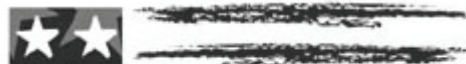


OVF 2006

**Post Election Survey
Results**



OVERSEAS VOTE
FOUNDATION

www.overseasvotefoundation.org
info@overseasvotefoundation.org

February 8, 2007

Table of Contents

- 1.0** - Introduction and Background - Page 3
- 2.0** - Project Overview - Page 5
- 3.0** - Respondent Profile and Demographics - Page 5
 - 3.1 - Voter Respondent Types
 - 3.2 - Where Overseas Voters Live
 - 3.3 - Percentage by Continent
 - 3.4 - The Midterms and First Time Voters
 - 3.5 - Where UOCAVA Voters Vote
- 4.0** - UOCAVA Voter Registration Issues - Page 9
 - 4.1 - Overall Satisfaction Rate
 - 4.2 - Top 3 Registration/Ballot Request Methods
 - 4.3 - Sending in the Registration/Ballot Request
 - 4.4 - What Gets in the Way of Registering to Vote
 - 4.5 - Voter Registration Questions and Issues
 - 4.6 - Voter Registration Confirmation
 - 4.7 - Voter Registration Form – Online Submission
- 5.0** - Voter Outreach - Page 16
 - 5.1 - Outreach To UOCAVA Voters
 - 5.2 - Voter Websites
 - 5.3 - Government Entities
- 6.0** - Overseas Ballot Issues - Page 18
 - 6.1 - Looks Good for Those Who Receive Their Ballots
 - 6.2 - Late or Non-arriving Ballots
 - 6.3 - Last-Minute and Late-Arriving Ballots by State
 - 6.4 - The FWAB - A Solution for Those Who Know It Exists
 - 6.5 - High Marks for Ballot Ease-of-Use
 - 6.6 - Range of Ballot Issues
 - 6.7 - A Question of Terminology
 - 6.8 - Which Ballot?
 - 6.9 - Notarizations and Oaths
 - 6.10 - What About Online Voting?
 - 6.11 - Ballot Return
 - 6.12 - Ballot Return Envelopes
 - 6.13 - Postage and Other Costs
- 7.0** - Voter Confidence - Page 25
- 8.0** - Conclusion - Page 27
- 9.0** - Addendum Reference Chart - Page 28

1.0 - Introduction

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) is a 501(c)(3) public charity that works toward greater enfranchisement of U.S. overseas citizen and U.S. military voters. These are the persons eligible to vote by absentee ballot pursuant to the Uniformed and Overseas Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). OVF functions as a nonpartisan, non-governmental central resource for UOCAVA voters around the world.

In this report, OVF discusses the results of its just completed 2006 OVF Post Election Survey of overseas and military voters. The 50-question survey was distributed beginning on November 8, 2006. Thousands of voters completed the survey during the following two months. The survey focused on matters affecting their voting experiences.

There is some good news. The survey results suggest that UOCAVA voters who are successful in the registration and voting process are very pleased with their experience. Many respondents, 80%, indicated satisfaction with the voter registration and ballot request process, and 86% of actual voters who received and returned their ballots indicated satisfaction with the balloting process.

There is other, not-so-good news. The survey results also suggest that some UOCAVA voters continue to encounter voting difficulties. 20% of the voter-respondents to the survey were unable to vote in the 2006 U.S. Midterm election: some because their ballot was late, some because their ballot never arrived. Other reasons cited as preventing successful voting included missed deadlines and the inability to get ballots witnessed or notarized. Many of these problems were also identified in responses to OVF's 2004 Post Election Survey.

2.0 - Project Overview

OVF conducted its online 2006 Post Election Survey of overseas and military absentee voters from November 8, 2006 to January 6, 2007.

Exactly 46,144 overseas civilian and military voters received access to the survey via email. 4,506 (10%) completed the survey. Partially completed surveys were not included in the calculated response rates or analyses.

3.0 - Respondent Profile and Demographics

3.1 - Voter Respondent Types

- **15%** - U.S. citizen residing outside of the U.S. Temporarily
- **83%** - U.S. citizen residing outside of the U.S. Indefinitely or Permanently
- **2%** - Active Duty Military or Spouse or dependent of Active Duty Military

Other notable characteristics include:

- 56% of the respondents have lived overseas for more than 10 years, compared to 46% in 2004
- The second largest group of respondents lived overseas for between 5 and 10 years (17%) in contrast to the 2004 survey results where the second largest group were voters overseas for one year or less, the majority of these individuals are students studying abroad (11%)
- 83% of the respondents have higher education degrees with a full 34% holding Master's degrees
- 75% of the 2006 respondents represent a mature voter group between the ages of 30 and 64
- The primary reason for living overseas was indicated as "marriage/partnership" (34%), with "personal preference" coming in at 27% and "employment" 20%
- The top occupational field was Education/Training/Training (20%), followed by Retired (10%). Other top occupations included: Arts/Design/Entertainment/Media (7%), Computer Related (6%), Business & Financial Operations (4%) – these occupational numbers reflected only slight changes from the 2004 survey data

3.2 - Where Overseas Voters Live

70% of the voter respondents are living in just 10 countries:

Top Respondent Countries		Top Ten Countries where Americans live, As per data posted by the American Association of Residents Overseas: http://aaro.org/map.html	
Canada	25%	Mexico	1,036,300
United Kingdom	11%	Canada	687,700
Germany	8%	United Kingdom	224,000
France	6%	Germany	210,880
Australia	5%	Israel	184,195
Japan	4%	Italy	168,967
Italy	3%	Philippines	105,000
Netherlands	3%	Australia	102,800
Switzerland	3%	France	101,750
Israel	2%	Spain	94,513

The breakdown of voter respondents to this survey does not entirely correlate with the available data on where Americans overseas are living.

Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Australia all correlate with the survey response data as important centers of overseas Americans . Not reflected in the top ten locations of overseas American population are Japan, Netherlands or Switzerland. Such small countries as Netherlands and Switzerland in the ranks of the top ten for voters, we surmise, has most to do with their technology and communications infrastructure coupled with English as a second language. Not reflected in the OVF top ten countries are Mexico and the Philippines.

Notably Absent – Mexico

Mexico – a first or second home to so many Americans continues to stand in great contrast to its sister American haven, Canada, when it comes to active voters abroad. A tiny 1% of the voters in Mexico registered and responded to the survey. This statistic was consistent with the voter demographics collected from the OVF site over 2006 indicating in which countries voters were residing.

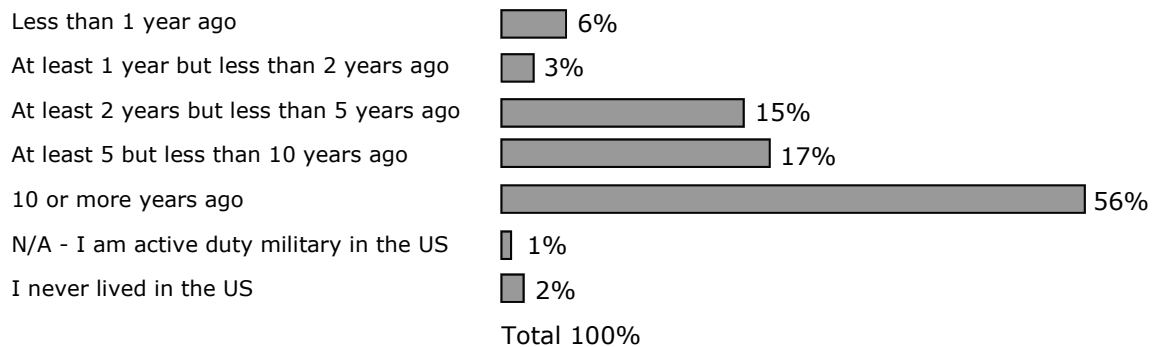
3.3 - Percentage of respondents by continent

Asia	16.9%
Africa	1.33%
Europe	44.76%
North America	28.72%
South America	2.15%
Australia/Oceania	6.77%

Breadth of Reach

Survey responses came from persons in 142 different countries.

When did you last live in the US?



Compared to 2004, there was less participation in the survey by younger voters who have been overseas only a short time. The category of "10 years or more overseas" grew by 10%, and the categories of "less than 1 year overseas" lost 9% respectively. This could be due to simply not having time or information regarding registering to vote in a brief year overseas. Indeed, 61% of Study Abroad participants reported that they received no information about registering to vote from overseas through their University Program.

3.4 - The Midterms and First-time voters

- Only 15% of the respondents were “first-time *overseas or military* voters.”
- Out of these, 4% were “first time voters” – i.e. voting for the first time in their lives.
- Just 50% of first time voters succeeded in casting a ballot vs. 70-76% of voters who had voted from overseas previously.

The combined group of first time overseas voters represented 25.4% of the “did not vote” subset. 36.5% of these unsuccessful, first-time overseas voters who did not get a chance to cast their ballot claimed that they would have voted, had they known of the emergency write-in ballot.

3.5 - Where UOCAVA Voters Vote

- California – 17%
- New York – 17%
- Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Texas – 5% respectively
- Florida, Washington, and Massachusetts – 4% respectively
- Ohio, New Jersey, and Virginia – 3% respectively

California represented 17% of all state supplied ballots delivered and 18% of the reported FWABS used. California was also responsible for 25% of non-arriving ballots and 33% of the reported late ballots.

New Yorkers responding to the survey, received 18% of all state-supplied ballots and 25% of the FWABS reportedly used. New York was also responsible for 15% of the reported non-arriving state ballots and 8% of the late ballots reported.

4.0 - UOCAVA Voter Registration Issues - Voters Who Registered to Vote / Requested Ballots in 2006

4.1 - Overall Satisfaction Rate

Of the voter respondents who registered to vote and or requested ballots in 2006, 80% said they were satisfied with the voter registration and ballot request process, and an additional 10% were neutral. 73% said they did not have any questions or problems in the process.

4.2 - Top 3 registration/ballot request methods

Voters continue to use a combination of manual and online voter registration/ballot request methods indicating that alternatives do serve their needs.

#1 Method	43%	Overseas Vote Foundation online registration process
#2 Method	30%	Paper Federal Postcard Application (FPCA) manual process
#3 Method	12%	Federal Voter Assistance Program online FPCA form

For voters who tried to register, but were unable to complete the process, most of them, 58%, never got as far as sending in their forms. 17% sent their form in early enough – between January and August, while the remaining 25% were quite late to register, between September and November.

4.3 - Sending in the Registration/Ballot Request

Regular Mail	73%
Certified Mail	7%
FedEx, DHL or other commercial courier	2%
Military Post Office system	2%
Embassy or Consulate mail pouch system	2%

Just 11% of the respondents reported that they used FAX or email options to return their forms and 7 individuals reported using the new DOD IVAS system to file their registration form.

