

**DEFENSE DEPARTMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE
SERVICES (DACOWITS) MEETING MINUTES
May 30-31, 2007**

DACOWITS held a meeting May 30-31, 2007, at the DoubleTree Hotel, Crystal City, National Airport, 300 Army-Navy Drive, Arlington, Virginia. Members and public present during the meeting are at enclosures one and two. Materials used during the meeting are at enclosure three.

30 May 2007

Dr Mary Nelson, Chairperson DACOWITS, opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. The Chair discussed the issues the Committee would be accomplishing over the next few days.

At 08:45 the Committee reviewed installation visits since 29 March. These locations included; Quantico, Corpus Christi, Hawaii, Marine Reserve Miramar, Coast Guard Telephone Conference, VTCs with Iraq and Afghanistan, Kirtland and McCord.

The Members indicated that no one knows about DACOWITS, Military One Source and spouse employment resources. Spouse employment was accomplished by networking not with the resources available. The hiring practices with the civilian personnel system was viewed as barrier to entry to the Government sector. Spouses were supportive of funds for license, certification, and assistance in paying recertification requirements when going to new states. Spouses mentioned that daycare is the most pressing concern for them; they wanted longer hours, lower rates and greater capacity.

Privacy for their health issues were a concern for military women when dealing with enlisted care providers such as medics and corpsmen. More information needs to be provided to Commanders for female service Members and their health needs prior to deployment. Observations were made that 60-90 day post deployment screenings were unevenly complied with by service Members. It was suggested that a full physical be conducted within three months of redeployment and not a screening.

A best practice was identified called the "Escape Zone", where new mothers can get respite while drop-in childcare is provided for their newborn.

The Committee broke from 9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

At 10:00 a.m. Research Results for Women's Health Care, Women deployed/non-deployed satisfaction issues from the 2006 Health Care Survey of DoD Beneficiaries (HCSDB) was presented by Dr Thomas V. Williams. Dr Williams noted two issues in his briefing. He thought that recently deployed and returned women expressed greater satisfaction with their current health care. He thought this was because their previous conditions were so austere that they were significantly grateful for the healthcare being

provided in garrison. The other item he noted was that women rated getting needed care while deployed statistically lower than in garrison or recently redeployed. The Committee asked him to bench mark that against the responses of deployed men and a national average.

At 11:00 a.m. the Members were provided a review of Survey Questions from the Health Related Behavior Survey (HERB) regarding deployment and women's health, by LTC Lorraine Babeu. LTC Babeu used responses to various questions and benchmarked them against Service and gender. Her briefing looked at PTSD symptoms, satisfaction with current job, relationships with significant others, and 15 other categories.

The Committee took lunch at 12:00 p.m. and returned at 1:15 p.m.

At 1:15 LTC Brett Kelly, from the Tri-Care Management Agency provided a briefing on the Tri-Care Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP). He addressed the Committee on gender specific information on prescriptions in theater. LTC Kelly said that as of 1 May the TMOP went to 6 months of refills for prescriptions. He explained that the shelf life of prescriptions has become a concern, specifically for birth control. He also included in his briefing some upcoming new features of the TMOP which would assist service members in theater in updating their prescription needs. LTC Kelly stated he could provide prescription information for a deployed unit that would cover certain timeframes and then be able to compare male and female usage rates of prescriptions. LTC Kelly was asked if PlanB, a contraceptive, was available and he stated as of 2006 PlanB was in the formulary.

The Committee broke from 2:15 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

At 2:30 Marine Corps Spouse Employment Program, Mrs. Bonnie Burns HQMC Family Member Employment Assistance Program (FMEAP) spoke. Mrs. Burns discussed the last Marine Corps survey which shows a satisfaction level with Marine Corps life as being within the median range. She also noted that spouse employment was a top four item of quality of life on the survey and a top five factor for retention.

