

MOVING FORWARD

2010 OVF POST ELECTION UOCAVA SURVEY REPORT AND ANALYSIS

A DETAILED LOOK AT HOW
OVERSEAS AND MILITARY
VOTERS AND ELECTION
OFFICIALS FARED IN THE
2010 ELECTION, WITH
SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MILITARY AND OVERSEAS
VOTER EMPOWERMENT ACT

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I

Executive Summary

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) is pleased to release the results of its 2010 Post Election Survey of Military and Overseas Voters and the 2010 Local Election Official Survey.¹ More than 5,000 voters in 140 countries and more than 1,550 local election officials in the US participated in the OVF surveys. These surveys, now in their fourth federal election cycle, provide a unique look into the voting experiences of overseas citizens, and are an unequalled resource in OVF's ongoing mission to help overseas and military Americans register and vote in federal elections.

The results of the 2010 surveys reveal that the impact of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act passed in October 2009 on voters is still mild.² Nevertheless, the results are encouraging, and we have turned a corner and are now headed in a new direction.

MOVE Act implementation is beginning to show in key areas such as an increase in the percentage of voters receiving ballots in time to vote. The sweeping reforms will need to be completely implemented before their impact is felt to their full potential.

Highlights of the study revealed the following:

- More than four-fifths of voters (82 percent) received the ballot that they requested, which represents a 5 percent improvement over 2008.
- Fewer voters reported receiving their ballots late. 16.5 percent of those voters who indicated that they wanted to participate reported getting their ballot after the middle of October.
 - o To summarize, one-third of respondents attempted to vote but could not because they either did not get a ballot or got it too late, a strong improvement over the 50 percent reported in 2008.
- There was an increase in the use of electronic transmission methods of blank ballots. All 50 states provided for the electronic transmission of blank ballots to voters, mainly via email or online download, and two states allowed transmission by fax. Use of electronic transmission was up from 20 states in 2008 and demonstrates a direct response to this MOVE Act mandate.
- The vast majority of voters (80 percent) used some form

¹ The *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* is commonly referred to as *UOCAVA*. *UOCAVA* voters are U.S. citizens who are active members of the Uniformed Services, the Merchant Marine, and the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, their family members, and U.S. citizens residing outside the United States. The Act, passed in 1986, provides the legal basis for absentee voting requirements for these citizens.

² The *Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act* of 2009 amended *UOCAVA* and paved the way for modernization in the arena of military and overseas voting in the areas of technology, communications and election administration. The MOVE Act required states to implement nearly all of its provisions in time for 2010's federal elections.

of electronic method to complete a registration/ballot request form, and nearly one quarter (23 percent) of voters chose to receive their blank ballots via electronic transmission.

- Voters who used electronic methods to request a ballot were less likely to receive a ballot. Of the 18 percent of voters who did not receive their requested ballots, 22 percent of them used either email or fax to send in a voter registration/ballot request form (unchanged from 2008), whereas only 16 percent of those who used physical postal methods did not get a ballot.
- One fifth (20 percent) of the election officials surveyed reported upgrades to their IT systems and over one third (37 percent) upgraded their website in response to the MOVE Act.
- Despite the fact that all states provided for some electronic blank ballot delivery mechanism, almost one-third (29 percent) of local election officials (LEOs) reported that they were not providing ballots electronically, which indicates that much of the MOVE Act implementation took place on the state level rather than the local level.³ LEOs gave low marks to online ballot delivery and online ballot tracking:
 - o Only 13 percent of LEOs indicated that online ballot delivery "worked well"
 - o 6.8 percent of LEOs indicated that online ballot tracking "worked well"
- The small 10 to 20 percent of voters who used the online tracking services were slightly more satisfied with the registration process than those who did not. There was no noticeable relationship between the use of tracking mechanisms and satisfaction with the balloting process. Many voters expressed that they would have used the systems if they had been aware of them, pointing to a communication problem.
- Confusion among voters and election officials around registration/ballot request form re-filing requirements continued during this year of transition to full MOVE implementation.
- Although the MOVE Act prohibits states from rejecting ballots that do not have notarization or witnesses, it does not stop states from requesting voters to obtain such signatures on their ballots and thus did not stop voters from dropping out of the voting process when reading instructions to find a notary or witness.

³ "Online (or 'electronic') ballot delivery" refers to the ability of a voter to both go to a website and download a blank ballot, or to receive a ballot as an email attachment or by fax. "Online ballot tracking" refers to the ability of a voter to consult a website service to confirm whether or not his/her ballot has been sent and voted ballot received.

Based on the results of OVF's surveys and our experience supporting overseas and military voters, OVF makes the following recommendations:

1. *We emphatically recommend that all states seek long term solutions to comply with the MOVE mandated ballot transmission timeline and avoid the waiver process while providing voters the necessary "time to vote."*
2. *We call for an early and thorough legislative review of UOCAVA in light of the MOVE Act 2010 implementation with an aim at identifying issues created by the legislative changes. Focus should be directed at amending the law to smooth out newly emerging problems stemming from poorly worded provisions, such as those regarding notarization and ballot request re-filing requirements for civilian voters.*
3. *We encourage adoption by the states of the proposed Uniform Military and Overseas Voter Act (UMOVA) brought forth by the Uniform Law Commission intended to harmonize UOCAVA implementation for overseas and military voters across all states and territories.*
4. *We suggest further support of local election officials regarding the implementation of new technology measures including online ballot request, blank ballot delivery and ballot tracking.*
5. *We recommend that states employ strict privacy and security mechanisms when applying technology to UOCAVA processes to protect the personal identities and votes of all those partaking in the franchise under this law.*
6. *We strongly encourage growth in communications and outreach by all states to their participating overseas and military voters. Pro-active communications from states to voters, whether online through email and social media or by post, could help to encourage timely participation and improved awareness of new voter services.*

The results of the 2010 surveys demonstrate that the passage of the MOVE Act was just the first step in a much longer process of implementation and that more efforts in technical and administrative action will be needed before the UOCAVA voting process is comprehensively improved. The MOVE Act reforms have given sufficient impetus to shift the majority of voters to new electronic methods for voter registration assistance and blank ballot receipt. However, progress is needed to increase the reliability of requested ballots to arrive for voters using these electronic methods. Physical postal methods and express mail remain in place for ballot return. Although voter satisfaction remained high, our report underscores the

need to continue to focus on the fulfillment of MOVE mandates on both the state and local levels, and on increasing communications and outreach with voters.

We look forward to the next election cycle when continued diligence in implementing the provisions of the MOVE Act within every responsible agency, as well as state and local election offices will be underway. With real experience and lessons learned from 2010, efforts can be more focused and bring stronger 2012 results.

Overseas Vote Foundation - 2010 in Review

OVF's reach continued to grow in 2010 with New York State becoming the eighth state to adopt a customized OVF State Hosted System featuring the full complement of integrated voter services to support their transition to MOVE Act compliance. New York's implementation also stands out as the first installation of an integrated Power to MOVE voter registration, information, and ballot delivery solution offered jointly by OVF and Scyt! Secure Electronic Voting. In addition, a strategic agreement was crafted with BIPAC's nonpartisan services arm, destined to bring OVF's voter services to thousands of multinational corporations that BIPAC supports with tailored election websites.

OVF now maintains seventeen websites offering the complete suite of OVF integrated voter services. These include State Hosted Systems for Alabama, Kentucky, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Texas, West Virginia and Vermont. The League of Women Voters, FAWCO and Rock the Vote also feature OVF hosted systems for the voters they serve. Exxon Mobil and BIPAC bring OVF services to US employees of major corporations overseas. OVF continues to support our main 'Classic' site, as well as Youth Vote Overseas, Military Voter Services, and a 'Lite' edition for voters in remote areas with low-bandwidth internet access.

The OVF sites were visited by 720,000 website users in 2010. Out of those, 28,000 voters used OVF registration and ballot services in 2010. The top five

states in terms of voter usage of OVF registration and ballot services were: Texas, New York, Minnesota, California and Ohio, in order of volume with Texas taking the lead. We thank the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for their support in directing voters to their state-specific voter services sites.

OVF also launched several new voter outreach concepts in 2010. We thank the Pew Charitable Trusts for their generous grant in support of development and recruitment of

“ The directions regarding my ballot received by email were a little confusing, but I cannot praise my local board enough for responding immediately and clearly to my questions. I felt included, engaged and counted! ”

Overseas Voter, Anonymous

the 'Overseas Voter Legislative Action Network,' which is now maintained by the Pew Center of the States. We are also grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for their grant sponsorship which assisted OVF in launching a new outreach strategy, 'Educate.Participate.Connect.', under which the 'Cocktail Party Civics' program was initiated.

2010 Post Election Survey Overview

OVF's 62-question 2010 Post Election Military and Overseas Voter Survey was launched on Election Day, November 2, 2010 and ran through December 31, 2010. 5,257 UOCAVA voters completed the survey, resulting in a 5.5 percent response rate. The survey focused primarily on matters affecting their voting experience and intended to gain both quantitative and qualitative data. This is OVF's fourth post election voter survey.

The 2010 Local Election Official (LEO) survey was sent to 10,712 LEO's in jurisdictions around the US. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were included in the survey distribution. The 55-question LEO survey ran from November 30, 2010 through January 1, 2011. 1,555 LEOs responded, which represents a 14.5 percent response rate. It was the third post election LEO survey that OVF has executed.

About Overseas Vote Foundation

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) helps overseas and military voters participate in federal elections. We do this by providing public access to innovative voter registration tools and services. Overseas American citizens, State Department employees, and active duty uniformed service members and their accompanying families within and outside of the United States vote under UOCAVA and can all register to vote from abroad using OVF's services. OVF is not connected in any way with any US government or US military organization. OVF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan public charity incorporated in Delaware.

OVF is committed to open dialogue, and aims to nurture constructive discussion on the role and use of technology in UOCAVA voting. OVF believes that, when applied appropriately and transparently, new technologies and the power of the internet can bring UOCAVA forward faster than any other element in the mix of tools. Seventeen customized websites offer millions of visitors access to the complete suite of OVF's internet-based voter services. OVF's research reports can be downloaded from the OVF website: <https://www.overseasvotefoundation.org/initiatives-research>

II

Evaluating Implementation of the MOVE Act

The passage of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act in October 2009 heralded the first major policy change for overseas and military voters in more than a decade, an issue that was brought to the forefront by the Help America Vote Act of 2002. This groundbreaking legislation amended UOCAVA and paved the way for modernization in the arena of military and overseas voting. The key provisions of the MOVE Act targeted:

- technology (voter registration information online, options for electronic delivery of blank ballots, and ballot tracking systems),
- communications (use of email to communicate with voters), and
- election administration (transmission of blank ballots 45 days before Election Day).

The MOVE Act required states to implement these provisions in time for 2010's federal election. States unable to meet the 45-day pre-election ballot transit deadline were required to file a request for a waiver, first consulting with the U.S. Attorney General and with approval provided by the Department of Defense. Throughout the election cycle, OVF monitored implementation, both on the policy and election administration level. As of August 2010, 24 states had passed measures to establish state-level compliance with the MOVE Act, while related legislation failed to pass in Alabama and Wisconsin. By the end of 2010, 32 states had enacted new laws.

