DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS)

Quarterly Business Meeting Minutes

14–15 June 2016

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a full Committee meeting on June 14 and June 15, 2016. The meeting took place at the Sheraton Pentagon City, 900 S. Orme Street, Arlington, VA, 22204.

14 June 2016

Introduction and Opening Remarks

COL Aimee Kominiak, Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, opened the meeting by reviewing the Committee's establishment and charter. DACOWITS Chair, LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson, thanked the day's briefers and public audience for their attendance. LtGen (Ret) Wilson announced that LT Susan Arbiter, Service representative for the Coast Guard, was attending her last meeting as the DACOWITS representative. She also recognized and welcomed LtGen Robert Ruark, Military Deputy for the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), as a special guest. LtGen (Ret) Wilson also recognized that this was the last meeting for MG (Ret) Gale Pollock, FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa, and herself. She announced that Gen. (Ret) Janet Wolfenbarger will take over the position of Chair of DACOWITS. Gen. (Ret) Wolfenbarger was commissioned in 1980 as a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. She was the first woman to receive the rank of General in Air Force. LtGen (Ret) Wilson then asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

COL Kominiak reviewed the status of the Committee's requests for information (RFIs). The Committee has received responses to all 15 of its RFIs. The responses were delivered in either written or briefing format.

Panel Discussion: Services' Gender Integration Implementation Plans (RFI 2)

The Committee continues to be interested in the gender integration progress made by the Services. The Committee requested briefings from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) on their implementation plans and timelines for continued full and effective integration of women into previously closed combat positions. The Committee specifically requested that the briefings include information on what is being done to encourage women to move laterally into newly opened combat billets. This briefing was originally requested for the March 2016 business meeting but was moved to June because Service implementation plans had not yet been approved.

Army: MG Hugh Van Roosen, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Mobilization and Reserve Affairs Office (GI)

MG Van Roosen discussed the gender integration implementation plans for Infantry, Armor, and a small portion of the field artillery specialties. He deferred discussing the implementation plans for Special Forces to USSOCOM. The Services were directed on December 3, 2015, to open all remaining units and positions to women by April 1, 2016. On January 5, 2016, the Secretary of the Army submitted the Army's implementation plan to the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). On January 29, 2016, Army Directive 2016-01 was signed, opening all remaining Army units and positions to women. On March 9, 2016, the SECDEF signed a memo approving the Services' gender integration implementation plans. On March 11, 2016, the Army published All Army Activities (ALARACT) message 014/2016 to inform the Service on expanding positions and changing Army policy for the assignment of female soldiers. The ALARACT also indicated that the Army was not lowering standards and that there would be no quotas established for the number of women entering these units and positions.

On April 1, 2016, the Army officially opened all positions and executed its implementation plan. MG Van Roosen indicated that integration will be a slow process and that leadership will be critical to ensure that the culture changes appropriately. As part of its implementation plan, the Army outlined five lines of effort: (1) transforming accessions, (2) talent management, (3) unit fill plans, (4) educating and communicating, and (5) assessment. At the time of the briefing, the education process by the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) was underway and the longitudinal assessments had been developed.

MG Van Roosen presented a chart that showed how the Army is tracking female accessions in Infantry and Armor. He stated that the tracking sheet was examined regularly. To begin the integration process, the Army will assign women to two companies at Fort Bragg and two companies at Fort Hood. At Fort Bragg, five female second lieutenants had begun the training for Infantry and were scheduled to complete it, and one female captain had completed the training. At Fort Hood, there were five female second lieutenants in the training pipeline for Infantry. At Fort Bragg, there were two female second lieutenants—and a potential third (for a maximum of three in that unit)—in the pipeline for Armor. At Fort Hood, there were 11 female second lieutenants and one female noncommissioned officer (NCO) in the pipeline for Armor. There is a limit on the number of female officers that can be assigned to these units. Reserve Component members belong to a particular geolocation (State); therefore, the Army will bring in officers State-by-State before enlisting soldiers into the company. The plan for the National Guard was to move female second lieutenants and NCOs to units where enlisted soldiers were training. They will do this for two years and/or until cultural issues related to gender integration have been overcome. In total, for the Army, there were 24 Infantry or Armor lieutenants in the training pipeline and 17 more in line for the next slating of Infantry officers. There were also two female Special Forces officers in the pipeline.

The Army's "leaders first" policy involves training and placing female leaders into a unit before assigning junior enlisted women to the unit. The plan includes training cohorts of women. Each cohort consists of at least two—but ideally, six—women. The goal is for the cohort to contain an equal number of women and men. Assigning women together can lead to cohesion and success and is a model that has worked well in other (non-combat) occupational specialties in the Army. There were six cohorts of five women each that were scheduled to finish Infantry training on May 19, 2017. There were three more cohorts scheduled to finish on October 6, 2017. For

Armor, there were four cohorts, although there were fewer enlisted women in Armor than Infantry. The Army is also tracking enlisted women integrating into Field Artillery, but they are not being tracked in the same manner because there are already female leaders in those units. The Army will continue to track these women to see how they are progressing. At the time of the briefing, there were approximately 100 women in the training pipeline, and MG Van Roosen believed the propensity plateau would occur when around 200 women had completed training. He indicated that around six to eight women were applying for the new positions each week and that it has been a very successful program thus far.

Marine Corps: LtCol Lawrence Coleman, Branch Head, Manpower Integration (MPI), Manpower Plans and Policies (M&RA)

On December 16, 2015, the Commandant of the Marine Corps signed the Marine Corps' implementation plan, and the Service began to execute the plan immediately. The Marine Corps was on track with the schedule of progress and had not encountered any obstacles at the time of the briefing. LtCol Coleman said that the main focus area for implementation was the Education Mobile Training Team. At the time of the June meeting, the Marine Corps had delivered programs of instruction at all major bases and stations, except Okinawa and Hawaii, where programs of instruction were scheduled to be delivered later that month.

LtCol Coleman noted that the Marine Corps' implementation plan has five phases and discussed the progress of the tasks under each phase. The Marine Corps had progressed well through Phase 1 (Setting Conditions) tasks. The gender-neutral standards were in place and had been validated and approved. The personnel assignment policies had been updated and published and were being implemented. The Education Program has been providing Commander's Education Toolkits to leaders. Billet ID Codes had been reviewed and made gender-neutral for all occupational specialties. Aside from positions that require close personal contact, such as for prison guards, all billets had been coded for both men and women. Additionally, female Marines who had participated in the Marine Corps' integration-related research had received their occupational specialties for the schools from which they graduated. For Phase 2 (Recruiting), women in the Delayed Entry Program were being offered the opportunity to transition into a newly opened position. In addition, the Ground Combat Arms Initial Screening Test, which was the first of the gender-neutral physical standards, was in place and being executed. Female ground combat arms accessions were in progress, but were limited by the propensity of women to enlist into these positions; there were no women who had enlisted into these positions as of the time of the June meeting. For Phase 3 (Entry Level Training), the gender-neutral occupational specialty classification standards were in place and being implemented. The gender-neutral qualification standards, which now form part of the graduation requirements at occupational specialty schools, were also in place and being implemented. Phase 4 (Assignment) focused on female leader assignments. The goal was for female leaders to be assigned to newly opened units at least 90 days prior to the assignment of junior enlisted female Marines; this was in progress for all units except for Infantry battalions since no female leaders had yet been assigned to those units. As women progress and enter Infantry school, the Marine Corps will place female leaders into those units. Additional Phase 4 tasks included Unit Assignment Criteria Implementation, which was in place and part of the assignment process. Personnel assignment policies had been published. Female Marines who had participated in integration-related research were permitted to move laterally into newly opened occupational specialties for which they had been trained. Four lateral moves had been requested and three of those had been approved; those Marines were

scheduled to attend advanced training prior to their assignments. For Phase 5 (Sustainment), physical continuation standards had been identified in training manuals and validated. The frequency for those tests and the task conditions and requirements had been codified and published.

Navy: LCDR Sarah Turse, Female Integration Lead, Naval Special Warfare

All of the newly opened positions in the Navy were part of the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) Center, which consists of fewer than 9,500 people; approximately one-third of those are SEALs (Sea, Air, and Land) and special billet operators, which are the positions being integrated. The implementation plan focused on schools for these positions and team rooms for SEAL teams. The Navy is taking lessons learned from Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) technicians, divers, and other special operations ratings in the Navy to develop and implement the integration process. LCDR Turse emphasized that equal opportunity for women may not guarantee success, because of the high physical standards maintained by the schools. On January 3, 2016, the Navy submitted its implementation plan, and on January 19, 2016, the Navy opened its personnel pipeline for filling the newly opened positions. The Navy has submitted two updates to its original plan. At the time of the briefing, the plan included ensuring continued selection through validated processes, applying previously developed standards, providing a gender-neutral screening process, enforcing operation security, and protecting the identity of future operators. All NSW standards are validated and transparent; NSW addressed all supply and facility issues. Navy SEAL, SWCC (Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewmen), and scout teams engage in top-down messaging, employ female staff members, and engage in leadership exchanges with partners. Mentors and recruiters support and assist all NSW candidates. NSW has updated all of its websites to reflect the newly opened positions for women. No women had applied for the positions at the time of the briefing, but they had expressed interest. LCDR Turse noted that NSW was extremely concerned about media attention and therefore worked to protect each candidate's identity and, subsequently, the identities of future operators in these sensitive positions.

Air Force: Lt Col Veronica Senia, Chief, Air Force Enlisted Accessions and Training

The Air Force's implementation plan affected six Air Force occupational specialties, including Battlefield Airmen and Special Operators, which represents about 4,000 positions. At the time of the SECDEF's decision to open all units and positions to women, the Air Force already had opened 99 percent of its positions to women. The Air Force's implementation plan consists of two parts: (1) using and incorporating current personnel policies and creating timelines with women going into training and operations units, and (2) addressing the SECDEF's seven areas of focus for gender integration.[1]

The Air Force had assessed equipment, facilities, and logistics and determined that no changes were needed; however, it will continue to assess these components. It updated policies and procedures and assigned female support cadres in training and operations units to help with the integration and implementation of women in the training pipeline. At the time of the briefing, there were no women in the training pipeline for any of the newly opened positions. Recruitment

[1] These seven areas—detailed in a March 2016 memo from the SECDEF to the Services and USSOCOM—consist of transparent standards, population size, physical demands and physiological differences, conduct and culture, talent management, operating abroad, and assessment and adjustment.

efforts were tracked weekly. Once women are in the pipeline, the Air Force will complete the required quarterly assessments of integration progress for the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The Air Force opened all positions on March 4, 2016. In March and April of 2016, there were no women who applied for the newly opened positions. The first woman was scheduled to enter the TAC-P (Tactical Air Control Party) training pipeline in July 2016. The next opportunities for women to join previously closed career fields would be from August to October 2016. The training pipelines for these career fields last from 30 weeks to two years; therefore, integration in these pipelines will take time. TAC-P is the shortest of these newly opened pipelines; the women scheduled to start training in July 2016 could be in an operational unit in January or February 2017. Lt Col Senia noted that attrition rates during the training pipeline for these positions vary greatly as well. The highest attrition rate is for Pararescue Jumpers—around 85 percent. In contrast, the attrition rate for special tactics officers and combat rescue is around 5–10 percent.

