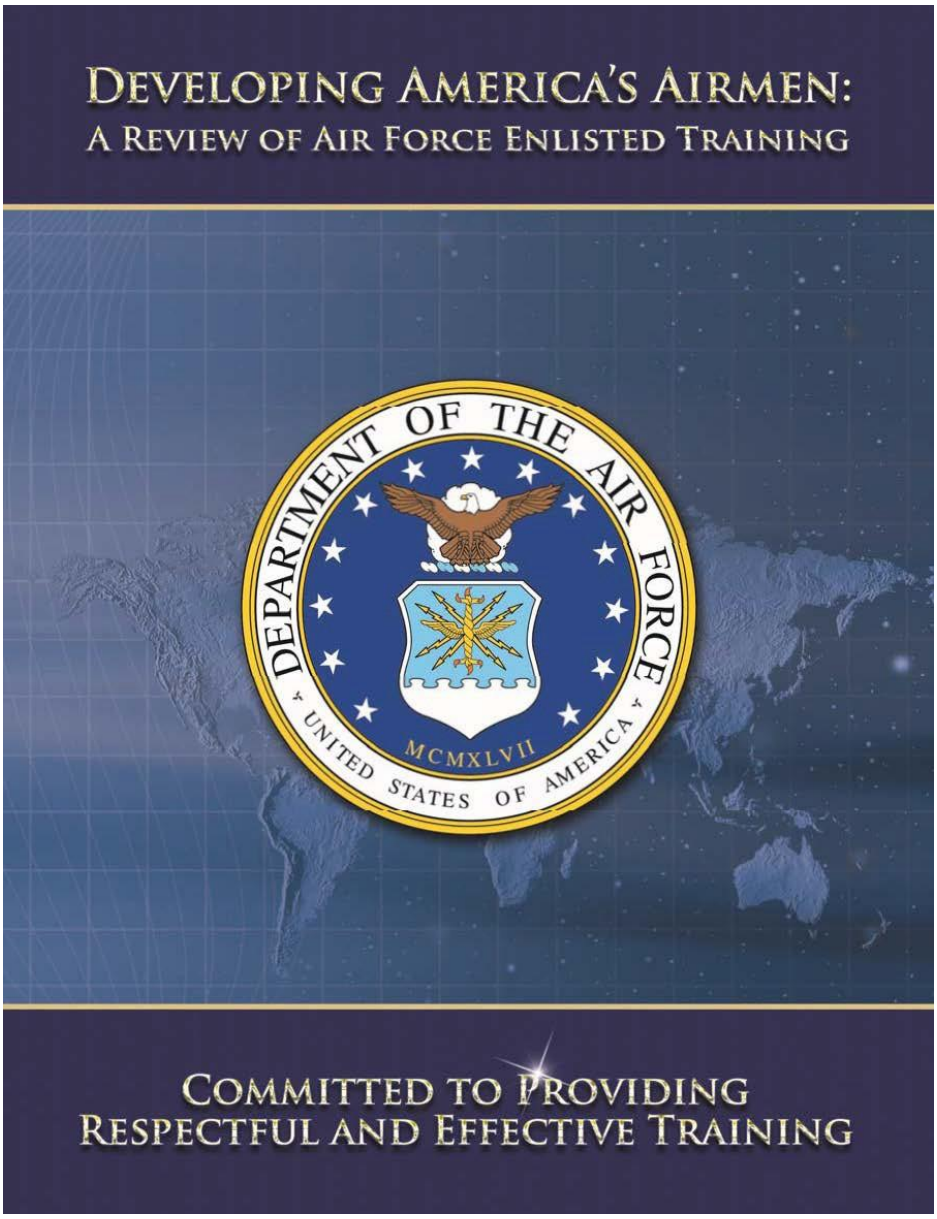
APPENDIX A

Commander Directed Investigation Report

Developing America's Airmen:
A Review of Air Force Enlisted Training

22 August 2012



Developing America's Airmen

A Review of Air Force Enlisted Training

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Executive Summary

On 20 June 2012 Gen Edward Rice, commander of Air Education and Training Command (AETC), commissioned an independent commander-directed investigation (CDI) based on substantiated misconduct within Air Force basic military training (BMT) that occurred between October 2010 and June 2011. This report provides the results of that investigation.

Since the discovery of misconduct, BMT and technical training (TT) have faced greater scrutiny than most military organizations have ever faced. The misconduct of a few irresponsible instructors, less than three percent of the military training instructor (MTI) force, precipitated this investigation and a series of separate criminal, command, and lower-level inquiries. These efforts sought to identify and punish those responsible and collectively amounted to tens of thousands of investigative man-hours.

In an institution that values the service of every Airman and prides itself on integrity, honor, and respect, sexual misconduct is as abhorrent as it is rare. It tears the fabric that holds us together as an Air Force because it destroys our trust, faith, and confidence in each other.

This report necessarily focused on the few who violated that sacred trust and broke faith with fellow Airmen everywhere. Because of their misconduct, this CDI took a detailed look at Air Force basic training and offered a number of recommendations for improving the safety and effectiveness of BMT.

It is important to remember that despite the extraordinary scrutiny of basic training and the adverse effect it could have on morale and unit cohesion, honorable men and women throughout the Air Force enlisted training complex continue to serve every day with distinction. These dedicated Airmen build our Air Force one person at a time and remain proud of their mission and themselves. They make a positive and profound difference every day. Their efforts continue to produce the world's greatest fighting force.

The remainder of this executive summary provides a brief description of the misconduct that led to the CDI, a summary of the CDI's specific tasks, a description of methods used to conduct the CDI, and a summary of findings and recommendations.

Background

Misconduct and Investigation. On 24 June 2011 a female trainee assigned to the 37th Training Wing's (b) (7)(C) Training Squadron (TRS) was reassigned to a flight in the (b) (7)(C) TRS.[1] The trainee reported to her new MTI that SSgt Luis Walker, an MTI assigned to the (b) (7)(C) TRS, had sexually assaulted a fellow trainee. The new MTI immediately informed the (b) (7)(C) TRS squadron commander, who in turn notified the (b) (7)(C) TRS squadron commander. Within 24 hours of notification, the squadron commander removed Walker from his duties, issued a no-contact order, and notified the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), which immediately opened an investigation into Walker's alleged misconduct.

During the approximately five-month AFOSI investigation, agents uncovered a total of 10 Walker victims—dating from October 2010 to June 2011. In November 2011,

concurrent with the Walker investigation, three MTIs in the (b) (7)(C) TRS approached their squadron superintendent and alleged that they knew of MTIs within their squadron engaging in inappropriate behavior and misconduct toward female trainees. The superintendent informed the (b) (7)(C) TRS commander, who contacted AFOSI, initiating another investigation. During subsequent interviews, all alleged victims denied involvement in sexual or other misconduct with MTIs. AFOSI ultimately found no credible evidence of inappropriate sexual contact and ceased its investigation on 5 December 2011.[2]

The 802nd Mission Support Group (MSG) staff judge advocate (SJA), having jurisdiction in this case, was dissatisfied with the results of the AFOSI interviews and elected to reinvestigate the matter using the Security Forces Office of Investigations (SFOI). SFOI agreed to interview the suspected MTIs (including then-SSgt Peter Vega-Maldonado),[3] while the base legal office interviewed other MTIs from the (b) (7)(C) TRS. Based on these initial interviews, the 802nd SJA requested that SFOI conduct further interviews with potential victims at various bases.[4] On 26 January 2012, during a follow-on SFOI interview, a former female trainee admitted to beginning a sexual relationship with Vega-Maldonado after graduating from BMT and arriving at technical training. From January to May 2012, SFOI investigators identified six more MTIs who allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct with trainees and students. A significant number of investigative leads came from Vega-Maldonado, who was given a sentence cap in exchange for his guilty plea and a promise to provide information under a

grant of testimonial immunity regarding misconduct by fellow MTIs. In May 2012 the AFOSI rejoined the investigation when it appeared that several of the violations discovered fell within AFOSI jurisdiction.

Adjudication. In late November 2011 charges were preferred against Walker. He was subsequently convicted of 28 charges, ranging from violation of lawful general order to rape, in a general court-martial ending on 20 July 2012. He was given a 20-year sentence, reduced in rank to Airman basic, required to forfeit all pay and benefits, and ordered to be dishonorably discharged.

Convicted on one count of engaging in an unprofessional relationship, Vega-Maldonado was reduced in rank to Airman, given 90 days confinement, required to forfeit $500 per month for four months, and given 30 days hard labor at his April 2012 court-martial. Under the grant of testimonial immunity, Vega-Maldonado confessed to seven unprofessional relationships and to date has provided testimonial evidence against five other MTIs regarding their misconduct with trainees. On 1 August 2012 TSgt Christopher Smith was also found guilty by a special court-martial on two counts of engaging in unprofessional relationships. He was reduced in rank to Airman and sentenced to 30 days confinement.

To date, three MTIs (Walker, Vega-Maldonado, and Smith) have been convicted of sexual assault or unprofessional relationships with trainees or students. Four additional MTIs ([redacted], SSgt Craig LeBlanc, SSgt Jason Manko, and SSgt Kwinton Estacio) are awaiting court-martial. Charges involve sexual assault or unprofessional relationships with five trainees or students. Eight additional MTIs are

under investigation for engaging in unprofessional relationships with 19 trainees or students, and one MTI also received nonjudicial punishment (NJP) under Article 15 of the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* (*UCMJ*) for inappropriate social-media contact with trainees. Because active investigations continue, it is possible that additional misconduct may be uncovered.

Commander-Directed Investigation

On 20 June 2012, concerned about the extent of misconduct, General Rice appointed Maj Gen Margaret Woodward, acting director, Operational Planning, Policy, and Strategy, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans, and Requirements, to lead an independent 60-day CDI into faculty and staff misconduct with BMT trainees and TT students. General Rice explained the purpose of the CDI:

> This CDI is the next stage in AETC efforts to deeply and deliberately evaluate the BMT and TT environments and obtain recommendations to enable AETC to
>
> a. Dissuade, deter, and detect criminal behavior by faculty and staff with trainees and students and eliminate the climate that fosters it.
>
> b. Hold offenders accountable while ensuring due process.
>
> c. Ensure a command environment that effectively supports victims and where any individuals who know of or reasonably suspect misconduct (bystanders) rapidly disclose information to the right authorities.

d. Ensure leadership at all levels accomplishes the three items above in a timely manner.

The memorandum of appointment goes on to establish seven tasks for the investigation:

a. Identify all current and historical cases of reported sexual misconduct and unprofessional relationships between faculty/staff and trainees/students in the BMT and TT environments. Your review should go back at least three years, and more if necessary.

b. Identify all current and historical cases of maltreatment and other forms of abuse of power by faculty/staff. Your review should go back at least three years, and more if necessary.

c. Assess the efficacy of AETC's actions in response to the reported cases of misconduct.

d. Identify the root causes of misconduct by faculty/staff.

e. Assess the efficacy and completeness of AETC's strategy to address the root causes of misconduct by faculty/staff.

f. Determine whether AETC is in compliance with applicable laws and policy with respect to misconduct by faculty/staff in the training environment.

g. Consider whether gender-segregated training would be a more effective model to mitigate MTI misconduct.

CDI investigators were given full independence to develop findings and offer recommendations. No limitations were placed on their ability to pursue information or take a critical look at the training environment, culture, or policies.

To complete the investigation, General Woodward assembled a team of 38 Air Force officer, enlisted, and civilian personnel. They included representatives from the Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps, Security Forces, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, recruiting, the inspector general, and medical community. Additionally, Airmen with experience as MTIs, military training leaders (MTL), and TT instructors (TTI) were included on the investigation team. Air University and AETC's Studies and Analysis Squadron assisted in the collection and analysis of data and the report's drafting.

Methodology

Investigators collected data using interviews, site visits, surveys, focus groups, analysis of case-specific material, and a review of existing academic literature. The CDI team also created and manned a 24/7 sexual misconduct hotline designed for current BMT trainees, TT students, and recent graduates, who were encouraged to use the hotline to report misconduct.

Interviews and Site Visits. Over the CDI's duration, investigators visited BMT at Lackland AFB, Texas; technical training schools at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, and Lackland, Goodfellow, and Sheppard AFBs, Texas; Officer Training School (OTS) at Maxwell AFB, Alabama; and Army basic training at Fort

Jackson, South Carolina. A video teleconference was held with leaders of Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois, and a telephone interview was conducted with leaders at Marine Corps basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina. On the various site visits, interviews were conducted with a wide range of personnel, from trainees and students to leadership. Investigators principally focused on sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining at BMT (Lackland AFB). The team interviewed the commanders of Second Air Force, the 37th Training Wing, and the 737th Training Group (TRG) and the eight BMT squadron commanders. The team also interviewed superintendents, first sergeants, section supervisors, and MTIs (male and female) from each of the squadrons—approximately 90 interviews at BMT. More than 115 interviews with leaders, faculty, and students at technical training schools were also conducted.

Surveys and Focus Groups. To measure trainee and student awareness of policies regarding sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining and to better understand the training environment and the extent of misconduct, investigators employed several tools. They included:

- Trainee focus groups (week 1 and week 4)
- MTI and spouse focus groups
- Quizzes (sexual assault, sexual harassment, and maltreatment, given to week 1, week 4, and week 8 trainees)
- Analysis of more than 25,000 end-of-course surveys completed by BMT graduates from 2009 to 2012

- Anonymous questionnaires administered to 6,003 BMT trainees (almost 100 percent of those assigned) during July 2012
- Surveys of over 400 MTIs concerning BMT culture
- Unit climate assessments (conducted by the 502nd Air Base Wing [ABW] Equal Opportunity Office for each BMT squadron)

The largest of these efforts was the CDI's 2012 *Training Environment and Culture Survey*, administered to 18,281 trainees, students, MTIs, MTLs, and TTIs. As one of the largest surveys ever given to trainees, students, and faculty, the survey provided the CDI team a valuable window into the training environment. For a detailed look at the survey's results, see Appendix N.

Likewise, the TT environment was analyzed through a series of surveys, interviews, and focus groups. More than 9,200 TT students completed at least one of two surveys; one focused on sexual assault and misconduct and another online survey concentrated on the technical training culture. In addition, more than 2,100 MTLs and TTIs also completed an online survey focused on the training environment. End-of-course surveys completed by TT students dating back to 2007 were also analyzed, and focus groups were conducted with technical training students. Much of our analysis is available in the appendices.

Case-Specific Material. A detailed review of all available law enforcement investigative material was undertaken. This included detailed interviews and law enforcement reports related to each of the specific cases that led to this investigation. While most case-specific material is protected by the Privacy Act

and is not available to the public, an extensive bibliography of releasable or publicly available material is included in the report.

Literature Review. Investigators reviewed relevant policy, recent government studies, and academic literature. In many instances, this information guided the development and design of interview and survey questions. It also assisted the team in understanding the history and psychological basis for misconduct.

Findings and Recommendations

This investigation examined every aspect of BMT and TT associated with recent misconduct and attempted to establish the root cause of problems that gave rise to serious lapses in good order and discipline. The findings and recommendations in the report offer a number of actionable opportunities to better dissuade, deter, and detect misconduct in the future. Although no single solution to the problem of misconduct was found, we believe institutionalizing the comprehensive solution set detailed in the report will significantly reduce the possibility of future unprofessional behavior.

The findings and recommendations are not without an important caveat. Since many incidents involving MTI misconduct crossed into the technical training environment when MTIs engaged in unprofessional relationships with TT students, the CDI examined both basic and technical training. However, the principle CDI focus was on BMT, and only a limited review of technical training was possible within the time frame of this investigation. Thus, we were unable to provide a fully developed set of recommendations regarding technical training and suggest a follow-on review to ensure that what occurred in BMT does not occur in technical training.

The findings and recommendations in the report are summarized in six categories based on the lines of effort taken by the CDI team. These are leadership; selection and manning; training and development; reporting, detection, and climate; policy and guidance; and gender integration.

Leadership. In any Air Force unit, commanders are ultimately responsible for mission success. To be effective, they must have the tools necessary to accomplish the mission. We believe one of the most important tools any commander has is the ability to discipline subordinates. This single aspect of command, above all others, distinguishes a commander from a manager; it is the foundation of good order and discipline in a military organization.

We did find cases where supervisors and commanders needed to exercise disciplinary authority with greater speed, consistency, and rigor. However, we also concluded that enhanced processes coupled with stronger leadership focus would resolve this concern more effectively than other options, including those that remove disciplinary authority from unit commanders.

The vast majority of training commanders work tirelessly to ensure mission success. However, our investigation also revealed instances where supervisors and commanders were insulated from, rather than engaged with, their squadrons. In these cases, insufficient oversight contributed to a culture where incidents of misconduct developed. Likewise, isolated instances where mid-level supervisors were either too lenient in dealing with an infraction or, in

at least one case, were directly involved in the misconduct also had an adverse impact on professionalism in the squadron.

Fixing these problems will require leaders who foster and promote a professional culture by directly engaging with instructors and trainees every day. In short, leaders must be an integral part of the training process from start to finish, building a climate of respect and discipline through action and example.

When operations officers were removed from the training squadrons between fiscal years 2007 and 2009, only one officer was left to supervise a squadron of up to 1,000 noncommissioned officers (NCO) and Airmen, so the level and intensity of supervision were significantly reduced. We believe this is part of a BMT "leadership gap" that should be filled as soon as possible. Our recommendation for increased officer oversight requires an additional major and four captains in each of the seven "street" BMT squadrons (320th, 321st, 322nd, 323rd, 324th, 326th, and 331st TRSs).

Additionally, leaders at all levels must prove their commitment to zero tolerance for misconduct by never wavering in their focus and consistently holding perpetrators fully and appropriately accountable. We recommend a renewed emphasis on the long-standing AETC standard that all nonprofessional contact, even when the student or trainee appears to consent freely, is unacceptable.

Selection and Manning. While manning authorizations are established to allow for two MTIs per flight, current manning stands at 86 percent of the authorization, which does not support the construct of increased oversight. Additionally, training requirements for new MTIs, medical holds for sick or injured personnel, pending

transfers, personnel on leave, and other persistent challenges further reduce effective manning. This regularly results in flights with only one MTI. When this occurs, MTIs may be required to train flights continuously without a break. Work schedules can also regularly average 85–100 hours per week. It was under circumstances like these that misconduct occurred.

We recommend increasing MTI manning to fill all funded manpower authorizations as soon as possible. This will enable the creation of four-member MTI teams, helping to disperse responsibility, authority, and power among team members. Increasing the female MTI ratio to mirror the proportion of female trainees will assure one woman per MTI team, while simultaneously allowing women to fill leadership positions that are an essential element of viable integrated training. The 737th TRG's proposal to reduce basic training from 8.5 weeks to 7.5 weeks should be adopted as soon as feasible. Modifying the BMT schedule in this way would eliminate unneeded breaks in training, increase efficiency, and reduce total MTI manning requirements.

The recommendations for a new MTI training-team paradigm, a quota for female MTIs, and a three-year tour cap all have manpower implications. We believe that the additional manpower requirements associated with these recommendations may be partially or completely offset by implementation of the 7.5-week curriculum. However, we believe a thorough manpower study should be accomplished to more accurately assess the total requirement. Integral to this study should be an accounting for the high rate of instructors that

are considered "ineffective" on any given day because of training, medical profiles, investigations, or reassignments. Data over the last 18 months revealed an average ineffective rate of 25 percent.

In examining the MTI selection process, we found that some MTIs were too immature and inexperienced to effectively exercise the authority and power they were given over trainees. Interviews revealed that some MTIs lacked the experience necessary to effectively serve as mentors and leaders and had little to no supervisory experience. We also found too often that junior MTIs had not completed Airman Leadership School—mandatory for frontline supervisors elsewhere in the Air Force. This lack of experience is considered particularly relevant when a single MTI is generally responsible for a flight of 50 or more trainees. Given the responsibility inherent in supervising and training this many Airmen, MTI leadership experience and skills are critical.

Additionally, to attract the Air Force's best NCOs to serve in this challenging assignment, effective incentives should be used to improve the quality of NCOs recruited to serve as training instructors. We also recommend that all possible career fields release eligible candidates for service in the MTI corps.

Separately, we believe the Air Force should increase the number of investigative personnel supporting our training wings and provide them with specialized training for this unique environment. SFOI is undermanned at Lackland because trainees do not count toward the number of investigators assigned. 802nd Security Forces Squadron manning will have to be formally assessed to determine the requirement for specially

trained and dedicated personnel within SFOI to meet the unique investigative needs of the training environment.

