

# IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ARMY VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (2004-2005)

## 1. Purpose:

These instructions implement the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), DoD Directive 1000.4 and provide information necessary for the conduct of the Army Voting Assistance Program (AR 608-20) during the 2004/2005 election years. The program's principal purposes are to make registration and voting information, materials, and assistance readily available to all eligible Army voters and provide them every opportunity and encouragement to register and cast a ballot in the 2004/2005 elections.

## 2. References:

### a. Publications:

- (1) AR 608-20, Voting by Personnel of the Armed Forces.
- (2) Misc Pub 360-04.05, Voting Assistance Guide – 2004-2005 (to be published).
- (3) DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP).
- (4) DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty.
- (5) 5 C.F.R. Part 734, Political Activities of Federal Employees (Civilian).
- (6) DoD 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation 6-200 – 6-205, Political Activities of Civilian DoD Employees.
- (7) AR 360-1, The Army Public Affairs Program.
- (8) AR 600-20, Army Command Policy.
- (9) Sections 608 and 609 of Title 18, United States Code.

### b. Forms:

- (1) Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).
- (2) Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

### **3. Concept:**

There are two basic missions associated with the Army Voting Assistance Program, which are as follows:

a. The first mission is the traditional voting assistance provided to Soldiers, their family members, and overseas DA civilian employees and their family members. This is the primary focus of the program. Individual voting assistance consists of providing technical guidance that is given by the unit Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs). Further assistance can be obtained by using the installation's chain of command: Unit VAOs, installation Senior Voting Assistance Officers (SVAOs), MACOM SVAOs, Army Voting Action Officer, the Army's Senior Service Voting Representative, and finally the Federal Voting Assistance Program, DoD.

b. The second mission is to educate every Soldier about the importance and usefulness of voting and the opportunities they have to participate in the voting franchise if they so desire. Direct command involvement is required to both meet this mission and ensure that it is accomplished within the limits of law and policy.

### **4. Prohibited Practices:**

The primary goal of the Army Voting Assistance Program is to actively assist Soldiers, as well as other eligible individuals, to register and vote without violating statute or regulation. The prohibitions below and in the references above must be strictly followed to meet this goal. Assistance in applying these guidelines while implementing the Voting Assistance Program may be obtained from your servicing Staff Judge Advocate's Office.

a. The use of lists to keep specific account of Soldiers' decisions regarding registration and voting is prohibited. The only reporting that this program requires is numbers indicating soldier participation in the voter assistance program – regardless of whether they choose to register or vote later. Therefore, by name accounting is not necessary and will not be recorded. It is also not necessary to track registration or voting decisions.

b. Installation commanders will not permit the use of installation facilities by any candidate (either incumbents or new office seekers) or members of their staffs and campaign representatives for: political assemblies or meetings; media events; fund-raising dinners; parties or social events; causes, no matter who is the sponsor; press conferences; or similar activities. If a current government official who is also a candidate is visiting the installation for official reasons, installation commanders must coordinate with the local PAO for guidance when planning the visit (Reference a(7)).

c. Installation commanders will decline requests for support to any political event which may imply association with any partisan group.

d. Unit VAOs will not engage in or support any activities that could be interpreted as associating the Department of the Army with any political causes or candidates.

e. Commissioned, warrant, and noncommissioned officers of the Armed Forces shall not use military authority to influence or attempt to influence any other member to vote or not to vote, or to require any member to march to any polling place or place of voting. Such activity violates the criminal laws of the United States (Reference a(9)). This does not prohibit individuals in their personal capacities from discussing political issues or the candidates for public office, but leaders must be cautious because of the influence they have over subordinates, even in informal conversation. For additional guidance on this issue, contact your servicing Staff Judge Advocate office.

f. Unit VAOs must be aware that the types of voting literature that may be distributed is very limited:

(1) The DoD policy prohibits Active Duty personnel from distributing **ANY** campaign literature, whether you consider it partisan or not. Active Duty personnel will only distribute information relating to the process of registering to vote; i.e., "Voting Assistance Guide," FPCA, and FWAB.

