



Electoral registration in Great Britain

Report on performance of Electoral
Registration Officers

June 2012

Translations and other formats

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Summary

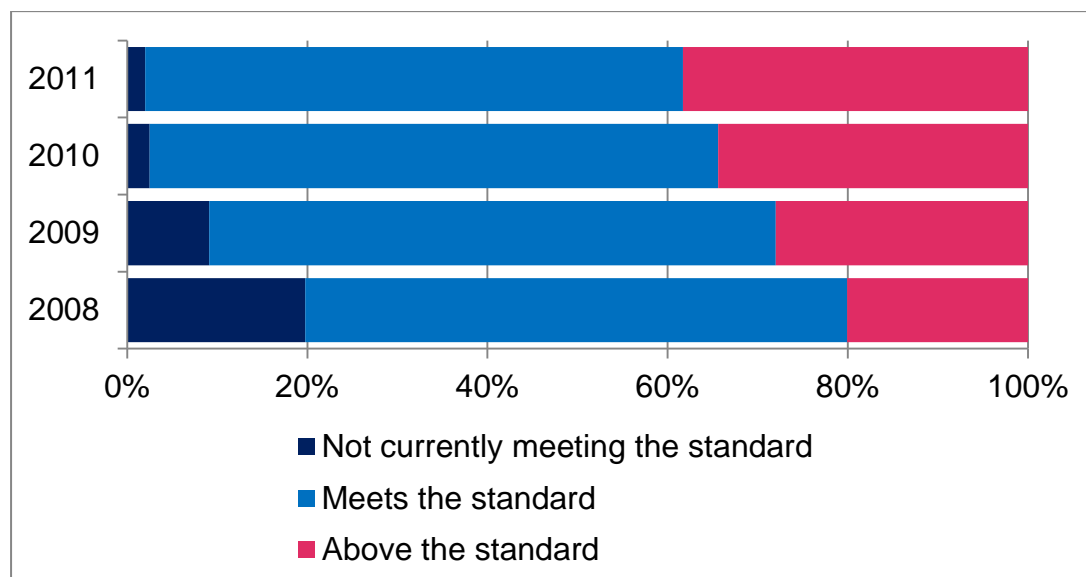
In order to take part in an election in Great Britain, individuals need to be included in an electoral register. We want people who are entitled to vote to be confident that registering to vote is as straightforward, accessible and secure as possible. We also want them to receive a consistently high-quality service wherever they live. It is the responsibility of Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) across Great Britain to deliver this.

The Electoral Commission monitors the performance of EROs through our performance standards framework. We highlight where electoral registration is well-run and challenge EROs where the service provided is below standard. However, while we can intervene to recommend improvements, we do not have the powers to **direct** EROs to take steps to improve their performance. We also provide guidance and resources for EROs to support improvements in electoral registration practice.

This report is our assessment of ERO performance in 2011, and looks at how performance has changed since the framework was introduced in 2008.

There has been an improvement in performance against the standards over the past four years, as shown in Chart 1 below, and 2011 continued the overall upward trend in performance.

Chart 1: Performance of EROs in Great Britain 2008 – 2011



However, in some aspects of performance there still remain areas of concern. In particular, the performance of EROs against performance standard 3: house-to-house enquiries has dropped, with 58 EROs not meeting the standard in 2011. Where EROs are not meeting this standard, this may also indicate potential non-compliance with Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA

1983) which requires EROs to take 'all steps that are necessary' to comply with their duty to maintain the register, including making house-to-house enquiries on one or more occasions in connection with the canvass.

The Electoral Registration and Administration Bill currently before the UK Parliament makes provision to introduce individual electoral registration (IER) in Great Britain. Within this Bill, there is provision to amend the existing Section 9A duty by adding a requirement to take all steps that are necessary for the purpose of securing that, **so far as is reasonably practicable**, persons who are entitled to be registered in a register (and no others) are registered in it. We are concerned that the proposed amendment could be taken as limiting the duty on EROs to take all necessary steps to ensure a complete and accurate register by reference to what is 'reasonably practicable'. Given that this report shows that there is already an issue around the levels of house-to-house enquiries being carried out in some areas under the existing duty, we are concerned that this proposed amendment creates an increased risk to the completeness and accuracy of electoral registers, **and urge the Government to re-consider this change**.

Even though there has been an increase in the number of EROs meeting the remaining standards over the past four years, there is still room for further improvement in performance. We now want to see EROs pushing on to perform beyond the standards, taking steps as necessary so that they are able to fulfil the criteria needed to exceed the standards.

In particular, while EROs are using appropriate sources of information to verify records on the register, our report on the evaluation of the first round of data matching pilots¹ noted that there is a variation in both the range of the data already available to EROs that is accessed in practice and the methods by which it is used, with the evidence suggesting that there is scope for more use to be made of local data. As we move towards IER it will be even more important that EROs make full use of all the records available to them not only to verify records on the register but also to identify and contact potential new electors.

In addition, although EROs are now able to demonstrate that they have in place a strategy for carrying out effective public awareness activities, there is still work to be done by EROs in relation to their plans for participation activities. This is an aspect of performance that will be crucial during the implementation of IER to ensure that electors understand what they need to do in order to get registered. EROs will need to ensure they are effectively targeting home movers, as well as other groups identified by research² as less likely to be registered such as

¹ [Data matching schemes to improve accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers – evaluation report](#), March 2012.

² [Great Britain's electoral registers 2011](#), December 2011.

young people, some BME communities and people living in private rented homes.

EROs will face a number of challenges as they prepare for the move from household registration to IER. It is particularly important to make sure that in preparation for this change EROs do all they can now to ensure that their registers are as complete and accurate as possible by taking all available steps – including carrying out house-to-house enquiries and using available local data to identify and target potential electors – before the transition to IER begins.

In 2012 the Commission will require EROs to report on their performance against the standards earlier than in previous years, with reports to be submitted prior to start of the annual canvass rather than following publication of the revised register. This will enable us to monitor performance throughout the process of planning for and delivering the annual canvass, and to intervene where any issues are identified in order to recommend improvements prior to publication of the revised register.

In April 2012 we wrote to all EROs to remind them of their legal duties to maintain complete and accurate registers and to highlight how the Commission will be monitoring the 2012 canvass process through our performance standards framework. This year, we will assess the project plans and risk registers of all EROs, and will focus on working with those EROs who are not currently meeting the standards to recommend improvements.