Not all voters sent in a form this year

The main reasons reported in 2006 for not registering or requesting a ballot were:

My voting materials arrived automatically	25%
I thought I was still registered	20%
I waited too long and missed the deadline	20%

HAVA legislation was amended to extend the validity of UOCAVA voter registration for two consecutive federal election cycles thereby allowing voters to receive their ballots automatically for two consecutive elections.

The same form has multiple uses. In some jurisdictions the form may still need to be re-filed as a ballot request *against* the registration form. This can vary from state to state depending on how the legislation is implemented. We encourage a review of the legislation to alleviate further complications due to its various interpretations.

Will the 2006 voters who received their ballots automatically because they registered in 2004 realize that they need to re-register for 2008 when their two general election cycles are up? Or will they have their turn at a nasty surprise? Communication in all forms will be needed to make sure that doesn't happen.

4.4 - What Gets in the Way of Registering to Vote?

Top 3 Reasons Voters cited as Preventing Completion of the Registration or Ballot Request Process:

#1 Reason	The process was too complicated
#2 Reason	Not knowing where to send the form or who to contact
#3 Reason	Missed the registration deadline

OVF 2006 POST ELECTION SURVEY RESULTS

The chart below illustrates that more first time voters and first time overseas and military voters who were unfamiliar with the UOCAVA registration procedure had questions during the registration process than those who had voted before.

In the voter registration process, did you have any questions and/or problems, and if so, what did they concern? (check all that apply)					
	Total*	What is your voting history?			
		This was (or would have been) my first time voting.	Voted before, but NEVER as an overseas or military absentee voter.	Voted before, but ONLY as an overseas or military absentee voter.	Voted before in the U.S. AND as an overseas or military absentee voter.
	2975	92	310	472	2101
I did not have any questions or problems	2178 73.20%	50 54.30%	183 59.00%	350 74.20%	1595 75.90%
Voting eligibility	86 2.90%	6 6.50%	18 5.80%	11 2.30%	51 2.40%
Registration deadlines	185 6.20%	8 8.70%	42 13.50%	28 5.90%	107 5.10%
Re-registration or filing requirements	150 5.00%	5 5.40%	19 6.10%	22 4.70%	104 5.00%
My US voting residence: where I should vote	185 6.20%	15 16.30%	33 10.60%	29 6.10%	108 5.10%
Personal identification requirements	35 1.20%	2 2.20%	5 1.60%	7 1.50%	21 1.00%
Notarization or witness requirements	69 2.30%	3 3.30%	11 3.50%	11 2.30%	44 2.10%
Election office mailing address	82 2.80%	2 2.20%	18 5.80%	9 1.90%	53 2.50%
My election office required additional forms to be completed	38 1.30%	3 3.30%	3 1.00%	6 1.30%	26 1.20%
Possible mistakes on the form	71 2.40%	3 3.30%	11 3.50%	17 3.60%	40 1.90%
Tax implications	45 1.50%	2 2.20%	4 1.30%	9 1.90%	30 1.40%
Military service implications	10 0.30%	2 2.20%	0 0.00%	1 0.20%	7 0.30%
Other, please specify:	352 11.80%	21 22.80%	56 18.10%	54 11.40%	221 10.50%

* Total = The number of respondents for the entire survey who answered the Row question and, if a filter is applied, meet the filter criteria.

4.5 - Voter Registration Questions and Issues

Most frequent questions/concerns cited:

- Registration deadlines
- My US voting residence: where I should vote
- Re-registration or filing requirement

Additional questions/problems were cited in the following areas:

- Voting eligibility
- Confusion / Disillusion with overseas voting process
- Election Office Mailing Address Problems
- Notarization or witness
- Personal identification requirements
- Notarization or witness requirements
- Election office required additional forms to be completed
- Possible mistakes on the form
- Tax implications

The list of issues reflects some of the many challenges facing UOCAVA voters.

The new Federal Voting Assistance Program IVAS online information pages for voter information sending options, and the National Association of Secretaries of State, www.canivote.org website which listed all online voter registration look-up tools as well as the OVF Election Official Directory, and the OVF Voter Help Desk, were all steps towards surmounting these challenges in 2006.

4.6 - Voter Registration Confirmation

Online Voter Registration Confirmation Tools

Only 4% of the respondents made use of state and county online registration tracking tools. 93% did not know if such a service was available. 3% looked for such tools but did not find them.

As services of this type become more widespread they will be very useful for UOCAVA voters. The number one question coming into the OVF Voter Help Desk is consistently, "Am I Registered?" We recommend broader communication of such services for the jurisdictions/States that have them, including listing of the URLs in the OVF Election Official Directory.

Registration Confirmation

Of those who registered, 42% received a confirmation that their registration was accepted or denied, compared with the higher rate of 56% in 2004. 59% claimed they received no notification that their registration was received or processed.

Of the 42% who received confirmation of their voter registration acceptance or denial, 12% reported that the communication came through email. OVF can attest to the fact that email is a great way to communicate between election offices and UOCAVA voters – we hope it catches on!

The chart below cross tabulates voter satisfaction levels with the voter registration/ballot request process against the type of registration confirmation voters received. The results indicate that the satisfaction in the process is not directly tied to the voter registration confirmation, or its form. One can surmise that it is success through the total process of registration/ballot request and casting his/her ballot that drives the voter to rate his satisfaction so high.