(2) Neither DoD nor DA is authorized to collect or distribute voting information of a partisan nature. Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their eligible family members **MUST** obtain this type of information from other sources. Much of this information may be obtained from the DoD Voting Information Center (DOD VIC). Soldiers and DA civilians overseas are encouraged to call the DOD VIC at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343 or DSN 425-1343. Toll free telephone numbers are listed by country on the Federal Voting Assistance Program web site at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov).

g. Voting Assistance Officers will **NOT** contact State and local officials or agencies about voting matters. They should contact the FVAP office for assistance if it is necessary to contact State or local offices. The FVAP office is the sole DoD representative for obtaining and distributing voting information from these officials.

h. Active duty Soldiers and Reserve component Soldiers on active duty are required to adhere to the policies in DoD Directive 1344.10 (Reference a(4)) and AR 600-20 (Reference a(8)) . Department of the Army civilian employees must comply with the limitations on political activity in 5 C.F.R. Part 734 (Reference a(5)) and JER, Chapter 6 (Reference a(6)).

## **5. Responsibilities:**

a. United States Army Human Resources Command (AHRC):

(1) The Adjutant General, AHRC, is designated as the Senior Army Voting Representative to manage the Army's Voting Assistance Program. The Senior Army Voting Representative will appoint an Army Voting Action Officer, preferably a GS-12 or higher, to administer the Voting Program.

(2) The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, implements the Army Voting Assistance Program and serves as the Voting Program Coordinator for Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA). The telephone number of the Voting Action Line is DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. The facsimile number DSN 221-4532 or commercial (703) 325-4532.

(3) The Adjutant General will coordinate with the Chief, Army Reserve and the Chief, National Guard Bureau to ensure each Reserve component maintains a contingency absentee voting program for the National Guard and reserve units and for personnel who have been activated and deployed. Each Reserve component shall designate a Senior Voting Assistance Officer at its Headquarters level NLT 10 Nov 03. Provide the name of the SVAO and quarterly updates as required in paragraph 5b(3) below.

b. Major Army commanders will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, a senior officer (Colonel or above or a civilian equivalent) as the Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage the major Army command's (MACOM) Voting Assistance Program. The designated grade of the senior voting assistance officer for MACOM's and their subordinate commands as SVAOs is directed in the DoD Directive 1000.4 Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)(Reference a(3)). They should ensure that the SVAO coordinates with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate so that the conduct of the voting assistance program remains within the limits of law and policy. The MACOM SVAO must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop during years with election for Federal offices.

(2) Ensure that each subordinate installation commander appoints a SVAO and an alternate (military or civilian) to manage the overall installation program. The installation SVAOs should also be prepared to provide voting assistance to members of the Army National Guard and Reserve in the event they are activated and serving within their subordinate commands whether in CONUS or OCONUS.

(3) The MACOM SVAOs must maintain a listing of all subordinate installation SVAOs and their designated alternates. Include the following information in the updated listing of SVAOs: Grade or title, name, address (mailing, message, and e-mail), telephone number (commercial and DSN), facsimile number (commercial and DSN), and date attended FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop. The listing should be forwarded to AHRC, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-IP, Alexandria, VA 22332-0474 NLT 8 Dec 03. The list must be updated quarterly and submitted to arrive at AHRC NLT 9 Jan 04, 9 Apr 04, 9 Jul 04, and 8 Oct 04. The list must be e-mailed to [davisj@hoffman.army.mil](mailto:davisj@hoffman.army.mil).

(4) Establish and publicize, on every installation, the availability of a special telephone number which serves as the "**Voting Action Line**," to provide rapid responses to voting problems or questions as they arise within the command.

(5) Monitor subordinate installation's voting assistance programs throughout the election year and provide monthly status reports beginning May 2004 through September 2004. These reports should be in narrative format and should contain examples of events planned and held at installations to publicize the importance of the voting franchise and opportunities for voters to register. Additionally, please include the percentage of eligible service members who have been contacted concerning absentee registration and voting procedures and the percent of service members who have received the training required in paragraph 5d(6) below. Remember the goals are 100% contact and trained, but keeping lists of soldiers regarding their decisions to register or vote is prohibited and unnecessary for the reports required by this program. See paragraph 4a above. The first monthly report is due 11 Jun 04; subsequent monthly reports are due 9 Jul, 13 Aug, 10 Sep 04, and 8 Oct 04, respectively. These reports will be sent to AHRC, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-IP, Alexandria, VA 22332-0474. The reports may be faxed to (703) 325-4532 or e-mailed to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(6) Prepare and forward two special reports to AHRC (AHRC-PDO-IP). These two reports may be submitted concurrently with the requirement in subparagraph (5) above. However, since they will be used for different purposes, they should be identified separately.

(a) The first special report as of 30 June 2004 is due 9 Jul 04. The report should be an overall evaluation of the adequacy of the planning efforts undertaken at installation level to implement a voter registration campaign during the Army Voter Registration Month in August 2004 (See paragraph 6 below). The report should reference whether or not existing stocks of the FPCA and FWAB for CONUS and OCONUS commands are in sufficient supply to meet the election year needs. The report should also provide a brief narrative overview of how the installations, in general, plan to implement Army Voter Registration Month. Copies of particularly strong or unique implementation plans should be included, if available.