We will also carry out our annual data collection exercise following the conclusion of the canvass.³ This year we will collect additional data to try to understand more about the impact of the approaches adopted by individual EROs to complying with their statutory duties, including information to enable us to fully assess the extent of where house-to-house enquiries are not being carried out across Great Britain and the impact this has on the electoral register. Looking ahead, we want to work with EROs to review their data and to ensure that EROs themselves are making full use of this information and understand what it tells them about their own performance.

³ The data collected from EROs following the 2011 annual canvass can be found at: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/performance-standards/electoral-registration.

1 Background

1.1 The Electoral Commission has the power to set performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Returning Officers (ROs) and Counting Officers (COs) in relation to specified elections and referendums, and a duty to publish assessments of the level of performance by these officers against the standards.⁴ The Commission also has the power to collect information relating to expenditure in connection with the specified elections and referendums.⁵

1.2 Performance standards for EROs were published in July 2008⁶ and since then we have reported on the performance of EROs against these standards following each annual canvass.

1.3 The following table sets out the 10 performance standards for EROs in Great Britain:

Table 1: Performance standards for EROs in Great Britain

Subject area	Performance standards
Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records	PS1. Using information sources to verify entries on the register of electors and identify potential new electors (referred to in following charts and text as <i>Information sources</i>) PS2. Maintaining the property database (<i>Property database</i>) PS3. House-to-house enquiries (<i>House-to-house</i>)
Integrity of the registration process	PS4. Maintaining the integrity of registration and absent vote applications (<i>Integrity</i>) PS5. Supply and security of the register and absent voter lists (<i>Supply and security</i>)
Encouraging participation in the registration process	PS6. Public awareness strategy (<i>Public awareness</i>) PS7. Working with partners PS8. Accessibility and communication of information (<i>Accessibility</i>)
Planning and organisation	PS9. Planning for rolling registration and the annual canvass (<i>Planning</i>) PS10. Training

⁴ Sections 9A and 9B of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), as inserted by Section 67 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

⁵ Section 9C of PERA

⁶ [Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain](#), July 2008.

1.4 Since 2008 there has been continuing improvement in performance against the standards. However, although considerable progress had been made, following the 2010 annual canvass, there still remained 45 EROs who reported performing below a particular standard in each of the three years.

1.5 Between May and July 2011, we contacted these 45 EROs to discuss the reasons why their performance was below the standard and the action they intended to take to improve. Of the seven standards which certain EROs had continually failed, five required the documentation of a written plan and in almost all cases, we found insufficient documented evidence to show that the EROs in question were meeting the standard.

1.6 Following the 2011 canvass, 42 of these EROs now meet the relevant standard. However, there are three EROs (East Hertfordshire, Eden and Rugby) who reported being below performance standard 6 – Public awareness - for the fourth consecutive year. We are continuing to follow up with these EROs to try to ensure that the development of a public awareness strategy is in progress and will be implemented in 2012. As we move towards the introduction of IER, this work will become even more critical, with all local EROs having a major role to play in ensuring voters understand what this significant change to the registration system means for them.

1.7 During the 2011 annual canvass, we reviewed evidence from a sample of 25% of EROs across Great Britain, which enabled us to verify the way in which the returns were completed and to better understand what underpins the levels of performance subsequently reported in the assessments. This also ensured that we could be confident that the performance standards returns had been completed consistently across Great Britain and enabled us to moderate the returns more effectively.

1.8 The following chapters provide an analysis of the levels of ERO performance against each of the standards over the past four years.

2 Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records

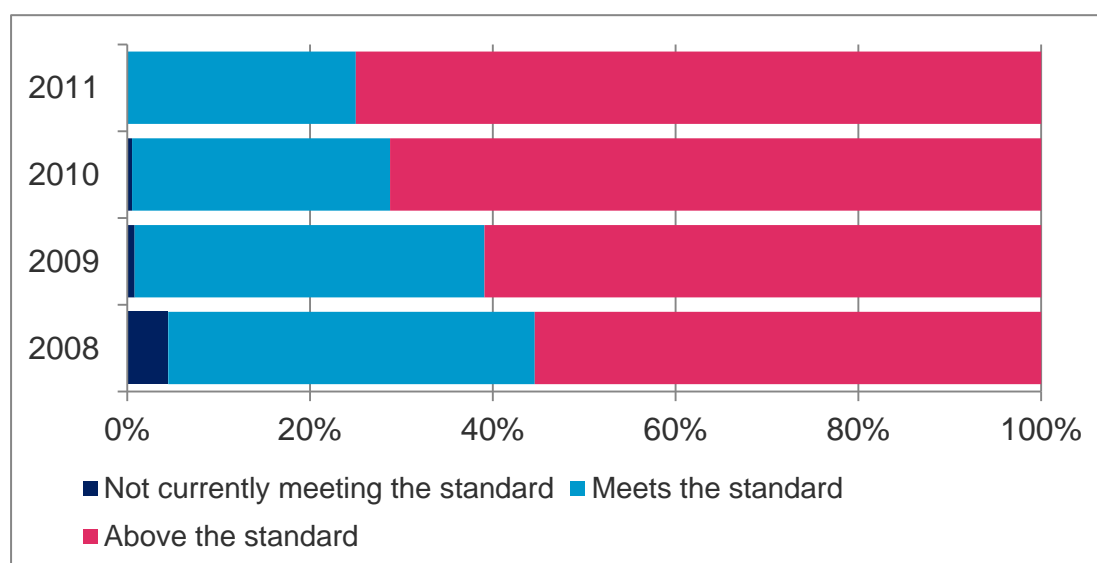
2.1 Maintaining a complete and accurate electoral register is one of the core statutory responsibilities of EROs, and this will be particularly important ahead of the transition to IER. The three performance standards within this subject area aim to ensure that EROs identify and use available records and make the necessary house-to-house enquiries in order to ensure that registers are as complete and accurate as possible.

Performance standard 1: Information sources

2.2 This standard aims to ensure that EROs use appropriate sources of information to verify records on the register of electors and to identify and contact potential new electors. EROs are entitled to inspect any records held by the council that appointed them such as council tax records and housing records, and can also inspect records produced by the registrar of births and deaths.

