



# **Strategic Plan For Fiscal Years 2010-2017**

**June 2010  
(Revised 5/15/2011)**

### **Director's Statement**

This Strategic Plan represents a key milestone for FVAP – the codification of its transformation from a hierarchical, traditionally communicating agency focused on voter registration and on the timely distribution of paper-based forms through unit Voting Assistance Officers, to a much flatter agency that provides direct-to-the-voter assistance, predominately through online tools --thereby easing much of the burden placed on the collateral duty Voting Assistance Officer.

The overall Strategic Plan is meant to be viewed in the context of the background analysis that serves as the justification for the initiatives in this Strategic Plan. FVAP's Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals are of overarching importance in this Plan.

### **Vision**

*Military and overseas voters are able to cast a valid ballot, which is counted in the election, from anywhere in the world, as easily as if they were at a polling place.*

### **Mission**

#### **FVAP exists to:**

- *Assist uniformed services and overseas voters exercise their right to vote so that they have an equal opportunity with the general population to have their vote counted.*
- *Assist the States in complying with relevant federal laws, and advise them on ways to best comply.*
- *Advocate on behalf of the uniformed services and overseas voters, identifying impediments to their ability to exercise their right to vote, and proposing methods to overcome those impediments.*

### **Strategic Goals**

- *Improve UOCAVA voter success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee population's voter success rates by 2016.*
- *All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election.*
- *Quantify the overseas civilian population by 2012.*
- *Streamline the UOCAVA voting process by 2016, so that no stage of the process takes a voter more than 15 minutes to complete.*
- *Be a model agency of professional execution.*

As transparency is a Key Value for FVAP, this Strategic Plan will be posted on the FVAP.gov website for all stakeholders to review. However, this is a living document, which represents a robust and continuous assessment of FVAP's operations relative to the Strategic Goals. Consequently, it may become evident that certain operations, activities, or tasks are not effective, or that some are more effective than others. If that is determined, such operations, activities, and tasks will be modified, deleted, or added to best achieve the Strategic Goals. However, changes to the Strategic Plan will be clearly identified, so that it does not appear that FVAP is changing Strategic Goals or timelines to mask execution failure.

Just as this Strategic Plan will be kept in alignment with the Strategic Plans of our leaders in the Department of Defense, all Performance Plans (including mine) will be aligned with this Strategic Plan; every initiatives cited in this Plan will appear in an individual's Performance Plan, and no initiatives in individual Performance Plans will appear without clear aligning authority from this Strategic Plan.

Bob Carey

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## Executive Summary

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is located within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (P&R). On behalf of the Secretary of Defense, the Director, FVAP, administers the federal responsibilities of the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986 (UOCAVA)*, 42 USC §1973ff et sec, as most recently amended by the *Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE, the Act)*, which covers an estimated six million citizens.

FVAP's mission is to ensure that Uniformed Services personnel, their voting-age dependents, and overseas civilians successfully exercise their right to vote in Federal elections, and that they are afforded an opportunity equal to that of the general population to vote and to have that vote counted. FVAP strives to achieve this mission through advocacy on behalf of, and assistance to voters and election officials.

This Strategic Plan will guide FVAP in its program oversight and policy development activities for Fiscal Years (FY) 2010-2017, including the manner in which FVAP will respond to and incorporate the impacts and requirements of the *MOVE Act*.

## FVAP Vision

*Military and overseas voters are able to cast a valid ballot, which is counted in the election, from anywhere in the world as easily as if they were at a polling place.*

## FVAP Mission

*FVAP exists to:*

- *Assist uniformed services and overseas voters exercise their right to vote so that they have an equal opportunity with the general population to have their vote counted.*
- *Assist the States in complying with relevant federal laws, and advise them on ways to best comply.*
- *Advocate on behalf of the uniformed services and overseas voters, identifying impediments to their ability to exercise their right to vote, and proposing methods to overcome those impediments.*

## FVAP Key Values

- **Customer-focused:** Successfully engage and satisfy FVAP's primary customers: military and overseas voters as well as election officials.
- **Proactive:** Individual staff members anticipate future problems, needs or changes within the Department, the Program, the Services, or the election community, and quickly take effective action to prevent, or, if necessary, resolve those issues.
- **Data-driven:** Manage programs through the rigorous, detailed statistical analysis of the voting population and through results-based metrics and assessments of voting assistance programs.
- **Transparent:** Make all data, methodologies, and performance evaluations readily available to the public.
- **Efficient:** Pursue programs that stimulate the greatest improvements in voter success rates in the most expeditious manner and with the least expense.

## **FVAP Strategic Goals**

To meet these challenges, FVAP established five strategic goals. FVAP's strategic goals represent areas of long-term strategic importance, consistent with top Personnel & Readiness (P&R) priorities, and are:

- Improve UOCAVA voter success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee population's voter success rates by 2016.
- All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election.
- Quantify the overseas civilian population by 2012.
- Streamline the UOCAVA voting process by 2016, so that no stage of the process takes a voter more than 15 minutes to complete.
- Be a model agency of professional execution.

## **Lines of Operation**

In its plan, FVAP identifies the overarching measures of effect by which it will assess its progress in achieving its strategic goals. To achieve its strategic goals, FVAP has identified five lines of operation, under which it groups its top-level, long-term initiatives that include specific activities, tasks, resource requirements, performance measurements, and partners (internal and external). Each line of operation supports one or more of the strategic goals:

- Line of Operation 1: Improve the voter's experience — Make the UOCAVA voters' experience as easy as if they were at the DMV or at their local polling place.
- Line of Operation 2: Provide greater support to the election official — Through better communication, regular interactions, and targeted education, substantially improve the ability of the election official to service the UOCAVA voter.
- Line of Operation 3: Commit to smart, effective, and substantial technology investment — Make the availability and usability of online tools the overwhelming norm for UOCAVA voters and election officials.
- Line of Operation 4: Foster public/private partnerships and engage with advocacy groups — Make the FVAP website, tools and names very familiar to voters and election officials.
- Line of Operation 5: Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization — Exceed the UOCAVA community's expectations with regard to our data and transparency.

Each line of operation includes several key activities with short-, medium-, and long-range targets which, when attained, will contribute to achieving the strategic goals in the context of the lines of operation. The lines of operation and their supporting activities are written as outcome-oriented, actionable statements. Table 1 provides an overview of the strategic goals, lines of operation, and the key activities that will be described in the "FVAP *Implementation Plan*" section of this document. The plan also includes sections on "*Key Variables*" and "*Critical Success Factors*."

FVAP will review annually and update, as needed, specific components of this strategic plan, including the lines of operation and activities. One area where FVAP will likely revise this Plan is to replace the Lines of Operation organization of initiatives with the Portfolio of Investments organization used in the Under Secretary's Strategic Plan (February 2011). As this POI process matures and is translated to the FVAP organizational level more granularly, FVAP will adopt it and use it as the primary method through which to organize its initiatives, activities, and tasks.

**Table 1: High-level Overview of the Components of the FVAP Strategic Plan**

Strategic Goals	Improve UOCAVA Voter Success Rates to Meet or Exceed the General Absentee Population Rates	All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election	Quantify the Overseas Civilian Population	Streamline the UOCAVA Voting Process	Be a Model Agency of Professional Execution.
Lines of Operation					
<b>Improve the voter's experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide direct to the voter assistance and training</li> <li>• Provide robust call center capabilities</li> <li>• Deploy targeted outreach and digital media at the right time to inform voters and drive engagement, including outreach to 18-24 year old members, military spouses, overseas civilians, and overseas U.S. students</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Services fully implement and maintain Installation Voting Assistance Offices (IVAO's)/National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).</li> <li>• Standardize Service Inspector General (IGs) annual voting assistance assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage technology to provide direct, in-time assistance to voters.</li> </ul>
<b>Provide greater support to the election official</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide call center capabilities to election officials</li> <li>• Improve election official training</li> <li>• Work with States on legislation, policies and processes (e.g. use of wizards and counting of Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots (FWAB's))</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a State-by-State plan for adoption of Legislative Initiatives.</li> <li>• Highlight and promote FVAP's State-by-State index.</li> <li>• Engage States in adopting Uniform Law Commission (ULC) final model legislation.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate surveys (Election Assistance Commission-EAC, Defense Manpower Data Center-DMDC, and FVAP).</li> <li>• Create a Best Practice Community of Interest for election officials and States.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize the burdens on States to comply with and enforcement of federal law compliance</li> <li>• Reduce the number of redundant requests for information.</li> <li>• Improve coordination among other Federal organization so as to reduce the burden imposed on States.</li> <li>• Establish action oriented points of contact within FVAP for each State.</li> </ul>
<b>Commit to smart and effective technology investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the use of online tools to support the voting process, e.g. Web site, training, wizards, voter registration tracking, and mobile voting options.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the EAC and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), to develop a roadmap on electronic absentee voting.</li> <li>• Provide a centralized online database support system for VAO/IVA Office personnel.</li> <li>• Develop data migration tools in support of online tool development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressively evaluate funds being expended to support program; establish "least cost, greatest impact" philosophy.</li> <li>• Conversely, implement full cost accounting principles to capture all costs of initiatives, including the costs in federal workforce time, the time to the voters, and the time for State and local election officials.</li> </ul>
<b>Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate overseas citizen advocacy groups, critical partners across military and academia, and subject matter experts into FVAP efforts.</li> <li>• Establish and implement "organic" VAO, utilizing strategic communication efforts through social networking technology and leveraging associated partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the Election Official Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Engage the UOCAVA community and the States in widely adopting the ULC final model legislation.</li> </ul>	Collaborate with Federal organization and online tool providers to leverage resources and identify new communications and technologies to build a better picture of the global community of voters	Engage the UOCAVA community and States in widely adopting the ULC final model legislation.	

## Background

Uniformed Services members worldwide and U.S. citizens who are located overseas must be able to register to vote, request and receive absentee ballots in a timely manner, and successfully cast those ballots in their State of legal residence. FVAP's mission is to provide advocacy and assistance to these citizens, in coordination with the States, to ensure their full enfranchisement. FVAP used key findings from the *2008 Post Election Survey Report* to develop the strategic goals and lines of operation within this strategic plan, in order to effectively meet this mission.

To address previous report issues, which received criticism from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), FVAP has taken significant measures to improve its data collection and analytical methods for the *Post Election Survey Report*:

- In 2006, FVAP adopted the Status of Forces Survey (SOFS), conducted by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), as the baseline methodology for conducting the military portion of the report.
- FVAP also weighted its findings in the *2008 Post Election Survey Report* to reflect that the U.S. active duty military population consists of a much larger percentage of young males than does the U.S. Census Bureau's citizen voting age population (CVAP).<sup>1</sup> The survey compares voter registration and voter participation rates between comparable age groups, and then adjusts active duty military registration and voting participation rates demographically to the comparable rates of the U.S. national CVAP.<sup>2</sup>

One dramatic finding from the FVAP *2008 Post Election Survey Report*, is that the U.S. active duty military voted in greater numbers than did the national electorate (when voting populations are adjusted for age and gender differences); furthermore, the active duty military population is registered to vote at greater numbers than is the national electorate, even before adjustments are made for age and gender differences. Specific findings of this survey include:

- When adjusted to match the demographic composition of the national CVAP, the active duty military registration rate in the 2008 general election was 87%.<sup>3</sup>
- When adjusted to match the demographic composition of the national CVAP, the active duty military's voting rate in the 2008 general election was 73%.<sup>4</sup>

Military voters appear to succeed in the voting process *despite* the rules of the absentee voting systems, rather than because of them. Uniformed Services and overseas voters must navigate a complex web of highly-varied, sometimes contradictory, and often senseless absentee voting processes. Although military

### *FVAP Exists To:*

#### **Assistance:**

- Assist uniformed services and overseas voters exercise their right to vote so that they have an equal opportunity with the general population to have their vote counted.
- Assist the States in complying with relevant federal laws, and advise them on ways to best comply.

