

**FVAP Voting After Action Report – USAF (2011)**  
**(Pursuant to paragraph 5.2.1.17 of DoD Directive 1000.04)**

1. Are the following available to the IVA Office?
  - a. Computer with access to the Internet? Yes, USAF IVAOs have not reported any problems in obtaining computers for the IVA Office. The Langley AFB IVA Office utilizes the computers, printers, etc. available in the Base Library (the site of the IVA Office).
  - b. Printer? One instance of no printer in office, but nearby. Dyess AFB has a computer, but won't have a printer/scanner/fax until the end of February 2012.
  - c. Scanner? One instance of a scanner not physically in IVA Office (but accessible in a nearby office). Osan AB has a computer and printer, but no scanner.
  - d. Identify multiple offices (satellite offices) on any installation. Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst has the main office on McGuire AFB and a Satellite on Ft Dix.
  - e. Problems encountered in implementing IVA Offices
    - i. Space availability was the number one issue for USAF
    - ii. No funding for FTEs was number two issue for USAF
    - iii. Buckley AFB: -Signage along the roadside (in front of the building) to inform the public with the location of the Voting Assistance Office and Voter's Registration Agency. Work order was disapproved by CES. The public including military members and civilians have problems locating the building.  
-Manning the office. Currently, I am the only one manning the office. Everyone is so short staffed and are not available to help run the office.  
-Voting program versus mission. Since the voting program is not considered mission critical, the voting program is not in everyone's highest priority on base.
    - iv. Wright-Patterson AFB: Wright-Patterson AFB: The biggest problem installing the IVA Office was finding a location and getting materials. Documentation took long but everything is up and running and it was done with a total cost of \$1350.
    - v. Two bases (Spangdahlem in Germany and Randolph AFB) reported no major problems in implementation of the IVA Office.
    - vi. Lackland AFB: Obtaining office supplies and who's supply inventory books to place the items on.
    - vii. Nellis AFB: ...it is difficult to maintain the office with the relative lack of demand the base maintains for a physical Voting Registration Agency.
2. Identify voting assistance complaints received: **(Include any Congressionals and or Lawsuits that were handled and responded to)**. None Received in 2011.
  - a. What was the nature of the complaint? No Congressionals or lawsuits regarding voting assistance for USAF in 2011. The only complaint noted was at Spangdahlem AB, Germany that the absentee ballot had not been received long after the FPCA was submitted. The IVAO attempted to contact the States involved, but the problem is not 100% resolved (no further explanation given).
  - b. How was the complaint resolved? N/A
  - c. What actions could be taken by either the USAF or FVAP to avoid a recurrence of this type of complaint? N/A
3. A narrative assessment describing the activities and effectiveness of the Service voting assistance program during 2011 in terms of :

- a. Is your Service compliant with the required distribution of SFs as specified by paragraph 5.2.1.6 of DoD Directive 1000.04? Yes, the AF Voting Action Plan provides specific guidance and the SVAO sends out reminders prior to each mandatory period during which the FPCAs are to be distributed. The USAF IVAO/UVAO Community of Practice site contains a Best Practice Plan for use in this endeavor.
- b. installation-wide voting activities and special events
  - i. Mt Home AFB: 2 events were held in 2011, a voting information table was set up on Retiree Day in Aug 2011; and Voting Information was distributed during Air Force Appreciation Day, 10 Sep 2011 in Mountain Home, ID.
  - ii. Keesler AFB: The installation voting activities include having three types of briefing representations for Newcomers, Non Prior Service and Deployment Fairs. These activities spread the information about the voting office, its purpose and any special information that has recently come up. Other activities include using an FVAP commercial on the DCO to spread out amongst the majority of members. Public Affairs news release in the base news and website has also been implemented.
  - iii. Altus AFB: The most recent event was the super bowl party where voting posters including election dates and FAQ handouts were available to members. Altus participates in voting drives as outlined by the 2012 Voting Action Plan.
  - iv. Fairchild AFB: IVA Office Ribbon Cutting and meeting with Spokane County Elections Official for a cross-tell session.
  - v. Vandenberg AFB: Booth at mandatory Wing Fun Runs where all military members were required to be present. Additionally, many units set up tables in the lobbies of their areas.
  - vi. Buckley AFB: Activities includes speaking at newcomers briefing, newcomers' orientation, deployment mass briefing, deployment reintegration briefing, commanders' call, speaking at Director calls, posting critical voting timelines, and using email to communicate voting information.
  - vii. Wright-Patterson AFB: TATTOO event which garnered over 200 registered voters.
  - viii. Spangdahlem AB: Voting banners are hung at the BX, Post Office, and Commissary.
  - ix. Edwards AFB:
    1. The voting office has been publicized in the base "Desert Wings" newspaper, as well as on the base television channel, and by way of all-hands email distribution.
    2. The EAFB voting office maintained a presence at the Muroc Club Super Bowl party with posters, absentees ballot request forms, write-in ballots, and personal assistance available.
  - x. Elmendorf AFB: A link to the FVAP website is included on the Installation homepage and voting articles are periodically published in the base newspaper (5 in 2010, 1 in 2011, and 1 to date in 2012).
  - xi. Nellis AFB: On 17 August, Lt Snyder, SMSgt Ryan, and I conducted a base-wide Voting Assistance Officer training workshop in the Nellis Base Theater where we trained a total of 25 UVAOs.
  - xii. Patrick AFB: To increase interest in the program, articles were put in the base newspaper, posters were put across base in break rooms and common areas and all newcomers were briefed on the program.

