

# **DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES (DACOWITS)**

## **Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

**9–10 December 2015**

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a full committee meeting on December 9 and December 10, 2015. The meeting took place at the Hilton Alexandria–Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22311.

**9 December 2015**

### **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. She asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves. LtGen (Ret) Wilson recognized that since the September 2015 meeting, several historic events had taken place. On October 16, 2015, a third woman graduated from the Army's elite Ranger School. On November 18, 2015, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Ash Carter announced the “Force of the Future” initiative which aims to ensure DoD employs modern techniques for the recruitment and retention of a quality force. On December 3, 2015, the SECDEF announced that all military occupational specialties and positions will be opened to women, without exception, 30 days from the announcement (a waiting period required by law). At that time, all Services must provide updated implementation plans for integrating women into the positions now open to them. Since 2010, DACOWITS has been recommending full gender integration of the Services. SECDEF Carter acknowledged that implementation would not happen overnight, but that DoD will overcome the challenges.

LtGen (Ret) Wilson acknowledged the contributions of Service representative LtCol Jonathan Swope—who will be retiring from the Marine Corps—and presented him with a DACOWITS commemorative coin as a token of appreciation.

COL Kominiak reviewed the status of the Committee’s requests for information (RFIs). The Committee received responses to all but one of its RFIs in either written or briefing format. The Committee requested that DoD’s Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity (ODMEO) provide a briefing on its report to Congress regarding sexual harassment; that report was undergoing staffing at the time of the meeting. ODMEO plans to brief DACOWITS at the March 2016 business meeting. No congressional notifications were issued since the previous DACOWITS business meeting, held in September.

MG (Ret) Gale Pollock requested that RFIs be projected on a screen (as a PowerPoint slide) during DACOWITS business meetings for Service attendees and other audience members to view, for a better understanding of the information being requested by the Committee.

## **Committee Presents 2015 Annual Report and Votes**

LtGen (Ret) Wilson acknowledged the efforts of Ms. Monica Medina, leader of the Assignments Working Group, and CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley, leader of the Wellness Working Group. The Committee discussed and approved its recommendations and reasoning at its September meeting. The Committee expedited the signing and approval of one recommendation to open all closed units, occupational specialties, positions, and training to women, so that it could be forwarded to the SECDEF for his consideration prior to his decision. While this recommendation was already signed and approved after the 2015 annual report was drafted, it was included in the report for historical purposes. LtGen (Ret) Wilson asked for nominations to vote on and approve the report in its entirety. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of approving the report (14 votes in favor).

Ms. Medina inquired whether the 2015 annual report will be published on the DACOWITS website immediately following the December meeting. COL Kominiak responded that the Committee's recommendations and reasoning will be posted on DACOWITS' website immediately after the December meeting, but the full report containing the Committee's recommendations and reasoning, installation visits summary, focus group findings, briefings, and other research will be published in early 2016. Ms. Medina emphasized the importance of making the recommendation process as transparent to the public as possible.

## **Single-Parent Recruiting Policies**

The Committee continues to be interested in the propensity, recruitment, and talent management of women joining the Armed Forces. As such, the Committee requested a briefing from each of the Services on their respective policies regulating military enlistment by applicants with dependent children. The Committee asked each Service when its policy went into effect and the reasoning behind each policy. In addition, the Committee asked how the Services' policies affect the ability to attract and recruit highly qualified female applicants, and if the Services make exceptions based on the gender of the applicant.

### **Army: Mr. Paul Aswell, Accessions Division Chief, Army G-1**

Mr. Aswell explained that under Army Regulation (AR) 601-210, "Active and Reserve Components Enlistment Program," single parents, regardless of gender, are disqualified from Active Component (AC) enlistment if they have dependents younger than 18. Single parents are able to join the Reserve Component (RC) if a waiver has been issued based on the presentation of a valid Family Care Plan (FCP) thoroughly documenting how they can provide care for their family members when military duties prevent them from doing so; however, for the past several years, the Army Reserve has elected not to allow single-parent applicants. Single soldiers and dual-military members who become single parents while already serving are not affected by the policy, but these servicemen and servicewomen may continue to serve only with a valid FCP. Mr. Aswell reasoned that it is in the best interests of the Army to retain these soldiers so as to capture the investment made in their recruitment, training, and experience.

This policy has been in place for the Army's AC for many years and has minimal impact on the Army's ability to recruit highly qualified applicants. The policy is a means to ensure soldiers' successful transition from civilian to military life and minimize the likelihood of poor soldier performance, which could affect unit readiness. The policy is also thought to minimize single-

parent first-term attrition, which also could affect unit readiness. Mr. Aswell estimated that 70 percent of soldiers in their first term of service remain in the Army only for their first term. Despite the validity and effectiveness of FCPs, between FY 2002 and FY 2015, more than 43,000 soldiers left active duty before their terms of service concluded because of an inability to care for their dependents while serving; this represents more than 8 percent of all Army attrition. Theoretically, soldiers joining the RC had a greater support network tied to their location and would be more likely than their AC counterparts to develop a viable FCP; however, soldiers who enlisted in the RC with a single-parent waiver during FY 2007–FY 2010 were twice as likely to attrite than their peers because of failed FCPs. The Active and Reserve Components Enlistment Program enables soldiers to complete the initial entry training, deployments, and other overseas assignments that come with the first term of active duty without the conflicting duties of caring for dependents or the financial strain of maintaining a household on the relatively low salary of a newly enlisted member. The Army plans to maintain the current policy to minimize attrition and other negative effects on unit readiness and to ensure applicants are positioned to succeed given their demanding military duties.

*Marine Corps: LtCol Jonathan Swope, Branch Head, Enlisted Recruiting Operations for Marine Corps Recruiting Command*

LtCol Swope informed the Committee that DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1304.26, “Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction,” regulates enlistment in the Marine Corps by applicants with dependent children. The instruction relates to applicants for initial enlistment into the AC and RC and prevents the Services from enlisting married individuals with more than two dependents younger than 18, and unmarried individuals with custody of any dependent(s) younger than 18. However, the Service Secretary is able to grant waivers for particularly promising applicants based on their adaptability, potential to perform, and conduct. Similar to the Army’s policy, the intent of DoDI 1304.26 is to protect all parties involved, including the applicant, the minor dependent, and the Service. Since successful completion of initial training affords Marines little time for contact with their dependents, this policy safeguards the minor dependent to ensure secure and consistent care and support from persons other than the parent.

The Marine Corps RC *Enlistment Processing Manual* outlines when waivers are not required and when they can be authorized. Waivers are not required for unmarried applicants who have never had a dependent; married applicants whose only dependent is a spouse; legally separated (by court order) applicants with or without any minor dependents; or divorced or legally separated applicants who do not have children. Waivers can be authorized for unmarried applicants who have relinquished legal and physical custody (by court order) once the requisite 90 days have elapsed from court order to custody change. Waivers also can be granted to those unmarried applicants who have dependent(s) but do not have permanent custody and may or may not have court-ordered support; married applicants who have an AC spouse (by Marine Corps RC Admin review); married applicants for AC enlistment with two dependents (spouse and minor child); married applicants for RC enlistment with three dependents (spouse and two minor children); and divorced applicants without custody of dependent(s) but with court-ordered child support. If the applicant is seeking a waiver, he or she must identify any and all dependents to the recruiter to ensure all details pertaining to custody are captured. This enables recruiters to determine if applicants are handling personal and financial affairs in a mature, competent, and responsible manner such that they can meet all current and expected financial obligations with service pay. This can prove particularly challenging for young, single-parent applicants (ages 17–19). The

identification of all dependents and the details surrounding custody allows counsel to be tailored to the applicant to address potential financial or assignment problems.

The impact of the policy is minimal; very few Marine Corps applicants have dependents, and fewer than 1 percent of Marine Corps recruits require a dependent waiver. The Marine Corps takes precautions to avoid inconsistencies and inequities based on ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation in the application of standards.

