W3

Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)

19 September 2014

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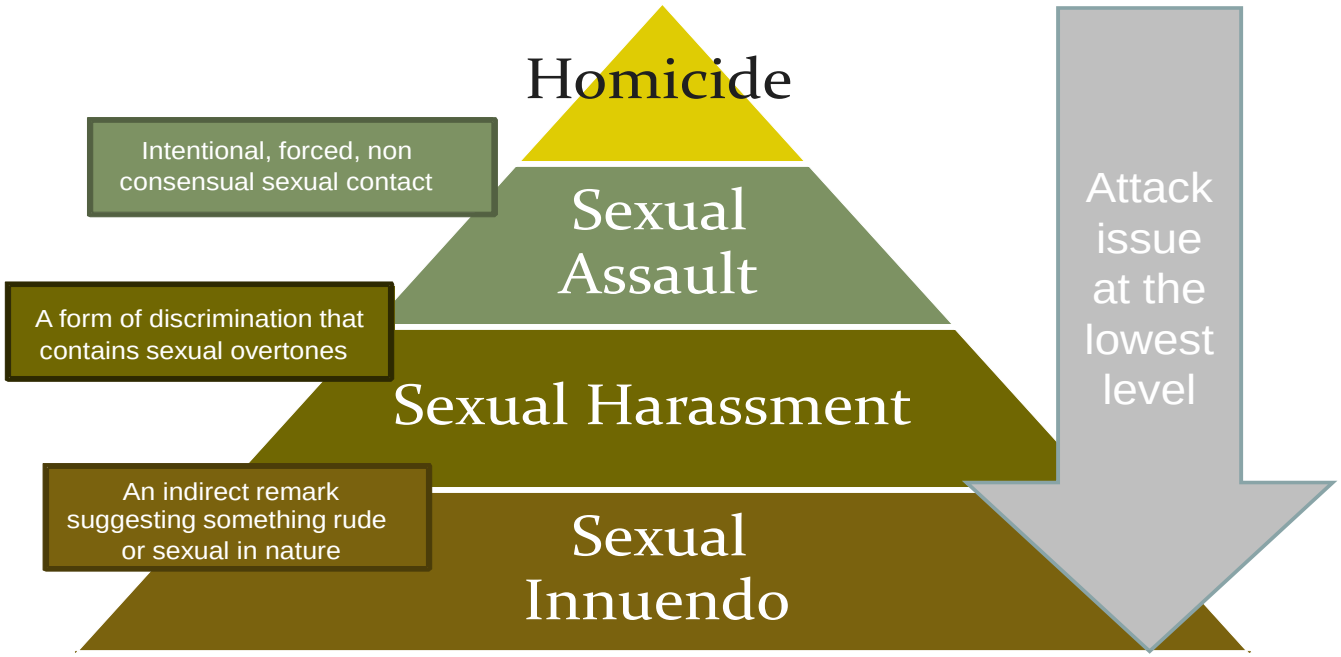
DACOWITS RFI Request

RFI #3: DACOWITS recommended in its 2013 Report that, ”DoD and the Services should combine efforts into one program to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual assault.” DACOWITS, as well as experts on sexual harassment and sexual assault both in and outside DoD, recognize that there is a strong correlation between the two.

DACOWITS requests briefings from the Navy and Army on their aligned sexual harassment and sexual assault programs. *Please include: 1) The reasons/impetus for joining the two programs; 2) The benefits and challenges encountered; and 3) Any lessons learned.*

Why Combine Sexual Harassment and Assault?