#### **Advocacy:**

- Advocate on behalf of the uniformed services and overseas voters, identifying impediments to their ability to exercise their right to vote, and proposing methods to overcome those impediments.

<sup>1</sup> CVAP as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau *2008 Current Population Survey* (CPS)

<http://www.census.gov/cps/>.

<sup>2</sup> The citizen voting age population (CVAP) is from the US Census Bureau Current Population Survey. For more information, visit: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cps/cpsdef.html>.

<sup>3</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 71% of the U.S. Census CVAP was registered to vote.

<sup>4</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 63.6% of the national CVAP voted in the 2008 general election.

voter participation rates are higher than those of comparable national voter populations, a significant number of military voters do not return their absentee ballots.

*The most critical finding from the 2008 Post Election Survey is that the vast majority of UOCAVA voting failures<sup>5</sup> occur in the ballot return process.*

According to the *2008 Local Election Official Post Election Survey Report*, the overall UOCAVA voter absentee ballot return rate was 67%, whereas the non-UOCAVA domestic national absentee ballot return rate was 91%.<sup>6</sup>

For military voters, the incidence of voting failure was due overwhelmingly to unsuccessful ballot return: only 1.4% of the voting failure occurred in the registration and ballot application process and another 6.9% was due to ballot delivery failure. But 74.0% of the total incidence of voting failure for military voters was due to ballots transmitted but not returned, and 17.7% was due to ballots cast but not counted; the majority of the votes cast but not counted were ballots returned to local election officials after the return deadline.

**Table 2: Failures in Military Voting Process during the 2008 General Election Cycle**

<b>2008 General Election Results – Military Voters</b>		
Stage of voting process	Number of additional failures over general voting population	% of total failure
Registration Failure	3,936	1.4%
Ballot Delivery Failure	20,064	6.9%
<b>Ballot Return Failure</b>	213,779	74.0%
Ballot Casting Failure	51,283	17.7%
<b>Total</b>	289,062	

For all UOCAVA voters, 1.3% of their voting failure was in registration or absentee ballot applications, 6.4% in ballots returned as undeliverable, 81.1% in ballots transmitted but not returned on time, or at all, and 11.2% in ballots cast but not counted.

For overseas civilian voters, 1% of their voting failure occurred in the registration or the absentee balloting process, 81.2% in ballots transmitted but not returned, and 17.8% in ballots cast but not counted.

<sup>5</sup> “Voting failure” is defined as the difference between the success or failure rate experienced by UOCAVA voters for a particular stage of the voting process compared to that experienced by national absentee voters for the same state in the voting process.

<sup>6</sup> Defense Manpower Data Center, Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program, *2008 Post-Election Voting Survey of Local Election Officials*, January 4, 2010; page 1.

The ballot delivery failure for overseas civilian voters was not separately determinable from the survey responses provided by local election officials (LEOs), and therefore is assumed to be in the ballots transmitted but not returned failures.

### **Federal Voting Assistance Program Challenges in Context**

FVAP has set a goal of improving the *UOCAVA* voting success rates<sup>7</sup> to meet or exceed that of the general absentee voting population. Within this goal, FVAP will specifically focus on improving the ballot return rates. FVAP's efforts to meet these goals are complicated by significant challenges:

#### ***Inherent Delays and Limitations in Traditional Mail Service***

One challenge to FVAP's mission is that the logistics of overseas absentee voting are inherently difficult. Delays and limitations in traditional mail service can slow and, in some case, prevent mail delivery and return. In the 2008 Federal elections, the general absentee population returned 91% of ballots, while the *UOCAVA* population returned 67% of ballots. Research into the failures in the *UOCAVA* voting process showed that 17% of military members who requested ballots did not receive them. Nine percent of military ballots were misaddressed and 6% of ballots were returned as undeliverable.

Traditional mail can only move so fast. It cannot always reach military voters involved in necessary, rapid troop movements or find overseas citizens who are located in remote locations. In addition, although active duty military members complete Federal Post Card Absentee (FPCA) voting requests, sometimes this process cannot keep up with multiple address changes over the course of a year.

U.S. citizens are likely to experience widely divergent voting rates and experiences depending upon their country of residence. Worldwide postal delivery systems vary, and U.S. postal system coordination with other countries also varies widely. In addition, the ability of U.S. election officials to address absentee ballots using non-Western alphabets is likely extremely limited. In some countries, overseas civilians report that any mail appearing to be official government mail (as an absentee ballot would) is regularly intercepted and retained by the host country government, never to be delivered.

#### ***Internet Voting Cannot Yet Provide an Alternative to Traditional Mail Processes***

Large-scale technology solutions, such as internet voting, are not yet available as a replacement to traditional mail channels. While 42 USC 1973ff (note)<sup>8</sup> requires that the Secretary of Defense conduct an electronic voting demonstration project among uniformed services voters, the Department of Defense is authorized to wait until the Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) develops "established electronic absentee voting guidelines" for such a system. The Department of Defense is assisting EAC with the development of these guidelines. However, the roadmap for this process is lengthy and requires significant evaluation and testing.

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<sup>7</sup> For absentee voters, "voting success rate" is defined as the successful transmission of an absentee ballot to a registered absentee voter and his/her successful casting of the absentee ballot.

<sup>8</sup> [Pub. L. 107-107](#), div. A, title XVI, § 1604, Dec. 28, 2001, [115 Stat. 1277](#), as amended by [Pub. L. 108-375](#), div. A, title V, § 567, Oct. 28, 2004, [118 Stat. 1919](#)

For *UOCAVA* voters, the measurable impacts of internet voting are yet unknown. FVAP has not yet completed a strategic review of the extent and nature of *UOCAVA* voter disenfranchisement to determine the efficacy of a completely online voting process versus other solutions, such as a voting process comprised of both internet and traditional mail components. FVAP's goals and metrics will form the basis of the comprehensive and integrated electronic absentee voting plans agreed to by FVAP and EAC.

***Voting Assistance Officers and State Local Election Officials Lack Infrastructure and Resources to Fully Support Their Overseas Voters***

Military Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) and state local election officials (LEOs) often lack sufficient infrastructure and resources to fully support their overseas voters. For example, the average VAO supports 150-300 voters, who often have very little voting experience. To support these voters, VAOs may need to navigate individual absentee voting requirements for 55 States and territories.

LEOs, who administer elections in counties, cities, and other jurisdictions across the United States, spend disproportionate amounts of time attempting to assist *UOCAVA* voters, but are often limited by absentee ballot requirements and state legislatively-mandated deadlines. These requirements vary state-to-state, resulting in the FVAP's 296-page *Voting Assistance Guide*, and translating into a cumbersome *UOCAVA* voting process.

The Pew Center for the States has stated that "there is tremendous variation in how the 50 States and the District of Columbia administer the election process for Americans covered under the *UOCAVA*."<sup>9</sup> Likewise, a 2008 delegation of five Secretaries of State and State Election Directors visiting military forces in Iraq mirrored that assessment, by stating: "Differing rules required by each State also complicate the voting process. For example, whether there is a requirement to have a ballot notarized or supported by an affidavit, or even when the ballot is mailed to voters depends on each State's requirements."

The number one complaint that VAOs received from voters during the 2008 election cycle was that voters did not receive confirmation from their LEO that their registration had been received and processed. Although LEOs used a variety of methods to notify voters of their status, only 7% of LEOs report having access to a state voter verification site where they can update the status of the voter's registration application. Overall, one third of active duty military and almost half of federal employees did not receive notification on the status of their registration. Without this knowledge, voters cannot determine if they must take remedial action on their application, or whether they are eligible to use the back-up Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

At embassies and consulates, often the first portal of information to overseas civilians, Department of State (DoS) VAOs frequently do not have the training, experience or time required to fully assist their voters. Seventy percent of DoS VAOs were new to the duties in the 2008 election cycle, but only 34% of them received training to perform their VAO duties. Voting assistance is also a collateral duty for DoS VAOs. Seventy-five percent of DoS VAOs spend 10 hours or less on voting duties in a two year election cycle.

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<sup>9</sup> The Pew Center on the States, *No Time to Vote: Challenges Facing America's Overseas Military Voters.* January 2009.

In reports published since 2002, the DoD Inspector General (IG) has repeatedly noted a persistent failure of the Voting Assistance Program, particularly at the VAO level, to provide adequate assistance to military voters. The DoD IG specifically identified a lack of voter awareness of the VAO, FVAP, and Uniformed Services' resources available to assist the voting process.

Despite the substantial investment in VAO training and resources since the 2005 DoD IG report found that, "voting assistance will always be a secondary duty [for military unit Voting Assistance Officers], and senior leadership can expect improvement only if a radically different approach is applied,"<sup>10</sup> -- voter awareness of the UVAO program seems to have changed little in the intervening four years. Findings from the annual DoD IG reports between 2004 and 2006, as well as from the FVAP 2008 *Post-Election Survey Report*, support this assertion: The DoD IG estimated that during the 2004 election cycle, VAOs only reached 40-50% of the military voters.<sup>11</sup> During the 2008 election cycle, only 49% of active duty military voters received assistance from their VAOs, a number that tracks consistently with the 2004 election cycle. Further, in 2008, 36% of active duty military voters said that they did not know that they could get help from a VAO; 33% said that they did not have a UVAO, and 46% of active duty military voters said that they did not know who their VAO was.<sup>12</sup>

Given the budget investment of \$220,000 and \$350,000, in Voting Assistance Officer training for the 2006 and 2008 election cycles, respectively, and despite the development of new training programs that focus on providing voters with information and resource referral (especially the FVAP.gov website), voter awareness of those resources has not appreciably improved over the past two election cycles. Although the military has raised the rank of UVAOs to Lieutenant Commanders or Majors (O4 pay grade),<sup>13</sup> and has thereby promoted voting program visibility in unit leadership -- no appreciable change in voter awareness has occurred.

The Voting Assistance Officer program is, always has been, and likely will continue to be inherently limited in its ability to substantially address and reverse these inadequacies, because of the collateral duty nature of these assignments. Therefore, the analysis of annual DoD IG Report data and the FVAP Post-Election Surveys from the 2006 and the 2008 general elections, confirm the following portentous message of the DoD IG: Little further voting assistance can be provided without a radical transformation of the voting assistance program away from a collateral duty, UVAO system."

### *Incomplete Data Drives Inaccurate Policy*

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) and other organizations have criticized FVAP in the past for using statistically-invalid or methodologically-flawed data in previous surveys and reports. For example, past surveys did not adequately adjust weightings to reflect the fact that the UOCAVA military

<sup>10</sup> DoD IG Report No. IE-2005-001, *Evaluation of the Voting Assistance Program*, March 31, 2005, p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> DoD IG Report No. IE-2005-001, p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> *Eighteenth Report*, p. 28.

