



2014 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey

Introduction

The *Defense Research, Surveys, and Statistics Center (RSSC)*, 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. RSSC 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.

In 2014, FVAP collaborated with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to collect required quantitative data from state election officials through the EAC *2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey (2014 EAVS)*. The *EAVS* has been conducted since 2004, with the *2014 EAVS* as its sixth administration. The *EAVS* collects information on “ballots cast, voter registration, overseas and military voting, Election Day activities, voting technology, and other important issues,” (EAC, 2014).¹ Specifically, the *EAVS* is divided into six sections:

- A. Voter Registration
- B. Uniformed & Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)
- C. Domestic Civilian Absentee Ballots
- D. Election Administration
- E. Provisional Ballots
- F. Election Day Activities

For FVAP’s reporting needs, Section B is the only section (with the exception of Q1 from Section A, overall registered and eligible voters) related to FVAP’s program. Questions from the *2012 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey* that RSSC conducted for FVAP in 2012 were added to Section B of the *EAVS* to obtain additional data required by FVAP. FVAP and RSSC worked to develop the additional questions for the *EAVS*, including data editing rules for survey item relationships, consistency among survey questions, and instructions for completion of the additional FVAP questions. Details on the survey content of Section B of the *2014 EAVS* are described in more detail in the next section.

¹ The *2014 EAVS* survey instrument is available from the EAC website: www.eac.gov.

This Survey Note contains results from Section B of the *2014 EAVS*. The *2014 EAVS* surveyed all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the four U.S. territories. Each state/territory was asked to report the information by each voting jurisdiction within their state/territory (e.g., county, town, township, etc.). Information was collected in a Microsoft Excel-based template.² EAC requested that states submit their data by February 2, 2015; the submitted data were checked for logic and consistency errors and states had the opportunity to edit and resubmit their data as needed. 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.

Survey Content

The topics covered in Section B of the *2014 EAVS* include UOCAVA information for the November 2014 General Election, including Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs), regular absentee ballots from UOCAVA members, and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs). One item from Section A is also used in this survey note (QA1 – overall registered and eligible voters). Section B asked questions on the following topic areas:³

Question	Topic
B1-B2	Number and type of UOCAVA absentee ballots transmitted
B3	Number of all UOCAVA ballots returned and submitted for counting
B4-B7	Type of UOCAVA ballot returned and submitted for counting by type of UOCAVA voter
B8	Number of all UOCAVA ballots counted
B9-B12	Number and type of UOCAVA ballot counted by type of UOCAVA voter
B13	Number of all UOCAVA ballots rejected
B14	Reasons why UOCAVA ballots were rejected
B15-B18	Number and type of UOCAVA ballot rejected by type of UOCAVA voter
B19	Number and type of registered and eligible UOCAVA voters
B20-B22	Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs) received and rejected
B23	Date when transmission of absentee ballots to UOCAVA voters began
B24	UOCAVA ballots transmitted by mode of transmission
B25	Transmitted UOCAVA ballots returned as undeliverable by transmission mode
B26-B27	UOCAVA ballots returned by voters received
B28-B29	UOCAVA ballots rejected
B30	UOCAVA ballots counted by mode of transmission
B31-35	Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs)

² Details on the survey administration and methodology are available from the EAC website: www.eac.gov.

³ Questions B19 through B35 are the new questions added by FVAP to the *2014 EAVS*.

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. Margins of errors are a statistical measure that represents the precision of the estimates and all are calculated in this survey note for a 95 percent confidence interval.

Due to the editing and imputation procedures, estimates for the subparts of a question often sum to a value that does not exactly match the total estimate for that question. Similarly, groups of questions may not have expected relationships. For example, ballots counted and ballots rejected do not always sum perfectly to ballots received. Three reasons contribute to these differences between totals. First, state election officials may have misinterpreted a question or may have incorrectly entered values when responding to the survey. Second, the complex relationships between survey items create difficulty in maintaining all logical relationships. Finally, data for some questions required imputation⁴ due to item missing data rates and it is difficult to maintain all logical relationships when imputing for missing data.

⁴ Imputation is a statistical process used to estimate the value for a question when the respondent did not provide the value. These missing values are referred to as “item missing data.”

