Ballot Image Information on ES&S Systems – *issued: 11/1/18*

Florida customers utilize the DS200 and DS450/DS850 digital scanners manufactured by ES&S to count and tabulate Vote by Mail paper ballots, provisional paper ballots, and any paper ballots cast by voters at Early Vote Centers and individual polling sites on Election Day. In the State of Florida, customers can choose three different image storage options during the election programming process. These options are: save no images, save write-in images only, or save all images.

The following process takes place when feeding ballots into a DS200 precinct tabulator. First, the paper ballot is scanned, and an image is temporarily captured into random access memory (RAM). The scanner then uses ES&S's patented Intelligent Mark Recognition (IMR) and Positive Target Recognition and Compensation (PTAC) technology to provide the most advanced and accurate mark recognition available. Once the voter's marks are identified and stored, the DS200 either writes the ballot image in RAM to the internal USB media or clears the image from the DS200's RAM depending on the configuration. If the image is written to the internal USB media, the image file is also digitally signed for added security. At the close of polls, all image files are encrypted and resigned before the USB media is removed from each DS200.

For the DS200, no changes can be made to the image capture settings without making changes in the election programming software and reburning all media.

For the DS450/DS850, image settings can be changed through the configuration menu on the scanner, however, this requires a change in local County procedures and settings.

Specific ballot image capture and retention capabilities for Florida hardware and software versions are outlined below:

EVS releases allow the Electionware user to specify which ballot images are to be saved on the DS200 and Central Scanners (DS450/DS850):

1. All images
2. Write-In Images Only
3. No images

Election Reporting Manager (ERM) is used to archive the DS200/DS450/DS850 media, and Electionware will contain and be able to display and export all cast vote records and those ballot images as designated by the user.

In Unity releases that support the DS200, Hardware Programming Manager allows the user to specify which ballot images are to be saved by the DS200:

1. Save All Ballot images
2. Save Only Ballot images with write-ins
3. Do Not Save Any Ballot Images

When DS200 media is read into ERM and the Collect Ballot Images process is completed, if All images or Only images with write-ins are designated to be saved by the user, only ballot images with write-ins are converted to Windows Bitmap format and consolidated by the ERM Database to allow easier write-in management. All images saved by the DS200 are available to be exported directly from each DS200 USB media using jurisdiction developed manual procedures and tools. The consolidated write-in images can also be viewed using a third-party COTS tool such as IrfanView.

ES&S' best practices recommendation is that full logic and accuracy testing be conducted when any changes are made to the election database, and/or settings on the voting system.