With this new law in mind, new questions were added to OVF's Post-Election Survey in order to tap into the experiences of both voters and election officials. This year's post-election research report draws on these survey results, as well as other data that OVF has collected over the past year. The results demonstrate the impressive progress made by many states, while at the same time illuminating the need for states to improve outreach to military and overseas voters in order to improve awareness of the new services available to them.

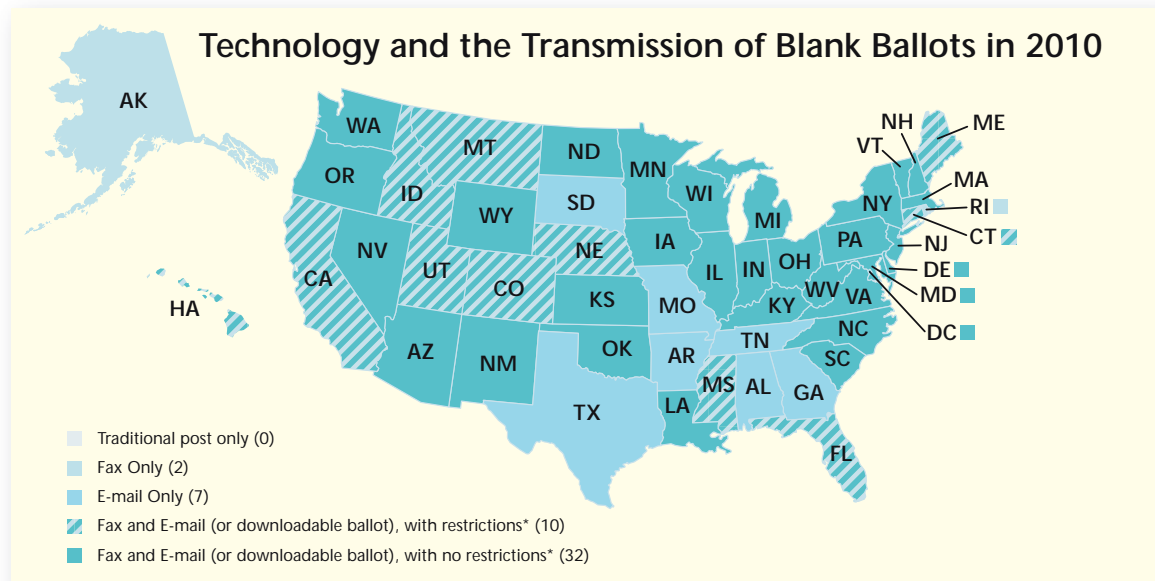
A.Requirement: Voter registration applications, absentee ballot applications and blank ballots must be available electronically (Sections 577 and 578)

As a result of Sections 577 and 578 within the MOVE Act, 2010 was an important year for technology and elections, especially for military and overseas voters. Several states were creative in their interpretation of the mandate to make blank ballots available electronically. The FVAP quickly put in place a new program that helped approximately twenty states launch new tools for online ballot

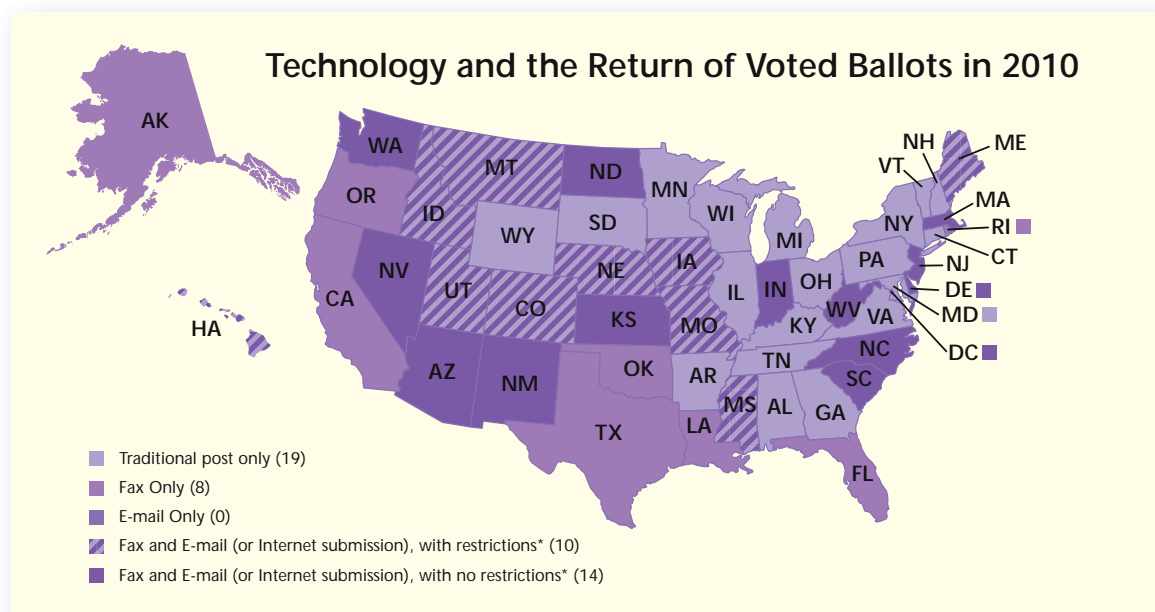
delivery and tracking. Many states, including Minnesota and Texas, improved their existing systems by adding new services to supplement the new technologies they had put in place over the previous election cycle. Separately, new pilots for "Internet Voting" were launched in West Virginia and the District of Columbia, with varied success and hefty doses of controversy.⁴

⁴ The MOVE Act mandated only that states provide voters with an option for online blank ballot delivery. It did not specify or require any form of online voted ballot return.

With all of these differences, what exactly did each state offer overseas and military voters in 2010? The maps below show how the states used technology in the 2010 elections to distribute blank ballots, and in some cases to receive voted ballots. The MOVE Act mandated blank ballot delivery only and there was consistent use of electronic methods to transmit blank ballots. In contrast, states relied mainly on postal and express mail solutions for ballot return rather than making broad use of the Internet as the medium to receive voted ballots.



*Some states only allow certain segments of the population to use fax and email. For example, several states only allow military personnel (and not overseas civilians) to receive a blank ballot via email. In some states, email is not available in all counties or prior approval is required. These states are described as having "restrictions." Other states allow all unrestricted access to blank ballots via email.



*Some states only allow certain segments of the population to use fax and email to return voted ballots. For example, several states only allow military personnel (and not overseas civilians) to return a voted ballot via email. Other states will only allow the return of a voted ballot via email if it is an emergency situation. These states are described as having "restrictions."

There was a remarkable increase in the use of electronic transmission methods for delivery of blank ballots. In 2010, all 50 states provided for the transmission of a blank ballot in an electronic form (mainly email or online download). This use was up from 20 states in 2008. Only two states, Alaska and Rhode Island, offered blank ballots via fax as their only electronic delivery method. Several states place restrictions on the use of email. For example, Colorado only allows military voters to receive ballots via email and not overseas civilians.

Table 1 summarizes how voters used electronic methods in 2010. Approximately 80 percent of voters used some form of electronic method (e.g. website) to complete a registration/ballot request form, and nearly one quarter (23 percent) of voters chose to receive their blank ballots via electronic transmission.

These results indicate that advancements were made in using electronic methods to access and complete voter registration forms and receive blank ballots, while traditional post remained the primary method for voter registration and ballot return. Reformers, advocates and legislators alike anticipated that the implementation of such MOVE Act technology provisions would reduce the time needed to register and vote on the front end of the process (i.e. registration and blank ballot delivery).

Election officials seem to have had some reservations with the new ballot delivery procedures. Only 205 (13 percent) of responding Local Election Officials (LEO) reported that their process for handling online ballot delivery to voters “worked well”. In fact, 442 jurisdictions (29 percent) reported that they did not even send out blank ballots electronically. Of those jurisdictions that did send ballots electronically, 702 (46 percent) used email, 236 (15.6 percent) used fax and 174 (11.5 percent) provided online ballot download.

TABLE 1: VOTER USE OF ELECTRONIC METHODS IN 2010

	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses
Registration		
Completion of Registration/Ballot request form, electronic methods (websites)	88%	77%
Filing Registration/Ballot request form, paper methods	12%	23%
Returning Registration/Ballot request form, electronic methods (email, fax, document upload)	22%	31%
Returning Registration/Ballot request form, physical methods (traditional post or express mail methods)	72%	64%
Balloting		
Receiving Blank Ballot, electronic methods (email, fax or document download)	22%	24%
Receiving Blank Ballot, paper methods (traditional post or express mail methods)	76%	71%
Returning Voted Ballot, electronic methods (email, fax or upload)	9%	12%
Returning Voted Ballot, physical methods (traditional post or express mail methods)	89%	86%

NOTE: Table indicates percentage of responses to the following questions: “Which of the following did you use to complete the registration/request form for the 2010 elections? (check all that apply)” “How did you send in your voter registration/ballot request form?” “How did you receive your official ballot?” “How did you return your completed ballot for the November 2, 2010 General Election?” Controlled survey responses are derived from the invitation only responses from the OVF mailing list. Open survey responses come from the use of an open URL.

B. Requirement: Ballot Tracking Mechanism (Section 580(h))

One of the consistent concerns of voters that we have documented through OVF's Post Election Surveys, is whether or not their ballots have been received and counted. This uncertainty is a deterrent for many individuals overseas and one reason that some eligible voters choose not to vote. Furthermore, overseeing agencies, such as the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), the FVAP, and Congress have been unable to observe what was actually happening with ballots on the local level. In an attempt to reduce this apprehension among voters and responsible agencies, as well as to provide greater transparency to this heretofore murky process, the MOVE Act requires states to create ballot tracking mechanisms that voters can access to confirm their ballots are received. Regardless of state or jurisdiction, military and overseas voters should be able to check their ballot status online.

Only about 10 percent of LEOs reported offering tracking services to voters on their own local elections website, while 53.4 percent indicated that these services were offered via the State Board of Elections or Secretary of State website. Nearly 16 percent responded that these services were not offered anywhere, despite federal requirements. Similar to the low rating for online ballot delivery, only 102 (or 6.8 percent) LEOs described their system of online ballot tracking as "working well."

In the 2010 Post-Election Voter Survey, OVF first asked voters who sent in a registration form if they had used a tracking system. We then asked all voters if they had used a tracking system to check their registration and/or ballot status. As the survey results in Table 2 demonstrate, few voters took advantage of these systems (between 10 and 20 percent). One of the most common responses among "other" was, "If I had known about it, I would have used it," which clearly points to a communication issue. In fact, those respondents who used the online ballot tracking services were more satisfied with the registration process than those who did not. There was no relationship between the use of tracking mechanisms and satisfaction with the balloting process.



OVF Volunteer Alan Benson at the JFK Friendship Center in Berlin.

