

# VOTING ACTION PLAN 2008-2009

## I. PURPOSE

To implement the Federal functions of the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (NDAA FY02)*, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (NDAA FY05)*, and the *Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA)*, administer the provisions of DoD Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) ," disseminate information and guidance, and coordinate tasks related to the Program.

## II. OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the following voters are provided all necessary voting information, including voting age requirements, election dates, Federal officers to be elected, constitutional amendments, other ballot proposals, and absentee registration and voting procedures:

1. Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, including the Coast Guard, commissioned members of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Merchant Marine in active service;
2. Family members of (1.) above;
3. U.S. citizens temporarily outside the United States;
4. U.S. citizens outside the United States by virtue of employment;
5. Family members residing with (4.) above;
6. Other U.S. citizens residing outside the United States.

## III. TASKS

- A. In accordance with 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1973ff (c)(1), the head of each Government department, agency, or other entity shall distribute balloting materials and develop a non-partisan program of information and education for all employees and family members covered by the *UOCAVA*. Each department or agency with employees or family members covered by the *UOCAVA* shall designate an individual to coordinate and administer a Voting Assistance Program for the department or agency to include, where practicable, those initiatives in one through five below and paragraph III. C. below. The name, address, and telephone number of this individual will be provided to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program and will be prominently posted within departmental or agency directories and websites. (See page 13 for contact information.) Departments and agencies shall not conduct independent surveys of the voting program without prior approval of the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program. In addition:

- 1.** The Secretary of State shall designate a Voting Action Officer at Department of State headquarters to oversee the Department's program and a U.S. citizen employee at each U.S. embassy or consulate to assist to the fullest extent practicable other U.S. citizens residing outside the United States who are eligible to register and vote.
  - 2.** Each embassy and consulate should have sufficient quantities of materials to include Federal Post Card Application Forms, SF-76 (FPCA), and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots, SF-186 (FWAB), needed by U.S. citizens to register and vote. Embassies and consulates will also inform and educate U.S. citizens regarding their right to register and vote, and will publicize voter assistance programs.
  - 3.** Each embassy or consulate Voting Assistance Officer should work on a nonpartisan basis with recognized U.S. citizen organizations in the consular district to facilitate voter information, voter registration, and absentee ballot transmission.
  - 4.** The Department of State's Voting Action Officer shall coordinate with the Director, FVAP in the development and conduct of "Overseas Citizens Voters Week" (week of June 28-July 7, 2008) and "Absentee Voters Week" (week of October 12-18, 2008) for citizens outside the U.S. Develop programs to support the objective of creating an educational awareness and motivation to participate in the general election, and disseminate information on voting and voting assistance. Publicize the importance of early action on the part of the voter in order to obtain a ballot for the general election well in advance of election deadlines.
  - 5.** The Department's Voting Action Officer shall assist, as requested, embassy and consulate Voting Assistance Officers with post-election surveys of civilians outside the U.S. Survey findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs.
- B.** The Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, appointed by the Secretary of Defense in his role as Presidential designee for implementing *UOCAVA*, shall:
- 1.** Coordinate all aspects of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and perform all tasks assigned to the Presidential designee by the *UOCAVA*.
  - 2.** Advise DoD components and other executive branch departments and agencies concerning Federal, state, and local election laws and procedures.
  - 3.** Assist eligible *UOCAVA* citizens to register and vote.
  - 4.** Publicize the right of citizens to register and vote.

5. Review and coordinate the informational and educational efforts directed toward all persons covered by the *UOCAVA*.
6. Provide information on elections, including dates and offices involved.
7. Conduct a series of training workshops and program orientations at military installations in the continental United States and overseas locations for Voting Assistance Officers and for interested civilian groups and organizations.
8. Conduct training workshops and program orientations in consultation with state and local election officials.
9. Actively collect and share good ideas identified by Service, Agency/Department, and states' voting assistance programs.
10. Be the sole DoD representative for contact and coordination with Federal, State, and local government entities for voting assistance and elections pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1973ff(b)(1).
11. Administer the Federal Voting Assistance Program on a non-partisan basis.

