



## DACOWITS: Articles of Interest

### WELLNESS

#### [“Be Someone’s Hero” – Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part. Do Your Part.](#)

(3 Apr.) *Navy Live Blog*, By Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan  
*A Message from the Surgeon General*

#### [Army to probe sexual assault charges in Colombia](#)

(3 Apr.) *USA Today*, By Tom Vanden Brook

Army criminal investigators plan to probe allegations with officials in Colombia that American soldiers and contractors sexually assaulted civilians there, an Army spokesman said on Friday.

#### [Key West military jury acquits Coast Guardsman of sexually assaulting shipmate](#)

(4 Apr.) *Miami Herald*, By Anthony Cave

An all-male jury of five U.S. Coast Guardsmen on Friday acquitted Petty Officer 3rd Class Edwin R. Angulo of two counts of sexual assault in Key West.

#### [For military Millennials, 'duty or child?' is not just an issue for women](#)

(4 Apr.) *The Christian Science Monitor*, By Anne Mulrine

A new generation of troops – both men and women alike – is demanding more flexibility to care for the needs of children and families. Without change, many are not going to be able to stay in the service.

#### [Heavy dose of SHARP training planned for Special Forces](#)

(6 Apr.) *Army Times*, By Jim Tice

Special operations units affected by a recent decision to expand assignment opportunities for women have been ordered to conduct an ambitious regimen of equal opportunity and Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention training for their soldiers.

#### [Forbes, Others Question Navy Chaplain's Removal](#)

(6 Apr.) *Norfolk Virginian Pilot*, By Bill Bartel

Capt. Jon Fahs cited a half-dozen complaints filed by sailors in his letter to [Lt. Cmdr. Wesley] Modder, including: a sailor who said Modder told him homosexuality is wrong; a female sailor who says Modder told her she was "shaming herself in the eyes of God" for having premarital sex; and a pregnant sailor who says Modder criticized her for not being married.

#### [Army looking into allegations of sexual assault in Colombia](#)

(7 Apr.) *Stars & Stripes*, By Jon Harper

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command is looking into allegations that American soldiers sexually assaulted women and girls in Colombia.

#### [AFA Superintendent Wants to Talk about 'Uncomfortable' Topic](#)

(7 Apr.) *Colorado Springs Gazette*, By Debbie Kelley

Sexual assault is tough to talk about, says Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson, superintendent of the Air Force Academy.

#### [Navy Pitching Congress on Expanding Sailor Career Intermissions Ahead of Wider Personnel Reforms](#)

(7 Apr.) *USNI News*, By Sam LaGrone

The Navy is asking Congress to expand a pilot service sabbatical program ahead of a broader slate of internal personnel reforms. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus is expected to announce next month.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### [Special ops troops doubt women can do the job](#)

(4 Apr.) *Associated Press*, By Lolita C. Baldor

Surveys find that men in U.S. special operations forces do not believe women can meet the physical and mental demands of their commando jobs, and they fear the Pentagon will lower standards to integrate women into their elite units, according to interviews and documents obtained by The Associated Press.

### [Combat engineer MOS now open to women](#)

(5 Apr.) *Army Times*, By Michelle Tan

Senior Army leaders have opened the combat engineer military occupational specialty to female soldiers as part of the ongoing effort to integrate women into closed jobs, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said Thursday.

### [Special ops forces fear standards will be lowered for women](#)

(6 Apr.) *The Hill*, By Kristina Wong

Men in U.S. special operations forces do not believe women can meet the physical and mental standards to join their ranks, and fear the requirements will be lowered to integrate them into the elite units, polling shows.

### [Pentagon Faces Hurdle To Women In Special Ops: 'Uninformed' Men](#)

(7 Apr.) *Christian Science Monitor*, By Anna Mulrine

The men in the America's Special Operations Forces will not get a veto on women joining their ranks, but they do get an opinion, and a recent survey suggests that they are "uninformed," a Pentagon summary of the survey says.

### [Last IOC in Marine infantry experiment drops female officers](#)

(8 Apr.) *Marine Corps Times*, By Hope Hodge Seck

The two-and-a-half year period in which the Marine Corps' Infantry Officer Course became gender-integrated for research will end without a single female graduate.

### [Women, Diversity Are Military Mission Critical, Author Says](#)

(10 Apr.) *DoD News*, By Lisa Ferdinando

The military can take the lead in breaking down the biases against women and people of diverse backgrounds, to create a stronger force and set the path for the nation, said Sheryl Sandberg, best-selling author of "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead," who spoke April 9 to a standing-room audience at the Pentagon.

## EXTRA

### [Marines revamping social media strategy for recruitment](#)

(7 Apr.) *Marine Corps Times*, By Derrick Perkins

After launching a new commercial advertising campaign last month, the Corps could soon revamp the way it uses Twitter to court potential Marines.

### [Women could compete next year in Best Ranger Competition](#)

(7 Apr.) *Army Times*, By Michelle Tan

When 51 two-man teams step off the starting line at this year's Best Ranger Competition, it could be the last time the famously tough event is men-only.

### [Transgender in the military: A Pentagon in transition weighs its policy](#)

(9 Apr.) *The Washington Post*, By Juliet Eilperin

Over the past decade, Sgt. Shane Ortega has served three combat tours: Two in Iraq, one in Afghanistan. Two as a Marine and one in the Army. Two as a woman and one as a man.

### **“Be Someone’s Hero” – Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part. Do Your Part.**

(3 Apr.) *Navy Live Blog*, By Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan

April marks Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month and I take this issue very seriously. That means I have a zero tolerance policy when it comes to sexual assault and I expect the same from everyone – Sailor or Civilian – throughout the entire Navy Medicine enterprise.

Increasing awareness and preventing sexual assault is a priority all year round, but as April begins, I also want to emphasize the important role Navy Medicine plays in preventing these crimes and the care we provide when these incidents occur that can tarnish our Navy, a career, and lives.

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In order to eliminate sexual assault from our service, every Sailor must know, understand and adhere to standards of behavior. When we join the Navy, we join a professional organization and pledge to uphold the core values of honor, courage and commitment. I'm counting on you to live by those tenets. Recognize your role in sexual assault prevention and know when, where, and how to intervene. Be an intrusive leader. Is it awkward at times to step in and "stop the fun" when it goes too far? Yes, it can be, but do it! Be someone's hero. Be that Sailor who has the courage and pride to intrude, to protect someone from another or perhaps themselves. Your actions could change the trajectory of someone's life from misery to success.

I am distraught any time I hear of a sexual assault within our ranks. It is inconceivable to me that our shipmates would assault one another or anyone else. These are the same comrades who entrust their lives to one another at sea, on the battlefield and in the workplace. Sexual assault destroys trust, it erodes morale among shipmates, and it degrades our mission readiness and operational effectiveness. The bottom line is sexual assault is a crime and will not be tolerated.

This year's theme for Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month is "Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part. Do Your Part."

Sexual assault prevention requires each of us to actively participate and stay engaged in the lives of our shipmates and colleagues. You are leaders at every level. If you see a shipmate who is harassing someone or being harassed, exert your leadership, demonstrate the Navy's core values and take action – in other words, do your part. We must take care of

## **Army to probe sexual assault charges in Colombia**

(3 Apr.) *USA Today*, By Tom Vanden Brook

WASHINGTON — Army criminal investigators plan to probe allegations with officials in Colombia that American soldiers and contractors sexually assaulted civilians there, an Army spokesman said on Friday.

The planned joint investigation will look into "all credible allegations of sexual assault" by U.S. forces in Colombia, said Chris Grey, spokesman for the Army's Criminal Investigation Command. Grey noted that a previous allegation regarding the sexual assault of an underage girl by a soldier and a contractor turned out to be unfounded.

American troops and contractors have supported the Colombian government for years in its fight against Marxist insurgents. A U.S.-backed offensive, begun in 2002 by Colombia, has decimated the largest insurgent group, known as FARC.

The new allegations involve more than 50 girls who were allegedly assaulted by soldiers and contractors, with some of the attacks being taped, according to published reports. There

one another because the safety, dignity, and well-being of our Sailors and Marines is a responsibility we all share.

Navy Medicine directly supports sexual assault awareness and prevention programs, not only through our training and education efforts, but also by ensuring the availability of care for those who have been victimized. We have proficient, confident and caring Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) providers ready to perform 24 hours a day, seven days a week to meet the immediate and long-term medical needs of sexual assault victims. SAFE providers – including sexual assault nurse examiners, physicians, physician assistants, advanced practice nurse practitioners and independent duty corpsmen – are trained and available to ensure timely and appropriate medical care for sexual assault victims in all military platforms served by Navy Medicine. We currently have more than 875 SAFE-trained providers serving aboard ships, alongside Marines, and in our military treatment facilities.

I expect everyone at every level, regardless of your rank, role or position, in Navy Medicine to be engaged. Together, by knowing our part and doing our part, we can eliminate sexual assault from our Navy.

