Supporting Statement A:

OMB Control Number: XXXXXX

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Educational Products Evaluation

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Section 202(3) of HAVA authorizes EAC to conduct studies and to carry out other duties and activities to promote the effective administration of Federal elections. The purpose of this data collection is to obtain input from election officials at the state and local level regarding the degree to which EAC's educational products have been put to use, the impact of implementing the recommendations and guidance contained therein, and the potential for improving existing products and/or creating additional guides to help election officials across the country more effectively serve their constituents.

Since 2004, the EAC has issued information and guidance on various topics to assist state and local election officials in managing and administering elections. This information includes a number of management guidelines, best practices, and other related reports. The specific products to be evaluated include:

- Effective Designs for the Administration of Federal Elections (Ballot Designs)
- Successful Practices – Poll Worker Recruitment, Training, and Retention
- A Guidebook to Recruiting College Poll workers
- State Poll Worker Requirements Compendium
- Election Management Guidelines
- Quick Start Guides
- Election Terminology Glossaries in Six Languages
- A Voter's Guide to Federal Elections

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The evaluation will provide EAC with a sense of the effectiveness, use, and overall satisfaction with these products by state and local election officials. The educational product evaluation information will be used internally as a decision-making tool to guide the EAC's determination about future updates and reprints of these educational products. The data generated through this effort will be used directly by EAC staff as they seek to improve products already created and develop new publications to address ongoing issues in the administration of Federal elections.

While the EAC is proud of the products it has produced for the nation's election officials, we are aware of the need to streamline some of our products, thereby making them more user-friendly. EAC has determined that it would be beneficial to examine these products with an eye toward this goal, developing updated materials, in part, based on feedback received from our stakeholders. Without stakeholder input, EAC would be engaging in re-writes and edits in the absence of critical feedback from those we hope will use these materials.

3. **Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.**

We will be collecting data with three instruments: a State Election Official Survey, a Local Election Official Survey, and a focus group protocol. We will be conducting the surveys via the Internet. Local and State officials will be sent a letter via the mail informing them of the survey, its purpose, and the importance of their participation. The letter will also provide a toll-free number for election officials to call if they would prefer to complete a paper-based version of the survey. The letter will be followed with an email that reiterates this information and provides instructions for accessing the survey, including a unique password. Periodic reminders will be sent, with the timing and frequency dependent on the response rate being achieved. Focus groups will necessarily be conducted in person. The input received through this method will elucidate the survey findings and provide further guidance on the improvement of existing products and the need for new ones.

4. **Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

Although there has been some research on the effectiveness of the EAC, it has been limited. In February 2008 the Congressional Research Service (CRS) published a report describing the results of two national surveys of local election officials concerning election reform. The survey, executed in 2006, asked officials about the benefits and helpfulness of EAC's services. Results were mixed, and the CRS conjectured that because of the EAC's relative newness, its delayed start-up, and general lack of understanding among respondents about the purpose of EAC guidance, well-founded and relevant opinions about EAC products could not be substantiated (Fischer & Coleman, p. 35, 2008). The CRS research provides little information about the evaluation of EAC's current work products, as the products are too new and the previous CRS survey was too broad-based to target the effectiveness of any specific EAC service. Therefore, there are no relevant data on this topic.

5. **If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

This information collection does not have a significant impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. **Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Section 202(3) of HAVA authorizes EAC to conduct studies and to carry out other duties and activities to promote the effective administration of Federal elections. The purpose of this data collection is to obtain input from election officials at the state and local level regarding the degree to which EAC's educational products have been put to use, the impact of implementing the recommendations and guidance contained therein, and the potential for improving existing products and/or creating additional guides to help election officials across the country more effectively serve their constituents. If the evaluation is not conducted, EAC will be left without a sense of how (or whether) its products are being used by elections officials and whether they have been of any benefit. EAC will likely move forward with producing products that may or may not prove useful for election officials, or whether they might benefit from a different type of product.

Given that elections are conducted locally, the EAC needs local feedback to determine if and how its products are being used. Not being able to provide the best possible products we can to assist election officials in the administration of elections would suggest that EAC is not fulfilling its mandate to do so under HAVA.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner: (a) requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly; (b) requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; (c) requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document; (d) requiring respondent to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; (e) in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study; (f) requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; (g) that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or (h) requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

