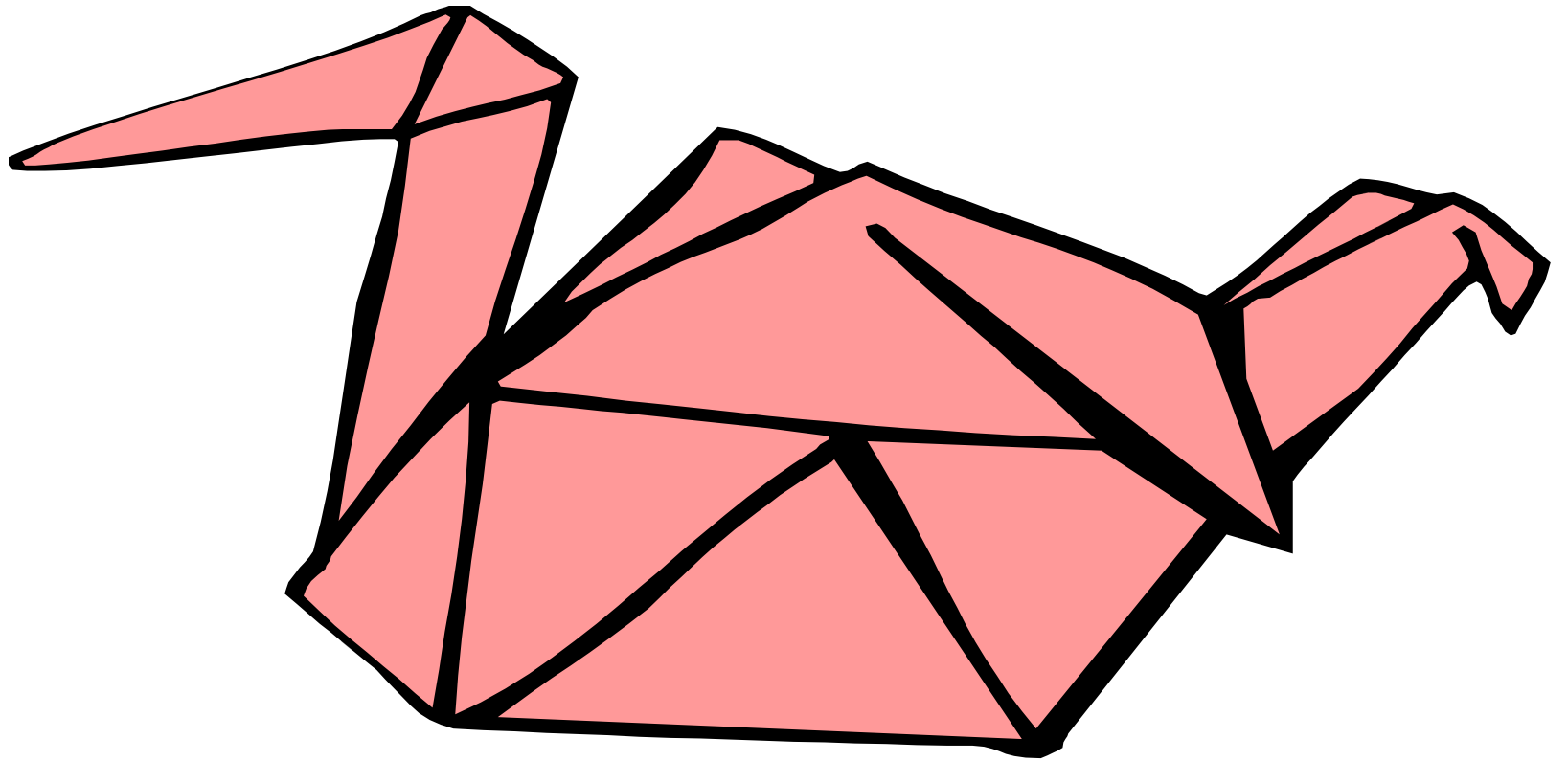


European Parliamentary Elections Review .

Mark R Heath – Regional Returning Officer South East



**In looking back a few things came to
mind.....**



From political blogs on the day.....

- *The paper was so long that if it wasn't folded - you'd look like the Andrex puppy walking around with it unfolded and trailing behind you.*
- *At first I thought this was a genuine problem, but now I realise that anyone with two brain cells should be able to properly unfold a ballot paper. People must be a lot thicker than I'd previously thought.*
- *If the paper had been folded towards you / up, its would show the back of the paper ie blank. Would people then not be voting because they were given a blank sheet of paper?*
- *At my local polling station they gave you a choice of how you would like the ballot paper folded. I opted for a swan, my partner chose an aeroplane.*

....and.....



*Those ballot
papers will
not fit in this
box, you
know!*

So – what went well

- No challenges
- Fees and charges order – when it arrived – was more than perhaps we expected
- Good support from EC
- No significant integrity issues

...or not so well....

- Basic things like....
 - How to run a count
 - How to run a polling station
- Lack of resources on the day when there were issues in some LAs – and lack of “focus” from LROs to fix the issue
- Verification figures being incorrect on Sunday night despite all the training / messages to focus on that

- Supplier issues
 - Most had contracts, but some suppliers were just....
 - Printers & RM were biggest concern
- Combined polls
 - Voters were confused
 - Whilst saving money, operational issues over different processes / regimes etc
- Disproportionate focus on “origami” as a big issue on the day

AS RRO.....

- I was happy (mainly)
- No legal challenges
- Cascade system & regime seemed to work well for the SE
- County Groups worked well (down to those who lead those)
- Seminars seemed well received
- Count – we all had some issues with results system - but did its job in compiling result
- RRO Count at Southampton - would manage differently next time, especially the PR side