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# *Department of the Air Force*

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Innovate, Accelerate, Thrive – The Air Force at 75

## *Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) March 2023 RFI*



**21-22 March 2023**

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# ***Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS)***

## ***DACOWITS Gender Integration***

The 330th Recruiting Squadron (RCS) does not currently have a designated mission requirement or resources allocated to focus efforts exclusively on minority populations, to include females for Special Warfare and Combat Support (SW/CS). Additionally, 330 RCS does not specifically recruit for SOF male or female candidates, rather focuses on any demographic interested in joining the ranks of Air Force Special Warfare (AFSPECWAR). In addition, a large majority of SW candidates recruited will support ACC (CAF), therefore are not defined as SOF operators. NOTE: AFRS is a subordinate command to Air Education and Training Command (AETC)



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**AETC**

## ***DACOWITS #6 Gender Integration***

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- **6a. What is being done to recruit more women into SOF?**
  - Marketing and recruiting initiatives currently focus on candidates aged 19 to 39, who are physically fit, medically qualified, and mentally capable to serve in a special warfare or combat support capacity. National partnerships span an array of venues and opportunities such as Spartan Race, PainKLLR, Wodapalooza, US Climbing, and US Swimming events.



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- **6b. What outreach efforts currently exist to mentor to encourage women to enter SOF?**
  - Second Air Force (2 AF) and AFRS recently partnered to utilize a female TACPO as an enhancement to recruiting efforts towards AFSPECWAR. In addition, AFRS is partnered with a female SERE Specialist during Arnold Classic events to showcase females in the Air Force. As AFSPECWAR continues to gain more females, AFRS will continue to leverage those resources.



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# AFRS

## DACOWITS #6 Gender Integration

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- **6d. How are you helping women prepare for the SOF selection process (pre-accession)?**
  - AFRS, in partnership with AETC/A3LS, stood up the Candidate Development Support Services (CDSS) contract. The contract develops female candidates in pre-accession with physical, mental, and programmed training to meet initial AFSPECWAR training requirements for entrance into AFSPECWAR. Once an AFSPECWAR candidate has made initial contact with a 330th recruiter, they begin working with CDSS III field developer. Field Developers are subject matter experts with at least 6 years post-graduation experience in Special Warfare Air Force Specialty Codes and are specifically trained to nationally recognized physical fitness training standards. CDSS III developers offer physical fitness programs specifically for female candidates. These programs are reviewed and approved through our nationally recognized strength and conditioning coaches specializing in human performance optimization with over 20 plus years of experience at the professional and collegiate levels. Additionally, CDSS III supports recruiting events for the purposes of providing a relatable resource for female candidates interested in AFSPECWAR for fielding any questions or concerns.



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- **6C. Provide an overview of the SOF selection process.**
  - The following AFSPECWAR career fields require candidates to meet physical and non-physical standards to enter and complete training pipelines / qualification training: Pararescue (PJ), Combat Control (CCT), Special Reconnaissance (SR), Combat Rescue Officer (CRO) and Special Tactics Officer (STO). Note: CCT, SR, and STO specialties are part of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). PJ and CRO specialties serve inside AFSOC but with Air Combat Command (ACC) as their lead command.
  - After completing Basic Military Training, both physical and non-physical standards are refined and examined during a pre-assessment course called Special Warfare Candidate Course (SWCC), and the above AFSPECWAR specialties are selected for entry into training through an Assessment & Selection (A&S) course.
  - During A&S, candidates are screened for physical performance, cognitive, and non-cognitive attributes. The A&S screening environment includes dynamic, modulated, high-intensity events designed to simulate the stresses of combat. Success at A&S is followed by initial qualification training, before any assignment to an AFSOC unit.



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## 2 AF

# DACOWITS #6 Gender Integration

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- **6d. How are you helping women prepare for the SOF selection process (post-accession)?**
- AETC combating areas of high attrition in the selection process developed a 7-week AFSPECWAR preparatory course. This purposely designed pilot focuses on the continuation of developing stronger, more mentally resilient recruits prior to entering the SOF pipeline. Special Warfare Candidate Course (SWCC) accomplishes this through coaching, mentoring, and education. SWCC is the culmination of AFSPECWAR Scouting, Recruiting, and Developing and ensures recruits are mentally and physically prepared on day one of the arduous Assessment and Selection (A&S) Course.
- SWCC employs Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the fields of physiology, nutrition, medical to ensure recruits are mentally and physically primed and prepared. Additionally, SWCC provides SMEs in the fields of aquatics, running and strength/conditioning that will ensure recruits are fitter, faster and stronger on day one of A&S.
- SWCC also infuses technology in every aspect of training to ensure events are purpose driven, employed to mitigate training/environmental risk and provide data to aide AFRS in the recruitment of future AFSPECWAR candidates.



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- **6f. Have you examined or established support systems for women to enter SOF?**
  - AETC in 2019 established the Air Force's first Special Warfare Human Performance Support Group (SWHPSG) in order to build human performance optimization in all physical, mental, and spiritual aspects for female candidates in special warfare training pipelines.
  - Examples of support systems established would be female physical therapist for reconditioning efforts, female specific swim coaches, female strength and conditioning coaches, female operational psychologist professionals. The SWHPSG and Special Warfare Training Group (SWTG) additionally offer female integration support/cadre that integrate into our training pipelines with support on physical and mental aspects of training throughout AFSPECWAR pipelines.
  - 2 AF Force Integration Officer is in contact with several female AFSPECWAR candidates, communicates with them both directly and on an informal group message platform with other females who have experience in AFSPECWAR pipelines and units. This is a small-scale grassroots effort, but we are also interested in getting in contact with AFRS Det 1 to get involved with their D&I recruiting efforts from an AFSPECWAR perspective.





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- **6g. Have you considered or reviewed lessons learned from other military integration efforts?**
  - One of the lines of effort of 2 AF is to hire female instructors with tactical backgrounds into Special Warfare training squadrons to mirror best practices from SOF sister services (i.e. Naval Special Warfare training pipelines). 2 AF is in coordination with the Air Force Special Warfare Training Wing to site visit and develop a working relationship with JFKSWCS (John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School) to learn best practices and understand US Army's approach and best practices.