

DACOWITS' RFIs for December 2017

GENDER INTEGRATION

Public Law and SecDef directives require operationally relevant gender neutral physical fitness tests and standards for physically demanding military occupations from recruiting through basic and advanced training to operational units.

1

Repeat RFI: On March 14, 2017, the Commandant of the Marine Corps provided testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee that he would evaluate the full integration of recruit training. Of note, the Marine Corps remains the only Service branch to not fully integrate men and women in recruit training. As soon as this decision has been made and is releasable to the public, the Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Marine Corps** that addresses the criteria upon which the decision was based and any resulting implementation plan. *[Of note, this RFI is a subset of a larger review of Recruit Training. Information will be shared when publically releasable.]*

TALENT MANAGEMENT

Under the previous administration, the former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced his goal to build a “Force of the Future,” in order for the Department of Defense to maintain a competitive edge in bringing in top talent to serve the nation. An in-depth review process captured almost 80 individual reform initiatives. A further effort by a principal level working group recommended an initial tranche of over 20 reform initiatives, focused on permeability, recruitment, and retention.

2

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **Office of Strategic Initiatives (OUSD P&R)** to provide a comprehensive update on all strategic initiatives that impact servicewomen and their families, formerly under the header of “Force of the Future.”

MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMY ADMISSIONS

All the Military Service Academies (MSAs) are working to appoint a higher percentage of women into their incoming classes. The Committee is interested in the actions being taken to market and recruit women to achieve this objective.

3

The Committee requests a **briefing** from all the **Military Service Academies*** on the following:

- a. Overview of the Application and Appointment/Nomination Process
- b. Data on the number of applications initiated vice completed applications (broken down by gender) over the last ten years:
 - i. Percent of applications completed by women
 - ii. Percent of women selected
- c. Do the MSAs target women (marketing/advertising)? If so, what has been the effectiveness?
- d. Are there any planned initiatives to increase the percentage of women that apply?

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PREGNANCY AND PARENTHOOD

Continuing its work from 2015, DACOWITS is examining ongoing issues and concerns surrounding pregnancy, the postpartum period, and parenthood.

4

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the all the **Military Services*** on the policies related to Service members' residency at development professional military education (PME) schools, to include Command and General Staff College, War College, Senior Enlisted Academies, Top Level Schools, or the Service equivalent. In particular, we ask the Military Services to address:

- a. What are your policies surrounding pregnant Service members' ability to obtain or maintain residency at schools?
- b. What are your policies surrounding assigning Service members on medical light-duty for non-pregnancy related issues to residency at schools?
- c. What are your policies for deferment from school vs re-selection for school with regard to medical light duty status? Is this the same policy for pregnancy?
- d. Are there any exceptions to policy? At what grade or level of command are exceptions granted?

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE

In 2016, DACOWITS made the following recommendation to the SecDef regarding transition services: *"The Secretary of Defense should review and enhance the content of current transition assistance programs to better meet the unique needs of transitioning servicewomen."* During the public comment portion of the Committee's September 2017 business meeting, representatives from the VA Women's Health Services and Air Force Women's Initiative Team presented their "[Hot Handoff](#)" pilot program, which seeks to address the unique needs of transitioning and transitioned women veterans. Current statistics:

- Female veterans' suicide rate is [250 percent higher](#) than civilian women.
- Of active-duty women, [23 percent](#) have experienced some form of assault prior to or while serving in the military.
- Women comprise [15 percent](#) of the military and the number of female vets using the VA's services has doubled over the last decade.
- Women make up nearly [11.6 percent](#) of OEF/OIF/OND Veterans.
- Women earned [80 percent](#) of what their male counterparts earned in 2015.
- Women veterans are the [fastest-growing demographic](#) of homeless veterans in America today.

5

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the **DoD Transition to Veterans Program Office** on the following:

- a. Breakdown of the current T-GPS/TAP curriculum (e.g., topics covered; duration/length per curriculum objective, etc.).
- b. Who is responsible for overseeing and facilitating these courses to Service members (e.g., each Service-branch, the Dept. of Labor, etc.)?
- c. Are the following topics addressed in the T-GPS/TAP curriculum:
 - i. VA Medical Care (e.g., how to file a VA disability claim; women's health options; etc.)
 - ii. Job Assistance Programs (e.g., VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E))
 - iii. Current veteran statistics and information on how to seek help once members are no longer in uniform (e.g., unemployment, suicide rates, homelessness, etc.)?
 - iv. Gender Wage Gap
- d. DoD's position on the VA Women's Health Services and Air Force Women's Initiative Team proposed "[Hot Handoff](#)" pilot program

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GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In 2015, DACOWITS made five recommendations to the SecDef regarding concerns surrounding the impacts of sexual harassment via social media on Service members. In June 2017, the Marine Corps requested to brief the Committee on the steps they are taking to address the Marine United Scandal.

6 The Marine Corps has requested to provide an updated briefing on the status of their efforts to eradicate unethical behaviors.