TABLE 2: VOTER USE OF BALLOT TRACKING MECHANISMS

	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses	Total Responses	Percent
Did you use an online tracking system from your state at any time? (respondents who sent in a registration form)				
Yes	231	32	263	10.04%
No	2209	148	2357	89.96%
Did you consult your state elections website regarding any of the following? (all voters)				
Your registration/ballot request status	898	70	968	18.41%
If your ballot was received and counted	330	27	357	6.79%

Note: Controlled survey responses are derived from the invitation only responses from the OVF mailing list. Open survey responses come from the use of an open URL.

Awareness of these new online tools appears to have been very low during the election, and many states were late in releasing and promoting such services. This demonstrates again that technological advances can only benefit voters when combined with effective outreach, a challenge that OVF has faced from the outset of providing its own online services.

C. Requirement: Designate a Means for Electronic Communication (Section 577)

The 2008 OVF Post-Election Survey report identified email as the dominant source of communication between election officials and voters. The MOVE Act worked to solidify this in 2010 by requiring states to officially establish a means of electronic communication with voters for the request and receipt of registration materials and for providing election and voting information. Despite reduced midterm election turnout, LEOs reported a slight percentage increase in the amount of email traffic in 2010.

Although written communication by mail still remains important (27.3 percent), 850 LEOs (57 percent) reported that email was their most frequent form of communication with voters. Nonetheless, 12 percent of LEO survey respondents reported that they do not communicate with voters by email and 22 percent do not collect the email addresses of those voters who contact them. Among the reasons that LEOs gave for not using email is that they believe it is "not necessary." Because 87 percent of those LEOs that use email indicated that "email works well for us," we view the 12 percent as a dwindling population.

D. Requirement: Single Application for Multiple Elections (Sec. 585)

Section 585 of the MOVE Act removed the requirement that a single registration/ballot request form could serve as a request to receive ballots for two election cycles. This provision was a source of major confusion among voters in 2010. Would requests sent in 2008 be honored in 2010? Should voters re-file a ballot request form? Not surprisingly, the number one question among those who completed the registration process was about re-registration or filing requirements (121 respondents).

Due to the fact that the same form was previously treated as a valid ballot request in many states for four years (two general election cycles), implementation of this requirement was not consistent, leading to confusion among voters and officials. Many states considered 2010 a year of transition to this new provision, and felt compelled to honor the 2008 ballot requests. At the same time, more jurisdictions required a new ballot request form in 2010 than in 2008. When asked about their system for sending ballots to overseas and military voters, 53 percent of election officials reported that overseas and military voters who registered in 2008 received a 2010 ballot without filing a new form, whereas 15 percent required voters to file a new form. However, only 26 percent of voters reported getting a ballot without filing a new form.

The different responses from LEOs and the corresponding confusion from voters further illustrate the uncertainty over the implementation of this part of the MOVE Act. OVF recommends that this provision be amended to be uniform for both military and civilian voters, which, as currently written, it is not. We predict that over time, with similar re-filing requirements across all states, the confusion will dissipate.

E. Requirement: Transmit ballots to voters by 45 days prior to Election Day. If states cannot comply, they must apply for a waiver. (Section 579)

The call for the 45-day window to send blank ballots dates back to the Truman administration. Sixty years later, the MOVE Act finally mandated that this recommendation be implemented by all states. This legislative requirement had an immediate impact. In 2010, 40 states had either legislation in place or created new legislation mandating a 45 day total ballot transit time, up from 28 states in 2008.

Unfortunately, by August 2010 it became clear that not all states would be able to comply with the September 18, 2010 deadline. Ten states, Washington DC and the Virgin Islands applied for waivers. Five waivers were approved (DE, MA, NY, RI, WA), while six were denied (AK, CO, HI, WI, DC and the Virgin Islands). Maryland withdrew its waiver request.

Regardless of the new ballot delivery deadline, about twenty percent of voters received their ballots after the middle of October. Although this is much better than in 2008, when 39 percent received their ballots late, states must continue to make sending out timely ballots a top priority as more than one-third of voters who tried to participate could not because their ballots were late or never arrived.

F. Requirement: Ballots cannot be rejected for what are considered overly burdensome requirements, such as notarization. Expansion of use of the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) (Sections 581(a) and 582)

The specific conditions for military and overseas voting vary from state to state. Some states have historically required overseas and military voters to have their ballots officially notarized, or witnessed by another American citizen. These cumbersome requirements led to ballot rejections and served as a deterrent to some voters. Even though the MOVE Act prohibits states from rejecting ballots that do not have notarization or witness signatures, 31 respondents did not use their ballots because they could not find a notary or witness. Despite the provision, some states are still requesting these signatures (including Alabama, Alaska, Louisiana, North Carolina and Wisconsin).

The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is an alternative, downloadable ballot which voters can use in general elections for the offices of President/Vice President, U.S. Representative, and U.S. Senator, as well as the non-voting congressional representatives from the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, etc. The FWAB, by federal law, is accepted by all states and territories. One provision of the MOVE Act expands the use of the FWAB to all special, primary, and runoff elections for Federal office. However, this requirement did not go in effect until the end of 2010 and therefore will not be felt until 2012.

“ My state did the best job getting the ballot to me in a timely fashion that I have seen in the 34 years I have been living abroad and voting. ”

Overseas Voter, Anonymous

Only 47 percent of voter survey respondents were aware of the FWAB in 2010, a finding consistent with survey results in all previous years. The FWAB is a valuable tool for voters who do not receive their ballot in time, but if outreach and awareness do not continue to increase, then the MOVE Act provisions expanding its usefulness in the 2012 elections will be far less effective.

III 2010 Post Election Military and Overseas Voter Survey Report

In 2010, for the fourth straight general election cycle, OVF sponsored its unique post election survey of overseas and military voters. Launched on Election Day, November 2, 2010, the survey was completed by 5,257 military and overseas voters as of January 1, 2011. The 62-question voter survey focused primarily on issues affecting the respondents' voting experiences. In keeping with new reforms, OVF introduced new questions in order to evaluate the implementation of the MOVE Act. These new questions aspired to uncover whether voters were yet aware of and able to use new technologies such as the electronic delivery of blank ballots and ballot tracking. In the following pages we review the findings of the 2010 voter survey. In addition, a focused analysis of these statistics in reference to the MOVE Act can be found in Section II.

A. Methodology

Two different groups took the online voter survey. The content and form of the survey remained constant across the two groups. The first group consisted of 89,322 individuals who received an online invitation from OVF to complete the survey. These invitations allowed one-time completion of the survey and were auto-disabled after use or if forwarded. This list of individuals was compiled from the OVF mailing list. Of the invited respondents, 4,913 (5.5 percent) completed the survey. In the second distinct group, OVF set up an open URL to the survey for the use of any overseas voter wanting to complete the survey. Of this group, 344 individuals completed the survey without a personalized invitation from OVF. The combined total number of respondents to the voter survey was 5,257. Partially completed surveys were not included in the calculated response rates or analyses. Unless otherwise indicated, the reported results are for the total number of respondents from both groups. Respondents lived across 140 countries and represented voters across all states; however there were no responses from the US territories. A methodology report containing detailed information on question development, sampling, response rates, and the promotion of the open URL, is available upon request.

B. Respondent Profile and Demographics: Who are overseas voters?

As documented below, there were some small variations in response rates from the differing voter types in 2010. Table 1 summarizes the voter types represented in the survey. There was a drop in the number of surveys from voters overseas residing abroad "temporarily," and from those in the military. The 2010 results are similar to those of 2006, which was also a mid-term election. Although there is insufficient time-series data available in order to reach a definitive conclusion, the trend suggests that the overseas voter profile of those who vote in Presidential elections differs from those that vote in mid-term elections. Because of the low response rate from military voters (only 107 respondents), we are unable to draw any conclusions about this specific group of voters.

TABLE 1: VOTER RESPONDENT TYPES

Description	2010	2008	2006
U.S. citizen residing outside of the U.S. Temporarily	14%	23%	14.4%
U.S. citizen residing outside of the U.S. Indefinitely or Permanently	83%	72%	80.9%
Active Duty Military or Spouse or dependent of Active Duty Military	3%	4.8%	1.6%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Which of the following best describes you?" This question was not asked in 2004. Figures represent percent of respondents to the question.

As in 2008, the average survey respondent was highly educated, has lived overseas longer than 10 years for personal reasons such as marriage, and describes him/herself as continuing to live overseas "indefinitely." In contrast to 2008 when the average survey participant was over the age of 30, in 2010 the average voter was over the age of 40, with the highest response coming from voters between 50 and 59 years old (26 percent). This coincides with the drop in the number of youth survey participants, as often midterm elections are less compelling to younger voters. Thus, the respondent profile was consistent with past surveys, if somewhat older.

For the first time in 2010, OVF posed a series of socio-demographic questions with an aim at gaining an improved understanding of the overseas voter profile. These questions included race and occupation. The question wording and format duplicated those questions that are used in the American National Election Studies (ANES).

- 85 percent of respondents were Caucasian, 3 percent were African American and 3 percent were Asian.
- Academics (education and research), Retirement, Management, Arts and Entertainment, and Computers and Technology were the top five occupations.

These findings are intriguing. However, given the other changes in the respondent profile from 2008 (that is, the increase in voters overseas “indefinitely” and the decrease in new voters), more time-series data is needed in order to establish trends. For example, the 2010 respondent profile is similar to the 2006 results and thus the socio-demographic responses may be different in a presidential election than in a midterm election.

Voters living in 140 countries were represented in the survey responses; however, respondents in the top 20 countries represented approximately 80 percent of the entire sample. As we can see in Table 2, the top 10 countries remain unchanged from 2008.

TABLE 2: WHERE SURVEY RESPONDENTS LIVE

Country	2010	2008	2006	2004
Canada	16%	14%	25%	26%
United Kingdom	11%	13%	11%	13%
Germany	8%	8%	8%	6%
Israel	7%	5%	2%	3%
France	7%	5%	6%	6%
Australia	4%	4%	5%	5%
Switzerland	4%	4%	3%	5%
Italy	3%	3%	3%	3%
Japan	3%	3%	4%	4%
Netherlands	2%	2%	3%	2%
Mexico	2%	3%	1%	%
China, People's Republic of	2%	3%	1%	1%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “In which country were you living at the time of the November 2, 2010 General Election.” Figures represent percent of respondents to the question

The percentage of respondents from China decreased slightly. However, we can infer little import from these minor movements. The top countries represented in the OVF Post-Election Survey are similar to those of previous State Department estimates of Americans abroad, and therefore we are confident that we are reaching a wide spectrum of locations.

In contrast, there was a significant change in the reported voting history of survey participants, which is summarized in Table 3. There was a dramatic decline in the number of first time voters from 13.9 percent to 2.2 percent, and a sharp increase in the number of experienced overseas voters from 42 percent to 72 percent. Results parallel those to domestic U.S. voters, and illustrate the clear difference in participation in mid-term vs. presidential elections. In this way, overseas voters are similar to domestic voters. That is, experienced and older voters turnout in higher numbers in mid-term elections, whereas the number of new and younger voters tends to decrease.

