



FLRA NEWS

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FLRA SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES REPRESENTATION ELECTION WITH INTERNET AND TELEPHONE VOTING

The Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) has successfully conducted an election in California in which voters cast their ballots using the internet or telephone, announced Julia Akins Clark, General Counsel of the FLRA. Representatives of the Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach Detachment, Corona, California and two labor organizations voluntarily entered into an election agreement, allowing the voters to cast their ballots by internet or telephone. The FLRA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) conducted the election among 14 eligible voters in Southern California beginning on January 28. The FLRA's San Francisco Region sent each voter a unique voter identification number and personal identification number, along with information on how to cast a ballot by internet or telephone. Voters were able to cast ballots at any time of day or night over a two week period. The polling period ended at midnight on February 11, the votes were tallied on February 12, and the period for objections expired on February 22, with no objections being filed.

The FLRA has traditionally conducted elections exclusively either on-site at the Federal facility or by mail. In late 2009 representatives of the OGC began researching the use of the internet and telephone as another means to conduct elections. OGC representatives met with officials of the National Mediation Board (NMB), which has used internet and telephone balloting -- also known as "remote access voting" -- for several years to conduct elections among airline and railroad workers. "The OGC was looking for a process that would maintain the secrecy of the ballot, possessed necessary safeguards, and was reliable and convenient for voters. The NMB's process met those criteria," stated General Counsel Clark.

"We are encouraged by the successful completion of a secret ballot election in which voters cast their ballots by telephone or internet," commented General Counsel Clark. "Remote access voting is now an option that the FLRA can use in its elections."

The FLRA administers the labor-management relations program for 1.6 million non-Postal Federal employees worldwide, approximately 1.1 million of whom are represented in 2,200 bargaining units. It is charged with providing leadership in establishing policies and guidance related to Federal sector labor-management relations and with resolving disputes under, and ensuring compliance with, the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute. The OGC is the FLRA's independent investigative and prosecutorial component that investigates, settles, and prosecutes unfair labor practice charges. In addition, the OGC, through its regional offices, supervises union elections and processes representation petitions.

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