How satisfied were you with process of registering and requesting your ballot for the November 7, 2006 election?							
		Did you receive a confirmation that your registration and ballot request was accepted? (asked of voters who filed registration/ballot request forms)					
	Total*	Yes, by postcard/letter	Yes, by FAX	Yes, by email	Yes, by telephone	No, it was denied	No, I received no confirmation either way
	2975	775	33	357	46	18	1746
Very satisfied	1343 45.10%	448 57.80%	18 54.50%	215 60.20%	21 45.70%	5 27.80%	636 36.40%
Satisfied	1045 35.10%	241 31.10%	8 24.20%	96 26.90%	19 41.30%	6 33.30%	675 38.70%
Neutral	311 10.50%	42 5.40%	2 6.10%	23 6.40%	3 6.50%	1 5.60%	240 13.70%
Dissatisfied	129 4.30%	20 2.60%	4 12.10%	10 2.80%	3 6.50%	2 11.10%	90 5.20%
Very dissatisfied	147 4.90%	24 3.10%	1 3.00%	13 3.60%	0 0.00%	4 22.20%	105 6.00%

* Total = The number of respondents for the entire survey who answered the Row question and, if a filter is applied, meet the filter criteria.

4.7 - Voter Registration Form - Online Submission

Respondents were very positive, 79%, when asked if they would submit a voter registration form online through a secure system with security equivalent to online banking. This response, however, trended down from the 86% who responded positively to the same question in 2004.

The response also stands in stark contrast to the high levels of concern that the remaining 21% had in regards to the various risks involved in online data transfer:

- Concerns about security 66%
- Concerns about privacy 51%
- Concerned about identity theft 41%
- Don't want share personal information online 39%
- Don't trust the Internet 30%
- Concerns about fraud or vote-tampering 25%

Respondents had the same concerns, and to the same extent, regardless of age or education level. Within each age category, the same percent of people were concerned about each category of issue, indicating that either they were the type of respondent that was unconcerned about online security or they were concerned about every aspect thereof. Male respondents to this question indicated they were slightly more willing to share personal information on the Internet than female respondents. In summary, UOCAVA voters like online registration submission, but they want assurance that it is secure.

Survey Comments about online solutions

"RI needs to allow soldiers to register and receive Ballot on email. Most soldiers in theatre do not have access to a fax because they are not secure."

"I work in the IT business, technology is hack-able."

I have tried to register in California for permanent absentee ballot. I work for USG abroad and must vote EVERYTIME absentee. I usually do not receive my ballot, or it arrives too late. There MUST be a way to do it online!

"I don't even use online banking."

Security Red Flag: Although online solutions for UOCAVA voting are attractive from many perspectives, OVF recommends caution. Appropriate online solutions will not risk the security, confidentiality, or identity of voters. As yet, no online solutions for UOCAVA voting have been free of security risks. Online solutions under development now, or to be developed in the future, may provide substantial security improvements. Meanwhile the UOCAVA community members must all be responsible for asking the right questions about security.

5.0 - Voter Outreach

5.1 - Outreach to UOCAVA voters

The majority of voters, 69%, did not receive any registration or ballot advice during the run up to the election.

Not surprisingly, with the abundance of online campaigns and donation drives, 18% of the respondents indicated that they received voter registration or ballot advice from a political party. Indications suggest that their registration efforts may collide with other motivations.

9% of respondents indicated they received registration and balloting advice from their families and friends. Only a few respondents, 5%, received any kind of voter registration brochure or handout.

OVF Word of Caution

If email addresses move from voter registration sites to political campaigns - resulting in voter inboxes filled with donation pleas and un-requested campaign material - the online registration efforts could easily backfire and cause general suspicion of online voter services.

5.2 - Voter Websites

Voters were presented a list of websites and asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the response and service they received.

Marks of "neutral" to "high-satisfaction" were given by 90% of respondents to this question to ALL of the websites listed including:

- Overseas Vote Foundation: www.overseasvotefoundation.org
- American Citizens Abroad: www.aca.ch
- Can I Vote: www.canivote.org
- Federal Voter Assistance Program: www.fvap.gov
- Fed. American Women's Clubs Overseas: www.fawco.org
- League of Women Voters: www.lwv.org or www.vote411.org
- Vote Smart: www.vote-smart.org
- Political Party (any)
- University Study Abroad Program

5.3 - Government Entities

All websites and the main UOCAVA voter agency and representatives received high marks on service and satisfaction rates

- Military Voting Assistance Officers – 92%
- Federal Voter Assistance Program – 89%
- Local election official in the US – 80%
- State Board of Elections – 80%
- US Embassy or Consulate – 72%

Only 2% of respondents went to the Embassy to complete their voter registration form. Regardless, many who had called or visited an Embassy had a lot to say about it:

Survey Comments

"I had gone to the US Embassy in _____ to mail my no US postage required envelope. Getting through security was time consuming since the screening lines were long. Once in, the receptionist said they couldn't accept my mail unless I was in the military, etc. Finally, a _____ local staff suggested I try American Citizen Services in another part of the building. ACS was most helpful."

"My voting experience was great, and anytime I needed to get citizen information, the US Embassy is superb. So, this US citizen is very satisfied."