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

CDR Spanier explained that the Navy follows the same overarching DoDI (1304.26) as the other Services to guide policy on single-parent enlistment. This ensures all sailors are able to be assigned worldwide and ready to deploy on short notice. Sailors may move locations three or four times in their first year alone. COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8 “Navy Enlisted Recruiting Manual,” outlines the policy regarding Navy enlisted applicants with dependents. Applicants for AC enlistment who are married with two to four dependents require a waiver, whereas married applicants with five or more dependents are deemed ineligible. Unmarried applicants with custody of their dependents are deemed ineligible, and no waiver can be authorized. Unmarried applicants who have custody of their dependents can become eligible if they present a court order or a child support order surrendering physical custody (90 days must have elapsed from the date of the custody transfer). Unmarried applicants with one to three dependents, but without custody, require a waiver. Unmarried applicants with four or more dependents, but without custody, are ineligible.

This policy has been in effect for more than 20 years. However, in 2004, the policy was modified to eliminate any reference to an applicant’s gender, and no exceptions are allowed based on gender. CDR Spanier said that while there is insufficient data to show how this policy modification has affected recruitment, recruiting personnel have indicated that some female applicants have surrendered physical custody to enlist, while other female applicants have declined enlistment because of the policy regarding single parents and custody. Concern that the current policy is causing the Navy to turn away viable applicants has led to the Navy Recruiting Command to review the policy further.

*Air Force: LtCol Veronica Senia, Chief, Enlisted Accessions and Women in Service Review Branch, Headquarters*

LtCol Senia affirmed that both AFI 36–2002, “Regular Air Force and Special Category Accessions” and AFI 36–2001, “Recruiting Procedures for the Air Force,” regulate the recruitment of applicants joining the military with dependent children. Neither policy makes an exception based on gender. In the past, single individuals with a child were barred from entry; however, changes to the dependency policy in June 2014 now allow single individuals with up to three children to enlist. These changes have led to a higher caliber pool of applicants. On average, between 20 and 100 requests for waivers by AC enlistment applicants are declined per year.

Coast Guard: LCDR Russell Mayer, Team-Leader, Policy and Standards Division, Office of Military Personnel

The Coast Guard Recruiting Manual, M1100.2 dated November 2015, does not follow DoDI 1304.26—unlike the other Services—though it does align with the instruction. The Recruiting Manual treats dependents (spouse, parents, children) equally.

The Coast Guard recently changed its policy to allow single members to go to officer candidate school and manage their dependents while serving. The plan is to review the policy again in approximately one year.

Discussion

MG (Ret) John Macdonald noted the discrepancy between the Services' policies. The Air Force allows single individuals with up to three children to enlist, whereas the Marine Corps prohibits the enlistment of married individuals with more than two dependents younger than 18. The Navy provided approximately 1,000 waivers to address exceptions for DoDI 1304.26. Service Secretaries can grant waivers on a case-by-case basis or offer a blanket waiver. Ms. Medina agreed with MG (Ret) Macdonald that there are several different definitions of dependents and each Service has its own limitations on enlistment when dependents are involved. She asked how single parents are treated regarding enlistment. Both the Marine Corps and the Navy use court orders to clarify some of the ambiguity surrounding custody and care of dependents. CMSgt (Ret) Bernise Belcer asked for clarification on the difference between an FCP and a court order. FCPs provide an outline of an individual's care plans for short- and long-term situations. A court order does not just focus on children and is a legal document.

CAPT Kelley asked whether the Services wanted the Committee to recommend improvements to DoDI 1304.26. Mr. Aswell (Army) noted that while the number of single parents is increasing, many of these individuals are able to care for themselves. Single parents are going to college, taking jobs, and looking to other family members to serve as the primary caregivers for their children; for example, some are relinquishing legal custody of their children to enlist. Single parents also are establishing support networks. The Army's policy, therefore, is sustainable and applicable to this cultural shift toward single parenthood. CDR Spanier (Navy) agreed that DoDI 1304.26 is flexible enough to enable Service Secretaries to make exceptions if needed. Both the representatives from the Marine Corps and the Air Force agreed with these arguments. DoDI 1304.26 does not apply to the Coast Guard.

MG (Ret) Pollock appreciated the efforts the Marine Corps is making to ensure single-parent applicants are handling personal and financial affairs in a mature, competent, and responsible manner.

Ms. Medina suggested that the Committee request an update from the Services on the percent of single parents in each Service and whether the number of single parents is in fact increasing. Services could report whether the number of single-parent applicants is problematic. Mr. Aswell responded that such an RFI is feasible, but that the bigger picture is to focus on the impact of both dual-military couples and single parents.

## **Dual-Military Co-Location Policies**

The Committee continues to be interested in the policies that directly influence the retention of servicewomen in the Armed Forces. The Committee requested a briefing from each of the Services on their respective co-location policies; any restrictions on who may apply for co-location (e.g., first-term enlistments); whether the policy crosses Service branches; and if there are any plans to expand the policy to address dual-military parents who have joint custody of dependent children but who are divorced or were never married. The Committee asked the Services to report on the ratio of servicemen to servicewomen in dual-military couples.

### *Army: LTC Elisabeth S. Litvin, Chief, Readiness and Distribution Branch, Military Personnel Management*

Army couples can request to be a part of the Army's co-location program, known as the Married Army Couples Program (MACP). It is based on DoDI 1315.18, "Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments," the overarching governance for Service assignments; AR 614-100, "Officer Assignment Policies, Details, and Transfers;" and AR 614-200, "Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management." This policy is meant for a soldier married to another soldier to have the opportunity to establish joint domicile; however, soldiers married to civilians and members of other Military Services, including RC members on active duty for one year or more, are not eligible for MACP. The biggest barrier for the program is ensuring that there are positions available for both soldiers near a specified location.

The program does not cross Service branches. It is important that the dual-military couple works with their respective branch managers and keeps them updated of their intended plans. The soldier also must submit a request for personnel action to his or her Army Human Resources Command career manager to establish joint domicile with the soldier's spouse from another Service. At the time of the briefing, there were 25,000 dual-military couples in the Army; this represents 9 percent of the Army's total married population. Nearly 40 percent of married female soldiers were married to another Service member, whereas only 5 percent of married male soldiers were married to another Service member.

The MCAP does not extend to dual-military parents who have joint custody of dependent children but who are divorced or were never married. There are no plans to expand the program at this time; however, soldiers may request assignment considerations based on the latter family circumstances. LTC Litvin affirmed that the Army makes every effort not to separate couples or families.

### *Marine Corps: Mr. Rob Barry, Manpower and Policy Analyst, Headquarters*

The Marine Corps has a co-location policy based on DoDI 1315.18, "Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments," which informs Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1300.8, "Marine Corps Personnel Assignment Policy." The DoDI provides military couples a reasonable opportunity to establish a joint household, assuming the requirements of the Marine Corps are met, valid Marine Corps staffing requirements exist and match the Marine's qualifications, and the accompanied tour of duty/tour length/retainability is authorized and within the parameters set by DoDI 1315.18.

Unlike the Army's co-location policy, the Marine Corps' policy not only applies to AC/RC Marines who are married to each other but also crosses Service branches. Service members must complete basic training requirements before co-assignment overseas. DoDI 1315.18 also

provides enough latitude to reasonably accommodate, on a case-by-case basis, co-location requests from dual-military parents who share custody of dependent children; the Marine Corps is prepared to review and comment on any DoD-proposed policy changes surrounding this issue. As of the briefing, there were approximately 3,717 dual-military couples in the Marine Corps, with a 1:1.04 ratio of servicemen to servicewomen; this includes same-sex couples.