Thank you for your service and the work you do every day. It is my honor to serve as your surgeon general.

*Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan is Navy Surgeon General and Chief, U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.*

<http://navylive.dodlive.mil/2015/04/03/a-message-from-the-surgeon-general-be-someones-hero-eliminate-sexual-assault-know-your-part-do-your-part/>

has been no record that these attacks have been reported, Grey said.

"Special agents from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command are currently coordinating with Colombian authorities and will initiate an investigation into any credible allegations of sexual assault or criminal acts committed by U.S. soldiers while in that country," Grey said. "We take this issue very seriously and will aggressively pursue all credible allegations."

In the case of the soldier and contractor, Army investigators sought to interview the alleged victim, Grey said. But her attorneys declined to participate, he said.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/04/03/army-colombia-sexual-assault/25252341/>

## Key West military jury acquits Coast Guardsman of sexually assaulting shipmate

(4 Apr.) *Miami Herald*, By Anthony Cave

An all-male jury of five U.S. Coast Guardsmen on Friday acquitted Petty Officer 3rd Class Edwin R. Angulo of two counts of sexual assault in Key West.

Deliberations in the court martial, which started Tuesday, at Coast Guard Sector Key West lasted about three hours. The jury composed of men who appeared to be their early to mid-30s,

Angulo, 26, had faced a maximum of 60 years in prison if convicted of violating Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. He was accused of sexually assaulting a 19-year-old Coast Guard seaman (she's now 21) at his off-base apartment on two separate occasions in November and December 2013.

A Coast Guard training room, complete with various Coast Guard action photos, doubled as the courtroom for the court martial, a military version of a criminal trial.

Following several procedural matters, the U.S. government, represented by Coast Guard Lt. Jeremy Weiss and Lt. Bianca Barcelo, and the defense, represented by Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nathaniel Gross and Lt. Tracy Waller, laid out their cases Thursday.

"This is a case about mutual, consensual sex, two occasions of mutual sex that [the accuser] later regretted," Gross said in an opening statement.

The government argued confusion and that the accuser did not remember what happened on both occasions, thus a lack of consent.

"He reasonably should have known that the victim was intoxicated and incapable of consenting," Barcelo said.

Variations of the story from all the witnesses and both counsels was that, in the first incident, the accuser told Angulo to call her a cab after they danced together at the Garden of Eden bar on Duval Street. She said after blacking out, she woke up with Angulo having sex with her.

She testified that a month later, she went to Angulo's apartment with her roommate and others before falling asleep and waking up to Angulo having sex with her again.

The accuser, now stationed at Coast Guard Station Islamorada, was contradictory in her testimony when cross-examined by the defense.

She told the court, for example, that she has had alcohol only about three times since joining the Coast Guard in July 2013. However, the accuser's roommate said they drank almost every weekend.

The defense also read the accuser a series of text messages she sent to her roommate in which she indicated she was drunk. Several of her answers also differed from what she said during an Article 32 investigatory hearing Nov. 14. For example, at that hearing, she said she spoke to Angulo at Higgs Beach after the December 2013 incident because it was a populated area. But, in court, she said she spoke with him there because it was a private area.

The crux of Thursday's proceedings was whether the accuser was drunk enough to consent to sex on both occasions. The defense called in a court-recognized expert witness, Lt. Col. Scott Moran, an Army psychiatrist, to testify.

On both occasions, the accuser allegedly drank at least two rum and Cokes and one shot of fireball whiskey.

"It would be unlikely that someone who had four to six drinks over a four-hour period would be highly intoxicated," Moran said.

The accuser's roommate also contributed to the consent debate. "She didn't remember asking for it but she didn't say no," the roommate said of one of the incidents.

The defense twice motioned to dismiss the case. Coast Guard Capt. Christine Cutter, the judge, denied both motions. Gross said there was not a "scintilla of evidence" that on either occasion Angulo should have known that the accuser was incapacitated.

Angulo did not testify during the court martial. Both he and the accuser were stationed on the Key West-based cutter *Thetis* at the time she alleged he assaulted her.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/florida-keys/article17331791.html>

## For military Millennials, 'duty or child?' is not just an issue for women

(4 Apr.) *The Christian Science Monitor*, By Anne Mulrine

A soldier from the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division had a particularly tough question this week for Defense Secretary Ashton Carter: Could the Army help her keep her job and her child?

"I'm a single mother, and I'm faced with some custody issues," the soldier, who is slated to be stationed in South Korea, told Mr. Carter in front of assembled troops at Fort

Drum in Jefferson County, N.Y. "Basically, it's going to be choosing between my career in the Army or my child."

With one two-month exception, the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain's brigades have been deployed for 14 straight years in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as South Korea among other places.

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She wanted to know if the Army could do anything to help. “It’s either I go and I lose my child, or I have to get out of the Army. And that’s the choice that I’m faced with currently, sir.”

“OK, well that’s a lousy choice,” Carter agreed, according to Department of Defense transcripts. “It’s not a choice that I want us to be driving you to.” He invited her to get in touch with his office later to discuss the particulars.

The exchange touches on a general dilemma with which the Pentagon has been increasingly grappling: As female troops are being encouraged to participate in the US military in more meaningful ways, senior Pentagon officials are struggling to figure out how the armed services can be flexible enough to make things work on the home front.

These are the sorts of changes that will not only appeal to women, but to Millennial men, too, top defense officials believe. Indeed, though the American military has long been built around the patriarchal nuclear family, a new generation of troops – both men and women alike – is demanding more flexibility in order to stay in the service.

“They have a different way of thinking about their careers, about choice, about what excites them – about what they want to do in the way of friends and family and everything else,” Carter noted.

It was a point that he emphasized repeatedly to the troops, assuring soldiers and their commanders that he was urging those working for him to “think outside the five-sided box called the Pentagon about how we need to change so that we remain attractive to our children and our children’s children.”

At Fort Drum, Carter met “folks that are right on the cusp of making the decision themselves about whether to stick with us or go off and do something else in life,” he told an audience at Syracuse University, a day after his visit to the 10th Mountain Division headquarters.

But the military will not be able to keep these troops, he added, without being willing to change.

“And the only way to change is to be open,” Carter added, “so that we’re relevant, that we’re attractive, that we’re exciting to you and to the generations that come after you.”

The Air Force was all of these things to Heather Penney when she was a young lieutenant running to her jet on the morning of the 9-11 terrorist attacks.

An F-16 pilot, she had just been briefed on her mission: to down United Flight 93, which was at that moment headed for Washington, DC.

This wrenching order was complicated by a key detail: There was no ammunition loaded onto the jet. There simply wasn’t time.

Then-Lieutenant Penney knew what that meant – her success would entail ramming the commercial airliner down, a kamikaze mission.

Passengers on that flight famously downed the plane themselves in a Pennsylvania field, likely saving lives in the nation’s capital.

For Penney, accepting the mission was something she had done without hesitation. Knowing there was a strong likelihood she wouldn’t return, the one thought going through her mind, she says, was “Dear God, don’t let me [expletive] it up.”

It’s a dedication that comes with the job, she says, eschewing any talk of heroism with the proviso that “I was just the wingman that day.”

But what ultimately ended her career was logistics: She had two young daughters and was a single mother.

“There was no way I could do it – I couldn’t manage my household responsibilities, manage my daughters, and put in the long hours necessary to remain a competent fighter pilot,” a job that requires constant training.

So she put in her retirement papers. “Having to leave the F-16 and leave that mission set – my squadron – it was heartbreaking. I loved the mission. I loved the jet. I loved my brother pilots.”

She was not alone in having to make that tough decision, she adds.

“A lot of the women experienced similar dynamics that I did, whether or not they were married,” Penney says. “To go 20 years, to be a lieutenant colonel, is very, very challenging – and it comes at a cost.”

Today, there are some 85 women actively flying in fighter cockpits, which is roughly two percent of all fighter-rated pilots. Women also tend to leave the military service at twice the rate of men.

In a nod to this fact, Air Force Secretary Deborah James announced a series of initiatives last month to give more flexibility to its top performers.

For starters, it allows these troops to step out of active duty for one to three years without losing their place in line for promotion, so they can “meet personal and professional needs,” Secretary James said at a conference at the Center for a New American Security, a think tank in Washington. These would include to raise a family “and alleviate life concerns.”

This sort of flexibility appeals not only to women, but to men as well, says Penney, who was tapped by the Air Force chief of staff to help spearhead a panel to investigate how to better retain troops.

What the panel found, she says, was that men were just as interested in the topic. Members of her team were “shocked” at the number of male officers who sought them out asking to take part in focus groups, because they had something to say.

This included men “who were frustrated that they felt culturally unable to do things like coach their kids’ little league teams, or take time off work to go to parent-teacher conferences,” Penney says. “They wanted to be present – they didn’t want to just delegate that responsibility to a spouse.”

They were thinking of their wives as well, since many were partnered up with fellow military officers. “These were men who wanted to marry someone who has a career, and who is maybe just as driven to stay in the service.”