(a) This is a one-time only data collection. Respondents will only be asked to provide input once. (b) The surveys will be composed primarily of close-ended items requiring respondents to select from available options. An "other, please specify" option will also be available in cases where the range of potential responses is such that comprehensiveness of the answers provided cannot be guaranteed. Respondents to the local election official (LEO) survey will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback concerning each of the products they review, as well as overall comments on the EAC's products. Whether they provide such feedback, and the depth at which they do so, is at their discretion. State officials will be asked to provide written input for two questions. We hope that the survey will be in the field 30 days or less, but do not feel that the nature of the written responses presents an undue burden. (c/d) Respondents are not being asked to submit documentation of any kind, nor are they required to retain records related to this research. (e) Because we are conducting a census of LEOs and State election officials (see response to B-1), we anticipate being able to generalize the results to both populations. Further, we plan to monitor the returns during the survey period and target reminders to ensure there is adequate representation along critical jurisdictional lines (e.g., by state, rural/urban, small/medium/large). Obviously we cannot generalize to either population based on individual respondent characteristics (e.g., age, tenure) as there are no existing data to allow for this. (f) No unapproved statistical data classifications will be employed. (g) Respondents will be guaranteed that results will only be reported in the aggregate, and that no breakdowns of the data will be reported that will allow for identification of individuals. Any information that could lead to such identification will be deleted from the database as soon as it is identified. (h) No proprietary or confidential information will be requested.

8. **If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5CFR 320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken in response to the comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside DOE.**

The EAC published a notice in the Federal Register on September 8, 2009 Vol. 74, no. 172, page 46120. One response was received based on the announcement in the Federal Register. The input concerned aspects of the survey logic, and all suggested changes were incorporated.

Consultations were held with an individual who was integrally involved in the development of the

Election Management Guidelines and who, in that capacity met with a wide range of individuals involved in the electoral process. In addition, she served as an LEO. She provided information on the background to the development of the *Election Management Guidelines*, and also offered guidance on the survey content. Several EAC staff members reviewed the surveys, all of whom have had extensive contact with election officials at all levels during the course of their normal duties, including presenting EAC products at various election official conferences. Therefore, they are well versed in the types of issues and concerns that are likely to arise with the content and use of the guidance and recommendations provided in the products.

9. **Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

The EAC does not provide any payment or gift to respondents.

10. **Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

Respondents will be assured of confidentiality under Public Law 93-573 (Privacy Act of 1974). They will be informed that no individual data will be released and that only aggregate data will be reported. The contractor for this effort, The Human Resources Research Organization, maintains an Institutional Review Board (IRB00000257) and a Federal Wide Assurance (FWA00009492) currently on file with the Department of Health and Human Services. This committee will ensure that legally effective informed consent is obtained and respondent privacy is honored.

11. **Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. **Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.**

For purposes of determining the maximum number of questions any respondent will be asked, we have assumed that it will take 30 seconds to answer each item presented. With 4 background and 24 product awareness questions taking, by this formulation, 14 minutes, this will allow for an additional 32 items to be presented. We will focus first on those products that were used by respondents. We will use information on the dissemination of paper-based products (how many, when) and the number of product views on the EAC's website to develop an initial prioritization for how respondents will directed to different products. In the first stages of data collection, priority will be given to those products that the data suggest may not be as widely known. As the survey remains in the field, we will base the decision regarding which products individuals will be asked about on the amount of data collected on each product to that point (i.e., products with lesser input will be given higher priority). In this way we can limit respondent burden while also balancing out the input received across documents.

The items concerning why the recommendations were not followed will be asked of those who respond only in this manner, and of officials who have not met the item quota after responding to questions requesting input on products actually used. Similarly, questions assessing interest in products that are unknown or have not been read will be asked of those who respond in this way to all the products, as well as those in the other two categories (saw, didn't use/saw used) who have not reached their item quota after answering the relevant questions. The number of items asked will depend on how far under the quota they are, and questions will be allocated as described above (i.e., priority given to questions with lesser data). Figure 1 presents a summary of the survey logic (see attachment).

We plan to conduct focus groups in conjunction with the mid-winter meeting of the International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials, and Treasures, to be held in Chicago, IL 14 to 18 January, 2010. Each focus group will take two hours. This will include 15 minutes for participants to review EAC products, and an additional 15 minutes during which the purpose of the session will be reviewed along with the procedures to be followed. Those in attendance will be provided a copy of the Privacy Act and will be asked to sign a statement indicating that they understand the reason for their attendance and the purposes to which their input will be put. Unless there is objection, the sessions will be taped for later transcription. Otherwise, detailed notes will be kept. In either case, we will not attempt to link statements made during the focus groups to individuals. The remainder of the session will be devoted to a moderator-led discussion of the following points/issues:

- How familiar are attendees with EAC products?
- Were they used to alter/improve election administration processes?
    - If so, how and were the outcomes successful?
    - If not, why not?
- In what ways could existing products be altered or amended so as to be more useful to LEOs?
- What other issues do LEOs face that could potentially be addressed through guidance based on research and best practices?

The size and number of focus groups will largely be a matter of logistics. We hope to have between two and five groups, with no more than 10 LEOs in each.

