

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER
ON
DACOWITS SEPTEMBER 2019 (RFI 1)
WOMEN’S RETENTION DATA

PURPOSE: The purpose of this paper is to provide written response to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) request for information (RFI) One, regarding gender diversity changes in the Services - Air Force (AF). This information is provided in support of the DACOWITS September 2019 meeting.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

Based on a review of a data product developed by the DACOWITS contractor, Insight Policy Research, entitled “*Changes in Gender, Ethnic, and Racial Diversity in the U.S. Military*” (June 2019), the committee requested responses to the following questions:

- ***“...to what do you attribute the disparity in the percentage of total women to your total force, as compared to the population of the country?”***
 - Per a December 2012 Joint Advertising Market Research Studies (JAMRS) Youth Poll Survey (ages 16-21), an increasing percentage of females believed military service would conflict with their ability to: 1) be in contact with family/friends, 2) be in an environment free from harm/danger and, 3) have an attractive lifestyle (family, career, financial stability and owning a home). Female youth surveyed also perceived the existence of discrimination against servicewomen (sexual harassment and fewer opportunities)
 - The AF continues to enhance its marketing efforts to directly address negative perceptions and decrease disparities. In the past five years, marketing has been re-engineered to reach a broader, more diverse base; using digitally-enabled platforms, devices and gaming. New data sets, digital tools and analytical techniques have been incorporated to heighten audience understanding, targeting and efficacy.
 - Between 2012 and June, 2019, AF Active Duty female accessions have steadily increased:

--- Enlisted/Basic Military Training (BMT)	18.57% (2012) – 25.12% (2019)
--- Officer/Air Force Academy (USAFA)	21.66% (2012) – 25.47% (2019)
--- Officer/Officer Training School (OTS)	16.30% (2012) – 18.64% (2019)
--- Officer/Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)	23.22% (2012) – 24.93% (2019)
 - Female accessions have also steadily increased in the AF Reserve and Air National Guard
 - Additionally, the AF proactively addresses barriers to female retention via policy/program studies, reviews and initiatives; including the efforts of its Womens Initiatives Team

- ***“To what does the... Air Force attribute [its 11%] gain in Hispanic women between 2008-2018?”***

- While not exclusively targeted to Hispanic women, likely contributing factors are:
 - By analyzing geographic diversity of new enlistments and increasing advertising spending in those areas, the AF has broadened its reach in underrepresented areas
 - AF (and DoD) advertising has evolved to be increasingly more inclusive, depicting diverse races/genders in varied career fields/occupations

- ***“...to what do you attribute the overall low percentage of senior women officers (O-7 and above), and even lower or non-existent percentages of senior women officers with ethnic or racial diversity?”***

- As of June 2019, the demographic makeup of Active Duty (AD) AF General Officers (O-7 and above) was:
 - Gender – Male: 92%; Female: 8%
 - Race – White (Non-Hispanic): 91%; Other Races: 7%; Declined to Respond: 2%
- The demographic makeup of the ‘feeder pool’ -- AD AF Colonels (O-6) -- was:
 - Gender – Male: 85%; Female: 15%
 - Race – White (Non-Hispanic): 83%; Other Races: 14%; Declined to Respond: 4%
- Further, 60% of AD AF General Officers were rated officers. Demographics:
 - Gender – Male: 96%; Female: 4%
 - Race – White (Non-Hispanic): 94%; Other Races: 4%; Declined to Respond: 2%
 - The demographics of the rated AD AF Col (O-6) ‘feeder pool’ is roughly similar)
- Increasing AF General Officer diversity requires talent pool growth and development; particularly in the rated force

- The AF Chief of Staff (CSAF) values Diversity and Inclusion as a joint warfighting imperative and has implemented steps toward increasing force diversity at all levels, primarily:

- Established the CSAF Diversity and Inclusion Council (AF senior leaders) to address military/civilian focus areas, impacting operational effectiveness across the AF enterprise
- Established an Aircrew Task Force to increase Rated Diversity by developing, tracking, assessing and reporting on bold, innovative initiatives and actionable lines of effort (LOEs)

CONCLUSION

In response to the DACOWITS September 2019 RFI one, this paper provides information regarding gender diversity changes in the Air Force.