TABLE 3: VOTING HISTORY

Possible Responses	2010	2008	2006	2004
First time voting	2.2%	13.9%	4%	25%
Voted before in the US, but never as an overseas voter	8%	33.8%	11%	48%
Voted before, but only as an overseas voter	13.9%	10.3%	18%	3.4%
Voted before in the U.S. and as an overseas voter	72.4%	42.0%	67%	20%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “What is your voting history?” Figures represent percent of respondents to the question.

Voters who participated in the survey came from all 50 states, with the highest number of respondents coming from California, New York, Texas, Florida and Pennsylvania; unchanged from the 2008 and 2006 results. Although these results are consistent, when we compare the distribution of respondents to the estimated populations of overseas voters by state, Florida is still the most under-represented state in the sample, and New York is the most overrepresented. The New York results may be influenced by New York State’s implementation of an OVF State Hosted System and the Power to MOVE balloting solution in 2010, which drew many new users to the site; and hence new survey respondents. There were no responses from the US territories.

TABLE 4: WHERE VOTERS WERE REGISTERED

State	2010	2008	2006	2004
California	15.3%	14.1%	17%	15.8%
New York	14.6%	12.6%	17%	12.8%
Texas	7.3%	8.6%	5%	4.7%
Florida	4.4%	4.7%	4%	4.1%
Pennsylvania	4.3%	4.1%	5%	4.9%
Illinois	4.2%	3.8%	5%	4.9%
Massachusetts	3.9%	3.7%	4%	4.7%
New Jersey	3.6%	3.7%	3%	3.8%
Ohio	3.6%	3.3%	3%	2.7%
Washington	3.3%	3%	4%	3.6%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Your legal voting residence is the state or territory where you last resided in the U.S. The right to vote extends to you even though you may no longer own property or have other ties there. As of the November 2, 2010 election, what state or territory was your legal voting residence?" Figures represent percent of respondents to the question.

In summary, although there was a decrease in the number of new and young voter participants in the survey, these findings are consistent with past years and to the voting experience of domestic US voters. The overall demographic profile of the respondents remained unchanged.

C. Voter Turnout

Creating public policy is a dynamic process and indicators of a previous policy's success are important when looking towards the future. In regards to voting legislation, there are several indicators that can measure a policy's success. Among them are voter satisfaction, registration levels and voter turnout. Voter turnout is the number of eligible individuals who actually vote in a given election. Unfortunately, turnout statistics are not readily available for overseas and military voters, which hinder our ability to evaluate the impact of the MOVE Act from this perspective.

There are two potential sources of data on voter turnout. The first, the actual numbers of ballots cast; which for UOCAVA voters will not be known until the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) releases its Election Day report in 2011. The second, self-reported voter turnout is documented through surveys.

For the first, time OVF attempted to measure voter turnout with the creation of a new question. Because voter turnout is over reported in surveys (over reporting in voting surveys has been well documented with estimates of 20 percent to 40 percent of survey respondents reporting that they voted when they did not), we carefully considered question wording that would reduce this problem.

"The voting experience for military and overseas voters requires several steps. (1) A voter must fill-in a form and ask request that their ballot be sent, (2) receive a ballot from the U.S., (3) vote the ballot and (4) mail it back to the U.S. As a result, some people were not able to vote because they were not able to complete all the steps in the process. Thinking carefully for a minute about the election held on November 2, 2010, which of the following statements best describes your experience?"

The results in Table 5 demonstrate that nearly 11 percent of respondents tried to vote but could not complete the process, whereas 12 percent did not try to vote. Many of the survey respondents who indicated "other" reported on the various problems they encountered while voting, such as not receiving a ballot or missing deadlines. Of the 12 percent of individuals who did not try to vote, many listed a "lack of information" as their reason. That is, these voters felt that they did not have enough information about the candidates and races to make an informed decision.

TABLE 5: VOTER TURNOUT

Voted using only my official absentee ballot	62.6%
Voted using the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB)	6.43%
Tried to vote but could not finish the process	10.96%
Did not try to vote	11.87%
Don't remember	0.78%
Other	9.36%

Because these survey responses are primarily from those individuals who are interested and tried to vote (i.e. OVF users), it is impossible to apply this data to the general voting population of overseas and military voters in order to extrapolate an overall voter turnout rate. The percentage of individuals who did not try to vote could indeed be much higher.



One voter mailed his ballot from Vatican City, as the post from the Vatican is faster than the Italian post!

D. Voter Registration Issues

As reported in Table 6, half of all of survey respondents (50 percent) sent in a registration form or ballot request, a much lower level than in 2008 or 2004, but similar to that of 2006. It appears that many voters relied on receiving a ballot without filing a new form (26 percent) in 2010. Previous voting rules required election officials to honor a single voter registration/ballot request form (officially called the Federal Postcard Application, FPCA) as a request to receive absentee ballots through two Federal election cycles (four years). However, this specification in UOCAVA was removed by the MOVE Act in favor of annual re-filing of forms.

In 2012, and especially in 2014, when there will be no overlap of the previous and new laws, special efforts will have to be made to ensure that voters file a new form for each election lest they fall through cracks. OVF strongly encourages a further amendment to this clause in UOCAVA in order to create similar re-filing requirements for military and civilian voters. The MOVE Act specifies one form filing per election year for military voters, while specifying one form filing for each election for overseas civilian electors. When taken literally this means that a civilian overseas voter who has sent in a form to register for a primary election may be without a ballot when it comes to the November general election itself.

TABLE 6: VOTER REGISTRATION/BALLOT REQUEST

Registration	2010	2008	2006	2004
I sent in a voter registration/request form	50.3%	83.9%	66%	88%
I did not send in voter registration/request form	14.9%	4.6%	21%	3%
My ballot arrived without filing a new form	26.1%	7.3%		
I tried, but was unable to complete the process.	3.7%	4.2%	4%	9%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "The following question concerns the registration and/or ballot request process only, not the actual voting process. The same form is used to register to vote and to request a ballot. Did you file a voter registration/ballot request form for any of the 2010 elections?" "My ballot arrived without filing a new form" was not a response option in the 2006 and 2004 surveys. Figures represent percent of respondents to the question.

In 2008, OVF documented that increasing numbers of voters are using the internet to gain access to voter registration information, tools and services, a trend that continued in 2010. Only 14.7 percent of those who registered or attempted to register used a paper based voter registration form. This result is not surprising as OVF users are over-represented in the sample with 71.9 percent of all survey respondents having used the OVF website to generate and complete a voter registration form. If we examine only the open URL responses, only 23 percent used OVF's registration tools. Among open URL responses there is also an increase in the use of paper based registration (27 percent), state and local election office websites (23 and 16 percent) and the website of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (13 percent).

TABLE 7: TOP REGISTRATION METHODS

	2010		2008	
	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses
OVF Website	75.6%	22.8%	67.9%	32.9%
Paper Provided by Local Election Office	11.3%	18.3%	6.2%	14.7%
State Website	9.2%	22.8%	5.1%	8.7%
Local election office website	8%	16.4%	2.6%	6.3%
FVAP Website	6.1%	12.7%	5.4%	13.9%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Which of the following did you use to complete the registration/request form for the 2010 elections?" "State Website" and "Youth Vote Overseas Website" were not response options in the 2006 and 2004 surveys. "FPCA Form" was not a response option in 2006 and 2008. Figures represent percent of respondents to the question. Controlled survey responses are derived from the invitation only responses from the OVF mailing list. Open survey responses come from the use of an open URL.

The numbers of individuals using electronic methods, such as fax and email, to return their registration/ballot request forms continued to increase in this election cycle, from 18 percent in 2008 to 23 percent in 2010. Traditional post was, however, still the dominant method. This may

indicate a preference among voters or it may also be due to internet limitations in some areas, but it is too early to tell. Our experience is that it takes time for voters to learn about the availability of new services and to shift to new methods. Combined physical delivery methods remain the dominant method and represented 71 percent of registration/ballot request return in 2010.

TABLE 8: METHODS FOR SENDING IN REGISTRATION/BALLOT REQUESTS

Method	2010	2008	2006
Regular Mail	58%	59.9%	73%
Email	10%	5.9%	5%
Email + original by mail	5.5%	3.9%	.
Certified Mail	3.9%	5.5%	7%
FAX + original by mail	2.8%	4.7%	6%
Delivered in person or mailed in the US	2.8%	3.2%	2%
FAX	2.7%	3.7%	.
Military Post	2.2%	2.0%	2%
FedEx, DHL or other commercial courier	1.9%	4.3%	2%
Embassy or Consulate mail pouch	1.4%	2.3%	2%
Express Your Vote (OVF/FedEx)	1%	2.1%	.
Uploaded it to my election office voting system website	1%	.	.

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How did you send in your voter registration/ballot request form?" In 2004 questions about the method for sending in registration request was combined with questions about ballot return. Figures represent percent of respondents to the question. The response options changed from 2006 to 2008 and again in 2010.

“ I have understood for some years that I was not eligible to vote in state/local elections and therefore made no effort. When I received a ballot, I assumed a mistake had been made. ”

Overseas Voter, Anonymous

As in 2008, how a voter registration/ballot request form was submitted also influenced whether or not a voter received a ballot. Of those voters that used an electronic method to send in a voter registration/ballot request form, 22 percent did not receive a ballot, whereas only 16 percent of those who used physical postal methods did not get a ballot. It appears at this early stage that electronic submission methods are not more certain to bring desired results (i.e. receiving a ballot).

TABLE 9: METHODS FOR SENDING IN REGISTRATION/BALLOT REQUESTS; RECEIPT OF A BALLOT

How did you send in your voter registration/ballot request form?	Total	Did you receive a ballot from your U.S. election office for the November 2, 2010 General Election?	
		Yes	No
Postal Methods	1814	1527 84.18%	287 15.82%
Electronic methods (fax, email, upload)	607	477 78.58%	133 21.91%
Sent it to the Federal Voter Assistance Program	6	3 50.00%	3 50.00%
Delivered in person or mailed in the US	75	63 84.00%	12 16.00%
Don't know / Don't Remember	63	44 69.84%	19 30.16%
Other, please specify	78	45 57.69%	33 42.31%
	2643	2159	484

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How did you return your voter registration/ballot request form?" "Did you receive a ballot from your U.S. election office for the Nov. 2, 2010 General Election?"

The top reasons that respondents did not send in a voter registration/ballot request form, was that they thought they were still registered or that they missed their deadline (28 and 18.5 percent), which is similar to the 2008 results. Personal feelings are also reasons that voters do not send in their forms; 18 percent "consciously decided not to" send in a form and 22 percent felt the process was "too complicated." These issues are similar to those respondents who indicated that they tried to send in a voter registration/ballot request form, but were unable to complete the process.