Training and Development. Squadron commanders are often functional experts within their career fields. However, commanders assigned to basic training squadrons rarely have any significant experience dealing with enlisted training. To resolve this concern and better prepare new commanders for this challenging environment, we recommend the establishment of a training program that is tailored to the unique aspects of commanding a BMT squadron.

For some MTIs, the power they hold over impressionable young men and women may tempt them to consider unprofessional conduct. Our investigation concluded that professional development programs that reinforce Air Force core values and emphasize professional NCO responsibilities will help ensure instructors are highly effective and professional at all times.

The shortfall in NCO professional development also impacts the overall climate at BMT. In some cases, instead of relying on a culture of respect to motivate trainees, MTIs relied too heavily on a culture of fear. Emphasis on MTI duties over NCO responsibilities affected not only the way MTIs related to trainees, but also the way in which they related to one another. Instances of experienced MTIs openly dressing down new MTIs, even those senior in rank, in front of trainees exemplify the negative culture that was present. The 37th TRW's deliberate development effort aimed at revitalizing a culture of respect is commendable, and we believe it should be fully resourced.

Reporting, Detection, and Climate. Reporting and detection of misconduct are essential to holding perpetrators accountable and deterring future misconduct. Unfortunately, in the eyes of faculty and staff, the combination of reporting barriers and poor detection methods assisted in creating a culture where misconduct appeared to be tolerated by leadership.

This also created an environment where trainees were fearful of reporting instances of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining because they were afraid of MTI reprisal, were fearful of punishment for their own misconduct, and in some cases, did not believe action would be taken against a perpetrator. We found that MTIs also failed to report misconduct for a variety of reasons, ranging from reluctance to come forward with uncertain allegations to fear of ostracism from their peers.

While it is difficult to eliminate all barriers to reporting, it is imperative that every effort be made to empower victims when they come forward. Providing easy and anonymous reporting and reassuring trainees that they will not face reprisal are critical first steps. If these steps are coupled with clear reporting guidelines and a culture that reinforces professional NCO responsibilities, we believe MTI reporting will improve. A positive step toward achieving these objectives has taken place. The CDI's 2012 *Training Environment and Culture Survey* found that 93 percent of trainees and students are comfortable reporting maltreatment and maltraining and more than 95 percent believe that leadership made reasonable efforts to stop sexual assault.

We also found that leadership would benefit from behavioral training designed to detect indicators of misconduct. We recommend that this type of instruction be included in the initial squadron commander training previously suggested.

Policy and Guidance. It was clear that commanders, supervisors, instructors, trainees, and students understood applicable regulations and guidance regarding professional conduct. However, our investigation found that punishment for these types of infractions varied widely within BMT and that, occasionally, individuals received punishment that seemed inconsistent with the severity of the misconduct. These situations contributed to the perception that unprofessional behavior would be tolerated by at least some in authority.

Most importantly, when we looked back over the past several years, it became clear that guidance and command emphasis on these issues were inconsistent over time. As attention ebbed and flowed, cycles of misconduct occurred. To prevent recurrence, we believe effective policies and procedures must be institutionalized, preventing the need to rely on the focus of an individual commander. Finally, we recommend that AETC work with the other services to conduct an annual review of initial training to stay ahead of developing trends, share best practices, and give these issues the continuing focus they deserve.

Gender Integration. The CDI's charter tasked investigators to consider whether gender-segregated training would prove to be "a more effective model

for mitigating MTI misconduct" than the current approach. To examine this option, investigators studied the current Air Force basic training model, along with those of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.

During our assessment, we concluded that the long-term readiness of the Air Force would best be served by a basic training construct that included three key attributes. First, any construct must provide an optimum balance between safe and effective training. Second, it must take advantage of an Airman's most formative period by instilling the same principles of mutual respect between genders that will be required in the operational Air Force. And third, it must address the power imbalance between MTIs and trainees that played such a significant role in setting the conditions for recent misconduct.

We compared the current Air Force BMT model with the segregated approach used by the Marine Corps and the fully integrated approaches used by the Army and Navy. Coupled with our thorough evaluation of leadership, policies, manning processes, and other aspects of BMT, this comparison led us to conclude that integrated training remains the best option for the Air Force.

While we found that the current BMT construct produces well-trained and exceptional Airmen, we also found that it requires changes to better optimize the balance between safety and effectiveness. These changes include approaches to diffuse individual MTI power and promote respect between the genders.

Achieving these objectives will require a modest reform to the single-MTI-per-flight approach currently used. Instead, we suggest that a team of four MTIs be assigned

to instruct two flights. Further, we believe one of the four MTIs in each team should be a woman, increasing overall MTI female manning to 25 percent of the force.

We recognize that this approach requires an increase in MTI manning, particularly in female numbers. However, we found that the Air Force has the lowest effective instructor-to-trainee ratio of any of the services and that the Air Force is currently the only service of the four without an established quota for female instructors in basic training. This led us to conclude that our suggestion is both feasible and critical. Furthermore, if the Air Force ultimately shortens BMT by one week (per our recommendations), the overall manning requirement for MTIs will be reduced, mitigating the impact of this change.

We believe this new construct will enhance training by providing role models of both genders for each flight of trainees and that it will enhance safety by diffusing power among all four instructors, limiting the likelihood that any one instructor could use his or her influence with a trainee to coerce misconduct. Moreover, this approach increases female role models and preserves an integrated training approach that is consistent with the principle of "training the way we will fight," together as Airmen.

Conclusion

A policy of zero tolerance for misconduct requires action consistent with the words. The Air Force has invested thousands of man-hours in investigations to identify and punish those responsible for recent cases of sexual misconduct

and to help preclude the possibility that it will happen again. Within this report, we describe additional specific actions we believe should be implemented to establish a BMT climate that provides the safest and most effective training possible for every Airman.

Notes

1. The term *trainee* is the proper title for individuals in basic training. Upon graduation, they become Airmen. While in technical training, they are also known as students. Throughout this report, the term *trainee* refers to an individual in basic training, and the term *student* refers to an individual in technical training.

2. The Office of Special Investigations is a chartered organization within the Air Force, which makes it independent of local leadership. Thus, while Security Forces may work for a wing commander, for example, and may be compelled by the wing commander to undertake an investigation, the local AFOSI office is independent and cannot be compelled to open an investigation by leadership outside the AFOSI chain of command.

3. Until charges are referred, the name of an instructor under investigation cannot be released. Thus, the term *subject MTI* is used.

4. The Security Forces Office of Investigation is distinct from AFOSI. Where AFOSI may be compared to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, SFOI may be most easily compared to detectives in a local police department or sheriff's department. The work of a standard security forces unit, as opposed to SFOI, best compares to the work of a

patrol division within a local police department. For further detail see Air Force Instruction 31-206, *Security Forces Investigations Program*, 16 September 2009.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Sexual assault is criminal behavior that violates the basic tenets of our profession. There is no place in our Air Force for this crime. Sexual assault directly undermines our core values, erodes the trust and confidence upon which our institution is built, and diminishes our mission readiness.

—Gen Norton A. Schwartz
Former Chief of Staff of the Air Force

The US Air Force is among the nation's most respected institutions. For almost a century, Americans have trusted our Airmen to stand with Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen to defend freedom and deter potential foes. American and Air Force histories are intertwined, bound together by the sacrifice of Airmen entrusted with causes much greater than themselves.

Over the past century, Americans have justifiably grown accustomed to the highest levels of integrity, service, and excellence from their Air Force. The Airman's Creed affirms that we are "faithful to a proud heritage, a tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor," and that we "will never leave an Airman behind."

Recently, the acts of a few instructors at Air Force basic training have placed that trust at risk and have tarnished our service's reputation. Sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining are rare occurrences in an otherwise exceptional training program. (For the definitions of these and other terms, see the glossary in this report.) These acts are incongruent with our

history, core values, creed, and shared sense of purpose as Airmen. Regardless of their rarity, they compel us to take deliberate action to minimize and, if possible, eliminate any chance of recurrence.

We are a responsive and resilient force, fully capable of meeting this challenge. The vast majority of training instructors serve with distinction and remain ready to make the next generation of Airmen even stronger than the last. Every year more than 35,000 trainees leave basic training as Airmen and go on to proudly serve the nation they took an oath to defend.

Senior leaders, commanders, and supervisors at every level are strengthening military discipline and reemphasizing professionalism throughout the training environment. Our commitment to providing the resources required to command, supervise, administer, and implement truly exceptional training for our Airmen will continue to remain a priority despite fiscal challenges. Enduring mission success requires a ready force, which is only possible if we make a truly continuing commitment to train our Airmen to the highest levels of professionalism in an environment consistent with safety, good order, and discipline.

This chapter gives context to the findings and recommendations found in the following chapters by providing the necessary background information. It begins with a brief description of basic and technical training and their unique environments. The chapter then describes the misconduct that led to the appointment of this investigation and discusses the 37th Training Wing (TRW) response, the specific tasks given to the investigation team, and the methodology employed by investigators.

The BMT Training Environment

Basic military training (BMT) is designed to prepare trainees, as young men and women are known in basic training, to be successful in the operational Air Force. At a time when deployments are at a near record high, the stress and physical challenges present in basic training are designed to both simulate that environment and determine who may not be suitable for the challenges of Air Force service. To achieve this mission, a dedicated corps of training instructors works tirelessly to motivate and instruct trainees while also pushing them to their limits.

Although trainees don't often notice, basic training is progressive in its approach. In the beginning, the military training instructors (MTI) employ their near total control over trainees as a means of bringing order to what would otherwise be a chaotic environment and introducing chaos when it is useful to the training mission. This intense training method is widely used in the first weeks of basic training because it aids in instilling discipline, rapidly introducing new knowledge and skills, and building teamwork among trainees. However, as trainees progress through BMT and demonstrate that they can take on greater responsibility for their flight's success, MTIs shift their training approach and act more as mentors, using the intense method only when necessary.

Since the purpose of BMT is not to "break" trainees but to build warrior Airmen, the power given to instructors is a measure of what is required to achieve that mission. It should not be forgotten that the new culture in which trainees are immersed is foreign and often at odds with what they experienced as civilians. Without strong MTIs,

a successful transition from the civilian to military world would prove very difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.[1]

BMT squadrons are organized to provide the highest-quality training while maximizing throughput, with squadrons consisting of approximately 1,000 trainees found in 20 flights of 50 trainees each, led by one to two MTIs. Each squadron is led by a board-selected lieutenant colonel, who can come from various occupational backgrounds. The remaining squadron personnel come from the enlisted ranks and range from a senior airman to a senior master sergeant. The squadron is further broken into four flights, each led by an MTI instructor supervisor, who is normally a master sergeant. Most issues related to MTI training and discipline are handled at this level. Each squadron also has a fully qualified first sergeant (master sergeant) who is responsible for maintaining the morale, welfare, and discipline of squadron members. This individual is not normally an MTI. The first sergeant focuses primarily on issues dealing with permanent party (MTI) personnel. The remaining squadron personnel perform support functions which directly aid the squadron training mission and are all normally fully qualified MTIs. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of a BMT squadron.

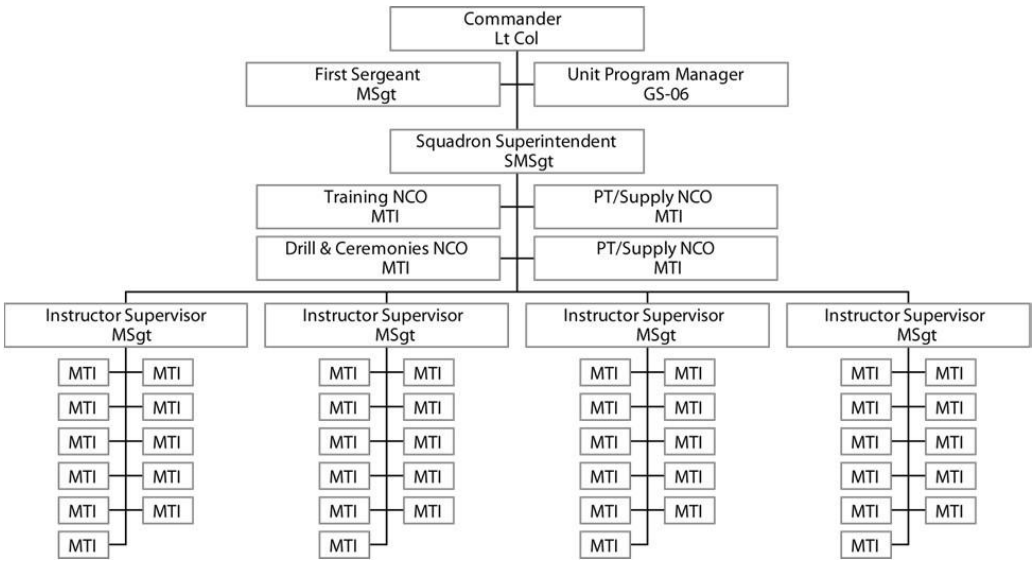

Figure 1. BMT squadron organizational chart

The Trainee Perspective. For the young men and women who arrive at basic training tired, scared, and unsure of what lies ahead of them, the chaos, intensity, and loss of individualism they experience is usually a significant culture shock. Trainees enter an environment where they are told when to wake, when to sleep, and what to do almost every moment of the day. In the midst of the stress and uncertainty stands the one pillar of stability within their new world, the military training instructor.

Deprived of the individuality and self-expression they valued as civilians, trainees must quickly learn to work together as they live in close proximity to one another.[2] Faced with the prospect of succeeding or failing as a group, these young men and women must learn to cooperate with people of different races, religions, ethnicities, values, and experiences. Either "washing out" (terminating a trainee's Air Force career) or being "recycled" (extending a trainee's stay at BMT) are primary concerns of most trainees, and avoiding either often serves as a prime motivator.

While some trainees may excel in one or more training areas, it is incumbent upon each trainee to ensure that the entire flight (approximately 50 trainees) achieves the objectives set for it. As they progress through BMT, trainees move from a dependence upon the MTI (for training and correction) to working as a cohesive unit that takes responsibility for the success of every flight member. This growth is one of the key signs that basic training is having the desired effect. By weeks 7 and 8, the MTI expects the flight to take significant responsibility for its daily success.

After entering basic training and facing a foreign culture and immensely challenging environment, trainees leave BMT with a new sense of personal discipline and an understanding of the teamwork required to succeed in the Air Force. Basic training instills confidence and pride in new Airmen and is an experience they are unlikely to ever forget.

The MTI Perspective. Transforming a diverse group of 50 strangers into a cohesive unit is a difficult task. Just as BMT is an intense and stressful time for trainees, it is also a high-stress environment for military training instructors and their families. Leaving home before 0300—six days a week—and not returning to their families until 1900 or later, MTIs have a schedule similar to that of a deployed Airman. The long hours, internal competition (to produce the best flights), and strict training regulations often leave instructors feeling as though they are simultaneously under intense pressure to succeed and subject to training constraints that make success challenging.[3] MTIs are given tremendous power over trainees not only as a means of maintaining discipline, but as a tool in creating the emotion, motivation, and commotion necessary to turn a

varied group of individuals (undergoing a life-altering transformation in 8.5 weeks) into a unified team focused on a single mission.

A persistent shortage of MTI manpower further exacerbates the long hours and constant pressures. This manpower shortfall makes MTIs reluctant to take leave because they are both loyal to their fellow MTIs and the mission and do not wish to be viewed as weak by taking a vacation.[4] Some MTIs spend so much time at the squadron that their families fade in importance. Their flight becomes their world.

Families also face significant stresses as MTIs spend little time with their spouses and children. Because instructors spend the majority of their waking hours at work, the bonds between husbands and wives or parents and children often suffer—creating additional stress. Spouses are all too often left alone to struggle with children, finances, and other issues. When they do struggle, spouses are often unwilling to seek help because they fear it may reflect poorly on their MTI spouse, causing harm to their career. Thus, families often feel isolated and alone, creating even more stress.[5]

As the previous paragraphs illustrate, basic training can be a difficult and stressful time for both trainees and instructors. The unique circumstances of an environment designed to artificially elevate intensity and stress for trainees also place a myriad of stresses on MTIs.

The Technical Training Environment

As graduates of basic training, the term *trainee* no longer applies. Instead, these young men and women can proudly call themselves Airmen. When they depart BMT and arrive at their respective technical schools (where they will gain the knowledge and skills

to perform their jobs), they are not only Airmen but students. While a more controlled environment than a college or university, technical training is a more relaxed environment than BMT. No longer trainees, technical training students attend regularly scheduled classes much as they would in college. Military training leaders and technical training instructors, who replace MTIs as authority figures, serve a very different function in technical training than that performed by MTIs in basic training. The primary function of a military training leader (MTL) is to ensure that students complete their military training and that good order and discipline are maintained. Technical training instructors (TTI) are technical experts and classroom instructors and often function as advisors, mentors, counselors, and sources of information. In many ways, technical training begins the process of assimilating new Airmen into Air Force life and culture after the intense environment of BMT.

Background

Misconduct and Investigation. On 24 June 2011 a female trainee assigned to the 37th TRW's (b) (7)(C) Training Squadron (TRS) was reassigned to a flight in the (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS.[6] The trainee reported to her new MTI that SSgt Luis Walker, an MTI assigned to the (b) (7)(C) TRS, had sexually assaulted a fellow trainee. The new MTI immediately informed the (b) (7)(C) TRS squadron commander, who in turn notified the (b) (7)(C) TRS squadron commander. Within 24 hours of notification, the squadron commander removed Walker from his duties, issued a no-contact order, and notified the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI), which immediately opened an investigation into Walker's alleged misconduct.

During the approximately five-month AFOSI investigation, agents uncovered a total of 10 Walker victims—dating from October 2010 to June 2011.[7] In November 2011, concurrent with the Walker investigation, three MTIs in the (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS approached their squadron superintendent and alleged that they knew of MTIs within their squadron engaging in inappropriate behavior and misconduct toward female trainees. The superintendent informed the (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS commander, who contacted AFOSI, initiating another investigation. During subsequent interviews, all alleged victims denied involvement in sexual or other misconduct with MTIs. AFOSI ultimately found no credible evidence of inappropriate sexual contact and ceased its investigation on 5 December 2011.[8]

The 802nd Mission Support Group (MSG) staff judge advocate (SJA), having jurisdiction in this case, was dissatisfied with the results of the AFOSI interviews and elected to reinvestigate the matter using the Security Forces Office of Investigations (SFOI). SFOI agreed to interview the suspected MTIs (including then-SSgt Peter Vega-Maldonado),[9] while the base legal office interviewed other MTIs from the 331st TRS.[10] Based on these initial interviews, the 802nd SJA requested that SFOI conduct further interviews with potential victims at various bases.[11] On 26 January 2012, during a follow-on SFOI interview, a female former trainee admitted to beginning a sexual relationship with Vega-Maldonado after graduating from BMT and arriving at technical training. (b) (7)(C), (b) (7)(A) [redacted] From January to May 2012, SFOI investigators identified

six more MTIs who allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct with trainees and students. A significant number of investigative leads came from Vega-Maldonado, who was given a sentence cap in exchange for his guilty plea and a promise to provide information under a grant of testimonial immunity regarding misconduct by fellow MTIs. In May 2012 the AFOSI rejoined the investigation when it appeared that several of the violations discovered fell within AFOSI jurisdiction.

Adjudication. In late November 2011 charges were preferred against Walker. He was subsequently convicted of 28 charges, ranging from violation of lawful general order to rape, in a general court-martial ending on 20 July 2012. He was given a 20-year sentence, reduced in rank to Airman basic, required to forfeit all pay and benefits, and ordered to be dishonorably discharged.

Convicted on one count of engaging in an unprofessional relationship, Vega-Maldonado was reduced in rank to Airman, given 90 days confinement, required to forfeit $500 per month for four months, and given 30 days hard labor at his April 2012 court-martial.[12] Under the grant of testimonial immunity, Vega-Maldonado confessed to seven unprofessional relationships and to date has provided testimonial evidence against five other MTIs regarding their misconduct with trainees. On 1 August 2012 TSgt Christopher Smith was also found guilty by a special court-martial on two counts of engaging in unprofessional relationships. He was reduced in rank to Airman and sentenced to 30 days confinement.

