



DOD To TEST VOTING TECHNOLOGY FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS

Operation VOTE to take place July 26-27

July 25, 2011 – San Antonio, TX – Fort Sam Houston – Voting platforms specifically designed for military and overseas civilians will be tested for usability and accessibility at Fort Sam Houston’s Okuba Barracks in a mock election July 26-27, 2011. The event, Operation VOTE, is an opportunity to replicate the actual voting process by Wounded Warriors. Wounded Warriors receiving treatment at Brooke Army Medical Center will vote on platforms provided by election industry providers: Dominion Voting Systems, Election Systems and Software (ES&S), Scytl and Everyone Counts on July 26. Platforms provided by Konnech, Democracy Live, and Credence will be tested on July 27.

To address these needs through a testing and research effort, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) of the Department of Defense partnered with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and the Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy (WWCTP). The objective of conducting voting systems testing and research is to ensure that Wounded Warriors are able to vote in a manner that provides the same opportunity for access and participation (including privacy and independence) as for other voters and provide specific recommendations back to the United States Election Assistance Commission and the industry providers for improvements to their products and product standards.

Director Bob Carey says, “With the average Wounded Warrior staying on active duty at least two years after the initial wound, providing them with a reasonable opportunity to vote is an important mission at FVAP.” Surveys of disabled citizens who vote have found that participation in the electoral process is especially meaningful, as voting represents a way to regain a voice and identity often lost after injury.¹

FVAP, the EAC, and WWCTP in a coordinated effort will conduct a usability test via a simulated election process —“Operation VOTE” — to assess voting systems. Operation VOTE represents the culmination of research efforts during the past year involving direct interviews of Wounded Warriors and an assessment of the requirements and recommended standards for Wounded Warrior usability and accessibility. Findings from Operation VOTE and the entire effort will be published in a future report released from FVAP. This is the first time a direct usability assessment of combat-related injuries and disabilities will be conducted in the context of voting assistance.

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If you’d like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Director Bob Carey, please call Katherine Lampel at 703-588-81292 or email her at Katherine.Lampel@fvap.gov. If you’d like more information on the DoD Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process go to www.fvap.gov or contact the FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE; also available toll free from 70 countries - <http://www.fvap.gov/contact/tollfreephone.html>) or email the program at vote@fvap.gov.

¹ Davis C, Nelson J, Hirsch M, Hammond F, Karlawish J, Schur L, Kruse D, & Ball A. 2010. An Exploratory Examination of Political Empowerment and Voting Among Individuals with TBI. *Brain Injury*. 24(3):208. Retrieved from: <http://ibia.conference-services.net/reports/template/onetextabstract.xml?xsl=template/onetextabstract.xsl&conferenceID=1677&abstractID=353098>