**C. Commanders/Heads of DoD components shall:**

1. Ensure continuing command support at all levels for the Voting Assistance Program.
2. Designate a uniformed officer of general or flag rank or a civilian employee in the Senior Executive Service in each military Service as the Senior Service Voting Representative who is responsible for Service-wide implementation of respective voting assistance programs. The senior officer will also manage the voting program for Reserve component members who have been called to active federal service. The Senior Service Voting Representative shall appoint a Service Voting Action Officer who preferably should be a civilian employee (GS-12 or higher) to administer the voting program for that Service. If a military member is assigned as Service Voting Action Officer, that member should be at least an O-4, if an officer, or at least an E-8, if an enlisted member.
3. Designate Voting Assistance Officers at every level of command with one senior Voting Assistance Officer on each installation and at each Major command who is assigned responsibility to coordinate the program of subordinate units and also coordinate with tenant command Voting Assistance Officers. Each Reserve component shall also designate a Voting Assistance Officer at its headquarters level. Where possible, Installation Voting

Assistance Officers should be a DoD civilian GS-12 or higher. If a military member is assigned as the Installation Voting Assistance officer, that officer should hold the grade of O-4 or higher. Designate a Unit Voting Assistance Officer, at the O-2/E-7 level or above within each unit of 25 or more permanently assigned members. An additional Unit Voting Assistance Officer should be assigned for each additional 50 members above the 25-member base. All such designations shall be in writing. Guidance for the maximum number of military and family members served by each unit Voting Assistance Officer will be provided by the Service Voting Action Officer as required by DoD Directive 1000.4. When military personnel, including noncommissioned officers, are designated as Voting Assistance Officers they are authorized in accordance with the provisions of DoD Directive 1000.4, to administer oaths in connection with registration and voting. All Voting Assistance Officers shall be trained and instructed in the procedures necessary to carry out their assigned responsibilities and be provided adequate time and resources to do so. Voting Assistance Officers should be readily available and equipped to give personal assistance to voters for Federal, state, local, and other jurisdictional elections during 2008-2009. In addition, any person who appears to need assistance due to physical disabilities or in reading or understanding English language material relating to voting or voter registration should receive immediate assistance in the appropriate language. Designate at least one well-advertised fixed location on bases, installations and ships where absentee voting materials and voting assistance are available to all military personnel.

4. Train all Service members (including Reserve component personnel) during years of elections for Federal offices on all aspects of the voting program, to include familiarity with the FPCA and FWAB.

5. Require commanders to rate Voting Assistance Officers on the way they perform their voting assistance duties. Commanders shall establish the evaluation criteria for Voting Assistance Officer performance within their command.

6. Encourage access to the FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for all voting information and materials. If Internet access is not available, ensure that voting information and related materials are obtained and disseminated in a timely manner, e.g., the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*, and changes thereto; necessary quantities of the FPCA, for registration and absentee ballot requests; and FWAB. Publish procedures regarding ordering of FPCAs, FWABs, and other voting materials. FPCAs are to be purchased in sufficient quantities (recommend four per person, including eligible family members) to furnish registration and ballot request support for all primary and general elections for all military and eligible family members, and overseas DoD civilian personnel. Most States accept the on-line version of the FPCA which is available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). The FWAB may be used by Uniformed Services voters and eligible family members who are located both within

CONUS and outside the U.S. and by all U.S. citizens outside the U.S. FWABs are to be purchased in sufficient quantities and disseminated (recommend one per person including eligible family members). The on-line version of the FWAB is available at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov). Adequate supplies must be made available to National Guard and Reserve Forces when activated. Some jurisdictions also allow use of the FWAB for other state and local elections. This information is contained in the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*. Additional exceptions will be announced by the Federal Voting Assistance Program, if and when they are authorized.

7. The Chief/Director of each Reserve component shall coordinate with the Senior Service Voting Representative and the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, to maintain a contingency absentee voting program for the National Guard and Reserve units and personnel who have been activated and deployed. The contingency absentee voting program shall ensure that all deployed personnel – Active, Guard and Reserve – are able to exercise their absentee voting rights. The scope of the program should include the availability of adequate supplies of the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*, FPCAs and FWABs. The Chief/Director of the Reserve component shall ensure a unit Voting Assistance Officer is appointed within each activated unit.

8. Ensure the delivery of FPCAs as follows:

a. Some early primary dates may require voters to submit their registration/ballot request in November or December 2007. Publicize the dates so that voters are aware of these requirements and provide forms for registration/ballot request.

b. By January 15 of each calendar year directly through in-hand delivery or through electronic means deliver SFs 76 to all Armed Forces members and their eligible family members, overseas civilian employees of DoD components and eligible family members.

c. By August 15, 2008 provide to Armed Forces members and their eligible family members, and to civilian employees of DoD components and eligible family members residing with or accompanying them, who are serving outside the territorial limits of the United States.

d. By September 15, 2008 provide to Armed Forces members and their family members within the U.S.

This distribution is in addition to FPCAs provided for use in Presidential and state primary elections.

9. Emphasize the week of August 31-September 7, 2008, as “Armed Forces Voters Week.” Commanding officers and Voting Assistance Officers will

develop comprehensive command-wide voting awareness and assistance programs and activities during this week to include local events publicizing the upcoming election and focusing on the importance of voting. Activities scheduled should include voting programs aimed at informing eligible voters on procedures required to obtain absentee ballots for the general elections including dissemination of supporting materials. These events should also be scheduled throughout the voting cycle to emphasize voting awareness and assistance before primary, special and run-off elections.