<sup>13</sup>The O-4 designation was implemented by DoD Directive 1000.04 dated June 3, 2002. The requirement for evaluation of VAOs was part of Section 1602 of Title XVI of the NDAA FY-02.

voter population consists of a much larger percentage of young, male voters in comparison to the U.S. citizen voting age population (CVAP).<sup>14</sup>

In the past, there was no consistently agreed upon source for authoritative information on *UOCAVA* voters. Organizations produced reports using methods to collect data that differed from those used by FVAP. Some of these reports were based on simple surveys, opt-in surveys, and censuses of entire populations with incomplete response rates.

Due to accessibility to poor data and varied data sources, FVAP developed an inaccurate portrait of the active duty military community’s voter registration and participation rates. Subsequently, FVAP created communications plans and trainings with the aim of increasing U.S. military voter registration and participation, which is actually quite high among this population. As a result, FVAP policy and programs historically did not focus on the real issues of ballot delivery and return rates, wherein the highest failure rates occur.

FVAP and other organizations also cannot accurately assess the number of non-government overseas citizens, leading to an incomplete picture of this voting population. As a result, FVAP communications and training efforts may fail to reach large voter populations. Consequently, FVAP cannot meet its mission to fully enfranchise the entire *UOCAVA* population.

**FVAP Strategic Goals**

Recognizing the challenges to overseas absentee voting, FVAP has identified five strategic goals to guide its FY2010-2016 program and policy development. Strategic goals are defined as FVAP-wide priority outcomes necessary to accomplish its mission. Each goal represents a leading indicator of success for the program.

**Table 3: FVAP Strategic Goals**

<b>FVAP Strategic Goals</b>
• Improve <i>UOCAVA</i> voter success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee population’s voter success rates by 2016.
• All <i>UOCAVA</i> voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election.
• Quantify the overseas civilian population by 2012.
• Streamline the <i>UOCAVA</i> voting process by 2016, so that no stage of the process takes a voter more than 15 minutes to complete.
• Be a model of professional execution.

<sup>14</sup> CVAP as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau 2008 *Current Population Survey* (CPS)  
<http://www.census.gov/cps/>.

**Strategic Goal #1:** *Improve UOCAVA voter success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee population's voter success rates by 2016.*

**Challenge:** UOCAVA voters do not currently experience the same voting success rates that are experienced by the general absentee populations. For absentee voters, "voting success rate" is defined as the successful transmission of an absentee ballot to a registered absentee voter and his/her successful casting of the absentee ballot. According to the *2008 Post Election Survey Report*, the overall UOCAVA voter absentee ballot return rate was 67%, whereas the non-UOCAVA domestic national absentee ballot return rate was 91%.

**Goal:** FVAP seeks to achieve UOCAVA voting success rates equal to or exceeding the general absentee population's rates by 2016

**Measure of Effect:** UOCAVA absentee ballot return and ballot count rates are equal to, or greater than, those of the general absentee population.

**Strategic Goal #2:** *All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election.*

**Challenge:** FVAP works with the States and other voting organizations to improve the UOCAVA absentee voting process. Currently, the States do not have a formal process to ensure compliance with legislative laws. In addition, there is no approach as to how States should prioritize initiatives.

**Goal:** FVAP will continue to strengthen its Legislative Initiatives program, an annual process in which FVAP reviews State legislation on absentee voting and develops recommendations and required actions to improve the process. FVAP will also continue to measure its ability to influence state-by-state UOCAVA voting programs with its Legislative Initiatives' scoring index.

FVAP's Legislative Initiatives program will focus on sending ballots to voters at least 45 days before the election, as now mandated by the *MOVE Act*. FVAP also proposes the expanded use of e-mail and online transmission for all election materials throughout the entire UOCAVA absentee voting process, thereby replacing fax and postal mail where possible.

**Measure of Effect:** Raise all States and Territories Legislative Initiative Scores to 75% or better by 2014.

**Strategic Goal #3:** *Quantify the overseas civilian population by 2012.*

**Challenge:** Overseas civilian voting cannot be analyzed without a clear understanding of the population size and demographic composition. At the same time, it is difficult to define the overseas civilian population: data-gathering is cost-prohibitive and overseas U.S. citizens are not required to register with embassies and consulates -- a major source of FVAP *UOCAVA* voter data. Additionally, the Department of State (DoS) may be reluctant to provide data due to security issues, and countries may decline to share numbers.

**Goal:** The current overseas population is not fully assessed, which leads to ineffective initiatives that fail to reach the entire community. By defining the current landscape of the overseas population, FVAP can initiate efforts to effectively reach overseas citizens, in order to meet its mission. FVAP will implement new technology and innovative research techniques to quantify the overseas civilian population and define voter demographics. FVAP will also reach out to overseas voting advocacy groups and private organizations to expand its data.

**Measure of Effect:** Overseas civilian population participates in surveys in statistically significant levels (95% confidence level).

**Strategic Goal #4:** *Streamline the UOCAVA voting process by 2016, so that no stage takes more than 15 minutes to complete.*

**Challenge:** The majority of voting failure occurs in ballot return, due to various factors such as limitations in traditional mail service, overtaxed VAOs and State LEOs, and voters' lack of understanding of the absentee process. Voters complain that the voting process is complicated, residency qualification laws are confusing, and that they do not receive timely responses or support from their election officials.

**Goal:** FVAP will focus on eliminating confusing, opaque, and lengthy voting processes for *UOCAVA* voters. In addition, it will focus on initiatives that improve the voting process, such as mail transit process analysis and training for VAOs and State Local Election Officials. As outlined in the "*Implementation Plan*" section of this document, FVAP will focus on technology improvements, assistance to the election officials and voters, and legislative support, in order to meet this goal.

**Measure of Effect:** The *UOCAVA* voter is able to complete each stage of the voting process in 15 minutes or less. The five stages are: voter registration and ballot request; ballot receipt; ballot marking; ballot return; and ballot tracking.

**Strategic Goal #5: *Be a model agency of professional execution.***

**Challenge:** FVAP is a DoD organization with a mission that extends beyond the traditional focus of the Department. FVAP works with DoD personnel and non-federal civilians who are covered under *UOCAVA*. Additionally, key constituencies of FVAP are local election officials who otherwise have absolutely no relationship with the Department of Defense. Finally, due to its broad interest in voting and in voting related issues, FVAP is a highly visible organization that must wisely and objectively ensure that *UOCAVA* voters are enfranchised in their ability to vote in an effective and nonpartisan manner.

**Goal:** FVAP will take the initiative within the federal government to demonstrate the value of transparency, awareness of cost, and the importance of focusing on mission throughout the Program.

This Strategic Goal will be defined with more specific recommendations before the end of FY 2011.

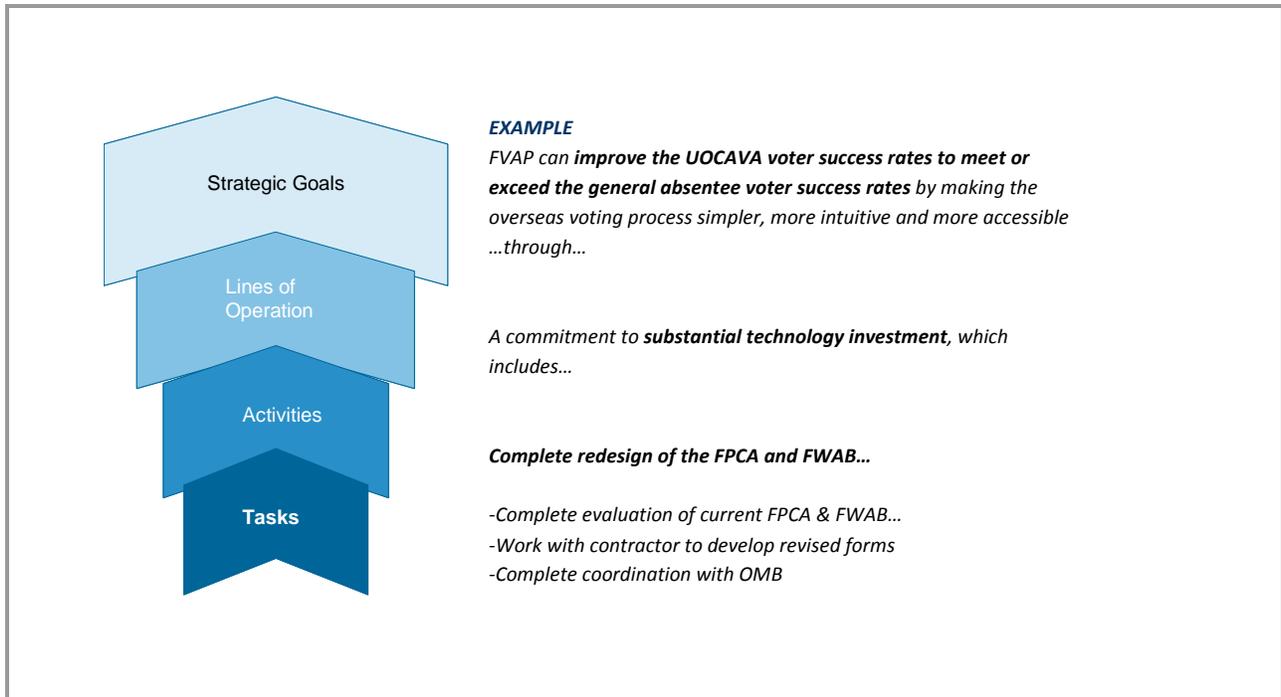
**Measure of Effect:** FVAP will win one of the following awards by 2012: the Malcolm Baldrige Award; GSA's IRMCO Awards; GSA's Citizen Services Awards; the Chief Information Officers Council's Leadership Award; Excellence.gov award; and/or the International Federation of Electoral Systems' Manatt Democracy Award.

## FVAP Implementation Plan

This section of the plan illustrates how FVAP will accomplish its strategic goals: each strategic goal will be achieved through the implementation of one or more lines of operation (initiatives), which include a set of key activities that are composed of specific underlying tasks.

Figure 1 provides an example of how FVAP relies on the underlying tasks, activities, and lines of operation to achieve its strategic goal of improving *UOCAVA* voter success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee voter population.

**Figure 1: An example of how FVAP will meet its strategic goals**



The remainder of this section will be divided into tables and descriptive overviews that describe the implementation plans for each of the strategic goals.

Each high-level implementation plan will include the specific lines of operation, activities, tasks, resource requirements, performance measurements, and partners (external and internal) for each of the strategic goals.

- Resource requirements are the funding, staff, and/or support (e.g., technology, logistics) that are needed to accomplish the strategic goal.
- Performance measurements are ways in which progress toward meeting the strategic goals can be quantitatively measured, e.g., FVAP performed <twenty> VAO training workshops in 2010.
- Partners are groups, individuals, agencies, or organizations, both internal and external to FVAP, that should be involved in accomplishing the objective.

## **Achieving Strategic Goal 1 – Improve UOCAVA voting success rates to meet or exceed the general absentee population’s voter success rates by 2016.**

### **Line of Operation 1: Improve the voter’s experience**

FVAP will enhance its direct-to-voter assistance, outreach, and education, in order to improve awareness of the program and offer technologies and tools to make the *UOCAVA* voting experience easier. FVAP will concurrently expand its call center capabilities during peak election cycles, so that as voters become more aware of the program and its offerings, they can better take advantage of the more immediate, robust customer service, via the FVAP call center. In this manner, FVAP can provide a wider audience of voters with faster, more direct service and thereby reduce the workload for election officials.

- ***Provide direct-to-the voter assistance and training.***

With the 2010 election cycle, FVAP shifted its voting assistance efforts to a more direct-to-the-voter assistance focus, with more online tools, information, and user friendly services, so that the voter will not require the direct assistance of the Voting Assistance Officer. For example, FVAP developed the first set of more interactive, intuitive online training that will guide voters through the new online tools.