This sort of flexibility appeals to an entire generation of Millennials, says retired Gen. David Barno, who commanded US forces in Afghanistan from 2003-05 and has two sons who were commissioned as officers in the US military.

“One just got out; one is teetering on the edge,” he says. “Their values are very much about quality of life. Moving every two years and not having a family – they’re not going to do that.”

Indeed, a recent survey among young male officers found that their values more closely mirror that of women than those of

older men, says Mr. Barno, now a distinguished practitioner in residence at American University’s School of International Service in Washington.

But presently, the way the services manage assignments “is predicated on the 1950s nuclear family with a stay-at-home, portable spouse,” Penney adds. “If we continue down this path we will be breaking families in order to serve, or unnecessarily limiting our talent pool.”

It’s a realization the military is gradually coming to terms with, Carter told the troops at Fort Drum.

The Pentagon is now exploring ways to expand the Air Force’s pilot program to “let you pause your service for education, for a new work experience outside, for family,” he said.

“How you find a next assignment that fits you – your skills, your family, your future and your goals in life. We need to be competitive in that way,” he added. “That’s changing for every other employer in our economy – and we need to change, too.”

[http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2015/0404/For-military-Millennials-duty-or-child-is-not-just-an-issue-for-women?cmid=addthis\\_twitter](http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2015/0404/For-military-Millennials-duty-or-child-is-not-just-an-issue-for-women?cmid=addthis_twitter)

## Heavy dose of SHARP training planned for Special Forces

(6 Apr.) *Army Times*, By Jim Tice

Special operations units affected by a recent decision to expand assignment opportunities for women have been ordered to conduct an ambitious regimen of equal opportunity and Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Prevention training for their soldiers.

The SHARP requirement responds to a Feb. 25 mandate from Army Secretary John McHugh to open 4,100 officer and enlisted “male only” positions in special operations units of the Regular Army, National Guard and Army Reserve to women.

The directive does not apply to the closed combat occupations and skills that comprise a bulk of the soldier jobs in Special Forces, Ranger and similar-type direct combat units.

However, Pentagon officials told Congress in mid-March that all military positions, not just those in the Army, will be opened to women by next year. Implementing guidance for those changes is expected to be announced this fall.

Special operations organizations open to women are:

- Army Special Operations Command (Airborne)
- Army National Guard Special Forces Group (Airborne) Battalions

- Military Information Support Operations Command Tactical Psychological Teams
- Special Forces Military Free Fall Operations, and associated additional skill identifiers 4X for officers and W8 for enlisted soldiers.
- The changes are part of an ongoing campaign to eliminate the Direct Ground Combat Assignment Rule by dismantling, in phases, policies that have barred women from serving in combat units below the brigade level.
- Human Resources Command, as well as S-1 and G-1 personnel officials at division, brigade and battalion levels, have been instructed to actively manage the assignment of women to these units to ensure the appropriate manning of female cadre who can serve as role models, according to guidance issued by HRC March 23.
- The SHARP training will be conducted immediately down to the squad level in units that have been assigned women.

In units that are not assigned women within the next three weeks, SHARP training will be conducted within one month for the active component, and within three months after the assignment of women to reserve component units.

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In addition to subject matter identified in the Army's 2013 stand-down order on SHARP training (HQDA Executive Order 161-13), training will include:

- "Who's on Your Team," a video from the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, and a follow-on small group discussion and command climate survey.
- Equal opportunity and SHARP training packages available on Army websites.
- Standard counseling for newly arrived women will be conducted in accordance with SHARP requirements defined in Army Regulation 623-3 and Army Pamphlet 623-3 on the officer and NCO evaluation reporting systems.

As the Army continues to assess the viability of opening additional jobs to women, the following specialties and skills remain closed to women:

**Branch Officer Areas of Concentration:**

11A (Infantry), 18A (Special Forces); 19A (Armor, general); 19B (Armor) and 19C (Cavalry)

**Branch Officer Skill Identifiers:**

3J (M1A2 Abrams tank); 3X (M2 and M3 Bradley fighting vehicles); 3Z (mortar unit officer); 4W (underwater special operations); 5R (Ranger) and 5S (Ranger parachutist)

**Warrant Officer Military Occupational Specialty:**

180A (Special Forces warrant officer)

**Warrant Officer Additional Skill Identifiers:**

4W (underwater Special Forces)

**Enlisted Military Occupational Specialties:**

**Forbes, Others Question Navy Chaplain's Removal**

*(6 Apr.) Norfolk Virginian Pilot, By Bill Bartel*

Lt. Cmdr. Wesley Modder has never served in Hampton Roads.

But the Navy chaplain – who's fighting accusations that he pushed conservative Christian views about sexual relations and homosexuality on sailors – has drawn the interest of local congressmen.

U.S. Rep. Randy Forbes, a Chesapeake Republican and co-chairman of the Congressional Prayer Caucus, is questioning the Navy's treatment of Modder. He led 34 other Republican legislators in sending a letter last week to the Secretary of the Navy asking for an explanation.

11B (infantryman); 11C (indirect fire infantryman); 11Z (infantry senior sergeant); 13B (canon crewmember); 13D (Field Artillery Automated Tactical Data System specialist); and 3F (fire support specialist).

Also, 18B (Special Forces weapons sergeant); 18C (SF engineer sergeant); 18D (SF medical sergeant); 18E (SF communications sergeant); 18F (SF assistant operations and intelligence sergeant); 18Z (SF senior sergeant); 16D (cavalry scout); 19K (M1 armor crewman); and 19Z (armor senior sergeant).

**Enlisted Additional Skill Identifiers:**

A1 (M270A1 Multiple Launch Rocket System and High Mobility Artillery Rocket System); A8 (master gunnery M1 and M1A tank); B7 (Bradley Transition Course), B8 (Anti-Armor Leaders course); C2 (Dragon gunnery); E9 (M901 Improved TOW Vehicle gunner and crew training) and F9 (Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data system).

Also, J3 (Bradley infantry fighting vehicle master gunner); K8 (master gunnery M1A1 tank); K9 (combat engineer mine detection dog handler); Q5 (Special Forces combat diving, medical); R4 (Stryker armored vehicle operations and maintenance) and R8 (mobile gun system master gunner).

And, S6 (Special Forces combat diving, supervision); U6 (field artillery weapons maintenance); W3 (Special Forces target interdiction operations); W7 (Special Forces underwater operations); 2C (Javelin gunnery) and 6B (Long Range surveillance Leaders Course).

**Enlisted Skill Qualification Identifiers**

G (Ranger); T (1st Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta unit operator); V (Ranger parachutist); and W (Special Forces advanced reconnaissance, target analysis and exploitation techniques).

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2015/04/06/women-special-operations-sharp/70486122/>

Modder was removed from his counseling duties at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in February because he "failed to show tolerance and respect" and "discriminated against students who were of different faiths and backgrounds," according to the notice given to Modder by Capt. Jon Fahs, leader of the command in Goose Creek, S.C., near Charleston. The command trains sailors in the operation of nuclear-powered vessels.

Fahs cited a half-dozen complaints filed by sailors in his letter to Modder, including: a sailor who said Modder told him homosexuality is wrong; a female sailor who says Modder told her she was "shaming herself in the eyes of God" for having

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premarital sex; and a pregnant sailor who says Modder criticized her for not being married.

Modder denies the allegations. He is working with a Texas-based religious rights advocacy group called the Liberty Institute. Modder "is compelled by his sincerely held religious beliefs to offer encouragement and hope from a Biblical perspective," wrote attorney Michael Berry in his response to the Navy. And the chaplain never initiated conversations about sexuality or marriage, Berry wrote.

The case prompted the Navy's chief of chaplains, Rear Adm. Margaret Kibben, to send a letter last month to all 803 active-duty Navy, Marine and Coast Guard chaplains reminding them of their duties and promising "clearer guidance" on the religious counseling that they provide.

Without mentioning Modder, Kibben urged chaplains to contact her if they feel "compelled to act in any way that is contrary to the tenets of your faith or fear reprisal" for sharing their beliefs.

That was in response to Modder, who contacted news outlets and the Liberty Institute after being removed from his job but did not call his higher-ups, according to Kibben's office.

The Family Research Council has also pressed for Modder's reinstatement, sending an online petition with 100,000 names to the secretary of defense last week.

The letter from Forbes and other legislators, sent to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Kibben, questioned whether Modder can be disciplined in response to complaints from sailors about his views on premarital sex and homosexuality. The legislators noted that the chaplain, with more than 19 years in the military, is sponsored by the Assemblies of God, a denomination that believes sexual relations outside of heterosexual marriage are sinful.

"These beliefs do not constitute a legally viable reason to bring action against Chaplain Modder or any member of the military," the letter states. All but five of the 35 signers are members of the prayer caucus, which Forbes founded and leads. Two other Virginia congressmen, Rob Wittman of Westmoreland County and Bob Goodlatte of Shenandoah Valley, also signed.