- c. special efforts to encourage voting participation by flag or general officer leadership
  - i. USAF Chief of Staff released a voting PSA in January 2012
  - ii. Secretary of AF, USAF Chief of Staff and Chief Master Sergeant of the USAF have been provided a joint memorandum to sign and release USAF-wide NLT 15 June 2012.
  - iii. Mt Home AFB: Posted on base FaceBook page, computer pop-up screens and on base marquee. UVAOs played FVAP video at Commanders Calls.
  - iv. Keesler AFB: All efforts have been encouraged through the Unit Voting Assistant Officers. As the IVAO it is paramount that we do not show bias towards the voting process and merely inform members that it is important to vote regardless of organization or location. General Schwartz' video on voting has been placed on the website as well to show the importance of voting.
  - v. Tinker AFB: Letters/commentaries – most within the past 30 days. Multiple CC call events, booths, articles, etc. are planned for this coming election year, beginning in Jan 12. Commander emphasis is also underway.
  - vi. Altus AFB: The CSAF video was distributed to all squadrons to be shown at commanders calls.
  - vii. Fairchild AFB: Wing Commander support has been instrumental in getting the program's message across.
  - viii. Columbus AFB: Special effort was put into reinforcing the FVAP commercials during the 2012 Super Bowl with an informational booth and FPCAs on hand. There have been PA pieces and messages on the base welcome sign.
  - ix. Spangdahlem AB: Through Armed Forces Network and Installation Website Homepage.
  - x. Osan AB: Osan regularly airs voting participation commercials on AFN by all the services flag leadership.
- d. recommendations for DoD- or service-level voting training and assistance to IVA Offices
  - i. Mt Home AFB: The online training is fine. However, requiring that IVAOs and UVAOs redo their training in even numbered years is redundant. It's difficult enough to get UVAOs to do the initial required training; making someone fill out a training certificate with a new date places more work on the IVAO in regard to tracking and getting people to comply. Staffing the IVA Office is also a challenge with the current deployment tempo. The Air Force mission comes first and there are many days where the office is closed and a sign left on the door with the IVAO's or the UVAO's phone number.
  - ii. Keesler AFB: The voting office makes the use of the additional duty much more appealing and easier. For team Keesler, it has been difficult transitioning from being a student to a stand-in IVAO. There was a poor level of continuity since the office has been established only one month prior. Additional attempts in requiring new personnel to become Unit Voting Representatives have been challenging.
  - iii. Tinker AFB: Decrease dedicated manning & the associated manpower drain for CONUS installations. Today's members are savvy enough to complete the requirements on-line & do not need hand-holding. Members serviced by this office have thus far preferred to complete the requirements in private, on their own. No one can force them to complete and mail ballots or registration documents; this is an individual responsibility.