*Navy: CDR Vernon Stanfield, Branch Head, Pay and Compensation Policy*

The Navy supports the co-location of all sailors married to other sailors; every reasonable effort is made for military couples to move together and establish a joint household. There are no restrictions on who may apply; however, co-location is not always possible, and there can be challenges fulfilling duty preferences for location, type of duty, or unit. Similar to the other Services, per DoDI 1315.18, sailors requesting to be transferred for co-location purposes must have completed at least one year at their current duty station at the time of the transfer. Another caveat of the policy is that if both Service members are first-term sailors, both may be required to be on sea duty because of the initial training received and the need of that trained sailor at sea. If one or both Service members are going into a training status, co-location is not normally granted because of the short duration of training assignments and the inherent costs. Normally, for a co-location assignment, one sailor is on shore duty and the other is on sea duty.

The policy spans Service branches, and the submission process for sailors with a spouse in another Service is the same as for those who are both in the Navy. However, both Service members' assignment officers need to coordinate to determine which member's tour is the priority. This can prove difficult since DoDI 1315.18 does not provide guidance on how to coordinate this task across Services. The Navy would like to establish a central point of contact to facilitate such coordination. As of November 2015, there were 20,749 sailors (4,675 officers, 13,249 enlisted) married to another Service member (including Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard). Approximately 88 percent of those sailors were married to another sailor (17,924 Navy-to-Navy couples), with a nearly even split between male sailors with a Navy spouse (51 percent) and female sailors with a Navy spouse (49 percent). The remaining 12 percent of sailors were married to a spouse in another Service.

The Navy has no plans to expand its current co-location policy; however, every effort is made to accommodate dual-military parents with joint custody of dependent children but who are divorced or were never married. Sailors are directed to make requests to their detailers, who consider sailors' requests and circumstances during the assignment process.

*Air Force: Maj Adria Hammond, Chief, Air Force Assignments Policy, Force Management Policy, Manpower, Personnel, and Services, Headquarters*

The Air Force has a co-location policy based on AFI 36-2110, "Assignment," and DoDI 1315.18, which applies to married Air Force active duty military couples on extended active duty and spouses on extended active duty with another Service. For both the Air National Guard and the RC, co-location is determined by the applicant; couples must work with their commanders to request co-location. There are processes in place for unit transfers if there is no position available within a reasonable commuting distance and the spouse is in the AC. Couples who are not eligible for the Join Spouse Assignments program include those who are not married; serve as part of the AC with military services of foreign countries; serve as members of the Air RC (whether or not they are serving on extended active duty); those in which one spouse is scheduled for reassignment, separation, retirement, or release from active duty within 12 months

from the date of request; those in which one spouse is a nonmilitary employee of the U.S. Government; and those in which one spouse will graduate from an ongoing training course in less than 12 months (or will complete the course less than 12 months after arrival). Spouses are also able to facilitate co-location through the Individual Mobilization Augmentee program.

The Air Force's Join Spouse Assignments program crosses Service branches to co-locate spouses while meeting the needs of the Air Force. As of the briefing, there were 4,859 dual-military couples in the AC Air Force; 94 percent were Air Force-Air Force couples, and only 0.06 percent included a spouse in another Service. An additional 1,625 military couples in the Air Force were married to a spouse serving in the Air National Guard/RC. There are no plans to expand the co-location policy; however, Maj Hammond explained that there are options for divorced or never-married dual-military parents.

*Coast Guard: LCDR Russell Mayer, Team-Leader, Policy and Standards Division, Office of Military Personnel*

The Coast Guard's co-location policy, COMDTINST M1000.8A 1.A.7, "Military Assignments and Authorized Absences," applies to any Coast Guard member married to another Service member, without restriction. In addition, this policy does cross Service branches, so the Coast Guard coordinates with the spouse's assignment officer as needed. As of the time of the briefing, there were 3,454 dual-military couples in the Coast Guard, with 89.6 percent being Coast Guard-Coast Guard couples. In addition, of the 3,454 dual-military couples, 51.5 percent were women and 48.5 percent of members were men. There are no plans to expand the current co-location policy; the entire assignment policy is due for review and overhaul starting in 2017.

*Discussion*

Ms. Donna McAleer acknowledged that the Committee's RFI did not address something important—how the success of a Service's policy is defined both at the individual level and at the Service level. She does not believe that success can necessarily be quantified, since the end result is that a qualified Service member—regardless of their gender, race, or ethnicity—successfully fills a valid billet requirement. At the individual level, Ms. McAleer conceded that success is employing the Services' respective co-location policies to ensure a dual-military couple is able to establish a joint household—but at the Service level, success is based on readiness and retention. LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park reasoned that the definition of success is complex since it is ultimately up to assignment officers to find the appropriate positions for a dual-military couple. LTC (Ret) Park inquired as to how the success of a co-location policy for dual-military couples can be determined if positions cannot be found. It may be easier for assignment officers to locate billets for junior Service members and accommodate couples' requests, but as Service members become more senior, it may become more difficult to find appropriate co-located billets. Ms. McAleer interjected that LTC (Ret) Park's point once again goes back to retention. She asked the Committee how many Service members the military is willing to lose as a result of failing to accommodate requests for co-location.

LCDR Mayer (Coast Guard), countered that it may be easier to define failure rather than success; the Services can identify co-location failure during exit surveys or in resignation letters if Service members indicate that they are leaving because of an inability to co-locate with their spouses. As of the briefing, the Coast Guard does not capture this experience through a metric because it is too specific to apply to the vast majority of the population. Mr. Barry (Marine Corps) said the Marine Corps' talent management office is implementing new strategies to capture reasons for

attrition, as LCDR Mayer (Coast Guard) described. MG (Ret) Pollock agreed that exit surveys are a vital means to understand why Service members choose to leave the military. This information could feed into the algorithm and alter the approach for recruitment and retention. MG (Ret) Pollock asked the Services if questions capturing reasons for attrition are included in their exit surveys. Representatives from the Army and the Air Force were not certain if members of their Services were required to complete an exit survey and/or if their respective exit surveys included questions on reasons for attrition. CDR Stanfield said the Navy requires resignation letters from officers but was not certain if enlisted Service members are required to submit them. CAPT Kelley informed the Committee that the Coast Guard does not require exit surveys. LCDR Mayer (Coast Guard) confirmed this and explained how forcing a Service member to complete an exit survey could compromise the quality of the data. The Director of Manpower and Personnel (J1), BG Margaret Burcham, USA, shared that there is an interest in requiring exit surveys to inform DoD's "Force of the Future" initiative. MG (Ret) Macdonald reasoned that co-location, or inability to do so, is a potential reason why women are leaving the military, but not the only reason. The availability of positions for officers and enlisted declines as rank increases, so the number of positions at the top is limited.

Ms. Sharlene Hawkes reasserted that no Service has plans to expand its co-location policy to include dual-military parents with joint custody of dependent children but who are divorced or were never married. She inquired whether the Services are able to collect data on issues these Service members are experiencing. Mr. Barry (Marine Corps) said the Marine Corps makes every effort to accommodate couples' requests. The Marine Corps' co-location policy is flexible enough to find opportunities for couples with different circumstances, so there is little to no need to modify policy requirements. LTC Litvin (Army) explained that dual-military couples need the support of their command, but also must keep their branch managers aware of their circumstances.

SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston asked if the Army's data pertains to both the AC and RC. LTC Litvin (Army) said the statistics she provided only pertain to the AC and only accounts for Army-Army marriages since its co-location policy does not cross Services. SMA (Ret) Preston further inquired whether the recent lifting of the ground combat exclusion policy for women has caused an opportunity bottleneck. LTC Litvin said the Army has not experienced this. She projected that the recent lifting of the policy would provide more opportunities for dual-military couples to be co-located. Mr. Barry (Marine Corps) agreed, as did Maj Hammond (Air Force). The Navy also has not experienced an opportunity shortage; CDR Vernon Stanfield (Navy) concurred with the other representatives that lifting the combat exclusion policy would in fact increase the number of opportunities. The lifting of the policy does not apply to the Coast Guard, which opened all billets to women several years ago.