At the center of the issue is whether Modder violated rules that chaplains must follow in counseling sessions, particularly with sailors who don't share their faith, according to Navy officials. Military chaplains' duties include conducting religious services and counseling military personnel of their specific denomination in the tenets of their faith.

They also provide counseling to all service members, regardless of beliefs, in private sessions that are requested by a service member. In these one-on-one meetings, chaplains are required to take an interfaith approach and not press their own religious views. The sessions can walk a fine line because a chaplain's counseling is guided by his or her own beliefs, but unless a person asks directly, a chaplain is not to offer judgment on the person's actions.

This part of military chaplains' duty is what differentiates them from civilian ministers, priests, rabbis and imams, said Christianne Witten, a spokeswoman for Kibben.

They must treat each person with "dignity, respect and compassion, irrespective of an individual's beliefs," Witten said. Navy chaplains offer military members and their families "a safe place to talk, free from judgment and shaming, with unbreakable confidentiality."

In correspondence with Modder, Capt. Fahs wrote that he was recommending the chaplain's "detachment for cause" – meaning he could be forced out of the Navy – because he found multiple allegations against Modder to be credible. Modder failed a chaplain's "core capabilities," Fahs wrote: to be "sensitive to the religious, spiritual, moral, cultural and personal differences of those you serve." The disciplinary action, he told Modder, came from a failure to comply with counseling standards and "not the exercise of your religion." In addition to complaints from sailors, investigators assigned by Fahs also gathered sworn statements critical of Modder from another chaplain at the South Carolina command and staff in the chaplains' office, according to Navy personnel familiar with the investigation.

Berry, speaking on behalf of his client, said Modder acknowledges meeting with the sailors involved but contends that comments he made about his beliefs were in response to their questions. His comments were not personal attacks, Berry said.

Modder, who started at the command last April, finds the charges against him offensive, Berry said.

"He doesn't even read from the Bible without permission from the person he's speaking with," the attorney said.

"If he had been aware of another chaplain who was doing the things that he was accused of doing, he would have attempted to correct that chaplain," Berry said. "This is why this is so offensive to him, that somebody would accuse him of doing things that – his exact words were 'I find these things to be vulgar.'"

Modder, a 19-year-veteran who served much of his time in California, was questioned during the investigation. He is temporarily assigned to another unit near Charleston, where he conducts Assembly of God services and counsels those who wish to meet with him.

His case will eventually be reviewed by the Navy Personnel Command. Modder can present a defense, and could be required to make his case to a panel of officers for staying in the Navy.

"We are looking for him to be restored – for the Navy to make him whole again," Berry said. "And to hold those who have taken this inappropriate action accountable."

Meanwhile, Kibben is slated to meet in the coming days with Forbes and a handful of legislators to address their concerns. The lawmakers also want to talk about the Navy's protection of religious freedom.

<http://hamptonroads.com/2015/04/forbes-others-question-navy-chaplains-removal>



## Army looking into allegations of sexual assault in Colombia

(7 Apr.) *Stars & Stripes*, By Jon Harper

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command is looking into allegations that American soldiers sexually assaulted women and girls in Colombia.

The allegations were made last week in a report issued by the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, according to news reports.

The FARC, an insurgent group that has been designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department, has been accused of numerous atrocities, including rape and sexual slavery.

“U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command will, after coordinating with Colombian authorities, initiate an investigation into any credible allegations of sexual assault or criminal acts committed by U.S. soldiers while in that country,” said Christopher Grey, a spokesman with Army CID, the command’s common acronym. “We take the issue very seriously and will aggressively pursue all credible allegations.”

Grey emphasized that no criminal investigation has been launched, and the recently initiated cooperation with the Colombian government is not a joint investigation.

## AFA Superintendent Wants to Talk about 'Uncomfortable' Topic

(7 Apr.) *Colorado Springs Gazette*, By Debbie Kelley

Sexual assault is tough to talk about, says Lt. Gen. Michelle Johnson, superintendent of the Air Force Academy.

But that's what she's doing.

She's talking to cadets, and she's talking in public. Her goal is to erase rape and other non-consensual sexual behavior from the slate of transgressions at the academy.

"It's hazardous ground if people are harming each other," she said. "The thing we've found that's necessary is to have the conversation. We are making efforts to be more frank. It's uncomfortable, but we have to be uncomfortable."

Johnson spoke Thursday about sexual assault prevention at an annual gathering of leadership and staff of the four local higher education institutions: the AFA, Colorado College, Pikes Peak Community College and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

College campuses, including military service academies, have come under fire after a White House report concluded that one in five women is sexually assaulted in college, and only one in eight students report the event.

This isn't the first time that U.S. servicemembers have been accused of sex-related crimes in Colombia. An underage Colombian girl claimed that she was raped in 2007 by a U.S. soldier and an American military contractor. Grey said Army CID looked into those allegations but determined they were unfounded.

Army CID just learned of the latest allegations, according to Grey.

“New allegations that have been recently reported are new allegations that we have no record of ever previously being reported,” he said.

Determining their credibility will be no easy task, according to Grey.

“This takes a lot of legwork to be able to pursue something like this,” he said. “It takes time and effort to substantiate these type of things.”

In the past, the U.S. military has deployed troops to Colombia to assist the Bogota government in its battles with insurgent groups and drug traffickers.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/army-looking-into-allegations-of-sexual-assault-in-colombia-1.338865>

A Pentagon report released in February found the academy is no different: that as many as one in five women in the cadet wing had experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact during their time there.

However, reports of sexual misconduct at the academy dropped from 45 in 2013 to 27 in 2014, the Pentagon noted, and said the academy's programs to decrease sexual assault met expectations.

Johnson said 1 to 2 percent of the academy's 4,000 cadets commit crimes or are subject to disciplinary measures.

"We don't want any to (be involved with illicit activity), but I don't have a wand to wave over and automatically deliver a halo at basic training," she said. "Our values are maybe different than what they had at home."

Johnson said 20 percent of reported incidents among cadets are allegations of rape -- unwanted penetrative assault on someone's body, male or female.

Another 20 percent are issues that happened to cadets before they came to the academy, whether at home or in prior military service or elsewhere.

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The remaining 60 percent of reports fall into the category of "unwanted touching," Johnson said. "Things people used to laugh off, but not anymore."

She referred to lyrics in the musical "Grease," when buddies ask John Travolta's character, "Did she put up a fight?"

"That was funny then. But guess what? Getting to second base if she doesn't want it is sexual assault," Johnson said. "The norms have changed. We need to have this conversation to understand what that is with 20-year-olds."

The academy has ramped up programs to educate cadets about sexual assault and prevention since a 2003 scandal, when dozens of women claimed their reports were mishandled or ignored.

The academy is still awaiting the results of a Pentagon Inspector General inquiry into how the school handles allegations of sexual assault against athletes, driven in part by a 2014 Gazette investigation into misconduct.

Johnson said new programs include a campaign to negate negativity of social media badmouthing, such as what happens on Yik Yak, an anonymous messaging app that's popular on college campuses.

## **Navy Pitching Congress on Expanding Sailor Career Intermissions Ahead of Wider Personnel Reforms**

*(7 Apr.) USNI News, By Sam LaGrone*

The Navy is asking Congress to expand a pilot service sabbatical program ahead of a broader slate of internal personnel reforms Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus is expected to announce next month.

The expansion of the Career Intermission Program from a pilot project that gives the opportunity for sailors to transition from active duty to the reserves for three years is designed to make the Navy a more attractive career option for the service's most talented, the Chief of Naval Personnel told USNI News in an interview last week.

"Frankly when you look at the pool of people that is available to recruit to do this work, it's shrinking and we're in competition with industry and corporate America others and we have to do a better job," CNP Vice Adm. Bill Moran said. The first step would expand the pilot CIP from the current limit of 40 sailors per year.

Following expanding the numbers, "the second part is to lift the restrictions of the folks that are on the minimum service requirement (MSR). So take an aviator that's on an eight-year MSR, they cannot even apply to this program until they are done with that eight year MSR — surface warriors five years, [a] submariner five years," Moran said.

"The third part of this is to remove the restriction of anyone that's under a critical skills retention bonus. We would allow those people to be also able to apply and we would freeze the bonus until they're complete with the program and pick it up back later so that we still get our money's worth for people in this program."

Cadets also now have access to a safety application for smartphones that enables them to call for help with the press of a button, she said.

April is "National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month," and Johnson said the academy will participate in the annual "Take Back the Night" campaign on April 16 and hold several special events. Cadets again made a video, "The Pledge," in conjunction with "It's On Us," a presidential campaign across U.S. college campuses and service academies to inspire students to take an active role in preventing sexual assault.

Cadets reiterate that they will not participate in derogatory statements or sexual violence and they will view every person as a human being, hold each other to high standards and stand up to those who try to take advantage of other people.