(b) The second special report is due 10 Sep 04. This report will be the overall evaluation of the success of the Aug 04 Army Voter Registration Month. It should include specific examples of particularly successful installation efforts and should provide an estimate of the number and percentage of Soldiers participating in the command's voting assistance program. This estimate should include a breakout for each event, as well as an overall total for the program, indicating the number of Soldiers that participated in each event (raw total and as a percentage of unit strength) and the number of forms distributed. Remember that keeping lists of Soldiers and recording their decisions regarding registering to vote and voting is strictly prohibited and is unnecessary for this estimate. This requirement calls only for estimated numbers of participants in the Voting Assistance Program, NOT by-name accounting of registration or voting decisions. Provide comments to indicate how the subordinate commands, in general, plan to ensure that Soldiers receive their ballots and how they plan to provide the necessary voting assistance and encouragement to ensure the ballots are executed.

(7) Ensure each Soldier is provided FPCAs for themselves and their voting age family members before graduation from recruit training (CDR, TRADOC).

(8) Establish within the MACOM a Voting Assistance Officer network and communications capability to quickly disseminate voting information through the MACOM.

(9) Report the accomplishment of the IN-HAND delivery of FPCAs required in paragraph 7a(2), NLT 1 Feb 04, The report must be e-mailed to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

c. Installation commanders will:

(1) Ensure that the voting assistance program is conducted within the legal limits discussed in paragraph 4 of these guidelines, as well as the limits imposed by the referenced publications. Commanders will ensure that their Senior Voting Assistance Officer coordinates closely with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate throughout the conduct of the program.

(2) Appoint, in writing, an Installation Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage the installation's voting assistance program throughout the election year. Where possible, the Installation SVAO should be a civilian GS-12 or higher. If a military member is appointed as the Installation SVAO that officer should hold the grade of MAJ or higher. An alternate SVAO should also be appointed. If the installation has no GS-12, or Major or above other than the assigned commander, then the next most senior officer, noncommissioned officer or civilian shall be appointed as the SVAO. All installation SVAO's must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop during years with elections for Federal offices. The SVAO is the principal assistant to the installation commander and is responsible to the commander to ensure that:

(a) Unit Voting Assistance officers (VAOs) attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop and are trained to provide assistance to all Army voters including family members, and DA civilian employees and their family members overseas. Also, the FVAP has a Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for additional information and training.

(b) All CONUS SVAOs should follow their normal support supply channels to obtain their blank forms from the U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility located at the address as follows: U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63114-6181. As a minimum, each VAO must have:

1. A copy of the Misc Pub 360-04.05, Voting Assistance Guide (2004/2005) (Reference a(2)).

2. Four FPCAs (Reference b(1)) for each assigned Soldier and DA civilian stationed OCONUS.

3. One FWAB (Reference b(2)) for each assigned Soldier and DA civilian stationed OCONUS.

4. Other promotional materials as required (see Appendix A).

(c) An installation voting assistance plan is established which reflects the guidance contained in these implementing instructions.

(d) Planning is accomplished on the installation to conduct, through the chain of command, the Army Voter Registration Month in August 2004.

(e) The effectiveness of installation voting assistance program is evaluated on a continual basis.

(f) Periodic status reports on planning efforts, successes, problems, and recommendations are submitted to their MACOM SVAOs to meet the requirements in paragraphs 5b(5) and 5b(6) above.

(3) Require that unit VAOs be appointed, in writing, at each level of command down to company and detachment level. Voting Assistance Officers must have retention in the unit through December 2004. Maintain a current listing of all unit VAOs.

(4) Ensure that unit VAOs (First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above) are appointed and trained no later than the end of June 2004.

(5) Ensure copies of FPCA are included in orientation packets for new and permanent change of station personnel.

(6) Evaluate the command's voting assistance programs on a continual basis.

(7) Conduct the Army Voter Registration Month in August 2004. All Soldiers will be briefed on their right to vote and will be given every opportunity and encouragement to exercise that right consistent with the limitations listed in paragraph 4 of this guidance and in other policies and laws. Soldiers should receive at least one briefing or training session devoted to absentee registration and voting. The availability of voting information, supporting materials, personal assistance and the importance of the voting franchise will be stressed. The MACOMs are required to report a percentage of Soldiers who have participated in the Voting Assistance Program, as of 31 August 2004, to AHRC, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-IP, no later than 10 Sep 04 (See paragraph 5b(6)(b) above). Remember that keeping lists of Soldiers and recording their decisions regarding registering to vote and voting is prohibited and is unnecessary for this requirement.