Ms. Medina asked the Services how co-located Service members are being tracked. LTC Litvin (Army) explained how once a soldier enrolls in the MACP, he or she remains in the MACP, and this is continually noted in the soldier's record. Therefore, if a soldier makes a request for co-location, his/her spouse's Service branch is notified as well. LTC Litvin (Army) emphasized the importance of the communication required between spouses on their respective goals and objectives to make the process "successful" and to ensure that the assignments do not disadvantage either soldier. Branch managers are temporary duty and manage a certain population; orders are issued by the Human Resources command. Mr. Barry (Marine Corps) explained that there is no formal program in the Marine Corps to track Service members; it uses

data elements from the Marine Corps' Total Force System to categorize personal and track dual-military couples. The Manpower & Reserve Affairs Deputy Commandant monitors the populations of both officers and enlisted Marines. The Navy employs a similar system for tracking. Sailors' records are updated if a co-location request is denied. If there is a switch in personnel as a result of a couple's co-location, then detailers make note for the sailor to be tracked. The Air Force's Join Spouse Assignments program requires couples to provide a marriage certificate to enroll in the program. This is coded to indicate the couple's co-location preferences. For enlisted Airmen, there is a system based on "permanent change of station" eligibility. The career manager must determine where to place Airmen based on co-location preferences and assignment requirements. For officers, career assignment managers navigate the system manually using codes. The Coast Guard does have a formal program that fosters a personal relationship between the assignment officer and the dual-military couple. Once a billet becomes available, the couple must discuss their priorities with each other before addressing their interests with the Service. LTC (Ret) Park asked how inter-Service, dual-military couples are tracked. The Army responded that there is not a code to indicate this type of dual-military relationship; therefore, it is important that this type of relationship is noted in the record to make the branch manager aware. The notation can be viewed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS); assignment officers are not able to access this system. The Marine Corps uses the Manpower & Reserve Affairs system as a means to categorize and track dual-military couples. The Navy, like the Army, does not have a systematic way to track inter-Service, dual-military couples, so it is up to the couple to make sure their status and preferences are recorded. The Air Force similarly requires the couple to submit a memo to their respective assignment officers explaining that a member of the Air Force is married to a member of a different Service. Maj Hammond (Air Force) noted that as of the briefing, there were 23 Airmen married to a Service member outside of the Air Force. The Coast Guard is able to track the number of inter-Service couples using DEERS.

Ms. Medina inquired as to how close within a unit couples can be assigned (e.g., can a married couple be assigned to the same unit, to the same ship?). All Services reported employing a standard protocol that couples must be co-located within a 50-mile parameter. Army policy varies based on the context. It is possible for couples, if deployed, to be located in the same housing unit. The main restriction of couples being located in the same unit is that they cannot be in the same chain of command such that one spouse is the subordinate to the other. However, couples are allowed to have the same rater or senior rater. Mr. Barry (Marine Corps) reported that couples are not allowed to be in the same unit. In addition to the 50-mile parameter, co-location is based on entitlement. A basic allowance for housing determined by ZIP Code can influence proximity and entitlement. CDR Stanfield (Navy) explained how married couples may not be assigned to the same ship. This is to promote survivability. The same rule applies to siblings. CDR Stanfield (Navy) said spouses may be located up to 90 miles apart. The Air Force considers the distance between the bases when determining co-location (50 miles is the standard), with the only caveat being that spouses are not able to rate each other. The Coast Guard, unlike the other Service branches, does not use a 50-mile proximity as a firm guiding policy for co-location; it does prohibit a couple from being assigned to a unit of 60 or fewer Service members on the same cutter.

## **Height, Weight, and Body Fat Policies**

The Committee continues to be interested in the policies that directly affect the retention and promotion ability of servicewomen in the Armed Forces. The Committee requested a briefing from each of the Services on its current height/weight policies, the reasoning used to create these policies, and dates these policies were last updated. The Committee asked each Service to report on whether it had ever completed an anthropometric study. The Committee requested that each Service provide information on what method is used to determine body fat (BF), what happens if a Service member exceeds the height/weight allocation, and whether this method differs between genders. Finally, the Committee asked the Services what the breakdown is for men and women who are discharged for height/weight/BF standards failures, and, of the servicewomen who were processed out for height/weight/BF failures, the number of failures within 12 months postpartum.

*Army: Ms. Sharyn Saunders, Senior Executive Services (SES) G-1 Army Resiliency Directorate*

The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, is responsible for AR 600-9, “The Army Body Composition Program,” which serves as the Army’s policy on soldiers’ weight, height, and body fat; it is every soldier’s responsibility to meet the standards prescribed in this regulation. Soldiers must maintain a high level of physical readiness to meet mission requirements and body composition. Body mass index (BMI) is one indicator of physical readiness that is associated with an individual’s fitness, endurance, and overall health. Individuals with desirable body fat percentages generally exhibit increased muscular strength and endurance, are less likely to sustain injury from weight-bearing activity, and are more likely to perform at an optimal level. Therefore, meeting the prescribed body composition standards benefits the soldier, but also influences the readiness of the unit and the entire Army.

The policy, last updated in June 2013, uses the soldier’s weight and height to determine if a circumference measurement is required. The policy update included a revised table of weight for height based on the results of multiple anthropometric studies. If a soldier exceeds the weight for height threshold, he/she is referred for a circumference measurement to estimate body fat. The Army utilizes circumference measurement to estimate percent of body fat, not BMI; circumference measurements are collected differently for men and women. For men, the circumference measurement is a summation of neck and abdomen measurements; for women, the circumference measurement is a summation of neck, waist (abdomen), and hip measurements. Those performing the measurements are unit leaders, certified Master Fitness Trainers, and/or personnel trained in body circumference methodology. All circumference measurements are taken three times and recorded to the nearest half inch. Soldiers who exceed body fat standards are required to enroll in the Army Body Composition Program (ABCP), which includes medical assessments conducted by medical providers; exercise guidance provided by the unit Master Fitness Trainer; nutrition counseling by registered dietitians; and assistance in behavioral modification. Soldiers’ progress is assessed monthly by commanders, with the expectation that soldiers are to lose three to eight pounds or one percentage point of body fat per month for twelve months.

Ms. Saunders provided the breakdown of Service members who were discharged for height/weight failures from 2009 to 2015. It is difficult to parse out the number of servicewomen who were processed out for height/weight failure within 12 months of being postpartum since there is no distinct code to indicate postpartum. Pregnant soldiers are exempt from ABCP standards for the duration of the pregnancy, plus a period of six months after pregnancy. If after

the six-month period of exemption the postpartum soldier exceeds body fat standards, the soldier will be enrolled in ABCP for up to 12 months, pending approval of a physician.

Marine Corps: Mr. Brian McGuire, Physical Readiness Programs Analyst, Training and Education Command

MCO 6110.3, updated in January 2015, is compliant with and uses the height and weight tables found in DoDI 1308.3, “DoD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program Procedures,” to outline the height/weight standards of the Marine Corps. If Marines exceed the height and weight standards, they are measured for body fat percentage. Similar to the Army, the Marine Corps uses the circumference method to determine body fat percentage. If a Marine exceeds the maximum weight standard, but is within the appropriate body fat percentage, he or she is still considered to be within standards. However, if a Marine exceeds both the maximum weight and body fat percentage, he or she is assigned to the Body Composition Program (BCP), if medically cleared. The program is a mandatory six-month assignment. If the Marine is able to meet standards after following the BCP, he or she is removed from the program. If not, a commanding officer can authorize a one-time, six-month extension, but only if the Marine is making satisfactory progress. If no progress is made, the Marine can be processed for discharge. Only two BCP assignments are allowed in a Marine’s career; the third time a Marine is determined to be out of standard, an administrative separation is triggered.

Since the Marine Corps has not been required to conduct an anthropometric study, it has not completed one. Rather, the Marine Corps defers to DoDI 1308.3 for its body fat estimation method. DoDI 1308.3 cites Dr. Hodgdon’s work to determine body fat estimation standards.<sup>1,2</sup> Discharges for height/weight/body fat failures are low and equitable between the genders. No servicewomen have been processed out for height/weight/body fat failures within 12 months postpartum.