Ultimately, the goal with this initiative is to create a voting experience for the military and overseas voter that is as easy as if they were back in their jurisdiction voting at a polling place.

FVAP introduced online voting support tools for military and overseas voters, well in advance of the dates required by the *MOVE Act*:

- An online FPCA wizard to enable military and overseas voters to electronically mark their voter registration and absentee ballot requests (with a printed hard-copy and wet signature form return).
- An online FWAB wizard which allows voters to electronically mark their FWAB with pre-populated federal candidate choices for their jurisdictions.
- In 2010, for the General Election, the FWAB included the names of all federal candidates.
- For the 2012 election, FVAP will provide a method for States to directly provide federal and State-wide election candidate data for populating the FWAB wizard.

By implementing enhanced, online FPCA and FWAB tools, FVAP can increase voting success rates by providing a simpler, quicker, and easier process to complete the absentee voting process than through the use of FVAP’s 296-page *Voting Assistance Guide*.

FVAP also supported the States’ implementation of absentee ballot wizards during the 2010 election, both through direct funding and by linking voters through the FVAP website to State-funded online ballot wizards.

To gauge the effectiveness of its online tools, FVAP measures online FPCA and FWAB usage against specific performance targets. The goal for FPCA wizard utilization is to reach the following usage rates laid out in Table 4.

**Table 4: FPCA Measures of Effect**

<b>Uniformed Service Member</b>	<b>Uniformed Service Spouse/Dependent</b>	<b>Overseas Civilian</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of voter registrations and ballot applications by military voters in 2010 are made with forms generated by the FPCA wizard, or State equivalents;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2014</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of applications in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2014;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of applications in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2014;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2016</li> </ul>

The goals for FWAB wizard utilization are identified in Table 5.

**Table 5: FWAB Wizard Utilization Measures of Effect**

<b>Uniformed Service Member</b>	<b>Uniformed Service Spouse/Dependent</b>	<b>Overseas Civilian</b>
FWABs submitted equal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Of all the ballots not returned by military voters, at least 15% of those voters submit FWABs 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2014;</li> </ul>	FWABs submitted equal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of ballots not returned in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of ballots not returned in 2014;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2016;</li> </ul>	FWABs submitted equal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of ballots not returned in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of ballots not returned in 2014;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2016.</li> </ul>

- ***Provide robust call center capabilities.***

FVAP is expanding its call center capabilities to provide extended voter and election official assistance in the months leading up to elections through call centers, online chat capability, and greater ombudsman support, to solve problems before they become UOCAVA voting failure statistics and necessitate potential UOCAVA enforcement actions. To measure the success of the call center, FVAP will track specific service level agreements, e.g., call wait times, first call resolution, and customer complaints.

- ***Deploy targeted media at the right time to inform voters and drive engagement, including outreach to 18-24 year old military members, military spouses, overseas citizens, and overseas U.S. students.***

FVAP is strengthening its outreach efforts in order to promote its program, voting resources, and online tools. Findings from the FVAP 2008 Post Election Survey Report indicate that while FVAP resources, such as the *Voting Assistance Guide*, online news releases, and [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) are useful, they are not always known to the UVAOs.

In September 2009, FVAP obtained consulting services through Mullen, a creative agency, to address requirements of the *MOVE Act* and to develop a comprehensive voting assistance communications and “marketing” plan. For the 2010 election cycle, FVAP executed the first step of that marketing plan with full-page ads in newspapers and magazines, concurrent with Military & Overseas Voter Week (4<sup>th</sup> of July), and around Absentee Voting Week (last week of September), as well as with vigorous social media outreach coupled with aggressive digital advertising on search engines and on facebook. FVAP plans to continue and expand this effort for the 2012 election cycle.

Through this effort, FVAP is working to create an increased awareness of its programs, which will best support military voters to keep abreast of, and use, the online resources of the FVAP.gov website. FVAP is analyzing why voters are not aware of and do not currently use the FVAP resources, what they find difficult with the current voting assistance process, and what they most want in their voting assistance programs. From that analysis, FVAP will develop communications and awareness campaigns using media (print, television, electronic, and social) to increase *UOCAVA* voter usage of the FVAP website, its electronic voting support tools, and to improve the success of voters in navigating the *UOCAVA* process. FVAP believes that only by bringing more *UOCAVA* voters to the FVAP portal, can FVAP provide a more direct-to-the-voter assistance program, reduce the reliance on inherently limited Unit Voting Assistance Officers, improve the quality of assistance provided to these voters, and reduce voting failure caused by inadequate or inaccurate assistance.

Through this initiative, FVAP is specifically creating a targeted awareness campaign for 18-24 year old males in the military, who comprise 32% of the active duty military and have the worst voting performance relative to their demographic counterparts in the general population. FVAP is also expanding its use of social networking tools, such as facebook, and is investigating mobile device options, such as iPhone, to appeal to these younger voters, and to provide the timely and crucial information necessary to help the voter successfully navigate this complex process.

FVAP will also perform greater outreach to military spouses and dependents, reported by the DoD IG as typically less aware of the voting assistance resources available to them. To reach this group of voters, FVAP will coordinate with the Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and will partner with organizations such as the Defense Commissary Agency, the Military Coalition, military spouse and family advocacy groups, and the individual Services. By promoting its tools and resources, FVAP will shift the focus of the UVAO program from that of providing direct voter assistance through the use of paper forms and instructions, to that of advocating the use of its portal and FVAP.gov family of websites, its online tools. As a result, UVAOs can save much of their direct assistance for those voters with unique circumstances and problems.

The FVAP outreach activity will address concerns cited by the DoD IG, which found that some military voters were unaware of online capabilities and that “aggressive marketing” will increase awareness of the resources available and so improve the success of the voting assistance program. FVAP will measure the success of its outreach programs by reviewing the *Post Election Surveys*, with the goal of increasing the number of responders who cite familiarity with VAOs, the FVAP website, FVAP online tools, and FVAP social media sites, to 75% by 2014. In addition, FVAP will increase its website traffic by 25% each election cycle between 2010 and 2016 (for comparable election cycles). FVAP will also evaluate if this is an effective measure of website usage, and whether increased website traffic is correlated with improved

voter success. If not, FVAP will determine other results measures to use to assess voter access to information that results in successful voter transactions.

- ***Deploy a targeted digital media campaign, with specific focus on the overseas civilian population.***

Because of the difficulties in quantifying and defining the overseas civilian population, FVAP is undertaking a targeted digital media campaign as a component of its work with Mullen. In this campaign, FVAP will buy space on specific websites targeted to overseas U.S. citizens, in order to advertise the FVAP website and online tools. For example, if an overseas website visitor types in specific terms, such as, “Kansas City Chiefs,” or, “Maryland crab cakes,” in a search engine such as Google during peak election planning cycles, an advertisement for FVAP may appear. The goal is to display advertisements when a uniquely American search occurs, in order to target the correct audience. FVAP will also explore other online options to increase the interest and attention of overseas U.S. citizens. This advertising mode will be compared to traditional advertising modes to evaluate which modes result in greater voter accessing of available voter assistance information, which modes result in greater use of online FVAP tools, and which advertising modes produce greater improvements in voter understanding of the UOCAVA voting process and voting assistance available. A specific measure of effect for this task will be developed and incorporated in this Strategic Plan by the end of September 2011.

## **Line of Operation 2: Provide greater election official assistance**

FVAP will provide significant enhancements to call center capabilities, election official outreach and training, and in its use of technology, in order to ensure that election officials have easy access to the information and resources that they require.

This election official assistance is aimed to increase election official adoption of FVAP online tools, and greater State adoption of FVAP recommendations and UOCAVA requirements. Through such election official assistance, problems can be averted earlier in the election process and election cycle, so that these can be solved before they become *UOCAVA* voting failure statistics and lead to potential *UOCAVA* enforcement.

- ***Provide call center hotline capabilities for election officials.***

FVAP will provide more voter and Election Official assistance in the months leading up to elections through call centers, online chat capability, and greater ombudsman support. Specifically, the FVAP call center and online chat capability will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the months leading up to the election. Call center staff will be increased to handle election cycle surges and call center service levels will be rated on performance-based measures, such as the number of issues resolved in only one phone call. FVAP’s team of Election Official Assistance Officers will be cross-trained to resolve ombudsmen issues and escalated call center issues.

- ***Improve election official training.***

FVAP offers in-person and online training to State and Local Election Officials, the Uniformed Services Voting Assistance Officers, and Department of State Voting Assistance Officers. For the 2009-2010 election cycle, FVAP expanded its workshops schedules. FVAP will continue to expand its training offerings to include additional online training courses and/or video-conferencing for the 2012 election cycle and beyond. FVAP will also introduce a post-training survey to gather feedback on best practices

and improvement areas. FVAP’s goal is to conduct in-person training in each State and territory at least once each election cycle, and to achieve average overall ratings of “excellent” on all post-workshop and post-training surveys.

- ***Engage States to ensure that legislation and election policies conform to UOCAVA requirements.***

FVAP has actively advised the States of the need to ensure that ballots are sent out at least 45 days before the election, and as much earlier than that as possible. FVAP accomplishes this through its Legislative Initiatives program, an annual process in which FVAP reviews State legislation on UOCAVA voting and develops recommendations and required actions to improve the process.

FVAP has established an internal management tool of a State-by-State ranked index to measure FVAP’s success in persuading States to adopt its recommended initiatives, and has weighted that index to provide the most credit for those programs that will address the greatest areas of UOCAVA voting failure, namely, the return of absentee ballots transmitted by local election officials. To achieve this goal, FVAP will send its teams to 25 States and Territories in the 2010 election cycle; 40 States and Territories in the 2012 election cycle; and all 56 States and Territories in 2014 election cycle.

- ***Encourage States to accept and use FVAP wizards or equivalents.***

The MOVE Act only requires States to provide at least one method of electronic transmission of blank ballots. However, substantial portions of the UOCAVA population, especially military voters in deployed locations, either do not have access to email, or do not have access to non-military websites. Therefore, to ensure full electronic access to ballots, FVAP believes that States should deliver ballots both by email and by posting online.

To assist States in this initiative, FVAP is developing State-specific outreach and engagement plans that include State executives, legislatures, and key stakeholders, in order to gain acceptance and usage of the online ballot delivery and marking wizards. Specifically, FVAP has funded State-defined online ballot delivery and marking wizards for the 2010 election. However, FVAP does not advocate that States only use the FVAP funded or developed systems, but would like States to provide such a capability, regardless of source, to UOCAVA voters. To measure its success in this activity, FVAP has established the following measures (see Table 5), to calculate how effectively States meet electronic ballot transmission targets through both emailing and posting ballots online, either through an FVAP or State sponsored program.

**Table 6: Measures of Effect for FVAP Wizard (or Equivalent) Adoption, with Email Transmission, by States**

Year	# of States
2010	20
2012	30
2014	40
2016	50

- *Assist States to ensure that all valid FWABs are counted.*

FVAP will expand its efforts to provide timely, quality education and ad-hoc assistance to ensure maximum use and acceptance of Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots (FWABs) and minimal usage of the State Write-In Absentee Ballots (SWABs). FVAP also continues to work with States in order to promote the concept of allowing the FWAB to be used for State and local elections.