2.3 Since EROs first reported on their performance in 2008, performance against this standard has improved with no EROs in 2011 reporting performance below the standard: 25% (95 EROs) are meeting the standard and the remaining 75% (285 EROs) are above the standard. Chart 2 below shows the improvement in performance against this standard over the past four years.

Chart 2: Performance of EROs against performance standard 1 – Information sources



2.4 While EROs are using appropriate sources of information to verify records on the register, our report on the evaluation of the first round of data matching pilots⁷ noted that there is a variation in both the range of the data already available to EROs that is accessed in practice and the methods by which it is used, with the evidence suggesting that there is scope for more use to be made of local data. As we move towards IER it will be even more important that EROs make full use of all the records available to them not only to verify records on the register but also to identify and contact potential new electors.

2.5 Although we know that EROs are using other information sources, we want to understand more, on both a local and a national level, about the impact and effectiveness of this work. As part of our data collection and analysis work this year we will be looking at the levels of changes made to the register, including the levels of reviews of registration that are carried out, to enable us to support EROs in evaluating and assessing the impact of the work they do in relation to and arising out of checking available records. As part of this, we will also be seeking to identify examples of good practice that we can share with other EROs.

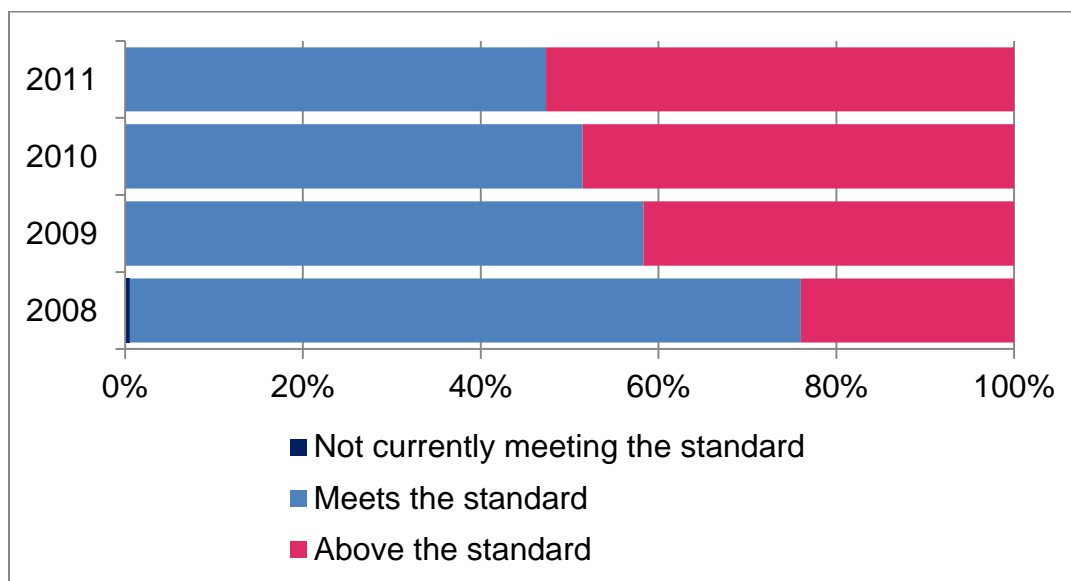
Performance standard 2: Property database

2.6 This standard aims to ensure that EROs use all appropriate sources of information available to them to ensure that all relevant properties are included in their property database.

2.7 EROs have performed well against this standard since 2008. For the past three years no EROs have reported performance below the standard. Currently, 47% (180 EROs) meet the standard, with the remaining 53% (200 EROs) above the standard. Chart 3 below shows the improvement in performance against this standard over the past four years.

⁷ [*Data matching schemes to improve accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers – evaluation report*](#), March 2012.

Chart 3: Performance of EROs against performance standard 2 – Property database



Performance standard 3: House-to-house

2.8 This standard aims to ensure that EROs make the necessary house-to-house enquiries to ensure that all eligible residents are registered. To meet the standard the ERO is required to have a comprehensive written plan designed to ensure that properties which have not responded to the annual canvass and, where the ERO is not otherwise satisfied that eligible electors are resident, will be subject to house-to-house enquiries on at least one or more occasions.

2.9 Although the number of EROs who reported meeting or exceeding this standard increased between 2008 and 2010, there remained eight EROs following the 2010 annual canvass who reported not meeting this standard. Three of these EROs had reported performing below this standard in each year since 2008. Consequently, we committed to finding out and reporting on the reasons for this and working with these EROs to try to ensure that they did not fall below the standard in future years.⁸ Between May and July 2011, we contacted these EROs to remind them of their legal duties to maintain complete and accurate registers⁹ and of the requirements of performance standard 3, and to discuss why they had fallen below the standard and the action they intended to take to improve. Subsequently, all three of these EROs confirmed that they

⁸ [Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers: Report into EROs failing a performance standard in all three years, August 2010.](#)

⁹ Section 9, RPA 1983.

intended to meet the standard in 2011 by carrying out house-to-house enquiries at every non-responding household. In addition to the three EROs who had reported performing below this standard in each year, we also contacted the remaining five EROs who reported not meeting this standard in 2010, reminding them of their responsibilities and the requirements of performance standard 3.

2.10 However, we became aware of anecdotal evidence suggesting that for various reasons, including local authority budget reductions, there may be a greater number of EROs in 2011 who would not meet this standard and who may not be complying with Section 9A of the RPA 1983. This section requires EROs to take 'all steps that are necessary' to comply with their duty to maintain the register including making, on one or more occasions, house to house enquiries in connection with a canvass for the purpose of supplementing information obtained on the canvass form or, where the form has not been returned, obtaining information that the form was designed to obtain.

2.11 Therefore for the first time, in addition to the performance standard return, we asked all EROs to confirm specifically whether or not they carried out a personal canvass of all non-responders and, if not, to provide an explanation as to the reasons why. In response to this request, in addition to the seven EROs who reported not meeting the standard, an additional 109 EROs, although reporting that they met or exceeded the standard, did not confirm that a personal canvass of all non-responders is carried out.

2.12 We subsequently asked each of these 109 EROs (29% of all EROs) to provide further data in order for us to make a better-informed assessment of their performance against performance standard 3. The data included the number of non-responding households which were not contacted by a personal canvasser or by any other method (not including forms and reminders); how many of these households had entries confirmed by other records; and how many of those households had entries that could not be confirmed and were removed.