"If we don't get this right, it will make moot all the other great efforts we're trying to get out there," Johnson said.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/04/07/afa-superintendent-wants-to-talk-about-uncomfortable-topic.html?comp=1199436026997&rank=2>

Service leaders beyond Moran have said allowing top performing sailors more flexibility to choose their path in the service outside of their year group is positive.

"We come in and we're sort of in a conga line. What year group are you in? In whatever amount of years, you will make J.G., lieutenant or whatever. It doesn't really matter how talented you are, for a while," Chief of Naval Operations Jonathan Greenert said last month during the roll out of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard revision of its cooperative maritime strategy.

"We've got to work our way out of the year group mentality, get some flexibility into that, allow them to blossom and take maybe some time to go off and do other things somewhere else in the career."

The ultimate goal for the service would be to eliminate the year group concept following the first few years sailors are in — for enlisted its End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS), for officers, the MSR.

"You can think of this in terms of people that go before promotion boards and how they come out of those promotion boards in terms of when we promote them based on the level of performance," Moran said.

"In other words, not all lumped together by their year groups. There are other ways to deal with the year-group challenge inside the current policy and authorities we have to work with. He added, "we've given the secretary some thoughts trying to consider on how to ratchet up a commanding officers ability to recognize talent when they see it."

Moran wouldn't detail specifics of the effort ahead of their approval by Mabus.

However, USNI News has learned of some of the changes the service is considering, including:

- Changes in officer promotion boards that allow commanders to more easily identify talented officers for promotion below the zone and allow officers with commensurate talent an equal chance of promotion independent of time in service.
- Changes in enlisted advancement that would give commanders greater meritorious promotion options for sailors in the E-1 to E-6 paygrades.
- Allow type commanders (TYCOMs) and other commands more say into screening personnel records to identify top performers for early promotion.

The first set of internal changes could happen as part of the Navy's Fiscal Year 2016 promotion board guidance, USNI News understands.

The internal Navy changes are happening in parallel with a wider push from the Pentagon to get and keep the best troops for the U.S. military.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter outlined a similar set of initiatives at Abington Senior High School in Pennsylvania in a March 30 speech.

"As the so-called 9/11 generation begins to leave our ranks, the Defense Department must continue to bring in talented Americans, from your generation and others," Carter said.

## Special ops troops doubt women can do the job

(4 Apr.) Associated Press, By Lolita C. Baldor

WASHINGTON (AP) — Surveys find that men in U.S. special operations forces do not believe women can meet the physical and mental demands of their commando jobs, and they fear the Pentagon will lower standards to integrate women into their elite units, according to interviews and documents obtained by The Associated Press.

Studies that surveyed personnel found "major misconceptions" within special operations about whether women should be brought into the male-only jobs. They also revealed concerns that department leaders would "capitulate to political pressure, allowing erosion of training standards," according to one document.

Some of those concerns were not limited to men, researchers found, but also were found among women in special operations jobs.

Dan Bland, force management director for U.S. Special Operations Command, told the AP that the survey results have "already driven us to do some different things in terms of educating the force."

About 68,800 people serve in the command, including 3,000 civilians. The main survey went to about 18,000 people who are in positions closed to women, and the response was about 50 percent. The high response rate, officials said, reflects the wide interest in the subject.

The studies are part of the Pentagon's effort to open all military combat positions to women or provide reasons why any jobs should remain closed.

One survey, by RAND Corp., reflected doubts that women could meet the overall job demands, found concerns that sexual harassment or assault could increase, and cited worries about "unequal treatment" of special operations candidates and

"We have to look at ways to promote people based not just on when they joined, and even more on their performance and talent."

More sweeping personnel reform will require legislative changes.

For officers it would be changes to the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act of 1980. DOPMA (pronounced DOP-Mah) outlines a rigid structure of year groups from the ranks of ensign to captain (O-1 to O-6) and a so-called "up-or-out" structure that forces retirement on an officer passed over for promotion.

Moran said Carter's remarks and the signals he's seen from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) are leaning toward broader legislative moves to reform DOPMA and changes to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

"[Carter's] talked about — and I've even heard Sen. [John] McCain (R-Ariz.) talk about — this reevaluating the impacts and the future of Goldwater-Nichols, looking at DOPMA reform, looking at year group management," Moran said. "Those are things coming from leaders way above my paygrade and I'm encouraged by that dialogue."

<http://news.usni.org/2015/04/07/navy-pitching-congress-on-expanding-sailor-career-intermissions-ahead-of-wider-personnel-reforms>

personnel. Some worried that if women were let in to some jobs, they might be treated more harshly.

Survey details have not been released. This was the first time that officials from Special Operations Command publicly discussed the results.

Andy Hamilton, who works with Bland and has expertise on this issue, noted that women in special operations jobs had concerns, too, about the broader integration.

"They're concerned that this might result in the lowering of the standards in what are currently our male-only occupations, and that would then reflect on either them or on the women who come into those occupations," said Hamilton.

Pentagon leaders lifted the ban on women in combat jobs in 2012, but gave the military services time to integrate women gradually and systematically into the male-only front-line positions. By January 2016, the military must open all combat jobs to women or explain why any exceptions must be made. Positions within the special operations forces, including the clandestine Navy SEAL and Army Delta units, are considered the most grueling and difficult jobs in the military, with training and qualifying courses that push troops to their physical, mental and emotional limits. The commandos often work in small teams in harsh, remote locations.

As a result, those jobs are some of the last to be addressed as commanders review the qualifications needed and assess the impact of bringing in women.

As integration unfolds, the surveys have brought home the reality that there are "some reservations or misperceptions in the force in terms of why we're doing this," Bland said. Defense officials have stressed that they will not reduce standards in order to let in women.

Women have so far had mixed results as they try to move into the more demanding combat positions — jobs for which men also have difficulty qualifying.

So far, about 7,200 positions within the special operations forces have been opened to women, including combat jobs in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, a specialized unit used to fly forces fast, low and deep behind enemy lines at night. For the first time, a woman last year made it through training and began serving as a pilot in the unit. Three female pilots, 25 women in other jobs, and 16 other women are now going through initial training for these helicopter crews, known as Night Stalkers.

Most female soldiers do not want combat jobs, an earlier survey found. But among those who do, the Night Stalkers were a popular choice.

Women have moved into Army artillery jobs and serve on Navy submarines and in the naval Riverine units. But none has made it through the Marine Corps' officer infantry course. Special operations command leaders have made it clear that genuine concerns exist about incorporating women into some jobs.

In 2013, when the planning was in its infancy, then-Maj. Gen. Bennet Sacolick spoke of demanding nature of missions

### **Combat engineer MOS now open to women**

*(5 Apr.) Army Times, By Michelle Tan*

Senior Army leaders have opened the combat engineer military occupational specialty to female soldiers as part of the ongoing effort to integrate women into closed jobs, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said Thursday.

"We've just approved opening up all positions in engineer to females, we're very close to approving all positions in field artillery for females," Odierno said during a virtual town hall with troops.

He expects a decision about armor and infantry will be made "sometime in October" once the Army completes its tests and analysis.

The only engineer MOS that was closed to women was 12B, combat engineer.

Odierno made it clear that the decision to open positions to women was made by the defense secretary 18 months ago.

### **Special ops forces fear standards will be lowered for women**

*(6 Apr.) The Hill, By Kristina Wong*

Men in U.S. special operations forces do not believe women can meet the physical and mental standards to join their ranks, and fear the requirements will be lowered to integrate them into the elite units, polling shows.

The surveys, reported by The Associated Press, found widespread concerns in special ops that Pentagon leaders would "capitulate to political pressure, allowing erosion of training standards."

requiring forces "to operate in small, self-contained teams, many of which are in austere, geographically isolated, politically sensitive environments for extended periods of time."

In an email last month to members of the special operations forces across the services, Gen. Joseph Votel, head of U.S. Special Operations Command, said leaders had done initial analysis on training, facilities, education and other policies. Now, officials are examining "the social and cultural challenges of integrating females" into male-only jobs. Next, Votel said, officials will analyze requirements for the jobs to make sure standards are accurate and gender neutral. "We will continue in our commitment to provide the best manned, trained, and equipped special operations personnel to execute our nation's most difficult and sensitive missions," Votel said. "With that in mind, we can assure you that our high standards will not be lowered."

Bland said that in addition to Votel's email to service members, leaders have discussed the issue with commanders at frequent meetings so they can better educate their troops. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ff32e0a3426a4f379a4f4d503cfe881d/ap-exclusive-special-ops-troops-doubt-women-can-do-job>

In January 2013, then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joint Chiefs Chairman Army Gen. Martin Dempsey announced the end of the ban on women in combat roles, with the goal of opening about 237,000 positions to women by 2016.

"What I would have to do is if I decide I want an exception, I would have to say why I believe we shouldn't open armor and infantry to females, and I would have to demonstrate why that's important," he said. "If I don't make any recommendations, everything will be open as of January 1st, 2016."

