

## 2012 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey

### Introduction

The *Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program (HRSAP)*, Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), conducts surveys to support the personnel information needs of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD[P&R]). These surveys assess the attitudes and opinions of the entire Department of Defense (DoD) community. DMDC developed the *Post-Election Voting (PEV)* surveys in 2008. These surveys are conducted every other year at the request of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) office as required by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986, Section 101.b (1), 42 USC §1973ff (UOCAVA) and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act (MOVE Act). The UOCAVA covers members of the Uniformed Services and Merchant Marines, their family members, and citizens residing outside of the United States. The surveys provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of assistance provided to UOCAVA voters in federal elections.

This survey note contains results from the *2012 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey (2012 PEVIA)* conducted from December 31, 2012, through February 22, 2013.<sup>1</sup> The *2012 PEVIA* targeted election jurisdictions that support UOCAVA-covered members. There were 7,303 voting jurisdictions covering the United States and the four territories. The survey was a stratified random sample of 2,500 voting jurisdictions with the local election official (LEO) as the respondent in states with no centralized state voting database and state election official (SEO) as the respondent in states with centralized databases as determined by FVAP. The reporting unit was the voting jurisdiction. This survey note (1) summarizes the survey content, (2) provides survey results, and (3) summarizes the survey methodology.<sup>2</sup>

### Survey Content

The topics covered in the *2012 PEVIA* include information on topics related to the November 2012 General Election, including voter registration, Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs), regular absentee ballots from UOCAVA members, and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs). The survey was subdivided into the following seven topic areas:

1. *Voter Registration*: Total persons registered and eligible to vote in the November 2012 General Election and total number of registered and eligible voters covered by UOCAVA.
2. *Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs)*: Number of FPCAs received, rejected, and rejected because they were received after the jurisdiction's absentee ballot request deadline.
3. *UOCAVA Absentee Ballot Transmission*: Date jurisdiction began transmitting regular absentee ballots to UOCAVA voters, number of UOCAVA absentee ballots transmitted, by before and after

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<sup>1</sup> Web administration allows us to have a soft opening and closing for the survey. The survey site was available between December 31, 2012 and February 22, 2013. The survey communications stated that the field opened on January 2 and closed on February 15, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Details on survey methodology are reported by DMDC. (2013). *2012 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey: Statistical Methodology Report* (Report No. 2013-016). Alexandria, VA: Author.

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the 45-day deadline and mode of transmission, and returned as undeliverable by mode of transmission.

4. *UOCAVA Absentee Ballots Received*: Number of UOCAVA absentee ballots received and received, by before and after the 45-day deadline and mode of transmission.
5. *UOCAVA Absentee Ballots Rejected*: Number of UOCAVA absentee ballots rejected by modes of transmission, before and after the 45-day deadline, and rejected because ballot was received after the statutory deadline.
6. *UOCAVA Absentee Ballots Counted*: Number of UOCAVA absentee ballots counted by modes of transmission, before and after the 45-day deadline.
7. *Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs)*: Number of FWABs received from UOCAVA voters, rejected, rejected because they were received after the ballot receipt deadline, rejected because the voter's regular absentee ballot was received and counted, and total FWABs counted.

### Procedures

Estimates are shown in four categories: voter registration, FPCAs, UOCAVA absentee ballots, and FWABs. Each statement begins with the total estimate used as the denominator in the ratio, followed by the ratio itself, and the total estimate used as the numerator in the ratio. Margins of error for the estimates are provided along with the question number references.

Estimates for the subparts of a question will often sum to a value that is not identical to the total estimate for that question. Similarly, groups of questions may not have the exact relationship expected. For example, ballots counted and ballots rejected do not always sum perfectly to ballots received. Three main reasons contribute to these differences between totals. First, local and state election officials may have misinterpreted a question or may have incorrectly entered values when responding to the survey. Second, the interrelated nature of the questionnaire, where each question has a logical relationship with several other questions, limits the ability for all logical relationships to be maintained. Finally, as much as 40% of the data for some questions required imputation due to item missing data rates and imputed values were subject to the logical relationships mentioned previously.

## Survey Results

### Voter Registration

Of the **202,087,034** ( $\pm 15,937,663$ )<sup>3</sup> total number of registered and eligible voters, **1%**<sup>4</sup> were covered by UOCAVA (**1,262,249** [ $\pm 151,368$ ]) (Q2a/Q1).

### Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs)

#### FPCAs Received from UOCAVA voters

Of the **534,927** ( $\pm 74,965$ ) FPCAs received from UOCAVA voters (Q3a)...

- Approximately **4%** were rejected (between **10,327** and **31,473**<sup>5</sup>) (Q4a/Q3a), of which...
  - **21%** were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot request deadline (**4,471** [ $\pm 829$ ]) (Q5/Q4a).
- **1%** of all FPCAs were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot request deadline (**4,471** [ $\pm 829$ ]) (Q5/Q3a).

#### FPCAs Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **278,496** ( $\pm 45,548$ ) FPCAs received from Uniformed Service voters, approximately **5%** were rejected (between **4,848** and **20,232**) (Q4b-c/Q3b-c).

#### FPCAs Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **248,790** ( $\pm 36,222$ ) FPCAs received from Overseas Civilians, approximately **3%** were rejected (between **3,903** and **9,653**) (Q4d/Q3d).

<sup>3</sup> All values are estimates and margins of error may not be used to draw inferential conclusions.

<sup>4</sup> All percentages in this note are rounded.

<sup>5</sup> For this survey note, estimates with a coefficient of variation (CV) of greater than .15 are considered estimates with high variance (not as reliable). The CV is defined as the standard error of the estimate divided by the estimate. We display these high-variance estimates as confidence intervals instead of point estimates (with margins of error) to emphasize the uncertainty inherent when standard errors are large relative to point estimates.

UOCAVA Absentee Ballots

Absentee Ballots Transmitted to UOCAVA Voters

Of the **1,122,993** ( $\pm 132,756$ ) absentee ballots transmitted to UOCAVA voters (Q7a)...

- **56%** were transmitted by postal mail (**627,975** [ $\pm 90,566$ ]) (Q7a1/Q7a), of which...
  - **74%** were received (**466,882** [ $\pm 51,200$ ]) (Q10a1/Q7a1).
- **3%** were transmitted by fax (**34,542** [ $\pm 8,602$ ]) (Q7a2/Q7a), of which...
  - **191%**<sup>6</sup> were received (**65,999** [ $\pm 10,380$ ]) (Q10a2/Q7a2).
- **24%** were transmitted by e-mail (**268,150** [ $\pm 27,464$ ]) (Q7a3/Q7a), of which...
  - **67%** were received (**179,920** [ $\pm 21,546$ ]) (Q10a3/Q7a3).
- **56%** were transmitted before the 45-day deadline (**631,580** [ $\pm 96,599$ ]) (Q7b/Q7a).
- **35%** were transmitted after the 45-day deadline (**389,323** [ $\pm 42,746$ ]) (Q7c/Q7a).
- **2%** were returned as undeliverable (**24,536** [ $\pm 4,223$ ]) (Q8a/Q7a), of which...
  - **85%** were transmitted by postal mail (**20,950** [ $\pm 3,533$ ]) (Q8a1/Q8a).
- **61%** were received by the jurisdiction (**684,808** [ $\pm 70,141$ ]) (Q9a/Q7a), of which...
  - **4%** were rejected (**25,858** [ $\pm 4,564$ ]) (Q11a/Q9a).
  - **98%** were counted (**669,085** [ $\pm 68,077$ ]) (Q13a/Q9a).
- **2%** were rejected (**25,858** [ $\pm 4,564$ ]) (Q11a/Q7a).
  - Of these absentee ballots that were rejected, **58%** were rejected because they were received after the statutory deadline (**15,088** [ $\pm 2,025$ ]) (Q12a/Q11a).
    - Of these absentee ballots that were rejected because they were received after the statutory deadline (Q12a)...
      - **68%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by postal mail (**10,296** [ $\pm 1,389$ ]) (Q12a1/Q12a).
      - **3%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by fax (**387** [ $\pm 106$ ]) (Q12a2/Q12a).

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<sup>6</sup> Voting jurisdictions can receive more ballots via fax from voters than ballots that were originally transmitted to the voter via fax. For instance, a voter could receive a ballot through e-mail or by downloading one from a website and then fax it to the voting jurisdiction.

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- **20%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by e-mail (**3,091** [ $\pm 614$ ]) (Q12a3/Q12a).

### Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Voters

Of the **683,689** ( $\pm 70,138$ ) absentee ballots received from UOCAVA voters (Q10a)...

- **68%** were received by postal mail (**466,882** [ $\pm 51,200$ ]) (Q10a1/Q10a).
- **10%** were received by fax (**65,999** [ $\pm 10,380$ ]) (Q10a2/Q10a).
- **26%** were received by e-mail (**179,920** [ $\pm 21,546$ ]) (Q10a3/Q10a).

### Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **395,817** ( $\pm 48,675$ ) absentee ballots received from Uniformed Service voters, **3%** were rejected (**13,760** [ $\pm 2,886$ ]) (Q11b-c/Q9b-c).

### Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **297,523** ( $\pm 31,437$ ) absentee ballots received from overseas civilians, **4%** were rejected (**10,565** [ $\pm 1,849$ ]) (Q11d/Q9d).

## Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs)

### FWABs Received from UOCAVA Voters

Of the **60,001** ( $\pm 6,188$ ) FWABs received from UOCAVA voters (Q14a)...

- **24%** were rejected (**14,200** [ $\pm 3,060$ ]) (Q15a/Q14a), of which...
  - Approximately **8%** were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot receipt deadline (between **762** and **1,580**) (Q16/Q15a).
- Approximately **2%** were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot receipt deadline (between **762** and **1,580**) (Q16/Q14a).
- **6%** were rejected because the regular absentee ballot was received and counted (**3,718** [ $\pm 919$ ]) (Q17/Q14a).
- **74%** were counted (**44,176** [ $\pm 4,386$ ]) (Q18a/Q14a).

### FWABs Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **29,530** ( $\pm 3,337$ ) FWABs received from Uniformed Service voters (Q14b-c)...

- **30%** were rejected (**8,981** [ $\pm 2,223$ ]) (Q15b-c/Q14b-c).
- **73%** were counted (**21,547** [ $\pm 2,262$ ]) (Q18b-c/Q14b-c).

### FWABs Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **27,380** ( $\pm 3,245$ ) FWABs received from overseas civilians (Q14d)...

- **24%** were rejected (**6,507** [ $\pm 1,431$ ]) (Q15d/Q14d).
- **74%** were counted (**20,249** [ $\pm 2,204$ ]) (Q18d/Q14d).

### Survey Methodology

The *2012 PEVIA* was administered via Web from December 31, 2012, through February 22, 2013. The population of interest for the *2012 PEVIA* consisted of the voting jurisdictions in the United States and the four territories. There were 7,303 voting jurisdictions covering the United States and the four territories.

The survey was a stratified random sample of 2,500 voting jurisdictions with the local election official (LEO) as the respondent in states with no centralized state voting database and state election official (SEO) as the respondent in states with centralized databases as determined by FVAP. The reporting unit was the jurisdiction. Completed surveys were received from 1,738 eligible jurisdictions. After the determination of eligibility for the survey and completion of a survey, analytic weights were created to account for varying response rates among population subgroups. The overall weighted response rate was 76%.

### Margins of Error

Estimates from the *2012 PEVIA* have uncertainty due to unit and item nonresponse. Unit nonresponse was about 24 percent and item nonresponse ranged from 0 to 40 percent for most survey questions that estimated numeric totals. We used weighting to compensate for unit nonresponse and imputation to adjust for item nonresponse. To create national estimates, missing information from responding jurisdictions was imputed and a weighting process was developed so that totals would represent all jurisdictions.

Margins of error were estimated using SUDAAN© PROC DESCRIPT. However, PROC DESCRIPT uses only one dataset, which does not account for the added uncertainty due to the imputations. To properly account for the variance in the estimated totals due to item nonresponse, we used multiple imputations and created estimates using SAS® PROC MIANALYZE, which isolated the inflation of overall variance estimates attributed to the imputations. As a result, the variances of national estimates from PROC DESCRIPT were increased 10%,<sup>7</sup> which caused margins of error to be inflated by approximately 4.8%.

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<sup>7</sup> Item missing data rates, the variance estimates for each question, and the variance inflations caused by imputation are different for each question. According to PROC MIANALYZE, the percent of variance attributed to imputation ranged from less than 1 percent to approximately 10 percent. To ensure that variances were not underestimated, we inflated all variance estimates from PROC DESCRIPT by 10 percent to account for the imputations.

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For further information see <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/surveys>.