Navy: LCDR Heath Clifford, Exercise Physiologist, Navy Physical Readiness Program

The Navy’s current height/weight policy complies with DoDI 1308.3, which establishes male and female maximum weight for height standards. As part of the Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA), height/weight and Body Composition Assessment (BCA) is assessed twice a year. If a member exceeds his or her height/weight allocation, the Navy uses a validated, circumference-based equation to estimate body fat percentage. For servicemen, measurements are taken from the neck and abdominal circumference at the navel. For servicewomen, measurements are taken from the neck, waist (at thinnest portion of abdomen), and hips. Members that fail both height/weight and BCA are enrolled in the command’s Fitness Enhancement Program. The Navy does not discharge individuals solely based on height/weight and body fat percentage failures. Members meet the criteria for administrative separation only after receiving three PFA failures

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<sup>1</sup> Hodgdon, J. A., & Beckett, M. B. (1984). *Prediction of percent body fat for U.S. Navy men from body circumferences and height* (Report No. 84-11). San Diego, CA: Naval Health Research Center.

<sup>2</sup> Hodgdon, J. A., & Beckett, M. B. (1984). *Prediction of percent body fat for U.S. Navy women from body circumferences and height* (Report No. 84-29). San Diego, CA: Naval Health Research Center.

(any combination of BCA and/or PFA failures) in the most recent four years. However, effective as of January 2016, NAVADMIN 178/15, “Physical Readiness Program Policy Changes,” will initiate administrative separation after two failures in the most recent three years.

The current policy was reviewed and updated with the release of OPNAVINST 6110.1J, “Physical Readiness Program,” in 2011 and was then reviewed in August 2015 with the release of NAVADMIN 178/15. This policy outlines a new three-step BCA policy starting January 1, 2016. The first step is to use the current height/weight table; the second step is to apply a single-site abdominal circumference measurement (Males: <39 inches; Females: <35.5 inches); and the third step is to apply multisite circumference measurements. This method represents the best approach, which can be applied by Command Fitness Leaders with minimal error.

The Naval Health Research Center considered Navy anthropometric data to develop the current BMI table using an equation for estimation of body fat content using member weight and height. Weights equivalent to 22 percent fat for men and 33 percent fat for women were calculated for each height.

*Air Force: Dr. Neal Baumgartner, Chief, Air Force Fitness Testing and Standards Unit*

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36–2905, “Fitness Program,” dated August 2015, states that the Air Force follows DoDI 1308.3. The policy outlines how height and weight are obtained with the Fitness Assessment and how height and weight are not factored into the Fitness Assessment score. AFI 44–170, “Preventive Health Assessment (PHA),” outlines how BMI is calculated with PHA, with preventive medicine guidelines based on BMI as appropriate. The policy is used for clinical and preventive medical care recommendations only and not for administrative or separation action.

Unlike the other Services, the Air Force currently uses abdominal circumference testing, rather than body fat or BMI estimates, as the preferred methodology to estimate total adiposity as a fitness predictor. The abdominal circumference program was initiated in 2004 and updated in 2010 based on improving evidence and fitness criteria. The abdominal circumference program promotes the scoring of individuals based on high, moderate, or low health risk criteria. For instance, an abdominal circumference of 37 inches results in a moderate health risk for men, but a high health risk for women. Women must have a lower abdominal circumference measure than men to achieve the same health outcomes. This is a cost-effective approach since other health care costs require a great percentage of the Services’ budget be dedicated to Service members deemed least fit.

The Air Force does not collect data on members discharged for height/weight/BF failures. Instead, discharges of Service members are linked to the failure of four fitness tests within a 24-month period. AFI 36–2905 currently exempts postpartum servicewomen from completing the Fitness Assessment for 12 months following delivery, so female members of the Air Force are not discharged for body composition failures within 12 months postpartum.

*Coast Guard: LCDR Russell Mayer, Team-Leader, Policy and Standards Division, Office of Military Personnel*

The Coast Guard’s height/weight policy, CIM M1020.8, “Weight and Body Fat,” is meant to mirror the Navy’s policy, although it is not subject to DoDI 1308.3. Therefore, all Coast Guard standards are based on Navy standards. Service members’ height/weight allocation is based on height measurement and taping.

From FY 2010 to FY 2015, 195 women and 508 men were discharged for exceeding body fat standards. Roughly 27 percent of body fat-related discharges were for women; as of September 2015, 15 percent of the Coast Guard members. From FY 2010 to FY 2015, two women were discharged for exceeding body fat standards between six and 12 months after adding a dependent (non-spouse). LCDR Mayer noted that it is not clear if these two servicewomen gave birth, adopted a child, or added a parent as the dependent.

### Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald noted that the number of female and male soldiers who were discharged from the Army for exceeding body fat standards more than doubled between FY 2011 and FY 2012. He inquired as to why such a large increase occurred during that period. Ms. Saunders was not able to provide an evidence-based explanation for the increase. It was suggested that the Army became preoccupied with other fighting-related initiatives during FY 2011–FY 2012.

SMA (Ret) Preston reasoned that the Army offers the Master Fitness Trainer Course to certify fitness advisers, but he asked the Services what other credentials would qualify someone as a subject matter expert (SME). MG (Ret) Macdonald added that a SME would be someone that has completed a fitness course and has actual experience in fitness advising—not a health care provider. The Navy offers a five-day/47 hour, didactic, hands-on, leadership fitness course. In the past, the Air Force provided health and wellness centers.

LTC (Ret) Park asked the Services how height/weight/body fat failures are reported and if/how postpartum status is noted. The Army does not report postpartum status. The Marine Corps notes postpartum status on a photo of the Marine, which goes before the promotion review board. The Navy representative was unsure whether postpartum status was noted; however, NAVADMIN 193/10 indicates that pregnancy/postpartum are given a generic PFA coding of “N,” indicating no PFA had been conducted during the reporting period. The Air Force does not use photos for its promotion board and does not notate postpartum status. The Coast Guard does not use photos for its reviews; failures in height/weight/body fat test result in a lower mark for that Service member.

MG (Ret) Pollock questioned the Air Force’s decision to eliminate taping and the hip measurement based on concern that women of different ethnicities have different body proportions. Dr. Baumgartner (Air Force) explained that the anthropometric measure to tape bodies to identify the percentage of body fat is a first step, but that the abdominal circumference is also an indicator of risk. Subcutaneous fat does not pose as much of a health risk as internal, visceral adipose tissue, which is associated with blood fats and diseases.

Dr. Kristy Anderson noted that several of the height/weight policies the Services enforce appear antiquated. She inquired as to how often these policies are reviewed and updated. The Marine Corps is required to review its policy every two years and update it based on advancements in the field of the experiences of the task force. Updates to the combat fitness test are a prime example of this. The Naval Health Research Center reviews policies annually. The Air Force relies on the literature to inform policy and to create updates. The Army requires policy to be updated within five years, if not sooner, as new information comes to light. Ms. Hawkes remarked that the Air Force is the only Service using a fourth level of fitness testing. She asked the Air Force to explain how it has been able to advance further than the other Services have in fitness testing, and she asked the other Services why they have not been able to make the same progress. The Navy responded that as of January 1, 2016, it will implement a three-step fitness

testing process based on available research. Dr. Baumgartner (Air Force) offered to work with the other Services. The Air Force, from an academic viewpoint, has access to an incredible amount of data and would like to make it available to the other Services. The Marine Corps is reviewing its current policy. The Coast Guard plans to align its policy with those of the other Services.