Survey Results

Voter Registration

Of the estimated⁵ **190,934,527** ($\pm 1,208,046$) total number of registered and eligible voters, less than **1%**⁶ were covered by UOCAVA (**554,840** [$\pm 21,342$]) (QB19a/QA1a).

Federal Post Card Applications (FPCAs)

FPCAs Received from UOCAVA voters

Of the **106,825** ($\pm 9,041$) FPCAs received from UOCAVA voters (Q20a):

- Approximately **2%** were rejected (**2,434** [± 152]) (QB21e/QB20a), of which...
 - **28%** were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot request deadline (**677** [± 89]) (QB22a/QB21e).
- **1%** of all FPCAs were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot request deadline (**677** [± 89]) (QB22a/QB20a).

FPCAs Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **46,382** ($\pm 3,715$) FPCAs received from Uniformed Service voters, approximately **4%** were rejected (**1,817** [± 361]) (QB21a/QB20b).

FPCAs Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **60,932** ($\pm 7,696$) FPCAs received from Overseas Civilians, approximately **1%** were rejected (**856** [± 173]) (QB21b/QB20c).

⁵ All numbers, margins of error, and percentages presented are estimates.

⁶ All estimated percentages in this note are rounded.

UOCAVA Absentee Ballots

Absentee Ballots Transmitted to UOCAVA Voters

Of the **426,635**⁷ absentee ballots transmitted to UOCAVA voters (QB1a):

- **62%** were transmitted by postal mail (**264,617** [± 5,509]) (QB24ac/QB1a), of which...
 - **39%** were received (**103,325** [± 7,820]) (QB27ac/QB24ac).
- **1%** was transmitted by fax⁸ (**4,025** [± 593]) (QB24cc/QB1a), of which...
 - **318%**⁹ were received (**12,780** [± 8,550]) (QB27cc/QB24cc).
- **38%** were transmitted by e-mail (**163,789** [± 3,461]) (QB24bc/QB1a), of which...
 - **20%** were received (**33,475** [± 2,845]) (QB27bc/QB24bc).
- **88%** were transmitted before the 45-day deadline (**375,131** [± 8,897]) (QB24_before¹⁰/QB1a).
- **14%** were transmitted after the 45-day deadline (**60,401** [± 2,714]) (QB24_after¹¹/QB1a).
- **4%** were returned as undeliverable (**15,652** [± 627]) (QB25_total/QB1a), of which...
 - **98%** were transmitted by postal mail (**15,274** [± 1,189]) (QB25a/QB25_total).
- **36%** were received by the jurisdiction (**151,694** [± 4,644]) (QB26a/QB1a), of which...
 - **5%** were rejected (**8,323** [±975]) (QB28e/QB26a).
 - **95%** were counted (**143,814** [± 380]) (QB8a/QB26a).
- **2%** were rejected (**8,323** [± 975]) (QB28e/QB1a).
 - Of these absentee ballots that were rejected, **62%** were rejected because they were received after the statutory deadline (**5,171** [± 248]) (QB29_Total¹²/QB28e).
 - Of these absentee ballots that were rejected because they were received after the statutory deadline (QB29_Total):

⁷ 99.3 percent of jurisdictions reported this value from the 2014 survey (7,651 jurisdictions). Because this statistic was needed for stratification, RSSC used 2010 data for this value for the other 0.7 percent of jurisdictions (51 jurisdictions). Further details are described in the Survey Methodology section below.

⁸ Survey instrument says 'other'; RSSC considered 'other' to be fax based on previous survey administrations.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Constructed variable comprised of QB24aa, QB24ba, and QB24ca.

¹¹ Constructed variable comprised of QB24ab, QB24bb, and QB24cb.

¹² Constructed variable comprised of QB29ac, QB29bc, and QB29cc.

- **61%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by postal mail (**3,175** [± 341]) (QB29ac/ QB29_Total).
- **4%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by fax (**178** [± 149]) (QB29cc/QB29_Total).
- **43%** were transmitted to UOCAVA voters by e-mail (2,206[± 225]) (QB29bc/QB29_Total).

Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Voters

Of the **151,694** ($\pm 4,644$) absentee ballots received from UOCAVA voters (QB26a):

- **68%** were received by postal mail (**103,325** [$\pm 7,820$]) (QB27ac/QB26a).
- **8%** were received by fax (**12,780** [$\pm 8,550$]) (QB27cc/QB26a).
- **22%** were received by e-mail (**33,475** [$\pm 2,845$]) (QB27bc/QB26a).

Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **74,944** ($\pm 3,840$) absentee ballots received from Uniformed Service voters, **6%** were rejected (**4,291** [± 420]) (QB28a/QB26b).

Absentee Ballots Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **75,350** ($\pm 1,299$) absentee ballots received from overseas civilians, **5%** were rejected (**3,641** [± 496]) (QB28b/QB26c).

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots (FWABs)

FWABs Received from UOCAVA Voters

Of the **2,277** (± 342) FWABs received from UOCAVA voters (QB31e):

- **26%** of FWABS received were rejected (**589** [± 113]) (QB32e/QB31e), of which...
 - **20%** of the rejected FWABS were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot receipt deadline (**116** [± 33]) (QB33a/QB32e).
 - **26%** of the rejected FWABS were rejected because the regular absentee ballot was received and counted (**156** [± 68]) (QB34a/QB32e).
- **5%** of FWABS received were rejected because they were received after the absentee ballot receipt deadline (**116** [± 33]) (QB33a/QB31e).
- **7%** of FWABS received were rejected because the regular absentee ballot was received and counted (**156** [± 68]) (QB34a/QB31e).

- **74%** of FWABS received were counted (**1,683** [± 123]) (QB35e/QB31e).

FWABs Received from UOCAVA Uniformed Service Voters

Of the **1,206** (± 74) FWABs received from Uniformed Service voters (QB31a):

- **23%** were rejected (**280** [± 82]) (QB32a/QB31a).
- **74%** were counted (**892** [± 75]) (QB35a/QB31a).

FWABs Received from UOCAVA Overseas Civilians

Of the **1,198** (± 252) FWABs received from overseas civilians (QB31b):

- **22%** were rejected (**260** [± 104]) (QB32b/QB31b).
- **76%** were counted (**906** [± 107]) (QB35b/QB31b).

Survey Methodology

The *2014 EAVS* was administered after the 2014 General Election. States were mandated to complete and submit the *2014 EAVS* by February 2, 2015. The population of interest for the *2014 EAVS* consisted of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the four U.S. territories. Completed surveys were received by EAC and distributed to RSSC in MS Excel files throughout the submission period. RSSC analyzed the survey returns for data quality and had a working relationship with EAC to address data issues by asking specific states to edit or clarify their submitted data. Overall EAC's frame consisted of 8,202 voting jurisdictions. The total number of jurisdictions was revised to 7,702 jurisdictions based on a later decision by Maine to report UOCAVA data at the state level. RSSC determined all jurisdictions as eligible but required jurisdictions to have a certain threshold of data quality to be considered a complete respondent.¹³ Of the population of 7,702 jurisdictions, 35 jurisdictions were considered incomplete. Jurisdictions were divided into eight strata based on the number of UOCAVA ballots transmitted. The rationale for grouping the jurisdictions by UOCAVA ballots transmitted was for imputation; RSSC assessed that UOCAVA ballots transmitted would be the best predictor of responses to other UOCAVA questions. Analytic weights were created to account for survey nonresponse.

Estimates from the *2014 EAVS* have uncertainty due to both unit (voting jurisdiction) and item nonresponse. Unit nonresponse was about 0.5 percent (7,667 complete jurisdictions / 7,702 total jurisdictions) and item nonresponse ranged from 0 to 68 percent for key questions used in this survey note. To create national estimates, missing information from responding jurisdictions was edited and imputed and a weighting process was developed so that survey estimates represent all jurisdictions. RSSC computed weights within strata to compensate for unit nonresponse. Item nonresponse was handled through multiple sequential weighted hotdeck methodology.

¹³ To consider a jurisdiction a complete response, RSSC required that jurisdictions provide enough information to allow the construction of EAVS question QB1a (Total Number of absentee ballots transmitted). If RSSC could not determine the value of QB1a through auxiliary questions the jurisdiction was considered as an eligible incomplete respondent.

Margins of error were estimated using SAS© PROC SURVEYMEANS and by following guidance from Rubin (1987) for multiple imputation, which isolated the inflation of overall variance estimates attributed to the imputations.

For complete survey methodology please reference *2014 Post-Election Quantitative Voting Survey of Local Election Officials. Statistical Methodology Report* (DMDC Report No. 2015-014).

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