2.13 We have not collected this data in the past and the data received varied in quality and completeness. Although the data helped us make a better-informed assessment of each of the individual EROs' performance, the interpretation of the categories of information requested varied by ERO and therefore was not always comparable. Consequently, it did not enable us to fully assess the scale or impact of where house-to-house enquiries are not being carried out nationally.

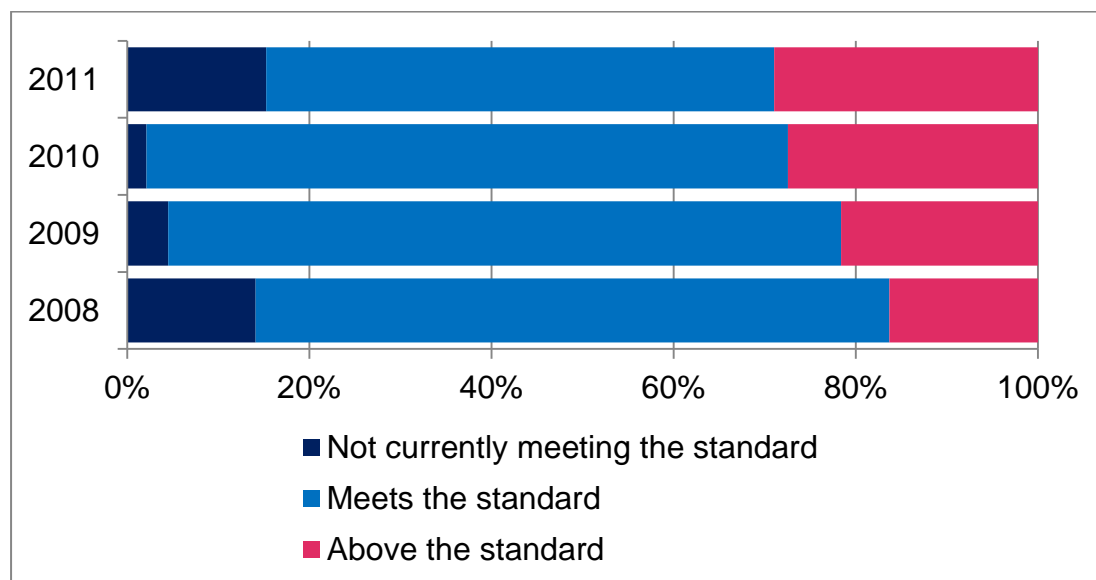
2.14 While we cannot quantify how many individuals were directly affected as a result of those EROs' failure to carry out house-to-house enquiries at all properties where the entries could not otherwise be confirmed, it is important to note that any individuals affected do still have the opportunity to apply to register throughout the year should they wish to do so and consequently would still be able to vote. Following the May 2012 polls, we have been collecting data from EROs on how many people tried to register to vote after the close of registration, up to and including polling day, and how many people tried to vote

on polling day and were found not to be registered, and we will be analysing this information as part of our election reporting work.

2.15 As part of our assessment of each individual ERO we took into account: the extent of house-to-house enquiries that were carried out; what, if any, other methods were used in addition to the steps specified in S9A of the RPA 1983 (for example, telephone, e-mail, personal canvassing outside the canvass period, mini canvass,¹⁰ etc.); and the outcomes of the canvass.

2.16 Following this process, we revised the assessments of 51 EROs to 'below' the standard. This means that, including the seven EROs who originally reported that they did not meet the standard, there are now 58 EROs who in our assessment do not meet this standard. Chart 4 below shows how performance has changed over the four years.

Chart 4: Performance of EROs against performance standard 3 – House-to-house



2.17 From the information provided by EROs, the main reasons given for not carrying out house-to-house enquiries were budgetary constraints leading to a lack of resources, being unable to recruit enough canvassers and the rurality of certain local authority areas. Our guidance to EROs is clear that in extreme cases the ERO may consider that house-to-house enquiries are not necessary - if, for example, there are personal safety implications for the canvasser.

¹⁰ Mini canvasses are postal, house-to-house and other programmes of enquiries undertaken outside the annual canvass period, generally in the spring before scheduled elections in May. These mini-canvasses can often cover the whole local authority area, or in some cases may focus on particular wards, for example, where there has been a particularly low level of response to the previous annual canvass in an area.

However, our guidance is clear that EROs should assess each **property** on a case-by-case basis rather than making a decision for the whole local authority area, or on financial grounds. While recognising the challenges with personal canvassing in rural areas, electors should not be treated differently solely on the basis of where they live.

2.18 Maintaining completeness and accuracy of the register prior to and during the expected implementation of individual electoral registration will be important. A key part of this must involve retaining and, if necessary, strengthening, existing legal duties to ensure that EROs proactively take steps to improve the quality of their electoral registers during this significant change to the registration system in Great Britain.

2.19 The Electoral Registration and Administration Bill makes provision to amend the existing Section 9A duty by adding a requirement to take all steps that are necessary for the purpose of securing that, **so far as is reasonably practicable**, persons who are entitled to be registered in a register (and no others) are registered in it. We believe that the proposed amendment could be taken as limiting the duty on EROs to take all necessary steps to ensure a complete and accurate register by reference to what is 'reasonably practicable'. Given that our analysis, set out above, shows that there is already an issue around the levels of house-to-house enquires being carried out in some areas under the existing duty, we are concerned that this proposed amendment creates an increased risk to the completeness and accuracy of electoral registers, and we urge the Government to re-consider this change.

2.20 In April 2012, we wrote to all EROs to remind them of their legal duties to maintain complete and accurate registers and to highlight how the Commission will be monitoring the 2012 canvass process through our performance standards framework. This year, we will assess the project plans and risk registers of all EROs, and will focus on working with those EROs who are not currently meeting the standards to recommend improvements. We have made available a revised project plan template and risk register template to assist EROs in planning for electoral registration activities and to support them in meeting the requirements of all the standards.

2.21 Moving forwards, we intend to work with all EROs to ensure that they are able to accurately identify and report how many households have not had entries confirmed by taking steps under Section 9A of the RPA 1983, including through making house to house enquiries, and what the consequences of this were. This year we will ask each ERO to supply us with this information as part of our annual data collection exercise to enable us to fully assess the extent of where house-to-house enquiries are not being carried out across Great Britain and the impact this has on the electoral register.