While the Air Force does not offer a Master Fitness Training Course, it does provide training on how to produce accurate measurements. There are specific tools, pictures, videos, and programs to train those doing the assessments. Previously, the Air Force had trained civilians to perform the measurements since they had no biases based on rank or rate. Currently, no one from a unit can perform assessments on others in the same unit. The Marine Corps requires two raters to perform each measurement. Dr. Baumgartner (Air Force) said the Services can access the best science available to validate testing practices, but if they do not effectively communicate the reasoning in a way that all Service members can understand, there will continue to be barriers and challenges.

### **Sexual Assault (Retaliation) Update**

The Committee remains concerned about retaliation that can occur after a Service member comes forward to report a sexual assault. The Committee requested a briefing from DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) on what actions have been taken as a result of the study findings completed in 2014, and, specifically, what steps are being taken to eliminate potential command leadership or peer retaliation/reprisal of Service members.

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

While many acts of retaliation fall under crime purview, certain types of retaliation cannot so easily be designated as criminal acts. This can be a frustrating experience for individuals who feel they have experienced retaliation. Dr. Greene-Sands reasoned that ambiguities in both law and policy have made it hard to both define acts of retaliation and penalize those who commit them. Rather, retaliation is used as an umbrella term encompassing actions taken both by the chain of command and peers regarding illegal, impermissible, or hostile actions taken against someone for making a protected communication, which includes making a crime report. Dr. Greene-Sands outlined the types of retaliation that are more specifically defined in law and policy: reprisal, ostracism, cruelty, oppression, and maltreatment. Reprisal is defined as the personnel actions taken, or not taken, by the chain of command in response to a Service member making or preparing to make a protected communication. Ostracism is more informally known as social retaliation; it is social exclusion, by either peers or chain of command, made with the intent to discourage a Service member from reporting a criminal offense. Cruelty, oppression, and maltreatment are acts of misconduct committed against a sexual assault survivor/reporter by either peers or chain of command. Current definitions of these types of retaliation are not fully aligned and standardized across the Military Services.

There have been ongoing data collection efforts to indicate whether retaliation continues to be a substantiated concern. DoD conducted the "2012 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey" (WGRA) and the "2014 RAND Military Workplace Study" to capture the sexual assault survivor experience with retaliatory behavior. Results indicated that more than half of female<sup>3</sup> survivors

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<sup>3</sup> Data not available for men

who reported a sexual assault perceived some kind of retaliation by peers, coworkers, or chain of command. There was no change in the proportion of female sexual assault survivors indicating an experience of retaliatory behavior associated with reporting from 2012 to 2014. Feedback from the 2014 focus groups on sexual assault prevention and response conducted by the Defense Manpower Data Center showed participants believed survivors may experience some kind of retaliation after reporting a sexual assault from peers and, on a lesser level, from some in the chain of command. The “2014 Survivor Experience Survey” (SES) showed 73 percent of survivors who indicated they experienced retaliation after reporting would still recommend reporting to others. The “Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute Equal Opportunity Climate Survey,” fielded in 2014, showed most Service members rated their climates as quite favorable (3.4 out of 4), meaning they did not observe indications that survivors would experience retaliation for reporting.

The investigative responsibility to address both social and professional forms of retaliation fall on the DoD Inspector General (IG), the Military Services (i.e., Military Criminal Investigative Organizations, law enforcement investigators, or commander-directed investigations) and/or command, depending on the type of retaliation being investigated. Acts of reprisal fall under exclusive purview of the DoD IG, although Service IGs may provide support; acts of ostracism, cruelty, oppression, and maltreatment are addressed by the Services. Other perceived acts of retaliation that are deemed noncriminal are typically addressed by command. Dr. Greene-Sands warned that this can lead to variation in command response, which can cause frustration for those involved; however, Congress and both past and current SECDEFs have been engaged to better align guidance and institutionalize efforts. Current legislation (10 U.S.C. § 1034) already addresses protected communications and the prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions; DoDI 6495.02 establishes procedures to protect sexual assault survivors from coercion, retaliation, and reprisal in accordance with DoD Directive 7050.06, “Military Whistleblower Protection.” DoDI 6495.02 describes comprehensive retaliation training requirements, procedures to require commanders to protect those who report or intervene to prevent a sexual assault, and additional roles/responsibilities of SAPRO personnel, supervisors, and commanders. FY 2014 NDAA SEC. 1709, “Prohibition of Retaliation Against Members of the Armed Forces for Reporting a Criminal Offense,” mandates definitions of retaliation for DoD and Service policies, and the FY 2016 NDAA mandates development of a strategy to combat retaliation against reporters of sexual assault, including bystanders.

In addition to policy and legislation, the SECDEF has implemented specific initiatives to address retaliation. For example, the SECDEF seeks to analyze existing and future survey data. There is now an opportunity to develop survey questions designed to clarify the scope and specificity of the range of perceived retaliation without losing the capability to trace trends. These new survey questions will be incorporated into the WGRA, SES, and the new “Military Justice Experience Survey.” Another recent initiative is the “Safe Helpline Reporting Option,” which enables members of the DoD community to anonymously report retaliation through the Military Feedback Form located on the Safe Helpline Website ([safehelpline.org](http://safehelpline.org)). This option allows those who experienced retaliation to safely and securely report their experience to either the DoD IG or SAPRO leadership and begin the official retaliation reporting process. Safe Helpline staff have been trained on how to refer Service members to the appropriate authority. Other directives implemented since the release of the December 2014 President’s “Report on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response” include enhancing first-line supervisor skills and knowledge to focus on the prevention of and response to retaliation for reporting a sexual assault; engaging

command to prevent retaliation through new procedures for installation commanders at case management groups; bolstering Service-wide efforts aimed at reducing retaliation associated with reporting of sexual assault, including the review of means available to address retaliation; improving organizational culture to address sexual assault, sexual harassment, and reporting-related retaliation; and developing a DoD strategy to prevent retaliation associated with reporting crimes and other misconduct.

Dr. Greene-Sands emphasized to the Committee that the watermark of change is a shift in organizational culture that includes prevention of and response to retaliation. Therefore, during FY 2016, the DoD strategy to prevent retaliation associated with reporting crimes and other misconduct is to be signed, with an implementation plan to follow within six to nine months. As the second quarter of FY 2016 approaches, workgroups will target five issue areas: standardizing definitions; closing the gap in knowledge through data collection and analysis; developing a response process for investigation and accountability; developing a response process for reporter protections (this is to include protections for bystanders who intervene, as well as first responders who experience retaliation related to the execution of their duties and responsibilities); and creating a culture intolerant of retaliation. Dr. Greene-Sands stated that she would be glad to brief the Committee once the strategy is signed.

### Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald inquired as to how DoD has fallen so behind in their efforts to reduce retaliation, and he asked at what point a clear definition of retaliation would be taught and marketed in the same way as the definitions of sexual harassment and sexual assault have. Dr. Greene-Sands responded that current policy does define retaliation, but she acknowledged that the term must be better aligned with the definition so “retaliation” is not used interchangeably with other, similar terms like reprisal. The lack of alignment causes inconsistencies. Standardizing definitions are a primary focus of one of the five workgroups led by the Office of General Counsel, as is changing the culture surrounding retaliation, so the implementation plan will include training and education on new core competencies as well as how to market the concepts effectively.

The Committee asked for more information about former SECDEF Chuck Hagel’s efforts to raise awareness about and reduce incidence of retaliation. SECDEF Hagel was extremely involved with SAPRO, participating in weekly meetings to address this issue, and in the drafting of the President’s report. In Dr. Greene-Sands’ opinion, former SECDEF Leon Panetta was able to prioritize the issue by introducing it to leadership, but former SECDEF Hagel was the first to focus specifically on retaliation and set the foundation upon which later SECDEFs could build.

Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer asked whether the Safe Helpline is affiliated with the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) and whether the staff or counselors served in the military. The Safe Helpline is governed by SAPRO but operated through a contract by RAINN. SAPRO worked with RAINN to develop the communication plan and outreach efforts as well as trained staff. Information collected by the Military Feedback Form will remain confidential, and RAINN will not share any personally identifying information with SAPRO or chains of command unless required by law.

