

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) administers the federal responsibilities of the Presidential designee (Secretary of Defense), under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* of 1986. The *UOCAVA* covers all members of the Uniformed Services, merchant marine and their family members, and all U.S. civilian citizens residing outside the United States---more than six million potential voters.

This report corresponds to the activity for the period 1996 through 2000. The survey of Uniformed Services members produced weighted statistics that will be used for comparative purposes with previous reports.

- The total voting participation rate among the Uniformed Services was 69% in 2000, as compared to the 51% rate of the general public. The 69% participation rate includes those voting absentee, voting in person, and attempting to vote. This is a five percentage point increase over 1996.
- Among federal civilian employees overseas, the total voting participation rate was 65% in 2000. The participation rate includes 52% voting absentee and 13% either voting in person or attempting to vote.
- Voting participation among non-federally employed overseas U.S. citizens remained constant from 1996 with 37% participating in 2000. Participation includes 20% voting absentee, 2% voting in person and 15% attempting to vote.
- In 1998, a non-Presidential election year, 40% of the Uniformed Services either voted in person (18%) or by absentee ballot (22%). Non-federally employed overseas U.S. citizens had a 17% voting participation rate and 51% of federal civilians overseas participated. The general public voting rate was 36%.
- The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) form continues to be the primary method used to register and request an absentee ballot. Of those who requested an absentee ballot, more Uniformed Services members used the FPCA (65%) compared to federal civilians overseas (60%) and non-federally employed overseas U.S. citizens (55%). Ninety-two percent of the local election official (LEO) respondents reported receiving FPCA registration and absentee ballot requests.
- For all populations, the most commonly used form of voting assistance was the Voting Assistance Officer (VAO), followed by the *Voting Assistance Guide*.
- The 2000 general election represents the third time that the FVAP's Electronic Transmission Service was in use for a Presidential election. This is an emergency measure to help enfranchise Uniformed Services members and overseas citizens. There was a decrease in the number of faxes processed compared with 1996. In

2000, a total of 16,683 pages of documents (compared with 19,655 pages in 1996) were transmitted.

- Seventy-six percent of the LEOs surveyed accepted electronically transmitted (faxed) FPCA requests for absentee ballots in 2000. Eighteen percent faxed blank absentee ballots to *UOCAVA* citizens and 13% accepted faxed voted ballots from these citizens.