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/enlist/d/2015/04/05/combat-engineer-open-to-women-army/25243687/>

Some women already in the elite forces expressed similar worries, the AP said.

The surveys are part of the Pentagon's effort to integrate women into all military combat jobs by January 2016 or provide reasons why jobs should remain closed.

Pentagon leaders, under Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, lifted the ban on combat jobs previously closed to women in 2012.

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The surveys were conducted as part of U.S. Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) efforts to integrate women into combat jobs, including the Navy SEALs and Army Delta Forces, which work in small teams in remote locations.

One of the surveys, by RAND Corp., found concerns about women meeting the job demands, about an increase in sexual harassment or assault, and about women being treated differently than men.

So far, about 7,200 positions within the special operations forces have been opened to women, according to the AP. For the first time, a female last year made it through training to become a pilot in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, a specialized unit known as "Night Stalkers" that flies behind enemy lines at night.

Three more female pilots are going through initial training, as well as several dozens for other positions with the unit.

### **Pentagon Faces Hurdle To Women In Special Ops: 'Uninformed' Men**

(7 Apr.) *Christian Science Monitor*, By Anna Mulrine

WASHINGTON – The men in the America's Special Operations Forces will not get a veto on women joining their ranks, but they do get an opinion, and a recent survey suggests that they are “uninformed,” a Pentagon summary of the survey says.

As the Pentagon opens new positions to women – including combat posts and Special Operations Forces – it is taking steps to smooth the process as much as possible. The Special Operations Command survey was used to gauge apprehensions that troops might have in the hopes of finding ways overcome them.

“It was not a referendum by any stretch of the imagination,” says Kenneth McGraw, a spokesman for United States Special Operations Command, based in Tampa, Fla.

But the concerns voiced in the survey completed by about 9,000 members of Special Operations Command who are in positions currently open only to men speak to the challenges ahead for the Pentagon.

Though the survey itself was not obtained by the Monitor, a summary of it was, and it repeatedly stresses the need for the Pentagon to educate men in Special Operations about the crucial role women can – and have – played in their field.

The summary has echoes of the debate surrounding the repeal of “don't ask, don't tell,” which allowed gay troops to serve openly. A similar survey about that change in policy in 2010 showed similar concerns. But they have largely proved unfounded. The summary of the current survey, which was completed in March, hopes for the same outcome.

The point of the survey was “to examine the socio-cultural barriers to integration, and potential solution(s) to overcome those barriers,” it says.

One of the most commonly cited reasons against putting women in combat roles is the potential for them to be sexually assaulted if they are captured. But the summary notes that “this issue is not exclusive to women” – it is a problem for many captives, regardless of sex.

The entire conversation about women joining Special Forces is fraught with such misunderstandings, the survey found. Indeed, the Pentagon's failure to make a robust case for

Gen. Joseph Votel, head of SOCOM, said in an email last month to the special operations community said its leaders had done initial analysis, according to the AP.

They are looking at the “social and cultural challenges” of integrating women into the special operations combat jobs, and will next analyze requirements for the jobs to make sure standards are accurate and gender neutral.

“We will continue in our commitment to provide the best manned, trained, and equipped special operations personnel to execute our nation's most difficult and sensitive missions,” Votel said. “With that in mind, we can assure you that our high standards will not be lowered.”

<http://thehill.com/policy/defense/policy-strategy/237961-special-operations-forces-fear-standards-will-be-lowered-for>

women in Special Operations Forces has led to “major misconceptions regarding the performance of females in mixed-gender teams,” the summary says.

The fact is, “women have served in SOF units ... for a long time,” the document notes, pointing to Air Force Special Operations aviation units and, more recently, Army Special Operations aviation fields.

“Women are important to our mission,” since they can interact with locals in places where other Special Operations Forces are currently prevented from going, it says. “The additional way of interacting and problem solving will make our SOF forces more effective overall.”

What is changing is that women, who previously have been appended to Special Operations Forces in non-combat roles, will now be able to become full special operators themselves. The Pentagon officially opened combat positions to women in 2013, though the decision has not yet taken effect. The services have until January integrate those posts or to come back with a reason why women cannot serve in these jobs. There are many women interested in serving in Special Operations Forces, the summary suggests. “Our components have routinely received inquiries from women who want to attempt to qualify for ground combat specialities within SOF units,” it says. “Many of them are already serving in SOF formations.”

The Pentagon does not “yet know how many” women are actually interested in these jobs, the document says. But there is no need for a “critical mass” of women before the Special Operations units can be opened, since the policy shift prohibits the establishment of quotas or ceilings.

A recent survey by the Defense Advisory Council on Women in the Services found that 22 percent of women currently in the military are “moderately or very interested” in transferring to combat jobs.

In the Marine Corps, the figure is higher, at roughly 40 percent, according to an April 2014 Marine Corps briefing. “That’s a lot of women,” says retired Col. Ellen Haring, senior fellow at Women in International Security, an advocacy group in Washington.

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Since 9/11, women serving overseas who have found themselves in combat situations have been awarded more than 9,000 combat action badges, which are awarded to soldiers “actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy and performing satisfactorily,” according to Army regulations. Pentagon documents stress that standards will not be lowered to accommodate women.

This year, a dozen women have qualified to take part in the elite Army Ranger School, which is set to begin its first-ever coed class on April 20. Even if they pass, women will not be allowed to serve as Rangers until the policy changes take effect next January. But they will be allowed to wear their Ranger tabs on their uniforms.

The prospect of women special operators in the not-too-distant future remains a unsettling proposition for some of the men in the March survey. It highlighted concerns that women in the ranks would affect unit cohesion, and that in the rush to bring

women aboard “leadership will capitulate to political pressure, allowing erosion of training standards,” the summary notes. These are many of the same concerns that troops expressed in the face of the lifting of don't ask, don't tell. A survey released in November 2010 found that 30 percent of troops, including 43 percent of Marines, believed there would be negative effects.

But those concerns have turned out to be overblown.

The lifting of the ban on women in combat could open 237,000 new combat positions to women. Of these, roughly 26,500 are Special Operations Forces jobs. Given the length of training and selection programs, it would be 2017 before women are deployed in currently-closed Special Operations Forces.

“However,” the summary says, already “there are SOF females forward in hazardous locations today.”

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2015/0407/Pentagon-faces-hurdle-to-women-in-Special-Ops-uninformed-men>

## Last IOC in Marine infantry experiment drops female officers

*(8 Apr.) Marine Corps Times, By Hope Hodge Seck*

The two-and-a-half year period in which the Marine Corps' Infantry Officer Course became gender-integrated for research will end without a single female graduate.

The final iteration of IOC to accept female Marines on a volunteer basis began April 2 with two female participants. One was a volunteer and one was a member of the newly integrated ground intelligence track.

Both were dropped that same day during the grueling initial Combat Endurance Test, said Capt. Maureen Krebs, a spokeswoman for Headquarters Marine Corps. Nine of the 90 men who began the course were also cut.

IOC, held quarterly at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, began accepting female officers fresh out of training in September 2012 as part of a larger research effort into the feasibility of opening ground combat jobs to women. Lieutenants who made it through the legendarily tough 86-day course would not receive an infantry military occupational specialty or career advancement; they did it only for the challenge and the hope of being part of a historical Marine Corps achievement.

But as the research continued, few volunteers took advantage of the opportunity. By July 2014, only 20 female officers had attempted the course. Only one made it through the Combat Endurance Test, and none made it to the end.

In an effort to achieve their goal of 100 female volunteers cycling through IOC, the Marine Corps opened the course to female company-grade officers in October 2014, making hundreds more Marines eligible for the course. The Corps also began requiring that volunteers get a first-class score on the male version of the service's Physical Fitness Test in an effort to better prepare them for the rigors of IOC.

The effort was a mixed success. In the October iteration of IOC, three of the seven female volunteers made it through the Combat Endurance Test, bringing the total number of women to pass the test to four. Two of those who passed the test were captains from the fleet. As time passed, no influx of volunteers materialized, however.

The testing period ends with just 27 female volunteers having attempted the course. Two other female officers also attempted the course as part of required ground intelligence officer training. The 0203 ground intelligence officer military occupational specialty was opened to female officers in late 2013, with IOC as a qualification requirement for applicants. None of the 29 female officers made it to the end of the course.

While IOC is closing to volunteers, female applicants for ground intelligence officer positions will continue to attend the course in the future, Krebs said.

Officials have said that ongoing research will consider many aspects of temporarily integrating IOC, including the number of volunteers, their pass rate, and performance in the course. That data will be taken alongside other research points, including the much higher success rate for enlisted female Marines in passing the Infantry Training Battalion course at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. As of February, 358 women had attempted the course, with 122 graduates, for a pass rate of 34 percent.

Also considered will be data generated from the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force, which is conducting assessments with male and female troops in a variety of infantry specialties now on the West Coast. All this information will be compiled this summer and used to inform Commandant Gen. Joseph Dunford's recommendation to the

secretary of Defense on whether or not to open remaining ground combat units to female troops.