**10.** Emphasize the week of October 12-18, 2008, as “Absentee Voters Week” to encourage voters to complete and mail their absentee ballots so that they are received by local election offices in time to be counted for the November general election. *UOCAVA* voters should submit a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot if they have not received their requested absentee ballot from their State in time to return it by the state’s deadline.

**11.** Require Inspectors General of the Military Services to include the command voting program as an item for specific review at every organizational level to ensure that persons covered by the *UOCAVA* are informed of, and provided an opportunity to exercise, their right to vote. This review will include an assessment to determine that the command has appointed Voting Assistance Officers; ensure that they are trained and equipped to give proper assistance; and that the command has sufficient quantities of materials to conduct an effective voting assistance program. Results of inspections pertaining to the voting program, including the need for additional command support, materials or training, will be reported to the cognizant commander and the Military Service Inspector General concerned. The Military Service Inspector General will report the findings to the DoD Inspector General, the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, and the Senior Service Voting Representative in accordance with the provisions of DoD Directive 1000.4.

**12.** Establish and publicize the availability of communication lines (telephone, facsimile, e-mail, web page) to link unit Voting Assistance Officers with their respective Senior Service Voting Representative or Voting Action Officer at the departmental level. Emphasis shall be placed on providing rapid, accurate responses, and solutions to voting-oriented problems.

**13.** Establish and maintain a Voting homepage on the Component’s website. This Voting homepage will provide Component-specific information regarding the Component’s Voting Action Plan, the identification of and links to the assigned Installation and Major command Voting Assistance Officers within the Component, procedures to order voting materials, and links to other government voting websites, including a link to the FVAP website.

**14.** Authorize "priority" precedence when using DSN for voting assistance when it does not interfere with mission program accomplishment.

**15.** Ensure privacy and access to command fax machines for transmission of election materials when it does not interfere with mission program accomplishment.

**16.** Require Installation Voting Assistance Officers to provide their office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses to the telephone operators at their installations. Require Installation and Major command Voting Assistance Officers to update and provide a list of all unit Voting Assistance Officers' names, e-mail addresses and office telephone numbers and send it to the Service Voting Action Officer. The Service Voting Action Officer shall provide the Director, FVAP with a quarterly updated list of office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for every Installation and Major command Voting Assistance Officer.

**17.** Ensure that all Armed Forces personnel receive at least one briefing, training period, or information period of instruction devoted to the absentee voting process during recruit training and within all leadership curricula and, for all members, again in each year in which elections for Federal office are held. Emphasis should be placed on the availability of voting information, supporting materials, personal assistance, and the importance of registering and voting.

**18.** Ensure all Major Command, Installation and Unit Voting Assistance Officers attend an FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop during years with elections for Federal offices. If the installation is not scheduled to receive an FVAP workshop, Major Command, Installation and Unit Voting Assistance Officers should attend training at a nearby installation when possible. Voting Assistance Officers at remote locations can access the FVAP website for training.

**19.** Ensure on-site senior command support at each installation for FVAP training workshops and orientations held at the installation, emphasizing attendance of every Voting Assistance Officer stationed at the installation. A senior officer, O-6 or above, will be designated to represent the installation/command and introduce the program. The host Installation Voting Assistance Officer will invite Voting Assistance Officers from tenant commands and from nearby installations, and the senior command at these installations should coordinate transportation requirements to maximize attendance by Voting Assistance Officers stationed on each installation. The Service Voting Action Officers will advertise the workshop schedule within their Service.

**20.** Ensure recruits are provided FPCAs for themselves and their voting-age dependents during their recruit training.

21. Ensure sufficient copies of the FPCA are included in orientation packets for new and permanent change of station (PCS) personnel at all personnel centers. Personnel, including their family members, should be advised to notify their local election office of their change of address.
22. Conduct an Information Support Program along the guidelines set forth in the DoD Voting Information Support Plan, 2008-2009 at Appendix A.
23. Coordinate voting information support materials with the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program.
24. File an "After Action Report" by January 15, 2009 with the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program summarizing successes and/or problems experienced in the conduct of the Program. A checklist for and the format of this report will be provided by FVAP.
25. Assist in conducting a survey of military members, civilian employees outside the U.S., and unit Voting Assistance Officers in the manner specified by the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program.
26. Revise command/organization directives or instructions on voting assistance as necessary.
27. Provide for continuing evaluation of command voting programs.