(8) Emphasize the week of 3-11 September 2004 as "Armed Forces Voters Week." This week should be used by commanders and unit VAOs to assist those who were not registered earlier in August and should be the culmination of the formal registration effort.

(9) Designate other days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting. Recommend a day around 4 July 2004 and other appropriate holiday.

(10) Ensure that installation telephone operators are provided the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of all unit VAOs, senior NCO assistants, and the installation SVAOs.

(11) Ensure that installation Public Affairs Officers coordinate voting information support materials through Army Public Affairs channels.

(12) Ensure that The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, is notified immediately whenever a voter is denied the opportunity to vote in any State. The telephone number is (703) 325-4530 or DSN 221-4530.

(13) Ensure that SVAOs specifically coordinate the services of the public affairs officer, staff judge advocate, publications account manager, communication and message centers to facilitate the opportunity to register and vote. See Appendix A for Voting Assistance Publications.

(14) Ensure that nonpartisan offers to assist in the installation's voting assistance program from on-post private organizations such as Spouses Clubs, Boy/Girl Scouts and other youth groups, veteran's organizations, and service associations are accepted, when appropriate, and integrated into the installation's voting assistance program. These offers MUST BE coordinated with the servicing Staff Judge Advocate before acceptance to ensure that the offer complies with all provisions of law and policy.

(15) Designate at least one well-advertised fixed location on the installation where absentee voting materials and assistance are available to all military personnel, civilian employees and their family members. Locations may include legal assistance offices, family service centers, community centers, etc.

(16) Ensure voting assistance is provided to small and/or geographically separated units.

(17) Each Installation SVAO will provide notification to Unit VAO's and eligible absentee voters on the installation of the last date before a general Federal election by which absentee ballots must be mailed from that installation to reasonably be delivered in time to State and local election officials (Absentee ballots should be mailed NLT 14 days prior to the election if mailed in CONUS and NLT 14-30 days prior to the election if mailed from OCONUS).

(18) Establish with the installation a VAO network to quickly disseminate voting information throughout the installation.

d. Unit commanders down to company and detachment level will -

(1) Appoint, in writing, unit VAOs in the grades of First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above in all units with 25 or more permanently assigned members. As a minimum and maximum span of control for VAOs must be established, an additional VAO should be appointed, in writing, for each 50 unit members above the 25 member base. When military personnel (including noncommissioned officers) are designated as voting assistance officers, they are authorized by DoD Directive 1000.4 (Reference a(3)) to administer oaths in connection with voting registration and voting.

(2) Provide unit VAOs the necessary time and resources needed to perform their voting assistance duties.

(3) Provide Soldiers who desire to vote the maximum opportunity to do so. This occurs through junior officers and senior NCOs assisting their respective subordinates with their voting questions and problems throughout the election year. Remember, it is **ILLEGAL** for commissioned, warrant, and noncommissioned officers to use military authority to influence anyone to vote or not to vote. Leaders at all levels must understand that the DoD goal is to eliminate problems/barriers that might prevent someone from voting and to provide every opportunity for Soldiers to register and vote if they so desire. The goal is NOT to pressure, cajole, or order soldiers to register or to vote. Doing so not only violates DoD and Army policy, but violates the criminal laws of the United States.

(4) Assist the maximum number of Soldiers possible to register during August 2004 which is consistent with the prohibited practices discussed in paragraph 4.

(5) Ensure the unit members and their voting-age dependents have ready access to absentee voter registration, ballot requests and absentee submission information and deadlines.

(6) Train all service members (including activated National Guard and Reserve component personnel) on absentee registration and voting procedures during years of elections for Federal offices. All basic training and command courses shall include voting training and advertise voting assistance programs to encourage junior Service members to register and subsequently vote and include instructions on voting rights and responsibilities and procedures on absentee registration and voting. Provide training and voting assistance for units preparing for deployment where voting materials and accessibility to register may be limited. Train all Reserve component personnel during years of elections for Federal offices on all aspects of the voting program, to include familiarity with the FPCA and FWAB.

e. The MACOM and installation commanders are responsible for providing an active command information program concerning voting. They will:

(1) Ensure clear channels of communications are established throughout the installation to expedite voting information down to unit level.