<u>Online Surveys</u>
Affected Public (Respondents): State and local governments.

a. Number of respondents = 6,000
b. Number of responses per each respondent = 1
c. Total annual responses = 1
d. Hours per response = 40 minutes
    i. Reviewing instructions: 6 minutes
    ii. Adjusting to comply with any previously applicable requirements: N/A
    iii. Training personnel to respond to a collection of information: N/A
    iv. Searching data sources: N/A
    v. Completing and reviewing the collection of information: 30 minutes
    vi. Transmitting or otherwise disclosing the information: 2 minutes
e. Total annual reporting burden = 2,400 hours *(# of respondents x frequency of response x hours of response)*
f. Estimated total annual cost burden = $56,088 (# of total annual reporting hours (2,400) x estimated hourly cost for responding to this information collection ($23.37))

Focus Groups

g. Number of respondents = variable (20-50)
h. Number of responses per each respondent = 1
i. Total annual responses = 1
j. Hours per response = 2 hours
    i. Reviewing instructions/materials: 30 minutes
    ii. Adjusting to comply with any previously applicable requirements: N/A
    iii. Training personnel to respond to a collection of information: N/A
    iv. Searching data sources: N/A
    v. Completing and reviewing the collection of information: N/A
    vi. Transmitting or otherwise disclosing the information: 1.5 hours
k. Total annual reporting burden = 40 hours (lower estimate) – 100 hours (upper estimate) *(# of respondents x frequency of response x hours of response)*
l. Estimated total annual cost burden = $934.80-2,337 (# of total annual reporting hours (40/100) x estimated hourly cost for responding to this information collection ($23.37))

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

There are no capital or start-up costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The estimated annual cost to the Federal Government is $230,573 This estimate includes: $173,073 for a contractor to develop and manage the online surveys and conducting the focus groups; the contractor's personnel cost associated with survey instrument development, database development, data analysis and production of the evaluation report; $40,000 for one (1) EAC personnel to manage the entire surveying process (includes salary and benefits), and $17,500 for overhead.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 (or 14) of OMB Form 83-I.

Not applicable.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

The results of this study will be used by EAC staff as they seek to improve existing products and develop new ones that will be of maximum benefit to election officials at all levels. Only aggregated data will be reported, with breakdowns on key variables that are hypothesized to have a potential impact on experience with and attitudes towards the products (e.g., state, size of jurisdiction). Note that breakouts will not be done in situations where doing so could lead to the identity of respondents. For instance, jurisdictions with only a few—or even one—election official will be combined in an "other" category if reported. At this time it is anticipated that the report will include an overview of respondents on key variables (e.g., location, tenure). This will be followed by a presentation to EAC staff on the results regarding individual product dissemination and level of familiarity (e.g., number/percent reporting seeing each product, number/percent reporting having implemented recommendations from each product). Detailed evaluation data for each product will then be presented, including opinions about the clarity and usefulness of the information presented and assessments of the impact of implementing the recommendations contained therein. The report will conclude with an overview of the results and recommendations regarding product dissemination and revision, and suggestions for additional topics that would be of value. We anticipate that this presentation will be accomplished through the use of simple frequencies and cross tabulations. While the evaluation report is meant to be used internally, EAC will of course make it available for anyone to review following finalization in February 2010.

17. **If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.**

Not applicable to this collection.

18. **Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.**

The EAC does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

Respondent identifies which products he/she: a) is unaware of b) is aware of, but has not seen c) has seen, but has not acted on d) has acted on	
If respondent is not aware of and/or has not seen any products	Ask interest questions.
Respondent has seen one or more products, but has not implemented guidance	1) Determine the product which the respondent has read but not used that has the least amount of data on why not used. 2) Ask respondent why this product was not used. a. If respondent has reached item quota, end. b. If respondent has not reached item quota, repeat 1-2 until all products read but not used have been addressed or item quota reached. 3) If respondent was unfamiliar with one or more products, determine which of them has the least data on potential interest. 4) Present interest question. a. If respondent has reached item quota, end b. Otherwise, repeat 4-5 until all products respondent was unaware of have been addressed or item quota reached. In either case, end.
Respondent has implemented guidance from one or more products.	1) Determine the product which the respondent has used that has the least amount of evaluation data. 2) Present evaluation questions for this product. a. If respondent has reached item quota, end. b. Otherwise, repeat 1-2 until all products used have been evaluated or item quota reached. 3) When all products used have been evaluated, determine if respondent identified products that were read but not used. 4) Determine which products read but not used have least amount of data on why not used. 5) Ask respondent why this product was not used a. If respondent has reached item quota, end. b. If respondent has not reached item quota, repeat 4-5 until all products read but not used have been addressed or item quota reached. 6) If respondent was unfamiliar with one or more products, determine which of them has the least data on potential interest. 7) Present interest question a. If respondent has reached item quota, end. b. Otherwise, repeat 6-7 until all products respondent was unaware of have been addressed or item quota reached. In either case, end.

Figure 1 Survey Logic