3 Integrity

3.1 To support public confidence in the electoral process, it is vital that every effort is made to ensure integrity in the process of compiling and maintaining electoral registers and absent voter lists. To ensure the risks of fraudulent or ineligible registration and absent voting applications are minimised, it is essential to have clear formal plans in place to assess, monitor and address integrity concerns.

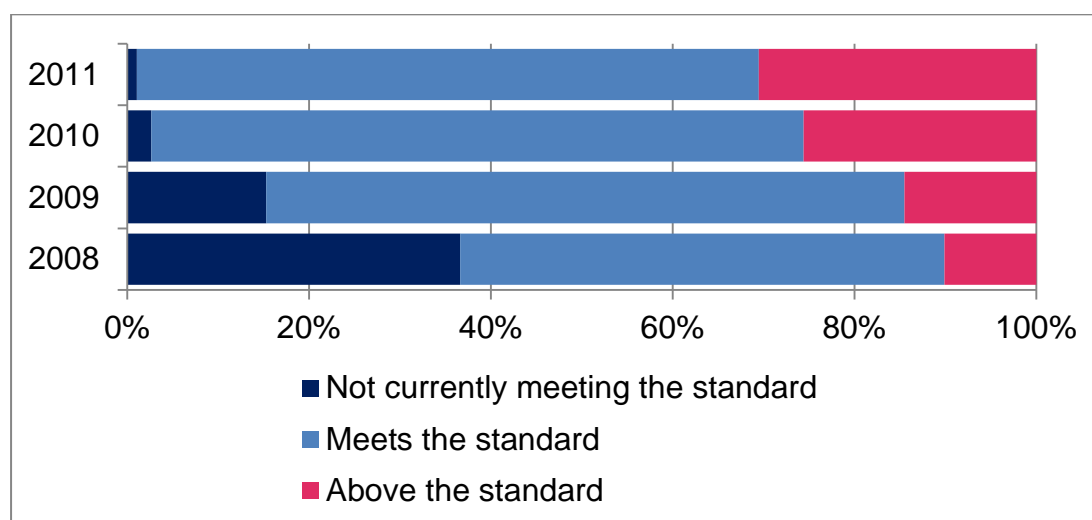
Performance standard 4: Integrity

3.2 This standard aims to ensure that EROs have a process in place to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate electoral malpractice. The types of patterns of activity that we expect should trigger ERO activity include the receipt of a large number of applications from the same property, or a high number of register entries at the same address.

3.3 Over the last four years, while the majority of EROs have confirmed that they ensure contact is made with their police single point of contact (SPOC) and that they have arrangements in place to refer to their SPOC suspicious registration and absent vote applications, there remain a small number of EROs who have not met this standard, in common with other standards which require documented evidence of processes designed to ensure that risks are identified and managed. There has however been a significant improvement since our first report, when over a third of EROs (138) reported performance below the standard. Since then, we have published additional guidance and planning templates to help EROs meet this standard, and last year met with those EROs who had failed this standard in each of the previous three years, all of whom now meet the standard.

3.4 However, there still remain four EROs (Lambeth, Horsham, Eden and Warwick) who are not currently meeting the standard, all due to a lack of documented evidence of their approach. We have provided all EROs with a revised template project plan and risk register, which includes example tasks and deliverables specific to the identification of potential integrity issues, and we will continue to work with these particular EROs who are not currently meeting this standard to support them in the development of a written plan for integrity issues. Currently, 260 EROs (68%) meet the standard and 116 (31%) are above the standard. Chart 5 below shows the improvement in performance against this standard over the past four years.

Chart 5: Performance of EROs against performance standard 4 - Integrity



3.5 Our work with Electoral Registration Officers, police forces and prosecuting authorities has highlighted that, in a small number of local authority areas, meeting or exceeding the current performance standard on electoral integrity may not be sufficient to ensure confidence that specific risks to the integrity of electoral registration and absent vote applications are being appropriately addressed.

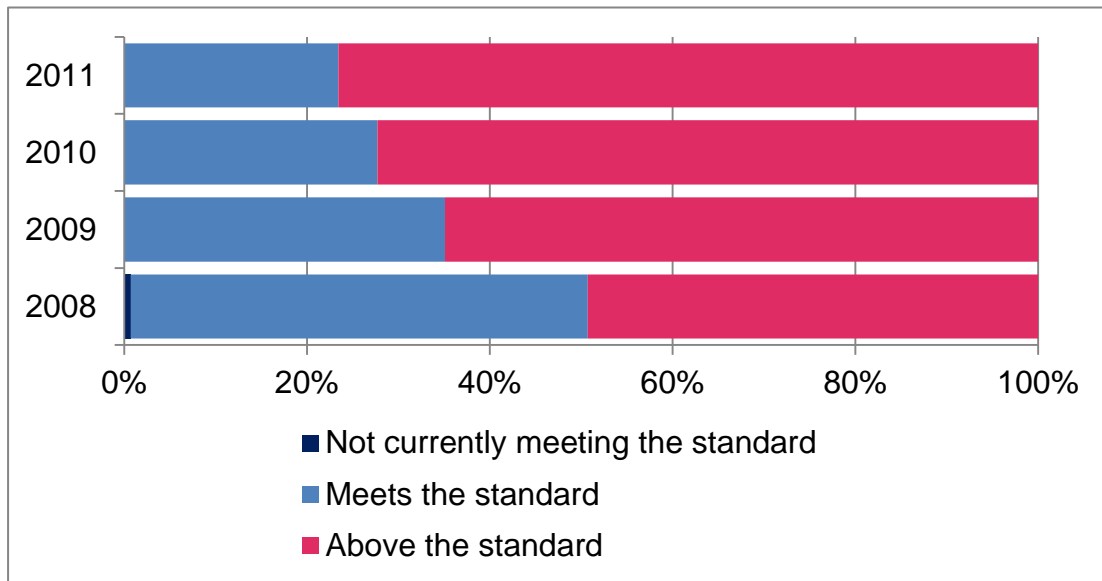
3.6 We will continue to work with the EROs for those local authorities which we have identified as being at a higher risk of electoral malpractice to ensure that they have enhanced plans and robust processes in place to assess, monitor and address any threats to the integrity of electoral registration and absent vote applications in their areas. We will also target our own performance monitoring activities in those higher-risk areas to ensure that those policies are being implemented in practice.