(2) Direct internal information media to publicize all aspects of the 2004/2005 voting information program in a timely and effective manner (see Appendix B).

f. The SVAOs and VAOs are responsible to their commanders for coordinating all matters pertaining to the Army Voting Assistance Program at their respective level.

g. Commanders at all levels will provide command emphasis and support to the Army Voting Assistance Program on a consistent and continuing basis and rate Voting Assistance Officers on the way they perform their voting assistance duties. Commanders shall establish the evaluation criteria for Voting Assistance Officer performance within their command.

## **6. Army Voter Registration Month (1 August - 31 August 2004):**

The Army Voter Registration Month will be the primary time to assist commanders in providing focus on the mission to educate soldiers and to assist those who desire/need assistance in requesting their State ballots.

a. Army Voter Registration Month. During August, commanders and their SVAOs must ensure that all soldiers are given the opportunity to register and request a ballot from their State election officials. If the Soldier desires to register, they must do so in person or by using an FPCA. Information for executing the FPCA, in all States and territories or possessions of the U.S. is found in the Voting Assistance Guide 2004-2005.

b. Program Structure. The Army Voting Assistance Plan divides the voting cycle into four distinct phases. These phases are outlined in detail in paragraph 7.

## **7. Coordinating instructions:**

The following instructions are phased to coincide with major events throughout the election cycle. It serves as a guide to be adapted and amplified as local circumstances dictate.

### **a. Phase I (November 2003 - Spring 2004):**

(1) Appoint installation SVAOs and unit VAOs to serve throughout the election cycle of 2004/2005. Ensure that all VAOs receive FVAP training and training regarding the legal and policy limits on political activities of uniformed service members and civilian employees. Servicing Staff Judge Advocates should be used to the maximum extent possible to provide this training.

(2) Commanders must ensure IN-HAND delivery of FPCA to all uniformed absentee voters (for them and their voting age family members) NLT 15 January 2004. This must be accomplished NLT 15 January of each year. This requires the unit VAOs to place the FPCAs in the hands of soldiers. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Voting Assistance Officers, Commanders, and other leaders must

be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to soldiers who want them, not to coerce soldiers to use the forms. Each MACOM must report the accomplishment of this IN-HAND delivery NLT 1 Feb 04 IAW paragraph 5b(9) above.

(3) Order all voting materials as specified in Appendix A.

(4) Provide installation telephone operators with a directory containing the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of all unit VAOs on the installation by the end of December 2003 and ensure it is continuously updated.

(5) Commanders should review their command's voting assistance programs to ensure that the Army Voting Assistance Program is implemented as specified throughout these instructions.

(6) Commanders should begin their command's information programs about primary elections as directed by DOD and Army leadership. These information efforts should be repeated, as necessary, to inform and educate Soldiers and their family members to exercise their right to vote in primaries and general elections. Family members will be encouraged to participate in these programs.

(7) Commanders should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations) which is available prior to publication and distribution of the *2004 - 2005 Voting Assistance Guide* and any changes thereto.

(8) Inspectors General of the Military Services are required to review the voting assistance program annually at every level of command to ensure compliance with DoD regulations and public law and submit their reports to the DoD Inspector General by 31 January of the following year.

b. Phase II (January - October 2004):

(1) Voting Assistance Officers shall attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop.

(2) Concentrate efforts to provide absentee registration and voting assistance to soldiers for State primary elections (January - October 2004).

(3) Order one FWAB per Soldier, their eligible family members and DA civilians in overseas areas. The FWAB may be used only under the conditions specified in the Voting Assistance Guide – 2004-2005 or by the individual States.

(4) Report the status of the planning effort for the August 2004 "Army Voter Registration Month" as directed by MACOM Senior Voting Assistance Officers. The report should include whether or not there are sufficient stocks of the FPCA and FWAB for use during the registration drive. The MACOM SVAOs will provide a consolidated status report of their subordinate commands (See paragraph 5b6(a) above).

(5) Conduct the Army Voter Registration Month during August 2004. Installation commanders should make the FPCA available through schools, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(6) Commanders must provide FPCAs to all uniformed absentee voters (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving outside the territorial limits of the United States NLT 15 August 2004. This must be accomplished NLT 15 August of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Commanders, VAOs, and other leaders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to soldiers who want them, not to coerce soldiers to use the forms. Each MACOM must report the accomplishment of this NLT 10 Sep 04 by e-mail to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(7) Conduct "Armed Forces Voters Week" (week of 3-11 Sep 04) and "Overseas Citizens Voters Week" (week of 27 Jun-3 Jul 04). Designate other special days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting, i.e. in July and September. Develop programs to support the objective of creating awareness of the process and requirements for soldiers to register to participate in the general election. Publicize the importance of early action on the part of voters to obtain a ballot for the general election well in advance of election deadlines.