To date, three MTIs (Walker, Vega-Maldonado, and Smith) have been convicted of sexual assault or unprofessional relationships with trainees or students. Four

additional MTIs ([redacted], SSgt Craig LeBlanc, SSgt Jason Manko, and SSgt Kwinton Estacio) are awaiting court-martial. Charges involve sexual assault or unprofessional relationships with five trainees or students. Eight additional MTIs are under investigation for engaging in unprofessional relationships with 19 trainees or students, and one MTI also received nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 of the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* (*UCMJ*) for inappropriate social-media contact with trainees. Because active investigations continue, it is possible that additional misconduct may be uncovered.

In response to an expanding number of misconduct cases, the 737th Training Group (TRG) undertook a number of initial efforts to identify problems at BMT and correct them. The following section outlines some of those efforts.

37th TRW Response. While the investigation into MTI misconduct within the 331st TRS began in November 2011, it was not until SFOI reinterviewed the alleged victims in February 2012 and they recanted their previous denials that it became clear to the then–37th TRW commander, [redacted], that there was a more widespread problem. He then authorized the formulation of a *Basic Military Training Command Climate Optimization Plan*, which was completed on 10 March 2012.[13] The 737th TRG also conducted a survey of 5,936 BMT trainees on 17 March 2012, publishing the results as the *BMT Sexual Assault and Professional Misconduct Report*.[14]

The *Basic Military Training Command Climate Optimization Plan* sought to optimize the safety, security, and productivity of trainees within the basic training

environment. It concluded that the following fundamental reforms to the BMT environment and MTI culture were required:

- Creating an atmosphere where trainees feel free to report misconduct without fear of retribution
- Deliberately developing MTIs who uphold the "Airmen of character" virtue and do not tolerate those who tarnish the reputation of the MTI corps
- Identifying all victims of sexual assault
- Employing heightened tracking and trend analysis while vigilantly investigating all misconduct accusations

On 13 July 2012 the 737th TRG released the *BMT Command Climate Optimization Plan Update*, which detailed 30 specific changes by the group in response to the wing's March climate optimization plan.[15] In the first week of August, the group provided a further update on its progress toward implementing changes. Among the most significant reforms that have been implemented are:

- Upon arriving at BMT, trainees are assigned a wingman that they must remain with when outside their dorm.
- Two permanent party personnel are required to work charge of quarters (monitoring the squadron) from 2100 to 0400.
- All female flights are assigned a female MTI-mentor as part of the MTI team. She regularly discusses issues of professionalism with female flights.
- MTIs are no longer authorized to access trainee cell phones except to store them.

- Squadron leadership is briefing squadron personnel quarterly on AFI 36-6001, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response.*
- Any MTI accused of an unprofessional relationship will be immediately removed from duty while an investigation is conducted.
- No closed-door counseling is ever allowed with a trainee.
- All trainees are issued a sexual assault/misconduct hotline card.
- All trainees are briefed, prior to departure, that they may have no contact with an MTI during technical training.
- Critique boxes are now located in discreet positions within dorm stairwells.
- All trainees meet the group commander during the first week of training and receive a brief on what constitutes misconduct and how to report it.

Additional reforms are also in the planning and implementation stages. Based on interviews and the evidence gathered by the commander-directed investigation (CDI) team, leaders at the squadron, group, wing, and numbered Air Force levels are actively engaged in reforming BMT in such a way that incoming trainees will find a safe, yet challenging, training environment.

Commander-Directed Investigation

On 20 June 2012, concerned about the extent of misconduct, General Rice appointed Maj Gen Margaret Woodward, acting director, Operational Planning, Policy, and Strategy, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans, and Requirements, Headquarters US Air Force, to lead an independent 60-day commander-directed investigation into

faculty and staff misconduct with BMT trainees and technical training students.[16] General Rice explained the purpose of the CDI:

> This CDI is the next stage in AETC efforts to deeply and deliberately evaluate the BMT and TT environments and obtain recommendations to enable AETC to
>
> e. Dissuade, deter, and detect criminal behavior by faculty and staff with trainees and students and eliminate the climate that fosters it.
>
> f. Hold offenders accountable while ensuring due process.
>
> g. Ensure a command environment that effectively supports victims and where any individuals who know of or reasonably suspect misconduct (bystanders) rapidly disclose information to the right authorities.
>
> h. Ensure leadership at all levels accomplishes the three items above in a timely manner.[17]

The memorandum of appointment goes on to establish seven tasks for the investigation:

> h. Identify all current and historical cases of reported sexual misconduct and unprofessional relationships between faculty/staff and trainees/students in the BMT and TT environments. Your review should go back at least three years, and more if necessary.
>
> i. Identify all current and historical cases of maltreatment and other forms of abuse of power by faculty/staff. Your review should go back at least three years, and more if necessary.

j. Assess the efficacy of AETC's actions in response to the reported cases of misconduct.

k. Identify the root causes of misconduct by faculty/staff.

l. Assess the efficacy and completeness of AETC's strategy to address the root causes of misconduct by faculty/staff.

m. Determine whether AETC is in compliance with applicable laws and policy with respect to misconduct by faculty/staff in the training environment.

n. Consider whether gender-segregated training would be a more effective model to mitigate MTI misconduct.[18]

CDI investigators were given full independence to develop findings and offer recommendations. No limitations were placed on their ability to pursue information or take a critical look at the training environment, culture, or policies.

Scoping the Investigation

The investigation quickly came to focus on misconduct at BMT that includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unprofessional relationships. As figure 2 illustrates, of the approximately 132,000 male and 33,000 female trainees that have come through basic training since January 2008, there have been four MTIs accused of sexual assault (including one rape) and 28 MTIs accused of unprofessional relationships. These 32 MTIs include the 15 subjects who are under investigation, facing charges, previously court-martialed, or received punishment under Article 15 of the UCMJ.

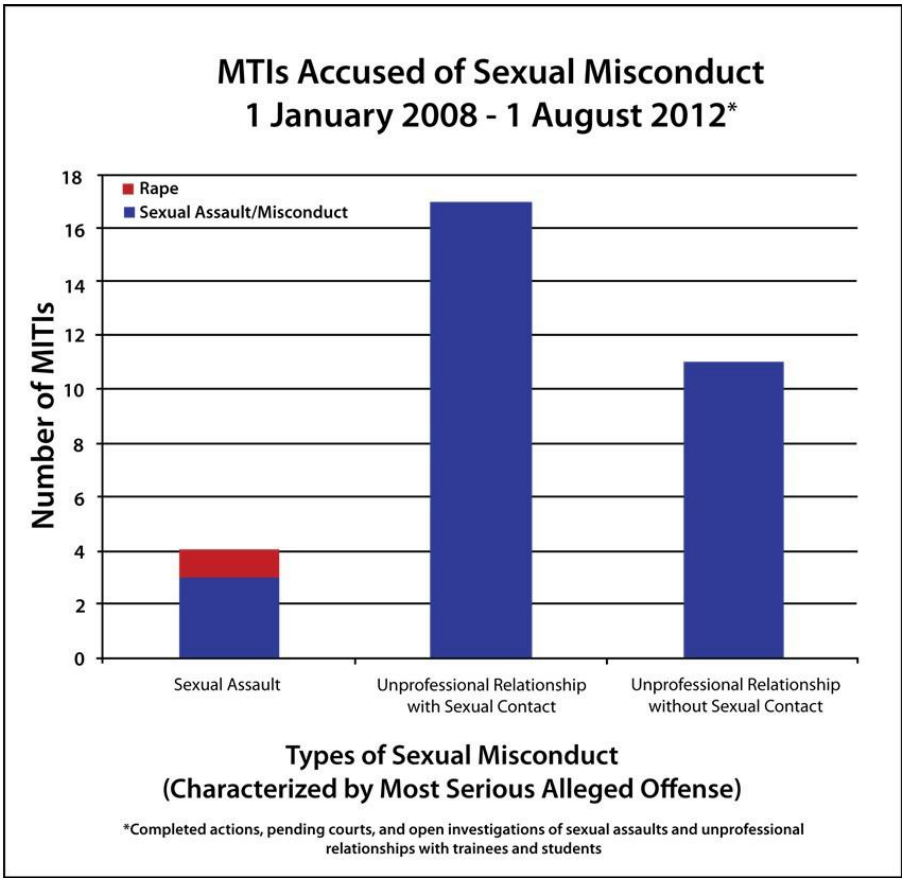

Figure 2. Sexual assault and unprofessional relationships at BMT, 1 January 2008 to 1 August 2012

These cases are broken into three categories: sexual assault (which includes rape), unprofessional relationships with sexual contact, and unprofessional relationships without sexual contact. While the legal definition of each is complex and context based, they can best be understood the following way. Sexual assault includes all unwanted sexual contact: kissing, groping, or other forms of unwanted sexual contact. Rape, a form of sexual assault, occurs when a person uses force to compel another person to perform a sex act. Under AETC Instruction 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, all cases of unprofessional relationships, with or without sexual contact, are prohibited.[19] This includes all interaction between faculty/staff and trainees or

students that is not of a professional nature. For example, talking on the phone socially, texting, and using social media for personal purposes falls within this category. For a more detailed discussion of military discipline, see Appendix E.

Because many of the incidents of MTI misconduct crossed into the TT environment when MTIs engaged in unprofessional relationships with TT students, the CDI necessarily examined both basic and technical training. However, with the CDI's focus on BMT, only a limited review of technical training was possible. Thus, we were unable to provide a fully developed set of recommendations regarding technical training. Therefore, we suggest a follow-on review of technical training to ensure that what occurred at BMT does not occur in technical training.

Investigation Team

General Woodward assembled a team of 38 Air Force officer, enlisted, and civilian personnel. They included representatives from the Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps, Security Forces, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, recruiting, the inspector general, and the medical community. Additionally, Airmen with experience as MTIs, MTLs, and TTIs were also included on the investigation team. Air University and AETC's Studies and Analysis Squadron assisted in collecting and analyzing data and drafting this report.

Methodology

Investigators collected data using interviews, site visits, surveys, focus groups, analysis of case-specific material, and a review of existing academic literature. The CDI team also created and manned a 24/7 sexual misconduct hotline designed for current

BMT trainees, TT students, and recent graduates, who were encouraged to use the hotline to report misconduct.

Interviews and Site Visits. Over the CDI's duration, investigators visited BMT at Lackland AFB, Texas; technical training schools at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, and Lackland, Goodfellow, and Sheppard AFBs, Texas; Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB, Alabama; and Army basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. A video teleconference was held with leaders of Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Illinois, and a telephone interview was conducted with leaders at Marine Corps basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina. On the various site visits, interviews were conducted with a wide range of personnel, from trainees and students to leadership. Investigators principally focused on sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining at BMT (Lackland AFB). The team interviewed commanders of Second Air Force, the 37th TRW, the 737th TRG, and the eight BMT squadron commanders. The team also interviewed superintendents, first sergeants, section supervisors, and MTIs (male and female) from each of the squadrons—approximately 90 interviews at BMT. More than 115 interviews with leaders, faculty, and students at technical training schools were also conducted.

Surveys and Focus Groups. To measure trainee and student awareness of policies regarding sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining and to better understand the training environment and the extent of misconduct, investigators employed several tools. They included:

- Trainee focus groups (week 1 and week 4)

- MTI and spouse focus groups
- Quizzes (sexual assault, sexual harassment, and maltreatment, given to week 1, week 4, and week 8 trainees)
- Analysis of more than 25,000 end-of-course surveys completed by BMT graduates from 2009 to 2012
- Anonymous questionnaires administered to 6,003 BMT trainees (almost 100 percent of those assigned) during July 2012
- Surveys of over 400 MTIs concerning BMT culture
- Unit climate assessments (conducted by the 502nd Air Base Wing [ABW] Equal Opportunity Office for each BMT squadron)

The largest of these efforts was the CDI's 2012 *Training Environment and Culture Survey*, administered to 18,281 trainees, students, MTIs, MTLs, and TTIs. As one of the largest surveys ever given to trainees, students, and faculty, the survey provided the CDI team a valuable window into the training environment. For a detailed look at the survey's results, see Appendix N.

Likewise, the TT environment was analyzed through a series of surveys, interviews, and focus groups. More than 9,200 TT students completed at least one of two surveys; one focused on sexual assault and misconduct and another online survey concentrated on the technical training culture. In addition, more than 2,100 MTLs and TTIs also completed an online survey focused on the training environment. End-of-course surveys completed by TT students dating back to 2007 were also analyzed, and

focus groups were conducted with TT students. Much of our analysis is available in the appendices.

Case-Specific Material. A detailed review of all available law enforcement investigative material was undertaken. This included detailed interviews and law enforcement reports related to each of the specific cases that led to this investigation. While most case-specific material is protected by the Privacy Act and not available to the public, an extensive bibliography of releasable or publicly available material is included in the report.

Literature Review. Investigators reviewed relevant policy, recent government studies, and academic literature. In many instances, this information guided the development and design of interview and survey questions. It also assisted the team in understanding the history and psychological basis for misconduct.

Report Format

The CDI team determined that the investigation should be conducted along five main lines of effort: leadership; selection and manning; training and development; reporting, detection, and climate; and policy and guidance. Thus, chapters 2 through 6 offer an analysis of the findings and recommendations from each of these lines of effort. At General Rice's request, the team also examined whether gender-segregated training would be a more effective model to mitigate MTI misconduct. Chapter 7 offers a discussion of available options and offers the team's preferred approach to addressing gender integration in basic training.

Notes

1. Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, 14 October 2011, 128, and AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 8 November 2011, defines "Airman" as "any US Air Force member (officer or enlisted, active, reserve, or guard, along with Department of the Air Force civilians) who supports and defends the US Constitution and serves our country. Airmen are those people who formally belong to the US Air Force and employ or support some aspect of the US Air Force's air and space power capabilities. An Airman is any person who understands and appreciates the full range of air and space power capabilities and can employ or support some aspect of air and space power capabilities."

2. The physical set up of a recruit housing and training building is straightforward. Each building contains 20 dormitories, with two open bays in each dorm. A bay sleeps 30. Dorms have a dayroom, showers/latrines, a supply closet, and a flight office.

3. Unnamed MTI, interview by (b) (6) [redacted], 31 July 2012.

4. CDI investigators interviewed more than two dozen current MTIs at Lackland AFB on 10 July 2012.

5. Focus group with MTI spouses, by (b) (6) [redacted], 23 July 2012.

6. The term *trainee* is the proper title for individuals in basic training. Upon graduation, they become Airmen. While in technical training they are also known as

students. Throughout this report, the term *trainee* refers to an individual in basic training and the term *student* refers to an individual in technical training.

7. Security Forces Investigations, *Special Interest Case Report (SICR) 418763*, Law Enforcement Sensitive, 11 July 2012. Information extracted is unclassified.

8. The Office of Special Investigations is a chartered organization within the Air Force, which makes it independent of local leadership. Thus, while security forces may work for a wing commander and be compelled to undertake an investigation, the local AFOSI office is independent and cannot be compelled to open an investigation by leadership outside the AFOSI chain of command.

9. Until charges are referred, the name of an instructor under investigation cannot be released. Thus, the term *subject MTI* is used.

10. 802nd Mission Support Group chief of criminal investigations and antiterrorism, interview by (b) (6) [redacted], 11 July 2012. (Law enforcement sensitive) Information extracted is unclassified.

11. The SFOI is distinct from the AFOSI. Whereas AFOSI may be compared to the FBI, SFOI may be most easily compared to detectives in a local police department or sheriff's department. The work of a standard security forces unit, as opposed to SFOI, best compares to the work of a patrol division within a local police department. For further detail see AFI 31-206, *Security Forces Investigations Program*, 16 September 2009.

12. Security Forces Investigations, *Special Interest Case Report 422424*, Law Enforcement Sensitive, 2 July 2012. Information extracted is unclassified.

13. (b) (6) [redacted], *Basic Military Training Command Climate Optimization Plan*, for official use only (FOUO) (Lackland AFB, TX: 37th TRW, 2012).

14. (b) (6) [redacted], *BMT Sexual Assault and Professional Misconduct Report* (FOUO) (Lackland AFB, TX: 737th TRG, 2012).

15. 737th TGR, *BMT Command Climate Optimization Plan (CCOP) Update* (Lackland AFB, TX: 737th TRG, 2012).

16. Gen Edward Rice, Air Education and Training Command, US Air Force, to Maj Gen Margaret Woodward, Headquarters Air Force, memorandum, 20 June 12.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. AETC Instruction 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, 2 March 2007.

F

Chapter 2

Leadership

As with any military organization, commanders and supervisors in basic training are crucial to mission success. An engaged leadership, in fact, is arguably even more important in the nearly 24/7 BMT training environment. Here, the need for MTIs to build trainee confidence by pushing them to their limits must be tempered with precisely the correct level of professional distance and restraint. Commanders and supervisors at every level must foster a training environment that facilitates the development of exceptional Airmen. This is done in an environment that is challenging, safe, and professional at all times. The only way this can be accomplished is if leadership is an integral part of the training process from start to finish—building a climate of respect and discipline by action and example.

While many dedicated commanders and supervisors work tirelessly to ensure mission success, we found several areas where leadership was lacking. Leadership is responsible for establishing a climate of respect within their organizations. This is done by example, training, accountability, and rewarding the right behavior. If the climate is healthy, bad actors are dissuaded from engaging in misconduct. The few who violate the rules are immediately removed. In our investigation, we found that the failure to provide adequate oversight and presence allowed a culture to develop in several squadrons that appeared to tolerate the MTIs' misconduct. The misconduct escalated when MTIs perceived accountability was lacking.

Likewise, we found the distance between commanders, superintendents, and first-line supervisors was too great. Process barriers at nearly every level limited information flow regarding instructor misconduct. Instead of the organizational culture being driven from the top down, we observed examples of leaders essentially insulated from, rather than engaged in, the daily training environment. Midlevel leadership (in the form of instructor supervisors) was often too lenient or, as alleged against (b) (7)(C), (b) (6) [redacted] involved in misconduct. In these situations, MTIs felt isolated and often developed an allegiance to their fellow instructors that was stronger than their allegiance to Air Force core values.

Cultivating a culture of mutual respect that provides safe and effective training requires engaged leaders who demand adherence to our core values. To achieve this consistently, the Air Force must make a commitment to fully resource the enlisted training enterprise with the highest caliber leaders and provide them with the training and resources required.

Finding 1

- The lack of squadron commander interaction with members of their units created an environment where offenders operated undeterred and undetected.
- Lack of mid-level officers and over reliance on instructor supervisors created a near-single-point of failure for commanders' oversight.

Discussion

In our interviews, while commanders believed they were frequently out and about in their squadrons,[2] MTIs reported their commanders and other squadron leadership were not visible within the squadrons, especially during non-duty hours.[3] Interviews confirmed that this lack of interaction, real or perceived, between commanders and subordinates contributed to the inability of commanders to detect and deter misconduct.[4]

Within BMT squadrons, instructor supervisors serve as the primary means of mentoring MTIs and detecting misconduct. When these instructor supervisors turn a blind eye or are involved in misconduct themselves, as is alleged against (b) (7)(C), (b) (6) [redacted],[5] it creates an environment where misconduct occurs.[6] Our investigation found that, at least within the (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRSs, instructor supervisors allowed cliques to form and loyalties became misplaced.[7]

Commanders and superintendents must be more active in the supervision and the day-to-day activities within the squadron, including direct and regular contact with instructor supervisors—especially outside of normal duty hours since BMT is a 24/7 training operation. In BMT, however, the squadron commander is the sole officer in the

squadron.[8] To adequately cover the squadron commander's duties and still ensure officer leadership is visible throughout the squadron, mid-level officer leadership is required.

Supervision within a squadron is crucial to detecting and deterring misconduct and is equally essential in fostering the type of environment that encourages reporting from both the alleged victims and witnesses; in BMT, witnesses reported a lack of oversight by unit leadership.[9] Not only did this lack of oversight prevent detection and deterrence, it also created the impression that leadership did not care.

To ensure appropriate oversight of BMT squadrons, each squadron should have an O-4 (major) serving alongside the squadron commander and O-3s (captains) serving as section commanders. This would bring these squadrons in line with the operational Air Force and provide the appropriate mix and proportions of officer to enlisted personnel. The Army's initial entry training program uses this model and believes it is very effective in providing the right level of supervision.[10]

Recommendations

- Add an officer director of operations and officer section commanders to BMT squadrons to improve oversight.
- Increase officer leadership presence throughout all hours and phases of training.