Performance standard 5: Supply and security

3.7 This standard aims to ensure that, once published, EROs make the full register available for public inspection and supply copies of the register and absent voter lists to those entitled to receive them, including political parties and candidates, the Office for National Statistics and the British Library.

3.8 EROs have performed well against this standard since 2008. For the past three years no EROs have reported performance below the standard: 23% (88 EROs) currently meet the standard with the remaining 77% (292 EROs) above the standard. Chart 6 below shows the improvement in performance against this standard over the past four years.

Chart 6: Performance of EROs against performance standard 5 – Supply and security



3.9 However, over this period we have received anecdotal reports of a small number of issues with the supply of registers, particularly to parties and candidates. Consequently, at the end of 2011 we asked all political parties on our Political Parties Panel and Scottish and Welsh equivalents to highlight to us any issues they were aware of regarding supply of the electoral register. No specific issues regarding supply of registers were raised with us subsequent to this. However, going forwards, we will continue to work with recipients of the register to verify performance against this standard.

4 Participation

4.1 Participation has been the subject area where, over the past four years, the lowest levels of performance have been demonstrated. Across this time, we have worked with EROs, providing them with planning templates and resources to support them in carrying out public awareness work. In addition, our *dopolitics*¹¹ website, which was designed to provide support and guidance tools for EROs participation activities, has a large collection of resources designed to help EROs carry out their public awareness duties and to provide them with ideas and case studies for communication strategies.

4.2 More EROs are now able to demonstrate how they plan to carry out effective public awareness activities than in any previous year. However, although EROs generally have such plans in place for public awareness, our verification work has shown that these documents are still not as detailed as we would expect and indicates that this area of activity still does not receive as much attention as other electoral registration activities.

4.3 Increasing levels of public awareness about the registration process and the requirements when registering to vote will become critical during and after the implementation of IER. Our report on the quality of the electoral registers across Great Britain in December 2011¹² found that at present, a significant proportion of the electorate have no engagement with the registration system as they are registered by others through the annual canvass, but will need to take ownership of their registration once IER is introduced. The Commission's research has also consistently identified that there are a number of key under-registered groups, including young people, some BME communities and people living in private rented homes. EROs should be using the available research to plan for and target under-registered groups to reach target audiences.

4.4 We will continue to support EROs through the provision of guidance and resources to support them with carrying out activity at a local level. We will also use our networks of local authority communications staff to discuss how best we can embed public awareness work with EROs, and will be seeking to identify examples of good practice which we can share with other EROs and their staff.

¹¹ <http://www.dopolitics.org.uk/>

¹² [Great Britain's electoral registers 2011](#), December 2011.

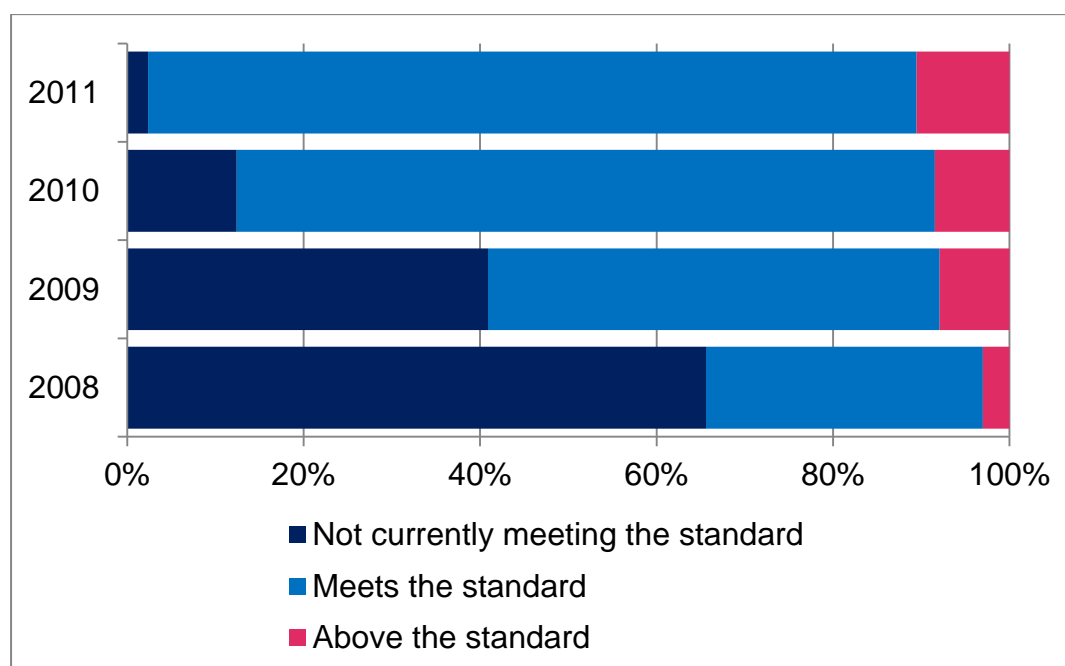
Performance standard 6: Public awareness

4.5 This standard aims to ensure that EROs develop and maintain an effective and appropriate public awareness strategy.

4.6 All but nine EROs reported meeting this standard in 2011, which is a clear improvement on the 266 EROs (66%) who reported not meeting this standard in 2008. Following our report¹³ last year we worked with the 35 EROs who had failed this standard in all three years to identify the action they intended to take to improve. The majority of these EROs have now reported meeting the standard but there remain three (East Hertfordshire, Eden and Rugby) who have never reported meeting this standard. All of these EROs have confirmed that a public awareness strategy is being developed and we will monitor these EROs in 2012 to ensure that they do have an appropriate public awareness strategy in place.

4.7 Of the remaining EROs, 88% (331 EROs) meet the standard and 10% (40 EROs) exceed the standard. Chart 7 below shows the improvement in performance against this standard over the past four years.

Chart 7: Performance of EROs against performance standard 6 – Public awareness



¹³ [Report into EROs failing a performance standard in all three years](#), August 2011.