Lateral moves into these positions in the Air Force are different from similar moves in other Services. The Air Force already had senior females assigned to support positions in these units that it could leverage to mentor women entering the newly opened positions. With the long training pipelines, lateral moves into these positions would take too long. The Air Force conducted a propensity survey of those women interested in retraining into other career fields and saw a decent amount of interest; however, in following up with these women, the Air Force found that they were in critically short career fields, and therefore could not easily switch fields. Despite this, the Air Force implemented a new policy allowing female airmen to attempt to retrain into these newly opened fields and to return to their current careers without prejudice if they do not qualify.

USSOCOM: COL Monroe Jones, Director, Special Operation Forces Female Integration, Integration project Team

USSOCOM has three phases of implementation and four focus areas as part of its implementation plan.[2] It works closely with the Services on accessions and talent management, as the Services manage these efforts. USSOCOM outlined details on the SECDEF's seven areas of focus for gender integration. At the time of the briefing, female candidates were able to attend training. SOCOM outlined the earliest training start dates and the subsequent earliest graduation dates for the newly opened positions within each Service. COL James reviewed Special Forces training dates to provide a hypothetical example—at the time of the briefing, women had not yet attended these classes. The earliest class open to women administered the Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) in April 2016 and would begin the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) in July 2016. Candidates who were not recycled during any SFQC phase would graduate in January 2018—Special Forces training has an 18-month pipeline. One female NCO had started the Ranger Assessment and Selection Program, and two Second Lieutenants were scheduled to attend SFAS in FY 2017. In the United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, one female NCO was scheduled to attend the Assessment and Selection class in August. Female candidates had expressed interest in some of the other career paths but had not applied at the time of the briefing.

[2] See http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/632536/carter-opens-all-military-occupations-positions-to-women for a description of the implementation phases and focus areas.

Discussion

MG (Ret) John Macdonald asked briefers who signed the implementation plans within each Service and USSOCOM. MG Van Roosen (Army) indicated that the Chief of Staff of the Army co-signed his Service's plan with the Acting Secretary of the Army. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) indicated that the Commandant signed his Service's plan. LCDR Turse (Navy) indicated the Office of the Secretary of the Navy signed her Service's plan. Lt Col Senia (Air Force) indicated the Secretary of the Air Force signed her Service's plan, and COL James (USSOCOM) indicated the Commanding General signed that organization's plan.

VADM (Ret) Carol Pottenger recognized that the plans that were presented by the Services were solid; however, she expressed concern about some aspects of the plans, such as the small size of the female cohorts and the long training pipelines. She asked how the Services could ensure more women join USSOCOM. She also inquired how the Services determined how many women should be in a cohort (e.g., five per cohort for one Service, two for another) and whether joining was voluntary. She acknowledged that it could take at least 20 years to grow the female force and that equal opportunity does not guarantee success. She asked how the Services will inspire other women to join and will ensure the career success and retention of the women who do join with such small cohorts.

MG Van Roosen (Army) said the Army had 113 women in the training pipeline; these included one Infantry officer who had already completed the training and was in a unit, one Infantry NCO who was in place and fully trained, and one Armor NCO who was preparing for training. The Army is trying to avoid highlighting these women "firsts" because of the media attention they could receive. NCOs enter the pipeline as they have the propensity to join. There were more Reserve NCOs than active duty NCOs interested in reclassing (changing occupational specialty) at the time of the briefing, likely because Reserve Component soldiers reclass frequently by nature based on where they live and their geolocation. Officers being trained as Army integrating leaders are the first line of women driving the timing of gender integration in the Army. The officers will complete their initial and follow-on training as leaders and be placed in units by April or May 2017; female enlisted soldiers will begin their training in February 2017 and will be assigned to units immediately after leaders are assigned to the units.

Joining a newly opened unit or position in the Marine Corps is voluntary; the Marine Corps is targeting women through its marketing efforts. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) explained that the timelines are based on the willingness and preparedness of recruits to attend the training and the availability of dates for training. Female leadership is in place; each unit includes at least two female leaders, which is a best practice based on research. The Marine Corps has a limited population of interested women to choose from, and the process of building a career takes multiple decades.

The Marine Corps recently began to collect data on the career progression process in the newly opened positions, such as selection for resident professional military education courses and key billets, to establish a baseline for assessing the success of women as they attain the higher ranks in these positions.

The Navy echoed a similar process. Its cohort size does not rely on quotas and instead is dictated by finding the best/most qualified candidates. The biggest challenge the Navy faces is monitoring female sailors and officers through their careers as special operators to ensure they are not being treated differently—as a subcategory of special operators.

The Air Force does not rely on quotas for recruiting women; joining a specialty is voluntary. Lt Col Senia (Air Force) explained that the Service has had difficulty recruiting not only women but also men into special operations positions, as these jobs are physically demanding and not typical positions for that Service. The Air Force tries to inspire and engage women to educate them about these positions, but convincing women who are interested and qualified to join these positions is a challenge. The Air Force will continue to track the recruitment of women into these fields and to monitor their performance and progression in the field.

COL James (USSOCOM) reiterated that accessions and talent management is achieved through the Services. USSOCOM works with Services to ensure candidates are assigned the opportunities for which they are qualified. Rather than working to train women together in a cohort, USSOCOM aims to move any interested and qualified female Service member into the training pipeline as soon as possible without waiting for another woman to join her. USSOCOM has slightly more than 1,000 operators in the Air Force and about the same number in the Marine Corps. Similar to USSOCOM, because of long training processes, the Services do not want to delay training a candidate who is qualified for a position, even if that would mean selecting and training one woman at a time. All training cadre, support, and training staff have female leaders in place, and all operational units have been integrated for many years. Because of this, a woman might go through training alone, but when she is assigned to a unit, she might not be the first woman there.

Mr. Brian Morrison asked about the Marine Corps' ground combat arms special training test and how it has changed. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) indicated that the test now allows women to perform a flexed arm hang instead of pull-ups, and it includes a three-mile run instead of a 1.5-mile run. LtCol Colman added that some scoring standards were now higher than for the previous strength test. Mr. Morrison also inquired about the pass rates for the test. LtCol Coleman said he did not have that information but would obtain it and report back to Mr. Morrison.

CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer inquired whether anyone going through the Delayed Entry Program in Phase 2 (Recruiting) of the Marine Corps' integration plan had accepted the offer to enlist into one of the newly opened positions and undergone the physical assessment. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) said the opportunity was offered, but no woman within the program had accepted.

Maj Gen (Ret) Sharon Dunbar inquired why the Marine Corps decided on a 90-day waiting period before assigning female leaders to units (leaders must be assigned to units before junior enlisted women can be assigned). She noted that in the Air Force, female leaders are already assigned to training pipelines despite no women having begun the training. LtCol Colman (Marine Corps) responded that the 90-day timeline was intended to ensure that women integrate with enough time to establish themselves professionally in a formerly all-male unit before they are designated as leaders for female subordinates. Based on the Marine Corps' gender integration research efforts, 90 days seems to be enough time for women to establish themselves professionally in a receiving unit and to be accepted by and enculturated into the unit.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar further asked if assignments for female leaders were predicated on assignments for female enlisted Service members. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) responded that this would be the case for Infantry units but added that those are the only units that still lack female leaders and that women will be assigned to Infantry units based on demand.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar then inquired how the Marine Corps would respond if a female leader was preemptively assigned to an Infantry unit before the expected assignment of an enlisted woman to the unit, but the enlisted woman failed to pass the training. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) indicated that in such a case, a female leader would not be assigned to the unit until the enlisted woman was at a point in the training where the Marine Corps was reasonably assured she would complete her training successfully. He added that if a leader would be assigned to a unit, she would remain with it throughout the standard tour. Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar also suggested that there might be merit in the Marine Corps preemptively assigning women to these Infantry units without waiting for enlisted women to begin the training. LtCol Coleman responded that there are not enough women in the Marine Corps for the Service to assign female leaders to units preemptively without having to move women who had been at their present duty stations for less than one year.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar asked the Air Force whether it had female leaders in units for all of its newly opened career fields; Lt Col Senia (Air Force) responded that it did.

CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley followed up on Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar's question and asked the Marine Corps whether a lack of interest by or availability of female officers would keep enlisted women from being able to join previously closed positions, given the need for assigning female leaders to units before assigning enlisted women. LtCol Coleman responded that female leaders in a unit could come from a non-Infantry occupational specialty, such as Logistics or Supply; enlisted women would not be hindered from joining Infantry units if there were no female Infantry officers.

CAPT (Ret) Kelley was perplexed that there are women interested in joining the SEALs but that none have formally applied. She specifically asked if there were any female graduates from the Naval Academy who were interested in joining the SEALs. The Navy explained how for new officers, accessions screening is done once per year; lateral transfers are offered during that screening and on one additional screening date each year. March 2016 was the first opportunity for applications, and no women from the Academy applied. The Navy expressed the belief that the process would require a two-year lead time to allow students to prepare for SEAL training. There is some interest among sophomore and junior women at the Academy, and there are some current female Service members interested in making lateral transfers. The application packages for the next lateral transfer were due in June 2016, and selection would happen in September 2016. Women who wish to enlist in the SEAL program are screened once every two months, and those selected for the program go through boot camp together as a cohort. There was reportedly some interest among women at the recruiting levels, but nothing official had been submitted at the time of the briefing. There is also a quarterly board for currently enlisted candidates, but there were no interested and qualified candidates in the Navy at the time of the briefing.

LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park inquired about pre-accession programs. She mentioned that West Point has a program for Service members preparing for Ranger School and asked if the Navy has any similar programs at its accessions sources to generate interest and prepare them physically for the training. The Navy indicated there is a SEAL training group at the Naval Academy, including some women at the sophomore and junior levels; there is a program in Reserve Officers' Training Corps units as well. The Navy also has a SEAL and SWCC scout team to prepare candidates.

LtCol Coleman indicated that the Marine Corps places every applicant in the 90-day Delayed Entry Program to allow candidates to do physical training to prepare for boot camp. The Marine Corps has updated its manual to reflect physical requirements to enlist in and complete training for each occupational specialty school. Marine recruiters work with district commanders to inform them about positions that were recently opened, requirements for the positions, and recommended physical fitness programs to prepare for the positions. LtCol Coleman also discussed Officer Candidate School; he indicated that the current commanding officer was the executive officer for the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force research and therefore is very attuned to the research findings and the expectations of women who wish to go into the Infantry. LTC (Ret) Park asked if the Marine Corps has an officially sanctioned program at the Naval Academy. LtCol Coleman was not aware of any programs for women at the Academy interested in joining the Marine Corps.

Ms. Sharlene Hawkes requested that the Marine Corps provide copies of screening and qualification standards for newly opened positions along with a graphic comparing the Marine Corps' screening and qualification timeline to those for other Services. LtCol Colman (Marine Corps) agreed to do so and explained how the Service has general implementation plan timelines that estimate how long it would take a woman to complete her training; a timeline with actual dates is dependent upon when the first woman begins.

SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston inquired about the staff sergeant in the Army from Fort Hood who was in the training pipeline for Armor, whether she had been reclassed, and if so, whether the reclassification was voluntary. He asked how the Army will reintegrate her. MG Van Roosen (Army) responded that the woman voluntarily reclassed. She will go through one Army school system reclassification course that is held by the National Guard; Armor is the only occupational specialty in the Army that offers this. This staff sergeant is the only woman from active duty to reclassify. A few women from the National Guard attempted to reclassify; of those three women, two failed the grenade toss and one failed the loaded ruck march. The Army indicated that the woman who reclassed was a communications specialist. SMA (Ret) Preston remarked that in the past, the Army has reclassified people from other occupational specialties into the Infantry, but with low success rates.

Ms. Donna McAleer inquired whether the Services are considering training and reclassifying additional female officers and NCOs rather than developing them organically. MG Van Roosen asserted that the Army has the most senior leaders discussing the right path for female soldiers who are part of the gender integration effort; this demonstrates the Army's intense interest in ensuring these female soldiers are successful. He clarified that this is less of an issue in the National Guard because soldiers regularly change specialties.

Ms. McAleer inquired about other women in the training pipeline, in addition to the ones previously discussed, noting the potential 20-year timeline to grow a senior female leader in those fields. MG Van Roosen (Army) described how filling the pipeline is all based on the propensity of women; the opportunity is still open. As the first group of 24 officers comes through together and blazes the way, it could reduce apprehension among other women. The Army is very interested in transferring female officers if necessary, but it is being careful to select the very best candidates to ensure the highest chance of success. He indicated the Army has turned away applicants who did not meet the requirements. MG Van Roosen said he felt confident that having 113 individuals in the training pipeline is a good start.

MG (Ret) Gale Pollock was pleased to see female NCOs in the Infantry environment and questioned the Marine Corps regarding why the women who completed Infantry training had not been assigned to Infantry units. If the women had completed the training, and there were NCOs in the units to serve as role models, MG (Ret) Pollock reasoned that nothing should hinder these women from being assigned. She inquired whether the Marine Corps could move these women within the installation to a new unit so they could join the Infantry. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) described the assignment process. He acknowledged that unit-to-unit transfers would not be difficult, but that the feasibility of such a transfer would depend on how many female officers were in the transferring unit and the receiving unit. The Marine Corps is looking to integrate all units across the Service, and battalions may not have female leaders in place to set the stage for enlisted women.

VADM (Ret) Pottenger noted the Committee is looking into gender-neutral standards. She acknowledged that before gender-neutral standards were developed, there were women who successfully completed Ranger School, but no female Marines had completed the Infantry Officer's Course (IOC). She wondered why women could pass Ranger School and not IOC. The Marine Corps noted during the briefing that a woman in the IOC had to repeat the training because of height failure and minor injuries. The Service originally suspected that women would have a hard time passing the endurance test, but women have passed it. Marching under load appears to lead to injuries among women. Marine Corps research indicated that carrying such a large load could be challenging due to women's shorter stride length compared to those of men. The Marine Corps is looking at equipment-based solutions. As the Marine Corps progresses through the gender integration process, it is collecting more data, but the population of integrated female Service members is so small that it is difficult to identify issues.

The Army followed up on the Marine Corps' comments and described how the pre-Ranger course affects women's success. The Army National Guard has a pre-Ranger course open to individuals in Reserve Components or to those active duty units that have the funding to send candidates. Large units hold pre-Ranger training as well. New officers coming in through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps or West Point have programs at their colleges that are modeled on pre-Ranger training and are designed to improve a soldier's chance of success. At the time of the briefing, the Army said few women had been able to complete the course successfully.

Services' Marketing and Accession Plans (RFI 4)

The Committee continues to be interested in the Services' marketing strategies for women as well as the Services' accessions plans. The Committee requested briefings from all of the Services on their marketing strategies. The Committee asked that the briefings address (1) what marketing strategies the Services were using to increase the accessions of women, and (2) if, and in what ways, the Services have altered their marketing strategies to recruit women into the newly opened positions and units.

Army: Ms. Andrea Zucker, Consumer Market Research Chief, Army Marketing and Research Group

Ms. Zucker explained that the Army's marketing strategy is focused around branding. The American public does not have a good understanding of the Army, given the declining number of veterans and growing misperceptions. The Army's brand messaging aims to bridge the gap between common perceptions of the "ideal Army" and the "actual Army." The Army uses an

integrated approach to reach all segments of Americans, particularly youth, given that they typically celebrate inclusion. The Army's approach to marketing has not noticeably altered; rather, it has continued to highlight jobs in real time as they have been opened to women. Army marketing shows a breadth of opportunities, including a television advertisement showing female Ranger school graduates.

Marine Corps: LtCol John Caldwell, National Director of Advertising, Marine Corps Recruiting Command

LtCol Caldwell recalled that in 2015, the Marine Corps shared a video with the Committee showing how the Service markets to women. It was well-received, and the Marine Corps continues to use similar materials. The Marine Corps' Recruiting Command has a new commander who has made some changes to the Service's marketing approach. For example, the Marine Corps' Semper Fidelis All-American Football Program has evolved into the new Semper Fidelis All-American Program, which will now recognize one male and one female Service member each year, regardless of the sport, and invite them to a symposium focused on life and career development. The program will be announced in September by the Commandant. In another shift, the Marine Corps, which has an investment in wrestling, is now tapping into the fact that 10 percent of wrestlers are female. For example, the Commandant was recently at an event posing for photos with three of the Nation's premier female wrestlers.

In 2017, the Marine Corps will launch a new advertising campaign that will be very different from previous efforts and more representative. Marine Corps research shows that women want to be seen first as Marines, then as women. The new campaign material will be authentic and show how the Service has changed. The Marine Corps is considering how marketing strategies affect propensity. In 2014, the Marine Corps targeted women through mail for the first time, prompting many conversations among families who received the materials. For this year's direct-mail campaign, the Marine Corps experimented with female-specific, gender-neutral, and all-male mailers. The most female responses were generated from the all-male materials, highlighting the desire to be seen as a Marine rather than singled out as a female Marine.

Navy: CDR Denise Spanier, Navy Recruiting Command Liaison Officer, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Plans and Policy Division (N130)

The marketing strategy for the Navy focuses more heavily on the internet to leverage millennials; for example, through the social media networks Instagram and Facebook and the video sharing website YouTube. The Navy is also trying to target more women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields and has had the opportunity to target women at various STEM-related events. The Navy launched the "Women in Leadership" series, which addressed reasons women may be reluctant to join the Service. The Navy is working to show that sailors can have a family as well as a successful military career. The Navy has not fundamentally changed its marketing strategy, however, to address the units and positions newly opened to women. Its marketing encourages women to apply to the SEAL program, but that program has always allowed women to take the entrance tests. Navy websites have been updated to remove male-only verbiage. The Navy asserted that it is doing a great job of recruiting women and that it leads the other Services with a 25-percent annual rate of female accessions.

Air Force: MSgt Tiffany Bradbury, Superintendent, Air Force Enlisted Accessions Policy, Headquarters United States Air Force

The Air Force marketing strategy for newly opened career fields is the same as for other career fields. The Service has prioritized recruiting a diverse force, and its strategy reflects its focus on reaching women as well as men. The Air Force recently initiated a television and digital marketing campaign on YouTube. The advertisement, "I'm an American Airman," features women in roles such as a pilot and a Judge Advocate General Officer. The Air Force is also running an Air Force Academy commercial featuring women. Current messaging has been shown to increase propensity more than previous messaging had. The Air Force's recruitment goal is to increase the proportion of female officers to 30 percent. The Air Force has altered its strategy by expanding recruiting efforts to women. The Air Force continues to target track, gymnastics, and CrossFit as arenas to reach potential female candidates. The Air Force has also removed male-only verbiage in its marketing literature. Current marketing funding does not allow the Service to market specifically to recruit women for combat positions.

Discussion

Ms. McAleer asked how the Air Force would address use of the term "airmen." There has been some discussion in the Air Force about this, but the Service thinks of the title as not gender identifying. They have not heard Service members raise it as an issue.

VADM (Ret) Pottenger asked the Army to discuss the propensity research and how it guided the Service's marketing efforts. Ms. Zucker explained that propensity to join the military is lower for young women than for young men. The question of whether joining the military would allow them to have an attractive lifestyle is a proxy for the question of whether women see themselves fitting into the military; women were less likely to see the military as an attractive lifestyle. Self-efficacy is a big issue with regard to propensity as well; if a young woman does not believe she can successfully complete boot camp or leave her family, then she does not believe the military is an option. The Army wants its marketing to reach women who may not believe they can succeed in the military. There are also perceptions that the risks of joining the military outweigh the benefits. In addition, the Army is learning through its research that young women want the option to serve and do not want to be excluded. Even so, however, many say it is simply not for them.

SMA (Ret) Preston inquired about why the likelihood of joining the military had dropped over the past 10 years. Ms. Zucker (Army) hypothesized the drop in propensity to be due to protracted war.