(8) Continue dissemination of information about the Voting Assistance Program throughout your installation.

c. Phase III (August 2004 - 2 November 2004):

(1) Continue to widely disseminate voting information to include schools, hospitals, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(2) Report the success of the "Army Voter Registration Month" efforts to include an estimate of the percentage of Soldiers participating in the voting assistance program at installation level. See paragraph 5b(6)(b). The report should also include plans for appropriate follow-up to ensure that services are available to soldiers who may need assistance executing the ballots they receive. Remember that keeping lists of Soldiers and recording their decisions regarding registering to vote and voting is prohibited and is not necessary to meet this requirement. This information will be consolidated by MACOM SVAOs and provided to AHRC, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-IP, Alexandria, VA 22332-0474 NLT

10 Sep 04. The report may be faxed to (703) 325-4532 or e-mailed to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(3) Commanders must provide FPCAs to all uniformed absentee voters (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving in the United States NLT 15 September 2004. This must be accomplished NLT 15 September of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Voting Assistance Officers and Commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to soldiers who might want them, NOT to coerce soldiers to use the forms. Each MACOM must report the accomplishment of this NLT 8 Oct 04 by e-mail to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(4) Unit VAOs should advise absentee voters serving in the United States that their absentee ballot must be mailed a minimum of 14-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State. Absentee voters outside the United States must mail their ballots a minimum of 14-30-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State.

(5) Unit VAOs should know how and when to use the SF 186 (FWAB) and recommend its use if the voter meets the criteria and does not receive the regular absentee ballot in sufficient time to vote and return it to be counted by the State election officials.

d. Phase IV (3 November - 31 December 2004):

(1) Assist, as requested, with post-election surveys of unit VAOs. The survey's findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs and as a part of the Report on the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

(2) Provide an after-action report in the format that is specified by DoD.

## **8. Administration:**

a. Voting Action Line. Senior installation and MACOM VAOs who encounter difficulties in preparing and carrying out their voting assistance programs may address problems or questions to the Voting Action Officer by calling the Voting Action Line at DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. Installation and MACOM VAOs will establish and publicize the availability of a special telephone service, the "Voting Action Line," to provide rapid response to voting problems as they arise within their commands. The Department of the Army's "Voting Action Line" is now operational to receive questions from 0730-1600 Eastern Daylight Time. After duty hours a voice mail system is available to record questions. A response will be provided as soon as possible

b. IN-HAND Delivery of FPCA. In-hand delivery of the FPCA is required as indicated in paragraph 7a(2) above. The FPCA should be readily available to DA civilians and their eligible family members outside the territorial limits of the United States. Installation SVAOs

must ensure that unit VAOs develop plans to assure that at least one FPCA is personally handed to each eligible Soldier on the installation. Soldiers should also be given an FPCA for each of their eligible family members. The FPCA should be handed to soldiers on TDY or leave upon their return to their active unit. Voting Assistance Officers and Commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to soldiers who want them, NOT to coerce soldiers to use the forms.

c. Legal Assistance. The SVAOs and unit VAOs should develop a working relationship with the installation or activity legal assistance office for help in determining legal residence for those voters who request such assistance. The Voting Assistance Guide 2004-2005, contains the required state information about residency, but rules are often complex or vague and vary widely from State to State. Legal assistance officers are often best able to provide advice on the more difficult residency questions which arise.

d. Electronic Transmission of Election Materials. Often, transmitting voting materials by mail prevents timely receipt and return of materials. When such conditions exist, possibly preventing an individual from voting, electronic transmission may be possible. At Appendix C of the Voting Assistance Guide, 2004-2005, are complete details on the possibilities of using this method which is allowed by certain States.

## Appendix A

### Essential Voting Materials (2004-2005)

#### A-1. Voting Assistance Guide 2004-2005

1. DA Misc Pub 360-04.05 is the basic reference document of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and provides all voting assistance officers with necessary information to give potential voters the following assistance:

a. Explanation of current procedures for absentee registration and voting in each State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

b. Absentee registration and voting deadlines established by the States, territories, and other jurisdictions, along with dates of primary and general elections.

c. Addresses, including county seats and ZIP codes of election officials in each State, territory, and other jurisdictions.