Furthermore, as depicted in Table 10, voters remain confused about the registration/ballot request process, and many individuals continue to miss registration deadlines. An additional problem in 2010 was the confusion created by the MOVE Act provision that eliminated the requirement to honor registration/ballot request forms for two election cycles. Many voters did not know if they had to re-file or not. In fact the number one question among those who completed the registration process was about re-registration or filing requirements (121 respondents, or 5 percent of all those who sent in a registration/ballot request form). This was followed only by "misunderstanding if the form was transmitted electronically or on paper (121 respondents; 5 percent) and registration deadlines (107 respondents; 4 percent).

TABLE 10: TOP 5 OBSTACLES TO COMPLETING THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS

Obstacle	2010	2008	2006
I missed the deadline.	29%	36%	27%
Problems with process	31%	34%	
I thought my form was sent online.	19%	20%	
I didn't mail my original form.	16%	16%	
I didn't know who to contact.	13%	13%	17%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "What prevented you from completing the voter registration/ballot request process? (Check all that apply.)" Question was not asked in 2004. Figures represent percent of respondents. Because respondents were allow to choose more than one response, total percentage may exceed 100.

In general, voters were overwhelmingly satisfied with the registration/ballot request process; 74 percent were either satisfied or very satisfied. In 2010 several new services were available to voters, which may have contributed to their approval of the registration process. Almost 44 percent report receiving a confirmation that their form had been accepted and 10 percent used the online tracking services offered by their state. Those respondents who used the online ballot tracking services reported being "more satisfied" with the registration process than those who did not, which is summarized in Table 11.

TABLE 11: SATISFACTION WITH THE REGISTRATION PROCESS AND USE OF ONLINE TRACKING

How satisfied were you with voter registration/ballot request process for the 2010 elections?	Did you use an online tracking system from your state at any time?	
	Yes	No
Very satisfied	123 47%	888 38%
Satisfied	80 30%	853 36%
Neutral	26 10%	279 12%
Dissatisfied	17 6%	181 8%
Very dissatisfied	17 6%	156 7%
Total	263	2357

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How satisfied were you with voter registration/ballot request process for the 2010 elections?" and "Did you use an online tracking system from your state at any time?" These results are only from those survey participants who indicated that they sent in a registration/ballot request form.

From the above, we can conclude that voters are continuing to move from using paper methods to electronic methods to complete registration/ballot request forms. However, those voters that use these techniques continue to have problems receiving their ballots. Missed deadlines continue to be the primary reason that most voters cannot complete the registration/ballot request process. Finally, although satisfaction with the registration process was high, voters that used online ballot tracking systems were slightly more satisfied.

E. Ballot Issues

After registration and ballot request, the next step in overseas and military absentee voting is receiving a ballot. In 2010, 81.8 percent of respondents who declared that they wanted to participate in the election received their ballots, while 18.2 percent did not receive their ballots. This is an improvement from 2008, when 22 percent did not get their ballot.

The MOVE Act impacted the how and when voters received their ballots. First, the MOVE Act required that states provide voters with an option for the electronic receipt of blank ballots in order to accelerate the voting process timeline (i.e. the time needed to vote). Although voters primarily used traditional postal methods to receive their blank ballots, over 20 percent used some form of electronic method to receive their ballot. This finding is summarized in Table 12.

TABLE 12: HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR BALLOT?

Method	Percent
By post	75.8%
By email and I printed it	19%
Downloaded the ballot from a website and printed it	2.5%
Other	1.9%
By express mail	1.7%

Note: Respondents were asked, "How did you receive your official ballot?"

In addition, the MOVE Act stipulated that all states must send out their ballots at least 45 days before the election (in 2010 that was September 18). Advocates have supported the 45 day transmission time for almost 60 years, emphasizing that overseas absentee voters who receive ballots two weeks before the election have little time to return them via traditional post. Unfortunately, not all states were able to comply with this regulation and 11 states applied for waivers. Despite these difficulties, as depicted in Table 13, about 20 percent of voters received their ballots after the middle of October. Although this is a great improvement over 2008, when 39 percent received their ballots late, states must continue to make punctual ballot transmission a top priority as

“The sample ballots and official ballots are confusing. A simpler method would be preferable.”
Overseas Voter, Anonymous

over one-third of voters who tried to participate could not because their ballot was late or never arrived.⁵ Fortunately, with the MOVE Act reforms, the trend is now going in the right direction, but there is still a need for improvement.

TABLE 13: BALLOT RECEIPT

When did you receive your ballot?	2010	2008	2006	2004
September or earlier	31%	18%	36%	22%
1 st half of October	41%	42%	37%	37%
2 nd half of October	15%	28%	20%	29%
Week of the Election	4%	9%	5%	
Election Day	.5%	1%	1%	5%
After Election Day	.7%	1%		
Don't know / remember	8%	2%		

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "When did your official ballot from your election office for the November 2, 2010 General Election arrive?" In 2004, responses for "Election Day or after" are combined. Figures represent percent of respondents to the question.

Of the 3,790 respondents who reported receiving a ballot, 477 (or 12.6 percent) did not use their ballot. The number one reason voters did not use their ballot was because "it arrived too late" (25 percent). Another reason that voters did not use their ballots was because of witness and notary signature requirements.

Even though the MOVE Act prohibits states from rejecting ballots that do not have notarization or witnesses, some states continue to ask for witness and notary signatures. Because of this, 31 voters did not use their ballots. OVF recommends refinement of this MOVE Act provision to eliminate this confusion. There is little chance that a voter will know that he or she can ignore a requested action such as providing a notary signature; hence this remains a barrier to participation.

⁵ Of the 5,257 responses, 624 indicated that they did not try to vote. Of the 4,633 who did try to vote, 843 did not get a ballot and 765 received their ballot after the second week in October. This reveals a total of 1,608 respondents who attempted to vote but could not because they did not get a ballot or got it too late, which represents 34.7 percent of those who wanted to participate.

Although 80 percent (3,029) of those survey participants who received ballots had no problems with their ballots, several issues emerged. The top problems reported include: receiving the incorrect ballot; receiving a ballot marked “sample”; and the absence of a ballot secrecy envelope. Table 14 illustrates some new types of balloting problems that began to emerge in 2010. These problems are directly related to the increased use of electronic methods to receive blank ballots, such as trouble accessing ballots online or files not being formatted to international paper sizes. Although few survey participants reported these kinds of problems, they are an indication of what is to come and should be given immediate attention at the state level, rather than becoming the “new set” of persistent problems. OVF will continue to monitor these precise problems as the use of electronic methods continues to rise.

TABLE 14: PROBLEMS WITH BALLOTS

Problem	Number of respondents reporting the problem
Ballot secrecy envelope was not included	235
My ballot was marked “sample”	104
My online ballot was not formatted for non-US paper size	94
Affidavit states I currently live in the US	65
My ballot seemed to be incorrect or incomplete	61
I requested a ballot by email but it came by post	57
My ballot did not look official	51

Note: Survey respondents were asked, “Did any of the following apply to your ballot? (check all that apply)”

As was the case in 2008, several respondents also reported problems with their envelopes, the most important of which was: “USA” not being printed on the ballot return envelope or being confused about whether postage was required or not required. OVF encourages the states to look at these avoidable issues and address them wherever possible.

Table 15 demonstrates that the majority of voters sent their ballots back during or after the second half of October. If traditional postal methods take approximately one to two weeks, a ballot must leave the voter at least two weeks before Election Day in order to arrive in the U.S. on time.

However, 41.3 percent were able to return their ballot before the second half of October, which represents a five percent improvement from 2008 and an eight percent increase from 2006. This positive trend indicates that more voters are returning their ballots earlier, which decreases the risk that their ballot will be rejected for arriving too late.

TABLE 15: BALLOT RETURN

When did you return your ballot?	2010	2008	2006
September	9.5%	6%	9%
First half of October	31.8%	30%	24%
Second half of October	39.7%	46%	43%
Week before the Election	13.9%	15%	18%
Election Day	2.3%	2%	3%
After Election Day	.3%	0%	
I don't remember	2.6%	1%	2%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “When did you return your completed ballot for the November 2, 2010 General Election?”

Similar to 2008 and 2006, some form of physical post was used to return ballots in 85 percent of cases, which can be seen in Table 16. As states expanded the use of fax and email for the return of voted ballots (which was not mandated in the MOVE Act), voters began to utilize these online transmission services. 9.5 percent of survey respondents used either fax or email to return their voted ballot.

“ I voted via e-mail for the first time. Aside from printing the ballot, filling it out, then scanning it, I was happy to have this option. I now know, for the first time, that my vote was counted. I checked! ”

Overseas Voter, Anonymous

TABLE 16: METHODS FOR RETURNING BALLOTS

Method	2010	2008	2006	2004
Regular Mail	71.9%	68%	79%	62%
Certified Mail	5.3%	7%	7%	21%
FedEx, DHL or other commercial courier	2.9%	5%	3%	6%
Embassy or Consulate mail pouch	1.6%	3%	2%	4%
Express Your Vote (OVF/FedEx)	1.4%	3%		
Military Post	2.1%	2%	1%	1%
Fax	4.2%			
Email	4.9%			
Delivered it in person or mailed in the US	3.3%			

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How did you return your completed ballot for the November 2, 2010 General Election?" In 2004 questions about the method for sending in registration request was combined with questions about ballot return. Figures represent percent of respondents.

Despite deadlines and problems with envelopes, 86 percent of those voters who received a ballot and voted reported being either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the process, which is consistent with previous years. Satisfaction with the balloting process is higher than the registration process in 2010. In fact, satisfaction with registration decreased in 2010. This could be attributed to the confusion regarding registration re-filing generated by the MOVE Act, which would have a negative effect on satisfaction.

TABLE 17: SATISFACTION WITH THE VOTING PROCESS

Satisfaction	2010		2008		2006		2004
	Reg	Ballot	Reg	Ballot	Reg	Ballot	
Very Satisfied	39%	48%	43%	47%	45%	44%	
Satisfied	36%	38%	33%	38%	35%	42%	72%
Neutral	12%	9%	10%	9%	10%	9%	
Dissatisfied	7%	4%	7%	4%	4%	4%	28%
Very dissatisfied	6%	1%	7%	2%	5%	2%	

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How satisfied were you with the registration aspect / balloting aspect of your November 4, 2008 voting experience?" In 2004 respondents were asked if they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the experience as a whole.

In summary, we see the influences of the MOVE Act reform trickling down into the voter experience. More and more voters are using electronic methods to receive their blank ballots. As more states comply with the 45 day ballot transit rule, fewer individuals are receiving their ballots late. Although the number of voters who were unable to vote because their ballot arrived late or not at all has decreased, too many individuals are still unable to complete the voting process.

F. FWAB Awareness and Use

The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is an alternative, downloadable ballot which voters can use in general elections for the offices of President/Vice President, U.S. Representative, and U.S. Senator, as well as the non-voting congressional representatives from the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, etc. The FWAB, by federal law, is accepted by all states and territories. One provision of the MOVE Act expands the use of the FWAB to all special, primary, and runoff elections for federal office. This requirement, however, did not go into effect until the end of 2010, specifically, after the election. The first improvements are anticipated for the 2012 elections.

