

*RFI Category and Number: The Impacts of Social Media and Online Sexual Harassment on Services Members, RFI #9*

*In 2015, DACOWITS began a new line of study, the impact of social media on Service members. The study was prompted by the Committee's 2014 installation visits and from concerns surrounding social media use and online bullying and harassment.*

*RFI Question:*

*The Committee requests a written response from the Military Services on the status of five 2015 DACOWITS' recommendations:*

*RFI Recommendation 9.1: The Services should revise their definition of sexual harassment and any regulations pertaining to the use of social media to clarify that conduct or speech that takes place wholly online can itself constitute sexual harassment.*

*RFI Response 9.1: The Navy Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Program Manual, OPNAVINST 5300.13, uses the sexual harassment definition provided in 10 U.S.C. §1561, Complaints of sexual harassment: investigation by commanding officers, modified by section 548 of the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. The policy outlines some examples of sexual harassment to include:*

- *The display of inappropriate sexually oriented material in a location where others can view it (i.e., displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, images on a computer, phone, or other electronic device, etc.).*
- *Persistent and unwanted requests for dates, unwelcome and inappropriate letters, telephone calls, e-mail, text messages, graphics, and other communications or gifts.*

*POC or office responsible: OPNAV N173*

*RFI Recommendation 9.2: The Services should revise and implement sexual harassment training that addresses online harassment, anonymity, and the consequences of online behavior both on- and off- duty.*

*RFI Response 9.2: The Navy's Full Speed Ahead 2.0 training will address the nature and impacts of online harassment. The training will consist of four training modules:*

- *Module 1 - This module will encourage Sailors to think critically about their individual contributions to the functioning of their organization.*
- *Module 2 - Focused on interpersonal (specifically leader/subordinate) interactions, this module will encourage Sailors to discuss motivating leadership practices and identify ways in which the leader/subordinate relationship can be strengthened within their organization.*

- *Module 3 - This module will compel Sailors to discuss the real risk and consequence of misusing social media.*
- *Module 4 - This module will encourage Sailors to think broadly about the culture of the United States Navy and the direct impact that each person can have on the Navy culture.*

*Additionally the Navy will incorporate training material into the Life Skills training which is given to enlisted accessions to address social media related behavior. The additional discussion will take the form of a scenario that instructs Sailors in the responsible and appropriate use of Social Media as a service member.*

*POC or office responsible: OPNAV N17Z*

*RFI Recommendation 9.3: The Service Secretaries and Joint Chiefs of Staff should communicate a united, passionate, and powerful message to the Armed Forces that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not part of our military culture.*

*RFI Response 9.3: In 2016, the Secretary of the Navy released a message outlining sexual assault awareness month in which he stated "The Department of the Navy is committed, as I am personally, to a culture of gender respect, where sexual assault is never tolerated and ultimately eliminated, where all survivors receive support and protection, and where offenders are held appropriately accountable. In 2017, he released a message announcing an interim change to the U.S. Navy Regulations to include Article 1168, Non-consensual distribution or broadcasting of an image. In 2017, the Chief of Naval Operations released two messages; one discussing social media misconduct and the second in which he announces the requirement for mandatory administrative actions for officers and enlisted personnel who violate U.S. Navy Regulations Article 1168.*

*POC or office responsible: OPNAV N172*

*RFI Recommendation 9.4: The Service Chiefs should send verbal and written communications to Service members emphasizing that sexual harassment and sexual assault are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The message should embrace aggressive accountability of sexual harassment and sexual assault offenders, and those who were knowledgeable of the attacks and did nothing.*

*RFI Response 9.4: The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) regularly conducts Fleet engagements to interact with Sailors and spread the message that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated, condoned, or ignored. CNO appears in videos supporting Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month as well as Navy Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) and destructive behavior training vignettes. Additionally CNO provides written communications in the form of blogs, articles and media releases that serve to send a persistent and consistent message that sexual assault is a significant threat to the United States Navy, adversely*

*impacting readiness, morale, and retention. The Navy takes this threat seriously and is fully committed to sexual assault prevention, victim support, and appropriate offender accountability with due process of law. The CNO also emphasizes that Sailors are not bystanders and it is everyone's responsibility to intervene to help a shipmate if they observe or become aware of undesired and destructive behavior. Navy remains committed to cultivating an environment of respect and mutual dignity for all, where victims are supported and feel safe to report crimes.*

*POC or office responsible: OPNAV N172*

*RFI Recommendation 9.5: The Services should provide the same attention to preventing and responding to sexual harassment as they do to preventing and responding to sexual assault.*

*RFI Response 9.5: The Navy developed and released a Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response policy separate from the Equal Opportunity policy. The Sexual Harassment Prevention policy places greater emphasis on the prevention and response programs as well as increasing command climate specialist oversight in the informal, formal and anonymous report processes. The Equal Opportunity policy places greater emphasis on the command climate specialists role and responsibilities with the command climate assessment process, which includes the responses from participants on the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS).*

*POC or office responsible: OPNAV N173*