The Marine Corps followed up on the Army's response and noted that according to data from a Joint Advertising Marketing Research Studies (JAMRS) report, propensity to serve in the military has largely remained the same. From 1984 to 2014, propensity for men was 22–24 percent, and propensity for women was 8-10 percent. Female prospects take a much longer view. The Marine Corps noted that research it conducted earlier this year showed 70 percent of potential recruits spent time deciding before they picked a Service to join. In general, prospective Service members are most interested in the types of jobs each Service offers. The Army, Air Force, and Navy offer jobs suitable for post-military careers, such as in medical fields, but the Marine Corps offers fewer of those opportunities. Influencers like parents and coaches are also important in guiding the decision-making process, as is social media. The Navy is concerned about how propensity is affected by the perceived inability to have a family while serving and

the growing military-civilian divide. Women who join usually come from military families and know they can be successful in the military.

Gen (Ret) Wolfenbarger asked the Army to provide the statistical margin of error for one of the figures in materials it presented at the briefing. The Army responded that the figures were statistically significant at the 95-percent confidence level.

SMA (Ret) Preston commented on two of the Army's figures regarding general military propensity and army propensity by gender. He noted that from his experience, males aged 18–24 in the Army make up 50 percent of recruits. There are 300 million Americans in the country and there are 35 million males in that age category. Only 19 percent of those have the propensity to serve, and even fewer are eligible. The Navy noted that eliminating males aged 18–24 who are not medically qualified or legally qualified further narrows the population of potential candidates.

Mr. Morrison applauded the Air Force's recruitment goal to increase the proportion of female officers to 30 percent. He also expressed his gratification that the Air Force was using recruitment goals. He was troubled by the low propensity figures provided by the Army and questioned whether the Army had regressed the propensity and self-efficacy numbers to see if educating someone on what it would take to complete boot camp or about education opportunities in the military would affect propensity. Ms. Zucker (Army) responded that she was not sure whether that had been done for efficacy and propensity, but she would look into it and report back. There has been research done on the different types of propensity. Applications to join the military decrease with lower self-stated interest. The Army shared focus group data showing the positive effect on propensity in a brief factsheet with information about the military. The Marine Corps added that while propensity is of interest, changing the behavior of prospective applicants to move them toward applying and understanding whether messages are resonating with young people is most important.

Ms. Hawkes commented that women need to see people like themselves in the military to be convinced to join. She mentioned that she did an internet search on the Services' websites and was shocked by the lack of female imaging for the Marine Corps and Army. Ms. Hawkes then inquired what the Services are doing to improve their website photos and photo positioning.

The Air Force commented that it does not have funding to develop marketing specifically highlighting women in combat positions, but the Service does utilize a similar approach with other difficult career fields, such as security forces and EOD; there are images of women in some of the literature for those career fields. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) commented that he did not know how Ms. Hawkes had searched on the Marine Corps website but asserted that there is a significant amount of content portraying women; at the time of the briefing, the Marine Corps was redesigning the webpage. In the Success Stories feature of the page, women are highlighted and are portrayed alongside men within the content. The Marine Corps also noted that there are opportunities that cost less than a full advertising campaign; the Service works with its public affairs counterparts to share content through social media networks Facebook and Twitter.

FLTCM (Ret) DiRosa commented on the Army's figures and the negative language surrounding military self-efficacy, specifically "fighting a war" and "leaving family." She asked if the Service is trying to put a more positive spin into the research. The Army responded that the survey question includes both positive and negative response options to the self-efficacy question but that the greatest differences in responses between men and women were apparent in the

negative response options. The Navy added that the JAMRS report referenced earlier in the briefing provided the full set of data.

Services' Strategic Communications Plans (RFI 5)

The Committee is interested in the Services' plans for strategic communications regarding their gender integration efforts. The Committee requested that the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force provide a briefing on where information on the Services' gender integration implementation plans is located. The Committee also inquired what information is being communicated regarding gender-neutral standards and where Service members could find the information.

Army: Mr. Hank Minitrez, Public Affairs Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

Strategic communication efforts in the Army have been deliberate in trying to balance the historic nature of the gender integration efforts with a "business as usual" approach to foster the success of women without giving them too much media attention. The Army follows OSD's lead regarding strategic messaging. It released three press releases at the headquarters level that focused on the initial announcement, the 22 women who branched into the new occupational specialties, and the female captain who became the first Infantry officer. TRADOC is managing the messaging, which focuses on readiness, opportunity, maintaining a culture of trust and respect, and ensuring every soldier has a right to serve regardless of gender. The messaging has been the same since 2012, when the first of 95,000 previously closed positions began opening to women. Social media is the primary means of communication. Senior leaders provide daily posts on social media. The Army also produces internal communications tools, including a daily one-page document outlining the who, what, when, where, and why on the topic of the day. This is a leaders' tool to show what the Army is doing about the topic and why the topic is important. Additionally, the Army held a media round table at the first Ranger School graduation that included female graduates to talk about the historic significance surrounding the first female graduates. The Army received positive coverage and little negative coverage in the media and reported positive experiences with the press. The Army also dispatches writers to the Army News services to discuss facts, figures, and statistics that focus the message on readiness.

Marine Corps: LtCol Lawrence Coleman, Branch Head, MPI, M&RA

After the Marine Corps' implementation plan was approved, the Commandant of the Marine Corps sent a personal e-mail to senior leaders that included the implementation plan and instructions to execute the plan. The Mobile Training Teams, whose job it is to explain the plan to Service members, spend the first few hours informing, educating, debunking findings of the research effort, and explaining what the Marine Corps is doing to address its research findings. To date, the information in those training sessions that has been the most-well received is that the occupational and physical standards are in place and are not gender specific. The way the plan is laid out, the education and training will trickle down to Marines through leadership. For applicants coming to recruiting stations, the focus is on finding people interested in being Marines. Recruits are given background checks and then learn about occupational specialties for which they are qualified. They are given a description of each occupational specialty, including the requirements for the specialty, and told what to expect.

Navy: LCDR Sarah Turse, Female Integration Lead, Naval Special Warfare

All NSW positions encourage candidates to apply regardless of gender. Points of contact engage with female candidates regularly. NSW mentors also assist recruiters through delayed entry and follow-up training. As of the time of the briefing, there were mentors in 26 regional areas throughout the United States. They administer physical screening tests for specialties that include EOD, divers, SEALs, and SWCC. All information about these positions is available on public websites, such as SEALSWCC.com. The websites were designed to inform a diverse audience of candidates and influencers. The communications include support, guidance, tips, tools, frequently asked questions, question and answer forums, education/training videos, and referrals to recruiters and mentors. NSW also maintains a Facebook page with more than one million followers, a public events calendar, videos, and webpages. The website had been updated to make the language more gender-neutral (e.g., replacing "choose your brotherhood" with "choose your team") and shows images of female staff and instructors. Information on standards, application processes, deadlines, and injury prevention measures is available online.

Air Force: Lt Col Veronica V. Senia, Chief, Air Force Enlisted Accessions and Training

Air Force recruiting websites and social media contain information for those interested in applying. National Guard and Reserve Component websites and special operations websites also share information about career fields. There have also been articles by Air Force Public Affairs covering newly opened career fields, and more education tools are being shared on the Air Force portal. Air Force Public Affairs sent guidance to all major command leaders to explain the occupational standards and how they correlate to the training and unit; the standards are tested annually.

Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald commented that the feedback the Committee heard from the focus groups did not seem to match information provided by the Services during the briefing. He applauded the Air Force Portal, noting that airmen use it, but then pointed out how the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) portal was less successful and advised the Army to look to the Air Force Portal as a best practice. He added that the "Army WTF" Facebook group is where many soldiers obtain their information. He also noted that little information had been made available about the gender integration implementation plans, even to integrated units. During the DACOWITS focus groups, he reported hearing that the implementation plans had not been disseminated to Service members. He also stated that many Service members did not know about the Army's gender-neutral standards (the Occupational Physical Assessment Test) and the improvements that were made to the validation process. He also specifically noted the challenge airmen face with the new combat test and said he believed the pendulum to increase or validate standards has swung too far.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar stated that the Air Force has an 85–90 percent attrition rate for Pararescue Jumpers and inquired whether that caused concern regarding the selection criteria when looking at the associated costs. She asked if more was being done to prepare women physically to reduce attrition rates. Lt Col Senia (Air Force) commented that at the end of 2015, the Air Force started the Scout Recruit Development program, which was opened to men and women in January; the program is similar to a program used by Navy Special Operations. They are still in the early phases of the program and are not sure of any potential improvements in attrition rate or training outcomes.

CMSgt (Ret) Belcer inquired about a point in the Air Force's brief that described how physical standards were not changed after they were validated. Lt Col Senia responded in the affirmative. For the six newly opened career fields, they reviewed several physical fitness tests and took data on the most critical tasks for those career fields. This line of study showed that the physical standards were correlated with the most critical tasks. The new test mentioned by MG (Ret) Macdonald is a new test, and the Air Force is still trying to refine it. The Service is studying it closely; at the time of the briefing, it was not being used to screen out candidates, and the Air Force was still refining the test with TAC-Ps to evaluate how the test functions. CMSgt (Ret) Belcer asked if the occupational standards had been validated for non-newly opened career fields as well. The Air Force responded that the standards are validated on a continuous basis. The Service did identify some changes for the other occupational tests but was in the process of implementing the changes.

CAPT (Ret) Kelley asked if the Marine Corps retested men to see if they met the new requirements since the occupational standards evaluation increased. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) stated that the occupational specialty-specific standards that were developed were based on the assessment of the tasks for each job. The manuals are regularly reviewed on a three-year cycle, and the Marine Corps' most recent review highlighted some that had not been updated or were in need of revision. It is a pass/fail for each standard. If someone fails a test, it does not mean immediate reclassification—he or she has the opportunity to retrain to be able to meet the standard. There have been no reclassifications in the operating force due to Marines being unable to pass the new standards. The two women who attended Artillery officer school each failed two events on their first attempts. The school helped them continue to train for those events to the point that they were able to pass at graduation.

CAPT (Ret) Kelley asked if there was any way women could pre-train for these occupational standards at recruitment instead of being faced with failing them up front. The Marine Corps said the physical fitness standards used to screen potential recruits are components of the Marine Corps' physical fitness test (PFT) and combat fitness test (CFT) and are not specific to occupations. At specialty schools, Marines face the occupation-specific part of the physical standard. Through research, the Marine Corps has been able to correlate Marines who were successful at certain schools with their PFT and CFT scores during recruitment. CAPT (Ret) Kelley stated high school girls are not entering the military in the same physical shape as their male counterparts. LtCol Coleman (Marine Corps) emphasized that it is the recruiter's job after the contract is signed to ensure recruits are prepared for boot camp.