Finding 2

- MTIs excluded first sergeants from access and information, thereby decreasing their ability to detect and deter misconduct.
- BMT squadrons are frequently staffed by inexperienced first sergeants, and occasionally, additional duty first sergeants

Discussion

Noncommissioned officers' (NCO) and senior NCOs' failure to report misconduct was exacerbated by squadron leadership's lack of insight into the morale, welfare, and discipline of their training flights. The majority of MTIs stated the squadron commander and superintendent had infrequent contact with flights during and after duty hours. The first sergeant was present even less.[11]

First sergeants are essential to the successful workings of any squadron, and even more so in BMT's unique environment. Our interviews revealed that inexperienced first sergeants had an unusually difficult time successfully navigating and inserting themselves into the MTI-centric culture of BMT.[12]

First sergeants seek out problems by talking to Airmen at every level in the organization, but they cannot discover problems without two-way communication. MTIs function in a stressful and competitive environment. They are reluctant to air their problems to someone who is not an MTI, so they withhold information, hide negative behaviors, and protect one another from disciplinary action.[13]

These practices must be corrected. Placing an experienced first sergeant into every BMT squadron will be a great step toward changing the BMT environment that

gave rise to the MTI tolerance of misconduct culture. An experienced, diamond-wearing first sergeant is more likely to be better equipped to establish the rapport and access necessary to eliminate the culture of tolerance for misbehavior.

Recommendation

- Ensure every BMT squadron has a diamond-wearing first sergeant with at least one year of experience as a first sergeant.

Finding 3

- Most commanders were unfamiliar with the unique aspects of BMT when they took command.

Discussion

There are many unique characteristics which distinguish squadron command in the training environment from others in the operational Air Force. Specifically, most squadron commanders are selected to serve within their specific career fields. They are normally recognized as subject matter experts and have a firm grasp of the unit's mission based upon many years of operational experience. They have likely served in numerous subordinate roles related to that mission. On the other hand, BMT squadron commanders normally have little to no experience in the training mission. Initially, they have to rely on the squadron's senior enlisted personnel as their source of technical expertise.[14] This lack of credibility and knowledge makes command much more difficult.

Second Air Force offers a course for TT commanders primarily covering academic management.[15] There is no similar course offered for BMT commanders. Commanders stated that current AETC training opportunities do not provide the situational awareness or command philosophy required to successfully lead in the training environment. Collectively, commanders indicated they had not been adequately prepared to make optimal decisions.[16] Instances where commanders took command without any AETC precommand training further compounded the lack of specific training.[17]

Additionally, with the steep learning curve required to adapt to the training mission and the leadership challenges unique to the training environment, the Air Force

should strive to place officers from among the highest-caliber and best-qualified officers available in the Air Force into training squadron command billets. Maj Gen Leonard Patrick, the Second Air Force commander, stated he needs all career fields to release quality candidates for BMT command positions.[18]

Recommendations

- Develop a leadership training course for BMT commanders that includes an understanding of the unique challenges present in the training environment.
- Ensure access to the highest-quality candidates across all career fields to be considered for TRS commanders.

Finding 4

- Substantiated misconduct was often dealt with using disciplinary tools less severe than warranted by the facts.
- BMT had no specific criteria or time standards for reporting allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.

Discussion

Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships,*[19] and AETC Instruction (AETCI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*,[20] clearly define professional and unprofessional relationships. AETCI 36-2909 classifies a violation of its unprofessional relationships paragraphs as a punitive matter.[21] Despite this, commanders failed to understand the gravity of the misconduct when these instructions were violated, and the misconduct was frequently addressed with disciplinary action lower than warranted. An analysis of disciplinary actions taken in basic training units shows misconduct against trainees was sometimes nominally punished, and in many cases those offending MTIs were allowed to continue performing instructor duties.[22] The low threat of discipline failed to deter perpetrators. (See Appendix E).

Between 2008 and 2012, 76 individuals accounted for 99 incidents of misconduct against trainees; 34 involved unprofessional relationships or sexual misconduct, and 65 involved maltreatment or maltraining. Of the incidents of sexual misconduct, 7 were disciplined under courts-martial or Article 15, and four received letters of reprimand

from their commanders. The maltreatment or maltraining offenses resulted in 22 courts-martial or Article 15s. Forty-two received administrative action given by commanders or lower level supervisor, including 22 letters of reprimand, two letters of admonishment, and 14 letters of counseling and four other administrative actions including one other than honorable conditions discharge in lieu of courts-martial.[23]

One of the most egregious examples of misconduct addressed with disciplinary action lower than warranted by the evidence involved then-(b) (7)(C), (b) (6). In April 2009 a trainee reported that her MTI had been in the dorms after midnight and had "harassed and flirted with" her by kissing and hugging her.[24] The evidence revealed that on 20 April 2009, (b) (7)(C), (b) (6) went to his female flight's dormitory around 0200. While there, he and the victim went into his office where he kissed her and hugged her so tightly to himself that she could feel his erection.[25] Security forces turned the case over to AFOSI, who investigated the allegations.[26]

In August 2009 (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) commander, (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), issued him a letter of reprimand and delayed his promotion to master sergeant for 60 days.[27] Later that year, (b) (7)(C), (b) (6) became an instructor supervisor and eventually became then-(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) immediate supervisor.

A second example involves now-(b) (6). In January 2011 special agents from AFOSI at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), conducted an investigation into allegations of an unprofessional relationship between (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and a female technical training student at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) .[28] OSI found (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had improperly engaged the student using social media, photographs, telephone conversations, and texting, all

violations of AETCI 36-2909, paragraph 4.3.3. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) commander, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], issued him a letter of reprimand and ordered him to attend the next class at the MTI school on professional and unprofessional relationships.[29]

An additional concern in this area was the lack of a clear policy requiring reporting of misconduct. The 737th TRG's current policy letter, dated 30 September 2011, states, "You may address [incidents of maltreatment and maltraining] by reporting the incident to the individual but repetitive or more serious acts of maltreatment or maltraining must be reported to the individual's chain of command."[30] Many first sergeants and squadron superintendents were not aware of this policy or any other specific policy establishing a reporting chain or timeline.[31]

The most glaring failure to report happened when a trainee reported that her friend had been sexually assaulted by then-(b) (6), (b) (7)(C). Only when the commander called to let him know about the incident did the superintendent report he had heard of another act of sexual misconduct (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had committed weeks earlier.[32] A first sergeant stated in his interview, "Other MTIs saw suspicious activity, but no one reported it."[33] In fact, evidence shows that (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) continued to instruct flights for nearly two weeks after the earlier incident had been reported to the superintendent.[34]

A clear and distinct reporting policy might have averted the delay in reporting (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) misconduct. Additionally, during a group discussion interview, instructors stated that a clear and specific reporting policy would make it easier to report incidents of misconduct. In fact, they said it would be helpful for them to have a policy with

examples of misconduct.[35] The creation of an enterprise-wide reporting policy is essential to stopping repeat incidents in the future.

Recommendations

- Develop a clear policy requiring wing commanders to be informed immediately of all allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.
- Require squadron commander consultation with the local legal office upon discovering allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining and direct consultation prior to taking administrative or disciplinary action.
- Immediately remove an MTI from the training environment when an allegation of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or unprofessional relationship involving a trainee or student is made. If the allegation is substantiated, remove the MTI permanently from the career field and take other disciplinary action as appropriate.
- If the allegation against an MTI involves maltreatment or maltraining, immediately remove him or her from the training environment. Require retraining and recertification in accordance with the recommendations in Finding 10.

Finding 5

- Failure to adequately use tracking mechanisms in BMT prevented leadership awareness of trends. This impacted leadership's ability to respond to disciplinary trends and deter future misconduct.

Discussion

There is no single mechanism in BMT to track and trend derogatory information. Multiple data points are available, including end-of-course critiques, student and trainee feedback, personal information files, derogatory information, administrative actions, and nonjudicial punishment.[36] But no squadron commander tried to track and trend data from these sources for specific MTIs. A recent example was discovered during a comprehensive review of a squadron's trainee critique program. The review revealed that an MTI from the 323rd TRS received three critiques for maltraining—one on 26 March 2012 and two more on 2 April 2012—but the unit commander did not take action until 6 July 2012, after the CDI team elevated the concern.[37]

A tracking and trending model worth considering is a model used by the Dallas police department. Police officers operate with great autonomy. Because of the power imbalance between officers and the public, the Dallas police department tracks all allegations of misconduct—including unsubstantiated allegations. If an officer receives a sufficient number allegations of a specific nature, or if a collective allegation threshold is met, internal affairs or similar elements conduct more thorough investigations to ensure public safety and trust.[38]

Recommendations

- Develop a tracking tool that allows wing, group, and squadron commanders to consolidate, track, and trend allegations of misconduct and disciplinary and administrative actions throughout an MTI's career.
- Archive the data collected to use in disciplinary actions, performance reports, termination actions, and so forth, and when determining whether or not to accept people wishing to return for another special duty assignment, such as an MTI, MTL, or TTI.

Notes

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1. Air Force Form (AF) 458, *Charge Sheet* (Preferral), (b) (6), (b) (7)(A), (b) (7)(C), 20 June 2012.

2. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, 10 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS commander, interview by General Woodward, 9 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), former (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS commander, interview by General Woodward, 26 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS commander, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 11 July 2012.

3. AETC Commander Directed Investigation (CDI) Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), "Off Duty Leadership in Squadron," July 2012. Note: Data compiled from MIT interviews in all BMT squadrons except 319th TRS (non-street-pushing squadron).

4. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 10 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 17 July 2012;

and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), former (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 16 July 2012.

5. AF 458, *Charge Sheet* (Preferral), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 20 June 2012.

6. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), former MTI, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 19 July 2012.

7. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 20 July 12.

8. 737th TRG, "Organizational Chart, 5–12 March 2012."

9. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTIs, interviewed by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 10 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 11 July 2012.

10. "Army & Air Force Swap Drill Sergeants PT 13," *You Tube*, 3 min., 05 sec., from a Fort Benning TV story, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_392RtBBDw&feature=youtu.be (accessed 10 July 2012).

11. CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) "Off-duty Leadership in Squadron."

12. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, first sergeant, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 11 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, first sergeant, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, 13 July 2012.

13. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), interview, 19 July 2012.

14. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS/CC, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 11 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS/CC, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 9 July 2012.

15. Technical Training 101 Course Syllabus

16. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview.

17. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview. When asked if he felt he had the training needed to be a first-time BMT commander, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) said, "After this last week and a half or so, I see why they want you to go to the commander's course before you assume command. I'm not going until July (approximately 30 days after taking command). I feel at a disadvantage because of that."

18. Maj Gen Leonard Patrick, Second Air Force commander, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 16 July 2012.

19. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships,* 1 May 1999, para 3.5.2.

20. Air Education and Training Command Instruction (AETCI) 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, 2 March 2007, certified current 26 September 2011, para. 1.2, 2.1 and 4.3.3.

21. Ibid.

22. CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , "Sampling of Individuals Continued in Training Following Unprofessional Relationships and Sexual Harassment (2008 to Present)" July 2012.

23. CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) "MTI & MTL Disciplinary Actions Cross Reference Worksheet," August 2012. Data was extracted by applying filter for incidents involving trainees occurring from 2008 to 2012, further filtered by type of offense (e.g., unreported nonsexual, unreported sexual, assault—sexual, maltreatment, maltraining). Offenses with results of "open investigations" or preferred/referred charges were not counted. Administrative actions such as no contact orders or hat removals were not factored into the total numbers as they were the result of the more serious charge or action.

24. AF Form 1168, *Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant*, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , Lackland AFB, TX, 28 April 2009.

25. Ibid.

26. AFOSI, *Report of Investigation 4F11-C-092-A0-32515091171208*, 28 July 2009.

27. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS/CC, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , memorandum, 11 August 2009; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) to AFOSI 11th Field Investigation Squadron, memorandum, 11 August 2009.

28. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 802nd Mission Support Group, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ,12 July 2012; and AF Form 1168, *Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant*, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), Lackland AFB, TX, 28 January 2011.

29. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS/CC, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), MTI, memorandum, 11 February 2011.

30. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], to all 737th TRG personnel, memorandum, 30 September 2011. There is otherwise no obligation, either in law or policy, to report sexual misconduct.

31. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 17 July 2012.

32. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], interview.

33. Ibid.

34. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] interview.

35. Technical Training Instructor Discussion Group Camp Bullis, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS, conducted by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 1 August 2012.

36. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 11 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 10 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] interview.

37. 737th Training Group, Trainee Critiques, 26 March 2012, critique 5991, 2 April 2012; critiques 6033, 6034; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] Training Squadron, commander, memorandum, 6 July 2012.

38. CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], memorandum for record, 4 August 2012.

Chapter 3

Selection and Manning

As you read this report, nearly 7,000 Air Force trainees are engaged in basic military training. Responsibility for transforming these impressionable young men and women into warrior Airmen rests principally with military training instructors.

Throughout our investigation, trainees within the training pipeline emphasized the extraordinary impact the MTIs have on every aspect of their professional development. It is in this environment that more than 75 percent of the Air Force receives its grounding in the Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. Every Airman leaving the initial training pipeline is a reflection of our MTIs. Their impact on building a professional Air Force cannot be overstated.

Because MTIs are particularly influential in imprinting our values on our youngest Airmen and the workload associated with MTI duty is extremely high, candidates must be carefully screened. In addition to experience in the operational Air Force, suitable applicants must meet a number of demanding requirements that indicate they are likely to succeed in this challenging special duty.

However, because no screening process will ever be 100 percent effective, other measures are also required to dissuade, deter, and detect potential bad actors while continuing to attract the best and brightest to instructor duty. Decreasing the student-to-instructor ratio and diffusing the immense power resident in each MTI is a necessary

step. Reducing the stress on training instructors and their families would also help alleviate the pressures that all too often leave MTIs susceptible to poor decision making.

We believe an Air Force commitment to maintaining MTI manning at 100 percent of requirements is essential. Required manning must account for reduced student-to-instructor ratios, increased female instructor ratios, and additional officer and experienced first sergeant squadron leadership. Furthermore, promotion incentives must be established to reward noncommissioned officers (NCOs) for their commitment and ensure quality volunteers. In our opinion, a safe and effective training environment calls for these important investments.

Finding 6

- Selecting officials did not comply with selection criteria for MTIs.
- Current selection criteria do not effectively require appropriate rank and experience levels necessary for MTI duties.

Discussion

Air Force members interested in volunteering for MTI duties contact the MTI recruiting team through the website or at special duty briefings. The selection team, a group of three NCOs led by a master sergeant, reviews applicant packages; BMT leadership approves them to be sent to the major command (MAJCOM) and the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) for final approval. Upon release from their career fields, new MTIs' assignments and training classes are loaded.

No formal guidance is in place for the application requirements and screening process; the selection team uses a locally produced document.[1] A review of 51 application packages revealed that 29 of the packages deviated from the standards outlined in guidance.[2] The types of discrepancies found in the packages included poor physical readiness scores, financial irresponsibility, failure to meet the minimum qualifying test score, and past disciplinary action (including Article 15s for shoplifting, soliciting to minors [alcohol], and indecent exposure). Two of the MTIs under investigation had discrepancies in their application packages.[3] Note, however, that some of these disciplinary incidents and discrepancies occurred outside the five-year screening window designated by the application process.

Furthermore, interviews revealed that some MTIs were too inexperienced to effectively serve as mentors and leaders because they lacked time in service and had little to no supervisory experience.[4] When we reviewed application packages for 12 of the 15 MTIs currently under investigation or with charges referred to court-martial (three packages were unavailable), we found eight who had become MTIs when they were either staff sergeants with less than a year time in grade or were still senior Airmen.[5]

MTIs' core duty is supervising and training future Airmen; leadership skills and experience are critical to accomplishing that duty. Airman Leadership School (ALS) teaches these entry-level supervision skills and is a prerequisite to pinning on staff sergeant.[6] Requiring applicants to be staff sergeants with a year time in grade will ensure they have already received this important training before they become an MTI.

Recommendations

- Update MTI selection to include the following requirements:

a. Candidates must be at least a staff sergeant (E-5) with a minimum of one year time in grade.

b. Applicants must have demonstrated leadership ability during previous tours of duty and must have demonstrated a capability to perform in positions of increased responsibility as junior/senior NCOs in the Air Force.

c. Applicants must complete ALS prior to applying.

d. Applicants must have no record of disciplinary action throughout their entire career.

e. Commanders must review the applicant's leadership skills and supervisory experience and include their assessment in the recommendation.

f. The applicant's local group superintendent must interview the applicant and provide feedback on the member's suitability for the MTI corps, including an assessment of whether the applicant has sufficient maturity to avoid entering into unprofessional relationships with trainees.

g. Only the training group commander (TRG/CC) can authorize waivers for deviations from these criteria.

Finding 7

- Mental health screening does not adequately identify individuals who may be inappropriate for MTI duties.

Discussion

The MTI application process includes a general mental health evaluation consisting of a review of past and current mental health history, interviews of the applicant and his or her spouse, and psychological testing (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, 2d edition [MMPI-2] and Shipley Institute of Living Scale).[7] (See Appendix H). This mental health evaluation has remained unchanged for more than 10 years. Review of a sample of 47 MTI mental health screenings indicated limited consistency in evaluations despite a standardized interview package. Furthermore, there is limited guidance for mental health providers to determine whether an applicant should be disqualified from MTI duties.[8]

The review of psychological testing data from the sample offers no significant findings associated with the testing other than applicants tend to respond in an overly positive manner and deny psychological difficulties.[9] While this type of response can be expected, given its use for job screening, other psychological testing may be more appropriate for identifying personality traits or behaviors that may cause problems in the MTI environment. For the spouse portion of the mental health screening, current MTI spouses noted that the interview provides minimal information and the material provided is not consistent with the current MTI environment.[10] (See Appendix C).

Recommendations

- A working group of mental health experts (including Behavioral Analysis Service personnel) should collaborate with MTI recruitment personnel to review and revise the mental health screening portion of the MTI application to ensure the interview questions and psychological testing adequately assess suitability for MTI duties.
- Establish specific mental health criteria for qualification and distribute the standards to mental health providers at each Air Force base to ensure the process is standardized.
- Update the spouse portion of the MTI mental health evaluation to include feedback from current MTI spouses to ensure the currency of information addressing realistic stressors associated with MTI life.

Finding 8

- MTI manning is insufficient to ensure an optimal training environment.

Discussion

The authorized manning for BMT instructors was reduced recently and will level out at 508 by 1 October 2012.[11] The seven standard BMT squadrons are each authorized 45 instructors to provide the 24/7 training required for new trainees. Each squadron consists of 20 flights which normally have 50 trainees, with two MTIs authorized to conduct training and oversight.[12] This ratio is very close to the number established by other services. The Army assigns one drill sergeant per 20 recruits, while the Navy has one recruit division commander per 30 trainees.[13]

However, assigned manning is considerably less than authorized manning. Currently, assigned manning stands at 88 percent.[14] Training requirements for new MTIs, medical holds for sick or injured MTIs, pending transfers, personal leave, and other persistent challenges leaves BMT with too few MTIs to maintain two MTIs per flight. Over the past 18 months, effective instructor manning has averaged only 75 percent. (See Appendix I). This often results in flights with only one MTI. When fewer than four MTIs are assigned per two flights, the level of MTI stress and isolation increases to an unacceptable level. Multiple interviews with leadership, MTIs, and spouses made it apparent that a significant level of stress is placed on instructors from leading back-to-back flights along with work schedules that regularly exceed 80 hours per week.[15] MTI spouses described limited family time for MTIs due to spending so much time at the squadron.[16]

Research conducted on upper-level business managers by Dr. Dean C. Ludwig and Dr. Clinton O. Longenecker identified ethical violations as the result of the inability to cope with the by-products of success, which they label the "Bathsheba Syndrome."[17] Specifically, their review found that ethical violations by managers are often the result of being poorly prepared to deal with success. Several of the unique demands that higher-level managers face are applicable in the MTI misconduct review.

Belief in one's success combined with stress can be a toxic combination. Ludwig and Longenecker cite long hours away from home as leading to isolation from family and friends, who are a valuable source of personal balance.[18] In comparison, MTIs who are not prepared to cope with the responsibilities and power that come with the MTI status may be prone to using negative coping strategies to deal with stress. Over a four-year tour, the prolonged stress on MTIs has the potential to decrease their effectiveness as a leader and, hence, the safety of the BMT environment.