As in previous OVF surveys, all voters were asked questions about the FWAB, both those who did not get a ballot and used the FWAB, as well as those who received a ballot but also used the FWAB. We also tested the level of FWAB awareness. Amongst both groups, those who did not get a ballot and those that did, the majority of respondents were not aware of the FWAB. In total only 47% of survey participants were aware of the FWAB.

TABLE 18: FWAB AWARENESS

Awareness	2010	2008	2006	2004
Yes	47%	44%	46%	48%
No	53%	56%	54%	52%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) is a ballot option for registered voters whose official ballots do not arrive in time. Were you aware of the FWAB?"

The FWAB was used by 610 of the survey participants. Table 19 reveals that the FWAB is used as a last resort by many voters and submitted during the second half of October or later. It appears that voters are mainly using the FWAB after mid-October as the FVAP and OVF advise. However, those who received a ballot and used the FWAB appear to have chosen to use the FWAB earlier, out of concern that their ballot was late.

TABLE 19: WHEN DID YOU RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FWAB?

When	Respondents who used only the FWAB	Respondents who received a ballot and used the FWAB
September	12.1%	20.2%
First half of October	20.5%	20.4%
Second half of October	31.0%	26.4%
Week before the Election	19.5%	7.9%
Election Day	9.0%	1.4%
I don't remember	7.4%	22.9%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "When did you return your completed FWAB?"

Where did voters get their FWABs? This inquiry uncovered an interesting variation between voters who used a FWAB but did not receive a ballot, and those voters that used the FWAB who also received their state-supplied ballot. Those who did not receive their state-supplied ballot overwhelmingly turned to the internet to seek a remedy. 71 percent downloaded a ballot from the OVF site and 8 percent from the FVAP site. However, 16 percent of those who received a ballot reported also receiving a FWAB from their local election office as a pro-active remedy to late balloting.

The FWAB is a valuable tool when effectively coupled with outreach and awareness actions. If these do not continue to increase, then the MOVE Act provisions expanding its usefulness in the 2012 elections will not be effective.

G. Voter Outreach and Information Sources

Those involved with elections know that it is difficult to engage U.S. voters during midterm congressional elections, and voter participation tends to decline. For overseas and military voters, however, because of the policy and technology innovations in 2010, communications were more important than ever. Unfortunately, although many states implemented new tools and services during 2010, few voters knew about them.

“ Although I did not know about the FWAB, using this survey has informed me of its existence and I have now begun the process to vote using this form. I wish I had received my appropriate ballots prior to this. ”

Overseas Voter, Anonymous

TABLE 20: SOURCES OF VOTER INFORMATION

Top Voter Websites		
	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses
Overseas Vote Foundation	3469 (65%)	86 (25%)
Political Party (any)	430 (8%)	35 (10%)
American Citizens Abroad (ACA)	294 (5%)	54 (16%)
Political Campaign Website (any)	304 (6%)	25 (7%)
League of Women Voters (vote411.org)	124 (2%)	10 (3%)
Facebook groups	82 (1%)	22 (6%)
Top Government Organizations or Websites		
	Controlled Survey Responses	Open Survey Responses
Local Election Office or Website in US	765 (30%)	68 (28%)
Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)	719 (28%)	68 (28%)
State Board of Elections/ Secretary of State	558 (22%)	53 (22%)
US Embassy or Consulate	253 (10%)	18 (7%)
US Department of State	82 (3%)	12 (5%)

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Which of the following websites did you consult for voting information or assistance? (Check all that apply.)" "Which of the following government organizations or websites did you consult for voting information or assistance? (Check all that apply.)" Cells include the number of individuals who indicated that they used that particular form of information. Because survey respondents could choose more than one response, the total number of responses exceeds the total sample size. Controlled survey responses are derived from the invitation only responses from the OVF mailing list. Open survey responses come from the use of an open URL.

The Overseas Vote Foundation website unsurprisingly emerged as the number one nongovernmental nonpartisan online destination. We can infer that these results are an artifact of the data, i.e. that the OVF email list was used to invite people to take the survey. However, when compared to the open sample, the rankings unexpectedly stay the same. Local election offices or websites were the top governmental source of information to voters. Overall, more survey participants indicated that they went to more nongovernmental websites (5,690 different responses) than to government sources (only 2,801 different responses).

H. Conclusion

In conclusion, the MOVE Act began to have an immediate impact on voters in 2010. However, the results are mixed. For example, although more voters are turning to the internet and electronic methods to complete registration/ballot request forms and to receive their blank ballots, the majority continue to use traditional postal methods to return their voting materials back to the US. The OVF voter survey also revealed several positive developments. The number of individuals who did not receive a ballot or received one too late decreased significantly, voters are sending their ballots back earlier, and overall voter satisfaction remained high. In contrast to these positives, FWAB awareness remained low and not many voters utilized the ballot tracking tools available. These mixed results indicate that there is still much to do in 2012, such as the continued expansion of communications and outreach to voters.

Following the 2010 general election, OVF conducted its third survey of local election officials (LEOs) amongst U.S. states and territories. The 55-question survey covered a wide variety of overseas and military voting issues. In addition to the questions asked in 2008, the 2010 survey featured many new questions designed to uncover the election officials' experiences in implementing the MOVE Act. A review of general responses, as well as comparisons to previous surveys, is provided in this section. For a more in-depth discussion of the MOVE Act, see Section II.

A. Methodology

Two different groups were invited to take the OVF 2010 Election Official Survey: local election officials (LEOs) and absentee voting clerks, which correlate to the contact data available in the OVF Election Official Directory. Because some election offices have a single official in charge of both positions, there is a certain amount of overlap in the mailing lists. Jurisdictions that received more than one invitation were instructed to take the survey only once. A total of 10,712 email invitations were sent out. The survey was issued through an online survey program that provided a unique one-time use URL link to each participant in the survey. State-level election officials did not receive survey invitations. As in 2008, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were included in the survey distribution. The survey was launched on November 30, 2010. A 14.5 percent response rate was achieved as of January 1, 2011, with 1,555 completed surveys submitted. Partially completed surveys were not included in the analysis.

OVF received responses from 48 states and the District of Columbia, with 53 percent of the responses coming from just 10 states. These results are similar to those in 2008. Because of the large number of jurisdictions in Wisconsin (approximately 1,850), it is over represented in the sample. When Wisconsin is removed from the sample, there is a larger dispersion of response rates across the 48 states. Alaska, Hawaii and the US territories are not represented in the results. There were a variety of changes in the top-responding states, such as the increase in the Massachusetts response rates from just one percent in 2008 to 5.5 percent this year. 2010 also brought in more responses from not only Massachusetts, but also Colorado and Iowa than in previous years. The number of responses from Vermont and North Carolina decreased.

TABLE 1: TOP RESPONDING STATES

State	2010	2008
Wisconsin	18%	16%
Texas	6.3%	7%
Massachusetts	5.5%	1%
Connecticut	4.3%	5%
Georgia	4%	3%
Virginia	3.2%	5%
Colorado	3%	3%
Iowa	3%	1%
New Hampshire	3%	2%
Indiana	2.8%	1%

NOTE: Figures represent percent of respondents.

Of these respondents, 90 percent reported that they were either the election official in charge of overseas and military absentee voting in the jurisdiction or one of several officials in charge. Only 39 jurisdictions (2.5 percent) reported that they did not have any military or overseas voters.

B. Numbers: Registration and Ballot Requests

As in 2008, the majority of reporting jurisdictions were small with fewer than 25,000 registered voters. However, the dispersion of respondents across jurisdiction size was greater in 2010 than in 2008, indicating that this year's sample is more representative, which can be seen below in Table 2. Of the surveyed LEOs, 70 percent of respondents have 0 to 24,999 registered voters, 12 percent have 25,000 to 49,999 registered voters, 7.7 percent have 50,000 to 99,999 registered voters, and the remaining 9.6 percent serve more than 100,000 registered voters in their jurisdictions.

TABLE 2: REPORTED JURISDICTION SIZE

	2010	2008
0 to 24,999	70.4%	73%
25,000 to 49,999	12.3%	13%
50,000 to 99,999	7.7%	6%
100,000 to 249,999	6%	5%
250,000 to 499,999	2.4%	2%
500,000 to 999,999	.8%	1%
1,000,000 or more	.4%	0%

NOTE: Respondents were asked "How many registered voters of all types including local voters, domestic absentee voters and overseas and military absentee voters do you estimate were in your jurisdiction for the November 2, 2010 General Election?"

When compared to the 2008 survey results, LEO's reported a general decrease in overseas and military voter participation, the results of which are summarized in Table 3. The majority of LEOs stated that fewer than 100 overseas civilian or military voters in their respective jurisdictions requested ballots in 2010, and 85 percent of LEO survey

respondents (1,282) reported an estimated 0 to 99 ballot requests from military voters in their jurisdiction for the 2010 mid-term election. Another 10 percent indicated 100 to 499 requests, and 2.2 percent estimated 500 to 999 ballot requests. Only 24 jurisdictions estimated that there were more than 1,000 military requests. The data strongly suggests that the majority of local election officials deal with relatively small numbers of military ballots.

The volume of overseas civilian ballot requests was similar to that of military requests. Of the sampled LEOs, approximately 88.5 percent (1,331 respondents) estimated that 0 to 99 civilian voters requested ballots in their jurisdiction for the 2010 mid-term election. Another 7.7 percent estimated that 100 to 499 civilian voters requested ballots in their jurisdictions, and 1.9 percent projected 500 to 999 ballots. Only 22 jurisdictions estimated more than 1,000 civilian ballot requests were processed.

The number of ballot requests was consistent from 2006 to 2008, and LEOs consistently reported seeing an increase in the number of requested ballots. However, this trend reversed in 2010. Although 55 percent reported "no noticeable change" in the number of military ballots requested, 38 percent described a decrease. The results for civilian registrations and ballot requests were similar; 60.7 percent of LEOs reported "no noticeable change" and 34 percent a decrease.

TABLE 3: ESTIMATED BALLOT REQUESTS FROM OVERSEAS CIVILIAN AND MILITARY VOTERS

Total Overseas Civilian Voters	Jurisdiction Size					Total
	1 to 24,999	25,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 249,999	More than 250,000	
Under 100	1043	166	89	27	6	1331
100-499	14	16	24	50	12	116
500 - 999	0	0	2	11	16	29
Over 1,000	0	0	1	1	20	22
Don't Know	2	3	0	1	0	6

Total Military Voters	Jurisdiction Size					Total
	1 to 24,999	25,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 249,999	More than 250,000	
Under 100	1038	150	65	25	4	1282
100-499	17	26	45	48	12	148
500 - 999	0	2	3	10	18	33
Over 1,000	0	1	1	6	16	24
Don't Know	4	5	1	1	4	15

NOTE: Data represents number of respondents to the questions, "How many overseas civilian voters / military voters in your jurisdiction do you estimate requested ballots for the 2010 General Election?" There are 1,504 respondents to the civilian question and 1,502 respondents to the military question.