At 3:30 p.m. Ms. Saundra Nichols, Manager Airman, Family & Community Operations Branch HQ Air Force Personnel Center, gave a presentation on the Air Force Spouse Employment Program. She described the renaming and reorganization of the Air Force Family Centers. They are now called the Airmen and Family Readiness Centers (AFRC). She briefed the Committee on the core competency method of manning the AFRC. She indicated that no one would be specifically devoted to spouse employment but that 80% of their skill alignment would be training in spouse employment while they could also cover 20% of the AFRC's other services provided to airmen and families. She was asked about how they look at customer satisfaction, she said they use surveys and comment sheets that help provide feedback to the staffs.

At 4:30 p.m. the Committee entertained presentations from the public. The presenters were, Colleen Mussolino, National Commander, Women Veterans of America and Ann Wright, Colonel, USAR, Retired. Both were advocating for the Committees involvement in the topic of sexual assault. Col Shaw responded that he was very interested in the topic of sexual assault and supported the comments of the persons addressing the Committee.

31 May 2007

Dr Mary Nelson, Chairperson DACOWITS, opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. The Chair discussed the issues the Committee would be accomplishing the rest of the meeting.

At 8:45 a.m. Gretchen Saunders, Department of Labor (DOL), Plans and Programs, discussed efforts to assist the Department of Defense in employing spouses and the DOL employment programs in general. Ms. Saunders described the policy making function of her department. She emphasized the decentralized system for allocating funds and the local communities' opportunities to allocate the funds for the priorities in the local communities. Her department continues to highlight the contributions of the military spouse to these localities and encourage them to create priorities for the military spouse.

The Committee broke from 9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

At 10:00 a.m. the Committee reviewed the draft outlines for the 2007 Report. They reviewed focus group information organization and reviewed requested research for integration into the report. DACOWITS Members and Caliber/ICF International Associates agreed to place the Women's Health in Theater topic as Chapter II instead as Chapter III. They discussed organizing the Women's health chapter topically instead of by pre, during and post deployment. The Committee asked for additional statistics about women in the theater, the overall totals, vs. the total number of men. The Committee wanted to ensure the overall percentages of women were provided early in the report to set the context for the health care issues.

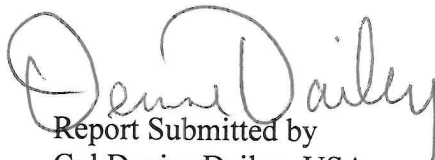
The Committee asked where the research would be provided in the organization of the report. Caliber stated that a lot of it is provided in Chapter 1. Also, as the focus group trends develop quantitative data from surveys and published research, which supports or is contrary to the focus group trends will be folded into the paragraphs for a full view of the issue.


After discussion with Caliber they told the Committee the 1st draft would be ready 13 September.

The Committee then discussed the sequence of events for the next meeting. They decided on three days, two days to review the entire report and the third day to discuss

findings and recommendations. Members were asked to have read the report, identify quotes they think need eliminating and identify areas for additional research for the first two days. On the third day Members were asked to bring with them their recommendations for the Chapters of the report.

After discussing dates for the next meeting the Committee adjourned its business meeting at 12:45 p.m.


Report Submitted by
Col Denise Dailey, USA
Military Director, DACOWITS


Report Certified by
Dr. Mary Nelson
DACOWITS Chair

Attachments as Stated

Enclosure One

DACOWITS MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present May 30, 2007

Dr. Mary Nelson
Mrs. Denise Balzano
Diana Denman
Mrs. Duniphan
Mr. Shaw
Col Torres

Members Absent

Mrs. White
Mrs O'Flaherty
Mrs Santiago
Mrs Lassus

Members Present May 31, 2007

Dr. Mary Nelson
Mrs. Denise Balzano
Diana Denman
Mrs. Duniphan
Mr. Shaw
Col Torres

Members Absent

Mrs. White
Mrs. O'Flaherty
Mrs. Santiago

Mrs. Lassus

Enclosure Two
Sign in sheets

Enclosure Three