Ms. Theresa Christenson inquired what the Services were doing to stop the "newly opened" or "recently opened" verbiage. She asserted that not every woman wants to lead the way.

VADM (Ret) Pottenger applauded Ms. Christenson's observation and asserted that reframing the gender integration issue to be about readiness opportunities and talent management will shift the conversation. The Army said this was the basis behind its "business as usual" communications approach. The Marine Corps commented that using the term "newly opened" is not part of the implementation plan.

Public Comment Period

Ms. Nancy Northrup, Co-Founder, Operation Reinvent

As a co-founder of Operation Reinvent, Ms. Northrop presented her program to the Committee. She is a military mother and is very passionate about helping women veterans. Operation Reinvent is based in New York City and focuses on helping transitioning female veterans find the right jobs after leaving the military. Most women exiting the Service are looking for full-time jobs and face many challenges. Operation Reinvent's mission is to provide tools and resources to help female veterans know their value, connect with companies, succeed at interviews, and find jobs to suit them so they can thrive. Operation Reinvent is a two-day program that is free for women who are completing the Transition Assistance Program and looking for full-time jobs. At the time of the briefing, 100 women had participated. The first day of the Operation Reinvent program included a webcast from CBS studios in New York City. MG (Ret) Pollock led the webcast and was followed by seasoned corporate executives. Speakers represented companies that understand and are eager to hire women veterans. Participants take CALIBER assessments, which are used by companies around the world to match candidates to jobs, regardless of the veteran's prior military occupational specialty. The second day included a hands-on, professional image makeover with hairstyling and makeup. Macy's gave participants a fashion show and wardrobe consultations. The two-day events are followed by job matching and mentorship programs that continue over the next 12 months. The program is currently active at Fort Bragg and Fort Campbell but is looking to expand to other Services. Ms. Northrup was curious to learn from Committee members about companies that are eager to hire women veterans. Operation Reinvent received positive feedback from participants at the end of each workshop highlighting its effectiveness.

COL Kominiak announced that today was Flag Day as well as the Army's birthday. She closed the Public Comment period and announced the meeting would resume on June 15, 2016, at 0830.

15 June 2016

Introduction and Opening Remarks

COL Kominiak, Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, opened the meeting. DACOWITS Chair, LtGen (Ret) Wilson, welcomed all in attendance. After the welcome, all Committee members and audience members introduced themselves. LtGen (Ret) Wilson noted that it was the last time Lt Col Robert Jackson, from the Force Resiliency Office, will be presenting to the DACOWITS as a briefer. Lt Col Jackson will be moving to a new position.

DoD's Gender Integration Implementation Oversight Plan (RFI 1)

DACOWITS continues to be interested in DoD's efforts to provide oversight to the Services in executing their gender integration implementation plans. The Committee requested a written response and a briefing from the Force Resiliency Office on the newly developed gender integration implementation oversight plan for the continued full and effective integration of women into previously closed combat positions that are now opened per the SECDEF's announcement on December 3, 2015.

LtCol Robert Jackson, Military Assistant, Office of the Executive Director, Force Resiliency

Lt Col Jackson briefed the Committee on DoD's Gender Integration Implementation Oversight Plan. He presented the timeline released by DoD for the gender integration process. The SECDEF notified Congress on December 3, 2015, of its intent to open all previously closed positions and units in the military to women. On the same day, the SECDEF directed the Service Secretaries and USSOCOM to submit detailed implementation plans for the integration process by January 2016, with execution plans to be completed no later than April 1, 2016. On January 2, 2016, all but approximately 5,000 of the submarine positions were legally opened to women. Two different laws that govern ground positions and submarine positions were cited as the reason that the few remaining positions remained closed. One law requires that a notice to Congress of such a change be in Congress for 30 calendar days, while the other specifies 30 consecutive days in Congress. The final plans were vetted and reviewed by the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD (P&R)) between January and March of 2016 and received SECDEF approval on March 9, 2016. On March 18, 2016, OUSD (P&R) issued a memo to the Services and USSOCOM detailing the annual assessment requirements; the memo did not specify an end date for these requirements.

Within the memo, there were seven areas of focus listed for the assessment requirements: transparent standards, population size, physical demands and physiological differences, conduct and culture, talent management, operating abroad, and assessment and adjustment. The memo noted that Services would be required to certify each year that gender-neutral standards are in place for all occupational specialties and in use at all occupational specialty training and schools. In September 2015, the Services certified that they had valid and applicable gender-neutral standards in place. A memo issued on March 2, 2016, called for the Military Department Inspector General to assess the standards and the processes used to develop and test them no less than every three years, beginning in FY 2016, to determine if the Services' occupational

standards are in compliance with applicable public laws and the March 2, 2015, statement released under the SECDEF. The standards include all mental and physical standards used for selecting, training, and continuing personnel in each individual occupation/rating/specialty.

OUSD (P&R) will also be assessing female population size. This will include a detailed description of challenges and mitigation strategies in the event that small numbers of women are integrated into the newly opened career fields. Equipment sizing is a concern, and the Services are actively working to ensure sizing is appropriate. Supply and facility issues are being addressed as well through this requirement item.

The third annual requirement item is assessing physical demands and physiological differences. Within this effort, injury rates for male and female Service members in the newly opened occupational specialties are being collected on injuries during initial qualification training and during the performance of duties; this data will be compared to data from the last five fiscal years. The Services will also report the results or status of any ongoing studies regarding injury rates and recommendations and actions taken to mitigate injury rates for all Service members, but particularly for those in the positions requiring load-bearing activities.

Each Service will also assess its conduct and culture. Units will be asked to report back with information on the integration education and training efforts being utilized, including type and frequency of the education and training. The reports will include the specific steps being taken to address sexual harassment, sexual assault, hazing, fraternization, or other unprofessional behavior exhibited, specifically concerning newly integrated occupations, units, and platforms.

Talent management is the fourth issue to be addressed and focuses on recruitment and retention efforts. The Services will provide detailed information on recruitment and retention efforts for women in the newly opened occupational specialties, including numbers of female accessions per fiscal year. Services also will provide an assessment of male recruiting and retention rates in the same occupational specialties over the five fiscal years prior to integration. Lastly, the numbers of men and women in newly opened occupations, units, and platforms will be compared to those of the previous fiscal year. The purpose of this is not to create or enforce quotas; rather, it is to understand the representation of men and women serving in these occupational specialties.

The operating abroad portion of the assessment will detail female integration issues and barriers experienced by women operating abroad with multinational forces; the Services must provide active mitigation strategies to address these barriers as well. Finally, the Services will list best practices and lessons they have learned during the past fiscal year in this area of the assessment.

Assessment and adjustment, the final item covered during the assessment, asks the Services to report back on their extremely robust assessment and adjustment plans, including any additional assessment and adjustment efforts not covered by the first six areas of assessment requirements. This will include the status and interim results of any ongoing longitudinal integration studies. Lt Col Jackson expressed that the goal of these assessment requirements is to create a more transparent process and facilitate information sharing across the Services and USSOCOM. Nearly every document used in the assessment process is publicly available on the DoD Website, including all of the Services' and USSOCOM's studies used in making integration decisions, their implementation plans, and all related SECDEF decision memos.

Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald stated that it was difficult for him to locate the implementation plans through an online search. He also reported that many focus group participants did not know of the implementation plans or where they were located and that Service members felt that publicity concerning this new policy was not comparable to that garnered by the repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. MG (Ret) Macdonald reminded Lt Col Jackson that DACOWITS submitted a spreadsheet to DACOWITS Service representatives for tracking the complex timeline and process as part of a previous RFI and asked the Force Resiliency Office if it had found the spreadsheet useful as a tracking mechanism. Lt Col Jackson responded that allowing the Services the opportunity to present the information in the manner they prefer has worked best because it allows the Services to utilize the information and present it to their Service members. LtCol Jackson also stated he would review the spreadsheet DACOWITS provided and talk with leadership about ways to accommodate DACOWITS' request.

MG (Ret) Pollock reminded the group that as new standards were developed for occupational specialties, some of the Services' past briefings listed combat experience as a rationale for the changes. MG (Ret) Pollock asked how the physical demands of combat experience are assessed. She highlighted the importance of ensuring validity and reliability throughout this process by ensuring these physical demands were based on multiple data points. In an effort to ensure informed decisions, she inquired about the reliability and validity of the combat experience assessment, Lt Col Jackson was not able to speak to the validity of the data, but he did reassure the Committee that a very deliberate process was used to develop the standards. The majority of the Services' physical standards are reassessed at least every three years. He mentioned that what was missing prior to this assessment plan was the overarching direction on how to do this and the methods for how to report the findings to the SECDEF.

VADM (Ret) Pottenger mentioned that the Committee planned to implement a standing RFI regarding the gender integration implementation assessments. She discussed the Committee's concerns about the differences in successes with women at Ranger School versus women in the Marine Corps IOC (Infantry Officer's Course) and the potential role physical standards have played in this. LtCol Jackson explained that when gender-neutral standards and occupational standards are referenced for an occupation, they are referenced relative to the Service within which the occupation is housed. He emphasized that every occupational standard has been validated to be gender neutral, but differences still remain between the mission of the Army and that of the Marine Corps.

SMA (Ret) Preston noted the importance of referring to the new standards as general "standards" rather than "gender-neutral standards." He mentioned that in his conversations with Service members, they wanted the gender-neutral standards to be referred to simply as standards. Lt Col Jackson felt that the Services had reached the point in the gender integration process where this terminology shift could be implemented, indicating that the Services are ready to talk about the issue of standards as a Service member issue rather than a gender issue. He credited the lingering differentiation to the newness of the implementation and felt confident that over time people would begin to drop the term "gender-neutral standards" from their speech.

CAPT (Ret) Kelley asked if DoD was able to reconcile the differences in the standards validations between the Army and the Marine Corps. These two Services utilize different

processes and had asked if they would be evaluated in the same manner. Lt Col Jackson mentioned that validation is a particular process that is authorized by each Service. The Services have different missions for their Infantry units. Adding to this discussion, SMA (Ret) Preston alluded to the difference in perspective from the armored crewmen. In a comparison of 16 of the best crews, different capabilities and expectations would be found between Army and Marine Corps tank crews based solely on their being from different Services. Lt Col Jackson stated that differences relate to the details of the mission they are asked to complete. He further indicated that DoD had commissioned the RAND Corporation to conduct a study to examine how each Service validated its standards to ensure the methodologies used were sound.