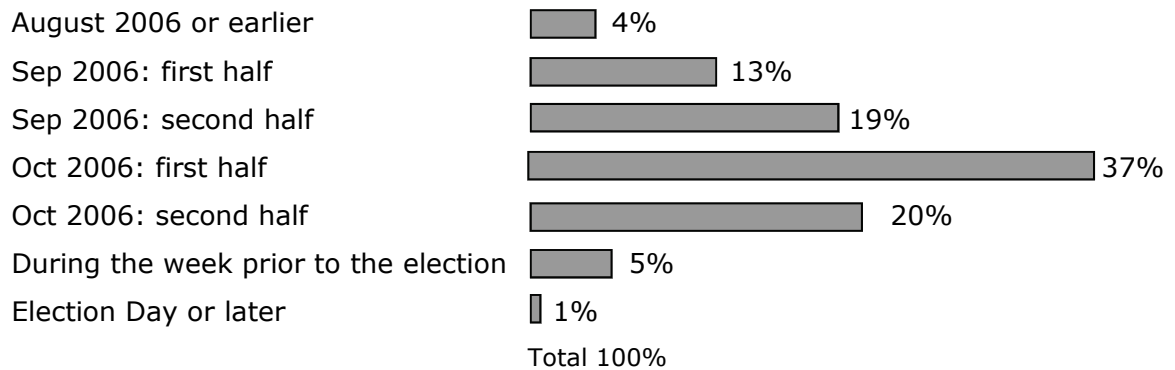
"I have no idea why my requested ballot did not arrive, and when I called the consulate to find out if there were last minute alternatives they had nothing to suggest."

"...the personnel at the embassy in _____ are unpleasant and unhelpful, sometimes hostile!"

6.0 - Overseas Ballot Issues

6.1 - Looks Good for Those Who Receive Their Ballots

Voters were asked when their state ballots arrived. The majority of state-supplied ballots, 73%, arrived before mid-October – a very positive statistic. Now the work is to move up the other 25% or to better inform the voters about the FWAB in cases of late ballots.



6.2 - Late or Non-arriving Ballots - 20% of responding UOCAVA Voters were unable to vote

Top 2 Reasons Why 20% UOCAVA Voters Didn't Vote

1. My ballot did not arrive – (36% of the non-voter group)
2. My ballot arrived too late – (9% of the non-voter group)

Further reasons cited for why people did not vote included:

- Affidavit required me to sign that I currently live in the US
- Ballot complications
- I could not get my ballot notarized
- I could not get a witness
- I could not meet the I.D. requirement
- I didn't think my vote would be counted
- Process too complicated

Consistent with the findings of the previous OVF 2004 Post Election Survey, the main reasons why voters were unable to vote in 2006 continued to stem from the combination of late and non-arriving ballots, 45% of the total who did not vote, or 20% of the total of all respondents -- coupled with the fact that these unsuccessful voters were not sufficiently aware of the alternative emergency Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) to remedy this problem: 24% of the total number of non-voters indicated that they didn't know of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot.

Active Duty Military

The number of active duty military responding to the survey was low, however, of those who responded to the survey, 42%, indicated that they were unable to cast their ballot in this election. Some believed they were registered and they weren't, and some failed to register successfully. 85% of the active duty respondents who were unable to vote cited the cause as a late or non-arriving ballot.

Lack of Candidate Information

Surprisingly, when factoring in a new variable for those who indicated that their lack of candidate information or information on state issues prevented them from voting, a significant 19% chose this option. Reaching voters around the world is not a simple challenge but the effort could be a valuable one should the parties and candidates take it on.

6.3 - Last Minute and Late-arriving Ballots by State

Ballots arriving on election day or the week prior were calculated as late ballots. The 2006 survey identified 7% of all submitted ballots in this category. Ballots arriving so close to the election give a very tight timeline for the voter to vote the ballot and return it in time. A simple business trip might be the cause of not returning a long awaited ballot. There is just no margin for error. This is, of course, a major reason why votes may not be counted for the voters who actually do receive their ballots.

See Addendum Chart 1 for state-by-state comparison

6.4 - The FWAB – a Solution for Those Who Know It Exists

All voters were asked if they were aware of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot which serves as an "emergency" ballot across all states for registered voters whose state-supplied ballots do not arrive in time. Unfortunately only 46% percent knew of it. 14% of the respondents who voted used the FWAB, of which 3% also ended-up sending in their state ballot as well.

FWAB Use in 10 States	
<i>(States with statistically high samples)</i>	
California	11.8%
Florida	5.5%
Illinois	6.8%
New Jersey	14.7%
New York	14.1%
Ohio	11.7%
Pennsylvania	14.7%
Tennessee	20.8%
Texas	8.7%
Washington	3.3%

Although the FWAB allows Federal level voting only, it is indeed a very significant aspect of the UOCAVA voting program that deserves a far greater awareness campaign. The number of voters who did not vote would have dropped by 31% in 2006 had they known to use the FWAB.

6.5 - High Marks for Ballot Ease-of-Use

Survey Comment

"My absentee ballot arrived too late, so I completed the Federal Write-in Ballot instead. I wish my state would have confirmed that they received my fax and completed form. I faxed them twice and emailed them twice and never received a reply. I wish they would have realized how long it takes to get a ballot via US mail to an overseas post via diplomatic pouch mail. They waited too long to send the ballots."

Only respondents who voted were asked ballot ease-of-use questions. Ballots were identified as easy-to-use to and complete for 97% of this group. An overwhelming percentage, 95%, also claimed to be neutral or satisfied with the balloting aspects of their November 2006 voting experience.