Ms. Hawkes asked Dr. Greene-Sands how many individuals have visited the Safe Helpline Website since the Military Feedback Form went live and if there are geographical hotspots for reporting. SAPRO looks at broader trends, whereas the Services track location-specific data. The

Safe Helpline was intended as a means to address inquiries rather than to collect quantitative data. There are fewer than 20 inquiries each month that ask specifically about retaliation. Ms. Hawkes asked how Service members learn about the helpline. SAPRO uses posters and conferences and also disseminates other products and tools.

Dr. Jackie Young asked how the data is accounted for in the 2014 RAND survey regarding retaliation experienced by servicemen who reported being sexually assaulted. Most sexual assault survivors are male, but the population is not well reflected in the data since only 10 percent of men come forward with a report, compared with 40 percent of women. Therefore, the sample of male sexual assault survivors to draw on for retaliation experience is not generalizable, and it is too difficult to draw significant conclusions from the sample. SAPRO is implementing a male victimization plan with the Services. Retaliation is a gender-neutral crime; however, there is a need to address the crime with a gender-specific approach. The director of SAPRO, MG Nichols, has been personally engaged with this issue and plans to track reports more closely as the ground combat exclusion policy is lifted. CAPT (Ret) Kelley expressed appreciation that SAPRO's director is showing special interest in this topic and emphasized that support should be expressed top-down from the highest levels of leadership.

### **Public Comment Period**

The Committee did not receive any statements or requests for comment from the public in advance of the deadline published in the Federal Register Notice.

**10 December 2015**

### **Morning Remarks**

The Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, COL Aimee Kominiak, opened the meeting to the public and introduced the agenda topics for the day. DACOWITS Chair, LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson, thanked the day's briefers and public audience for their attendance. She asked all Committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

### **Announcement of 2016 Meeting Dates**

COL Kominiak presented the agreed-upon DACOWITS Business Meeting dates for 2016. The meeting dates are as follows:

- Tuesday, March 8—Wednesday, March 9
- Tuesday, June 14—Wednesday, June 15
- Tuesday, September 13—Wednesday, September 14
- Thursday, December 8—Friday, December 9

## **Update on Today's Military: Generational Review and Comparison**

DACOWITS continues to be interested in the propensity, recruitment, and talent management of women joining the Armed Forces. The Committee requested a briefing to compare the mindset, views on family, job expectations, work ethic and habits, promotion/talent management, values, and priorities of the different generations serving within today's military (i.e., Baby Boomers and Generation X) to those of the new generation that is joining the Armed Forces (i.e., Millennials).

*Ms. Ashley Schaad, Senior Research Associate, ICF International*

Ms. Schaad presented research she compiled on the different generations serving within today's military. Baby Boomers, defined as those born between 1946 and 1964, make up approximately 25 percent of the U.S. population, which is the greatest representation of a single generation. Given the defining events of their generation, Baby Boomers typically are anti-war and anti-government, individualistic, challenge authority, and want to "make a difference," yet they are also materialistic, privileged, highly competitive workaholics.

Individuals born between 1965 and 1981 are known as Generation X<sup>4</sup> and make up less than 20 percent of the U.S. population. They have high expectations and value balance, diversity, and a work-life balance.

Millennials are defined as those born between 1982 and 2000 and make up 23 percent of the U.S. population. They are more likely to be children of divorce and associate most with the digital era, cell phones, and social media. Defining moments for Millennials include 9/11, school shootings, and heightened security. They, too, value diversity and a global community—in fact, Millennials are the most racially and ethnically diverse generation. Millennials, however, are less religious than Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. They are projected to be the most educated generation in U.S. history. Millennials are also seen as idealistic, empowered, and self-confident. They are thought to be impatient and overly expectant, possibly because they were more sheltered as children. Interestingly, Millennials are more civic minded, yet not as politically active; they are only attentive to national affairs in high-profile situations. Compared with other generations, Millennials are more liberal and more accepting of immigration, different ethnicities, less defined gender roles, and homosexuality. They are less strict on personal appearance as well. Millennials respect authority, follow rules, and are team players; if compared with previous generations, they are most similar to the pre-Baby Boom generation in commitment to family, community, and teamwork. Millennials are typically just as altruistic, if not more so, than older generations.

Baby Boomers have an increasing divorce rate and have divorced and remarried, whereas Generation Xers wait longer to marry. Millennials not only marry and/or have children at an older age, they are less likely ever to marry. On average, Millennial men marry at age 29 and Millennial women marry at age 27.

The values and qualities of each generation are also reflected in how each views work. Baby Boomers prefer work environments that are warm and friendly and that promote equal opportunity. They invented the 50-plus hour workweek and therefore look for fulfillment in the workplace. They desire workplaces with clear and concise expectations and that foster both teamwork and the ability to stand out. Generation Xers, on the other hand, enjoy fast-paced,

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<sup>4</sup> The definition of Generation X varies slightly throughout the research.

efficient, fun, and positive work environments. They prefer engaging, cutting-edge workplaces with dynamic leadership that assign tasks with a clear purpose. Millennials want environments that are collaborative, creative, diverse, positive, flexible, and provide continuous feedback. Millennials seek strong mentors and want challenging work and constant learning opportunities. Eighty-one percent of Millennials think they should be allowed to set their own hours at work; 88 percent want their coworkers to be their friends; 60 percent think they will switch jobs in the next five years; 50 percent believe switching jobs will help them climb the corporate ladder faster; and 50 percent would rather have no job than a job they hate. Three out of four Millennials would like to have a mentor; eight out of 10 Millennials want regular feedback from their bosses; two-thirds of Millennials think they should be mentoring older coworkers on technology; and 89 percent of Millennials think it is important to be constantly learning at work. Compared with other generations, Millennials possess the ability to develop visions based on their personal drivers as well as to consider the desires of others. They are also adept at sharing information with others on a global scale and are more receptive to advice, but they require more explanation on the task process as well as the importance of the task. Millennials are less likely to stay with one employer; are more loyal to their personal lives than to their employers; and desire to keep their work lives and personal lives separate. This generation values compensation that is useful now versus in the future (e.g., education benefits versus retirement); however, they place greater value on enjoying their job than having a high-paying job. They are realistic about salary expectations for their first job, but unrealistic about their overall career projection.

In the military, Millennials make up 26 percent of all Service members (20 percent of the AC and 33 percent of the RC). More than half of officers are Millennials (51 percent) while Millennials make up only 19 percent of enlisted Service members. Typically, higher command positions are occupied mainly by Baby Boomers and secondarily by Generation Xers, with some Millennials occupying lower command positions. As such, current training methods are developed by Baby Boomers for Baby Boomers, making it hard for Millennials to adapt.

Millennials appear to support the military, but the propensity to serve is lacking. In 2011, of top-performing college students who were asked about their post-graduation intentions, fewer than 25 percent said they intended to do something outside of the private sector (including the military), teach or work in a nonprofit, or work for the Federal Government. In contrast, nearly 29 percent intended to work in the private sector and 27 percent reported intentions to attend graduate school. Factors female Millennials cited as important to consider when selecting a job included training and development opportunities; flexible working hours; and an employer's policies on diversity, equality, and workforce inclusion. Almost 70 percent of Millennial women expressed a desire to work internationally at some point in their careers. To recruit Millennials, the military should emphasize a strong commitment to a family and work-life balance and to the community. For example, 20 percent of Millennial women shared that they would give up some of their pay or slow their rate of promotion to be able to work fewer hours. Having a family member(s) who served or is currently serving also aids in the recruitment of Millennials; this is in part because veterans and family members of veterans have been shown to be more likely than the general public to recommend the military to young people. Approximately 60 percent of young veterans have a family member that served. As for the specific recruitment of female Millennials, the military is not typically seen as a viable career for women. Nearly 15 percent of Millennial women said they would avoid the defense sector because it has a negative image.