- iv. Malmstrom AFB: During AFVW and AVW, most people had questions on how to access the web based FVAP services. Based on the fact that states now provide both registration and absentee voting options on-line, my recommendation would be to focus on web and e-mail based advertising of the FVAP site.
- v. Goodfellow AFB: Provide training and instruction for UVAOs and IVAOs that addresses expectations of CI Inspectors and expand FVAP in-person training to all bases
- vi. Buckley AFB: Provide manpower authorization for voting assistance program. Communicate requirements of the voting assistance program to Wing/Installation Commanders.
- vii. Wright-Patterson AFB: Another big thing implemented here at WPAFB was the implementation of the Voting Training Curriculum. The IVAO developed a bimonthly schedule of topics to teach the UVAOs to maintain proficiency and educate them on any new ideas.
- viii. Osan AB: It seems at times that there is almost too much information that we inundate individuals with: voting releases etc. Would it be more appropriate to inform individuals to go to [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) to receive the current update, vice sending out emails with all the attached information? And would this suffice as adequate contact? (SVAO comment: Perhaps a 2 sentence executive summary for each news release would help. That would allow voters to skim the summary. If something pertains to them, they'd then delve into the article).
- e. Any lessons learned:
  - i. Mt Home AFB: This program has to have an IVAO whose only job is to man the IVA office and run the installation voting assistance program. Trying to juggle 2 demanding full-time jobs means neither job gets the attention to detail that is expected/required.
  - ii. Keesler AFB:
    1. I highly recommend that all IVA Offices be governed by civilians who are very enthusiastic about this position. Come election months this position may take valuable time away from military members whose job may be more important than being a full time voting officer. Additional duty is very doable but should be spearheaded by a civilian. This will result in an unbiased view of the voting program from the military and will help in future election metrics. The training offered to the IVA Offices was very informative but lacked any means of interest. I recommend having an active training program that would spark interest in future voters.
    2. The biggest lesson learned from starting a voting office from scratch is the continuity of the previous member or binder and its organization. I have only been a stand-in IVAO since October 2011 and I am still finding out information from the continuity binder that should have been found earlier.
    3. Delegating efficiently would be the second biggest priority for the base voting officer. If the IVAO does not delegate efficiently then he/she will become overloaded and disoriented with unorganized information.
    4. Being highly motivated and having initiative to be proactive with election materials and posters is also a trait that is needed for each voting officer.

5. Have a standard system that records attendance during briefings, and put into one spreadsheet. Some IVAO's have been using the program FIRST.
- iii. Altus AFB: Because of Altus's small size we are able to operate with only group and installations VAOs. This removes the burden of additional duties for squadron reps and does not prevent voting news from getting to personnel.
- iv. Fairchild AFB: In meeting manning requirements, Fairchild had Retiree Activities Office volunteers come assist.
- v. Hill AFB: Don't let anyone move the office it took 14 months to get one in place.
- vi. Vandenberg AFB: Appoint more than two IVAOs in case of deployment and setting up an e-mail auto-response for common out-processing tasks.
- vii. Columbus AFB: We are in the process of moving the Voting Assistance Program at Columbus AFB to an entirely digital format. There by reducing paper consumption by 90% (an estimated 2000 pages per year) and streamlining and simplifying the continuity binders for all units. We moved to this after conducting the 2012 Staff Assistance Visit from which we learned that the program in its current form is wasteful and tedious to maintain.
- viii. Buckley AFB: The use of the electronic signage on both gates for alerting voters is highly effective in reaching at least 13,000 people each week. Furthermore, having a permanent office for voters' assistance and voters' registration has increased the visibility and importance of the voting program at Buckley. Keeping current personnel roster. It would have been very challenging to man the IVA office if my office is not in the same building. In addition, sharing the duties and responsibilities of IVAO to an alternate is critical. It is difficult when the work schedule of the alternate IVAO includes mid-shift, nights, week-ends etc.
- ix. Wright-Patterson AFB: The lessons learned from this year were to continually communicate with your people. We can only help them so much but educating them about the importance of voting is instrumental. This was an obstacle we had at one of our units was educating them on the why. Another lesson learned is that as long as you have great UVAOs which we do have here at WPAFB, there really is no need to have an IVA Office. You can make 100% contact without having an office that has only seen 6 total customers since its inception.
- x. Langley AFB: The most important lesson learned so far has been ensuring that the UVAO database is kept updated. When the program was passed over to me and my alternates, many of the UVAOs in the database were no longer current, and that has created issues in quickly and efficiently disseminating information.
- xi. Lackland AFB: POC information for base operator, Public Affairs, etc has been placed on a "Helpful POC list" that will be passed onto the next IVAO.
- xii. Bagram AB: Keep it as simple as possible. Distribute necessary information, but do not overload. In a deployed environment, some airmen do not have consistent access to email, so in person announcements are good. IVAOs should appoint UVAOs for each group, but then each group should designate a squadron or flight rep as needed.
- xiii. Nellis AFB: We IVAOs at Nellis/Creech/NTTR drafted a voting assistance policy letter from the AF Voting Plan, AFI, and DoD Directive that serves as a streamlined guide to serving as a Unit Voting Assistance Officer. Moreover, we created a FVAP brochure specific to this base for easy dissemination of frequently asked questions, general information on the FVAP, the election calendar, and installation voting assistance

contact information. Finally, we created our own database for tracking additional information including number of e-mails distributed and complaints received, among others. All of these have helped us improve effectiveness, though the battle against disruption of continuity is still on-going