6.6 - Range of Ballot Issues

23% of voters reported a range of issues that complicated their UOCAVA ballot experience:

- I expected to *only* vote for House and Senate
- I expected to vote for *more* than House or Senate
- Civilian receiving a military ballot
- Military receiving a civilian ballot
- "Affidavit stated I currently live in the US"
- Secrecy/Validity issues
(photocopied ballot, name on secrecy envelope, lack of secrecy envelope)
- Address/Residency problems
- Ballot did not look official

As with the registration issues, these little problems can add up to ballots not being returned.

6.7 - A Question of Terminology

Survey Comment:

"I was concerned about signing forms swearing that I live in [State] in order to vote absentee. It would seem that allowances are made for people in the military but not for US citizens working and living overseas."

Some voters were afraid to send in ballot envelopes or affidavits that stated that the voter was "currently resident" at their stateside voting address. Many UOCAVA voters generally want to have their election official know they are NOT currently resident in their state, rather that they are abroad! Simple modifications or clarifications regarding terminology on ballots sent overseas could make a difference.

6.8 - Which Ballot?

The greatest confusion was reported by Federal Voters who expected to only vote for House and Senate, but were surprised to receive a full state ballot, 35%. The reverse was also true, voters who expected a full-state ballot were surprised when they were not able to vote for more than House and Senate because they only received a Federal Ballot, 24%

6.9 - Notarizations and Oaths – inconsistency between states and for some voters, the reason their ballot never gets cast

"[State] requirement to have a US citizen sign the envelope is pointless. It's not required that the citizen know me, so what does this accomplish? This is no safeguard that the person voting is who is supposed to vote. Why can't a notary, lawyer, or some other adult who actually knows me do it? As other US citizens living abroad may be difficult to find, the requirement is onerous, as well as not accomplishing anything for assuring the security of the vote."

"I've just done a brief search by Internet and have found that there is a state statute requiring overseas voters to have an adult US citizen witness the absentee ballot. I noticed that not all states require this; some just require a witness of any nationality. Interestingly, [State] doesn't require any witness. When I applied for the absentee ballot in person this summer, the town clerk should have told me I'd need to bring a friend to France with me if I really wanted to vote!"

6.10 - What About Online Voting?

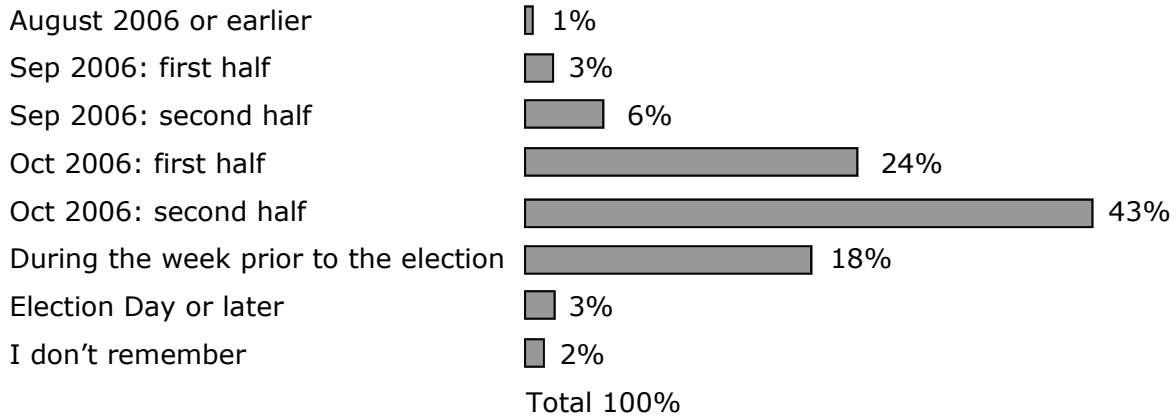
"Developing voting on-line would be very advantageous - cost efficient for the various States and for the voter, but it needs guarantees so that the voter feels comfortable on receipt of vote, inclusion of vote and secrecy of vote - not an easy combination to obtain."

"...secure voting for military personnel should be pursued."

"I am increasingly concerned about hackers, etc. I want to KNOW that my vote is getting where it needs to go and being counted as I intended. I've spent a lot on Fed Ex this year (possibly more than I estimated) to that end.~"

6.11 - Ballot Return

98.5%, of those who received their state-supplied ballots claim to have used it, and 77% of these ballots went back by the end of October.



Some form of physical post was used to return ballots in 90% of cases.

- Regular Mail 79%
- Certified Mail 7%
- FedEx, DHL or other commercial courier 3%
- Embassy or Consulate mail pouch system 2%
- Military Post Office system 1%
- The remaining 10% was made up of several other return methods including, FAX, email and personal delivery.

6.12 - Ballot Return Envelopes

Ballot envelopes continue to pose problems for many voters. The top 3 issues cited in 2006 were:

1. Postage required/not required
2. "USA" not included in ballot mail-to address
3. Size of the return envelope

Not listed in the survey options was the issue of the ballot being returned to the voter due to an envelope issue which appeared through the voluntary comments. Most often it is caused by addresses on both sides of the envelope, something which is also not permitted in some countries. Ballot envelopes are so often used as more than just envelopes – they are also official documents that must meet particular specifications and sometimes their correct completion is tied to the acceptance of the ballot. It might be time to let envelopes be envelopes and keep the official documents inside them.

Additional issues were noted in the following areas:

- Missing ballot secrecy envelope/sleeve
- Incorrect or incomplete street mailing address
- Confidential information on the envelope
- Received military voter instead of civilian envelope
- Received civilian instead of military voter envelope
- Affidavit required me to sign that I currently live in the US
- Witness or notary requirements
- Unofficial markings on the envelope (party affiliation, numbers, other)

An "envelope" comment from a respondent...