#### **IV. SCHEDULE**

##### **A. PHASE I -- Preparation and Initiation During Period of September 1, 2007-Spring 2008.**

1. Disseminate the Federal Voting Assistance Program Action Plan 2008-2009 to Military Departments, Combatant Commands, other DoD components, and participating Federal departments and agencies.
2. Develop and implement Service, Command, Department and Agency Voting Action Plans for the 2008-2009 elections.
3. Encourage access to the FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for all voting information and materials. If Internet access is not available, ensure distribution of voting information which is available prior to publication and distribution of the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* and any changes thereto.
4. Ensure procurement and distribution of FPCAs and FWABs, which are purchased by each Uniformed Service, department and agency and distributed through normal supply channels.

5. Ensure direct delivery to all Armed Forces members and their eligible family members, overseas civilian employees of DoD components and eligible family members, as required by paragraph III.C.8, above. Ensure FPCAs are available to citizens from states holding early primary elections.

6. Provide installation telephone operators with the name, mailing address, e-mail and office telephone number of the Major command and Installation Voting Assistance Officers by October 1, 2007. The Major command and Installation Voting Assistance Officers shall generate and maintain a directory containing names and office telephone numbers of all local unit Voting Assistance Officers, including tenant organizations, by October 1, 2007. This directory must be updated at least quarterly.

7. Service Inspectors General, through scheduled command inspections, shall review command voting assistance programs and plans and determine whether unit Voting Assistance Officers are appointed and trained and have sufficient supplies to provide voting assistance.

8. Information efforts shall begin with commanding officers and Voting Assistance Officers conducting command information programs prior to primary elections and repeating, as necessary, to inform and motivate military personnel and their family members to exercise their right to vote in primary and general elections. Family members will be encouraged to participate in these programs. Information provided shall include dates of scheduled primary and general elections and state deadlines for voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and the receipt of returned, voted ballots. Information programs can be accomplished through the use of local websites, installation newspapers, and by placing voting materials (with Voting Assistance Officer's name, phone, e-mail address, and office location) in stationary locations such as libraries, medical and dental clinics, commissaries, exchanges, MWR facilities, schools, training facilities, and at designated locations onboard seagoing vessels.

**B. PHASE II** -- Registration and Primary Elections During Period of December 2007-October 2008. This phase will require careful planning and execution of voting assistance programs in order to inform potential voters of the primary elections scheduled to begin in early 2008. Phase II runs simultaneously with portions of Phase I.

1. Voting Assistance Officers shall attend a Voting Assistance Officer Workshop and shall concentrate on providing absentee registration and voting assistance to personnel and eligible family members for Federal, state and run-off primary elections.

2. Ensure procurement and distribution of FWABs for use by Uniformed Services voters both within the U.S. and overseas and by other U.S. citizens in overseas areas. The FWAB may be used only for the general election (Federal

offices) under conditions specified in the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*. Some jurisdictions may expand the use of the FWAB to primary, and State and local elections. For specific information on State requirements, refer to the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*.

**3.** Ensure availability of FPCAs to personnel overseas, as listed in paragraph III.C.8, above, by August 15, 2008.

**4.** Conduct “Armed Forces Voters Week” (week of August 31-September 7, 2008) and “Overseas Citizens Voters Week” (week of June 28-July 7, 2008). Develop programs to create voting awareness and to motivate absentee voters to participate in the general election. Publicize the importance of early action and planning well in advance of election deadlines by the absentee voter in order to obtain a ballot for the general election. Publicize the last date before a Federal general election for which absentee ballots mailed from that location can reasonably be expected to be timely delivered to the appropriate State and local election officials.

**5.** Conduct “Absentee Voters Week” (week of October 12-18, 2008). Encourage all *UOCAVA* voters to vote and mail their absentee ballots during this week.

**6.** Continue agency and command information programs and dissemination of voter information.

**C. PHASE III -- Requesting Ballots for the General Election During Period of July - November 4, 2008.**

**1.** Continue disseminating voting information.

**2.** Ensure availability of FPCAs to personnel within the United States, as listed in paragraph III.C.8, above, by September 15, 2008.

**3.** Communicate how and when to use the FWAB and recommend its use if the voter meets the criteria and does not receive the requested regular absentee ballot in sufficient time to vote and return it to be counted.

**D. PHASE IV -- Evaluation During the Period of November 5 - December 31, 2008.**

**1.** Assist, as requested, with post-election surveys of military members, overseas civilian employees and Unit Voting Assistance Officers. The survey's findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs.

**2.** Participate in and support the reports as required by paragraphs III. C. 24 and 25, above.

## V. ESSENTIAL MATERIALS

### A. 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide (2008-09 VAG)

1. This is the basic reference document of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and provides all Voting Assistance Officers with the necessary information to give potential voters the following assistance:
  - a. Explanation of current procedures for absentee registration and voting in each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.
  - b. Absentee registration and voting deadlines established by the states, territories, and other jurisdictions, along with dates of primary and general elections.
  - c. Addresses, including ZIP codes of local election officials in each state, territory, and other jurisdictions.
2. Encourage access to the FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for all voting information and materials. If World Wide Web access is not available, the initial distribution of the *Guide* to Government Departments, including the Department of Defense and the Military Services, agencies and other organizations will be followed by distribution of subsequent published changes to the basic document during the 2008-2009 time period.