A decision is expected from the Pentagon early next year.

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2015/04/07/ast-ioc-in-marine-experiment-drops-two-officers/25418867/>

## Women, Diversity Are Military Mission Critical, Author Says

(10 Apr.) DoD News, By Lisa Ferdinando

WASHINGTON, April 10, 2015 – The military can take the lead in breaking down the biases against women and people of diverse backgrounds, to create a stronger force and set the path for the nation, said Sheryl Sandberg, best-selling author of "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead," who spoke April 9 to a standing-room audience at the Pentagon.

Diversity in top leadership positions is "mission critical" to the military or any organization, she said.

Studies have shown that a diverse group makes better decisions.

But, she said, "we are not getting women into leadership roles in real numbers in any sector" whether it is Fortune 500 companies, the Senate, or the military.

The long-standing biases that prevent women from advancing professionally need to be overcome, Sandberg said. The military can help kick start the effort.

"I believe that the United States military has an incredibly important role to play here," she said. "If you look at the history of desegregation, the military led; a lot of the good things that happened in our society happened here first.

"If we want to increase our progress along racial discrimination, if we want to increase our progress along the leadership gaps of women and people of color, the military has to lead," she said.

Making progress in getting women in leadership roles and discussing the wage gap between men and women are topics that are "really hard to talk about," Sandberg said. "What I think will make the really big difference is if we can make sure we explain that as mission-critical leadership."

The conversation about women in leadership positions is particularly important to the Department of Defense today, as the military goes through "dynamic changes" that include opening more jobs to women, said Laura Junor, the principal deputy under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness. Junor, who described those changes as exciting and historic, also noted how the Department of Defense is shrinking, in both the civilian and military workforce. With that in mind, DOD is going to see "more complex" demands being tackled by fewer people, she said.

"With a smaller workforce, we have to make the most of all of your potential," Junor said. "We have to be the employer of choice. We also have to work to support, motivate and make sure that we enable you to commit fully to develop your talents."

### Addressing Biases Head-On

"Leadership is about getting people to follow you - because they want to - and they believe," Sandberg said. "Leadership is the ability to use the full talents of the population to get the very best from everyone regardless of gender or race or background or age."

Sandberg, who is currently Facebook's chief operating officer and was previously a top Google executive and chief of staff at the U.S. Treasury Department, said she "never spoke about being a woman" when she was rising in her career.

"Because if you speak about being a woman, the person on the other side of the table thinks you're whining, complaining, asking for special treatment ... " she said.

"What we are currently doing is not working; the veil of silence is not creating an equal playing field. We need to acknowledge the issues, acknowledge the biases and counteract them," she said.

The biases include that women are underestimated on their work performance. They are also tasked with note-taking and other "office housework" duties in the workplace, she said. As a note-taker, they would not be the one speaking and making a great point that would get them noticed and promoted.

Success for women is viewed differently than success for men, Sandberg pointed out. While power and success are positively correlated for men, they are negatively associated for women.

"When women get more powerful and successful, they are less liked," she said.

A successful woman might be described as aggressive, political, not well-liked by her peers, too ambitious, or someone who just got lucky. A man in power, however, might be viewed as someone with leadership skills who rose to the top because of his talents, she said.

### Counteracting Ingrained Biases

In polling the audience, Sandberg demonstrated how men are not told they should be at home caring for their children instead of working.

She said, "Women, raise your hand if anyone has ever said to you, 'Should you be working?'," with many in the room raising their hands. "We constantly tell women they can't have it all." The biases are deeply ingrained in all of us, men and women, she said. "We react without even realizing we're doing it." Girls are described as "bossy," while boys aren't, she pointed out.

"When a little boy leads, it is expected, but when a little girl leads, it's not," she said.

When someone hears a girl being described as bossy, Sandberg suggested saying to the parent, "That little girl's not bossy, that little girl has executive leadership skills."

The reaction from the audience: laughter and applause.

"I'm going to pause for one moment on that," she said. "I'm going to say it the other way, 'That little boy has executive leadership skills.'" There was no laughter or applause from the audience.

"That's because humor is about going against our expectations. It's funny because you're surprised. If you want to understand why there are no four-star female generals in the Army right now, or why Silicon Valley has two female CEOs, you just understood it," she said.

"We do not like leadership in girls and women," she said. What needs to be done, Sandberg said, is for all of us to shed the biases, continue to have those hard discussions, and put women in the military jobs that put them on the path to be a general officer. Everyone will benefit from women and diversity, she said.

In closing her presentation, Sandberg thanked the men and women who serve the nation.

"I think Facebook has an important mission; I'm proud to work on it," she said.

"I don't think anything is as important as the mission that you all have," the technology executive said. "You keep us safe,

you keep the world open to democracy, and boy is it a complicated, scary world out there. What you do has never been more important."

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=128567&source=GovDelivery>

## **Marines revamping social media strategy for recruitment**

*(7 Apr.) Marine Corps Times, By Derrick Perkins*

After launching a new commercial advertising campaign last month, the Corps could soon revamp the way it uses Twitter to court potential Marines.

Marine Corps Recruiting Command has long boasted a presence on social media. Marines running recruiting stations' accounts usually push out information about the service and its benefits, as well as some local flavor.

But they could start doing a lot more. SocialSphere Inc., of Cambridge, Massachusetts, is planning Marine Corps Recruiting Command's new social media strategy. And that battle plan includes more engagement, according to the Boston Globe.

While the company's CEO did not respond to repeated requests from Marine Corps Times, he told the Globe that his digital strategy rested heavily on social media outreach. For example, Marines might start tweeting congratulatory messages to a high school football captain after a win, along with encouragement for being an active citizen.

Marine Corps Recruiting Command confirmed that Twitter would become — and to an extent remain — a tool in bringing in potential poolees.

"Marine recruiters throughout the country engage with prospective applicants via social media as one of many tools and activities to initiate contact, gain sufficient information for follow-up conversations, or schedule an appointment," said Master Sgt. Bryce Piper, a MCRC spokesman. "MCRC's integrated social media program is still developing, but even now it enables our national level platforms to help inform recruiters of great opportunities and information to share with their prospects and other contacts."

SocialSphere is collaborating with J. Walter Thompson, a multinational advertising company with long ties to the

Marine Corps. For nearly 70 years, the firm has served the Corps, molding its image in the public mind. It recently won a major, multi-year contract to continue working with the service.

The firm's latest campaigns included the newly launched cycle of television and online commercials as well as the popular "Toward the Sounds of Chaos" advertising blitz. Recruiting officials said they placed their trust in J. Walter Thompson when it comes to aspects like social media.

Piper said the advertising firm has relied on SocialSphere since 2008.

"As the goals, character and temperaments of young men and women shift over time, the feedback provided through market research has proven invaluable," he said. "The guidance and feedback provided will continue to help mold and shape our messages to the public."

While J. Walter Thompson and SocialSphere are running the show, the Corps maintains a presence in the background. For instance, individual Twitter accounts will remain in the hands of Marines, Piper said.

There is no success or failure rate for this new approach. The goal remains the same, Piper said: recruiting young people interested in serving their country.

"Our marketing and advertising paradigm has traditionally focused and continues to focus on the intangible benefits of being a Marine," Piper said. "Hence, men and women who seek out our recruiters for more information are looking for something more than a paycheck or job skills."  
<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2015/04/07/corps-social-media-engagement/70783400/>

## **Women could compete next year in Best Ranger Competition**

*(7 Apr.) Army Times, By Michelle Tan*

When 51 two-man teams step off the starting line at this year's Best Ranger Competition, it could be the last time the famously tough event is men-only.

Competitors must be graduates of the Army Ranger School, which until this month has been open only to men.

The Army on April 20 will conduct an integrated assessment at the storied Ranger School as part of a wider effort to determine how to open combat arms jobs to women. So far, 12 women have qualified to attend the two-month course.

As part of the assessment, women who successfully complete Ranger School will receive a certificate and be awarded the



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coveted Ranger tab. They will not, however, be assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment, which is separate from Ranger School.

"If a woman earns the Ranger tab prior to the Best Ranger Competition 2016, she is eligible to compete in BRC 2016 or any subsequent BRCs," said Gary Jones, a spokesman for Fort Benning, Georgia.

The 2015 David E. Grange Jr. Best Ranger Competition kicks off Friday at Fort Benning. The three-day competition pits two-man teams against each other in back-to-back events, with the winning duo earning the title of Best Ranger.

The competition, hosted by the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade, tests competitors on their physical conditioning, Ranger skills and team strategies. The competition events are back-to-back and around the clock for 60 hours, allowing little time for rest and meals.

In the past, events included weapons firing, extended road marches, day and night land navigation courses, Ranger skills and parachute jumps. All events are timed, and competitors score points for each completed event. Both team members must complete each task.

