



UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

7701 TAMPA POINT BLVD.
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5323

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May 15, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES, 4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 04J25-01, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22350-9000

SUBJECT: US Special Operations Command Response to Request for Information on Progress Relating to Gender-Neutral Language and Representative Imagery on Web Sites and Social Media

1. In advance of their 13 June 2017 Quarterly Business Meeting, the members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) requested US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) provide a written response to their query regarding the status of gender-neutral language and representative images of women in non-traditional military roles on USSOCOM web sites and social media accounts.
2. Our review of USSOCOM web sites and social media accounts indicates we are utilizing gender-neutral language but have limited imagery of women in non-traditional roles. Going forward, USSOCOM Office of Strategic Communication personnel will ensure we continue to use gender-neutral language and display women in non-traditional roles to the maximum extent possible. With no women qualified for previously-closed occupations and small numbers of women having attempted SOF Assessment and Selection courses our opportunity to publish photographs of women in non-traditional roles is greatly limited.
3. Due to the sensitivity of USSOCOM missions and units, USSOCOM does not regularly post photographs of or information on its personnel. This is in order to protect our units and personnel from being targeted by foreign entities. As facial recognition software becomes more sophisticated and automated image-gathering equipment proliferates, protecting and managing the identities of our personnel becomes even more important. The small numbers of female operators initially joining our ranks will make the protection of their identities a critical issue.
4. Point of contact for this action is Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Pavelko, commercial telephone 813-826-1044, non-secure electronic mail: jeffrey.pavelko@socom.mil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Karmazin", is positioned above the typed name.

ROBERT A. KARMAZIN
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Director, Joint Special Operations
Forces Development