The Ludwig and Longenecker review suggests that by-products of success, such as inflated self-confidence (often portrayed by MTIs), increased control of or privileged access to resources (such as BMT trainees), and decreased levels of supervision (such as that experienced when leading a flight alone), can lead to leadership failure—including ethical violations. The review further proposes that leaders may engage in activities that they know are wrong because they mistakenly believe they have the power to conceal the misconduct due to their leadership status.[19] In the BMT environment, an MTI leading a flight alone may fall into this mind-set and be more likely to maltreat and/or maltrain. Ludwig and Longenecker state "detection is the primary factor that deters

unethical behavior."[20] Ensuring a second leader (at least two certified MTIs to a flight) may therefore be the best way to diffuse the effect of power and decrease the possibility of MTI misconduct. Each would serve as the other's wingman and be in a position to observe an MTI's unethical or illegal behavior.

Another issue is the lack of priority placed on female MTI manning. Although a female mentor position has recently been established to meet with female flights weekly, this does not adequately address identified training issues. The presence of a female instructor is needed to afford female trainees the opportunity to have immediate contact for gender-specific issues. Additionally, introducing male trainees to women in leadership roles is paramount in today's fully integrated force. Incorporating a four-member MTI team per two flights, with one woman per team, offers a variety of benefits to the BMT environment. In addition to reductions in stress and isolation, trainees will have improved access to multiple leaders, and peer-to-peer oversight will be improved. Furthermore, we recommend establishing a quota for women to achieve this level of female integration in trainee leadership teams. Accordingly, we also recommend that 25 percent of the remaining MTI staff positions be filled by women.

Recommendations

- Immediately increase manning to fill all authorized positions (currently 508) to meet a trainer-to-trainee ratio of four certified MTIs per two flights with one female MTI per team. This will require a female quota of 25 percent of total MTI manning.

- An effective MTI nonvolunteer selection process must be developed to fill authorized positions if either total authorized or female quotas exceed qualified volunteers.
- Conduct a thorough manning assessment that addresses the recommendations above, accounting for MTIs in an ineffective status.

Finding 9

- Excessive MTI tour lengths contribute to cultural and professional stagnation.
- Failure to release eligible candidates from their career fields and lack of adequate incentives create recruiting challenges.

Discussion

A review of current personnel documents showed that MTIs have homesteaded at BMT—in some cases for 15 to 25 years. The intent of special duties, such as MTI, is to broaden and develop well-rounded Airmen. Having Airmen assigned for multiple MTI tours impedes this process. Excessive tour lengths may cause MTIs to stagnate to a point where they ignore fresh ideas, grow overly comfortable in their positions of power, become blind to their own shortcomings, and are no longer effective.

To combat a stagnant environment, it is imperative that the MTI corps be comprised of Airmen from every career field. Currently, some career field managers refuse to release Airmen for MTI duty because they are concerned the Airmen will not return to the career fields. Shortening the maximum tour length will ensure MTIs return to their career fields and will reduce restraints imposed by functional managers. The Army and Navy limit their MTI counterparts' tour lengths to two and three years, respectively.[21] We believe a three-year tour correctly balances the training investment and the need to return MTIs to their career fields.

Because MTI responsibilities are so important, we must properly incentivize the duty with rewards and recognition. Currently, the Army and Navy offer incentives such

as testing within their career field and points toward promotion to attract applicants of the highest caliber.[22]

Recommendations

- Shorten the MTI tour length to a maximum of three years, and do not allow follow-on special duty assignments.
- Prior to returning to MTI duty, Airmen should spend a minimum of four years in their career field.
- Develop and institutionalize a more effective incentive program for MTI duty.

Notes

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1. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRG, superintendent, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 13 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), "MTI Applicant Screening," July 2012.

2. Application Trends, accomplished by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), July 2012.

3. Ibid.

4. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, instructor supervisor (IS), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 10 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7) TRW, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 17 July 2012.

5. Application Trends, accomplished by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), July 2012.

6. AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure*, 27 February 2009, para. 3.2.4.

7. MTI/MTL/AMT (Academy Military Trainer) Mental Health Screening, Behavioral Analysis Service, Lackland AFB, TX, June 2008.

8. Flight commander (Behavioral Analysis Services [BAS], Lackland AFB, TX), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 59th Mental Health Squadron, Lackland AFB, TX, 16 July 2012; guidance outlined in e-mail, 28 June 2012.

9. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 59th Mental Health Squadron, Lackland AFB, TX, review of MTI mental health applications, July 2012.

10. MTI Spouse Discussion Group Summary (prepared by the CDI Team), 23 July 2012.

11. 37th TRG, "BMT Unit Manning Document," 1 October 2013.

12. Air Force BMT 3660XX, *Capability-Based Manpower Standard*, 1 Dec 11; AETC Manpower and Personnel (A1M) Study, 2011.

13. US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Regulation 350-6, *Enlisted Initial Entry Training Policies and Administration*, 19 July 2012; and US Navy Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, IL, video teleconference by CDI Team, 2 August 2012.

14. MTI Manning Report (prepared by the CDI Team), August 2012.

15. MTI Spouse Discussion Group Summary (prepared by the CDI Team); interviews by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 23 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 322 TRS, IS, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 10 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 320 TRS, IS, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 11 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 37 TRW, Operations Training Center, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 17 July 2012.

16. MTI Spouse Discussion Group Summary (prepared by the CDI Team), 23 July 2012.

17. Dean Ludwig and Clinton Longenecker, "The Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders," *Journal of Business Ethics* 12, no. 4 (1993): 265–73.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Army Regulation 614-200, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management*, 26 February 2009; and Military Personnel Manual 1306-954, *Recruit Division Commander (RDC) Duty*, 9 August 2004, chap. 8.

22. Ibid.

Chapter 4

Training and Development

Building professional Airmen is a demanding task that requires a highly trained and skilled MTI force. While the existing instructor training program provides the foundation for this force, our investigation found several areas where enhanced training and professional development would be beneficial. Additionally, we found that leadership needs specialized training to gain the credibility, understanding, and tools required for success in the unique environment of basic military training.

One of the key tools for leaders in preventing misconduct is a knowledge of behavioral indicators in both instructors and trainees. Surprisingly, very few—with the exception of the most experienced MTIs—were capable of identifying worrisome signs of ongoing misconduct. If commanders, supervisors, and MTIs received training in this aspect of behavioral science, the entire training leadership team would be better equipped to identify and intervene when individual behavior departs from the norm.

We believe MTI training should be reinforced with a "back to basics" program that emphasizes Air Force core values and NCO professional standards of conduct. This training should emphasize the need to hold accountable those individuals who either cannot or will not meet these standards. Only when fully developed as NCOs can instructors be expected to effectively lead their trainees by example.

These and other training and professional development suggestions are designed to shape the culture of the initial training pipeline, emphasizing the *quality* of the Airmen produced rather than the *quantity*. Further, we believe there is a need for a

fundamental shift in the training culture. While fear has often been a preferred training tool because it is more expedient than respect, deemphasizing fear and reemphasizing mutual respect among trainees, students, and instructors will lead to higher quality graduates and fewer cases of unprofessional conduct. The following findings and recommendations reflect this perspective.

Finding 10

- Perpetrators with substantiated allegations of maltreatment and maltraining were allowed to continue trainer duties without decertification of training tasks, remedial training, or behavioral modification to prevent future infractions.

Discussion

An analysis of training records, personal information files, and records of *UCMJ* actions showed multiple inconsistencies in the use of remedial training, behavioral training, and behavioral analysis to address specific infractions. These inconsistencies, including instances of uneven handling of misconduct within the same unit, appear to occur across all BMT squadrons.[1] (See Appendix J).

Many of the incidents were handled at the lowest supervisory level and with no remedial training directed to correct the infractions. One example involved an MTI who received a letter of reprimand from his section supervisor for disparaging trainees by referring to them in terms such as "homosexuals and female dogs."[2] His supervisor did not make him attend remedial training or equal opportunity training. Six months later, this same MTI was again in trouble for using inappropriate language with a trainee—an action that generated an inspector general complaint. The MTI received a letter of counseling—a lower level of administrative action than he received for his first incident—and yet again was not directed to attend remedial training to correct the behavior.[3] Additionally, this MTI's annual performance reports had no markdowns for periods of the infractions, both of which occurred under the same squadron commander.[4]

Another process deficiency is the lack of behavioral analysis for those MTIs committing maltreatment where cruelty or anger management was a factor. One MTI had four instances of misconduct in less than two years. Two of the incidents included damage to government property; uncontrolled anger was a major factor in three of the four incidents.[5] (See Appendix E). Squadron leadership did not direct anger management training as part of the recertification process until after the fourth incident.[6]

Earlier action by commanders and a well-thought-out plan—including decertification, anger management training, and behavioral analysis at the first sign of behavior that includes uncontrolled anger—might have rehabilitated the member. It certainly would have given the commander critical information to determine whether or not to eliminate the MTI from the MTI corps or to administratively discharge the member from the Air Force.

Recommendations

- Decertify and accomplish remedial training prior to recertification and reinstatement for all instructors found to have been engaged in maltreatment or maltraining. Require squadron commanders to review and sign documentation ensuring remedial training was accomplished.
- Mandate documentation of the incident and remedial training in both the members' training records and personnel information file to ensure proper tracking of personnel with disciplinary issues.

Finding 11

- Leadership and instructors are unable to recognize behavioral indicators of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining in trainees as well as in MTIs.

Discussion

The investigation revealed that indicators of unprofessional conduct were present but not recognized in BMT. In part, this is because leadership and instructors are not trained to look for pertinent behavioral indicators. The unique vulnerabilities that exist between trainees and instructors in the training environment require a particular sensitivity to misbehavior and misconduct. Therefore, the better equipped all levels of leadership are to identify certain behavioral indicators, the more ready leadership is to intervene at an early stage of impropriety and prevent violations.

Testimony suggests that more experienced staff are using some indicators. During his CDI interview, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS superintendent, was asked what indicators he looks for to identify sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining behaviors. He replied that "bearing and discipline are key indicators and are absolutely critical for a [BMT] flight. You have to watch the different genders and see how they are performing at what week of training. The bearing and discipline needs to match the date of training they are in. You have to know your people. It raises a flag if they are willing to use specific risky language in public. For example, if the female trainees are giggling, they have broken discipline."[7] An additional example of the use of indicators comes from (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

TRS superintendent, who stated, "I look for the intensity of the instructors. I watch how the instructors are yelling to tell if they are in control or not. If an instructor is closer than an arm's length to a trainee, then I will approach them and see what is going on. There is no group-wide product to identify indicators. It is more instinctive to me because of my multiple MTI tours and experience."[8] These examples, along with many others, highlight that methods currently in use are based solely on individual experience and judgment.[9] Nevertheless, these techniques should be captured, compiled, and codified in a training format to equip all instructors, regardless of experience, with "lessons learned" as tools to recognize possible indications of misconduct.

While experience is a powerful instrument when it comes to detecting misbehavior and misconduct indicators, the time it takes to develop such experience is not a luxury available in the BMT environment. Upon entering BMT, leadership and MTIs are immediately placed in positions that oblige them to swiftly spot, assess, and address questionable behaviors and activities. Currently, neither AETC nor the Air Force at large offers these members training in the skills needed to identify sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining indicators in any systematic way.

Recommendations

- Use behavioral skills specialists to determine and design an indicator set specifically related to detecting sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.

- Develop formal training using scientifically developed sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationship, maltreatment, and maltraining indicators and lessons learned from training environment veterans. Implement this training for leadership, faculty, and staff prior to their arrival in basic military training.

Finding 12

- The BMT culture seems to place greater value on instructor status and skills than on Air Force core values and NCO professionalism.

Discussion

In the operational Air Force, supervisors are encouraged to communicate with subordinates, peers, and superiors from the adult-to-adult ego state—based on respect. This concept is taught within professional military education and is further developed during continuous engagement with various levels of supervision. This skill is honed through supervising Airmen, writing performance reports, conflict resolution, counseling, change management, feedback, and sharing "lessons learned." Conversely, the BMT environment routinely pushes MTIs to approach conflicts and employ solutions from a parent-to-child ego state—based on fear.[10]

BMT created a culture where the power of a campaign hat or a blue rope trumped the earned authority and respect of an NCO's or a senior noncommissioned officer's (SNCO) rank.[11] It was not uncommon for MTIs to treat each other and those of more senior ranks with disrespect in front of trainees, attempting to achieve their desired goals through fear versus respect because their focus was more on MTI duties than NCO responsibilities.[12] MTIs were more likely to reprimand one another on technical skill infractions, such as marching techniques, than offenses of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, or maltraining.[13]

MTIs must learn to model proper cultural norms through epitomizing the Air Force core values in daily interaction with each other and with trainees they

encounter.[14] It is also important to break the paradigm that suggests maltraining and maltreatment are effective approaches.[15]

This culture shift can only occur through deliberate and focused developmental training. The 737th TRG has already started attacking this issue by hiring a contractor to design a program that further develops the professionalism of NCOs and SNCOs.[16] The goal of this program is to strike a balance between mastering instructional skills and delivering those skills in a professional manner. Though a commendable start, the initiative is not permanently funded and falls short of developmental requirements.

Recommendation

- Continue to develop, resource, and institutionalize MTI development programs that promote a culture of mutual respect and correctly balance both instructor proficiency and NCO professionalism.

Finding 13

- Trainees are not retaining important information on sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.

Discussion

Currently, at the beginning and end of the eight-week training period, trainees are taught to recognize actions that constitute misconduct.[17] A basic quiz given to students at six different BMT squadrons—in different weeks of training—showed that students at best retain 49 percent of the information they receive from their sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining instruction. The study also suggests trainees are retaining more information as they progress into the later weeks of training.[18] (See Appendix L). Although the study cannot definitively determine why the information is not being retained, it may be because of the timing, method, and emphasis of the training.

Upon review of the BMT curriculum, there appears to be a lack of focus on the sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining during weeks 3 through 6.[19] (See Appendix K). Varied methods of training delivery would aid retention. Currently, most formal training is given via slideshow, with some videos used in support.[20] More varied methods should be used to ensure trainees with different learning preferences retain more of the information they are receiving. Training in week 4 by the sexual assault response coordinator (SARC) and chaplain—via a discussion format—would prove beneficial. Also, no less than two BMT flights should

participate per discussion session to ensure the environment is conducive to open discussion and crosstalk.

Furthermore, having the SARC conduct initial sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) training would ensure trainees know the SARC's role and that definitions of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and restricted/unrestricted reporting procedures are thoroughly and professionally taught.[21] This varied and continuous training should improve trainee confidence in the system and may lead to effective trainee response to MTI misconduct, including better reporting. A test should be given following this training. Immediately following the test, incorrect answers should be corrected, ensuring trainees received the proper knowledge and increasing their retention of the information. The test would not only place the proper emphasis on the material but also provide efficacy and trending data for leadership and curriculum development use while increasing retention.[22]

Recommendation

- Add scenario-based training (led by SARC or chaplain) on sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining into week 4 of the BMT curriculum. Administer a test at the end of this training. Immediately correct all wrong answers. Track and trend results.
- The SARC should teach all training curriculum on sexual assault prevention and response to both trainees and MTIs.

Notes

1. AETC CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , "Sampling of Remedial Training Applied to MTI Misconduct," July 2012.

2. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, section supervisor, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , MTI, USAF, LOR, 9 March 2010.

3. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, section supervisor, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , MTI, USAF, LOR, 22 September 2010.

4. AETC CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , "Sampling of Remedial Training Applied to MTI Misconduct," July 2012.

5. 737th TRG First Sergeants, "MTI Discipline Chart (spreadsheet)," 2011/2012, line 4, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 29 January 2011 incident; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, section supervisor, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), MTI, USAF, LOR, 19 July 2011; and (b) (6), TRS/CC, to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), MTI, USAF, LOR, 8 February 2012.

6. AETC CDI Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , "Sampling of Remedial Training Applied to MTI Misconduct," July 2012.

7. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 10 July 2012.

8. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 17 July 2012.

9. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, first sergeant, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 9 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS,

superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 9 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS/CC, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 11 July 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] TRS, superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 11 July 2012; and [redacted] TRS, first sergeant, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 10 July 2012.

10. Gordon Emerson, *Ego State Therapy* (Norwalk, CT: Crown House Publishing, 2007).

11. "He was a blue rope and an MBC. I made a mistake. I called a column half right in an inverted column formation. I was about 10 feet from my flight. He just started cursing at me and telling me that I was a piece of shit." (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], former MTI, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] r, 19 July 2012.

12. "I was standing at parade rest. He and I are both staff sergeants. He was mad that I was not standing at attention. He told me to fuck off. He and I got into it. He said, 'Let's go talk to the TS.' I was a student."(Ibid.) "I am very disenchanted with what I have seen here in BMT. There are a lot of good people, but there are too many people on power trips that don't respect other people, especially the trainees, as people. They treat others just as they treat the trainees—with disrespect." (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], [redacted] TRS, MTI, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 20 July 12.

13. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], former MTI, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 19 July 2012.

14. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, superintendent, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 10 July 2012.

15. "Section 5 was known as maltrainers. Everybody wanted to be in our section. We pushed the honor flights. We pushed the most disciplined flights. But we were also known as the maltrainers." (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), former MTI, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 19 July 2012.

16. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRG, superintendent, interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 10 July 2012.

17. AETC CDI Team, Training Trainee and Instructor Training/Development Team, [redacted], "BMT Training Continuum," 1 August 2012.

18. AETC CDI Team, Selection/Manning/Organization Team, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], "Sexual Harassment/Assault Questionnaire Findings," 4 August 2012.

19. AETC CDI Team, Training Trainee and Instructor Training/Development Team, [redacted], "BMT Training Continuum," 1 August 2012.

20. Ibid.

21. BMT discussion group, week of training 1 (WOT 1) trainees, led by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 3 July 2012.

22. Henry L. Roediger III and Jeffrey D. Karpicke, “The Power of Testing Memory: Basic Research and Implications for Educational Practice,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 1, no. 3 (September 2006): 181–210.

Chapter 5

Reporting, Detection, and Climate

Despite the Air Force's best efforts to screen, train, and develop MTIs, preventing every instance of misconduct remains a challenge. Thus, additional mechanisms to detect, dissuade, and deter misconduct must be put in place. We must reduce barriers to reporting misconduct, provide leadership with situational awareness through vigilant trend analysis, eliminate opportunities for misconduct, and thoroughly investigate all allegations. These efforts will restore faith in the system and ensure accountability.

Our investigation revealed that a perpetrator's fellow MTIs were often the first to suspect unprofessional conduct but were reluctant to bring an allegation forward because they were uncertain of the allegation's credibility. They also feared ostracism from their peers and, in some instances, did not believe their concerns would be seriously investigated. Eliminating these types of barriers to reporting is difficult because it requires successfully balancing the need to build a cohesive team of instructors with the even greater imperative of ensuring zero tolerance for inappropriate conduct. We believe the best method to develop a climate that achieves this balance is to make Air Force core values and NCO standards of professional conduct the foundation of everything an MTI represents.

We found that in most instances trainees did not report inappropriate conduct. They too feared reprisal or other action that would result in delayed graduation. To assist in correcting this issue, we suggest implementation of an improved anonymous

reporting process designed to make trainees more comfortable raising concerns to supervisors and commanders. Trainees must feel confident that the Air Force cares for them and will protect them from negative consequences for taking the right action. We expect no less in the operational Air Force. Basic training should be no different.

In addition, we believe the training environment would benefit from streamlined reporting processes, enhanced misconduct reporting and trending, improved investigative processes, and a range of reforms that will reduce the opportunity for unprofessional behavior.

Ongoing efforts to strengthen wingman policies and programs, improve physical security, and restrict MTI access to trainees' personal information are commendable. However, we believe more should be done to increase the visibility and engagement of supervisors and commanders and decrease free time during training programs.

An invigorated commitment to reducing reporting barriers, increasing trust, adhering to investigative lanes of responsibility, improving training of investigators, and eliminating opportunities for misconduct will help provide a healthy climate conducive to safe and effective training. The following findings and recommendations reflect this perspective.

Finding 14

- Allegations of unprofessional relationships and sexual assault were not always thoroughly investigated by the appropriate organization.

Discussion

From 2006 to the present, allegations of unprofessional relationships between MTIs and trainees have been investigated by three different organizations: the individual squadron, security forces, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. When conducted by the individual squadron, the first sergeant typically assumed the investigative role. This limited the quality of the investigation because the first sergeant is not a trained investigator. Security forces squadrons supporting high-density trainee populations have a different challenge. Security Forces Office of Investigations investigator manning does not account for BMT trainees.[1] Trainee populations increase investigation requirements well above that of a typical operational base, yet their numbers do not lead to a corresponding increase in SFOI personnel. Before AFOSI accepts a case, the case needs to meet a specific developmental level or threshold. As a result, the level of expertise and resources applied to the investigations of concern here were uneven, which caused results to suffer.