### **Transgender in the military: A Pentagon in transition weighs its policy**

*(9 Apr.) The Washington Post, By Juliet Eilperin*

Over the past decade, Sgt. Shane Ortega has served three combat tours: Two in Iraq, one in Afghanistan. Two as a Marine and one in the Army. Two as a woman and one as a man.

Ortega is a helicopter crew chief in the Army's 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. He was born female and would like to serve the rest of his career as a man. That would require a significant change in Pentagon rules, which require that transgender troops be discharged from military service, usually on medical grounds.

Last summer, medical tests showed Ortega had elevated testosterone levels due to the hormones he was taking to support his transition to being a man. As a result, he was barred from flight duties. He still faces the risk of being separated from the Army, but the intervention of an outside legal advocacy group has held that off, at least temporarily. He remains a woman in the eyes of the military, a status with emotional and practical costs.

He holds a man's military travel passport, based on the new Social Security card he received when he changed his name. But he is still identified as female in the military's official computer system. He must wear a woman's "dress blues" for official occasions.

Looking for clarity, his commanders have formally asked the Army a simple question: Can Ortega serve openly as a man?

"Administratively I shouldn't exist," said Ortega, 28. "But I do exist, so that's still the problem."

The Best Ranger Competition was established in 1982 and has been compared to Ironman and Eco-Challenge competitions.

Last year, only 26 of the 50 teams to begin the competition made it into the final day. Of the 50 teams at the starting line in 2013, only 23 finished the competition. And in 2012, 34 of the 50 teams completed the competition.

This year's competition will begin at 6 a.m. on Friday; organizers estimate the competition will wrap up about 4 p.m. Sunday.

A formal awards ceremony is scheduled for 10 a.m. April 13 at McGinnis-Wickam Hall in Fort Benning's Marshall Auditorium.

The competition is open to the public. A schedule of events will be released to the public on Wednesday on the Fort Benning Facebook page. Family, friends and spectators are encouraged to tweet updates on their teams during the competition using the hashtag #2015BestRanger, @FortBenning.

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2015/04/07/women-best-ranger-competition/25408919/>

An estimated 15,500 transgender people serve in the military, according to the Williams Institute, a legal think tank that studies sexual-orientation and gender-identity issues. The Pentagon will not disclose how many have been discharged. Palm Center Executive Director Aaron Belkin, whose group studies the issue, said that at least a dozen people have been discharged in the past six months because of their transgender identity.

Clarifying the military's policy — and the contradictions in how it's executed — poses a particular challenge for a president who has made the rights of transgender Americans a key component of his domestic social policy.

President Obama has expanded legal protections on the basis of gender identity, advocated for the rights of transgender prisoners, and just this week condemned conversion therapy for young people, a practice that purports to change the sexual identity of transgender and gay people.

On Thursday, Michelle Obama's chief of staff, Tina Tchen, posted a blog recounting how she met with transgender women of color last month "during the White House's first-ever discussion solely focused on the challenges this community faces."

In contrast to his vocal advocacy for gays to serve openly in the military, Obama has remained silent on the status of transgender service members. Transgender rights advocates view their acceptance as the next step in creating a more inclusive military.

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Transgender troops have always been treated differently from their gay counterparts. Openly gay soldiers were blocked from service — or dismissed from the ranks — on the grounds they would undermine unit cohesion. Being transgender is classified as a mental disorder that makes someone unfit to serve.

Privately, some military officials argue that transgender soldiers could not serve in hardship posts, because they rely on hormone treatments. Transgender advocates point out that troops with other medication requirements, such as diabetics, are not automatically disqualified from service.

Rather than calling for a policy reversal, the White House — which declined to comment for this article — has turned to the services.

In August, the Pentagon asked each service to reassess its rules regarding transgender service members. All still have regulations labeling transgender troops unfit for service, even though some have signaled an openness to reviewing the policy.

Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said last year that she supports the idea of allowing Americans to serve regardless of their gender identity.

The Army recently placed decision-making authority over the future of transgender soldiers in the hands of a senior civilian appointee, Debra S. Wada, the assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and Reserve affairs.

That move was made after the American Civil Liberties Union filed a petition in September on behalf of Ortega and other transgender soldiers who faced separation proceedings.

“Although the Army appears to have temporarily halted the process of kicking trans people out, the policy still declares that they are unfit,” said Joshua Block, the ACLU staff attorney representing Ortega. “That puts service members and their commanders in an untenable situation. It’s the policy itself that’s interfering with the military’s ability to do the job, not service members like Shane.”

Senior civilian Pentagon officials have begun speaking publicly — if cautiously — about resolving the questions surrounding transgender service members.

But promoting another such change after the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell” and the advent of women in combat roles presents a number of political and public relations challenges for the administration.

During a February question-and-answer session with troops in Kandahar, Afghanistan, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter suggested that being transgender alone should not disqualify someone from the military.

“I don’t think anything but their suitability for service should preclude them,” he said.

That same month, the Pentagon began what its spokesman Nate Christensen called “a routine, periodic review” of the Defense Department’s medical requirements, including the provision that being transgender makes one medically unfit for duty.

Miles away from the political debate, Ortega has spent months doing administrative tasks for his unit since his flight certification was suspended last summer.

But having been cleared by his brigade’s senior behavioral-health officer of gender dysphoria — a condition in which patients suffer distress from having a sharply different view of their gender than what others see and perceive — Ortega expects to be allowed to resume flying in mid-April following another physical. He will then be permitted to perform the full range of duties as a helicopter crew chief, though technically still designated as female.

Ortega’s transition — which included taking testosterone for four years under the supervision of military and civilian personnel — has not interfered with his ability to serve, he and his attorneys say. Ortega meets all the standards for a male soldier in his age category in terms of performing push-ups, sit-ups and a two-mile run.

Serving in eastern Afghanistan three years ago, Ortega operated easily as an assistant squad leader repairing aircraft for a Special Forces unit in a remote forward operating base. He regularly lifted weights with his team at the gym and socialized, as well.

“I don’t think there was any animosity,” he said.

Even early on in Ortega’s military career, gender identity was not a major factor in assignments. During an initial deployment as a member of a Marine military police unit in Fallujah, Iraq, he recalled, there were just three women out of 387 troops. Once the units split up, “I never even saw another female Marine,” he said.

“You really learn it really plays no role. Nobody’s going to carry my gear,” he added. “It’s pretty hard-core equal treatment in a combat zone.”

Both of Ortega’s parents were career military — his father served in the Navy, his mother served in the Navy and Army, and two of his uncles went to Vietnam. Ortega never considered any other career. He signed up for Marine boot camp while still in high school and said his family’s military tradition and a desire for adventure inspired the move.

“One thing my father always said was, ‘Be the change you want to see in the world.’” said Ortega, who buzzes with energy and spills out declarations at a rapid clip. “I definitely wanted to be that change.”

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A diminutive 5-foot-6, Ortega weighs roughly 160 pounds and has a sculpted physique. Tattoos cover more than a third of his body and speak to a range of experiences, from the Hindu deities Ganesha and Shiva to a tank and woman sporting a gas mask.

He was born in Patuxent River, Md., when his mother was serving at the naval air station there. Ortega said he did not want to dwell on his past as a female and declined to provide the name he was given at birth. But he offered that, from early on, being female didn't feel comfortable. "I've known since I was a child," he said.

He left for Marine Corps boot camp in 2005, two days after graduating from Monacan High School outside Richmond.

For several years, Ortega has campaigned quietly to push for greater acceptance of transgender service members. He has spoken with elected officials, civilian groups and health professionals and has upcoming speaking engagements in cities including Philadelphia and Atlanta.

"It definitely clears up abstract concepts and preconceived stereotypes," Ortega said of his talks, adding that while he has "really high walls to climb over when I get there," many audience members are more understanding once they see and talk to him.

Ortega, who has gradually become more comfortable being in the public eye, has recently launched a Twitter account and was accepted into the Gay Men's Chorus of Honolulu. He will start competing for a professional bodybuilding title in the fall.

But the Pentagon does not appear poised to clarify its policy soon. In an e-mail, Christensen wrote that the "current periodic review" of the Pentagon's medical rules "is expected to take between 12-18 months; it is not a specific review of the Department's transgender policy."

For the past several years, Ortega has served between two genders.

He has lived in communal accommodations, thereby avoiding the problem of having to bunk with women rather than men. While he is usually addressed as male, occasionally others refer to him by his original gender identity when he has to wear a woman's uniform.

"I have not asked for any special accommodations from my chain of command," Ortega said, adding that it has led to some "socially awkward" situations. "You have to exercise patience with people, but people are not going to understand the subject overnight."

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/transgender-in-the-military-a-pentagon-in-transition-weighs-its-policy/2015/04/09/ee0ca39e-cf0d-11e4-8c54-ffb5ba6f2f69\\_story.html?tid=sm\\_tw](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/transgender-in-the-military-a-pentagon-in-transition-weighs-its-policy/2015/04/09/ee0ca39e-cf0d-11e4-8c54-ffb5ba6f2f69_story.html?tid=sm_tw)