



SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA)

For

vTools.Voting project users





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Overview

This document describes a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the vTools team and IEEE members [users]. It outlines the services offered by vTools to vTools project users as they are understood by vTools stakeholders. This SLA does not supersede any of the general IEEE policies or procedures. This SLA is a living document and might be revised after a mutual agreement between vTools team members.

SLA purpose and scope

The purpose of this document is to ensure that proper mechanisms are in place to provide high quality service and support to vTools users. This SLA provides clear description of service ownership, roles and responsibilities, service quality metrics, and available support. The SLA's scope is limited to services offered under vTools voting project. By definition an SLA is an agreement, not a contract. It is understood, that while diligent effort will be made to fulfill this SLA by stakeholders, there might be exceptional circumstances when the SLA will not be realized. Please note that this SLA is tuned for vTools.Voting service. [This sentence duplicates an earlier sentence in this paragraph.]

Stakeholders

There are five major stakeholders in vTools.Voting: IEEE members, IEEE volunteers running elections, vTools team, vTools.Voting team, and IEEE IT department.

IEEE members and IEEE volunteers running elections constitute the user group of the vTools Voting project. They are consumers of services offered by the vTools Voting project and are responsible for reporting problems encountered.

vTools team consists of IEEE volunteers and IEEE staff. This team develops the vTools projects, and is tasked with making strategic decisions in regards to vTools services offered. This team is responsible for coordinating efforts needed to ensure SLA fulfillment, arranging for resources necessary, allocating appropriate budget, etc.

vTools.Voting software development team consists of an IEEE Volunteer Project Manager and Architect, paid part-time analyst/programmer, and an ad-hoc team of student developers.

IEEE IT department is responsible for general oversight by providing hardware, software, and staff resources necessary as agreed with vTools team. In addition IEEE IT department provides valuable advice and expert opinion on matters related to fulfilling SLAs.



SLA

Roles and responsibilities for supporting vTools.Voting services

vTools.Voting service users will be responsible for consuming services offered in a non-malicious manner and promptly reporting encountered problems.

IT staff will be responsible for handling issues related to hardware maintenance and failure.

IT staff will be responsible for handling issues related to server software maintenance and failure (server operating system, application servers, database servers, web servers, etc).

IT staff will be responsible for virtual server and database backup.

Software development team for vTools.Voting will be responsible for handling issues due to failures of the underlying service. vTools.Voting service are dependent on services provided by the IT department, such as web services and Siteminder. Therefore, IT department's involvement might be required in troubleshooting and resolving problems when it is determined that they are related to dependencies within IEEE IT realm.

vTools.Voting team is composed of an IEEE Volunteer Project Manager, IEEE staff project manager, and, paid part-time analyst/programmer.

Availability of services offered

vTools.Voting services will be available 24 hours day, 7 days a week with the following exceptions:

- 1 hour weekly maintenance windows for software maintenance, Wednesday 9AM - 10 AM EDT. [Maybe Eastern Time, or a Universal time
- Service interruptions for emergency fixes and unscheduled outages. Due to unpredictable nature of such occurrences it is not possible to specify the exact outage duration, however due diligence will be taken to resolve them in a timely manner.



Performance of services offered

The vTools.Voting service offered is a web-based application. vTools.Voting application will have a response time not exceeding 30 seconds for a full screen load 90% of the time over a broadband connection that is not experiencing network related delays connecting to the IEEE network.

Available support and means of problem reporting

Available user support for application usage will include self-service via help pages such as Wikis and recorded tutorials available online. There would be no phone support provided for questions regarding application usage. Voters will be supported directly by ballot creators. Ballot creators will have additional e-mail support via mailing list monitored by staff.

