#BeReady16: working together for our military and overseas voters

Federal Voting Assistance Program

Election Assistance Commission Standards Board
15 April 2016

FVAP.GOV
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(U.S. Air Force photo/Airm

PASSPORT
United States of America

FVAP's renewed focus

- **The electronic voting demonstration project was repealed.**

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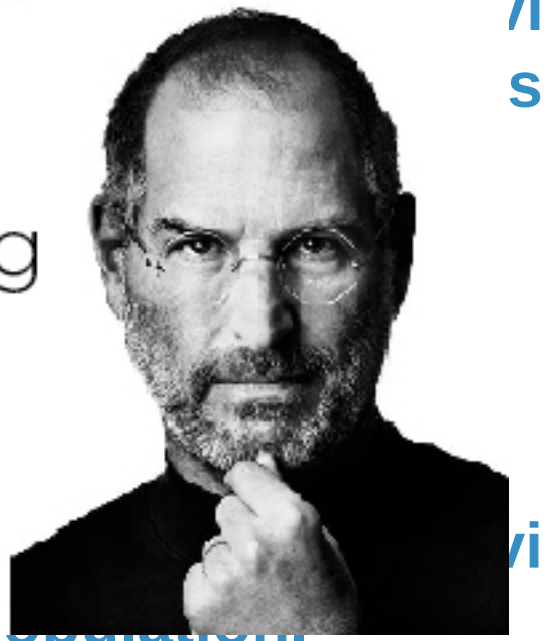

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FVAP facing challenges in a new way

- Look to the Data
- Cooperative Solutions:
  - Council of State Governments
  - EAC/FVAP/MPSA/USPS Mail Emphasis
- New Outreach Efforts

Look to Data - Personas (Use Cases)

- Effective way to translate research data
- Based on data analyses using:
  - 2012 Post-Election Survey of Active Duty Military (ADM)
  - 2012 Post-Election Survey of Spouses of ADM
  - Survey of Overseas Citizens
  - Google Analytics for FVAP.gov
  - 2014 Status of Forces Survey of ADM (SOFS-A)

Persona 1: George, Older Overseas Citizen Voter

- **Media Use and Behavior:**
  - Uses email, does some online shopping, not generally tech-savvy, uses personal computer
- **FVAP User Behavior:**
  - Likely to visit website directly based on voting experience
- **Voting Experience:**
  - Registration Likelihood: HIGH
  - Ballot Return Likelihood: HIGH
  - Feels voting is an opportunity to express American pride and maintain connection to U.S.
  - Main sources of voting info: State and LEOs, other ex-pats
- **Challenges:**
  - Assumes FVAP is for military voters and is unaware of services available for overseas civilians
  - Sends and receives voting materials in paper form and is not aware of online registration and ballot delivery options
- **Needs:**
  - A convenient, centralized one-stop shop for current voting information, deadlines, forms
  - Timely reminders of registration, ballot request and ballot return deadlines
  - Feedback from LEO about the status of his registration, ballot request and returned ballot

Persona 2: Andrea, Unaware Overseas Citizen Voter

Media Use and Behavior:

- Tech-savvy and heavy social media user; accesses Internet on her cell phone and personal laptop

FVAP User Behavior:

- Likely to be referred from another source (Dept of State); likely to use online assistant to complete FPCA

Voting Experience:

- Registration Likelihood: LOW
- Ballot Return Likelihood: LOW
- Voted in U.S. no experience with absentee; perceives voting as a way to stay connected
- Main sources of voting info: family and friends, other ex-pats

Challenges:

- Unaware of right to vote from overseas; unfamiliar with process; unlikely to seek out information independently
- Confusion about what State she should vote in; might decide not to participate if she feels process is hard or overwhelming

Needs:

- Detailed info about right to vote and process
- Information about voting assistance resources
- Help identifying her State and its requirements
- Timely reminders of registration, ballot request and ballot return deadlines

Persona 3: Johnny, Young ADM Voter

Media Use and Behavior:

- Tech-savvy and heavy social media user; accesses Internet on his cell phone

FVAP User Behavior:

- Likely to directly visit FVAP.gov based on word of mouth and VAO outreach

Voting Experience:

- Registration Likelihood: MODERATE
- Ballot Return Likelihood: LOW
- First-time voter with no experience or knowledge of absentee process; views voting as important right but ambivalent about participating
- Main sources of voting info: DoD resources, family and friends, VAO

Challenges:

- Voting is not a priority, has little motivation to seek out info independently; might decide not to participate if she feels process is hard or overwhelming
- Likely to register but might fail to return ballot without follow-up prompting
- Unstable mailing address due to frequent moves

Needs:

- Step-by-step info of the process; assistance filling out FPCA
- Proactive engagement by VAO; support from Commander
- Electronic registration options

Persona 4: Davis, Senior Enlisted ADM

Media Use and Behavior:

- Internet access mostly limited to time in ship/computer lab; uses Internet and social media regularly to communicate with family while deployed

FVAP User Behavior:

- Likely to directly visit FVAP.gov, though referrals are helpful; likely to use paper forms

Voting Experience:

- Registration Likelihood: HIGH
- Ballot Return Likelihood: MODERATE
- Has voted in the past and generally understands absentee process; believes if he doesn't vote, can't complain
- Main sources of voting info: DoD resources, spouse, VAO

Challenges:

- Has experienced difficulties voting in the past, skeptical his vote will count
- Likely to register but may fail to return ballot without reminders/encouragement
- Speed and quality of mail system, limited time and Internet access; unfamiliar with FWAB

Needs:

- Accurate info about voting rights and reassurance vote will be counted; support from Commander
- Timely reminders of registration, ballot request and ballot return deadlines
- Feedback from LEO about the status of his registration, ballot request and returned ballot

Persona 5: Arlo, Military Officer

Media Use and Behavior:

- Internet access primarily through personal computer; uses email and Facebook to communicate with family/friends

FVAP User Behavior:

- Likely to directly visit FVAP.gov without referrals

Voting Experience:

- Registration Likelihood: HIGH
- Ballot Return Likelihood: HIGH
- Extensive experience voting absentee; views voting as civic duty and takes it very seriously
- Main sources of voting info: DoD resources, spouse, VAO

Challenges:

- Has experienced difficulties voting in the past, including not getting ballot on time; sometimes unsure whether ballot was counted
- Feels unprepared to assist Service members who look to him for guidance about voting; struggles to discuss voting without discussing politics

Needs:

- Reliable, up-to-date information about the voting assistance resources available that he can share with subordinates
- Timely reminders of registration, ballot request and ballot return deadlines
- Feedback from LEO about the status of his registration, ballot request and returned ballot

Persona 6: Hanna, Military Spouse

Media Use and Behavior:

- Uses Internet and social media to communicate with family/friends; use cell phone and personal computer

FVAP User Behavior:

- Likely to be referred to FVAP.gov by online sources or through independent search

Voting Experience:

- Registration Likelihood: MODERATE
- Ballot Return Likelihood: MODERATE
- Sometimes voted in home jurisdiction but unfamiliar with absentee process; recognizes voting as an important right
- Main sources of voting info: DoD voting assistance resources, spouse and other military families, VAO

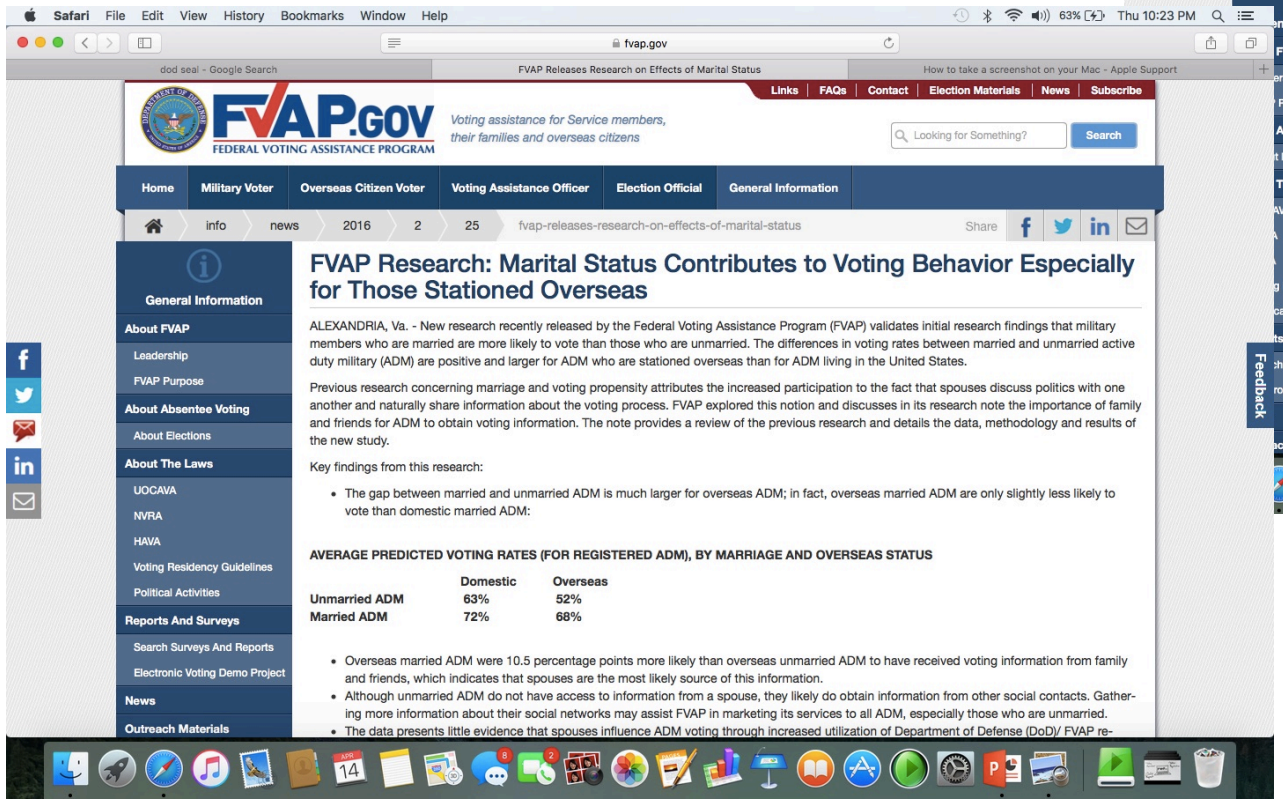
Challenges:

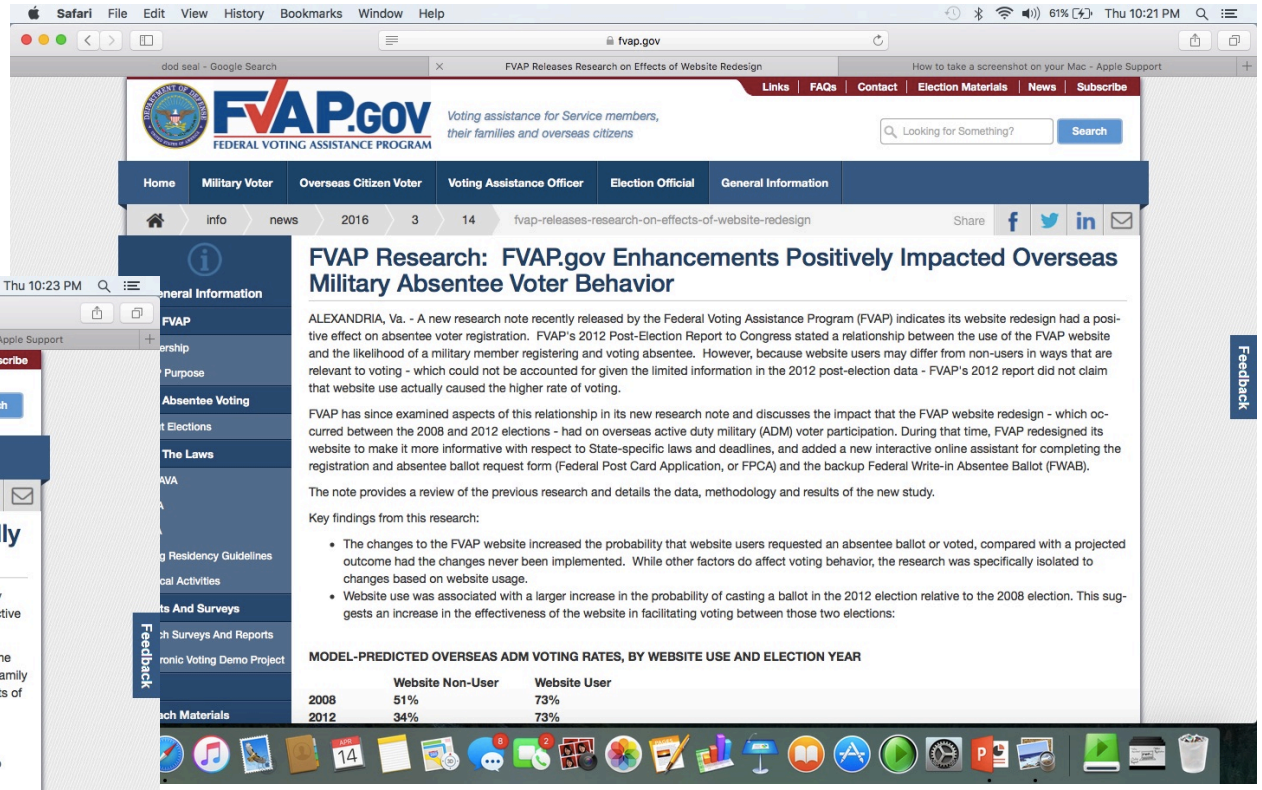
- Would like to vote but has little knowledge of process; limited time/energy to figure out process
- Often receives inaccurate information through social network of military families and is unsure who can be trusted as a source of reliable information

Needs:

- Step-by-step info of the process and available resources
- Timely reminders of registration, ballot request and ballot return deadlines
- Assistance communicating important info to spouse

Look to Data - FVAP Analysis





Working together is success
Henry Ford

Working Together for You and Your Voters….