**Table 7: FWAB Goals for % of UOCAVA Voters Not Using Absentee Ballot**

Year	% of UOCAVA Voters
2010	30%
2012	60%
2014	90%

**Line of Operation 3: Commit to smart, effective, and substantial technology investment**

FVAP will commit to smart and effective technology investment in order to facilitate an easier, faster, more seamless, and more intuitive absentee voting process. The integration of technology into specific stages of the voting process can help to eliminate confusion, reduce workload for voting officials, and replace slow mail delivery channels.

- *Deliver the online FPCA and FWAB.*

FVAP is committed to smart, effective, and substantial technology investment to expedite the delivery of blank ballots from local election officials to voters. FVAP is introducing online voting support tools for military and overseas voters, well in advance of the dates set by the *MOVE Act*:

- An online FPCA wizard to enable military and overseas voters to electronically mark their voter registration and absentee ballot requests (with a printed hard-copy and wet signature form return).
- An online FWAB wizard which allows voters to electronically mark their FWAB with pre-populated federal candidate choices for their jurisdictions.

**Table 8: Goals for Delivering Online FWAB**

Year	FWAB Goal
2010	FWAB will provide all federal candidates.
2012	FVAP will provide a method for States to directly provide federal and Statewide election candidate with data for populating the FWAB wizard.

By implementing enhanced, online FPCA and FWAB tools, FVAP can increase voting success rates by providing a simpler, easier process to complete the absentee voting process than through the use of FVAP’s 309 page *Voting Assistance Guide*. FVAP will also support the States’ implementation of online registration/absentee ballot application systems, as well as online absentee ballot wizards to complement email delivery of blank ballots. Online tools also provide easier access for LEOs and VAOs in the field, who may not have the time or resources (e.g., printers or fax machines) to use and disseminate paper-

based voting materials. If States develop their own systems that provide the military and overseas voter the opportunity to identify themselves as such and to take advantage of the federal voting rights afforded them, FVAP will steer voters to those State sites over any FVAP FPCA or FWAB wizard.

To gauge the effectiveness of its online tools, FVAP will measure online FPCA and FWAB usage over the next several years, with specific performance targets. The goal for FPCA wizard utilization is to reach the following usage rates of either the FVAP FPCA wizard, or a State online registration/absentee ballot application system, identified in Table 8.

**Table 9: FPCA Wizard/State Online Registration/Absentee Ballot Request System Utilization Goals**

<b>Uniformed Service Member</b>	<b>Uniformed Service Spouse/Dependent</b>	<b>Overseas Civilian</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of voter registrations and ballot applications by military voters in 2010 are made with forms generated by the FPCA wizard, or State equivalents;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of applications in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2014;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of applications in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of applications in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of applications in 2014;</li> <li>- 75% of applications in 2016</li> </ul>

As in the case of State online registration/absentee ballot application wizards, FVAP will also steer voters first to the States’ online FWAB tools (or their equivalent), if available and if they provide as great voting protection as using the FWAB specifically does. The goals for FWAB wizard utilization, therefore, will also provide credit for utilization of State-provided wizards, as is laid out in Table 10.

**Table 10: FWAB Wizard (or State Equivalent) Utilization Goals**

<b>Uniformed Service Member</b>	<b>Uniformed Service Spouse/Dependent</b>	<b>Overseas Civilian</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Of all the ballots not returned by military voters, at least 15% of those voters submit FWABs 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2014</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of ballots not returned in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of ballots not returned in 2014;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15% of ballots not returned in 2010;</li> <li>- 30% of ballots not returned in 2012;</li> <li>- 50% of ballots not returned in 2014;</li> <li>- 67% of ballots not returned in 2016</li> </ul>

- ***Work with States to implement Electronic Voting Support Wizards.***

FVAP believes that online ballot delivery and marking provides the greatest promise for accelerating and simplifying the absentee voting process for military and overseas voters. It also serves as a key test-platform for what is essentially the first-half (from the voter’s perspective) of any future online voting system, for which a demonstration project with uniformed services voters is required by PL 108-375.

A State-tailored, online absentee ballot wizard was deployed in 17 States in September, 2010. These ballot wizards were federally-funded, vendor-provided, and State-tailored initiatives which provided military and overseas voters the opportunity to receive and mark online a complete federal, State, and local election ballot through an online wizard that delivers such ballots through systems tailored to each State’s individual requirements. Additionally, 14 other States deployed their own online ballot delivery systems that were substantially equivalent to the FVAP-funded Wizards, and which, preliminary data indicates, enjoyed far greater utilization than did the FVAP-funded systems.

**Table 11: Goals for States Implementing Electronic Ballot Delivery and Marking Wizards**

Year	# of States
2010	20
2012	30
2014	40
2016	50

- ***Implement online voter training for the 2012 election cycle.***

FVAP will develop more interactive, intuitive online training that will guide voters through its online tools. The goal with this initiative is to create an online experience that requires minimal training and time to complete required voting materials, such as the online FPCA and FWAB. FVAP will measure the success of this initiative by working with an external training evaluation group to rate the online offering.

- ***Create and maintain the [www.OverseasVote.gov](http://www.OverseasVote.gov) and/or [www.MilitaryVote.mil](http://www.MilitaryVote.mil) website.***

FVAP will promote its portal and family of websites as the “voting assistant of the future” that provides direct-to-voter resources, including FPCA and FWAB wizards, links to State registration verification sites, links to State absentee ballot wizards, and online training, in addition to election official resources. According to the FVAP 2008 Post Election Survey Report, 92% of VAOs visited the FVAP website, and 90% of those who did visit, found it to be useful or very useful.

The DoD IG cited that “more effective use of FVAP and service websites can improve timely access and delivery of voting information and materials.” By promoting and maintaining the website as a tool for both election officials and for the voters, FVAP can expand usage of the tool as a quick, one-stop shopping experience for many voting issues. To determine the effectiveness and usability of its website, FVAP will attempt to achieve optimal scores from external rating providers such as Hubspot and Google Buzz Website Graders.

- ***Nurture technologies for secure remote electronic voting.***

FVAP will partner with the NIST, the EAC and other elements of the DoD, to design, test, and publicize secure cryptographic architectures and technologies capable of supporting remote electronic voting. These technologies will be shared, along with best practices for secure remote electronic voting, with

State and local government officials and vendors, so as to promote the adoption of secure systems for elections. Where possible, FVAP will attempt to partner with such States, both financially and administratively, in developing and deploying the most encouraging technologies.

**Line of Operation 4: Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into the voting assistance program**

FVAP will engage with advocacy groups, who already have an extensive presence and set of relationships with overseas absentee voters, in order to better understand and address the needs of the population.

- *Integrate overseas citizen advocacy groups (e.g., Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF), Federation of American Women’s Clubs Overseas (FAWCO)) into FVAP efforts.*

FVAP is working with Mullen to develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that will include new approaches to reaching and engaging overseas citizen advocacy groups through electronic and print media, an expansion of online services, and face-to-face efforts. One method will be the identification of organic voting assistance officers. These volunteers will take FVAP’s information, assistance, materials and training to a greater number of US citizens overseas, and will thereby increase Program effectiveness.

FVAP is also continuing to target its workshop schedule to overseas voters, specifically reaching out to the overseas civilian voting advocacy organizations to encourage them to become VAOs and to attend workshops hosted by U.S. embassies and consulates. Its goal is to expand the number of overseas trainers (external to FVAP) to:

**Table 12: Goals for Overseas Trainers External to FVAP**

Year	# of Trainers
2012	100
2014	500
Succeeding Election Year Cycles	500

- *Engage organizations to increase family member success rates.*

Towards this end, FVAP will coordinate with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and will partner with organizations such as the Defense Commissary Agency, military spouse and family advocacy groups, and the individual Services. FVAP will also focus its outreach efforts on these populations, creating specific communications and media that will appeal to these groups.

The goal of these efforts is to increase military spouse and family member ballot success rates, as follows:

**Table 13: Goals for Military Spouse and Family Member Ballot Success Rates**

Election Year	% of General Population Success Rates
2010	50%
2012	75%
2014	85%
2016	100%

- *Work with universities and colleges to promote FVAP with overseas U.S. students*

As a component of its outreach and engagement plans, FVAP will develop a specific, targeted campaign for this community of voters in anticipation of the 2012 election cycle. FVAP will also develop an engagement plan for universities and colleges, in order to strengthen partnerships and build new networks of contacts. The goal of these efforts is to increase overseas student voter participation rates to:

**Table 14: Goals for Overseas Student Voter Participation Rates**

Election Year	% of General Population Success Rates
2010	15%
2012	30%
2014	50%
2016	100%

- *Convene a roundtable of voting experts and influencers to discuss impacts of internet voting overseas.*

FVAP will open a dialogue around issues that impact overseas voting, in order to understand the perceptions, status, and effects of internet voting. By engaging states, election officials, and overseas voting groups (e.g., OVF, FAWCO) to create a regular forum around the topic, FVAP will work with groups such as the EAC and NIST to understand the implications of internet voting.

**Line of Operation 5: Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization**

FVAP can increase voting success rates by refining its surveys, in order to make it easier to identify the root causes of voting failure and determine better ways to serve the voter. Today, UOCAVA voters receive lengthy, sometimes indirect, surveys. As a result, survey responses may be limited, skewed, or inaccurate. By providing a transparent and simpler process to gather voting data, FVAP can improve data integrity and make accurate, timely decisions regarding the needs of voters, ensuring that appropriate funds are allocated for voter assistance programs.

- *Perform rigorous analysis of UOCAVA voting data, in order to identify root causes of voting failures.*

FVAP and EAC are discussing the possibility of collaborating to make States’ collection of data on UOCAVA voting more efficient. Unfortunately, the considerable timeline associated with survey approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act, did not allow the Election Assistance Commission to entertain combining its survey with the FVAP survey for the 2010 election cycle. The goal of these efforts is to

determine areas of voting failure in order to implement appropriate outreach and improvement measures to fix the root causes. Such an effort will also require adjusting the EAC Election Day Survey data for non-response and jurisdiction sizes.

- ***Understand the reasons for FWAB rejection rates.***

FWAP will work with States to determine the percentages of FWABs that are rejected due to late arrival of a ballot, voter error, election official error, or for other reasons. It is crucial to understand and address the root cause of this issue, in order to dramatically increase the effective use of the FWAB.

- ***Institute non-response analysis in Post Election Surveys to define actual survey respondents' population frames.***

In late 2009, the Department of State estimated the number of registered overseas citizens with email addresses to be approximately 250,000. This estimate serves as both the frame and sample size for the FVAP/DMDC 2010 surveys. DMDC has requested that the Department of State remove minors and non-citizens from this population frame, in order to build an accurate picture of the number of overseas citizens of voting age population. In addition, FVAP plans to work with DMDC and the Department of State to validate the population size, in order to confirm that FVAP can achieve a statistically-significant number of survey respondents. FVAP must also understand the demographics of both the survey respondents and non-respondents, in order to accurately adjust the population results to reflect the participants' ages, genders, and locations. FVAP's goal is to improve survey result confidence levels to 95%.