### B. Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for Registration and Absentee Ballot Request (Standard Form 76).

1. The FPCA, a postage-paid form, is authorized by law for use by persons covered by the *UOCAVA*. (See paragraph II above). The FPCA was revised in 2005 to include more information and to make the form more useable and was designed to protect voter identity. The previous edition of the form (Rev. 10-95) may continue to be used until existing stocks are exhausted.
2. Because there are differences in treatment accorded the FPCA by the various states and other jurisdictions, the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* should be consulted to determine how each particular jurisdiction authorizes use of the FPCA by voters.
3. FPCAs are requisitioned within each Uniformed Service through normal supply channels in accordance with established directives. Other government departments and agencies may requisition this form through General Services Administration (GSA) channels. It is available to citizens outside the U.S. from State Department embassies and consulates.

4. An on-line version of the FPCA (accepted by 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands but not American Samoa or Guam) is available at the FVAP website. This on-line version provides an alternative to citizens who cannot obtain the card stock version and must be placed in an envelope with proper postage affixed.

C. Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) (Standard Form 186).

1. The FWAB is authorized by law and may be used in general elections for Federal office by Uniformed Services voters and by overseas voters who make timely application for, and do not receive, regular absentee ballots. The FWAB was revised in 2005 to include more information and to make the form more useable and designed to protect voter identity. The previous edition of the form (Rev. 10-95) may continue to be used until existing stocks are exhausted. If the Rev. 10-95 FWAB is used, the voter information on the back of the envelope could be compromised. Alternative procedures to guard against identity theft should be provided. For those who wish to use the FWAB, the following criteria must be met:

a. The request for a regular absentee ballot must have been received by the local election official at least 30 days before the general election or the state deadline for registration/ballot request, whichever is later. (Some states may allow its use in primary and run-off elections—see the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* for details.)

b. The FWAB may be submitted by Uniformed Services personnel and their family members when absent from their voting residence and located either inside or outside the U.S., and by other U.S. citizens when located outside the United States. The United States is defined as the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

c. The FWAB must be received by the local election official not later than the deadline for receipt of regular absentee ballots under state law.

2. All Service installations and naval vessels at sea should stock a sufficient supply of FWABs for use by voters as outlined above. Consult the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* for detailed instructions on the FWAB. Additionally, some jurisdictions may authorize the FWAB to be used in state and local elections by other categories of absentee voters depending on state law. The *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* contains procedures which include the extent to which the FWAB may be used in each state. The FVAP will provide the widest dissemination of this information. Organizations should have available one FWAB for everyone covered by the *UOCAVA*.

NOTE: ONLY THOSE VOTERS WHO MAKE A TIMELY APPLICATION FOR THEIR REGULAR STATE BALLOT AND MEET ALL THE STATE CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION/BALLOT REQUEST MAY USE A FWAB.

3. An on-line version of the FWAB is available at the FVAP website. This on-line version provides an alternative to citizens who cannot obtain the card stock version and must be placed in an envelope with proper postage affixed.

**D. Other Voting Information Materials.**

1. See the DoD Voting Assistance Information Support Plan (Appendix A).

E. The Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program may be contacted concerning any aspect of the program. Correspondence should be directed to:

**Director  
Federal Voting Assistance Program  
Department of Defense  
Washington, DC 20301-1155**

Telephone number: (703) 588-1584  
DSN 425-1584  
1-800-438-8683  
E-mail address: [vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov)  
Home Page: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)  
Fax number: 703-696-1352  
DSN 426-1352

Appendix A: DoD Voting Information Support Plan 2008-09

# **Appendix A**

## **DoD VOTING INFORMATION SUPPORT PLAN**

### **2008-2009**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

To inform the Uniformed Services, DoD components and other Federal agencies of the coordinated schedule for multi-media dissemination of voting information for the 2008 and 2009 elections. The Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) will act as overall coordinator of media materials produced or distributed in support of the Voting Action Plan 2008-2009.

