

During the Committee's annual installation visits, co-location is frequently addressed by both men and women as an important issue affecting Service members. Military women are less likely than their male counterparts to be married; however, almost half of all married military women are married to a fellow Service member. Additionally, the number of married couples serving in different Service branches will continue to grow joint operations increase world-wide.

The Committee requests a **written response** from the **Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD (P&R))** on whether or not the Department has considered directing the Secretaries of the military departments to revise their co-location policies for married couples serving in different Service branches, making it mandatory for assignment managers to work across the Military Services.

OUSD(P&R) response:

Department of Defense policy provides that the permanent change of station (PCS) reassignment of a Service member is authorized for national security purposes or for ensuring equitable treatment of Service members. Military Services should try to minimize PCS-move turbulence wherever possible to enhance unit readiness, manage PCS costs, and provide stability for Service members and their families.

To date, none of the Military Departments have requested the suggested policy change regarding assignment considerations for military couples assigned to different Services. However, OUSD(P&R) is convening its PCS/Assignment working group to address more effective management of PCS costs and to discuss stakeholder input for changes to DoDI 1315.18, Procedures for Military Personnel Assignments. We will add this as a topic for discussion.

DoD routinely considers all options for best structuring assignment policy that maximizes readiness, minimizes the time service members must spend away from their families, maximizes co-location/geographic stability, while ensuring safety and security.