**Table 15: Implementation Plan for Improving UOCAVA Voter Success Rates to Meet or Exceed the General Absentee Population’s Success Rates**

Strategic Goal	Improve UOCAVA Voter Success Rates to Meet or Exceed the General Absentee Voter Success Rates.			
FVAP Lead	Voting Assistance			
Measures of Success	UOCAVA absentee ballot return, FWAB utilization, and ballot count rates are equal to or greater than those of the general absentee population.			
Lines of Operation	Activities & Tasks	Resource Requirements	Performance Measurements	Partners
Improve the voter’s experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide direct to the voter assistance and training.</li> <li>Provide call center capabilities.</li> <li>Deploy targeted outreach and digital media at the right time to inform voters and drive engagement, including outreach to 18-24 year old members, military spouses, overseas civilians, and overseas U.S. students</li> <li>Deploy a targeted digital media campaign, with specific focus on overseas civilian population.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voting Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Programs, External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve online FPCA and FWAB usage targets</li> <li>Meet call center service level agreements for wait times, call resolution, and complaints</li> <li>Increase website traffic to meet annual targets</li> <li>Increase 2010 Post Election Survey responders who cite familiarity with VAO’s, FVAP website, FVAP online tools, and FVAP social media sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alliance of Military and Overseas Voting Rights, The Military Coalition</li> <li>U.S Postal Service (USPS), Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA)</li> <li>Department of State (DoS)</li> <li>State Election Officials</li> <li>Overseas military reservists</li> <li>Democrats/Republicans Abroad</li> </ul>
Provide greater support to the election official.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide call center capabilities to election officials</li> <li>Improve election official training</li> <li>Work with States on legislation, policies and processes (e.g. use of wizards and counting of Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots (FWAB’s))</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Officials Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Programs, External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet hotline support service level agreements</li> <li>Achieve ratings of “excellent” on post-workshop and post-training surveys.</li> <li>Visit 25 States/Territories in 2010; 40 in 2012; 56 in 2014.</li> <li>Meet electronic ballot transmission targets.</li> <li>Reduce FWAB rejection rates to the level of the general absentee voting population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)</li> <li>National Association of State Election Directors (NASED)</li> <li>Election Center</li> <li>IACREOT</li> <li>NACO/NACRC</li> <li>National Conference of State Legislatures</li> <li>Council of State Governments</li> <li>Uniform Law Commission</li> </ul>
Commit to smart and effective technology investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver the online FPCA and FWAB.</li> <li>Work with States to implement Electronic Voting Support Wizard.</li> <li>Implement online voter training.</li> <li>Create and maintain <a href="http://www.overseasvote.org">www.overseasvote.org</a> and/or <a href="http://www.militaryvote.mil">www.militaryvote.mil</a></li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Official Assistance, Voting Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve wizard adoption rates.</li> <li>Receive high ratings on online voter training from an external training evaluation group.</li> <li>Achieve optimal scores on the Hubspot and Google Buzz Website Graders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States/Territories</li> <li>National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)</li> <li>National Association of State Election Directors (NASED)</li> <li>Election Center</li> <li>IACREOT</li> <li>NACO/NACRC</li> </ul>
Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate overseas civilian citizen advocacy groups into FVAP efforts.</li> <li>Engage the National Military Family Association to work with military spouses.</li> <li>Work with universities and colleges to promote FVAP to overseas U.S students.</li> <li>Convene a roundtable of voting experts to discuss impacts of internet voting overseas.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voting Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand number of overseas trainers (external to FVAP) to 100 in 2012; 500 by 2014.</li> <li>Improve military spouse/dependent absentee ballot success rate to 50% of the general population in 2010; 75% in 2012; 85% in 2014; and 100% in 2016.</li> <li>Increase overseas student voter participation rates to 15% of general 18-24 year old population by 2010; 30% by 2012; 50% by 2014; and 100% by 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alliance of Military and Overseas Voting Rights,</li> <li>The Military Coalition</li> <li>USPS, MPSA</li> <li>DoS</li> <li>State Election Officials (Directors)</li> <li>Overseas active reservists</li> <li>Democrats/Republicans Abroad</li> </ul>
Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform rigorous analysis of UOCAVA voting data to identify root causes of voting failures.</li> <li>Understand reasons for FWAB rejection rates.</li> <li>Institute non-response analysis in Post-Election surveys to define actual survey respondents’ population frames.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and Assessments</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outreach and improvement measures to target specific areas of the voting process.</li> <li>Adjustments to the survey data to accurately reflect the respondents’ population frames.</li> <li>Improve survey result confidence to 95%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Election Officials</li> <li>EAC, DMDC</li> </ul>

**Achieving Strategic Goal 2 – All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election.**

**Line of Operation 2: Provide greater support to the election official**

FVAP will provide greater support to the election official in order to minimize workload, refine and improve training, simplify and streamline voting processes, and find new ways to provide services to the voters. Working directly with the State election officials through the Election Official Advisory Committee, in workshops, and with trainings, FVAP can gain a better understanding of issues, concerns, and how to meet voters’ needs. Each of these activities will help to improve State Legislative Initiative Scores by providing a better understanding of the needs of States, voters, and election officials.

- ***Develop a State-by-State plan for the adoption of Legislative Initiatives***

The FVAP 2009-2010 Legislative Initiatives focus was on sending ballots to voters at least 45 days before the election, as now mandated by the *MOVE Act*. FVAP also proposes the expanded use of e-mail and online transmission for all election materials throughout the entire *UOCAVA* absentee voting process, as well as universal use and adoption of the FWAB. FVAP’s goal is that all 56 States’ and Territories’ Legislative Initiative index achieve scores of at least 75% by 2014.

FVAP is instituting a plan for expanding its efforts to provide legislative support to States with the aim of changing their laws to meet these initiatives. FVAP will continue to engage State legislatures, election officials, and associated organizations to support such legislation, as outlined in the Table below:

**Table 16: FVAP Goals for State and Territory Visits**

Election Year	# of States Visited
2010	25
2011	40
2012	40
2013	56
2014	56

In addition, FVAO will continue to build its partnership with organizations such as the Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) to identify the best ways of working with State and Territorial legislatures.

- ***Highlight and promote FVAP’s State-by-State index***

To determine how States should prioritize their legislative initiatives, FVAP developed a State scoring system which annually measures the State’s compliance with the FVAP Legislative Initiatives and measures FVAP’s ability to influence State-by-State *UOCAVA* voting programs. Given that FVAP Legislative Initiatives are intrinsically linked to the *MOVE Act* requirements, FVAP plans to promote the State-by-State index through its visits to the States and Territories, testimony, and partnership with the DSLO. However, given that the promotion of such scores to non-government officials is outside the realm of FVAP’s authorities to directly advise State and local officials on federal compliance requirements, and because such public promotion may be considered grass-roots lobbying, FVAP is currently planning on providing this data only to government officials.

**Table 17: Legislative Initiative Scoring Rubric**

Legislative Initiative	Military	Overseas Citizens
45-Day Ballot Transit Time	30	30
Electronic Transmission of Election Materials	30	30
Expansion of Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)	20	20
Late Registration Procedures	7	4
Emergency Authority of Chief Election Officer	7	5
Elimination of Notary/Witnessing Requirements	4	8
Enfranchise Citizens Who Have Never Lived in U.S.	2	3
Bonus: EVSW Participation	2	2
Bonus: Ballot Transit Time Greater Than 45 Days*	0	0
Bonus: Ballot Return Permitted After Election Day**	0	0

- **Engage States in adopting Uniform Law Commission (ULC) final model legislation**

Variations exist in military and overseas civilian voting law from State-to-State, resulting in errors. As a result, FVAP supports and recommends that the States join the ULC in their efforts to draft the Uniform Military and Overseas Voting Act (UMOVA) FVAP is actively encouraging States to adopt standardized legislation with regard to UOCAVA voting. FVAP is developing a communications plan targeting the need for broad, aggressive marketing to State legislatures to promote the ULC model.

FVAP has developed performance targets to measure its success in meeting these goals. Its primary goal is that States adopt the ULC model legislation:

**Table 18: FVAP Goals for State Adoption of UMOVA**

Year	# of States Adopting ULC Model Legislation
2011	10
2012	20
2014	30

However, to ensure that the largest number of UOCAVA citizens benefit from the standardized laws, it is also critical that the top ten UOCAVA population States adopt the ULC model legislation by 2014.

**Line of Operation 4: Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program**

FVAP will develop a communications plan for State Legislatures, in order to educate and advise these groups on how to improve their Legislative Initiative Scores. By proactively working with the States to revise laws and consistently interpret the *MOVE Act*, FVAP can improve State Legislative Initiative Scores.

- **Establish the Election Official Advisory Committee**

FVAP is working with States and territories to establish a committee in order to share best practices, develop policy guidance, and create standardized legislation and approaches to UOCAVA voting.

- *Engage the UOCAVA community and the States in widely adopting the ULC final model legislation*

However, to ensure that the largest number of UOCAVA citizens benefit from the standardized laws, it is also critical that the top ten UOCAVA population States adopt the ULC model legislation by 2014.

**Line of Operation 5: Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization**

FVAP will provide data research and analysis in order to support States in meeting their Legislative Initiative Scores.

- *Analyze overseas mail delivery timelines.*

Given the timeliness of postal mail delivery in the United States, many State and local officials are surprised that it can take up to 25 or 30 days for mail to reach Americans living abroad or military personnel deployed overseas. Therefore, FVAP will engage subject matter experts working with the U.S. Postal Service to develop deep and rigorous analysis of timelines for ballots to be delivered from and back to each State from various locations worldwide. This type of analysis will help States understand the need for extended ballot delivery timelines and electronic ballot transmission. FVAP will also continue to expand its partnership with MPSA to understand military mail delivery timelines. Because 90% of all deployed military personnel are located in only eight countries, FVAP can provide valuable data to States with regard to the turnaround times required for military members, their spouses and dependents. The goal is to reduce the proportion of late returned UOCAVA absentee ballots, as in the Table below:

**Table 19: FVAP Goals for Reducing Proportion of Late Returned UOCAVA Absentee Ballots**

Year	UOCAVA Late Returned Ballots compared to the General Electorate
2010	200%
2012	150%
2014	100%

- *Analyze impact of State waiver requests on UOCAVA voting success.*

Under the *MOVE Act*, States can request a waiver from the 45 day ballot delivery requirements. FVAP will review any waivers that are granted, in order to determine the State’s level of success in providing adequate time for ballot delivery. Specifically, FVAP will determine if voters from States granted waivers had better, worse, or equivalent voting success rates, and to what extent such differences can be attributed to the States’ comprehensive alternative plans. The goal is to reduce the proportion of late returned UOCAVA absentee ballots, as shown below:

**Table 20: FVAP Goals for Reducing Proportion of Late Returned UOCAVA Absentee Ballots**

Year	UOCAVA Late Returned Ballots compared to the General Electorate
2010	200%
2012	150%
2014	100%

**Table 21: All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election**

Strategic Goal	All UOCAVA voters have adequate opportunity to successfully cast a ballot in every State and Territory in the 2014 General Election			
FVAP Lead	Election Official Assistance, External Relations & Communications			
Measures of Success	UOCAVA absentee ballot return, FWAB utilization, and ballot count rates are equal to or greater than those of the general absentee population. Legislative Initiative Index scores >75% for all 56 States and Territories.			
Lines of Operation	Activities & Tasks	Resource Requirements	Performance Measurements	Partners
Improve the voter's experience.				
Provide greater support to the election official.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a State-by-State plan for adoption of Legislative Initiatives</li> <li>Highlight and promote FVAP's State-by-State Index.</li> <li>Engage States in adopting ULC final model legislation.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Official Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring 56 States/Territories to a 75-100% index score by 2014.</li> <li>Visit 25 States/Territories in 2010; 40 in 2012; 56 in 2014.</li> <li>10 States adopt ULC model legislation by 2011; 20 in 2012; 30 in 2014.</li> <li>Top ten UOCAVA States (e.g. Florida, Texas) adopt ULC model legislation by 2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State/Territorial Legislature</li> <li>PEW, ULC</li> <li>Defense State Liaison Office, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense ODUSD, (Military Community and Family Policy)</li> <li>Alliance for Military and Overseas Voting Rights (AMOVR)</li> </ul>
Commit to smart and effective technology investment.				
Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the Election Official Advisory Committee.</li> <li>Engage UOCAVA community and the States in widely adopting the ULC final model legislation.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Official Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 States adopt ULC model legislation by 2011; 20 in 2012; 30 in 2014.</li> <li>Top ten UOCAVA States (e.g. Florida, Texas) adopt ULC model legislation by 2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NASS</li> <li>National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)</li> <li>Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO)</li> <li>Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD)</li> <li>State Legislatures</li> </ul>
Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze State mail delivery process.</li> <li>Analyze impact of State waiver requests on UOCAVA voting success.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and Assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine voter success rates in States granted waivers, and determine if the differences in those rates are attributable to the comprehensive plan presented in the waiver.</li> <li>Reduce late return of UOCAVA absentee ballots to 200% of that of the general population in 2010; 150% in 2012; and 100% in 2104.</li> </ul>	

## **Achieving Strategic Goal 3 – Implementation Plan for quantifying the overseas population by 2012**

### **Line of Operation 4: Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into the voting assistance program**

FVAP will integrate Federal organizations and online tool/social networking providers into its mission in order to leverage existing networks, capabilities, and programs. By working directly with these groups, FVAP can use their channels to build a better picture of the global community of voters.