#### **II. OBJECTIVES**

- A.** Provide voting assistance officers at all levels with information regarding the 2008 and 2009 primary and general elections so that they may assist interested voters within their organizations.
- B.** Plan and conduct a multi-media internal information program, utilizing internal media of the DoD and other Federal agencies to reach all eligible voters covered by the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*.
- C.** Provide information through appropriate channels to ensure that all organizations are aware of the availability of voting assistance for their personnel.
- D.** Ensure that the Uniformed Services, DoD components and Federal agencies are aware of information materials produced and of procedures to obtain them.
- E.** Publicize “Armed Forces Voters Week” (week of August 31-September 7, 2008) and “Overseas Citizens Voters Week” (week of June 28-July 7, 2008) for conducting voting assistance activities and “Absentee Voters Week” (week of October 12-18, 2008) for citizens to vote and mail their absentee ballots.
- F.** Implement a systematic release of materials in accordance with the phased program outline in Section IV of this Plan to ensure that all eligible voters are aware of voting procedures.

#### **III. TASKS**

- A.** The Director, FVAP will:
  - 1.** Coordinate all aspects of the 2008-2009 DoD Voting Information Support Plan.
  - 2.** Prepare all source material on voting information for use within DoD, other Federal agencies and other interested groups.

- 3.** Coordinate all special information requirements in support of special programs (Armed Forces Voters Week, Overseas Citizens Voters Week and Absentee Voters Week) and other events as developed.
  - 4.** Operate the DoD Voting Information Center in a nonpartisan manner to provide information on elections, including dates and offices involved.
  - 5.** Actively collect and share good ideas identified by Service, Agency/Department, and states' voting assistance programs.
- B.** The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) will provide Public Affairs Guidance throughout DoD regarding the conduct of the Department's voting program.
- C.** The American Forces Information Service will:
- 1.** Coordinate with the Director, FVAP, all aspects of information for release to include: radio, television and print media materials.
  - 2.** Provide other information support as required by the Director, FVAP.
- D.** The Military Departments will:
- 1.** Ensure that clear channels of communications are established throughout each Service expediting all voting information down to unit level.
  - 2.** Establish Service voting information direct "Hot-Lines" to link unit Voting Assistance Officers with their respective Senior Service Voting Representative or Service Voting Action Officer.
  - 3.** Direct Service internal information media to publicize all aspects of the 2008 and 2009 voting assistance program. Furthermore, each Service will monitor the information support to ensure that voting information is being disseminated in a timely, effective and non-partisan manner.
  - 4.** Procure, produce, and distribute voting information materials and ensure that voting assistance officers at all echelons are in receipt of an adequate number of materials to enable them to assist individuals covered by the *UOCAVA*.
- E.** Other Federal agencies will:
- 1.** Perform all functions listed above, as applicable, if their agencies employ individuals stationed outside the U.S.

2. At the request of the Director, FVAP, coordinate with foreign media for the publication of voting information in media that have been identified as sources of information by U.S. citizens outside the U.S.

#### **IV. PHASED PROGRAM SCHEDULING**

##### **A. Phase I - September 1, 2007 - Spring 2008**

The Director, FVAP will publish the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*, distribute information and other motivational posters developed for 2008, and operate the DoD Voting Information Center.

##### **B. Phase II - December 1 - October, 2008**

1. The Director, FVAP will prepare and disseminate voting information on state and local primary elections and continue operation of the DoD Voting Information Center.
2. The Director, FVAP will make available for distribution a motivational poster.
3. American Forces Information Service (AFIS) will conduct specialized, multi-media activities emphasizing registration for and voting in primary and general elections. In addition to distributing news releases and related features, American Forces Press and Publications Service (AFPPS) will provide military newspaper editors the graphic support necessary (line art and cartoons) to supplement their text. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) will continue overseas broadcasting of voting spot announcements and features.
4. Military Services will ensure that telephone information operators at every military installation are provided with the name, e-mail addresses and office telephone number of the Installation Voting Assistance Officer. Installation Voting Assistance Officers shall generate and maintain a directory containing names, e-mail addresses and office telephone numbers of all local Unit Voting Assistance Officers by October 1, 2007. Military Services will provide the Director, FVAP with the quarterly updates of the office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for every Installation and Major command Voting Assistance Officer.
5. All departments and agencies will ensure that voting assistance materials are distributed expeditiously to all echelons for use by Voting Assistance Officers and ensure Voting Assistance Officers are aware of procedures to obtain additional materials if needed.
6. Military Departments will ensure that commanding officers or Voting Assistance Officers provide at least one briefing, training, or information period devoted to registration and voting procedures. Ensure that these or

other sessions are made available to spouses and eligible dependents, and ensure that incoming personnel are provided voting guidance if they arrive in a unit after the voting information briefing is conducted. Information provided shall include dates of scheduled primary and general elections and state deadlines for voter registration, absentee ballot requests, and the receipt of returned, voted ballots. Information programs can be accomplished through the use of local websites, installation newspapers, and by placing voting materials (with Voting Assistance Officer's name, phone, e-mail address, and office location) in stationary locations such as libraries, medical and dental clinics, commissaries, exchanges, MWR facilities, schools, training facilities, and at designated locations onboard seagoing vessels.