Survey Comment

"My only suggestion is to include "USA" on the return ballot envelope. The election before this one I actually forgot to write it on my envelope and it was returned to me (I put my return address on there) so my vote was not counted. However, this last election I remembered, and I assume it arrived in time. Thank you!"

6.13 - Postage and Other Costs

Most voters, 86%, were able to post their ballot for the equivalent of \$5 or less in 2006 – in 2004 it was 75%. We were pleased to see that the big spending dropped from 25% to 14% this year. It is a concern that some are spending between \$5 and \$100 USD to vote. Timely ballot arrival will improve this situation.

Some people have a heavy price to pay – additional costs were noted by 13% of the voters. These included Notarization fees, Witness fees, Transportation costs, Telephone and FAX costs, Internet access fees and Time off work. 87% did not have additional costs.

7.0 - Voter Confidence

Are voters confident that their votes were counted?

Of voters who were unable to vote in 2006, 8% claimed that they did not send in their ballot because they did not feel their vote would be counted. More women indicated this lack of confidence than men in a ratio of 1.6:1.0.

The 8% who lacked confidence was in contrast to 2004 where a surprising 42% of the voters were *not* confident that their vote was counted when the question was asked directly and apart from any other.

Although the question was *not* asked directly this year, a flood of comments on the subject were pro-actively offered – all of which point to a problem here, be it a problem in perception or reality. Assurance that one's vote gets counted is a deep part of the motivation to vote. We have all heard, "every vote counts." The comments reflected the fact that for many, this level of confidence has been undermined.

Extended Ballot Receipt Deadlines

Many states have extended ballot arrival deadlines for UOCAVA voters. One can consider that this is good; it gives the voter more time to return their ballot. It addresses logistical aspects of UOCAVA which are difficult to surmount, like unpredictable postal services. But is it good? Or is it a "Band-aid" for the late ballot problem which was not solved in another manner – and if so, what are the consequences? Of course an extended deadline helps to resolve the late ballot return problem which is created by the late ballot delivery problem... But then again, it exacerbates the consequential problem that voters know the election has been called before their vote even arrived back home!

Any differences that exist between the counting process for UOCAVA votes and domestic votes could very well be one of the most critically important problems we face in trying to build enfranchisement – assurance to voters that their vote is counted and that it matters. And make no mistake: the voters don't want their vote counted two weeks late, they want it counted on Election Day before the news channels announce the winner.

This is not a recommendation to rollback the extended deadlines, rather, a reminder about the real objectives of this voting program: to send ballots on time, receive them back in time, and to transparently assure that they are included in the Election Day vote count.

Additional Quote and Comment Highlights:

"I was really saddened and frustrated to read that because of a fault in voting machines in Colorado, that all overseas ballots would not be counted for days -- all after the election results had already been named. Once again, making me feel that my vote does not count!!"

"I would have liked some kind of receipt proving my vote had been received and registered. I had the feeling I was blindly sending my ballot into the universe without being sure it would ever be counted. I would have liked proof of the content of my vote, as I have serious concerns about the ethics of vote counting, be they sent via absentee ballot or Diebold machines."

Messages from the Military Front Line

"I am currently deployed to Iraq. I do not have faxing capability at my current location. Is there anyway that I can email the FPCA to you? I know if I am having this issue that other soldiers in Iraq are probably having the same problem. What is the possibility of changing the rules to allow Soldiers to register and receive their absentee ballot via email?"

"I suspect my application was lost in transit... we loose equipment and cargo on a daily basis to insurgent activities."

"I did all the steps that were required of me to register to vote in my home state of _____. The problem was that they never sent me anything in return. So I was unable to vote. There was also no contact information posted on the _____ S.O.S. (Secretary of State), so I had no one to call (even if I could get through from Iraq). I was VERY disappointed with the system. I believe that our overseas troops deserve MUCH better, after all they are the ones who ensure our rights, of which the right to vote is one."

"I was pretty disturbed about the write-in absentee ballot and didn't know who to complain to. The Voting Assistance Officers here are only part-timers who basically just pass out the voter registration cards and the absentee ballots and help. We deal all the time with protecting privacy info and the U.S. Govt is the worst abuser. (I am surprised that IRS finally broke their habit of mailing people's income tax books with their SSNs on the address label. That means they exposed your SSN both coming and going)."

8.0 Conclusion

The survey respondents provided OVF outstanding feedback regarding registration and balloting experiences in this past election. The 10% response rate to a Midterm voter survey underscores the commitment of the UOCAVA voter group to its own enfranchisement.

Survey recipients had provided their email addresses to OVF and identified themselves as UOCAVA voters. These people likely learned of OVF through its online presence or through traditional media stories identifying OVF's online address. They likely have high levels of Internet familiarity and of interest in seeking out information on elections. Other UOCAVA eligible voters may not share these characteristics. Therefore it is difficult to predict whether the survey results are representative of the results which might flow from a survey of a random sample of persons eligible to vote pursuant to UOCAVA.

Regardless, this survey provides a highly useful and timely snapshot of the problems and successes taking place within the UOCAVA voting arena. UOCAVA voters need to be reminded of their part in the process: they must register to vote first and they must make sure their absentee ballot request is on file with a current address. Election officials and voting organizations must improve communication of UOCAVA requirements to UOCAVA voters. OVF is committed to expanding the number registered UOCAVA eligible voters. OVF is also committed to reducing the 20% statistic of would-be voters who don't succeed at voting.