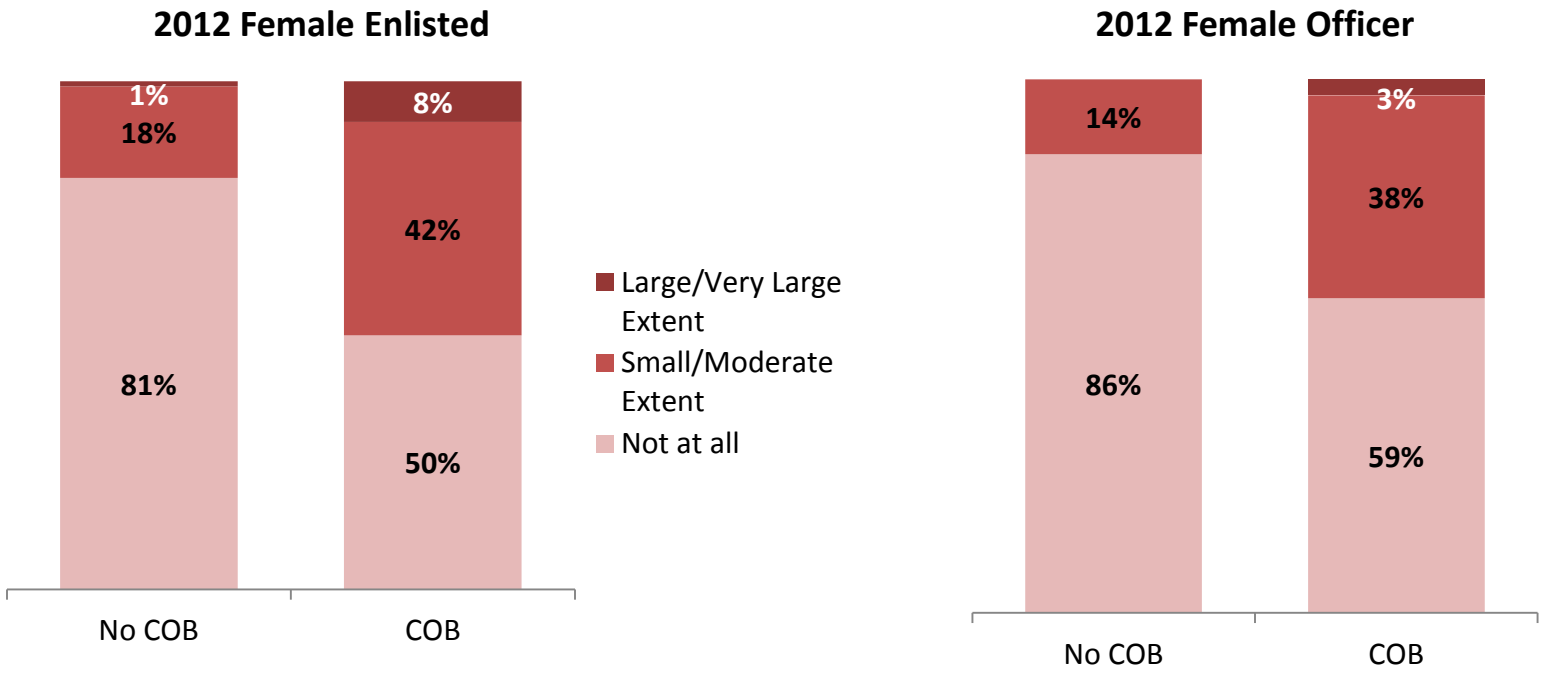


- The Army used the model of Clinical Psychologist, Dr. David Lisak, to evaluate and assess the correlation between sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- The Army considers the elimination of sexual innuendo and sexual harassment as fundamental to eliminating more extreme acts of sexual violence on the continuum of sexual violence
- These acts and the attitudes that enable them do not just appear; rather, they are a culmination of other acts that encourage more egregious behavior such as sexual assault

Impact of Sexual Harassment on Soldiers

- **Feelings of Vulnerability to Sexual Assault:** Past experience with sexual harassment, crude and offensive behavior (COB), affected feeling vulnerable to sexual assault at their current installation/duty location

Percent of females who felt vulnerable to sexual assault at their current installation/duty location given their experience with COB



- 20% of males and 40% of females said the offender harassed them prior to the sexual assault incident
- 13% of males and 15% of females said the offender stalked them prior to the incident

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Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

- Unity of purpose in combating the continuum of sexual violence.
- Integrated policy for harassment and assault; operational execution under supervision of a single program.
- Coordinated planning and communications efforts.
- Co-located support to victims and complainants.

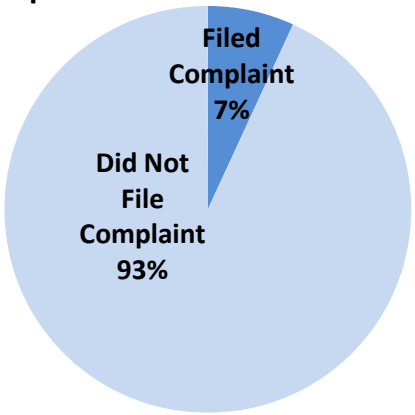
Challenges:

- Difficult to get individuals to ‘self-identify’ sexist attitudes and behaviors, and take steps to change.
- Training Soldiers and Leaders to recognize and intervene to stop sexist behavior and sexually explicit language (harassment).
  - An example on Lessons Learned slide.