User support for resolving service problems such as service interruptions, application response times, software "bugs", etc. will be as follows:

- Service Interruptions – users do not need to report issues related to service outages. System will be monitored with automated tools. MGA staff will be automatically notified via e-mail of any service interruptions.
- Section Officers who receive reports of system problems will forward them to a special peer group support mailing list open to officers of all OUs utilizing the software. This list will be monitored by MGA staff who will analyze the reported problems and send them to an appropriate party (service development team, IT staff, etc). Staff will then respond back to the support list in order to keep officers aware of the status and resolution. The list's e-mail address will be vtools-voting@ieee.org. Please note that there will be no phone support.

Problem resolution response time

E-mail support for responding to service problems will be available 9AM – 5PM EST [See earlier time comment], M-F excluding holidays. For example, service interruption reported on Friday at 6 PM will not be looked at until 9AM the following Monday.

Priority	Impact	Examples
1 - Critical	Service outage or a major application problem making it impossible to use the service.	Service is not available, application does not save critical data correctly.



2 - Major	Large number of users is impacted and no work around exists.	Slow application response time, session timeouts, some application functionality is broken.
3 - Ordinary	Impact on a small number of user base or impact on a large number of users, but a workaround exists	Users running a supported browser are affected, but can use an alternate browser. Some minor application functionality is broken, but the service is still usable.
4 - Low	No impact on users	A request for a new feature

Flow for the response will be as follows:

An automatic monitoring system will detect an issue with the service and send a message to vTools.Voting team. vTools.Voting team will perform an initial investigation and then report the issue to vTools teams and Voting tool business users. MGA staff will work with IT staff and volunteer project manager to determine the issue's priority and assign the work to an appropriate party: Voting development team, MGA staff, IT staff. **Due to the fact that system is running in a pilot mode as opposed to production mode, IT response time will vary based on the workload associated with supporting production systems.**

In cases where it is determined that vTools.Voting software development team needs to fix the problem an effort will be made to address the issues in a timely manner. However, the actual response time will be based on volunteers' commitments outside of the vTools project. An estimate of the response time will be supplied as part of the response to the support list.

Over the course of problem investigation priority might be changed. If it is determined that issue affects more users than initially estimated, the severity will be increased and more effort spent on finding a solution. Likewise, if it is determined that a work around, such as using an alternative browser for content creator, is available, the severity may be lowered. The team working on the problem will be responsible for changing the severity level. The team will then communicate the changes to the support e-mail list open to OU officers to keep them updated.

Resolution criteria, i.e. considering an issue to be resolved, will be determined by the team working on the problem. This will be communicated to the vtools-voting@ieee.org support e-mail list open to OU officers. Officers will then have an opportunity to voice their concerns (if any) with the solution.



Quality metrics for services offered

Quality metrics are used to evaluate success of the services offered and to determine when a change in strategy is required or additional resources are needed.

	Excellent	Good	Poor (action required)
Availability (Uptime)	99% Maximum outage duration not to exceed 24 business hours.	Over 97% Maximum outage duration not to exceed 48 business hours.	Less than 97% Maximum outage duration exceeds business 48 hours.
Performance	Less than 5 second response time	No more than 5 second response time on 90% of the monitored screens	More 5 second response time on 20% of the monitored screens
Issue resolution	More than 99% of critical and major issues resolved or mitigated within one business day.	Over 94% of critical and major issues resolved or mitigated within one business day.	Less than 90% of critical and major issues resolved or resolved within one business day.

$$\text{Monthly Uptime \%} = (\text{Total Hours} - \text{Hours of Down Time}) / \text{Total Hours} \times 100\%$$

Please note that uptime will be determined based on data reported by automated monitor agents. Downtime due to announced maintenance will not be used in uptime calculations. Reports of downtime submitted by users will be investigated, but won't be used to calculate uptime, since downtime experienced by users can be related to network issues on the user side or anywhere between user's computer and IEEE network. Uptime will be measured by automatic monitoring application's login page.

Changes to SLA

This SLA is a living document and might be revised after a mutual agreement by vTools team. Updated SLA will be published in a timely manner.

Appendix A – Definitions