MG (Ret) Macdonald mentioned that there are huge misconceptions about the physical fitness test each Service uses because the tests are being used incorrectly. Each physical fitness test is designed as a physical readiness test to determine if an individual has the physical capacity to be in the Service. However, at present, Services use the tests to award points for promotions and as key data in a Service member's enlisted records. This frustrates Service members because the test uses different standards for men and women. MG (Ret) Macdonald suggested to the Committee that it consider recommending the Services stop using the physical fitness test in this incorrect manner. Lt Col Jackson stated he has heard similar comments from Service members and suggested that the comments point to the difference between the occupational standards and the physical fitness test standards and show the need for Services to educate Service members on the tests and their proper use.

Marine Corps Gender Integration Implementation Plan for Recruit Training (RFI 3)

On January 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Navy sent a memo to the Commandant of the Marine Corps requesting a detailed plan for integrating genders in the branch's entry-level recruit training, to include specific steps that the Marine Corps would take to fully integrate. Recently, the Secretary of Navy indicated that the recruit training integration would be done incrementally. The Committee requested a written response and briefing to include details on the plan and timeline to integrate enlisted recruit training incrementally. If the Marine Corps does not intend to fully integrate recruit training, the Committee requested that the Service provide its rationale and research to support that decision.

LtCol Jeffery Bauer, Branch Head, TECOM G-3/5/7 Future Operations

LtCol Bauer presented on the gender integration implementation plan being utilized by the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps looks at training across several different stages, including boot camp, recruitment, training, combat, infantry, and then military occupational school. Overall, 61 percent of initial recruit training is conducted with men and women together. All training beyond boot camp is fully gender integrated. To address the task of assessing how the Marine Corps trains recruits, the Service commissioned the Center for Naval Analysis to conduct a 2-part study to examine current training practices in the Marine Corps, assess the degree of balance between transformation and preparation for task cohesion, and recommend changes to Marine Corps training going forward. There are three primary goals: Document current training practices in the Marine Corps and the extent of gender-combined training; understand the implications of the small number of female marines; and examine the other Services' approaches to entry-level training. The study commenced in March 2016; the first part of the study—the review of other Services' approaches—is slated for completion in December 2016. The second part of the

study—the examination of Parris Island training—is slated for completion in May 2017; however, the review process has slowed down the study timeline, and this date will likely get pushed back to mid-summer 2017.

Discussion

LtGen (Ret) Wilson noted a statistic from LtCol Bauer's slides that stated that 61 percent of the Marine Corps' initial recruit training is conducted with men and women at the same location. She asked if this included instances where men and women are training in the same location, but separately. LtCol Bauer replied that the lowest level of training is divided by gender. LtGen (Ret) Wilson asked for clarification concerning whether men and women are separated and do not interact when they go into the field. LtCol Bauer explained that while there are few exceptions, men and women are mostly separated.

Ms. McAleer asked for a further explanation of what the 61 percent of co-ed training truly alluded to—the total amount of time spent interacting or the amount of time spent in the same location. She followed up by asking how "same location" was defined in this context. LtCol Bauer explained that the 61 percent represents a combination of the amount of time spent interacting as well as the amount of time spent in the same location but not interacting. For example, recruits train in the same location while completing swim qualifications but are instructed separately and do not interact during training. There are also instances where they are receiving instruction and performing drills at the same location. Ms. McAleer felt that the 61 percent was not an accurate gauge of the amount of time men and women actually spent interacting during initial recruit training.

LtGen (Ret) Wilson asked how many instructors are provided during training and if the trainer and the trainee are matched based on gender. LtCol Bauer explained that the number and gender of trainers depends on the class being taught; there are some academic settings where men and women are taught by the same instructor.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar was curious as to what percent of the environments had been integrated. Regarding the 61 percent of training that is co-ed, she also asked what percentage of that training involves men and women training separately but within sight of each other and what percentage involves planned interactions. LtCol Bauer explained that most of the 61 percent of training involved planned interactions. Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar also noted that she understood the rationale for gender integration, but it would be helpful to discuss how holding separate, female-only events could affect confidence. LtCol Bauer listed the regimental run, female battalions, and water survival training as examples of similar activities held in the same location and conducted with the same instructors for both genders. Marine combat training is 100-percent integrated. Both genders go through the training, and from there, those being trained for the Infantry attend Infantry school, while those being trained for Tanker crews attend Tanker school. There is a difference in the progression of paths.

MG (Ret) Pollock was concerned about the lack of interaction between men and women at initial recruit training compared to other Services. She expressed the belief that working with others enables people to perceive their strengths and weaknesses and helps people see each other as resources. However, there is concern around separation. People can learn humility and teamwork better if they work side by side with a diverse group of individuals. She was curious how the Marine Corps' separation could produce a better outcome than training men and women together. She also speculated that it would be challenging to put Service members who trained

separately together in a unit. LtCol Bauer disagreed with that idea and explained that initial recruit training is only to learn basics. Within that stage, the goal is turning a civilian into a Marine, so there is little than can be done regarding specialty training.

Mr. Morrison inquired if recruits are gender integrated except during in-house training in the battalion bays with the drill instructors. LtCol Bauer indicated there are also moments when segregated training is used for specialized events. Mr. Morrison asked if recruits are integrated during classroom training; he reasoned that recruits should not be gender segregated during any part of classroom training because the training is not held in the bays and is not a specialized event. LtCol Bauer was unsure of the answer to this question.

DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) Retaliation Strategy (RFI 9)

DACOWITS continues to be interested in the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Committee asked SAPRO to provide a briefing on its Retaliation Strategy.

Dr. Allison Greene-Sands, Deputy Chief of Staff, SAPRO

Dr. Greene-Sands informed the Committee of her attendance at the United State of Women Conference hosted by First Lady Michelle Obama on June 14, 2016, the previous day. She felt it was tremendous to be present at the DACOWITS meeting to further discuss some of the issues covered at the conference. She was happy to report that there were issues covered at the conference that were relevant to DACOWITS.

Dr. Greene-Sands briefed the Committee on DoD initiatives to prevent retaliation against individuals who report a sexual assault or sexual harassment. DoD is concerned about the potential for retaliation against those who report sexual harassment and sexual assault. It is widely accepted that fear of retaliation is why some people do not report incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Certain types of retaliation against reporters of sexual harassment and sexual assault may not be viewed as crimes, but retaliation is viewed as a threat to the military justice process and a barrier to support for those in need of assistance. DoD and Congress put forth a directive to address these issues. DoD aims to eliminate retaliatory behavior; improve resources for reporters; and provide tools for commanders, supervisors, and peers to prevent and respond to retaliation against those who report violations. In May 2015, the SECDEF drafted a memorandum that resulted in the development of a DoD Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy (DRPRS). The initiative combined the efforts of SAPRO with the efforts of OSD stakeholders and the Services. In the memorandum, Congress also directed the development of a strategy that would address retaliation for filing a sexual assault report. This strategy, and the DRPRS, were subsequently signed by the SECDEF in April 2016. In addition to looking at reporters, the DRPRS considered witnesses of these incidents who suffered retaliation as a result. The initiative covers Active Component, Reserve Component, or National Guard Service members who are sexually assaulted or harassed and report the act while serving in active service or inactive duty training. The initiative also considers those who felt retaliatory incidents were being ignored.

The strategy focuses on five Issue Areas that are outlined in the DRPRS and that will be defined in the 2016 Implementation Planning Phase and executed in the coming year:

- Issue Area 1: Standardizing Definitions, focuses on developing a consistent definition of what is considered retaliation and related sub-behaviors of retaliation. This process will

also inform a description of the full spectrum of retaliatory behavior, including components of work-related behavior experienced after coming forth about an incident, ostracizing and targeting people, and cruelty and maltreatment. Creating standardized definitions of retaliatory behavior will diminish ambiguity about what constitutes retaliation and help commanders and leaders determine how to handle the incidents.

- Issue Area 2: Improving Data Collection and Analysis, focuses on developing a method to track retaliation to enhance understanding of the wide scope of retaliatory experiences and to identify retaliation prevention and response efforts. This topic demands a data-driven approach that utilizes a centralized process to integrate data from retaliation cases, conduct robust survey and focus group efforts, and evaluate retaliation prevention and response initiatives in a timely manner. To address this area of interest, a three-phase data collection plan will be conducted: develop data calls for DoD entities that handle retaliation, position the most senior Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) as central managers of data collection, and modify the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID) to be a central data repository. Survey questions were aligned to policy and law, and the retaliation prevention and response strategy was assessed for effectiveness. Based on data that is already available, 62 percent of people who have reported sexual assault or harassment also reported dealing with a negative outcome.
- Issue Area 3: Streamlining Investigation and Accountability Efforts, requests that DoD create a uniform, comprehensive retaliation response process to address allegations of retaliation. This process should ensure victims/complainants are able to report retaliation allegations, garner support, and hold offenders accountable. There is also a request to enhance the training of response personnel. Issue Area 3 will require the development of a comprehensive retaliation response process, ways to strengthen accountability, and an improved social media policy.
- Issue Area 4: Strengthening Reporter Protections, addresses the need for specialized support services for individuals who report retaliation. It is important to inform victims of their rights. There is also a need to define reasonable accommodation measures for those who complain and then suffer retaliation; address their level of comfort and safety; provide reasonable accommodation; and provide general awareness for education purposes. SARCs, Victim Advocates (VA), Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOA), and commanders, as appropriate, are designated to help support persons who have reported retaliation. Within this area, DoD will establish SARC, VA, and EOA support for those experiencing retaliation; identify and define reasonable accommodations for sexual harassment complaints; generate retaliation response system awareness for reporters; develop policies for investigating, tracking, and reporting allegations of Article 6b violations; and establish General or Flag Officer review of career-related effects and administrative separation actions.
- Issue Area 5: Creating a Culture Intolerant of Retaliation, addresses the concern that there is a lack of guidance and training for military leadership and Service personnel on how to prevent retaliation. Within this area, it is vital to prepare supervisors and first responders, create awareness about guidance and accountability practices for leadership, and promote misconduct reporting and the new response system.

