



Information and Technology for Better Decision Making

2010 Post-Election Voting Survey of Overseas Civilians

Statistical Methodology Report



Additional copies of this report may be obtained from:

Defense Technical Information Center

ATTN: DTIC-BRR

8725 John J. Kingman Rd., Suite #0944

Ft. Belvoir, VA 22060-6218

Or from:

<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/order.html>

Ask for report by

**2010 POST-ELECTION VOTING SURVEY OF
OVERSEAS CIVILIANS:
STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY REPORT**

Defense Manpower Data Center
Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program
1600 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22209-2593

Acknowledgments

Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) is indebted to numerous people for their assistance with the *2010 Post-Election Voting Survey of Overseas Civilians (2010 PEV2)*, which was conducted on behalf of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD[P&R]). The survey program is conducted under the leadership of Timothy Elig, Director, *Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program (HRSAP)*.

Policy officials contributing to the development of this survey include Bob Carey, Director, Paul Drugan, Deputy Director for Research, and Alan White, Survey Specialist (Federal Voting Assistance Program).

Sampling was performed by the Department of State, and the statistical methodology report was written by Eric Falk, DMDC and Dorothy Kester Jackman, SRA International, Inc. under the guidance of David McGrath, Branch Chief of DMDC's Personnel Survey Branch. Mary Padilla, SRA International, Inc., helped with the formatting of this report.

2010 POST-ELECTION VOTING SURVEY OF OVERSEAS CIVILIANS: STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY REPORT

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the statistical sampling procedures that were used by the Department of State (DoS) under the request of the Defense Manpower Data Center to select a random sample of overseas civilians with registered e-mail addresses to participate in the *2010 Post-Election Voting Survey of Overseas Civilians (2010 PEV2)*. Responses from the survey are important to the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to ensure that they are meeting their mission of providing easy access to voting when U.S. citizens are located overseas.

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.....	1
Sample Design and Selection.....	1
Target Population.....	1
Sampling Frame	1
Sample Design	2
Sample Allocation.....	2
Weighting.....	3
Variance Estimation.....	3

List of Tables

1. Sample Selections for the Overseas Civilians Survey by Region and Year of Registration with DoS.....	2
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---

2010 POST-ELECTION VOTING SURVEY OF OVERSEAS CIVILIANS: STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY REPORT

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the statistical sampling procedures that were used by the Department of State (DoS) under the request of the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) to select a random sample of overseas civilians with registered e-mail addresses to participate in the *2010 Post-Election Voting Survey of Overseas Civilians (2010 PEV2)*. Responses from the survey are important to the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to ensure that they are meeting their mission of providing easy access to voting when U.S. citizens are located overseas.

Sample Design and Selection

Target Population

FVAP and DoS attempt to support all U.S. citizens living overseas in their effort to vote in federal elections. For the *2010 PEV2*, this is the population of interest, but DMDC cannot survey this population because no agency maintains a comprehensive list of U.S. citizens living overseas.

Sampling Frame

The best available list of overseas civilians is maintained by DoS and includes at maximum only the subset of citizens that have registered with DoS. This list only includes about 10% of overseas civilians, and coverage varies widely by country. For instance, a higher percentage of U.S. citizens living in Chad may register with DoS for safety reasons than citizens living in Canada. In addition, we removed other groups of citizens based on our experiences during the *2008 Post-Election Voting Survey of Overseas Civilians (2008 PEV2)*. In 2008, we attempted postal mailings for survey notification and encountered numerous problems with overseas mailing. FVAP, DMDC, and DoS decided to remove postal mailings for 2010 and concentrate efforts on citizens with an e-mail address on file because the postal mailings only slightly improved coverage of the target population for the *2008 PEV2* (overall 5% response rate in 2008). DoS believed this method of contact would be most effective and e-mail registrations were more recent and the citizen was more likely to still reside in the country of registration.

The sampling frame for the *2010 PEV2* consisted of citizens registered with DoS, born on or before November 2, 1992 (voting age), with e-mail addresses on file. In addition, short-term registrants (30 days or less at majority of posts) and those who arrived in the country after October, 1, 2010 were excluded. Although DoS maintains registries covering hundreds of

thousands of U.S. citizens, slightly less than 96,000¹ met all the 2010 PEV2 criteria for inclusion on the sampling frame.

Because citizens living in different countries may have varied access to voting, postal mail, e-mail, and attachment to the U.S. government, estimates from a survey sampling DoS registries are not likely representative of the voting behavior of all U.S. citizens living overseas.

Sample Design

According to DoS, it appears that the sample was systematic in nature. A team within DoS excluded all who were not 18 years of age on voting day and short-term (30 day or less at a majority of posts) registrants. A short-term registrant was defined as a U.S. citizen that arrived after October 1, 2010. From those that were considered to be available for sampling, DoS instructed their information technology (IT) staff to take every other valid registrant starting with the second valid registrant.

Sample Allocation

The final sample contained 47,879 overseas civilians that met these criteria is shown by *Region and Year of Registration* in Table 1. The order of the full population of approximately 476,000 registrants did not appear to be intentionally sorted and details were not provided by DoS. As Table 1 shows, the sample covered the world’s major regions, but it is unknown if the sample design is proportional to the actual number of overseas civilians in each region because this information is unknown. The table also shows that the sample consists primarily of more recent registrations, especially 2008 through 2010.

Table 1.
Sample Selections for the Overseas Civilians Survey by Region and Year of Registration with DoS

Region	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Africa	97	546	1,051	1,378	1,535	4,607
East Asia and Pacific	330	1,430	2,495	2,814	2,579	9,648
Europe	318	1,745	2,426	3,112	4,141	11,742
Near East	262	1,128	1,673	2,360	1,575	6,998
South and Central Asia	109	461	997	1,261	1,261	4,089
Western Hemisphere	374	1,417	2,473	3,744	2,787	10,795
Total	1,490	6,727	11,115	14,669	13,878	47,879

¹ DoS maintains these files and neither DMDC nor FVAP have access to the files. DoS did not count the entire population (registered U.S. citizens) and document the removal of members for failing the various criteria, but instead provided DMDC with only final sample counts.

Weighting

Weighting was not performed for this project due to the extremely low response rate and number of usable questionnaires. Point estimates from the survey only represent respondents, and weighted point estimates cannot be generalized to the population of overseas civilians.

Variance Estimation

Due to both the low coverage of the sampling frame and the low number of usable questionnaires, the estimates from this survey are not intended to represent all overseas U.S. citizens, and no variance estimation procedures were performed.

This page is reserved for insertion of Standard Form 298, page 1 -- this is best accomplished by replacing this page after the document has been converted to PDF

This page is reserved for insertion of Standard Form 298, page 2 -- this is best accomplished by replacing this page after the document has been converted to PDF