These results indicate that the record level of turnout seen in the 2008 report either stagnated or decreased in 2010. Given that 2010 was a mid-term election, in which participation among all voter groups, domestic included, tends to decline, this result was expected. OVF would suggest that this decrease in participation should not overshadow the trend of rising overseas and military voter participation over the past two election cycles and documented in the 2006 and 2008 reports.

C. LEO Processes for Registration and Balloting

In order to identify UOCAVA electoral processes that are effective and those that need improvement, OVF asked election officials questions regarding the voting process. The first step in the voting process is registration and/or ballot request. Results from OVF's 2010 Post Election Voter Survey (Section III of this report), revealed that many voters had questions about re-filing requirements. The responses of election officials differed from the voters' reported experiences, and are summarized in Table 4.

The majority of election officials (53 percent) reported that overseas and military voters who registered in 2008 received a 2010 ballot without filing a new form, compared with 26 percent of voters who said that they received a ballot without filing a new form. 15 percent of LEOs required voters to file a new form, compared to the 50 percent of voters who sent in a voter registration/ballot request form.

The different responses from LEOs and the corresponding confusion from voters further illustrate the uncertainty over the implementation of the MOVE Act requirement that removes the obligation to honor registration/ballot request forms for two election cycles.

17.8 percent of LEOs said that if a person registered to vote in 2008 and contacted their office in any manner (mail, telephone, fax, and email) a ballot was sent to them. These results represent a departure from 2008 and 2006. In accordance with the MOVE Act, more jurisdictions required a new ballot request form. As the results indicate, implementation of this particular requirement was not consistent, leading to confusion among voters and election officials.

“ We prefer e-mailing voting contents to the voters overseas... This way the voter can get the contents much quicker than by mail and have more time to send the voted contents back by mail in a timelier manner. ”

Election Official, Anonymous

TABLE 4: REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR PREVIOUS VOTERS

Registration System	2010	2008	2006
Those who registered in the last election received ballots without filing a new form	52.8%	57%	59%
Those who voted in the last election were required to file a new ballot request	15.1%	6%	5%
If they were registered and contacted us, we sent a ballot	17.8%	20%	17%
We did not have any overseas voters	7.3%	7%	
I don't know	1.9%	4%	2%
Other	5%	6%	16%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Which of the following best describes your system for sending ballots to overseas and military voters who registered previously?"

The Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) is the official name given to the federal government's voter registration form used to vote under UOCAVA.

The FPCA functions as a simultaneous voter registration and absentee ballot form. In 2010, 68 percent of election officials reported that most overseas and military voters used the FPCA to register. This represents an eight percent decrease in use of the FPCA as the primary registration form from 2008. This decrease in the use of the FPCA could be attributed to the decrease in voter participation during mid-term elections but also to an increase in online voter registration information being provided to voters.

Each state can vary in its own requirements regarding FPCA completion. This variance in requirements is another source of confusion among voters. In 2010, 126 survey respondents (8.3 percent) indicated that they required some sort of additional state-specific information, beyond

that outlined on the FPCA. Supplemental personal identification remains at the top of the list of additional state imposed conditions for UOCAVA voter registration. It must be noted that the number of actual jurisdictions that require additional information is much higher than the small sample presented here.

TABLE 5: TOP 5 ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirement	2010	2008
Additional Identification	8.3%	11.7%
Date of Birth	7.1%	7.2%
Other	5.2%	4.7%
Additional Address Information	2%	2.8%
Additional Proof of Previous Residency	.01%	1.2%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Does your jurisdiction require a voter to submit any information in addition to what is required on the FPCA? (Check all that apply.)" Percentages are calculated as the number of respondents divided by the entire sample size. In 2010, the sample size is 1,516 and in 2008 1,019.

The confusion created by filing requirements and additional identification requirements may have contributed to the reports received from 176 voter survey respondents (3.3 percent) that they did not register to vote because they thought the process "seemed too complicated."

D. Problems Voters Face during the Voting Process

The additional state-specific registration requirements imposed upon military and overseas voters are not the only hurdles that they encounter when attempting to participate. Election officials and voters corroborated through their responses that the number one reason for registration form rejection was that the form arrived too late and did not meet the deadline (40.4 percent). The time it takes to complete the process of voting from overseas continues to be the number one challenge voters' face.

OVF asked LEOs to identify the top three reasons for rejecting registration forms. The percentage of election officials indicating that they rejected registration forms decreased slightly from 2008 to 2010; 25.4 percent of election officials reported that they did not reject any applications in 2010, which represents an increase of 3.6 percent from 2008. It does appear that the number of registration rejections decreased in 2010.

TABLE 6: TOP 5 REASONS FOR REJECTING REGISTRATION FORMS

Reason for Rejection	2010	2008
Missed deadline: form arrives too late	40.4%	48.9%
Form is incomplete	28.2%	35.5%
Signature and/or date is missing	25.9%	28.2%
Can't reach voter when we have questions	11.3%	9.7%
Wrong address	8.3%	9.3%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Identify the top three (3) most common reasons for rejecting registration forms and/or ballot requests from overseas and military voters in your jurisdiction? (Please check only your top 3 reasons)" Percentages are calculated as the number of respondents divided by the entire sample size. In 2010, the sample size is 1,516 and in 2008 1,019. Because survey participants were allowed to choose more than one response, total percent may exceed 100.

Another persistent problem identified by election officials was "out-of-date mailing addresses" (39.8 percent of survey respondents). Voter address maintenance issues are a continuing problem for election officials. Another 20.6 percent of survey participants reported that "voters do not notify us when they return to the US." Voters do not often remember that if they change their voting status to overseas or military absentee, it remains that way until they personally take the initiative to change it again.

“ Military voters complain they don't get their ballots but they forget - when they move, they need to tell us. Until the FPCA changes this year, we would get 80% military ballots returned 'undeliverable.' ”
Election Official, Anonymous

TABLE 7: INABILITY TO VOTE

Reason could not Vote	2010	2008
Out-of-date mailing address	39.8%	37.9%
Missed registration/ballot request deadlines	33.3%	40.2%
No signature or witness or oath requirement not met	20.6%	24.6%
Voters not notifying us when they return to US and we've already sent their ballots	20.6%	17.9%
Incomplete information on the form	20.3%	.

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Identify the top three (3) causes of overseas and military voters' inability to vote in your jurisdiction? (Please check only your top three causes)" Percentages are calculated as the number of respondents divided by the entire sample size. In 2010, the sample size is 1,516 and in 2008 1,019. Because survey participants were allowed to choose more than one response, total percent may exceed 100. "Incomplete information on the form" was not a response option in 2008.

The source of the out-of-date addresses and persistent undeliverable ballot problems is directly related to the UOCAVA requirement that mandated that an FPCA registration/ballot request form be honored for two federal

election cycles (i.e. four years). Overseas, and especially military voters, are extremely mobile and often changed addresses or ended their deployment by the time of the next election. This led to the frustration of election officials when sending ballots that came back marked "undeliverable". The two-election cycle registration validity requirement has been removed by the MOVE Act in favor of renewed registration form filing for each election year (or each election in the case of civilians). We look forward to future surveys to reveal whether election officials continue to report address validity problems with such high intensity in 2012 and 2014.

E. Process Management

In order to gain insight into how local resources are applied to military and overseas voters, OVF asked LEOs a series of questions about their process management. Table 8 reveals that the majority of LEOs have one person dedicated to the management of overseas and military voters. Whereas 53 percent of survey respondents stated that they have just one employee committed to UOCAVA voters, 30.4 percent have two employees, which represents no change from 2008. There has been a decrease in the number of jurisdictions that actually do not "define the process for this task" of overseas and military voter administration. Only 8.5 percent reported that the process is not defined, which is down from 12 percent in 2008. This is a promising indicator as it infers the process management of UOCAVA voting is becoming a higher priority.

TABLE 8: STAFF SIZE BY SIZE OF JURISDICTION

	Size of Jurisdiction						
	0 to 24,999	25,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 249,999	250,000 to 499,999	500,000 to 999,999	1,000,000 or more
Overseas Voting Staff							
One person is dedicated to the management of military and overseas voting	600 (42.3%)	89 (6%)	51 (3.4%)	38 (2.6%)	8 (.01%)	3 (0%)	0 (0%)
Two or more persons manage military and overseas voting	235 (15.8%)	83 (5.6%)	55 (3.7%)	42 (2.8%)	26 (1.7%)	8 (.01%)	4
The management process for this task is not precisely defined	111 (7.4%)	6 (.01%)	6 (.01%)	3 (0%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I don't know	9 (.01%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other, please specify	94 (6.3%)	6 (.01%)	4 (0%)	4 (0%)	1 (0%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	1049	185	116	88	36	12	4

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "How many registered voters of all types including domestic local and absentee and overseas and military absentee do you estimate in your jurisdiction?" "How does your jurisdiction staff the management of overseas and military absentee voting?" The results in this table are based on responses to both questions. The total sample size is 1,490.

“ We had just one problem with someone so remote, she could not vote because of her lack of access to post office and printer, and could not e-mail me her vote wishes. ”

Election Official, Anonymous

The majority of LEOs felt that their overall UOCAVA voter administration process “works well.” Nevertheless, there does appear to be a slight decrease in satisfaction from 2008 to 2010, from 81 percent to 76 percent. LEOs were most confident in their ability to deal with voter questions and/or problems and their tracking and reporting systems. Under the new MOVE Act, providing for the electronic transmission of blank ballots and online ballot tracking is one of the new responsibilities of election officials. At this early stage, only 13.6 percent felt that their system of online ballot delivery worked well in 2010 and only 6.8 percent said that their system for online ballot tracking worked well.

TABLE 9: WHAT WORKS WELL

	2010	2008	2006
Our overall process works well	75.6%	81%	63%
Ability to deal with voter questions and/or problems	15.5%	16%	28%
Tracking and Reporting systems	13.8%	12%	27%
Voter address maintenance	10.1%	10%	17%
Online ballot delivery	13.6%		

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “What works well in your jurisdiction’s processes for managing overseas and military absentee voting? (Check all that apply.)” Data entries represent percent of respondents to the question. Because respondents were allowed to check multiple responses, percentages do not add to 100.

Although LEOs are, in general, satisfied with their process management, many remain discouraged about the continued problem of undeliverable ballots and voter address maintenance problems. The percentage of respondents that found undeliverable ballots to be a problem remained unchanged from 2008, hovering at 38 percent. In a positive development, the percentage of LEO survey participants that had problems with postal service and voter address maintenance went down slightly from 22 percent in 2008 to 18 percent in 2010.

TABLE 10: WHAT DOES NOT WORK WELL?

	2010	2008	2006
Our overall process does not work well	1%	1%	2%
Undeliverable ballots	37.5%	38%	42%
Postal service or delivery problems	14.4%	23%	
Voter address maintenance	18.3%	22%	44%
I don’t know	18%	22%	
Other	12.6%	14%	12%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “What does not work well in your jurisdiction’s processes for managing overseas and military voting? (Check all that apply.)” Data entries represent percent of respondents to the question. Because respondents were allowed to check multiple responses, percentages do not add to 100. Response options were different in 2006 and 2008.