7. Military Departments will monitor command internal information media ensuring that voting information is being made available to eligible voters.

*C. Phase III - July - November 4, 2008*

1. The Director, FVAP will continue to release information on elections and operate the DoD Voting Information Center.

2. AFRTS facilities will intensify the radio and television campaigns to alert eligible voters overseas as to deadlines for registration and motivate them to request absentee ballots and vote.

3. AFIS will intensify print media campaign to inform all eligible voters of deadlines for registration and requesting absentee ballots.

4. AFPPS and AFRTS will publicize "Armed Forces Voters Week" (August 31-September 7, 2008) and "Absentee Voters Week" (October 12-18, 2008), making the shift in emphasis from voting in the primary elections to voting in the November 7, 2008, general election.

5. Military Departments, the State Department, and other departments and agencies (as applicable) will plan and publicize local "Armed Forces Voters Week" (August 31-September 7, 2008), "Absentee Voters Week" (October 12-18, 2008) and "Overseas Citizens Voters Week" (June 28-July 7, 2008) activities. Military Departments should utilize local "on-base" community groups to generate support for the voting program and the State Department should utilize embassy and consulate facilities.

6. Military Departments and applicable agencies should conduct second briefings to ensure that newly appointed voting assistance officers are trained. Second briefings should be considered for personnel covered by the *UOCAVA*, shifting emphasis from primary to general election information.

7. Military Departments will continue monitoring command information channels ensuring that voting information is being made available.

## V. LIST OF INFORMATION SUPPORT MATERIALS AND SERVICES

- A. FVAP Internet Home Page. Located at <http://www.fvap.gov>, the page provides an overview of the FVAP as well as electronic access to many of the materials listed in this section. In addition, this site provides election information, access to the on-line FPCA, and links to state government home pages and other sites with election information and results.
- B. 2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide. (2008-09 VAG). A reference guide for Voting Assistance Officers providing a compendium of state-by-state absentee voting procedures.
- C. Voting Assistance Officer Training and Certification on CD-ROM and on-line.
- D. Posters. 2008-2009 voting posters will be available for use by the Armed Forces, State Department, and other government agencies. Initial requirements for posters will be coordinated by FVAP with DoD components and other government agencies. Distribution is made through normal supply channels.
- E. News Articles and Features. News and feature articles on the Voting Assistance Program - 2008-2009, emphasizing primary elections, "Overseas Citizens Voters Week," "Armed Forces Voters Week," and the general election, will be released to all media. Departments and/or agencies outside the DoD will be sent this information for their use as appropriate.
- F. DoD Voting Information Center (VIC). The DoD Voting Information Center will be in operation 24 hours a day. Anyone may call the VIC on DSN 425-1343, (703) 588-1343 or the appropriate toll-free number listed at the end of this section under "Ombudsman Service."
- G. Voting Information News (VIN) Newsletter. The VIN is a monthly publication that is primarily distributed on-line in PDF format and via e-mail in text format to Voting Assistance Officers. The newsletter contains information on elections and other voting-related matters of interest to citizens covered by the UOCAVA. The VIN should be distributed as extensively as possible throughout your organization. Voting Assistance Officers are encouraged to extract information from the VIN and copy articles for internal media use.
- H. Ombudsman Service. The FVAP provides an Ombudsman Service for both the voter and local election officials to resolve problems which cannot be solved locally or answer questions concerning procedures for registration and ballot requests, including the timely receipt of ballots. Citizens and local election officials may call for assistance using the international toll-free numbers below, and contained on the inside back cover of the 2008 - 2009 Voting Assistance Guide. The number for citizens in the United States and Canada is 1-800-438-VOTE (8683). Assistance is available during normal business hours, Eastern Time, or a recorded message may be left at other times. Toll-free telephone numbers are listed on page A-7.

- I. FVAP Electronic Transmission Service. The FVAP provides the Electronic Transmission of Election Materials Service. Where allowed by state law, a military or overseas citizen may electronically transmit the FPCA for registration/ballot request, receive the regular blank absentee ballot by fax, return the voted ballot by fax, or any combination of these three. Election materials may be transmitted to local election officials through the following numbers: DSN 223-5527, (703) 693-5527 or (800) 368-8683. Toll-free fax numbers are listed on page A-8.

