



EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTION ASSETS

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The effective management of essential election assets, such as electronic poll books, scanners, laptops, provisional ballot boxes, and mail-in ballot receptacles, is crucial for ensuring elections run smoothly. This not only facilitates a more streamlined voting process but also enhances the overall experience for voters, poll officials, election staff, and other stakeholders involved. Below, we outline some best practices for Election Asset Management that can be adopted by local and state government agencies.

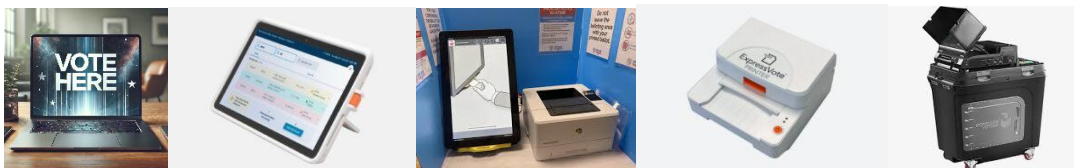
The election asset management life cycle includes several crucial stages to ensure the effective and secure management of election-related assets. Here's a breakdown of the key phases:

1. Asset Identification and induction

The process of tracking election assets starts by determining which types of assets should be monitored, a decision that is influenced by various factors including their criticality, monetary value, and compliance requirements. Many county governments keep tabs on critical equipment such as electronic poll books, ballot marking devices (BMDs), scanners, and laptops, all of which play an integral role in the voting process. Additionally, some agencies extend tracking to tablets and other network endpoints, even those valued under \$500, because of their specific applications within precincts, the software installed by vendors, or their overall significance during elections. This comprehensive approach ensures that all essential assets, regardless of their individual value, are accounted for and maintained appropriately, reflecting their operational importance and ensuring they meet regulatory standards. This systematized tracking not only aids in the logistical management of election assets but also enhances security and operational efficiency, crucial for maintaining the integrity of the election process.

Asset induction is straightforward, marking the "Record of Entry" into the Asset Registry. This step is typically associated with a unique Asset key, which aids in tracking the asset throughout its lifecycle.

*** Images are for demonstration purposes only ***



Record of Entry is kept in a database that gets updated using an Asset Management application or simply in XLS files (manually updated by the election staff)

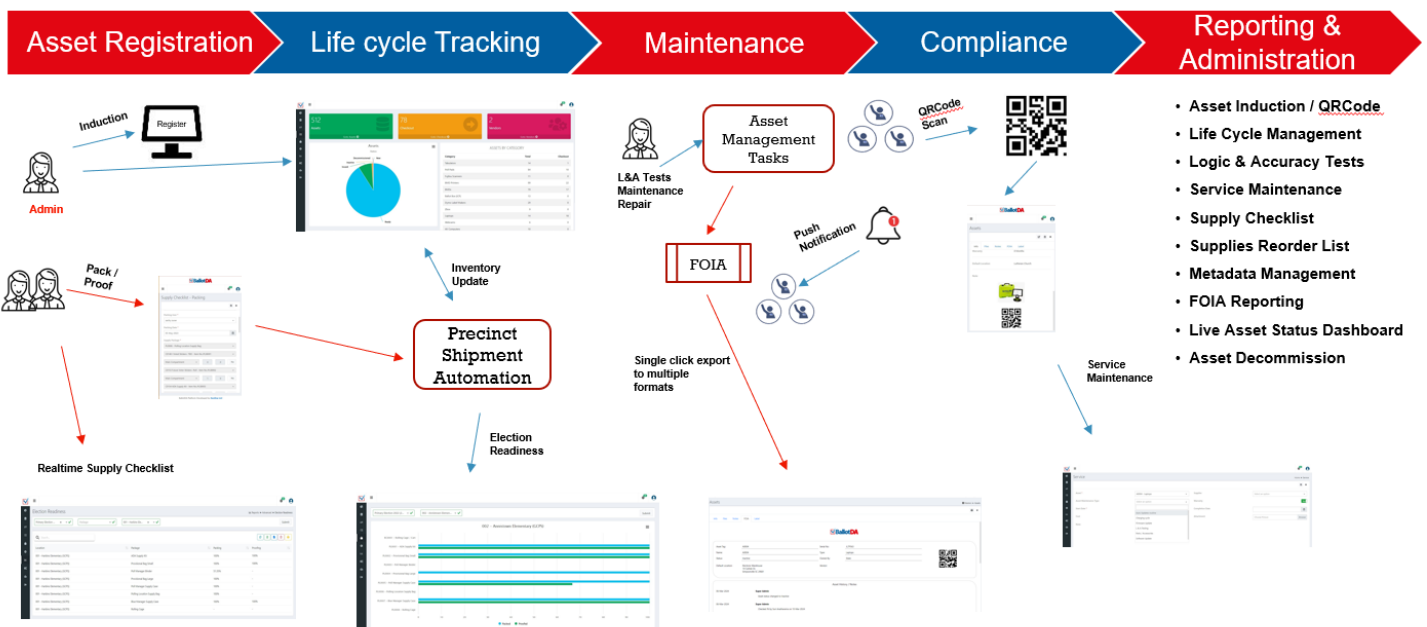
2. Asset Life Cycle Tracking

The lifecycle of an election asset involves several phases: induction, active operation (including routine maintenance, calibration, and updates from vendors), and finally, asset decommission. Throughout this cycle, each asset is tracked using a unique Asset Key. To facilitate efficient tracking, county governments use identifiers such as barcode labels, QR code stickers, or RFID tags, which are compatible with standard industry scanning equipment. Election Assets go through the following :-

