

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU RESPONSE TO DACOWITS RFI Q4 CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS GENDER BIAS

Services are at various phases in eliminating conscious and unconscious bias from the various elements of Service member professional development. There have been independent studies conducted which indicate potential evidence of conscious and unconscious gender bias and language in military performance evaluations.

The Committee requests a written response from each of the Military Services on what actions have been taken to assess and mitigate (if necessary) the impact of conscious and unconscious gender bias and language on military performance evaluations and promotions? Additionally, include any processes built into your promotion and evaluation systems that facilitate equitable selection.

OVERVIEW

The National Guard's unique composition influences our approach to assess conscious and unconscious gender bias and language on military performance evaluations. The Air National Guard (ANG) and Army National Guard (ARNG) currently tailor their approaches for their respective formations. The National Guard Bureau is reviewing these initiatives to develop guidance and resources aimed at synchronizing and augmenting impact. Leadership is also exploring process and policy options to integrate into the promotion and evaluation systems that facilitate equitable selection.

Air National Guard (ANG)

The ANG Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) program flows from Air Force D&I Policy Directive 36-70 and emphasizes benchmarks and metrics to provide decision-makers the tools to implement change. Air Force D&I efforts complement, but remain separate and distinct from Air Force Equal Opportunity (EO) compliance programs and activities. The four facets of diversity (demographic, cognitive/behavioral, organizational/structural, and global) ensures the ANG is "Ready for Tomorrow's Fight" by fostering an environment enabling units to be mentally prepared to engage with unexpected challenges.

The Air National Guard employs a holistic approach to developing culturally competent leaders with the skills that provide awareness, knowledge, practical behaviors and skills to support Airmen, Supervisors, and Leaders in building a high performing mission ready culture that leverages the value of diversity through inclusion.

Human Resource Advisors (HRAs) are assigned at the Wing and they are empowered, trained and resourced to educate and equip all Airmen to increase their cultural competency. They provide technical assistance to help Units build culturally competent leaders who can support the ANG's goals to be mission ready and effective in the current global reality. These initiatives will shape a culture that values and promotes agility, innovation and resiliency (AIR) for all Airmen. Through training, measurement and D&I resources, HRAs will be equipped to successfully administer this program.

The ANG adopted HAF/A1DV UB education presentation, developed by Cook Ross as the primary unconscious bias training for the field. As of 1 October 2018, the ANG has incorporated Unconscious Bias training as a HRA Self-Assessment Communicator within the Manager's Internal Control Toolset (MICT) which plays a vital role in the way Air Force compliance is monitored to provide wing commanders visibility on and prioritize deficiencies found in any unit. The HRA Self-Assessment Communicator that addresses unconscious bias examines the following questions:

- Does the HRA implement D&I initiatives designed to educate and contribute to a diverse and inclusive organization?
- Are promotion and selection board processes transparent and are board and selection members trained of how bias enters into the selection process?

Additionally, the ANG has expanded UB education to the ANG Diversity Council Executive Chairs (9 – General Officers, O7) and 75 HRAs (E7 – E9s). Lastly, the ANG Commanders Course (target O5 & O6) will incorporate UB education into their semi-annual course beginning in March 2019.

Army National Guard (ARNG)

The ARNG EO Diversity Program has established strategic partnerships with the ARNG G1 and G3 communities. These have resulted in synchronized efforts to assess policies, procedures and programs that influence personnel readiness, equality and inclusion.

The ARNG EO Diversity office works in coordination with G Staffs to assess policies that influence training, policies, and programs that may be influenced by bias. Based on branch, MOS, race, gender, PME, scores etc. These initiatives are aimed at developing leaders and personnel that will establish and sustain workplace environments, increase functionality, and mission readiness with bias.

The Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS) plays a prominent role in the assessment of the organizational culture as well as unconscious bias. The Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOAs) administering the DEOCS have received unconscious bias training at the last two National Guard Diversity AND Inclusion Workshops. The EOAs utilize their ability to interpret the DEOCS with an unconscious bias perspective bringing added value to the tool.

The ARNG promotes Leader Development and Diversity Train the Trainer courses. These courses focus on individual behavioral preferences, leadership tendencies and the efficacy of those preferences in the short and long-term. The trainings promote a model for understanding the dynamics of leadership, unconscious bias and inclusion. It is presented with facilitated participation to promote the understanding utilizing a variety of psychological instrument results and how they reveal the individual's approach to leadership challenges in a variety of scenarios. The specific challenges of change, decision-making and conflict resolution are addressed. The classes target individuals who are identified as future leaders.