Working Together – Policy Working Group

Voter Communication

- » Use plain language.
- » Make effective use of election websites and social media.
- » Create more user-friendly electronic ballot return envelopes.
- » Communicate to voters when the ballot application is accepted.
- » Provide information to voters about what is on the ballot.

Federal Post Card Application

- » Treat the FPCA as a permanent request for voter registration.
- » Establish a default validity period for the FPCA mail ballot request.

Online Voter Registration

- » States that provide online voter registration should incorporate online registration for overseas and military voters.

Improved Engagement with U.S. Military Community

- » Establish partnerships between state and local election officials and local military installations.

CSG Sharing capitol ideas.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE · UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION · UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Working Together – Technology Working Group

- Ballot Duplication
- Data Standardization
- Use of the DoD Common Access Card
- Ballot Tracking Pilot Project

Working Together – EAVS Section B Working Group

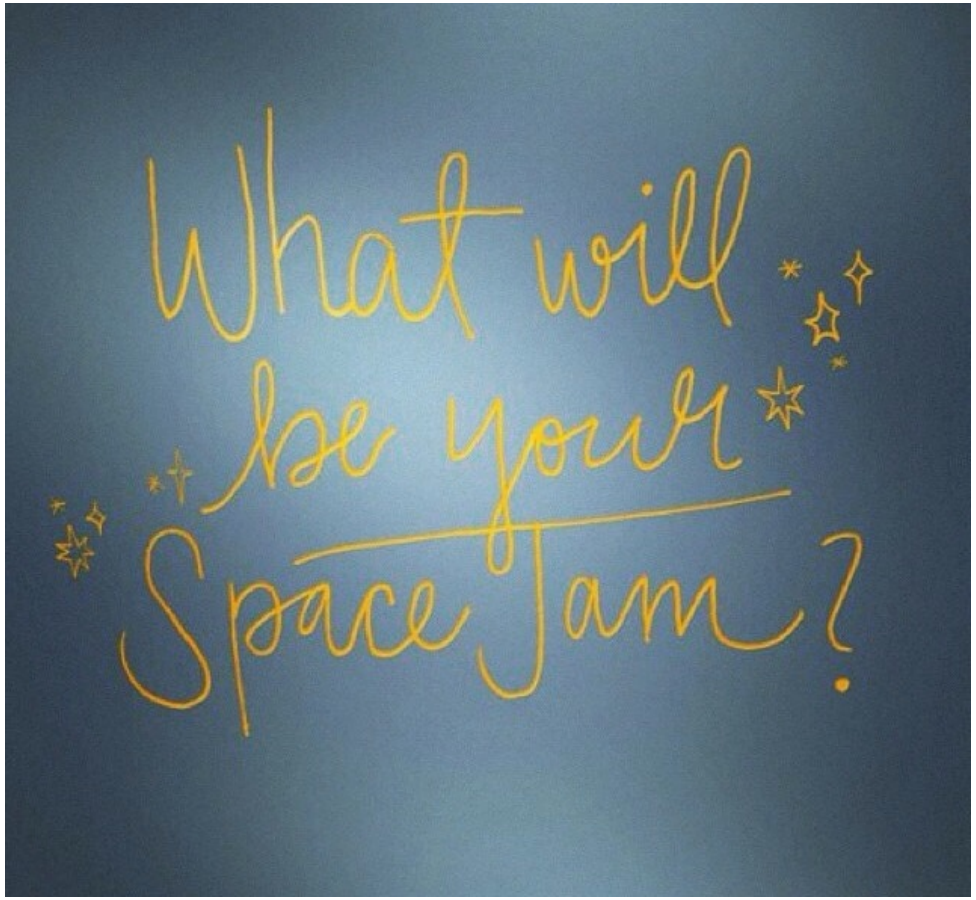
- Clarify Language and Instructions for 2016
- Develop Roadmap for the future
- Understand the role of Data Standardization
- Look to transactional election data for voter success metrics

What can the Standards Board do?

- Continue to set the bar high for the work of the EAC
- Challenge the Status Quo and embrace change
- Continue to push the EAC and FVAP to develop technologies and programs/services for our UOCAVA voters

SERVICE ALL VOTERS
VOTER EXPERIENCE & SUCCESS BECOMES PRIORITY
DELIVER ”THE WOW” PHILOSOPHY

What Can We All Do?

Let’s all do this together

Our military and overseas voters need our very best