

INFORMATION PAPER

Department of the Army, G-1
30 Jan 20

SUBJECT: Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)
March 2020 Quarterly Business Meeting Request for Information (RFI) 11: Effect of Grooming Standards on Women's Health

1. Purpose: To reply to the DACOWITS Effect of Grooming Standards on Women's Health RFI for the March 2020 Quarterly Business Meeting

The Military Services' written responses to the December 2019 RFI acknowledged awareness of alopecia possibilities and some reported incidence of alopecia among servicewomen, but they do not track or monitor this condition or other hairstyle-related conditions.

The Committee requests a written response from the Military Services describing what and how female recruits are taught to style their hair, to ensure compliance with Service hair grooming standards, specifically those styles which entail pulling or twisting hair into "up-do" or "pull back" styles. The Committee is particularly interested in how servicewomen are taught to achieve the following hair styles: buns, ponytails, and braids.

Question a: Please provide copies of instructional materials, curricula, videos or other media used to demonstrate and teach servicewomen how to achieve these and any other styles which require pulling or twisting the hair.

Response a: AR 670-1 and DA PAM 670-1 provide policy and guidance regarding female hairstyles, including pictorial examples. There are no Army-wide, officially produced instructional materials, curricula, videos, or other media used to demonstrate and teach servicewomen how to achieve hair standards prescribed by policy. Throughout the training bases, Drill Sergeants and Cadre provide a brief overview of Army Regulation (AR) 670-1 (Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia) standards to include the basis for hairstyle standards. Female Drill Sergeants often provide instruction and demonstration on how to style and maintain their hair in various uniforms. While in reception battalions, female Soldiers are also encouraged to use on-post salon facilities to assist in complying with hair standards.

Question b: If "how to" styling demonstrations are used to train, please provide the Committee video demonstration of this training.

Response b: There are no officially produced styling demonstrations used to demonstrate and teach female Soldiers how to achieve hair standards prescribed by AR 670-1, paragraph 3-2.

Department of the Army, G-1

SUBJECT: DACOWITS March 2020 Quarterly Business Meeting RFI 11: Effect of Grooming Standards on Women's Health

Question c: Are servicewomen specifically, and Service members generally (particularly supervisors/commanders), educated about the potential harm resulting from hairstyles that excessively pull/twist hair and, if so, how?

Response c: See response to question a.

Question d: Although Service grooming standards do not require "tight" pulling of the hair or "tight buns," Committee members have observed many servicewomen who do wear such hairstyles. Is there any unit practice or encouragement to achieve a more professional looking appearance by employing this styling technique?

Response d: There are no Army-wide practices that encourage achieving a more professional appearance by styling, however there are some female Drill Sergeants that conduct hands on demonstrations with their own hair explaining to female Trainees recommended hair care products and providing some techniques on what the female hair styling standards are in AR 670-1 and DA PAM 670-1.