The UOCAVA voter community continues to grow in numbers and visibility. The fact that candidates are starting to campaign to overseas citizens is a tremendous sign of change. It is a sign that they recognize how in close elections, the overseas and military votes could be the determining votes.

Not only do they realize it, candidates are putting aside campaign money to communicate to the overseas electorate!

OVF looks forward to additional collaboration with members of the UOCAVA voter community in its continuing efforts to identify and address issues affecting the quality of the UOCAVA voter experience.

9.0 - Addendum Chart 1

In what state did you register or would you have registered to vote?				
	Total*	Did you receive a ballot from your state for the November 7, 2006 election?	When did your official state-supplied ballot ARRIVE for the Nov. 7, 2006 midterm election?	
		Number who Voted	During the week prior to the election	Election Day or later
	Total*	75.27%	5.31%	1.29%
	4506	3392	180	44
Alabama	16 0.40%	9 0.30%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Alaska	8 0.20%	5 0.10%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
American Samoa	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Arizona	69 1.50%	49 1.40%	6 3.30%	1 2.30%
Arkansas	15 0.30%	10 0.30%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%
California	750 16.60%	582 17.20%	23 12.80%	9 20.50%
Colorado	104 2.30%	77 2.30%	9 5.00%	1 2.30%
Connecticut	74 1.60%	57 1.70%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Delaware	16 0.40%	14 0.40%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
District of Columbia	24 0.50%	9 0.30%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%
Florida	200 4.40%	151 4.50%	5 2.80%	1 2.30%
Georgia	54 1.20%	33 1.00%	1 0.60%	1 2.30%
Guam	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Hawaii	32 0.70%	25 0.70%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%

OVF 2006 POST ELECTION SURVEY RESULTS

In what state did you register or would you have registered to vote?				
	Total*	Did you receive a ballot from your state for the November 7, 2006 election?	When did your official state-supplied ballot ARRIVE for the Nov. 7, 2006 midterm election?	
		Number who Voted	During the week prior to the election	Election Day or later
	Total*	75.27%	5.31%	1.29%
	4506	3392	180	44
Idaho	14 0.30%	9 0.30%	0 0.00%	1 2.30%
Illinois	204 4.50%	159 4.70%	2 1.10%	1 2.30%
Indiana	60 1.30%	43 1.30%	3 1.70%	3 6.80%
Iowa	44 1.00%	31 0.90%	4 2.20%	0 0.00%
Kansas	25 0.60%	19 0.60%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Kentucky	25 0.60%	20 0.60%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%
Louisiana	13 0.30%	8 0.20%	3 1.70%	1 2.30%
Maine	21 0.50%	13 0.40%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Maryland	97 2.20%	77 2.30%	9 5.00%	1 2.30%
Massachusetts	163 3.60%	99 2.90%	12 6.70%	1 2.30%
Michigan	110 2.40%	63 1.90%	8 4.40%	4 9.10%
Minnesota	106 2.40%	86 2.50%	2 1.10%	2 4.50%
Mississippi	1 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Missouri	55 1.20%	44 1.30%	2 1.10%	2 4.50%
Montana	15 0.30%	10 0.30%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Nebraska	9 0.20%	7 0.20%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Nevada	19 0.40%	14 0.40%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
New Hampshire	32 0.70%	23 0.70%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%
New Jersey	148 3.30%	106 3.10%	8 4.40%	0 0.00%
New Mexico	41 0.90%	22 0.60%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%

O V F 2 0 0 6 P O S T E L E C T I O N S U R V E Y R E S U L T S

In what state did you register or would you have registered to vote?				
	Total*	Did you receive a ballot from your state for the November 7, 2006 election?	When did your official state-supplied ballot ARRIVE for the Nov. 7, 2006 midterm election?	
		Number who Voted	During the week prior to the election	Election Day or later
	Total*	75.27%	5.31%	1.29%
	4506	3392	180	44
New York	750 16.60%	607 17.90%	18 10.00%	2 4.50%
North Carolina	62 1.40%	44 1.30%	3 1.70%	1 2.30%
North Dakota	8 0.20%	5 0.10%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Ohio	144 3.20%	109 3.20%	16 8.90%	5 11.40%
Oklahoma	17 0.40%	13 0.40%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Oregon	80 1.80%	67 2.00%	1 0.60%	1 2.30%
Pennsylvania	211 4.70%	170 5.00%	6 3.30%	2 4.50%
Puerto Rico	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Rhode Island	14 0.30%	11 0.30%	4 2.20%	0 0.00%
South Carolina	20 0.40%	15 0.40%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Sough Dakota	10 0.20%	7 0.20%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Tennessee	37 0.80%	23 0.70%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Texas	205 4.50%	159 4.70%	3 1.70%	3 6.80%
Utah	19 0.40%	7 0.20%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Vermont	13 0.30%	8 0.20%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Virgin Islands	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Virginia	124 2.80%	94 2.80%	2 1.10%	0 0.00%
Washington	160 3.60%	142 4.20%	8 4.40%	0 0.00%
West Virginia	5 0.10%	5 0.10%	1 0.60%	0 0.00%
Wisconsin	58 1.30%	29 0.90%	2 1.10%	1 2.30%
Wyoming	5 0.10%	3 0.10%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%

O V F 2 0 0 6 P O S T E L E C T I O N S U R V E Y R E S U L T S
