to assure that prescribed methods are followed. Audit reports that are incomplete or contain obvious or unexplained discrepancies should be rejected by the Secretary of State's office and corrective action taken by election officials.
2. increase competency of registrars and election officials in election audits through mandatory educational programs that include security, audit organization, and conduct; the steps and details of the audit procedures; counting methods; and organizing and supervising the audit teams.

C. Amend PA 07-194 to:

1. mandate investigation and independent analysis of data discrepancies which are not thoroughly and reasonably explained .

2. require that copies of the Moderators' Returns, and machine tapes, be present at the audit for review
3. mandate that all ballots in all elections remain sealed until thirty days after all audits and audit investigations are complete. They should be released only after the Secretary of the State's notification in writing that the audit and investigations are complete. During that period ballots should only be unsealed temporarily for the purpose of recounts, audits, and state investigations – and resealed whenever audits, recounts, and investigations are complete or continued.
4. resolve the conflicting demands for any extended audit investigations with the need for re-programming of memory cards in preparation for new elections or referenda.
5. limit the role that candidates can perform in the post-election audit process. Opposed candidates, even if they are sitting registrars, should not supervise or have official roles in post-election audits. The Secretary of State's office should develop procedures to identify who will supervise and have an official role in audits in cases of this kind of conflict.
6. set forth specific and enforceable criteria for chain of custody, access logs, and secure storage facilities for ballots, memory cards, and machines. The Secretary of the State's office should establish a system of random unannounced inspections of storage facilities and access logs.

#### **IV. Audit Procedures**

A. The Secretary of the State should provide detailed guidance on methods of auditing that are efficient, transparent, specific, and accurate. National efforts should be reviewed, such as California's recently adopted audit procedures, the audit practices of Minnesota, recommendations of the Brennan Center, and the *Principles and Best Practices for Post Election Audits*<sup>21</sup>.

B. The Secretary of State should amend procedures to:

1. remove the subjectivity associated with the identification of what constitutes an undisputed ballot and a ballot containing a questionable vote.
2. require all tallies be performed in public and audit reports be filled out as part of the actual public audit and displayed publicly at the end of the audit along with the tally sheets.
3. require that the results of all original manual counts and repeated counts, when necessary, be reported to the Secretary of the State's Office.

---

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.electionaudits.org/principles>  
10/20/2010

## **V. Public Involvement**

Observers' rights should be established in law. As long as observers don't interfere with the hand counting process, the public should be allowed to observe and verify all phases of the election audit from district and race selection through any follow-up investigation.

## **VI. Random District Selection Integrity (New Aug 2010 Report)**

In order that the random district selection is publicly verifiable and more accurate, with mechanisms for re-establishing audit integrity in the case of errors discovered:

### **A. Amend Sec. 9-50b to:**

require registrars to maintain an accurate list of districts with the Secretary of the State for inclusion in the Central Voter Registration System (CVRS), with each district identified by a unique district number for the Municipality

### **B. Amend Sec 9-314**

require the Head Moderator to submit copies of each district totals and copies of all closing scanner tapes from the election or primary with the Head Moderator's report shortly after the election or primary. Provisions for later amended reports should also be included based on errors or corrections discovered. Each district should be identified by unique district number for the Municipality as listed in the CVRS.

### **C. Remove Sec. 9-322a, which requires the district results from the Municipal Clerk sixty (60) days after the election or primary.**

### **D. Amend PA 07-194 to:**

1. require the Secretary of the State to make available a copy of an extract of districts from the CVRS for public review at the random district drawing.
2. require the Secretary of the State to make available a copy of the District Reports and Head Moderator's Reports for public review at the random district drawing.
3. require that each district in the drawing be identified by municipality and by the unique district number listed in the CVRS and the district reports.
4. require in the case of errors discovered after the drawing, in the list of districts for random selection (omissions, non-existent districts, or ambiguities), they must be, by law resolved in a way that restores the integrity of the audit. For instance, when selected districts are ambiguous, audit integrity could be restored by auditing all possible districts implicated by such ambiguities; when districts are omitted from the drawing, integrity could be restored by auditing those districts.