The MOVE Act has started to impact the UOCAVA process management of LEOs: 37 percent stated that the MOVE Act affected their work or procedures in 2010, and 20 percent of jurisdictions reported adding new IT support systems to support the reforms initiated by the MOVE Act. However, because the OVF Post Election Survey targets local election officials and not state officials who are also responsible for MOVE Act implementation, we may not be capturing changes made at that level. 8.6 percent of respondents also indicated that they were planning changes. Among those jurisdictions that are planning changes, 45 percent are targeting changes that support MOVE Act requirements, 42 percent training, and 30 percent communications.

F. Training

Training is an essential component of a LEO's ability to keep up with developments in voting legislation and technology. In 2010, 88.5 percent of LEOs reported receiving updates and/or training regarding overseas and military voting. This represents a five percent increase from 2008. An overwhelming majority, 95 percent, indicated that they were informed of the passage of the MOVE Act, which is a very positive sign. LEOs received the majority of their information and training from the state level, and 24.7 percent reported receiving training from the FVAP, a federal agency.

TABLE 11: SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND TRAINING

	2010	2008	2006
State Elections Office (Sec. of State, Board of Elections, etc.)	96.3%	95%	91%
The Federal Voter Assistance Program (FVAP)	27.4%	41%	35%
State person in charge of UO-CAVA voting	15.4%	18%	16%
County Clerk	15.8%	15%	
The Election Center	9%	10%	13%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Who provides you with updates/information and/or training regarding overseas and military voting? (Check all that apply.)" Data entries represent percent of respondents to the question. Because respondents were allowed to check multiple responses, percentages do not add to 100. Response options were different in 2006 and 2008.

“ This was our first experience with the MOVE act, and we received our training in early September. It was so helpful having the email addresses so we could respond with our voters when problems occurred. But it was a lot of back and forth to sometimes get the information we needed. ”

Election Official, Anonymous

Emails, meetings or classes, and memorandums are the most popular forms of training. These results are summarized in Figure 1. The 2010 results are similar to the 2008 findings. The trend toward new training technologies continued and 22 percent reported receiving online training, up from 15 percent in 2008 and 10 percent in 2006.

In summary, election officials reported received more training in 2010 than in 2008, and 72 percent felt that this training was very sufficient or sufficient. This represents a decrease from 2008, when 91 percent indicated that the training they received was sufficient. Only approximately 6 percent found their training insufficient in 2010.

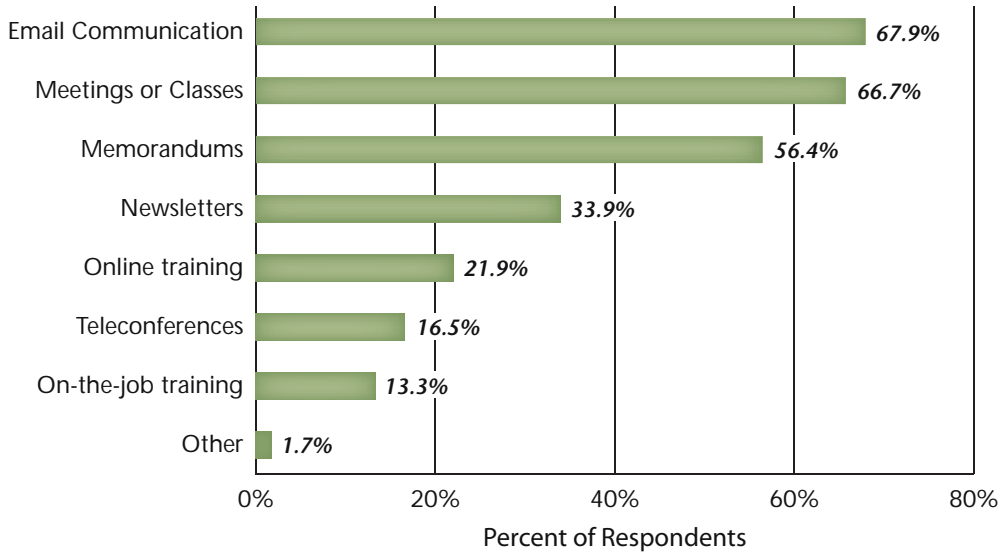
G. Assistance and Communication to Overseas and Military Voters after the MOVE Act

LEOs provide several forms of assistance to voters among which communication tops the list. Of those participants who stated that they provide special assistance, 75.7 percent offered assistance in the form of email communications, which represents a 19 percent increase from 2008. In addition to email, 52 percent provided information on their website, which represents an 18 percent increase from 2008. Furthermore, 72 percent gave priority to voting materials mailing, and 52 percent contacted relatives to confirm addresses. These results indicate that election officials are increasingly turning to email and the internet as a way to assist and communicate with voters.

The findings regarding LEO assistance to voters are illustrated in Figure 2, which shows that 57 percent of LEOs reported that email was their most common form of communication with overseas and military voters. As in 2008, the second most common form of communication was postal mail. Although the use of written communication by post appears to have decreased (from 36 to 27 percent) since 2008, there has not been a corresponding increase in the use of email.

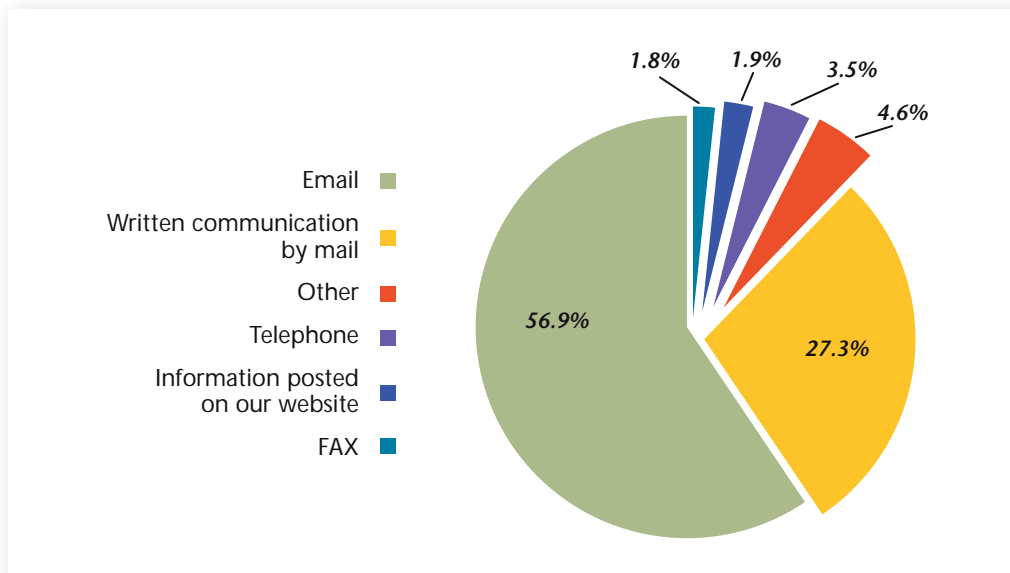
According to the MOVE Act, states were required to designate a form of electronic communication with voters, which was to be used for the following purposes: for voters to request voter registration and absentee ballot applications, for states to send applications to voters, and to provide voters with election and voting information. The results of this survey do not provide enough data to determine if local election officials fully implemented this aspect of the new reforms.

FIGURE 1: TYPE OF TRAINING



NOTE: Respondents were asked, "Please identify the type of information and/or training you receive on overseas and military voting. (Check all that apply)" Data entries represent percent of respondents to the question. Because respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses, percentages do not add up to 100.

FIGURE 2: COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LEOS AND VOTERS



NOTE: Respondents were asked, "What is your most frequently used form of communication with overseas and military voters?" Data entries represent percent of respondents to the question.

Although 850 LEOs (57 percent) reported that email was their most frequent form of communication with voters, 12 percent of LEO survey respondents reported that they do not communicate with voters by email and 22 percent do not collect the email addresses of those voters that contact them. Among the reasons that the 12 percent of LEOs gave for not using email is that they believe it is “not necessary.” The use of email is a trend that election officials cannot ignore, as 40 percent of jurisdictions reported an increase in the number of emails coming from overseas and military voters.

Websites are an alternate form of communication that election officials have explored. As in 2008, 45 percent of jurisdictions had their own website and 33 percent referred overseas and civilian military voters to the State Board of Elections website or the Secretary of State’s website. It is encouraging that 78 percent of LEO survey participants are increasingly using this form of communication. Just 5 percent did not rely on any websites and nearly 7 percent have no plans for a website. 37 percent (450 jurisdictions) reported upgrading their website in 2010; just 23 percent (276 jurisdictions) described their upgrades as a response to the new MOVE Act.

TABLE 12: ONLINE SERVICES FOR VOTERS

Online Service	Percent
Online registration assistance in the form of actual data-entry registration, not just text instructions	14%
Online voter registration confirmation system	10.6%
Online ballot download facilities	11.5%
Online ballot tracking and status	16.1%
We do not offer any of these services	15.7%
We do not offer these services, but they are available on the State Board of Elections or Secretary of State site	53.4%
I don’t know	6%
Other	3.4%

NOTE: Respondents were asked, “Did you offer any of the following online services to voters? (Please check all that apply)”

In contrast, the majority of respondents stated that their State Board of Elections or Secretary of State’s website made changes because of the MOVE Act. This emphasis on state level, rather than local level implementation is reflected in Table 12. The primary online service provided to voters was online ballot tracking (per the requirements of MOVE) with the majority of activity at the state level, supplementing local jurisdiction activity.

H. Conclusion

The 2010 Post Election LEO Survey results indicate a decline in the number of registration/ballot requests submitted by overseas and military voters, which is unfortunately deemed “to be expected” in a mid-term election. Despite this disappointing finding regarding turnout, the survey results revealed several positive developments. An overwhelming majority of LEOs were informed of the MOVE Act and it had an immediate impact on their management processes. LEOs continued the upward trend towards the use of technology as a means to fix problems in the voting process, and implemented a variety of new online tools for voters. Those that did not, appear to have relied on their state election officials. The most important challenge facing LEOs as they enter the 2012 cycle will be to increase outreach to their voters as they continue to develop their IT solutions.

“Until our State allows us to follow through with the Move Act, our hands are tied.”
Election Official, Anonymous

OVF Research Program

Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF) is dedicated to advancing research concerning overseas and military voters and voting. Surveys and ongoing research are vital to substantiating the efforts of OVF, election officials on all levels, scholars and advocates in understanding and improving registration and voting processes for citizens who live abroad or serve in the military.

The following OVF Research Reports are available for download from our website:

- These are our Numbers: Civilian Americans Overseas and Voter Turnout
- It's in the Mail: Surveying UOCAVA Voters and Barriers to Overseas Voting
- Case Study: Minnesota Takes the Lead in 2008
- Defining the Universe: The Problem of Counting UOCAVA Voters
- State Fact Sheets
- Back issues of the "OVF Research Newsletter"
- Survey Reports for 2008 and 2006

Please visit the OVF Research web page for more information:

<https://www.overseasvotefoundation.org/research-intro>

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