- f. recommendations to improve the voting assistance program.
  - i. Keesler AFB: Improvements to the voting assistance program should be made to the Service Voting Officers. There should be mandatory advertisements from third party non biased members to include information kiosks and local information. FVAP should include information about each element that they are voting for. If FVAP is only used for the actual voting process then it should broaden its purpose and supply as much information to the member about who and what they want to vote for. This will be helpful if a member does wish to vote but has not kept up with details on elected officials or state elections.
  - ii. Altus AFB: A voting drive in January of even years would allow voters to register before it is too late to vote in democrat and republican primaries. This might encourage voters to engage in the election process.
  - iii. Hill AFB: Get more volunteers.
  - iv. Dover AFB: More hands on training to promote awareness and visibility. In 2010 OSD physically trained Dover's members both military and local election officers
  - v. Vandenberg AFB: Connect military voters to their home states. Many voters are apathetic to issues in their home state or elections other than presidential. They can be educated to realize that elections in their home of record can still affect them in terms of taxes, legal issues, etc.
  - vi. Moody AFB: The online training made it easy for UVAOs to switch out and find temporary replacements, but I would recommend relying more on civilian employees to run the voting assistance program if possible.
  - vii. Buckley AFB: Manning and funding support for office supplies/equipment.
  - viii. Wright-Patterson AFB: My recommendation to improve the program is to work with your local and base organizations to help you advertise voting. For example the League of Women Voters was instrumental for us to get a record breaking number of registrations this year and soon we will be working with AFSA on advertising the importance of voting.
  - ix. Randolph AFB: Recommend briefing the "Voting Assistance Program" to First Term Airmen Center (FTAC) students and Airmen Leadership School to meet the target audience.
  - x. USAF Academy: Leading a large base voting program and maintaining an IVA Office are very time-consuming activities. Considering that the IVAO position is an additional duty, I recommend that FVAP either reduce voting program requirements or provide funding for a dedicated part-time civilian or reservist IVAO. Additionally, the requirement to categorize, record and report each instance of voter assistance is burdensome and should be eliminated. Finally, DoD, FVAP, and the Air Force currently issue guidance for the voting program through several directives, instructions, handbooks, and supplements. I recommend FVAP consolidates this guidance to clarify IVAO, UVAO, and IVA Office duties and responsibilities.

- xi. Nellis AFB: My recommendation is to remove the requirement for an Installation Voting Assistance Office at stateside locations. I understand the impetus to maintain such facilities overseas, but there are sufficient avenues for voting assistance in the continental U.S.—through Voting Assistance Officers, resources on the internet, and off-base agencies—to provide an adequate amount of support, as evidenced by our lack of demand and absence of complaints. In my humble opinion, the FVAP is in search of an identity. Mr. Bill D’Avanzo has been extremely helpful in supporting the Air Force’s Voting Assistance Officers amidst the changes to the FVAP over the past few years, but there are important limiting factors that disrupt the implementation of direction from Congress. During a time of decreasing manpower and funding, we in voting assistance began moving to a more automated process through the FVAP website—an invaluable resource. However, amidst this transition, Congress mandated that each base open a Voting Assistance Office that, if operated to the intent of the instruction, would more than double the voting assistance workload for the IVAOs and multiple UVAOs who attempt to run the program as an additional duty. If a more rigorous and in-depth FVAP is a priority for Congress and the DoD, they should allocate funding and create manpower positions to cover the scope of the program. If the intent is simply to ensure voter enfranchisement, the program should stay on the track of automation by employing the communication resources available through base networks and relying upon voting assistance officers as back-up resources for troubleshooting individual questions or concerns. With the current, diminishing state of human and economic capital in the Air Force, I believe the latter option is the more feasible of the two.
- xii. Dyess AFB: Recommendation to improve the voting assistance program would be to make position fulltime with no additional duties. This would give IVAO more time to get out and spread the word about the importance of voting.

--END USAF 2011 VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AFTER ACTION REPORT--