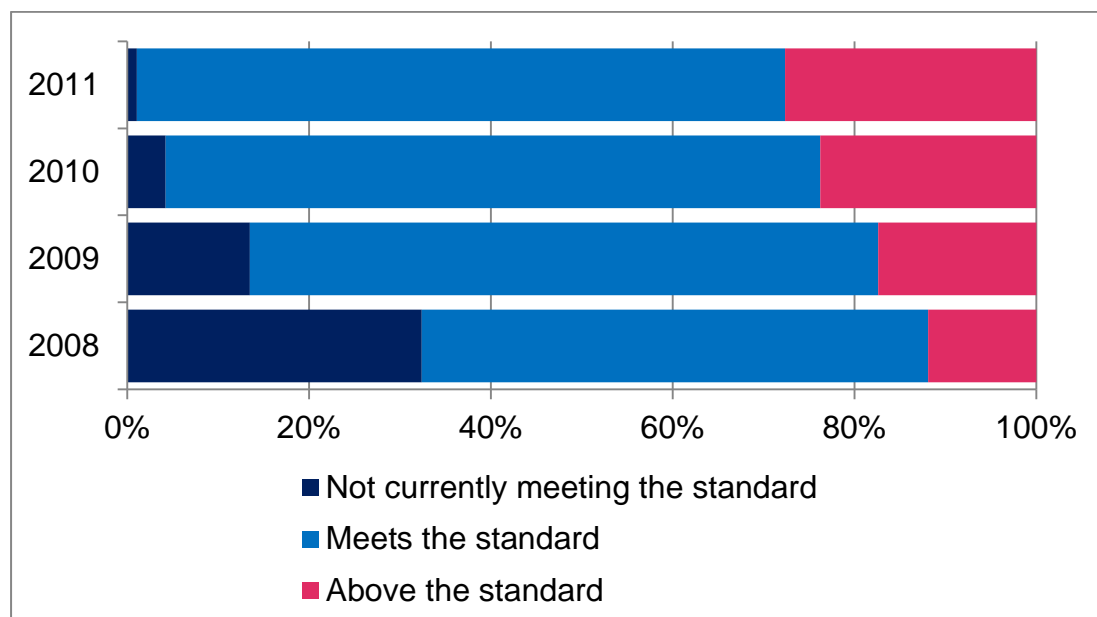
4.8 While performance against this standard has improved over the last four years, there is still work to be done by EROs in relation to their plans for participation activities, which is an aspect of performance that will be crucial during the implementation of IER to ensure that electors understand what they need to do in order to get registered. EROs will need to ensure they are effectively targeting home movers, as well as other groups identified by research as less likely to be registered such as young people, some BME communities and people living in private rented homes.

Performance standard 7: Working with partners

4.9 This standard aims to ensure that EROs have assessed the merits of working with appropriate partners, and work with partners where appropriate to promote electoral participation. Partners that EROs regularly work with include other departments of their local authority, such as those with experience in working with particular hard to reach groups, other EROs and Returning Officers, local media and voluntary sector groups representing those groups research has shown to be under-registered (including young people and BME communities).

4.10 Nearly all EROs now meet or exceed this standard, with only 4 EROs (Basildon, Hertsmere, Thanet and Windsor and Maidenhead) below the standard, compared to 16 last year. We will be working with all of these EROs to ensure that they can meet this standard in the future. Of the remaining EROs, 71% (271 EROs) meet this standard, with 28% (105 EROs) exceeding the standard.

Chart 8: Performance of EROs against performance standard 7 – Working with partners

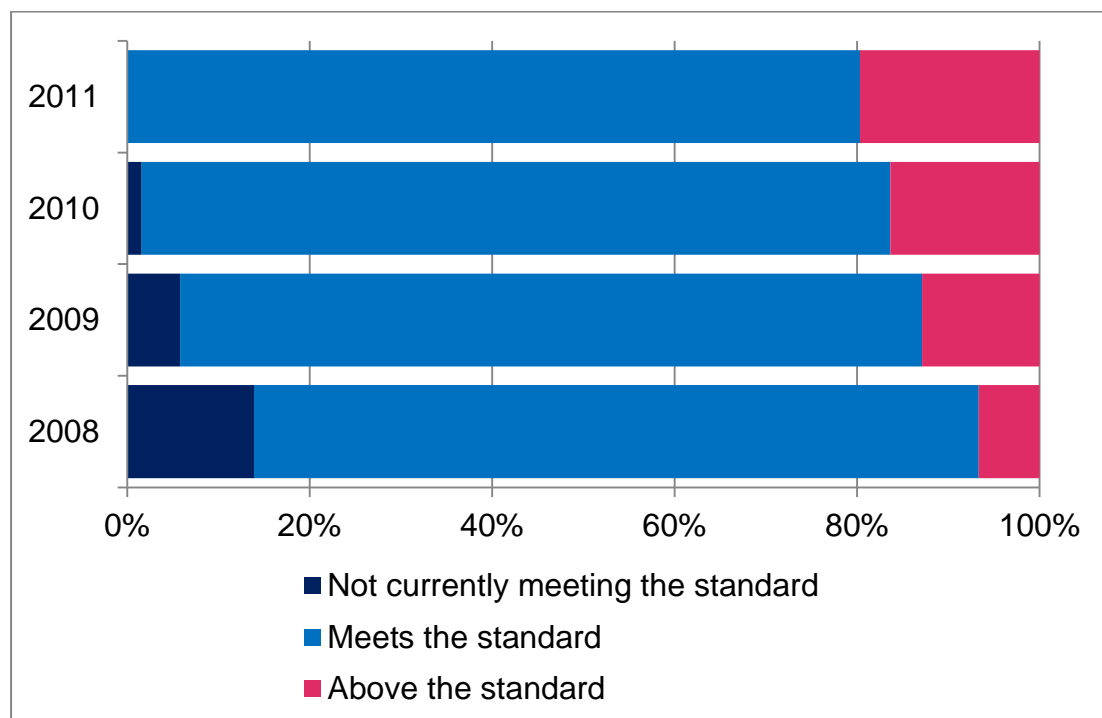


Performance standard 8: Accessibility and communication

4.11 This standard aims to ensure that EROs effectively communicate electoral registration information and provide a simple and user friendly way to access this information to encourage registration applications.

4.12 For the first time this year, all EROs met or exceeded this standard. 6 EROs were below the standard last year, all of whom have now reported having undertaken the necessary work to enable them to meet the standard. 80% (306 EROs) currently meet the standard with the remaining 20% (75 EROs) exceeding the standard.