## Appendix D: Additional Observer Comments

In this section we present selected observer comments and interview responses not referenced elsewhere in the report. As in past reports there were many comments complimentary of election officials making observers welcome and demonstrating their commitment to serving the voters of Connecticut. There were also many comments expressing concerns with the audit process. Comments included:

*Overall, the registrars were professional, welcoming, and even asked those of us observing if we wanted coffee.*

*It was a very well-run audit and the personnel were very welcoming and warm toward me.*

*Of the more than five or more towns whose audits I've observed, this is the first one in which I observed the complete and careful following of a procedure so well prepared and so procedurally organized! It should be a model for other towns. A video of their procedural steps could be used as the basis for a good training video.*

*During the hashmarking process, ONE team verified by the woman reading the winner watching that the second person making the hash marks was doing so properly. The other team did not do this. One on team, one person was watching that each VOTE was recorded properly some of the time.*

*There was no attempt to double-check the vote totals. They happened to match the machine totals the first time, but that in no way assures that they were accurately counted. From what I observed, they appeared to have a false sense of confidence in their audit. The small number of ballots to count and the fact that they matched the machine totals the first time, led them to conclude the audit without thoroughly double-checking any of the totals.*

*The manual Count from Team 2 was clearly inaccurate...Team 2 came up with questionable vote totals on the Audit report with simple subtraction of column D from Column C after their first count. Questionable vote totals from Team 2 do not refer to the agreed upon questionable ballots but instead are a simple math correction to make Column F match Column C. No recounts were conducted to explain errors or discrepancies with machine totals.*

*Questionable set aside to use if tally did not match, it matched, so they were added in.*

*Person with calculator at end of table only job, compiling results. Two officials supervising and two more sitting across the room doing nothing I could tell. (No problem unless city complains audit costs too much)*

*There was simply not a good understanding of the purpose of the audit nor a conscientious imparting of the purpose and the procedures for conducting the audit. The*

*idea that teams should be allowed to find their own way (particularly after having gone through an audit as many times as they have) is unreasonable. It seems to me that the Audit Procedure Manual had not been thoroughly read or absorbed; no one there was aware, for instance, that the Clerk should have selected 3 offices or 20% of the office races to audit, and so they had to do them all making the process much more complicated and time consuming.*

*They had the moderator sheets and machine tapes in their possession the entire time they were counting, and after the first count they knew EXACTLY how far off they were.*

*Although I am confident it did not affect the count in the case as there were so few ballots, the machine tape totals for the candidates obviously should never be read off at the outset. This was expressly directed to be done by the supervisor.*

*[One party] team knew total number of ballots before they started counting.*

*The counts were off by one for each candidate. The registrar told them what the totals should be and that they were off by one.*

*After they were satisfied that their hashmark totals matched their stacks totals the supervisor showed the tape and announced that they were one ballot short. Ballots were counted again and an extra was discovered.*

*The counts were accurate. But the counters were given the numbers to check against their hash totals. Better if the counters had read their totals to the Registrar.*

*The teams had the slip with the official counts sitting right near them. They did not appear to refer to the slip until after they made their first count.*

*Who has access to the ballot storage area and keys to the storage area? - Both registrars and 1 maintenance supervisor to room*

*Shelves on the back wall had empty ballot bags and other shelves on the same wall had stacks of all the marked ballots, open and unsealed, that were not being audited.*

*The cabinet is kept in a corner of the Community Room where it is visible and accessible to the public when the Community Room is in use. Anyone can access the Community Room, but only the two registrars have keys to the metal cabinet.*

*Where were the ballots stored after the election? - Locked cabinet. Who has access to the ballot storage area and keys to the storage area? - Anyone in registrars office.*

*How many people have access to the key(s) to ballot storage? - 5*

*How is the ballot storage area secured? - Two padlocks. Who has access to the ballot storage area and keys to the storage area? - Each registrar has both keys.*