Investigative Purview. Investigative purview, or responsibility, for the investigation of unprofessional relationship allegations is determined by the "AFOSI and Security Forces Investigative Matrix" found in AFI 71-101, *Criminal Investigations Programs*, 8 April 2011. Under the matrix, the investigator of allegations depends upon the degree and nature of the alleged sexual interactions between the MTI and the

trainee. According to the matrix, AFOSI has investigative purview over "all sexual offenses involving authority figures." The definition of "authority figures" "includes sexual offenses by MTIs with trainees" and "official training . . . instructors/staff with students." Further, the definition of "sex offenses" includes "unlawful sexual acts between consenting adults."[2] Therefore, under the matrix, allegations of an unprofessional relationship between an MTI and a trainee that include sexual acts are the responsibility of the AFOSI. On the other hand, unprofessional relationship allegations that include sexual "contact" but not sexual "acts" are the shared responsibility of the AFOSI and SFOI.[3] If the allegations do not include sexual "acts" or "contacts" but do include less serious activity, such as improper e-mail exchanges, the unit can exercise jurisdiction to investigate.

In reality, the exercise of investigative purview has not followed the matrix guidelines closely. A review of cases from 2006 to the present shows instances in which an MTI's unit has investigated allegations of unprofessional relationships that claim sexual contact or acts and the SFOI has investigated allegations of sexual acts. For example, an examination of the available derogatory records at BMT shows at least four instances in which a unit investigated allegations of unprofessional relationships where the facts indicated potential sexual contact or acts.[4] The most striking example involves allegations of sexual relations between (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and one of his former female trainees. In January 2011, special agents from the AFOSI squadron at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, conducted an investigation into allegations of an unprofessional relationship between (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and a technical training student at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

who had been one of his trainees. These allegations involved "friending" the trainee on social media, sending a picture of himself without a shirt, sending inappropriate text messages, and having phone conversations of a sexual nature. During the course of their investigation, AFOSI special agents uncovered unrelated allegations that (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] had engaged in sexual relations with a different female trainee who had been his (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and was then stationed at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , for technical training. The AFOSI at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) provided four written witness statements to the original victim's technical training squadron at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , which in turn forwarded them to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) commander at the (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)–Lackland.[5] On 11 February 2011, the commander of the (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS imposed a letter of reprimand on (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) for his unprofessional communications with the original victim.[6] On 14 February 2011, at the request of the (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS first sergeant, the former female trainee dormitory chief was interviewed by her technical training squadron first sergeant at (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) The former trainee denied that (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had engaged in any sexual or other misconduct with her.[7] No other investigative steps were taken at that time, and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) was not interviewed.[8]

Under the matrix, the allegations of sexual relations between (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and his former trainee (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) should have been investigated by AFOSI, not the squadron's first sergeant. Further, the importance of a thorough investigation by the proper organization was later demonstrated by the dramatically different results obtained by AFOSI once an investigation of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) was initiated. During the

subsequent AFOSI investigation of allegations against (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) of sexual assault and unprofessional relationship, the same former trainee (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) admitted to special agents that (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) attempted to have sexual relations with her behind closed doors in his MTI office.[9] Another advantage of following the matrix is that confusion over investigative responsibilities will be eliminated. Commanders, staff, and investigators will know who is responsible for investigating allegations of unprofessional relationship. Adhering to a clear delineation of investigative purview will prevent situations where units are investigating serious allegations such as sexual relations between a trainee and an MTI.

Specially Trained Investigators. On the other hand, merely adhering to the investigative purview outlined in the matrix will not, of itself, improve the effectiveness of investigations. The key is consistently employing the proper investigative resources: the right number of specially trained investigators who understand the unique nature of the training environment and trainee mind-set. The evidence strongly indicates that trainees will rarely self-report and, when initially asked by investigators, they will deny that an unprofessional relationship or sexual misconduct occurred. Of the 37 reported trainee victims identified by current criminal investigations of unprofessional relationship or sexual assault, only two reported the misconduct themselves.[10] Further, many victims will deny that any misconduct occurred during initial questioning.[11] While there are a number of reasons for this reluctance to report, an investigator needs training on how to overcome these barriers. In these cases, investigators learned over time how to establish trust and rapport with the trainee victims, often through follow-

up interviews.[12] A thorough investigation also required that the other trainees in the victim's flight be interviewed to look for potential corroborating facts even if the alleged victim initially denied the event occurred. Investigators used this corroboration to encourage the victims to cooperate with an investigation. For example, AFOSI's investigation into allegations against Sergeant Walker of sexual assault and unprofessional relationship that began on 25 June 2011 was extremely thorough and identified the full scope of Sergeant Walker's criminal misconduct. Investigative steps included telephone interviews of all his graduated female trainees (approximately 150), follow-up interviews in person with 30 of these trainees, and a close working relationship with prosecuting judge advocates.[13] As a result, Sergeant Walker was convicted on all charges and specifications for crimes committed against 10 victims in a fully litigated trial.[14]

The need for investigators with specialized training is also important because, in the training environment, the line between consensual unprofessional relationship and sexual assault is sometimes blurred. Often, as with the case of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], the initial allegation is not specific as to the details and nature of the sexual interaction. Moreover, because of the victim's youth and the extreme power imbalance in the BMT setting, the victim may not fully understand the nature and severity of the act. Given these variables, it is even more important to treat every allegation of unprofessional relationship very seriously and for the investigators to be specially trained to understand the unique challenges of investigating sexual offenses in the training environment. It should be noted that AFOSI has developed a sexual assault

investigators' course to train its agents on sexual assault "victimology" and investigative techniques. The course was recently held for the first time.

Unsteady Beginnings—331st TRS Cases. The importance of first, having a clear understanding of investigative responsibilities and second, conducting a thorough investigation that takes into account the unique mindset of the training environment, is also demonstrated—unfortunately in counterpoint—by altering the way in which the investigations of SSgts Peter Vega-Maldonado, Kwinton Estacio, and [redacted] initially unfolded. On 12 November 2011, three MTIs from the [redacted] TRS reported to their leadership that three fellow MTIs in the [redacted] TRS (Staff Sergeants Vega-Maldonado, Estacio, and [redacted] had shown undue attention to female trainees and made statements about having sexual relations with female trainees in the physical training (PT) supply room after graduation.[15] AFOSI initially refused to investigate the allegations on the grounds that the allegations were for consensual sex. The 802nd MSG/JA (judge advocate) argued that the power imbalance between an MTI and trainee nullified consent. The AFOSI subsequently agreed to "test" the allegations to determine if opening a formal investigation was warranted. In November 2011, the AFOSI interviewed the three female former trainees whom (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had identified. By this time, the three former trainees were stationed at their technical training bases or were in civilian status as an Air National Guardsman. The interviews were conducted not by the case investigators but by special agents stationed at or near these locations. All three alleged victims denied that sexual contact occurred with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C). AFOSI did not interview the subject MTIs or

Sergeant Vega-Maldonado's (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) who had been identified as a potential victim. AFOSI "determined no credible information suggesting a crime falling within AFOSI jurisdiction was committed."[16]

At the request of the JBSA-Lackland legal office, security forces investigators from the 802nd MSG/SFS continued with the investigation into the allegations. These investigators, with funding provided by the legal office, traveled to the duty locations of the alleged victims and key witnesses and conducted in-depth interviews. On 26 January 2012, SFOI got its first big investigative break when a (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) admitted during a second follow-on interview to having a sexual relationship with him while (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (b) (6), (b) (7)(C).[17]

From January 2012 to May 2012, SFOI investigation uncovered allegations of unprofessional relationship against six additional MTIs.[18] The SFOI uncovered these cases against MTIs by following all investigative leads, including telephonic interviews with all trainees of both genders who were members of the alleged victims' flights.[19]

Treat Trainees as Victims. The decision to treat trainees and students as victims, not as criminal subjects, was vitally important to the effectiveness of the unprofessional relationship investigations.[20] Because AETC Instruction (AETCI) 36-2909 prohibits MTIs and trainees from engaging in an unprofessional relationship, trainees potentially committed an offense under Article 92 of the *UCMJ* for violating AETCI 36-2909.[21] The investigators' approach to treat only the MTIs, not the trainees, as subjects positively impacted investigative efficacy and overall considerations of justice. Rather than engaging trainees and students from an adversarial position, this approach meant that

investigators could establish the trust and rapport with them that proved so critical to obtaining their cooperation. Trainees were not advised of their rights under Article 31 of the *UCMJ* to remain silent and to request a lawyer; to do otherwise would have likely resulted in losing the cooperation of potential victims who could have chosen to exercise their rights. Equally important, this approach facilitated providing trainees with the array of services available to assist victims of crimes. All the alleged victims were offered the services provided under the SAPR Program and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program, as well as legal assistance and chaplaincy, medical, and psychological care.[22] Treating the potential victims as subjects would have interfered with the provision of these services, revictimized the individuals, and jeopardized their cooperation with the criminal prosecutions.

Recommendations

- Adhere to existing Air Force policy to determine investigative purview over allegations of unprofessional relationship and sexual assault.
- Train investigators to understand the challenges of investigating sexual offenses in the training environment.
- Apply benchmark investigative procedures and lessons learned from successful investigations.
- Dedicate additional SFOI manpower to the training mission based on trainee population and unique operating environment.

Finding 15

- The BMT trainee feedback program does not effectively secure, track, and analyze allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.

Discussion

BMT trainees can report any instance of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining by writing it on a Lackland AFB IMT Form 133, Trainee Comment Sheet, and putting it in a drop-box. Blank Trainee Comment Sheets are included in the *Basic Military Training Study Guide* each trainee receives upon arrival to BMT and at each drop box location. The drop-boxes are currently located in the dining facilities, dormitory stairwells, field training encampment, 324th TRS Transition Flight, and the Gateway Chapel.[23]

Content of the Trainee Comment Sheet. The Trainee Comment Sheet does not adequately address the misconduct reporting function. For example, it lists sexual harassment as a reporting option, but does not list sexual assault, unprofessional relationship, maltraining, or maltreatment. Second, the Trainee Comment Sheet includes language that may discourage trainees from reporting incidents. Bold lettering at the bottom of the sheet warns trainees that "making a false statement on this form may result in punishment under Article 107 of the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* (*UCMJ*)," and that "problems, when possible, should be resolved at the lowest possible level of the chain of command."[24] While it is appropriate for trainees to learn about the *UCMJ* and chain of command, the Trainee Comment Sheet is not the best place to

reinforce those messages. Trainees are already reluctant to report MTI misconduct. Fear of being charged with making a false statement or of backlash for elevating their concerns in the chain of command could reinforce their reluctance to report.

Locations of Drop-Boxes. The locations of the comment drop-boxes strongly impact the trainees' ability to use the Trainee Comment Sheet. Prior to March 2012, the BMT drop-boxes were not available in the dormitory stairwells, and the drop-box in the chapel was located in such a way that when the door was open (which it was on Sundays) the door blocked access to the box. Further, the drop-boxes in the squadron dining facilities were, and still are, located in direct line of sight of the table where the MTIs sit to eat their meals. Because of the locations of the comment boxes, trainees did not feel that they could anonymously use the boxes without risking potential backlash by an MTI. An example of trainee backlash by an MTI was given during the administration of the CDI. During an interview, a trainee stated that an MTI had seen her placing a comment in the comment box. The MTI later confronted the trainee about the comment.[25]

In March 2012, BMT leadership directed that the chapel drop-box be moved to an accessible location and that new drop-boxes be placed in the stairwells of all trainee dormitories in order to facilitate anonymous use of the Trainee Comment Sheets. As a result, the number of comment sheets trainees submitted per year increased from approximately 500 a year to 501 in just the first six months of 2012.[26] Further, in the end-of-course critiques conducted in the second quarter of FY 2012, 74.6 percent of male and 74.3 percent of female trainee respondents indicated they were able to use

the student feedback system.[27] While these improvements have been positive, testimony indicated that more accessible drop-box locations are still needed. In discussion groups, trainees stated that there was "no time" to use the box, that MTIs didn't let them "stop to grab a comment sheet," and that the MTIs are there "100 percent of the time."[28] Locating the drop-off boxes in the dormitory living area would result in the trainees having the ability to freely and anonymously utilize the Trainee Comment Sheets for reporting purposes.

Securing the Trainee Comment Sheets. The drop boxes do not adequately secure the Trainee Comment Sheets. Only the designated civilian employees from 737th Training Support Squadron (TRSS) and 737th TRG possess the key to the locked drop-off boxes and are authorized to collect and process the Trainee Comment Sheets. However, evidence indicates that sheets can be easily extracted from the older-style drop-boxes located in the dining facilities and chapel.[29] All drop boxes should be designed to prevent unauthorized individuals from removing comments.

Tracking and Trend Analysis of Trainee Comment Sheets. Trainee Comment Sheets are tracked through an Access database created by 737th TRSS personnel. Upon collection, the comment sheets are scanned and filed in the database. The comment sheets are labeled as either routine or urgent. Urgent comment sheets are those that contain comments involving suicide, sexual assault, sexual harassment, alleged maltreatment, maltraining, hazing, fraternization, or solicitation. An e-mail copy is sent from the 737th TRG deputy commander to the leadership of the squadron where the comment sheet was collected. Squadron leadership then investigates the matter and

provides a response to the 737th TRG deputy commander within 24 hours for urgent comments. Replies to trainees are provided when requested.[30]

This tracking system is deficient because it does not reliably capture and store the comment sheets, commander actions, and responses to trainees who submitted the sheets. The CDI review identified numerous comment sheets missing from the database. Moreover, the responses by squadron commanders to urgent comments were not stored in the database, other than those responses that could be retrieved ad hoc from individual e-mail files.

The tracking system did not provide adequate ability to run basic searches of its content.[31] For example, the database cannot filter or search by names of MTIs or by routine or urgent classification. These limitations lessened the usefulness of the tracking system for identifying MTIs who have multiple allegations made against them over time.

BMT did not use the trainee feedback program to conduct trend analysis of allegations of MTI misconduct. No trend analysis is conducted for sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationship, maltreatment, or maltraining. While the overall number of sexual harassment complaints received is tracked quarterly, this analysis provides no insight into the MTIs against whom the allegations were made. BMT has identified this deficiency and directed that a program with more in-depth trend analysis be developed to identify "hot spots," including individual offenders.[32]

Inadequate Investigation into Negative Trainee Comment Sheets. Investigative actions by the unit are often cursory in nature and lack substantive responses, especially for minor allegations of mistreatment. For example, in Trainee Comment Sheet 6450,

dated 18 June 2012, a female trainee alleged a civilian instructor made sexist remarks about female trainees and their inferiority compared to male trainees. The squadron commander spoke with the subject civilian instructor. However, the flight trainees were not interviewed, and the allegation was unsubstantiated. A lack of a substantive investigation erodes confidence in the trainee-comment-box system and hampers its effectiveness as a reporting tool.[33]

As a possible benchmark, the US Army's TRADOC Regulation 350-6, *Enlisted Initial Entry Training Policies and Administration*, 19 July 2012, provides specific guidelines for investigating and responding to the Army's version of comment sheets. Interviews of all witnesses are required. It also requires commanders to consult with their legal advisor when conducting an inquiry or evaluating evidence concerning all substantiated allegations of trainee abuse.[34]

Recommendation

- Implement secure processes that track and analyze BMT comment box critiques that are suitable for reporting allegations of misconduct. Use Army TRADOC Regulation 350-6, *Enlisted Entry Training Policies and Administration*, as a benchmark to develop specific guidelines for investigating and responding to comment sheets.

Finding 16

- Barriers exist to trainees reporting allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining.

Discussion

When it comes to actual reporting of misconduct, trainees are uncomfortable asking the MTI for an appointment with an outside agency due to embarrassment, fear, feelings of self-blame, and guilt. MTIs have so much authority over trainees that it can severely inhibit the trainees' ability to seek help. Submitted comment sheets and administrative actions against MTIs show egregious examples of this happening in the training environment.[35] In one example, a trainee having suicidal thoughts asked an MTI for an appointment to see a chaplain. The MTI handed the trainee a pair of scissors, instead, and encouraged the trainee to kill himself.[36] It's important to note that this MTI received nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 of the *UCMJ* for this misconduct.

When MTIs are the perpetrator of the misconduct, the lines are quickly blurred for the trainee as to how misconduct should be reported. The extreme power imbalance between MTIs and trainees was identified in interviews with SARC and chaplain personnel as a hindrance to reporting allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining due to a fear of being recycled, prolonged training, or career endangerment.[37] For example, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) allegedly told a victim to deny that any sexual contact happened between the two of them or the victim's life and career would be in jeopardy.[38] Additionally, during the

investigation of former (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , it was found that he warned his victim not to say anything or that she would be discharged from the Air Force.[39]

When the MTI is the perpetrator, victims also sometimes do not want to report misconduct to the chain of command out of misplaced loyalty to the MTI. The nature of BMT lends itself to the MTI turning into a mother or father figure for trainees and students. This misguided loyalty leads to trainees wanting to please their MTIs, resulting in a strong reluctance to report allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationship, maltreatment, and maltraining.[40]

Furthermore, trainees are afraid any relationship with an MTI will be construed as consensual and they themselves will be charged with violating the *UCMJ*. In the Trainee Environment and Culture Survey conducted with trainees in July 2012, 3,509 basic trainees answered that fear of punishment keeps victims from reporting sexual assault. A potential area of concern is that female trainees gave this answer at a significantly higher rate than their male counterparts.[41] For a detailed look at the survey's results, see Appendix N. Training Environment and Culture Survey.

Trainee fear of being punished is reinforced on the Trainee Comment Sheet and through commander's time briefings where warnings are given that false statements will be punished under Article 107 of the *UCMJ*. A better approach would be to emphasize that unprofessional relationships are ultimately the responsibility of the leader and encourage trainees to report sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining without fear of punishment.

During BMT there is a limited chaplain presence and no SARC presence in the squadrons, resulting in a limited ability for the trainee to contact outside agencies without going through the MTI first to request time to travel and visit with a chaplain and/or the SARC.[42] Focus groups conducted with week 1 trainees suggest that they are more willing to report if they are actively engaged by people they know and trust.[43] BMT should allow the SARC to pair with the chaplain or have their own separate offices within the squadrons. Having an independent SARC office within the squadron and having chaplains assigned to each BMT squadron would allow for minimal interruptions to basic training and greatly enhance a trainee's opportunity to report allegations of misconduct. Further, trainees cannot use the SARC 24/7 hotline because they do not have access to a phone, except for 15 minutes once a week under the direct supervision of their MTI.[44] Installing a phone in each dormitory that connects directly with the SARC hotline would give trainees ready access to a SARC.

Finally, instructing trainees on the avenues for reporting is an important element of this discussion. The method and timeliness of training can either facilitate reporting or create yet another barrier. This issue is addressed in more detail in Finding 13.

Recommendations

- Training regarding how to report MTI misconduct should reassure trainees that there will be no negative training or career consequences for reporting allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, or maltraining.

- Increase the physical presence of SARC personnel and the chaplain in BMT squadrons to facilitate access to reporting mechanisms.
- Install in each dormitory a 24/7 hotline phone that directly connects to the SARC.

Finding 17

- Ineffective detection and prevention measures enabled MTIs to isolate and exploit trainees.

Discussion

Many allegations of sexual misconduct by MTIs have a common feature--the ability of MTIs to engage trainees alone. The amount of time MTIs spend with trainees and the power they hold over them creates the opportunity for abuse. Despite the prohibitions against one-on-one contact, the BMT environment offers multiple occasions and locations for MTIs to isolate and take advantage of trainees.