During March through August 2016, the Working Groups will develop implementation plans for each issue area within the DRPRS. After this period, the groups will coordinate implementation plans for the different issue areas and identify any necessary SAPRO policy updates. The Working Groups will begin executing the implementation plans in calendar year 2017.

Discussion

LTC (Ret) Park pointed out that the reporting process seemed really drawn out, which could diminish its credibility among Service members. There is a concern that the reporting process is too extensive and that the process may not seem credible. LTC (Ret) Park asked if there were any ways to consolidate this process in the interest of the victim. She also raised concerns about the investigations carrying on after Service members transfer locations. Dr. Greene-Sands responded that any investigation could take a long time. The length of the investigation is tracked by SAPRO, but there is no requirement for completing investigations within a certain period of time. To deal with that concern, Service member transfers can be expedited. LTC (Ret) Park still felt that the process seemed to lack credibility and that there would be transparency issues.

MG (Ret) Macdonald felt that Service members should not receive any more PowerPoint trainings as a result of this. He believed that scenario training and vignettes were well-received and that Service members appreciated when training sessions included instances of intentional sexual harassment and, by chance, social awkwardness.

Maj Gen (Ret) Dunbar asked for clarification as to whether sexual harassment would now be addressed by SAPRO. Dr. Greene-Sands explained that the two officers are still separated. SAPRO works in partnership with the Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) on the data collection effort. Data are collected separately but housed together in DSAID because ODMEO does not have the capacity to gather this data; the data were reported in one annual report at the request of Congress.

Dr. Jackie Young asked if Chaplain Corps members would be involved in any discussions about retaliation. Dr. Greene-Sands explained that they hoped to get more chaplains involved. Chaplains are not mandated to attend training on this but have requested it.

Overview of 2016 Focus Group Findings

Between April and May of 2016, Committee members conducted 57 focus groups at 14 military installations that involved 545 participants. These discussions targeted military personnel across all ranks and Services, centering on four areas of interest: gender integration, strategic communication, mentorship, and chaplains. The Committee requested a briefing on the findings from these focus group discussions.

Ms. Rachel Gaddes, Insight Policy Research, and Ms. Ashley Schaad, ICF International

Of the 57 focus groups the Committee conducted, 24 groups were solely composed of women, 24 groups were solely composed of men, and nine of the groups were of mixed-gender composition. There were 18 groups of officers, 18 groups of senior enlisted Service members, 18 groups of junior enlisted Service members, and three groups with leaders and trainers of mixed ranks. Each focus group had approximately 10 participants, who were recruited by the staff at each installation.

The analysis was completed using verbatim transcripts and mini-surveys. Qualitative analysis software was used to examine the trends among different subgroups. Focus groups as a methodology have certain strengths and limitations. Focus groups are an interactive way to gauge participants' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs. However, focus groups results cannot be generalized and cannot be quantified because each question was not asked of each participant. Demographically, focus group participants were nearly equally split between men and women (55 percent women, 45 percent men) and were roughly evenly split among all of the Services except the Coast Guard, which was less represented than the others.

Gender Integration

Overall, few focus group participants were in units that were not gender integrated. Ms. Gaddes noted that participants' integration experiences likely affected how they answered the gender integration questions. The relevance of gender integration to the participants varied by occupational specialty and by Service.

Most participants reported seeing few if any changes as a result of the gender integration initiatives. Ms. Gaddes indicated that this may have been partially a factor of the timing of the focus groups; the decision to open all units and positions to women occurred in December 2015, and the focus groups were held in April and May of 2016; it is possible that the Committee would hear different responses to this question if they went back to those same units later. Because most participants had little personal experience with gender integration, many had not seen changes in their units. A few participants mentioned seeing modifications to the training, such as a Train-the-Trainer program being implemented in one of the Services, as a result of the integration efforts. The participants believed that any changes made would take time to trickle down to the newly integrated units.

The Committee conducted three focus groups with leaders and trainers; participants from these groups presented mixed perceptions regarding women's interest in the newly opened positions. Some described how women were not interested in filling these positions, while those who were interested wanted to be part of the historic effort. Participants also mentioned that the motivation of women to move into newly opened positions could be affected by the numbers and types of openings, possible hesitation by women to make lateral career moves, and their levels of experience and investment in their current occupations. Leaders and trainers expressed mixed perceptions about the support they were receiving to implement their Services' integration plans. Some felt the support they received was adequate, whereas others did not. Some would have liked more communication from leaders as well as more opportunities for mentorship from others who had been through the gender integration process themselves.

Participants discussed their sources for information about the decision to open all units and positions to women. Most of the participants first heard of the changes from civilian sources, though some heard it later from military-related sources as well. There was frustration from the participants at not hearing about the implementation plans from their commands, though some reported that since their units were already integrated, they felt the news did not pertain to them. A few participants indicated they received secondhand communications from official military sources, such as being forwarded a DoD e-mail by their commanders. Without being prompted, a few participants compared the communication for this initiative with communication regarding the repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which some felt was better executed. Official

communications were the most trusted source for information on gender integration; however, participants in most groups indicated being bombarded with rumors about gender integration from nonofficial sources. When asked, few participants indicated they had seen or looked for their respective Services' gender integration plans.

According to hand count, 85 percent of the participants acknowledged that physical fitness standards and occupational standards were different, but in some cases, the topic of standards came up before participants were asked about it, and respondents were briefed with the definition before answering the question, which may have tainted their responses. During the discussions, participants often referred to the two types of standards interchangeably. Opinions about the gender-neutral occupational standards were almost always positive or neutral. Several participants expressed distaste with the term "gender-neutral." Many participants would prefer the term "standards." When asked, no participants mentioned hearing information from their Services or commands about the new occupational standards. Participants had heard several rumors about the new standards, including that the physical fitness and occupational standards had been lowered; others heard that the standards would not change but were skeptical about this. A few participants mentioned hearing about a new tiered system of occupational standards.

Participants perceived several challenges related to gender integration, including women's ability to meet the physical fitness and occupational standards, concerns about lowering standards, pregnancy as a barrier to integration, adapting facilities and logistics to support women's integration, and problematic gender dynamics, including overt sexism or bias and a fear of sexual harassment or sexual assault accusations that affected men and women's interactions. There was also general concern that the younger generations as a whole might not be able to meet the standards, irrespective of gender. Participants believed that resistance to gender integration could affect unit cohesion. Participants believed that women could face challenges of being underrepresented, indicating that placing women in a unit in "onsies and twosies" was isolating and could cause women to feel they constantly had to prove themselves. Some participants feared special treatment of women could hinder integration efforts, whereas others indicated that women were sometimes perceived as troublemakers. A few participants were concerned about Services forcing women into newly opened units and positions. In addition, concerns about female-to-female competition were expressed by a small number of the participants.

Participants also mentioned a few potential mitigating factors that could help gender integration succeed. These factors included the ability of the leaders and older generation to either help or hinder integration through their support. Another potential mitigating factor is that many Service members value female perspectives and capabilities. Finally, some participants indicated that allowing gender integration to progress with minimal interference would help the initiative succeed, similar to previous integration efforts.

Discussion

CAPT (Ret) Kelley asked about the limitations on the findings and the inability to quantify the results. Ms. Gaddes explained that there are limitations to the focus group process as a whole. Ms. Hawkes similarly expressed her desire to move away from using vague words. Ms. Gaddes explained that because there is no denominator/base-value in focus group research, it is hard to quantify a specific value. It is also important to note that not every question is asked in each survey. The mini-survey does allow for some quantifiable findings.

MG (Ret) Macdonald asked if female-to-female competition was caused by men pitting women against each other. Ms. Gaddes stated that she doubted this was the case. The general consensus from the other Committee members was that women often create their own competition independent of male interference.

VADM (Ret) Pottenger asked if these findings pointed to a need for a massive communication effort on changes within the Services. Ms. Gaddes emphasized that participants were not pleased with the lack of information they so craved. There were some groups that felt the news did not apply to them since they were already in integrated units, but they still had misconceptions about gender integration.

Ms. Christenson commented that the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy affected civilians as well as Service members, whereas gender integration may not have been as important to civilians. It is possible that for this reason, it is harder to find general information about the policy.

Strategic Communications

When asked to describe the ways commands communicate, participants mentioned—in order of frequency—talking, texting, e-mail, face-to-face, telephone, and social media. Participants indicated that communication affected the morale, cohesion, and pride of Service members. Lack of communication caused resentment and frustration, while informal communication often improved morale and gave a unit "personality." The preferred methods of communication differed by generation; senior participants perceived that junior Service members wanted to know the rationale behind orders. In addition, participants indicated text messaging was the preferred method of communication among younger generations and expressed that the younger Service members also preferred social media for communication. Social media was seen as a way to directly access Service members, with some senior Service members indicating they use social media to stay informed about what is going on in their subordinates' lives.

E-mail was perceived as the most effective method of communication when it was followed up with face-to face communication. Participants indicated that face-to-face communication was the most effective but that it can be difficult given the time burden. Text messages were perceived as the most effective method for immediate communication. Participants believed the effectiveness of e-mail was limited because Service members receive a high volume of e-mail, and not all Service members have access to their e-mail at work. The preference for communication flow was top-down and face-to-face. Most participants recommended fewer PowerPoints and online trainings.

Discussion

There was no discussion about this section of the focus group findings.

Mentorship

Ms. Schaad briefed the findings from the focus group discussions on mentorship. She indicated that DACOWITS has heard from focus group participants over the past few years that mentorship is a concern, particularly for women, which prompted the Committee to study the topic in the 2016 focus groups. Participants' experiences with mentorship varied by Service. Participation in a Service- or unit-sponsored mentorship program varied from 74 percent of

participants from the Navy to 27 percent of the participants from the Air Force. Ms. Schaad indicated that participation in a formal mentorship program does not necessarily correlate with having a mentor, however. Senior enlisted participants were more likely than officers and junior enlisted participants to report currently or formerly having a Service member as a mentor. When looking at gender differences, the percentage of men and women who reported that they had never had a Service member as a mentor did not significantly vary (18 percent of women versus 14 percent of men).

Mentorship was perceived as centering around guidance. Career guidance was reported most commonly, but personal guidance was also mentioned by several of the participants. Participants' understanding of mentors varied somewhat. Several of the participants described mentors using terms often used to describe leaders or role models. For instance, some junior enlisted men indicated a person could be a mentor without realizing it—similar to a role model. Unlike sponsors, there was an expectation among most participants that a mentor would have a long-term relationship with the protégé.