- Asset Check Out / Check In during elections or for training purposes
- Asset Calibration / Firmware updates
- Logic & Accuracy (L&A) tests
- Asset Maintenance (including O/S updates, charging cycle for tablets, etc.)
- Vendor warranty checks and parts upgrade

Many of these activities fall under the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), necessitating that election teams maintain logbooks or essential "chain of custody" documents. These records ensure the precise tracking of which individuals handled the asset, the locations it was transported to, and the relevant date range.

Election Asset Management



The diagram above outlines a comprehensive system for managing the lifecycle of election assets, detailing processes from Asset Registration to Reporting and Administration. It emphasizes the importance of efficient tracking, maintenance, and compliance, featuring tools like QR codes and automation for precinct shipments. The flowchart effectively shows how these components integrate to ensure election readiness and streamline asset management tasks, enhancing transparency and operational efficiency.

3. Asset Maintenance Considerations

In managing and supporting assets during an election, several critical strategies must be employed. **Operational support** is key, featuring a specialized team prepared to resolve any technical or logistical challenges, ensuring that all voting equipment and systems operate smoothly. Pollworker Communication apps that enable “Realtime chats” are used in some places to resolve issues quickly. **Regular maintenance** is crucial, involving comprehensive pre-election checks, updates to software, and thorough inspections of hardware to avoid significant problems during elections. Furthermore, **Continuous monitoring** of the election infrastructure is necessary to quickly detect and rectify any potential issues, which includes tracking software performance, monitoring voter traffic, and safeguarding against tampering. Together, these best practices help create a stable and secure environment for elections, reducing disruptions and preserving the integrity of the vote.

4. Asset Supply Checklist

During elections, effective asset management is crucial and involves several key processes. Logging of **Pack / Proof Activity** is vital, as it entails maintaining detailed records of all assets shipped to precincts, tracking their condition, personnel involved and movement to ensure secure delivery. **Auditing** is equally important; this process checks that all assets are issued and received in proper condition, which is essential for the smooth conduct of Early Voting (AIP) and on Election Day. **Security** measures must also be robust, involving the use of appropriate seals, tags, and packaging techniques to prevent tampering and unauthorized access. Together, these practices ensure the integrity and security of election materials, crucial for maintaining the effectiveness and fairness of the electoral process.

5. Asset Retirement

Effectively managing the end-of-life of election assets involves several critical steps. Retiring or **Decommissioning** is the first step, where assets that are no longer usable are safely retired and systematically removed from active use. It is very important to have a paper trail that complies with local laws.

Data Sanitization is crucial to ensure all data stored on these assets is securely erased to prevent unauthorized access and potential data breaches. This includes comprehensive wiping of storage devices and destruction of any backups. Care should be taken to comply with data retention policies. **Recycling and Disposal** involves adhering to environmentally friendly practices to dispose of retired assets. This step ensures compliance with local environmental regulations and often involves engaging specialized e-waste recycling services that can safely process and recycle materials. Collectively, these practices ensure that decommissioning is both secure and environmentally responsible, minimizing potential risks and environmental impact.

6. Post Election Evaluation and Improvement

Echoing Stephen Covey's notion of "Sharpening the Saw," it's essential to continuously refine the process of managing election assets. The cycle begins with the proper conduct of an independent **Post-Election Review**, where a specialized team analyzes how effectively the asset management strategies were implemented, identifying both strengths and weaknesses. Following this analysis, **Feedback Collection** is vital. This step involves soliciting input from a variety of stakeholders, including election officials and volunteers, to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives on areas needing improvement. It is important to keep emotions aside and be objective. The final step is **Process Optimization**, where the collected feedback and insights drive necessary changes and enhancements. This systematic approach of evaluation, feedback, and optimization fosters ongoing improvement, aiming to streamline efficiency and bolster effectiveness in managing assets for future election cycles.

Effective management of election assets is essential to guarantee the transparency, efficiency, and security of the electoral process.

The BallotDA platform, created by Sonline LLC, is uniquely designed to support local government agencies in digitalizing and automating their workflows, thus enhancing operational efficiency and effectiveness. Our Election Asset Management module equips election teams with tools to oversee election assets from acquisition to disposal, accurately track consumable inventories, access an election readiness dashboard, and comply with local laws and FOIA. We are proud to assist the dedicated election staff who diligently work to maintain the integrity of the electoral process across our nation.