

ELECTION OFFICIAL NEWS

Military and Overseas Voting

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Election Officials Help Make VRBD a Success

In 2008, the Federal Voting Assistance Program launched the Voter Registration and Ballot Delivery (VRBD) system. This included an automated version of the Voter Registration/Ballot Request form (Federal Post Card Application, FPCA) embedded with state specific requirements that produced an electronic version of the FPCA that voters could print, sign, and submit to their local election officials. This feature provided all citizens covered by the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* a new and improved way to fill out their FPCAs independently. In total, the system guided over 21,000 military and overseas citizens through completion of the form online.

The system also included options for states to receive the FPCA for registration and ballot request, as well as provide a blank ballot to the voter via a secure server. Citizens from 425 local election offices in Arkansas, Iowa, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, and Washington could use one or both of these features. From July 23 – November 4, 2008, 780 citizens uploaded ballot request forms to local election offices, and 124 voters downloaded their blank ballots.

The FVAP would like to thank the 11 states and 425 local election offices who used these secure features and provided a new alternative to the by-mail absentee voting process for military and overseas citizens. Your use of this tool not only helped hundreds of citizens vote but also helps pave the way for future advancements in voting alternatives.

Other automated versions of the Voter Registration/ Ballot Request form (FPCA) can be found at the websites of Democrats Abroad, the Overseas Vote Foundation, and Republicans Abroad.

States Use Electronic Alternatives in 2008!

In 2008: 51 states allowed submission of the FPCA by fax and 23 states allowed submission of the FPCA by email. 38 states allowed counties to send the blank ballot by fax and 21 states allowed sending the blank ballot by email. 26 states allowed voted ballots by fax and 11 states allowed voted ballots by email.

Thank you to all the state and local election officials who helped military and overseas citizens vote using electronic alternatives in the 2008 General Election.

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**Share your
VRBD
experience
with FVAP!**

Have questions, comments, or suggestions, about VRBD? Send an email to vote@fvap.ncr.gov with "VRBD" in the subject line and let us know what worked great and what could be improved on our online ballot request and delivery system. Your feedback is greatly appreciated and will help us make an even better tool for the next election.

Didn't use VRBD? Let us know why or give us suggestions for future systems!

2008 Special Electronic Voting Initiatives

Arizona's Military and Overseas Voting System

In October, Secretary of State Jan Brewer announced a new web-based Military and Overseas Voting system for registered Arizona voters residing overseas to request absentee ballots and securely submit their voted ballots online for the November 4, 2008 General Election. Arizona continued to also allow faxing for requesting, receiving and voting absentee ballots.

The system used industry standard, 128-bit SSL encryption technology to ensure the security, privacy, and integrity of the voted ballot. The voting system incorporated a newly designed, secure website that provided a direct connection from which the overseas voter could transmit their voted ballot onto the State's computer servers in Arizona. The ballot was then forwarded on to the appropriate county to be processed.

Under Arizona's voting program, participating overseas citizens could receive their ballots and print them out, along with their official affidavit forms requiring signature for verification purposes. After the voter marked, completed and scanned this material into the computer, he or she could log on to the overseas voting system with a specific user identification and password (provided separately with their requested ballot). The user ID and password allowed the voter direct and secure access to upload both their voted ballot and signed affidavit. The voter's registration and signature were verified before tabulation.

Thank you to all the Arizona state officials and local election officials who gave overseas citizens an additional method to submit voted ballots.

Florida: Okaloosa Distance Balloting Project (ODBP)

Florida's Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections partnered with the Operation BRAVO (Bring Remote Access to Voters Overseas) Foundation and Florida State University's SAIT (Security and Assurance in Information Technology) Laboratory to provide county voters residing overseas a different way to vote absentee. Voting kiosks were set up and run in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Japan under the leadership of Pat Hollarn, Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections and director of the Operation BRAVO Foundation. The kiosks were connected to the Okaloosa secure remote server and operated for about 10 days before the election. Thank you to Okaloosa county for providing this innovative alternative to military and overseas citizens.

Texas' Email Pilot Program

The Texas Email Pilot Program enabled certain active duty military members to request and receive their blank ballots via email for the 2008 General Election. Active duty, overseas military voters from participating counties, who had submitted a Registration and Absentee Ballot Request Form but who had not yet received an official ballot in the mail, were allowed to request their ballot be sent via email.

The following counties participated in this pilot program: Bexar, Brazoria, Brown, Collin, Cooke, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, Kaufman, Lubbock, Nueces, Robertson, Tarrant, Taylor, Tom Green, Travis, Wichita, Victoria, and Zavala. Thank you to all the Texas state and local election officials who gave their time and effort to allow military voters a simple and fast way to receive their blank ballot. Hopefully, these voting initiatives can help pave the way for more advancements in alternatives to the by-mail absentee voting process.

Have Military and Overseas Absentee Voting Questions?

Contact FVAP:

1-800-438-VOTE (8683)
Fax: 703-696-1352
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