- *Collaborate with Federal organizations and online tool providers in order to leverage their resources and identify new communication technologies to build a better picture of the global community of voters*

FVAP is investigating new ways to work with Federal and technology partners to quantify the overseas civilian population. By expanding its relationships with both DoS and USPS, FVAP may be able to find new mechanisms to calculate and categorize these voters. In addition, efforts to collaborate with organizations such as the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency, the U.S. Census Bureau, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Social Security Administration may lead to new avenues for determining the locations and demographics of overseas civilians.

By developing an online outreach program through the use of social media tools, FVAP can increase outreach to *UOCAVA* voters in even the most remote locations; also to voters who have limited or no interaction with their embassies or LEOs, and to younger voters (ages 18-25), who frequently use websites and online news sources.

FVAP is also investigating partnerships with social networking and online tool providers, e.g., facebook and Google, to determine if there are ways of identifying and marketing to overseas civilians.

The goal of these efforts is to raise the overseas civilian population survey participation to statistically significant levels.

### **Line of Operation 5: Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization**

FVAP will develop comparative research studies in order to better quantify the overseas civilian population.

- *Explore and pursue innovative research methodologies to find alternative ways to measure the overseas population*

FVAP will conduct data studies across a subset of countries that have reliable estimates of their residing U.S. civilians, and will use that data to extrapolate numbers of overseas civilians worldwide. In combination with its efforts to collaborate with Federal and technology partners, FVAP plans to use these new research methodologies to validate the overseas civilian population frame by 2012.

- *Engage academia to review issues with prior surveys and propose research methodology improvements*

FVAP will work with academia to adjust previous survey data in order to allow time-series analysis to determine FVAP’s level of success. By developing a time-series analysis of 2000-2010 data, FVAP can accurately portray programmatic success.

**Table 22: Implementation Plan for Quantifying the Overseas Civilian Population by 2012**

Strategic Goal	Quantify the Overseas Civilian Population by 2012			
FVAP Lead	Research & Assessment			
Measures of Success	UOCAVA absentee ballot return, FWAB utilization, and ballot count rates are equal to or greater than those of the general absentee population.			
Lines of Operation	Activities & Tasks	Resource Requirements	Performance Measurements	Partners
Improve the voter’s experience.				
Provide greater support to the election official.				
Commit to smart and effective technology investment.				
Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with Federal organizations and online tool providers to leverage their resources and identify new communications technologies to build a better picture of the global community of voters.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research &amp; Assessment</li> <li>• Technology Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise the overseas civilian population survey participation to statistically significant levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DoS</li> <li>• Social Security Administration (SSA)</li> <li>• Internal Revenue Service (IRS)</li> <li>• Google, facebook, Meetup.com</li> <li>• OVF, FAWCO</li> </ul>
Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find new, innovative research methodologies to measure overseas population.</li> <li>• Engage academia to review issues with prior surveys and propose research methodology improvements.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and Assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validate the overseas civilian population frame by 2012</li> <li>• Conduct time-series analysis of 2000-2010 survey data that accurately portrays programmatic success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academia, research organizations, think tanks</li> </ul>

**Achieving Strategic Goal 4 – Streamline the UOCAVA voting process by 2016, so that no stage takes more than 15 minutes to complete.**

**Line of Operation 1: Improve the Voter’s Experience**

FVAP will enhance its voter training, simplify voter surveys, and increase its use of technology in order to streamline the overseas voter process. FVAP will work with the Services, in order to ensure that the NVRA designation is implemented in a consistent, timely manner that serves both the VAOS and their voters.

- ***Support the Services in fully implementing the Installation of Voting Assistance Offices (IVAOs)/National Voter Registration Act (NVRA.)***

FVAP is currently coordinating with the DoD and Uniformed Services to develop a complete revision of DoD Directive 1000.4 (FVAP), which will include instructions to the services for fulfilling all aspects of the *National Voter Registration Act* (NVRA). As an interim measure, The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) issued a Directive Type Memorandum to the Services directing them to establish Installation Voting (IVA) Offices on every military installation and that these offices shall be designated as voting registration agencies under NVRA.

The goal is to create a uniform, effective IVA Office at each installation, which is equipped to best serve the military voters, their spouses, and dependents. FVAP will measure the success of this activity by reviewing responses to the Post Election and Department of Defense Inspector General Survey findings, with a goal of familiarizing 90% of military voters with FVAP services.

- ***Standardize the Service Inspector Generals’ annual voting assistance assessments.***

The Department of Defense Inspector General, tasked with performing an annual assessment of its voting assistance programs, has delegated this responsibility to the Service Inspector Generals. Each Service then surveys voters and conducts an analysis of performance. However, there are variations in the processes, questions, and level of details for each of these surveys, making it impossible to find comparable data. FVAP will work with the Services in order to standardize their surveys and perform an overarching review of the results across all of the groups.

**Line of Operation 2: Provide greater support to the election official**

FVAP will improve its election official education, in order to better equip election officials for dealing with the questions, concerns, and needs of their voters. By expanding and improving the education of election officials, FVAP will ensure that these will be able to deal with the voting issues of their voters in a timely manner, reducing turnaround times and voter frustration.

- ***Consolidate surveys (EAC, FVAP)***

Currently, both EAC and FVAP independently collect data from LEOs. FVAP will work more closely with the EAC to clarify data sources and to ensure that surveys and data are consistently gathered and represented. In addition, FVAP will conduct comprehensive studies in 2010, including a full census, directly with LEOs, to supplement its 2008 Post Election Survey and to provide additional data points.

The goal is to simplify the surveys, making it easier and faster for LEOs to respond. FVAP's goal is to achieve a weighted LEO census participation rate of 90% by 2014.

- ***Create a Best Practice Community of Interest for election officials and for States.***

FVAP is working to create an online data and support repository for State and local election officials. In recent immersion sessions with election officials worldwide, FVAP's creative/communications group, Mullen, identified that many election officials feel disconnected and unaware of their colleagues and support resources. By providing an online site where election officials can share best practices and lessons learned, FVAP is helping to develop a closer-knit and more informed community of global contacts.

By increasing its service offerings to the LEOs, including call center hotline support and the community of practice, FVAP hopes to expand its presence and relationships with this group. FVAP's goal is for 80% of LEOs to rate FVAP's voting information or assistance as "very useful" or "largely useful."

### **Lines of Operation 3: Commit to smart, effective, and substantial technology investment**

FVAP will implement new technologies that will make it easier and faster for overseas citizens to vote.

- ***Drive greater EAC, NIST, and FVAP roadmap/collaboration on electronic absentee voting.***

As discussed in its (EAC) April 2010 "Report to Congress on EAC's Efforts to Establish Guidelines for Remote Electronic Absentee Voting Systems," FVAP is assisting EAC, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and their joint Technology Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC) to develop internet voting guidelines. This is roughly codified in the EAC Roadmap report.

The roadmap will address the recommendations from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), which recommended in 2007 that: "DoD in conjunction with major stakeholders such as EAC and local election officials develop a comprehensive, results-oriented plan for future efforts that specifies tasks including security, privacy, contingency for both electronic and internet voting systems." However, the roadmap for this process is lengthy and requires significant evaluation and testing.

For *UOCAVA* voters, the measurable impacts of internet voting are yet unknown. FVAP is completing its strategic review of the extent and nature of *UOCAVA* voter disenfranchisement, so as to determine the efficacy of a completely online voting process versus other solutions, such as a voting process comprised of both internet and traditional mail components. FVAP's goals and metrics will form the basis of the comprehensive and integrated electronic absentee voting plans agreed to by FVAP and EAC.

- ***Encourage States to accept/use a Common Data Format for all election databases.***

FVAP will work with Election Officials to explore options, e.g., Google's Voter Information Project (VIP) and the NIST Common Voter Data, as potential common data formats for election databases. With variances among State and Territory election information, it is impossible to accurately compare information and draw accurate, timely conclusions about absentee voters, including numbers and demographics. FVAP is working with the States to adopt a Common Data Format methodology, or a data migration system, with the States adopting the goal of thus covering 20% of the *UOCAVA* population by 2012, 50% in 2014, and 75% in 2016.

**Line of Operation 4: Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into the voting assistance program**

FVAP will continue to build on and create new partnerships to address the needs of *UOCAVA* voters.

- *Engage the UOCAVA community and the States in widely adopting the Uniform Law Commission’s (ULC) final model legislation.*

Variations exist in military and overseas civilian voting law from State-to-State, resulting in errors. As a result, FVAP supports and recommends that the States join the ULC in their efforts to draft the Uniform Military and Overseas Voting Act (UMOVA). FVAP is actively encouraging States to adopt standardized legislation with regard to *UOCAVA* voting. FVAP is developing a communications plan targeting the need for broad, aggressive marketing to State legislatures to promote the ULC model.

FVAP has developed performance targets to measure its success in meeting these goals. Its primary goal is that States adopt the ULC model legislation:

**Table 23: FVAP Goals for State Adoption of UMOVA**

Year	# of States Adopting ULC Model Legislation
2011	10
2012	20
2014	30

However, to ensure that the largest number of *UOCAVA* citizens benefit from the standardized laws, it is also critical that the top ten *UOCAVA* population States adopt the ULC model legislation by 2014.

**Line of Operation 5: Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization**

FVAP will gather voting community inputs through new technologies, in order to gain critical feedback and improve the development of its online tools. In addition, FVAP is working with the EAC and NIST to create and establish a roadmap on electronic absentee voting that will explore internet voting and other mechanisms, so as to make the voting process more accessible.

- *Gather voting community inputs through open and crowd sourcing of FVAP wizards.*

FVAP introduced new FPCA and FWAB wizards in 2010 and will use the latest approaches in technology, including open and crowd sourcing, to gather voter feedback to improve the tools. By using these new approaches, FVAP will be able to engage a younger population who can help to steer the online tool in the direction that will be most readily accepted by overseas voters, particularly the young, male population which predominantly represents the Active Duty military voting community. The goals are to meet the wizard adoption rates for the online FPCA and FWAB, and to encourage States to adopt the new electronic voting wizards.

