

SUBJ: DACOWITS RFI #5

FROM: Civil Rights Directorate

TO: CG-12B

HEALTHY UNIT CLIMATE

The Department of Defense has made progress in coping with sexual harassment and mistreatment in the Armed Services, but the “#MeToo” movement has shed more light on areas for continued emphasis. The Committee continues its work to address those gap areas.

The Committee requests a **briefing** from the Military Services.

DACOWITS:

- a. What elements does your Service include in assessing whether or not you have a healthy unit climate?
- b. What policies/procedures are in place to promote: healthy relationships; respect and dignity; and bystander expectations and accountability?
- c. How effective are your current policies/procedures; and if none exist, offer your Service’s future plan(s) to address.
- d. Explain how women in your Service are encouraged or trained to respond to inappropriate behavior, language, or a perceived hostile environment.

CG Response:

- a. The Coast Guard (CG) primarily employs two tools for assessing whether or not a unit has a healthy climate: The Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey and the Equal Opportunity Review.

Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS) - The DEOCS is a tool to aid commanders in improving the unit’s civil rights climate and organizational effectiveness. The purpose of the DEOCS is to gather information on the organization to assist commanders in clarifying the positive and negative views of an organization by its members. The DEOCS includes measures associated with Organizational Effectiveness, EO/EEO/Fair Treatment, Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (SAPR) and Retaliation.

In addition, the findings are used to formulate action plans to improve the organization's climate, provide commanders insight into personnel issues that may impact unit effectiveness and identify positive and negative factors that may affect mission readiness. Also, the survey is required annually.

Equal Opportunity (EO) Review - The EO Review is used as an evaluative management tool for units that are visited by the Civil Rights Directorate. The purpose of an EO Review is to assess the Command's EO climate, determine unit effectiveness and also identify best practices within the unit. It is then utilized to offer recommendations and identify any program-wide areas of concern. An EO Review can be initiated by Unit Command request or directed by the Civil Rights Directorate (CRD). Also, the data collection techniques used in the EO Review process include: focus groups and interviews.

- b. Examples of policies/procedures currently in place at the CG to promote healthy relationships, respect and dignity, bystander expectations and accountability are as follows:

Equal Opportunity Policy Statement states that every single member of the CG force has the right to expect and require equal and fair treatment with dignity and respect without any regards to any basis protected by law.

Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy Statement states that unlawful discrimination is incompatible with the CG Service values. Also the policy states the CG will cultivate and sustain a work environment that is free from conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment. The statement encourages members to report any incident where they have felt subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment as well as any suspected retaliation or reprisal related to a complaint. Members who violate this policy are subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action if allegations reported are substantiated.

Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement states that the CG values and respects its diverse workforce. This policy reiterates respect for those who serve and others. Further, this policy reinforces how the Service benefits from a diverse workforce at all levels of the organization.

Anti-Harassment and Hate Incident Policies and Procedures states all CG members are responsible for bringing misconduct of a harassing or offensive nature to the attention of a supervisor or someone in their chain of command. In addition, the policy prescribes procedures for reporting, limiting and stopping inappropriate behavior. These

procedures direct and hold accountable every CG Commanding Officer/Officer-in-Charge (CO/OIC), supervisor or anyone in the supervisory chain accountable for maintaining addressing and taking appropriate corrective action if allegations reported are substantiated.

Hazing and Bullying Policy identifies key reporting requirements when an allegation of hazing or bullying are made or is suspected. This policy was established in response to a 2015 Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit focusing on hazing in the Armed Forces. Members who violate this policy are subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action.

Civil Rights Manual, COMDINT M5350.4 (series) provides the users guidance for applying and complying with all CG EEO/EO requirements. The manual reinforces CG's commitment to its core values of respect and devotion to duty. The purpose of this Manual is to enable the commanding CO/OIC, civil rights service provider, and all Coast Guard members at large to understand and fulfill their roles and responsibilities related to civil rights. Also, it should be noted that while federal laws and regulations do not apply in their entirety to military personnel, this Commandant Instruction (policy) affords military members the same rights, to the extent possible, as those for civilian members.

Sexual Assault and Prevention Response Instruction, COMDTINT M1754.10E establishes policy for the Coast Guard SAPR Program. The policies in this Manual cover prevention and response requirements with a focus on creating a culture of prevention, education and training, response capability, victim support, reporting procedures, and accountability to enhance the safety and well-being of all CG members.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (SAPR) Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (GGTTP-1-16-1) makes CG members aware of their duty to intervene in situations that may lead to potential harm or violence. The procedures also recommend safe methods for intervening in dangerous or high risk situations.

- c. The CG policies and procedures are effective because they are: 1) widely disseminated through a combination of methods; 2) consistently enforced; 3) clarify roles and responsibilities of CG members; 4) motivate employees to create a positive work culture; 5) create multiple impartial paths to complain about harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behavior, including a path outside the supervisory/military chain of command; 6) provide for prompt and impartial inquiries; provide a clear explanation of prohibited conduct; 7) clearly describes CG complaint processes that provide possible avenues of redress; and, 8) reassurances complainants that the CG will protect their confidentiality to the extent possible. Also, CG policies outline consequences for inappropriate and offensive behavior that is found. More important, CG-wide people

experiencing sexual harassment has declined. In accordance with policy, CG members are taking action after an incident of sexual harassment: such as filing complaints, reporting the incident to a supervisor or CRSP to include confronting the individual. Overall, there is a small percentage people reporting that they have observed a high risk situation/incident that could lead to sexual assault at the CG. Of those members reporting they observed a high risk situation, the majority reported they took action.

- d. Women in the CG are encouraged and trained to respond to inappropriate behavior, language, or a perceived hostile environment as follows.
 1. Members are trained to confront the harasser unless the situation is so severe that it is dangerous or unreasonable to do so.
 2. If the inappropriate behavior or harassment continues or is severe enough to warrant immediate command attention the person is encouraged to discuss the subject with a supervisor or CO/OIC in private.
 3. If the supervisor is the harasser, the harassment will be reported to the CO/OIC.
 4. If the CO/OIC is the harasser, then the report should be given to the official at the next higher level in the chain of command.
 5. If the inappropriate behavior/harassment continues despite confronting the harasser and discussing it with the supervisor, an individual has the right to file a complaint if it is perceived that the problem is not being addressed properly or in a timely manner.