Chart 9: Performance of EROs against performance standard 8 – Accessibility and communication



5 Planning and organisation

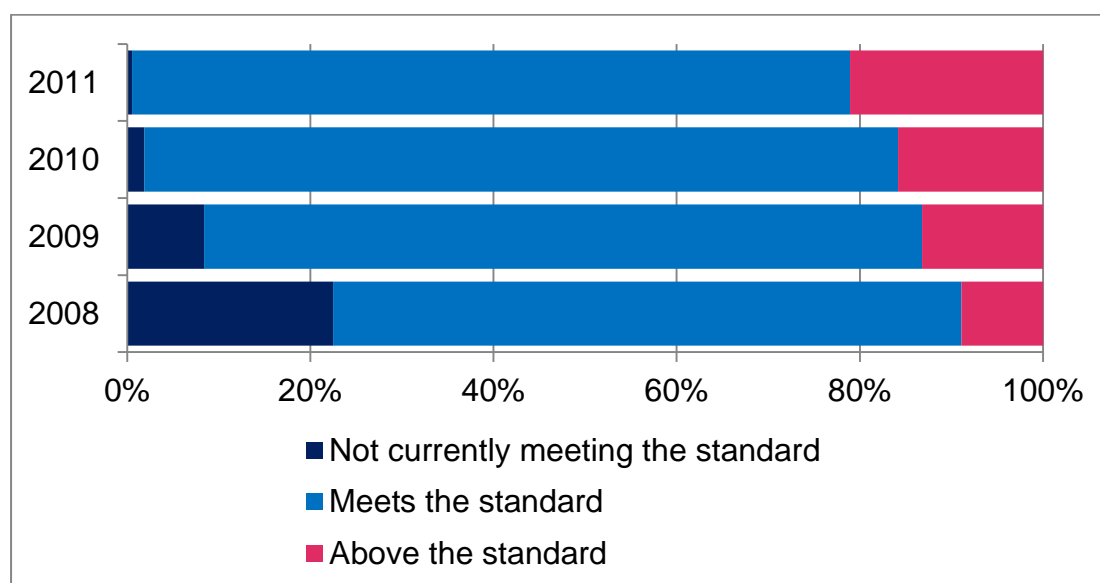
5.1 The key objective for the standards in this area is to ensure that adequate preparations are made for rolling registration and the annual canvass, in order to ensure that the electoral registration process is well run and that risks are identified and properly managed. Performance in this subject area has shown the greatest improvement since our first report, with the majority of EROs now having formal plans in place designed to ensure that their electoral registration processes are managed effectively and lead to the best possible outcomes.

Performance standard 9: Planning

5.2 This standard aims to ensure that EROs have developed robust planning processes for rolling registration and the annual canvass. In order to meet the standard, EROs are required to have in place formal, written plans, with clearly defined objectives and success measures, and arrangements to evaluate the activities undertaken.

5.3 As chart 9 illustrates below, there still remain two EROs (Windsor and Maidenhead and Wyre Forest) who do not meet this standard. For Windsor and Maidenhead, while they have task lists and timetables in place there is no formal plan with objectives and success measures. For Wyre Forest, although a plan is in place it does not include all the requirements as outlined in the standard. We will be working with both of these EROs to ensure that adequate plans are in place in 2012. For the remaining EROs, 78% (298 EROs) meet this standard, with 21% (80 EROs) exceeding the standard.

Chart 9: Performance of EROs against performance standard 9 – Planning



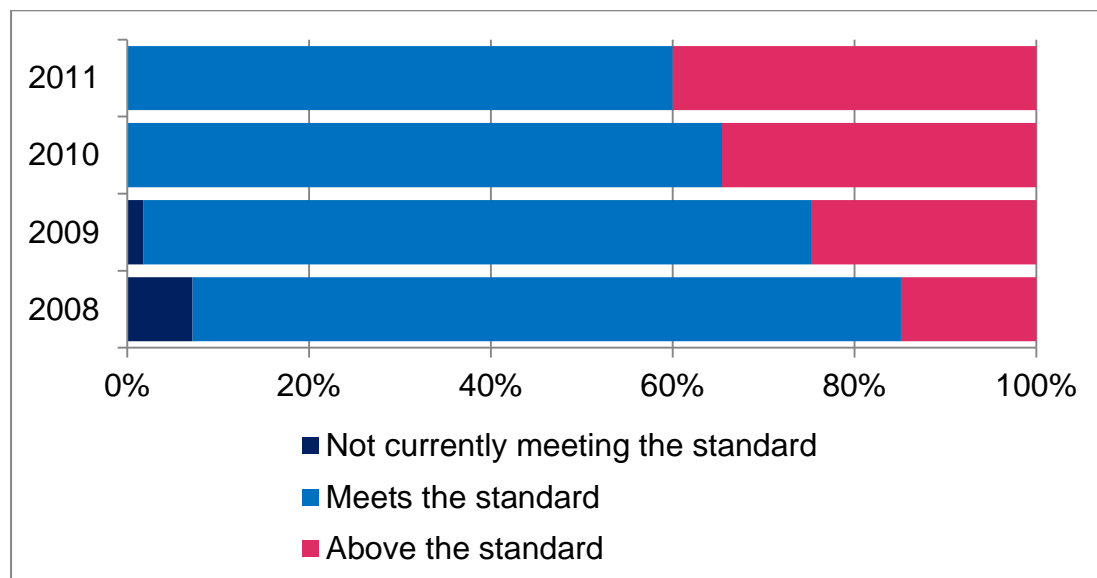
5.4 We have also provided all EROs with a revised template project plan and risk register to assist them in maintaining robust plans for rolling registration and the annual canvass. All EROs will be required to submit their project plans and risk registers in advance of the annual canvass in 2012.

Performance standard 10: Training

5.5 This standard aims to ensure that EROs have provided appropriate training for staff to deliver the rolling registration and annual canvass processes.

5.6 No EROs were below this standard for the second year in a row: 60% (228 EROs) meet the standard with the remaining 40% (152 EROs) exceeding the standard.

Chart 11: Performance of EROs against performance standard 10 – Training



5.7 Although all EROs are providing relevant training to all staff, those EROs who are not yet exceeding the standard should now work to put in place a training plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan – a requirement to exceed the standard.

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