- *Drive greater EAC, NIST, and FVAP roadmap/collaboration on electronic absentee voting.*

As discussed in the (EAC) April 2010, “Report to Congress on EAC’s Efforts to Establish Guidelines for Remote Electronic Absentee Voting Systems,” FVAP is assisting the EAC, the National Institute of

Standards and Technology (NIST), and their joint Technology Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC), to develop internet voting guidelines. This is roughly codified in the EAC Roadmap report.

The roadmap will address the recommendations from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), which recommended in 2007 that: “DoD, in conjunction with major stakeholders such as EAC and local election officials, develop a comprehensive, results-oriented plan for future efforts that specifies tasks including security, privacy, contingency for both electronic and internet voting systems.” However, the roadmap for this process is lengthy and requires significant evaluation and testing.

For *UOCAVA* voters, the measurable impacts of internet voting are yet unknown. FVAP is finishing its strategic review of the extent and nature of *UOCAVA* voter disenfranchisement, so as to determine the efficacy of a completely online voting process versus other solutions, such as a voting process comprised of both internet and traditional mail components. FVAP’s goals and metrics will form the basis of the comprehensive and integrated electronic absentee voting plans agreed to by FVAP and EAC.

- ***Hold focus/test groups to determine the length and ease of completing the UOCAVA voting process.***

A primary goal for the Federal Voting Assistance Program is to simplify and streamline the *UOCAVA* absentee voting process, so that the *UOCAVA* voter is able to complete each stage of the voting process in less than, or equal to 15 minutes.

FVAP will hold focus and test groups to determine the length and ease of each stage of the voting process, with the goal of developing solutions that can improve any areas of difficulty or complexity, so as to make the *UOCAVA* absentee voting process as quick and easy as possible.

**Table 24: Implementation Plan for Streamlining the UOCAVA Voting Process by 2016**

Strategic Goal	Streamline the UOCAVA Voting Process by 2016, so that no stage of the process takes a voter more than 15 minutes to complete.			
FVAP Lead	Voting Assistance			
Measures of Success	UOCAVA absentee ballot return, FWAB utilization, and ballot count rates are equal to or greater than those of the general absentee population.			
Lines of Operation	Activities & Tasks	Resource Requirements	Performance Measurements	Partners
Improve the voter's experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the Services in fully implementing IVAOs/NVRAs</li> <li>Standardize Service Inspector Generals' annual voting assistance assessments.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voting Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research &amp; Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2012 Post Election and DoD IG Survey findings cite that 90% of the military voters are familiar with FVAP services and know their VAO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EAC, NIST</li> </ul>
Provide greater support to the election official.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidate surveys (EAC, DMDC, FVAP)</li> <li>Create a Best Practices Community of Interest for election officials and States.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Officials Assistance,</li> <li>Research &amp; Assessments (or Surveys)</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase LEO census weighted report participation rates to 90% by 2014.</li> <li>2010 LEO Census report finds that 80% of the LEOs rate FVAP voting information as "very useful" or "largely useful".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election officials</li> <li>EAC</li> </ul>
Commit to smart and effective technology investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create EAC, NIST &amp; FVAP roadmap &amp; collaboration on electronic absentee voting.</li> <li>Encourage State to accept/use a Common Data Format for all election databases.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Official Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet 90% of FVAP roadmap obligations in a timely manner.</li> <li>20% of the UOCAVA population covered in States that adopt the Common Data Format methodology/systems in 2012; 50% in 2014; and 75% in 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIST (Common Voter Data)</li> <li>Google (Voter Information Project)</li> <li>EAC</li> </ul>
Foster public/private partnerships and integrate advocacy groups into voting assistance program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage the UOCAVA community and the State in widely adopting the ULC final model legislation.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Official Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Relations &amp; Communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 States adopt ULC model legislation by 2010; 20 in 2012; 30 in 2014.</li> <li>Top ten UOCAVA States (e.g. Florida, Texas) adopt ULC model legislation by 2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCSL/American Legislative Exchange Council</li> <li>DSLO</li> <li>ASD (IGA)</li> <li>State Legislatures</li> </ul>
Set the standard as an open, data-driven organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather voting community inputs through open and crowd sourcing of FVAP wizards.</li> <li>Create EAC, NIST, and FVAP roadmap on electronic absentee voting.</li> <li>Hold focus/test groups to determine length, ease of completing UOCAVA voting process.</li> </ul>	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voting Assistance</li> </ul> Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet wizard adoption rate targets.</li> <li>Meet 90% of FVAP roadmap obligations in a timely manner.</li> <li>UOCAVA voters can complete each stage of the voting process in less than/equal to 15 minutes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EAC, NIST</li> </ul>

## **Achieving Strategic Goal 5 – Be a Model of Professional Program Execution**

This Strategic Goal will be finalized before the end of FY 2011. Through this goal, FVAP will accomplish the following:

- Establish a cost accounting program to measure the actual cost of doing business, including bureaucratic processes and requirements; as well establish a program for determining and tracking return on investment ROI on initiatives.
- Implement an assessment program under data driven lines of operations.
- Implement a decision making improvement program that includes intelligent voting and crowd sourcing, as well as more effective internal decision making process improvements to speed up decision making and ensure greater alignment with the Strategic Plan and P&R Strategic Plan.
- Establish a process for improving program management and planning.
- Implement PPBE process improvements.
- Implement contracting improvements and OCB thinking – performance, contracting, Broad Agency Announcements BAAs.
- Establish customer service tracking programs and improvements.

## Key Variables

This strategic plan reflects FVAP's best current assessment of the various factors relevant to decision-makers. FVAP has identified variables that are expected to continue to evolve and influence aspects of the plan. These variables include:

### Data Integrity

Previous FVAP surveys and reports have been criticized by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and by other organizations for statistical and methodological flaws. FVAP has taken great strides to improve its data collection and analytical methods:

FVAP adopted the Status of Forces Survey (SOFS), conducted annually by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), as its baseline methodology. FVAP will use these statistically reliable standards to review and adjust past surveys.

FVAP also weighted the data produced from the *2008 Post Election Survey* to reflect the fact that the U.S. active duty military is comprised of a much larger and younger male population than the U.S. citizen voting age population (CVAP).

FVAP plans to conduct comprehensive studies in 2010, including a full census directly with Local Election Officials (LEOs), to supplement its *2008 Post Election Survey* and to provide additional data points.

Finally, FVAP plans to work more closely with the EAC to clarify data sources and to ensure that surveys and data are consistently gathered and represented.

Each of these changes may considerably improve the integrity of the data used to guide FVAP over the next six years. As a result, new data findings may drive changes to the FVAP strategic planning.

In addition, historically, FVAP surveys have not included overseas non-military and non-government overseas citizens. The inclusion of this voting population in any subsequent surveys may also impact FVAP strategic goals and lines of operation.

FVAP will continue to closely monitor and validate the effects of data integrity and will report any implications in future strategic plans.

### Adoption of the Uniform Law Commission Model by States

The Uniform Law Commission (ULC) is drafting the "*Military Services and Overseas Civilian Absentee Voting Act*," to be presented for future adoption by the States. FVAP supports the efforts of the Commission, and recommends that all States participate in and support the drafting of the *Act* through their State Commission representatives.

Uniformity and standardization of voting laws for the uniformed services and overseas civilian voters would substantially ease the burden of compliance and improve voter success. Furthermore, FVAP recommends that the State Chief Election Official work closely with the State legislative body to enact the *Act* when it is presented to the States for adoption.

If States choose to adopt the ULC model, FVAP will significantly alter its legislative agenda, planning, and policy over the next six years.

FVAP will continue to support the ULC agenda and State adoption rates, in order to understand any implications to future strategic planning.

### **Implementation of MOVE Act Requirements by States**

A major hypothesis driving this plan is that the vast majority of voting failure for *UOCAVA* is due to issues in ballot transmission and return. Specifically, FVAP contends that the *UOCAVA* population does not receive ballots in a manner that allows them adequate time to cast their votes.

In October 2009, *UOCAVA* was amended by the *MOVE Act*, which mandates the following:

- Absentee ballots must be sent at least 45 days in advance;
- States must make voting information and blank ballots available electronically;
- Expanded use of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB); and
- Removal of outdated notarization requirements.

As new legislation, the *MOVE Act* and its effects are yet untested. As States implement *MOVE Act* requirements, process and timing changes will affect absentee voting. As a result, FVAP will track and respond to *MOVE Act* implications, reporting on any effects in future strategic plans.

## Critical Success Factors

FVAP has identified the following factors as critical to the successful accomplishment of its four strategic goals.

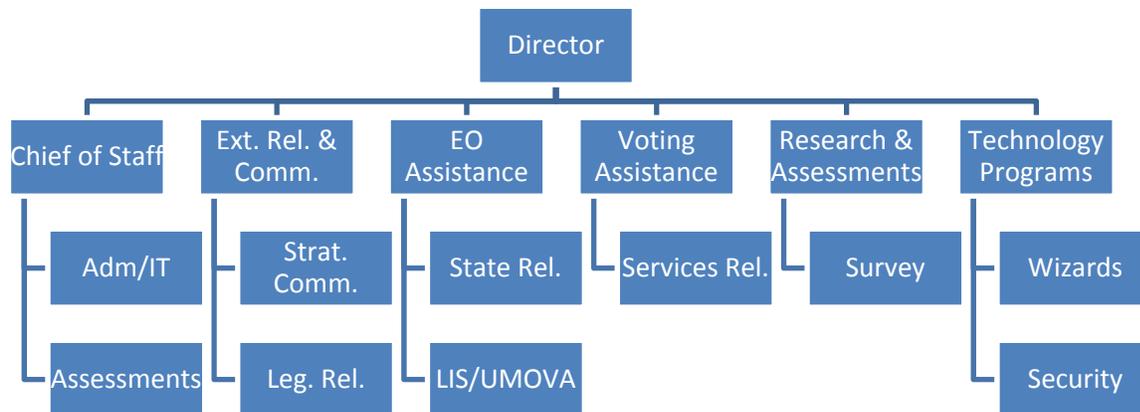
### State/Federal Coordination

FVAP must work closely with the States, their election officials, and legislatures in order to ensure the implementation of each of the *MOVE Act* requirements. Ultimately, the States will define how they work with their voters, supply absentee ballots, and how quickly they enact the *MOVE Act* required legislation.

### Staffing

The expansion of the program requires a commensurate increase in staffing, since at the very heart of the program is the ability to serve the *UOCAVA* voting population to the fullest capability possible. As shown in Figure 2, FVAP reorganized its staff in 2010, in order to better align its team to support overseas absentee voters, election officials, and the States.

**Figure 2: FVAP Functional Reorganization**



The proposed reorganization plan anticipates a significant increase in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) personnel to fill the mission need—currently, approximately 23-33 personnel. The authorization of FTE is essential.

## **Listing of Acronyms**

Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP)

Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC)

Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO)

Department of Defense Business Transformation Agency (DoD BTA)

Department of Defense Inspector General (DoD IG)

Election Assistance Commission (EAC)

Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO)

Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)

Government Accountability Office (GAO)

Installation Voting Assistance Office (IVO/IVAO)

Local Election Official (LEO)

Military Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (*MOVE Act*)

National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)

National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF)

Personnel and Readiness (P&R)

Status of Forces Survey (SOFS)

Uniform Law Commission (ULC)

Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986 (*UOCAVA*)

Unit Voting Assistance Officer (UVAO)

Voting Assistance Officer (VAO)