The following numbers for Ombudsman assistance may be dialed directly from the individual countries to reach the FVAP. No cost is incurred by the caller. They should be dialed exactly as they appear here, without affixing prefixes for international calls.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>
AMERICAN SAMOA	800-323-8180	LATVIA	800-0154
ANTIGUA	1-877-833-3886	LUXEMBOURG	8002-9087
AUSTRALIA	1-800-836-324	MALAYSIA	1-800-80-7684
AUSTRIA	0800-293478	MARSHALL ISLANDS	1-877-833-3886
BAHAMAS	1-877-833-3886	MEXICO	001-800-438-8683
BAHRAIN	80-965	NETH. ANTILLES	001-800-438-8683
BARBADOS	1-800-534-2104	NETHERLANDS	0800-0228213
BELGIUM	0800-11402	NEW ZEALAND	0800-446524
BERMUDA	1-8778333886	NICARAGUA	001-800-220-1349
BRAZIL	0800-891-0619	NORWAY	800-10520
CANADA	1-800-438-8683	PANAMA	001-800-507-1699
CAYMAN ISLANDS	1-877-833-3886	PHILIPPINES	1-800-1-1114-1341
CHILE	123-0-020-3232	POLAND	0-0-800-1112-078
CHINA	10-800-120-0925	PORTUGAL	8008-12543
COLUMBIA	01-800-9155-345	PUERTO RICO	1-800-438-8683
COSTA RICA	0800-012-1201	RUSSIA	8-10-8002-3333-011
DENMARK	80-884048	SINGAPORE	800-1203891
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1-888-156-2025	SOUTH AFRICA	080-09-90886
FINLAND	0-800-1-17998	SPAIN	900-961-668
FRANCE	0800-917-304	ST. KITTS/NEVIS	1-877-833-3886
GERMANY	0800-1007428	ST LUCIA	1-877-833-3886
GREECE	00800-12-5268	ST VINCENT	1-877-833-3886
GUAM	1-800-438-8683	SWEDEN	020-79-2242
GUYANA	1-800-438-8683	SWITZERLAND	0800-564294
HONG KONG	800-926191	TAIWAN	00801-13-7322
HUNGARY	06-800-150074	THAILAND	001-800-12-066-4536
INDONESIA	001-803-011-3116	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	1-800-934-7340
IRELAND	1-800-312-340	TURKEY	008-00151-1163
ISRAEL	1-800-9203230	UNITED KINGDOM	08-0002-88056
ITALY	800-784460	UNITED STATES	1-800-438-8683
JAMAICA	1-800-666-3819	URUGUAY	000-413-598-2849
JAPAN	00531-1208-96	VIRGIN ISLANDS	1-800-438-8683
KOREA	00798-14-800-5748	VENEZUELA	0800-100-3678

The FVAP's Electronic Transmission (Faxing) Service (ETS) allows citizens and state and local government officials to fax election materials (FPCA) request for registration and/or ballot; blank ballot sent to the voter by the local election official; voted ballot returned to the local election official; other election materials when permitted by state law and conditions do not allow for timely receipt and return of these materials via mail. To maintain the integrity of the electoral process and provide an audit trail of transmissions, all faxing should be done using one of the following toll-free fax numbers:

<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u>Fax Number</u></b>	<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u>Fax Number</u></b>
AUSTRALIA	1-800-887-858	JAMACIA	1-800-9266606
AUSTRIA	0800-292502	JAPAN	00531-1-20833
BAHAMAS	1-866-5605844	KOREA	00798-14-800-5648
BAHRAIN	800-921	LATVIA	800-0069
BELGIUM	0800-72216	MEXICO	001-866-560-5844
BRAZIL	0800-891-0656	NETHERLANDS	0800-0223962
CANADA	1-800-368-8683	NEW ZEALAND	0800-445874
CHILE	123-0-020-2892	NICARAGUA	001-800-2201638
CHINA	10-800-120-0855	NORWAY	800-18037
COLOMBIA	01-800-915-5253	PANAMA	001-800-507-1671
COSTA RICA	0800-012-1163	POLAND	00-800-1112004
DENMARK	8088-4568	PORTUGAL	800-8-12463
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1-888-156-2004	PUERTO RICO	1-800-368-8683
FINLAND	0-800-1-17346	SINGAPORE	800-1201687
FRANCE	0800-916-557	SOUTH AFRICA	080-09-90857
GERMANY	0800-1002793	SPAIN	900-961800
GREECE	00800-12-5816	ST LUCIA	1-866-560-5844
GUAM	1-800-368-8683	SWEDEN	020-79-1472
GUYANA	1-866-560-5844	SWITZERLAND	0800-564752
HONG KONG	800-968820	TAIWAN	00801-13-7287
HUNGARY	06-800-14980	THAILAND	001-800-12066-4459
INDONESIA	001-803-011-3094	TURKEY	00-800-151-1139
IRELAND	1-800-300015	UNITED KINGDOM	08-000280262
ISRAEL	1-800-921-3783	UNITED STATES	800-368-8683
ITALY	800-783943	URUGUAY	000-413-598-2820

If your country is not listed above, please use one of the central numbers below:

**(703) 693-5527 (toll call)**

**or**

**DSN 223-5527**