2. The SVAOs should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web Site ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations) which is available prior to publication and distribution of the Voting Assistance Guide – 2004-2005 and any changes thereto. The SVAOs should ensure that copies of the Voting Assistance Guide are ordered as follows:

a. For CONUS SVAOs, copies of the Guide may be requisitioned through the Army's normal resupply channels as Misc Pub 360-04.05. The unit of issue is "EA" for each. SVAOs do not use the nomenclature "VAG --04-05" found on the back cover of the Guide.

b. For OCONUS SVAOs, copies of the Guide may be ordered in the same manner as above, with the exception of Europe. SVAOs in Europe are required to use the UPUBS (<https://aepubs.army.mil>) system when submitting their resupply requisitions.

#### A-2. Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

The FPCA, a postage-free form, is authorized by law for use by all eligible active duty soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members. Because there are differences in the treatment accorded to the FPCA by various States and other jurisdictions, the Voting Assistance Guide - 2004/2005 should be consulted to determine how each

particular jurisdiction authorizes use of the FPCA by absentee voters. The installation SVAO should ensure that the publications account manager has a 120-day inventory of the FPCAs on hand, or on order.

### **A-3. Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)**

a. The FWAB is authorized by law and may be used in general elections for Federal office by overseas voters who make timely application for, and do not receive, regular absentee ballots. **NOTE: ONLY THOSE VOTERS WHO MAKE A TIMELY APPLICATION FOR THEIR REGULAR STATE BALLOT AND MEET ALL THE CRITERIA MAY USE A FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT.**

b. Those who wish to use the FWAB must have met the following criteria:

(1) The application of an overseas voter for a regular absentee ballot must have been received by the local election official at least 30 days before the general election.

(2) The FWAB may be submitted only from locations outside the United States except for some States which will accept a FWAB mailed from within the United States (Check Misc Pub 360-04 for details.) The United States is defined as the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

(3) The FWAB must be received by the local election official no later than the deadline for receipt of regular absentee ballots under state law.

c. All overseas installations should stock a sufficient supply of these ballots for use by voters as outlined above. See the Voting Assistance Guide. Misc. Pub 360-04.05 for detailed instructions on the use of the FWAB. The FWAB may be ordered with the same instructions as shown above for Misc Pub 360-04.05.

### **A-4. Other voting information materials**

a. Posters. DoD voting posters will be distributed automatically by United States Army Printing Distribution Center to all publications account holders in accordance with the subscription requirements for initial distribution number (IDN) 040049. Additional posters will be available for requisitioning through normal resupply channels.

b. Public Service Announcements will be available for voting assistance officers to educate soldiers about the processes they need to follow if they want to participate during the 2004 general election. Their availability will be announced prior to their distribution to installation SVAOs

## Appendix B

### Information Support Plan (2004-2005)

#### B-1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to focus Commanders, Personnel Officers (G-1s), and Voting Assistance Officers' (VAO) efforts in providing voting assistance to Soldiers, overseas DA civilians (to include NAF civilians and Retirees overseas), and their family members for the 2004 general elections.

#### B-2. Scope

This plan applies to MACOM and Installation Public Affairs Officers.

#### B-3. Applicability

- a. This plan should be aimed at all Soldiers, but primarily first time voters and those using the absentee voting process for the first time and their family members.
- b. MACOM and installation VAOs will build upon this plan to produce their educational and promotional materials.

#### B-4. Situation

- a. This is a general election year. In 2004, The President, 34 U.S. Senators, 435 members of the House of Representatives, 13 State Governors, and thousands of State and local officials will be elected.
- b. We must communicate to our Soldiers the importance of voting and the process they must follow if they desire to participate in the general election including the primaries throughout the 2004 election year.
- c. The number one voter slogan for the 2004 general election year is: **"It's Your Future, VOTE for it"** This slogan, in addition to other slogans found on the front page of Misc Pub 360-04.5 and throughout the pamphlet, should be used during the 2004 and 2005 elections to encourage and motivate the Army's target market voters.
- d. The Armed Forces Information Service (AFIS) will likely conduct specialized, multimedia activities emphasizing registration for voting in primary and general elections for the entire Army. In addition to distributing news releases and related features, the Armed Forces Radio Television Service (AFRTS) may broadcast voting spot announcements and features. Army News Service (ARNEWS) will disseminate articles to newspapers worldwide. Soldiers Radio and Television (SRTV) Service will also be

Involved in disseminating radio and television products worldwide. Soldiers magazine will provide information regarding voting to commanders for their use in educating soldiers about the process to follow to register and vote.

e. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office will prepare releases to alert voters of special election dates.

f. The FVAP will prepare voting information on State and local primary elections and continue operation of the Voting Information Center (VIC). The VIC provides a 24-hour recorded service with news and information on elections, candidates and issues. Anyone may call the VIC on 1-800-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343, DSN 425-1343 or any of the toll-free numbers found in the Voting Assistance Guide Misc. Pub 360-04.05, or under the FVAP website [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) under toll-free Ombudsman Service.

g. August is "**Army Voter Registration Month.**" During this month, every soldier and overseas civilian (to include NAF civilians and retirees overseas) will be given a Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which will allow them to register to vote. Local commands may design an "event," within the limits of law and policy, to accomplish this activity.