Participants believed every mentorship relationship was different, and most indicated Service members generally have more than one mentor. In many cases, individuals reported going to one mentor for professional issues and another mentor for personal issues. Participants were asked about generational differences in mentorship. Senior enlisted and officer participants often perceived that younger Service members were less likely to seek mentors and had an expanded view of who can be a mentor. The differing views of mentorship were echoed in the explanations many junior Service members gave for who could be a mentor. Participants also discussed generational differences in mentorship communication channels, with older Service members communicating in person with their mentors and junior Service members communicating more through electronic means.

Participants had different views on the qualifications needed for mentors. Mentors were generally seen as having more knowledge or experience than the protégé, but they could be of similar or different ranks and ages. In addition, some participants wanted mentors from the same career field while others wanted mentors from other career fields. The gender of the mentor sometimes mattered for personal issues and because of concerns about fraternization. A few women expressed that it is beneficial to have female mentors for career guidance. The characteristics of a good mentor mentioned included being trustworthy, willing, compatible, committed, available, a good listener, unselfish, and caring. Participants desired to pick their own mentors. Participants described bad mentors as hypocritical, selfish, having a bad attitude, demanding/directive, giving bad advice, emotional, incompatible, dishonest, unwilling to listen, and unavailable or uninterested. Good protégés were described as motivated and receptive to the guidance provided. Participants also described what they envisioned as the ideal mentor program. For the most part, they opposed formal mentorship programs where mentors and protégés are matched inorganically by the Service or unit. However, formalizing some aspects of the mentoring relationship could be beneficial. Senior members felt junior members did not adequately understand what mentorship is, so providing a foundation of what it is and why it is important could be helpful. In addition, bringing people with similar interests or career paths together could be an informal way to foster mentorship.

Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald pointed out the word "compelling" on slide 57. He asked if information could be shared on what commanders use to compel Service members. Ms. Schaad replied that based on the comments that were provided, those members whose commanders forced them into mentoring relationships tended to bond over their mutual dislike of being forced together and were grateful later for the bonding that occurred from those experiences. There were also symposiums and conference opportunities where Service members formed mentoring relationships.

Chaplains

Of the focus group participants asked, 73 percent knew who the chaplains were for their units. Nearly half of the participants indicated they had sought services from a chaplain at some point during their military careers. Use of chaplains varied by Service but did not vary significantly by gender. Of the participants asked during the focus groups, 21 percent had previous experience with a female chaplain.

Chaplains played a few different roles for Service members, including counselor, spiritual guidance, confidant, mentor, mental health resource, and coordinators for retreats and volunteers; the most common role mentioned was counselor. There were varied reasons why individuals sought counsel from chaplains, including their role as confidential sources and providing nonreligious as well as religious counseling. Chaplains also served as mental health resources, enabling Service members to bypass mental health clearance issues. When asked why Service members might not want to seek help from a chaplain, several participants suggested that nonreligious Service members might avoid chaplain counsel because they associate chaplains with religion. A few senior enlisted participants reported that once the misperception of chaplains providing only spiritual guidance was overcome, Service members felt more comfortable seeking counsel from chaplains. Chaplains influence morale. A few participants indicated they could also serve as a link between Service members and the commanders.

Several participants indicated female chaplains are viewed the same as male chaplains. A small number of participants expressed that female chaplains were sometimes perceived as more motherly or compassionate. Many participants identified few barriers to women becoming chaplains. For those participants who did perceive barriers, one obstacle mentioned was that some religious organizations do not ordain women; Ms. Schaad noted that this was not seen as a barrier stemming from the Services but rather from religious organizations. Several participants were indifferent about the gender of the chaplain, but for certain matters, the chaplain's gender was a consideration. For sexual assault or sexual harassment, Service members felt more comfortable with women. Those Service members subscribing to a religion that does not ordain women may feel more comfortable with a male chaplain. Same-gender chaplains were preferred for discussing personal issues.

Participants were asked what role, if any, chaplains should play in gender integration. Most participants did not feel chaplains should have any special role in this issue. They saw the chaplains' role as being a sounding board for Service members to discuss gender integration or any other topic they desired. Most members also felt indifferent about the number of female chaplains. The qualifications of the individual to be a chaplain were more important than the person's gender.

Discussion

Ms. McAleer asked if there were difference by Service in terms of the role and perception of chaplain. Ms. Schaad clarified that there were not differences and that generally, chaplains were seen as counselors and providers of spiritual guidance.

General Comments

Ms. Schaad briefly reviewed the topics discussed in response to the questions at the end of each focus group asking about the biggest challenge for women in the military and one recommendation the Service member would make to the SECDEF. Gender integration was the most commonly mentioned topic, including a perceived lowering of occupational standards and stereotypes that were held against women in combat positions. Participants also raised several other issues. Participants discussed the perceived roles of women in society. Concerns raised about maternity and paternity leave policies included concerns about evaluations during extended leave, stigmatization for servicewomen taking the full leave period allowed, unit staffing concerns during postpartum leave, and the perception that paternity leave was inadequate. Work-family balance challenges, including challenges for dual-military families and single parents and a lack of available childcare for extended hours (versus childcare restricted to normal business hours) were discussed. Some participants mentioned a lack of breastfeeding support or uniform-related concerns related to gender-neutral uniforms being male oriented and the difficulty of obtaining pregnancy uniforms. Other participants discussed sexual harassment and sexual assault issues, including perceived excessive sexual assault training, the high prevalence of sexual assault, and continuing concerns with sexual harassment. Lastly, a few participants expressed the perception that recruitment practices focus on diversity over the qualifications of the applicants.

Discussion

There was no discussion about this section of the focus group findings.

Study Topic Update for the Public

The Committee provided an update to the public on the topics each Working Group is studying this year.

The Employment and Integration Working Group is examining five topics:

- Gender integration
- The Chaplains Corps
- Properly fitting combat equipment
- The effect of gender integration of women registering for the Selective Service
- Sexual assault and sexual harassment related to gender integration

The Recruitment and Retention Working Group is studying three topics:

- Recruitment, marketing, and accessions

- Talent management and retention, including an examination of single-parent policies
- Mentorship

The Wellbeing and Treatment Working Group is studying seven topics:

- Strategic communications on gender integration
- Transition services for women veterans
- Physical standards and height, weight, and body fat standards
- Sexual assault and sexual harassment retaliation
- Pregnancy and parenthood policies, including pregnancy uniforms
- A review of the Marine Corps fitness reports and discharge forms
- Consolidated, Service-wide pregnancy and parenthood instruction and additional lactation rooms

Awards Ceremony for Departing Members

The Awards Ceremony was held to honor the service of three departing Committee members: LtGen (Ret) Wilson, MG (Ret) Pollock, and FLTCM (Ret) DiRosa.

LtGen (Ret) Wilson introduced the host, Ms. Stephanie Barna, Principal Deputy USD (P&R), Principal Assistant to the SECDEF. Ms. Barna was present in execution of the responsibility of the SECDEF.

Ms. Barna read a statement from OSD to recognize and honor the hard work of the outgoing Committee members. She began her address by sharing a quote from former U.S. President Calvin Coolidge: "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." She recognized this year as a historic moment for DACOWITS as it commemorates its 65th anniversary. Ms. Barna recognized DACOWITS as one of the most influential advisory committees in the federal government. The institution of the Committee arose because then-SECDEF General George C. Marshall recognized the Nation had an untapped labor pool: women. Gen Marshall began to think of how the Armed Forces might continue to employ women after World War II, and as a result, he established DACOWITS.

The Committee has made numerous accomplishments within its years of service. As a result of DACOWITS, DoD has increased access to birth control and other essential supplies for women; increased the number of medical personnel trained to care for female Service members during deployments; advocated for better-fitting equipment for women; advocated for an increase in the number of lactation spaces for women; recommended the combination of sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention activities, recognizing that sexual harassment is part of a continuum of harm that can lead to sexual assault; and urged DoD to increase the number of women in the Services and the number of women leaders. DACOWITS acted to ensure the Services had fairly and accurately validated the physical standards required to perform each particular occupational specialty. The persistence of each individual member and the Committee as a whole was instrumental in the SECDEF opening all units and positions to women who could meet the

physical standards—DACOWITS was determined to achieve this to fulfill the promise of women in the Services. DoD has taken a step forward for women, for fairness, and for national security. Ms. Barna believes President Coolidge would say, "Well done!"

Ms. Barna told the three honorees how important, precious, and enduring their hard work is. She reiterated that the work being done by DACOWITS mattered to so many women currently and previously in the Services. She expressed her thanks on behalf of the Committee, and DoD, for the work that the honorees put into their roles and their willingness to press on in spite of different obstacles.

MG (Ret) Pollock and FLTCM (Ret) DiRosa were presented the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service, for their service from June 2012 to June 2016. In their tenure, the honorees served as leading members of the Committee for the SECDEF. As part of their service, they recommended policies for female Service members related to sexual assault and sexual harassment, the recruitment and retention of women, and combat inclusion and the opening of all positions to women.

LtGen (Ret) Wilson received additional accolades from the SECDEF for her outstanding service as DACOWITS Chair for two years, directing the Committee in the execution of two annual reports on matters related to recruitment, retention, and integration of women in the Armed Forces. Her efforts have led to DoD ending gender-based restrictions; the integration of women in submarines; military leaders being held accountable for sexual assault and harassment; uniform improvements for servicewomen; and improvements in quality of life for servicewomen. The distinct accomplishments by LtGen (Ret) Wilson were recognized in a statement signed by SECDEF Ash Carter.

All honorees were presented with medals for their service and were photographed with their medals and Ms. Barna. LtGen (Ret) Wilson, on behalf of the DACOWITS Committee, also recognized Ms. Barna for the work that she is doing and presented her with a DACOWITS coin.

Following the awards ceremony, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held 13-14 September 2016.

Meeting was adjourned.

Report Submitted by:
COL Aimee Kominiak, USA
DACOWITS Military Director

Report Certified by:
LtGen (Ret) F.C. Wilson, USMC
DACOWITS Chair

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE
LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson (Chair)
CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer (Vice Chair)

Dr. Kristy Anderson
Ms. Teresa Christenson
Maj Gen (Ret) Sharon Dunbar
CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley
Ms. Donna McAleer
LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park
VADM (Ret) Carol Pottenger
Gen (Ret) Janet Wolfenbarger
FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa
Ms. Sharlene Hawkes
MG (Ret) John Macdonald
Mr. Brian Morrison
MG (Ret) Gale Pollock
SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston
Dr. Jackie Young