In many cases of sexual assault and unprofessional relationships with trainees, the targeting and grooming process began early. The evidence, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] indicates that the potential victims were identified by the subject MTIs from the beginning of training. Female trainees left the bus in their civilian clothes and were evaluated by the subject MTIs. Then MTIs would appoint their selected female targets to leadership positions, such as element leader or dorm chief, to offer more time with the MTI and isolate them from other trainees. During BMT, the targeted trainees received preferential treatment. Once trainees were physically isolated, the MTIs then moved on to physical contact.[45]

Former Sergeant Walker engaged in unprofessional relationships, sexual assault, and rape behind the closed doors of the MTI office, empty dormitories, and supply closets.[46] Squadron offices, laundry rooms, and classrooms all offer opportunities for MTIs to isolate trainees in confined areas. Sergeants Estacio and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) allegedly

engaged in sexual misconduct with trainees in the PT supply closet.[47] Additionally, [redacted] allegedly engaged in multiple instances of sexual misconduct with a trainee in the MTI office.[48] In 2008 (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) engaged in sexual misconduct with a trainee in the closet to the squadron gym. In this last case the trainee was missing for an hour before taps, yet the only action taken was to dispatch a pair of trainees to look for her on their own.[49]

All of these incidents occurred despite the following prohibitions in BMT instructions, which are designed to prevent situations where the trainees can be mistreated:

- Except in emergency situations, personnel will not be alone in any confined area, including in any motor vehicle, with a trainee of the opposite gender.[50]
- Trainees who must leave their dormitory to report to the charge of quarters (CQ) on duty after lights out will be escorted by a trainee of the same gender. Prior to their departure, the EC must notify the CQ via the call box.[51]
- If an MTI or supervisory personnel must counsel a trainee one-on-one in private (i.e., closed door) and the member is of the opposite gender of the trainee, another permanent party staff member of the same gender as the trainee will be present.[52] Dormitories of opposite-gender flights are off-limits to all personnel from 30 minutes prior to lights out until five minutes after lights on. Members of the opposite gender enter trainee dormitories during off-limit times only in the event of an emergency.[53]

Prior to a change in the regulation, trainees could meet with MTIs behind closed doors provided another permanent party staff member was present. As of July 2012, the 37th TRW instituted a policy which prohibits any closed-door counseling session in a flight office with a trainee. In the rare instance the trainee would need privacy, the MTI will now take the trainee with his or her wingman to the instructor supervisor's (IS) office in the squadron's administration area downstairs.[54]

Wingman Policy. The wingman concept is part of the Air Force culture and a way of life that should be learned sooner rather than later. "Airmen take care of other fellow Airmen. Being a good wingman means you share a bond with other Airmen. You can be counted on to support each other, in all situations, both on- and off-duty."[55] It affords Airmen mutual support, accountability, and responsibility. This concept should be instilled as early as basic military training. No Airmen should be sent somewhere on their own or attempt to leave the flight without a wingman present. Not only will this practice improve the safety of trainees, but it will also teach them to be accountable for each other at all times. Trainees must be taught the wingman concept by always having a flight member present. MTIs should identify and correct situations where Airmen are alone.

Previously, BMT instructions required trainees to have a wingman only during hours of darkness, BX visit, and base liberty/town pass unless accompanied by family members.[56] Effective 27 July 2012 the 37th TRW developed and enacted a strict wingman policy for BMT. From the moment trainees arrive at BMT, they are now

assigned a wingman and must remain with that wingman whenever outside of his or her flight's sleeping area (open bay dormitory).[57]

The new BMT policy will mitigate the ability to isolate trainees and aligns with the "battle buddy" system employed at Army enlisted initial entry training. There, soldiers are permanently paired by name in battle buddy teams of two or three. This is done for the purpose of mutual support to teach teamwork, responsibility, and accountability; improve safety; and reduce the likelihood and opportunity for sexual harassment, misconduct, and suicide. Army trainees are required to be with their battle buddy up to the 21st week of training, beyond which they are required to pair only during duty hours. Battle buddy teams do not necessarily attend sick call, religious services, or appointments together. In these cases soldiers must be paired with a trainee of the same gender attending the same venue.[58]

Surveillance Cameras. Surveillance cameras cover the squadron entrances, the outside of fire escapes, and the dorm stairwells.[59] However, they should be added, at least, to the following vulnerable areas: laundry rooms, PT supply closet, and dining facility. Additionally, the digital records should be stored for at least 45 days. Control of those files needs to be in a central location outside of the squadron to avoid tampering.

Despite the presence of door alarms and surveillance cameras to monitor building access, MTIs are able to isolate trainees in areas unseen by the cameras. For example, on multiple, separate occasions (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ordered trainees into an empty dormitory and used this opportunity to sexually assault them. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) went so far as to direct trainees to go to the dorm first so they would not be seen on camera

together. Similarly, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) was able to order a trainee to the supply closet and sexually assault her.[60]

Again, in the case of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), he was able to direct a trainee into the MTI gym closet undetected for up to an hour to have sex. He also followed a female trainee who was preparing to shower in an empty dormitory despite her protests to leave her alone.[61] Sergeants Estacio and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) allegedly used the PT supply closet for sexual misconduct.[62] Though it cannot be corroborated, one trainee made an anonymous third-party report on the CDI BMT survey that a female acquaintance was sexually assaulted in a squadron laundry room some years ago.[63]

Charge of Quarters. The CQ desk provides too much opportunity for MTIs intent on misconduct to abuse the system. CQs are MTIs who serve rotating 12-hour shifts during which they are responsible for controlling the dormitory keys, access cards, and intercom, with the authority to summon trainees at will.[64] CQ procedures do not adequately protect door keys and access cards. Misuse of the squadron intercom system and abuse of trainee details allow MTIs to isolate trainees. CQ duty should not be assigned to those under investigation for trainee abuse or unprofessional relationships.

In reading the training group instruction, one would think that nothing would escape detection by the CQ. As a 24/7 monitor of training squadron activity and the squadron focal point, the CQ is required to immediately report to the squadron commander any suspected or confirmed instances of maltraining/maltreatment, hazing, solicitation, or sexual assault.[65] Each hour, the CQ conducts random security and fire

checks.[66] Finally, the CQ monitors security camera footage of the squadron common areas, entrances, and stairwells.[67] However, many cases of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and unprofessional relationships occurred under the purview of the CQ. In some cases the perpetrators were the CQs themselves. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] all used the CQ position to summon trainees to conduct unprofessional conversations, essentially grooming the trainees for later sexual misconduct.[68] (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] both did this after being removed from flights.[69]

More troubling is the CQ's ability to command a trainee from any flight. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] used the CQ position on "ship night" (the night prior to a BMT graduate's departure from basic training) to conduct unprofessional conversations with female trainees and eventually order them to the PT supply closet.[70] Previously, MTIs who lost their campaign hats due to misconduct were allowed to sit CQ and still have contact with and control over the trainees. As of July 2012, the 37th TRW made the necessary and positive change to policy where MTIs under hat removal are detailed to work at a location where there is no contact with trainees or students in the BMT or technical training pipeline.

Additionally, the 37th TRW also instituted a policy requiring two personnel on the CQ desk at a time. With MTI manning already stretched thin, this new requirement may be an inefficient and ineffective use of manpower since it still opens the door to MTI collusion during CQ. A better approach would be to reduce the power of CQs and

change their mandate to one similar to Army initial entry training, where the CQ is a nighttime safety monitor.[71]

Entry Controllers. BMT needs more restrictive controls over access to dorms and common areas. The entry control program must deter MTIs and other trainees from unauthorized dorm access. This starts with better training for MTIs and trainee entry controllers (EC). To do this, we recommend improving the accountability system to include making MTIs in the dorms subject to EC reports. Finally, the lock-and-key measures are inadequate to control access to squadron areas.

Currently, flight entry control procedures are in place to deter interaction between trainees or other unauthorized personnel; however, they do not significantly prevent MTIs from having contact with trainees. For example, former (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had several of his victims report alone to the MTI office in their brother flight. Despite the presence of the ECs and the other male trainees in the dorm, on separate occasions, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) was able to conduct closed-door sessions one-on-one with the female trainees for up to an hour at a time.[72] In fact, on one occasion, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ordered the ECs to go elsewhere while he sexually assaulted a trainee in his flight office. Finally, on ship night, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) stayed in the female dormitory past taps without being reported by the ECs. Another of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) victims reported seeing him in the dorms after taps.[73] In another case, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had sexual contact with a female trainee after taps on ship night.[74]

Though most squadron areas are locked via key, little prevents an MTI from gaining routine access or from using an unsanctioned duplicate key. The 37th TRW

instituted a new key policy in July 2012 requiring all keys to be locked in the CQ area. All keys must be signed out in a log maintained by CQ and returned every day. The group commander's standardization and evaluation team will periodically verify compliance.

Though this new policy has advantages over the current system, it does not prevent the creation of unauthorized copies. A better form of entry control for unguarded areas is the use of a key card access system, for example the Vindicator card. This type of security requires a special card, specific to each individual, to unlock doors. The system logs not only when doors are opened but also who opens them. Moreover, it can be controlled from a central location to restrict access by individuals to specific areas.

7.5-Week BMT. The ability of MTIs to take advantage of trainees comes from not only their ability to isolate the trainees but also the opportunities during the day where trainees have no scheduled activity. These hours are at the discretion of the MTI. Ideally used for dorm training or details, they also offer a nonstructured setting away from supervision for the MTI to abuse their power.

The large amount of open space on the BMT schedule, especially at the end of the program, puts the trainees in the squadron area without a defined location or group activity. The 7.5-week training schedule, developed by BMT for other purposes, would tighten the schedule and mitigate much of the "white space" in the current eight and a half week program.

The most common opportunity for unprofessional relationships and sexual assault is the period of time from graduation to ship night. The (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) Training

Squadron MTI (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] all conducted alleged sexual misconduct with trainees on ship night. Additionally, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] allegedly engaged in unprofessional relationships and sexual misconduct with two trainees on town pass after graduation.[75]

The policy at that time was to have the MTI of the departing flight sit CQ on ship night. This essentially gave them the opportunity and authority to take advantage of the trainees, with no checks or balances when it came to dorm access or accountability. Following these instances, the 37th TRW instituted a policy barring all flight MTIs except the IS from the dorm during ship night—a positive measure that must be codified in BMT instructions.

Recommendations

- Institutionalize new wingman procedures by incorporating them into training group instructions.
- Eliminate weaknesses in existing detection measures by improving surveillance, CQ, and entry control procedures.
- Adopt the BMT-developed 7.5-week training program to eliminate "white space" in the training schedule.

Finding 18

- Access to trainee personal information allowed MTIs to target or exploit individual trainees.

Discussion

The cases of MTI misconduct often follow a similar pattern. Trainees are targeted early on by the MTI, who engages in an unprofessional relationship during BMT. The MTI is able to gain the victim's silence by instilling the fear that the trainee, too, will be punished if the relationship is reported. Of the current cases, five MTIs initiated a physical relationship during the last week of training. In at least eight cases, trainee personal information was used to continue contact, establish a friendship, or sexually exploit the victim.[76]

Prior to the 737th TRG policy change in July 2012, trainees' personal possessions were examined during initial arrival. Instructions of the 737th TRG still require trainees to delete any photographs or videos from their phones that are considered lewd or pornographic, and MTIs used to follow up with an inspection to assure compliance.[77] MTIs had access to trainee personal photos and videos, which (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) abused. Among his offenses, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) sexually harassed and propositioned trainees while viewing explicit photos and videos on their cell phones. He also sent explicit texts as well as inappropriate photos of himself to trainees both during and after BMT.[78]

The 37th TRW revised its cell phone policy in July 2012. MTIs are no longer authorized to turn on, view, or handle trainee cell phones at any time (with the exception of putting them into a locked cabinet and reissuing them). Though a positive

step, this guidance still provides opportunity for abuse. The Navy is more stringent in its policy, which prohibits recruits from having any personal articles (including cell phones) during basic training.[79] While the 37th TRW may not go this far, it may decide to draft more detailed guidance to properly protect trainee personal information. For example, the keys to the locked cabinet where the cell phones are stored could be signed in and out from the CQ desk or section supervisor's office.[80]

In addition to cell phones, social media presents another avenue for MTIs to groom trainees or students for sexual misconduct. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] had a favorite female trainee whom he allowed unfettered access to her cell phone during BMT. They exchanged phone numbers and conducted unprofessional texting. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) had this trainee log on to her social media account in the flight office to view her suggestive pictures. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] then allowed another MTI and trainee to view this social media page.[81] (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) also allowed one of his victims to view her social media page on the computer in the flight office.[82]

Despite prohibitions against unprofessional contact with trainees until the completion of formal training, the majority of allegations against MTIs include relationships developed over social media. MTIs (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted] all allegedly communicated inappropriately using social media. In light of these cases, the 37th TRW has since instituted a policy that prevents any contact between MTIs and technical training students until the completion of technical training.[83]

Another area for potential abuse of trainee privacy was the requirement, recently rescinded, for MTIs to conduct tattoo inspections of trainees, including taking photographs.[84] This tattoo inspection requirement was problematic for several reasons. First, the process for conducting tattoo inspections was not clearly defined in the training group instructions and, therefore, the squadrons varied in their approaches. In some cases, trainees were inspected in their towels on the way to the shower; in another, they were inspected only for tattoos visible in PT gear. One MTI had the trainee element leaders discover and report trainees with tattoos. The process for documenting and evaluating tattoos was also not standardized. For example, some MTIs used their personal cameras to take the required photos of the tattoos.[85] Second, even though all trainees were required to be inspected in their underwear by MTI personnel of the same gender, no clear protections were in place to prevent other MTIs from gaining access to trainee tattoo pictures. While there is no evidence that an unauthorized MTI viewed tattoo photos of a trainee of the opposite gender, there is testimony that former Sergeant Walker sexually harassed trainees regarding their tattoos.[86] Third, the BMT tattoo inspection requirement was redundant to the existing tattoo screening policy in place in the Air Force accession process. In accordance with Air Force policy, applicants who have tattoos that are "excessive" in size (exceed more than 25 percent of an exposed body part in any uniform combination) or that have "unauthorized content" (obscene, gang related, or advocates sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination) are ineligible from joining the Air Force. As part of the accession screening process, all applicants are inspected for disqualifying tattoos at their Military Entrance Processing

Station medical examination by a physician. Further, an applicant's recruiter, with a third party present, inspects those tattoos that are "readily visible" while clothed (recruiters are expressly prohibited from asking applicants to remove clothing articles).[87] The formal tattoo inspection process at BMT was redundant to these existing accession screenings.

On 1 August 2012, the 737th TRG rescinded its requirement to inspect trainee tattoos and now defers to the accession process to screen for disqualifying tattoos.[88] While the elimination of the formal requirement to inspect tattoos was a positive step, to be fully effective, the 737th TRG instruction should expressly prohibit MTIs from inspecting tattoos that are not readily visible while wearing an official uniform, similar to the guidance for recruiters.

Recommendation

- Deny unnecessary access to trainee private information by prohibiting social media contact, restricting control of trainee cell phones, and strengthening guidance to restrict tattoo inspection.

Finding 19

- The 24/7 basic and technical training misconduct hotline, established by the CDI, received a higher than expected number of calls.

Discussion

During the course of the CDI, a 24/7 hotline was established to facilitate reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining. Second Air Force produced cards with the hotline information and distributed them to all basic and technical training trainees and students. The Air Force Personnel Center also sent an e-mail to all BMT graduates since 2009 to inform them of the hotline's existence.

Seventeen calls were received over a six-week period. All calls were investigated. Calls covered the spectrum of misconduct and related to issues dating back to 1999. In one instance, an MTI called to report misconduct. An unrelated caller sought to report misconduct that took place not in the training environment but in the operational Air Force. For the majority of callers, the hotline represented the only means of reporting they felt comfortable using.

Recommendation

- AETC should maintain the 24/7 hotline to allow for continued reporting.

Notes

1. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd Security Forces Squadron [SFS], (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 24 July 2012.

2. AFI 71-101, vol. 1, *Criminal Investigations Program,* 8 April 2011, attachment 2, table A2.1.

3. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd SFS, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 24 July 2012.

4. AETC CDI Team, MTI and MTL Disciplinary Actions Cross-Reference Worksheet, reference (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) .

5. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd Mission Support Group [MSG], (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)]), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 12 July 2012.

6. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) LOR, 11 February 2011.

7. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012.

8. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd MSG/ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 12 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ((b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, 30 July 2012.

9. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd MSG/ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 12 July 2012.

10. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ((b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, MTI), interview by Maj Gen Maggie Woodward, 19 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ((b) (6), (b) (7)(C) TRS, IS), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , 20 July 2012.

11. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd SFS, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 24 July 2012.

12. Ibid.

13. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd MSG/ (b) (6), (b) (7)(, interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 12 July 2012.

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18. Ibid.; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (MSG/ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 12 July 2012. See also AFF 458, Charge Sheet, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 25 March 2008; AFF 458, Charge Sheet, 19 December 2008; AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Victim– (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 12 May 2012; Special Interest Case Report, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 1 February 2012; and AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Victim– (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 26 June 2011.

19. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802nd SFS, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 24 July 2012; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (802 MSG/ (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 12 July 2012.

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22. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 37th TRW, "MTI Unprofessional Relationship Misconduct," PowerPoint brief to AETC/CC, 1 August 2012.

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24. Lackland AFB IMT 133, Trainee Comment Sheet, 4 October 2010.

25. CDI Hotline, 13 July 2012.

26. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 737th TRG, Programs and Analysis, "Air Force Basic Military Training Survey Report FY2012, 2nd Quarter (1 Jan – 31 Mar 12)," 25 April 2012.

27. Ibid.

28. BMT discussion group, WOT 1 trainees, led by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 2 July 2012.

29. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) (737th TRG, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)), interview by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [redacted], 16 July 12.

30. 737th TRG, Air Education Command Instruction (AECTI), Supplement 1 36-2201, *Technical and Basic Military Training Evaluation,* 2 March 2012, Interim Change 1, 11 June 2012.

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36. AFF 3070A, Record of Non-Judicial Punishment Proceedings, [redacted] Article 15, 31 October 2011.

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38. [redacted] ROI, 5 December 2011.

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47. AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Victim 1–[redacted] 18 November 2011; and ibid., Victim 2–[redacted] 24 April 2012.

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49. [redacted] ROI, 16 December 2008.

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60. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012.

61. (b) (6), (b) (7)(ROI, 16 December 2008.

62. AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Victim 2–(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 24 April 2012.

63. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), to 37th TRW/CC, memorandum, subject: Interim Report of Investigation on BMT Trainee Survey Conducted 21 July 2012, 29 July 2012.

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68. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 28 July 2009; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012; AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Trainees (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 8 June 2011; and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 14 October 2010.

69. AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), 12 November 2011.

70. Ibid., Victim 2–(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 24 April 2012.

71. Maj Gen Margaret Woodward, Army Initial Entry Training tour, Fort Jackson, 18 July 2012.

72. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012.

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75. Ibid.; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012; (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 14 October 2010; AFOSI Form 158, AFOSI Investigative Communication, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 5 December 2011; AFOSI Form 158, AFOSI Investigative Communication, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 5 December 2011; and AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Trainee–Victim, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 2 March 2012.

76. AETC CDI Team, MTI and MTL Disciplinary Actions Cross-Reference Worksheet, July 2012.

77. 737th TRGI 36-3, vol. 1, *Basic Military Training (BMT)*, 1 October 2010, incorporates interim change 1, 6 January 2011.

78. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012.

79. US Navy Recruit Training Center video teleconference, conducted by AETC CDI Team, 2 August 2012.

80. 737th TRG, "Significant Changes to Basic Military Training since March 2011," 1 August 2012.

81. AFF 1168, Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant, Victim—(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) 30 May 2012.

82. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) ROI, 10 February 2012.

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Chapter 6

Policy and Guidance

During our investigation, we reviewed Air Education and Training Command policy and guidance regarding prevention, detection, and handling of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining in basic military training. We found that commanders, supervisors, instructors, trainees, and students understood applicable instructions and guidance. However, we also found cases where corrective action for similar infractions varied significantly and where some individuals were not held fully accountable for their behavior. We believe this inconsistent approach to accountability contributed to the development of a culture too accepting of misconduct.

Although historical information was difficult to gather, our review found that for several years prior to 2009, cases of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining were declining. Possibly as a result, approximately three years ago emphasis on preventive policies began to wane. We believe that, coupled with a lack of leadership oversight, this led to the appearance of a more permissive environment where the consequences for unprofessional conduct became less of a deterrent.

While a renewed emphasis on preventive policies is making a significant difference, the contrast between the last three years and today is very instructive. Fair, just, and equitable enforcement of instructions, policies, and guidance regarding unprofessional conduct must remain a top priority for every leader—from front-line

supervisors to senior commanders. Furthermore, to increase acceptance and understanding of policies governing faculty and staff misconduct, procedures should be revised with the input of instructors, supervisors, and commanders who will be held accountable for implementation.