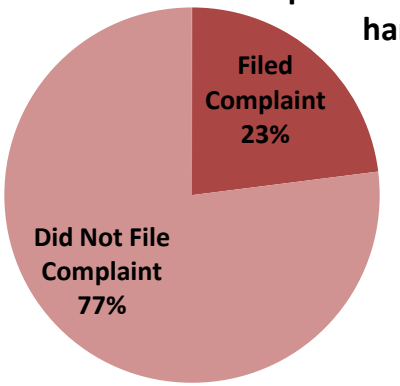
Sexual Harassment Reporting

Overall, 23% of female respondents and 7% of male respondents who experienced sexual harassment filed a complaint

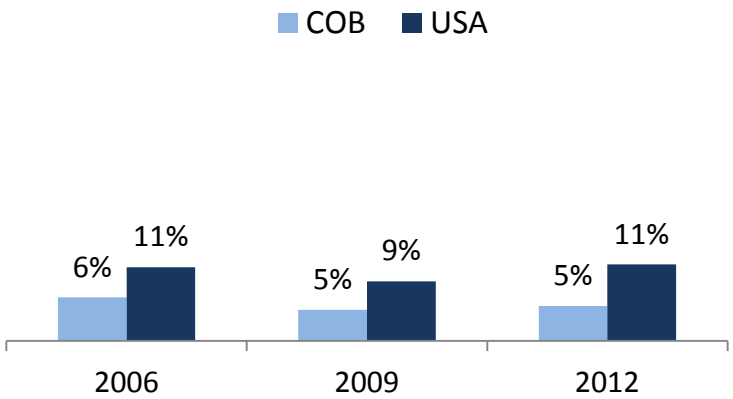
Males who experienced sexual harassment

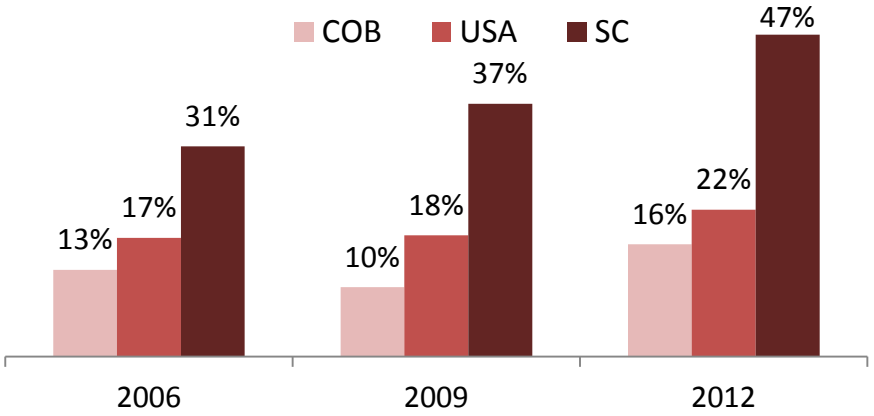


Females who experienced sexual harassment



The type of sexual harassment affected the propensity for respondents to file a complaint





*Sexual Coercion is not included for males due to insufficient sample size

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Lessons learned

- Leadership and the prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment are inextricably connected.
- Poor Command Climate fosters sexual harassment which can prevent bystanders from intervening and can embolden predators.
- ***Competence over Character***—an Initial Military Training Example:
  - TRADOC survey of IMT New Soldiers established their definition of ‘professionalism’ in Drill Sergeant (DS) or Advanced Individual Training Platoon Sergeants (AIT PSG)—in over 15,000 open-ended responses, New Soldiers defined ‘professional’ as: ‘squared away’, ‘PT stud’, ‘combat tested’, and ‘knows his stuff’.
  - Not a single response described a ‘professional’ NCO in terms of inter-personal skills.
  - When New Soldiers were specifically asked to indicate the extent to which DSs and AIT PSGs used or tolerated sexually charged or explicit language:
    - Approximately 1/3 of New Soldiers stated their DS or AIT PSG used sexually explicit language and tolerated sexual harassment.
- New Soldiers generally do not associate ‘professionalism’ with use of appropriate language and/or discouragement of sexual harassment.

Back-up