



DACOWITS Public Statement submitted December 5, 2017

On 18 November 2017, I was at FT Bragg, NC where I watched the first US women Soldiers receive the Army's Expert Infantrymen's Badge (EIB). Five women officers and one enlisted woman were awarded this badge.

However, none of the women wanted to be publicly recognized for this accomplishment. Not only have they been warned off of celebrating their achievements because some of their male peers will be resentful of their recognition but in this instance the women felt that public recognition is not warranted because they were not held to the same standard as their male colleagues.

Although the Army has stated that *occupational standards* are now gender neutral, they are neither age nor gender neutral when it comes to this occupational certification. One of the requirements of the EIB is that Soldiers receive a maximum APFT score during the EIB testing phase. The Army continues to use the age and gender normed APFT scoring standards during EIB certification rather than identifying minimum required scores for a Soldier to be designated an *expert* in the field of infantry.

The infantry women have repeatedly requested that this practice be stopped and that a single standard be applied to *all* Soldiers regardless of age or gender. They can meet the male standard if that is what is determined to be the appropriate standard for a Soldier to be considered an "expert" infantrymen. They have made requests to their chain of command, to FORSCOM and to TRADOC representatives that a single standard be applied. Their requests have been ignored.

This practice is causing ongoing integration problems because women continue to be seen as less capable due to the different and lower standards. Further, it begs the question of legitimate occupational standards that are based on actual job requirements.

Several of the women officers who graduated asked that I convey this messages to DACOWITS in the hopes that this committee will relay their concerns to the Chief of Staff of the Army and to the Secretary of Defense.

In addition to FT Bragg I visited FT Benning in September and FT Hood in October where I met with and talked to the women infantry and armor officers who are assigned to the 82nd ABN DIV and the 1st CAV DIV. I also talked to some of the woman infantry privates.

The Army Research Institute is conducting research on integration. ARI reported to Army leadership that gender integration is progressing smoothly. However, they have not turned up any of the problems that I found. I have several concerns about how gender integration is progressing.

My observations are based on my discussions with the women who have integrated these units. They include reports of widespread and ongoing sexual harassment and a possible sexual assault but none of the women is reporting. They fear being ostracized and derailing their careers. Furthermore, they are desperately determined to prove that they have a place in the combat arms. They don't want anyone in the Army to think that it isn't going well which I believe is one of the reasons why ARI did not turn up the problems that I found.

I recommend that the Army do the following:

1. Everyone could benefit by leadership training that focuses on bystander intervention and what constitutes appropriate or even tolerable behavior. The Army should do it during OPD/NCOPD and it should not be done in the context of gender integration or SHARP training. The Army has an excellent program called Mind's Eye II which does just this kind of training but it hasn't been done at the brigades where the women are integrating.



2. Conduct small group sensing sessions with the women. These sessions should be run by outsiders (not ARI), and they should be done outside of normal duty hours so that other unit members don't know about them. The women don't want to be seen as being singled out or complaining for any reason.
3. Establish some kind of anonymous reporting mechanism outside of SHARP. The women want response options outside of SHARP because anyone who goes to SHARP risks immediate alienation.
4. Women would benefit from some training on how to respond to various types of low level harassment, the kind that doesn't rise to the level of overt "sexual harassment" but nevertheless undermines their authority and credibility. This recommendation actually came from one of the infantry privates. Following are some examples of what they are dealing with. 1. A 1SG who asked why the platoon ran out of water in the desert and wanted to know how many times the Platoon Leader (PL) had washed her hair. 2. A CDR who, over the net, asks for reports from the PLs except in the case where the PL is a woman and then he wants the report to come from her Platoon Sergeant. 3. A 1SG who tells the women that they have to tell him when they have their periods because he thinks that there is an Army regulation that says women get extra showers when they have their periods. This is not true. 4. The 1SG who told his soldiers that they wouldn't have to put up with one of the women officers for long because she would be fired after their upcoming NTC rotation. 5. A company commander who thinks it's funny (his Soldier think it's funny too) to call enlisted women Hoes instead of Joes.
5. Finally, the Army must issue all of the combat arms women, women specific equipment. The Army has IOTVs designed for women but apparently it only exists in small numbers and is only issued to women when they deploy and not for training at their units. The women can't even get simple things like female urinary diverters (FUDs) which are cheap and in the supply system. Women officers are buying them for the enlisted women in their units.

In addition to the low-level harassment there are more serious incidents like the NCO who says vulgar things about his PL. The comments are so vulgar that the other PLs approached her about it and told her to report the NCO to SHARP but won't do it themselves. One of the woman said that she thinks she was drugged in the barracks. She woke up in the morning, naked in her room, but has no idea how she got that way. She refuses to report because she says she can't report what she doesn't know. Another enlisted woman had a bat taken to her car windows after she rejected the attention of another soldier.

According to a recent media report, DOD has spent \$35M on facilities modifications to accommodate women's integration. None of the women can figure out where that money was spent because many of them report that they have to leave their buildings just to find a bathroom that they can use. Perhaps the Army should have used some of that money to increase the stock of women specific equipment and to install security cameras in the halls in the barracks and around the barracks parking lots or to provide Minds Eye II training to unit leaders.

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