Our review also identified two policy gaps. First, trainees should arrive at BMT with a basic understanding of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining policies and reporting procedures. Second, there must be a standardized procedure for collecting and tracking data about reported misconduct over the long term.

Finding 20

- Trainees arrive at basic training without any knowledge of Air Force policies regarding sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, or maltraining.

Discussion

As of March 2012, the 737th TRG commander gives all trainees a "neighborhood watch" briefing within the first 72 hours of their arrival at basic training.[1] This briefing covers sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining. The group commander tells trainees that it is the trainee's duty to report misconduct to anyone in the chain of command, to the chaplain, to the sexual assault response coordinator (SARC), or through the trainee critique system.

Trainees are also briefed on basic orientation, dress and appearance, the *UCMJ*, and dining hall procedures, and they receive initial drill and dormitory instruction.[2] Trainees see the first three days as extremely rushed and feel overloaded.

The Air Force Recruiting Service (active duty component) and the National Guard Bureau (ANG component) both require the recruiter and the recruit to sign a form specifying that they understand and will uphold Air Force discrimination and sexual harassment policy, the recruiter-recruit relationship, and the recruit's rights.[3] However, there is no mandatory briefing telling the recruit how this policy transfers into the training environment or the Air Force.

A standardized prebrief for all recruits would help them identify and report instances of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships,

maltreatment, and maltraining and may help the recruits and their families feel more comfortable with the training they are about to enter.

Recommendation

- Develop an informational briefing and require the military entry processing station (MEPS) NCO to brief all recruits on what constitutes sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining and how to report such instances when recruits arrive at basic military training.

Finding 21

- AETC has no standardized survey to collect data pertaining to misconduct in the training environment.

Discussion

As with all AETC training courses, BMT uses anonymous end-of-course surveys (EOC) to collect data to aid improvements in the training environment.[4] These surveys, however, do not readily capture data pertaining to misconduct. BMT's EOC survey is 50 questions, with only three addressing misconduct, and it does not ask questions directly related to sexual harassment or sexual assault.

An anonymous survey will provide leadership with misconduct indicators and trends. Standardizing the report format will also allow leadership to quickly ascertain critical information and make historical or cross-organizational comparisons that lead to policy improvements or illuminate areas that require further investigation.

Recommendations

- Create a standardized and anonymous survey, separate from other EOC surveys, to effectively capture training environment misconduct.
- Establish standardized procedures, including trend analysis, for analyzing and reporting survey data. Report results and analysis quarterly to group, wing, and numbered Air Force leadership at a minimum.
- Require that the wing commander be informed of all allegations of sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining reported in the EOC surveys.

Notes

1. 737th Training Group (TRG), *Significant Changes to Basic Military Training since March 2011*, 1 August 2012.

2. 737th TRG Instruction 36-3, vol. 1, *Daily-Weekly Activities Checklists*, 1 Oct 2012.

3. Air Force Recruiting Service Form 6, *Air Force Recruiting Service Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy*, 1 Jul 2011.

4. AETC Instruction 36-2201, *Technical and Basic Military Training Evaluation*, paragraphs 2.1 and 3.2, 13 September 2010.

Chapter 7

Gender Integration

The CDI's charter tasked investigators to consider whether gender-segregated training would prove to be "a more effective model for mitigating MTI misconduct" than the current approach. To examine this option, investigators studied the current Air Force basic training model, along with those of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.

While we found that the current BMT construct produces well-trained and exceptional Airmen, we also found that it requires changes to better optimize the balance between safety and effectiveness. These changes include approaches to diffuse individual MTI power and promote respect between the genders.

A modest reform to the single-MTI-per-flight approach currently used is also required. We suggest that a team of four MTIs be assigned to instruct two flights. Further, we believe one of the four MTIs in each team should be a woman, increasing overall MTI female manning to 25 percent of the force.

We recognize that this approach requires an increase in MTI manning, particularly in female numbers. However, we found that the Air Force has the lowest effective instructor-to-trainee ratio of any of the services and that the Air Force is currently the only service of the four without an established quota for female instructors in basic training. This led us to conclude that our suggestion is both feasible and critical. Furthermore, if the Air Force ultimately shortens BMT by one week (per our recommendations), the overall manning requirement for MTIs will be reduced, mitigating the impact of this change.

This new construct should enhance training by providing role models of both genders for each flight of trainees, and it will enhance safety by diffusing power among all four instructors, limiting the likelihood that any one instructor could use his or her influence with a trainee to coerce misconduct. Moreover, this approach increases female role models and preserves an integrated training approach that is consistent with the principle of "training the way we will fight," together as Airmen.

Finding 22

- Gender integration is important to foster mutual respect, provide strong role models of both genders, and prepare Airmen for the operational Air Force.
- Gender segregation alone does not completely eliminate sexual assault, sexual harassment, or unprofessional relationships.
- When a single MTI leads a flight, the power imbalance rests solely on a single MTI creating a stronger susceptibility to abuse that power.

Discussion

Full Segregation. The first option considered was full segregation of men and women across the BMT spectrum. This option drove the CDI team to explore the basic training policies and procedures of the US Marine Corps (USMC), as it is currently the only service that segregates males and females. In the USMC, males and females are billeted and trained separately during daily operations and activities. In some training activities, such as rifle range and swim qualifications, male and female recruits and instructors operate in the same location. However, the recruits are still segregated by gender at those locations. Each platoon has approximately 60–80 recruits. For each of these platoons, there are at least three and as many as five same-gender drill instructors.[1] This concept sometimes drives a higher instructor-to-recruit ratio than that of the Air Force and necessitates a female drill instructor quota. The model removes the gender-opposite power imbalance, but does not teach men and women to work together as they will in the operational environment. The USMC model also requires 25 percent of its training facilities at Parris Island to be dedicated to female recruits,

whereas the Air Force co-utilizes all training facilities.[2] The Marine model may also perpetuate the perception that there are two different standards in regard to training. Lastly, and possibly most importantly, the USMC model does not subject male and female recruits to opposite-gender leadership.

Full Integration. When considering the fully integrated option, we consulted the Army and the Navy, examining their basic training models. We discovered that the Army and Navy models offer the greatest degree of integration. Except for all-male specialties, both fully integrate their basic training environments. Men and women are billeted separately but are completely integrated during daily training operations and activities. In addition to integrating the trainees, the Army and Navy deploy their instructors in a mixed format. Each platoon/division of approximately 60 trainees is led by a cadre of three instructors—one of whom must be female. The Army and Navy believe that gender-integrated training enhances their ability to deliver Soldiers and Sailors that are fully prepared to take their places in the ranks of their gender-integrated services. It is important to note that this model also requires a female instructor quota. Resourcing for training facilities is not an issue since trainees co-utilize all existing training venues. In fact, the goal of both services is to ensure male and female trainees train together and learn concepts of mutual respect and support in the early stages of their career.

The Air Force Way Ahead. We agree that integration at the basic training level is essential to instilling a culture of mutual respect necessary for a fully integrated Air Force. While the current Air Force BMT model integrates training, it does not do so as fully as the Army or Navy, but instead maintains all-female or all-male flights of trainees.

The new model our recommendations propose does not change this. It does, however, cut straight to the heart of the issue—abuse of power by a single MTI. It does so by requiring four MTIs per two flights, with a minimum of one woman per MTI team, regardless of the gender of the trainee flights. This construct of checks and balances places female MTIs in all training environments and cultivates a culture of mutual respect between men and women. One of the greatest benefits of this new model is that it subjects trainees to strong male and female role models. While maintaining this model has the added benefit of not increasing training infrastructure costs, it does drive an increased manpower requirement and will necessitate a female MTI quota.

We believe this structure provides the best mix of safe and effective training. It is a powerful countermeasure to one of the root causes of the recent incidents in BMT while also sustaining a "train the way we fight" mentality. Evidence suggests that a higher level of gender segregation does not preclude sexual misconduct. In fact, in 2011, 20 of the 330 sexual assaults in the Marine Corps occurred at segregated basic training facilities.[3] The problem at Lackland was not with the population of trainees, but with the MTIs that enabled bad actors to operate without appropriate MTI and leadership checks and balances. Any effective solution must be targeted appropriately to address this fundamental problem.

Furthermore, this construct best prepares Airmen for the fully integrated environment they will find in the operational Air Force and is the least disruptive to BMT. It provides strong role models of both genders for all trainees and MTIs. These role models are an essential element in taking male and female trainees from a wide range

of backgrounds in society and developing them into a cohesive team that shares Air Force core values.

This new structure will also likely encourage increased reporting of misconduct by making same-gender MTIs available to all trainees. In a survey conducted by the CDI, 44.4 percent of trainees surveyed stated that they would be more comfortable bringing personal issues to an MTI of the same gender.[4] Taking this into account, our recommendation requires a cadre of instructors to work together as they would in the operational Air Force. Each two-flight pairing would have a team of four instructors, one of whom is female, working collaboratively to achieve Air Force objectives.

While there is a higher manpower bill with this model, the recommendation for increased manpower is supported by the findings of the CDI to improve training for other purposes as well. Because this course of action requires the Air Force to increase the ratio of female MTIs from the current level of 11 percent to approximately 25 percent, slightly above the Air Force average, this raises concerns of recruiting enough qualified female MTIs. If increased incentive options are not enough to attract strong female NCOs, a nonvolunteer process that brings in females should be established.

If the Air Force is to have a culture free of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination, we must establish the principles of mutual respect between the genders during an Airman's most formative period.

Recommendation

- Strengthen the current integration model by creating MTI teams of four instructors per two flights, with a minimum of one female instructor per team, regardless of the gender of the trainee flights.

Notes

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1. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) , CDI Team member, memorandum for record, 15 August 2012.

2. Ibid.

3. Greg Jacob, "Segregated Air Force Training: Not the Answer," *Time,* 1 August 2012, http://nation.time.com/2012/08/01/segregated-air-force-training-not-the-answer/.

4. AETC Commander-Directed Investigation Team, Manning/Selection/Organization Team, "Training Environment and Culture Survey Results," July 2012, 5.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Nearly 700,000 total force Airmen defend America's vital national interests around the world every day. Together, these men and women are the backbone of the world's greatest Air Force, unified by a mission so demanding that every Airman must constantly be at his or her best. To be ready for the challenges of tomorrow's mission, these Airmen not only require an Air Force organized, trained, and equipped for success, they also require every Airman to be committed to our core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. These core values are the foundation of a professional warrior able to stand shoulder to shoulder with other warriors in the defense of our nation.

Recent misconduct at BMT tears the fabric that holds us together as an Air Force because it destroys our trust, faith, and confidence in each other. The Air Force is focusing tremendous resources on eliminating sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining from its ranks. No institution wants to accomplish this more than the Air Force. The aggressive investigation that brought this misconduct to light is clear evidence of that commitment. The intense scrutiny applied to basic training since that misconduct came to light is further proof that this issue is an absolute priority for Air Force leadership.

Our in-depth look into BMT assured us that supervisors and commanders at every level are now fully engaged, and many positive changes have already been made. However, this report contains many additional steps we believe are crucial to

reinforcing our commitment to zero tolerance, with action that holds perpetrators accountable, and ensures that we address all of the factors that brought us to this point. While we found no single answer that solves the problem, we believe that the comprehensive set of recommendations presented, taken together, will help reform the culture at BMT and ensure safe and effective training for all of our Airmen.

Finally, while we necessarily highlighted the negative elements in BMT culture that contributed to misconduct, we must also emphasize that the vast majority of MTIs serve with distinction. They are outstanding role models who work tirelessly to make the next generation of Airmen even stronger than the last.

Glossary

Discrimination—Any unlawful action that denies equal opportunity to persons or groups based on their race, color, sex, national origin, or religion.

Disparate Treatment—Treatment that is different because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, or reprisal.

First Sergeant—A special duty held by the senior enlisted advisor of a military unit who reports directly to the unit commander. This billet is held by individuals between pay grades E-7 and E-9. The first sergeant, often referred to as the "first shirt" or "shirt," is responsible for the morale, welfare, and conduct of a unit's enlisted Airmen and serves as the chief adviser to the squadron commander concerning the enlisted force.

Hazing—Any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of service or rank, without proper authority cause another military member or members, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful.

Maltraining—Any practice not designed to meet a course training objective. Examples of maltraining include, but are not limited to, using abusive, excessive physical exercise or unnecessarily rearranging the property of an Airman to correct infractions. Any practice for the purpose of inducing an Airman to self-eliminate is considered maltraining.

Maltreatment (Physical)—Includes, but is not limited to, poking, hitting, thumping, pushing, grabbing, threats of violence, physical violence, physical

intimidation, hazing, or any unnecessary physical contact.

Maltreatment (Verbal)—Any language that degrades, belittles, demeans, or slanders an individual or group based on color, national origin, race, religion, age, ethnic group, gender, or physical stature. Includes, but is not limited to, (1) the use of profanity and any insinuation of immoral, unethical, illegal, or unprofessional conduct; (2) crude, offensive language in rhymes or prose as memory devices (mnemonics); and/or (3) training tools that contain profane words, offensive language, or inappropriate sexual or gender references. Any language that establishes a hostile environment constitutes and promotes sexual harassment, or disrespect to men and/or women.

Nonprior Service—Individuals who enter the military with no previous military service or have not been awarded an Air Force Specialty Code.

RAPpers—First-term Airmen who participate in the recruiter assistance program (RAP).

Reprisal (Military)—Taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action, withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action, or any other act of retaliation against a military member for making or preparing to make a protected communication.

Restricted Reporting—A process used by a service member to report or disclose that he or she is the victim of a sexual assault to specified officials on a requested confidential basis. Under these circumstances, the victim's report and any details provided to the sexual assault response coordinator (SARC), healthcare personnel, or a victim advocate (VA) will not be reported to law enforcement to initiate an official

investigation unless the victim consents or an established exception is exercised under DOD Directive 6495.01, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program*.

Sexual Assault—The following definition of sexual assault has been directed by DOD and is for training and educational purposes only. This definition does not affect in any way the definition of any offense under the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* (*UCMJ*). Commanders are encouraged to consult with their staff judge advocate for complete understanding of this definition in relation to the *UCMJ*.

Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, forcible sodomy (oral or anal sex), and other unwanted sexual contact that is aggravated, abusive, or wrongful (to include unwanted and inappropriate sexual contact), or attempts to commit these acts.

Consent means words or overt acts indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual conduct at issue by a competent person. An expression of lack of consent through words or conduct means there is no consent. Lack of verbal or physical resistance or submission resulting from the accused's use of force, threat of force, or placing another person in fear does not constitute consent. A current or previous dating relationship by itself or the manner of dress of the person involved with the accused in the sexual conduct at issue shall not constitute consent.

Sexual Harassment—Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a physical nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of

a person's job, pay, or career; submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person; such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; any person in a supervisory or command position who uses or condones implicit or explicit sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a military member or civilian employee; any military member or civilian employee who makes unwelcome, deliberate, or repeated verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

Trainees—This includes military and civilian personnel who are assigned or on temporary duty to Air Education and Training Command bases, wings, detachments, or schools to attend training prior to reporting to their permanent duty stations of assignment. This also includes personnel who (1) are awaiting or have completed training, and (2) have been eliminated or disenrolled from training and are awaiting reassignment or discharge. Examples include, but are not limited to, basic military trainees, technical school trainees, officer training school (OTS) cadets, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) cadets, and officers attending commissioned officer training (COT), undergraduate pilot training (UPT), and undergraduate navigator training (UNT).

Training—This includes entire blocks of training, such as, but not limited to, basic military training, technical training, AFROTC training, OTS, COT, UPT, and UNT.

Unprofessional Relationship—Unprofessional relationships include relationships involving faculty, staff, trainees, cadets, students, recruiters, recruits, applicants, and/or

RAPpers. Whether pursued on or off duty, relationships are unprofessional when they detract from the authority of superiors or result in (or reasonably create the appearance of) favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests. Unprofessional relationships include relationships between officers; between enlisted members; between officers and enlisted members; between recruiters and recruits, applicants, or RAPpers; between RAPpers and recruits or applicants; and between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel.

Unrestricted Reporting—A process a service member uses to disclose, without requesting confidentiality or restricted reporting that he or she is the victim of a sexual assault. Under these circumstances, the victim's report and any details provided to the SARC, healthcare personnel, a VA, command authorities, or other persons are reportable to law enforcement and may be used to initiate the official investigation process.

Victim Advocate—Military and DOD civilian employee volunteers, selected and trained by the SARC, who provide essential support, liaison services, and care to victims.

Victim—A victim is a person who alleges direct physical, emotional, or pecuniary harm as a result of the commission of a sexual assault and who has a connection with the installation. If the victim is incompetent or incapacitated, the term *victim* includes one of the following (in order of preference): spouse, legal guardian, parent, child, sibling, another family member, or another person designated by a court. Victims will be eligible for and provided services by the Air Force consistent with their legal status. The

services contemplated range from referral to the appropriate civilian or foreign agency to the provision of all services available to an active duty member. Nothing in this policy shall be constructed to authorize or require the provision of specific services (such as medical care or therapeutic counseling) unless the victim has an independent entitlement to such services under relevant statutes or DOD directives. The restricted reporting option is only available to those sexual assault victims who are service members.

Abbreviations

ABU	airman battle uniform
ABW	Air Base Wing
ADC	Area Defense Council
AETC	Air Education and Training Command
AETCI	AETC instruction
AF	Air Force
AFB	Air Force Base
AFDD	Air Force doctrine document
AFECD	Air Force enlisted classification directory
AFI	Air Force instruction
AFOSI	Air Force Office of Special Investigations
AFPC	Air Force Personnel Center
AFRES	Air Force Reserve
AFROTC	Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps
AFRS	Air Force Recruiting Service
AFSC	Air Force Specialty Code
ALS	Airman Leadership School
AMS	assignment management system
AMT	Academy military trainee
ANG	Air National Guard
ATP	advanced transition period
AWOL	absent without leave
BAS	Behavioral Analysis Service
BEAST	Basic Expeditionary Airman Skills Training
BIG5	sexual assault, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, maltreatment, and maltraining
BMT	basic military training
BMTG	basic military training guide
BMTSG	basic military training study guide
CC	commander
CCOP	Command Climate Optimization Plan
CDI	commander-directed investigations
CO	commanding officer; co-utilize
CQ	charge of quarters
DFAC	dining facility
DOD	Department of Defense

DODD	Department of Defense directive
EO	equal opportunity
EOC	end of course
EPR	enlisted performance report
FA	fitness assessment
FLT	flight
Flt/CC	flight commander
FOUO	for official use only
FY	fiscal year
HAF	Headquarters Air Force
HF	honor flight
IAW	in accordance with
IBD	integrated base defense
IG	inspector general
IIT	ineffective in training
IO	investigating officer IS
	instructor supervisor
ITP	initial transition period
JQS	Joint Qualification System
LOA	letter of admonishment
LOC	letter of counseling
LOR	letter of reprimand
MAJCOM	major command
MDC	military drill and ceremonies
MEPS	military entry processing station
MILPERSMAN	Military Personnel Manual
MMPI	Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory
MOS	maintenance of standards
MSG	Mission Support Group
MTI	military training instructor
MTL	military training leader
NAF	Numbered Air Force
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NCOIC	noncommissioned officer in charge
NJP	nonjudicial punishment
NPS	nonprior service

OI	operating instruction
OSI	Office of Special Investigations
OTS	Officer Training School
PA	public affairs
PIF	personal information file
PME	professional military education
PT	physical training
QTR	quarter
RAP	Recruiter Assistance Program
RAPper	first-term Airman who participates in the RAP
RH&T	recruit, housing, and training
ROI	report of investigation
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
RTP	remedial transition period
SABC	self air buddy care
SAPR	sexual assault prevention and response
SARC	sexual assault response coordinator
SASH	students against sexual assault and harassment
SF	security forces
SFOI	security forces office of investigations
SICR	Special Interest Case Report
SJA	staff judge advocate
SME	subject matter expert
SNCO	senior noncommissioned officer
SOT	students out of training
SSD	significant statistical difference
STT	squadron training time
SURF	single unit retrieval format
TAFMSD	total active federal military service date
TEP	training evaluation program
TF	transition flight
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command (Army)
TRG	training group
TRS	training squadron
TRW	training wing
TT	technical training
TTI	technical training instructor

UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
UIF	unfavorable information file
UMD	unit manning document
USMC	US Marine Corps
VA	victim advocate
WAS	weekly activity schedule
WOT	week of training

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