



AN FVAP UPDATE



MAY/JUNE 2017



NOTES FROM THE ROAD: A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I recently had the opportunity to see first-hand how Canada – the country with the largest number of Americans residing abroad – conducts its elections. I participated in an Election Visitors Program sponsored by the Provincial Government of British Columbia, Canada, and the experience brought back many memories of my time conducting elections in Florida and Texas. However, one big difference in our neighbor’s election process is the lack of technology, largely due to the simplified nature of their ballot. There is a sense of quaintness to their process: one contest, leading to a simple, elegant single-page ballot that is manually counted at the polling

stations and reported in. There is no doubt that our process is quite different. The administration of U.S. elections at the local level creates complexity, which drives the need for technical solutions.

I asked election officials about Canada’s efforts to engage their own overseas citizens, and one striking difference emerged. Canada only permits its citizens to vote from outside the country if they’ve been living abroad less than five years. While U.S. elections might be more complicated, they are open to Americans regardless of what country they live and whether they’ve been there one year or 30. [Our research on overseas citizen voters](#) estimates that 23% of these Americans have lived abroad for more than 24 years, with another 23% having lived overseas for 12-24 years.



Before heading home, I stopped by the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver to share feedback from the 2016 election and discuss some of our upcoming projects, research, and preparations for the 2018 election cycle. I was pleased to see a consulate engaged with so many Americans living abroad (there are nearly 185k voting-age Americans in Vancouver!), and they stand ready to assist all those who want to vote.



UPDATED

FPCA & FWAB FORMS!



As you may have heard by now, the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) were up for public comment on the Federal Register. We have been so pleased with the feedback we've received so far from those at the State and local levels. Our next steps are to collect and review each comment, make any necessary changes, and then place the forms back on the Federal Register for one final round of public comments. Please keep an eye out for an email from our office when round two is under way. If you'd like any more information on the incorporated requirements and usability of the design, please visit <https://www.fvap.gov/info/news/2017>.

2018-2019 VOTING ASSISTANCE GUIDE COORDINATION CONTINUES!



The coordination process for the upcoming 2018-2019 Voting Assistance Guide continues. The Guide is a compilation of absentee voting regulations, laws, deadlines and procedures across all 50 States, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. It is the primary source of information for citizens covered by the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* and is a critical resource to assist them in successfully completing the required forms and communicating with you and your localities throughout the voting process. We'll send your office three requests for coordination, so please be sure to review the documents we send your way. If you have any questions during the coordination process, your State Analyst will be happy to help: Nate (nate.a.bacchus@fvap.gov) or Meghan (meghan.kelly@fvap.gov).

INSTALLATION VOTER ASSISTANCE OFFICE VISITS



Our office has spent the last several weeks visiting Installation Voter Assistance Offices across the country to gain a better understanding of their experiences during the 2016 election, and to conduct on-site assistance visits and provide guidance, best practices, and identify areas for improvement. These visits provide critical insight into how FVAP can better support their mission on the ground. We will continue to visit offices throughout 2017 to help ensure personnel are prepared for the 2018 election cycle.



Special Thanks to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton for sending us these great shots from their voting events on May 25, 2017!