Ms. Schaad outlined the qualities and features that Millennials seek and value in the organizations for which they work. Millennials, for instance, respect competency over position/title (i.e., rank). They also expect constant feedback and desire constant learning and a mentor. Ms. Schaad listed specific benefits (e.g., telecommuting, fitness classes, paid sabbaticals) and compared the proportion of the *Fortune* 100 best workplaces for Millennials that offered these benefits with the proportion of other workplaces that did. Compared with other companies, the 100 best workplaces for Millennials had 14–20 percent higher scores on innovation measures, an 18-percent higher score on receiving a fair share of the profits, and a 14-percent higher score on management involving people in decisions that affect their careers.

Ms. Schaad reviewed the current military landscape with the Committee, including the proportions of married, divorced, dual-military, parent, and single-parent AC men and women and RC men and women. She noted that having children alters work priorities. For instance, 51 percent of mothers said being a working parent makes it harder for career advancement, whereas 27 percent of mothers quit their jobs at some point to care for their children. Ms. Schaad then listed specific benefits (e.g., fully paid maternity leave, onsite stress reduction program, paid paternity leave, mentoring program) and compared the percent of the 2015 *Working Mother* 100 best companies for 2015 that offered these benefits with the percent of other workplaces that did.

### Discussion

MG (Ret) Macdonald reiterated that this briefing was meant to be in response to an RFI comparing the different generations serving within today's military (Baby Boomers and Generation X) and the new generation that is joining the Armed Forces (Millennials) on factors affecting the propensity, recruitment, and talent management of women joining the Armed Forces. Therefore, the information on talent management and the retention of mothers can be used as a smart marketing tool. MG (Ret) Macdonald explained the military could cross-reference with the information provided in the briefing to determine which benefits the military offers that have not been emphasized or marketed enough to increase the propensity of women to serve. Ms. Teresa Christenson agreed that the briefing provided much insight on how to recruit women in to the military, but that there is still an issue of retention. Efforts are being made to foster the careers of women in the military and to decrease attrition, but the data presented in this briefing indicated that Millennial women are not likely to stay with one company or employer. Ms. McAleer felt the latter fact was not counterproductive to DACOWITS' mission. The Committee does not want a 100-percent retention rate of women in the military—that is not the structure the military wants or what any company wants. Rather, it is important to have more junior members and fewer senior members. Ms. McAleer reasoned that the data showing Millennials are less apt to stay with one employer is not a challenge to address.

Ms. Medina noted that she did not consider mentorship to be a driving factor, although based on the data, Millennials value mentorship opportunities within a workplace. She asked if Ms. Schaad was aware of the types of mentoring offered by organizations (e.g., mentorship of all employees versus mentorship of female-only employees). The appreciation for mentorship may relate to Millennials' desire for continuous feedback, especially regarding newly opened positions. Specific to the military, Millennial women may desire mentorship and feedback for positions that were not open to them previously. CAPT Kelley noted that the historic structure of the military does not invite innovation as much as it should. It was suggested that as Baby Boomers transition out, the military might become more flexible and, subsequently, military

structure could better accommodate Millennials. Ms. Schaad agreed that the notion of gradual change is positive and that many of the work practices preferred by Millennials are also appreciated by Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. LTC (Ret) Park suggested that the concept of mentorship has been frequently and continuously brought up in focus groups and in other briefings, but there seems to be a discrepancy between the mentoring opportunities DoD offers and what Service members consider effective mentorship. The language used to discuss leadership and mentoring is not synonymous.

LTC (Ret) Park suggested Millennials be asked how they define mentorship to ensure that their request for mentorship is being satisfactorily addressed. Ms. Schaad agreed and reaffirmed that for Millennials, competency is respected more than rank, so effective mentorship should not focus or pertain to rank or leadership but rather focus more on the educational advantage that a partnership could offer. COL Kominiak interjected that she recently attended a forum on mentoring; one point raised during the forum was that a website similar to Match.com could partner mentors with protégés; this approach treats mentorship like a relationship and not an assigned task. Ms. McAleer reaffirmed that the issue is parsing out mentorship from sponsorship and the goals should be on defining mentorship—this will determine what is important and how mentorship should be approached effectively. Ms. Hawkes inquired whether the Army's Sisters in Arms program could be a potential model to emulate in other Service branches. MG (Ret) Pollock explained that one of the barriers to mentorship is that servicemen have become afraid to mentor servicewomen. The mentality is that women can easily file a sexual harassment claim and destroy men's careers, despite the potential dearth of evidence to substantiate the claim. To encourage male-female mentorship, men's fear of working with women needs to be addressed.

### **Committee Presents 2016 Study Topics and Votes**

LTC (Ret) Park presented the Recruitment and Retention study topics:

- **Recruitment.** The Committee plans to review the strategies Services are using in their marketing to increase the accessions of women.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- **Talent Management and Retention.** This line of study would include issues of gender integration, single parent policies, colocation and geographic stability, mentorship, and chaplains.

- **Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

MG (Ret) Macdonald presented the Employment and Integration study topics:

- **Reexamining the Chaplain Corps.** DACOWITS last examined the Chaplain Corps in 2006; therefore, the Committee plans to review the progress the Services have made toward increasing the number of female chaplains in the force, if any, and how increasing the number of female chaplains would affect Service members. The Committee plans to study how the Chaplain Corps affects command climate and culture, Service support to Service members, support to commanders and staff, and gender integration in newly opened units and positions.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- Successful Gender Integration. The Committee will continue to examine how DoD is progressing with full and effective integration of women in previously closed combat positions, career field schools, and specialty schools opened between FY 2013 and FY 2015, including the barriers and facilitators of progress, and lessons learned from previously gender-integrated units. The Committee also plans to study DoD's plan for continued full and effective integration of women into previously closed combat positions opened December 3, 2015.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- Examining Physical Standards. The Committee will continue to examine how, if at all, the Services monitor and respond to changing science in body fat measurement, and how the occupational standards are established for each occupational specialty opened as of December 3, 2015.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- Continuing Concern: Properly Fitting Combat Equipment. Following up on its 2015 concern, the Committee will continue to examine the fit of combat equipment.

Ms. Hawkes presented the Well-Being and Treatment study topics:

- The Impact and Effectiveness of Social Media. Unlike the 2015 study on the impact of social media on women in the military, the Committee will seek to examine DoD's and the Services' general communication strategies and how Service members perceive communication within their respective units. This line of study will focus on the positive use of social media and how it can be used to promote unit cohesion, pride, and morale, and how commanders use social media to connect with their respective units. The Committee seeks to examine how communication surrounding the image of women, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and retaliation is being presented by DoD, the Services, and command, and how Service members perceive such communications.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- Access to Fertility Treatment. The Committee will review the current fertility treatment options (e.g., hormone treatments, in vitro fertilization (IVF), assisted reproduction technology (ART)) are covered by TRICARE, evaluate the effects these treatment options have on the quality of life of Service members, and examine how offering these fertility treatment options influences perceptions of the military as an employer.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

- Proactive Transition Training. The Committee plans to review training programs to prevent female veteran unemployment, homelessness, and suicide; their effectiveness; and how Services determine Service members' risk for unemployment, homelessness, and suicide.

**Voting:** The Committee voted to adopt the study topic unanimously (14 votes in favor).

**Final Remarks**

Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, COL Aimee Kominiak, thanked the remaining attendees and closed the public meeting.

**Meeting was adjourned.**



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



**Report Certified by:  
LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson  
DACOWITS Chair**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson (Chair)  
CMSgt (Ret) Bernise F. Belcer (Vice Chair)

Dr. Kristy Anderson  
Ms. Sharlene Hawkes  
Rev. Dr. Cynthia Lindenmeyer  
Ms. Donna McAleer  
LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park  
SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston

Ms. Teresa Christenson  
CAPT (Ret) Beverly Kelley  
MG (Ret) John Macdonald  
Ms. Monica Medina  
MG (Ret) Gale Pollock  
Dr. Jackie Young