## **B-5 Objectives**

a. To provide voter information which will educate Soldiers and overseas DA civilians (to include NAF employees overseas), and their family members regarding the process they need to follow if they desire to register and vote.

b. To educate Soldiers, DA civilians overseas, and their family members on the mechanics of voting. See Misc Pub 360-04.05.

c. To ensure that all Soldiers and overseas DA civilians have the opportunity to register and vote.

## **B-6. Concept**

a. Through command information print and electronic media, all VAOs will support the command's efforts to educate soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members about the systems that exist for them to register and vote, even when they are away from their home state.

b. The following guidance and communication ideas should be incorporated in command information programs:

(1) As stated in paragraph B-3a above, appeal to first term Soldiers who may be eligible to vote for the first time. Challenge them to educate themselves on the voting process and assist those who desire to do so with registering to vote.

(2) Spots/pictures could show NCOs teaching first term Soldiers the mechanics of absentee registration and voting.

c. The following "good ideas" should be communicated throughout the command to encourage voter participation among the target market soldiers. **All programs should be reviewed by the servicing Staff Judge Advocate to ensure that the effort complies with law and policy.**

(1) Conduct an Oath Reaffirmation Ceremony, followed by registration opportunities.

(2) Set up colorful, patriotic voting displays in high traffic areas (chapels, housing areas, child care facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, exchanges, clothing sales stores, welcome centers, commissaries, theaters, golf courses, bowling facilities, hobby shops, shopettes, etc.).

(3) Use unit organizational days, command picnics, and other important events unique to the command to publicize voter registration and request for ballots. Set up other Special Days to focus on registration and voting (suggest a day around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and other appropriate holiday).

(4) Publicize Army Voter Registration Month by e-mail, flyers and posters. The flyers and posters could be placed in local banking facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, NAF facilities, museums, Officers and NCO Wives Clubs, on-post theaters, exchanges, shopettes, gasoline stations, hobby and craft shops, gymnasiums, etc.

(5) Publicize letters from installation commanders or SVAOs to soldiers regarding their opportunity and right to vote. Commanders must be cautious to ensure that their letter complies with law and policy, especially the limits on commissioned officers influencing the voting of a member of the Armed Forces. The letter should be reviewed by their servicing Staff Judge Advocate prior to publication.

(6) Publicize the location of where FPCAs may be obtained for registration and request for ballot. This publication should also include all unit voting assistance officers who are trained to assist in executing the FPCA.

The above suggestions are just some of the "good ideas" commanders may use to increase voter participation. Commanders and VAOs can use any patriotic theme that is in good taste and that complies with law and policy to reach the Army's target market.

## Appendix C

### Required Reports (2004-2005)

<u>SUSPENSE DATE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>REFERENCE PARA</u>
8 Dec 03	Listing of Installation SVAOs	Para 5b(3)
9 Jan 04	Quarterly update to listing of Installation SVAOs	Para 5b(3)
1 Feb 04	IN-HAND Delivery of FPCAs	Para 7a(2)
9 Apr 04	Quarterly Update to Listing of Installation SVAOs	Para 5b(3)
11 Jun 04	Monthly Status Report (May 04)	Para 5b(5)
9 Jul 04	Quarterly Update to Listing of Installation SVAOs & Monthly Status Report (Jun 04) w/1 <sup>st</sup> Special Report	Paras 5b(3), 5b(5), and 5b(6)(a)
13 Aug 04	Monthly Status Report (Jul 04)	Para 5b(5)
10 Sep 04	Monthly Status Report (Aug 04) w/2d Special Report & Delivery of FPCAs (OCONUS)	Paras 5b(5), 5b(6)(b) & 7b(6)
8 Oct 04	Quarterly Update to Listing of Installation SVAOs, Monthly Status Report (Sep 04) & Delivery of FPCAs (CONUS)	Para 5b(3), 5b(5)& 7c(3)
Dec 04	After Action Report	Para 7d(2)