

# **DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICES**

## **Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

**12–13 June 2014**

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) held a full committee meeting on June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The meeting was held at the Sheraton-Pentagon City Hotel, 900 S. Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204.

**12 June 2014**

### **Opening Comments and Swearing-In of New Members**

The Designated Federal Officer and DACOWITS Military Director, COL Betty Yarbrough, opened the meeting. Ms. Holly Hemphill, DACOWITS Chair, introduced Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Hon. Jessica Wright, who gave remarks to set the stage for the induction of new members of the Committee.

Ms. Hemphill introduced and welcomed the new DACOWITS members: Dr. Charlotte Dixon, MG (Ret) John Macdonald, FORCM (Ret) Laura A. Martinez, Ms. Monica Medina, Mr. Brian Morrison, and SMA (Ret) Kenneth Preston (unable to be present). COL Yarbrough administered the oath to the new members in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Committee Vice Chair, LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson, presented each with the DACOWITS pin and Under Secretary Wright offered her congratulations.

As an introduction to the newest members, Ms. Hemphill provided a brief history of Dr. Dorothy Height, one of the first DACOWITS members. She spoke about Ms. Height's service with DACOWITS and about how the Committee's early goals of increasing the role of women relates to its current goals.

COL Yarbrough reviewed the status of the Committee's Requests for Information. The Committee received full or partial responses, either in the form of briefings or written statements, to all but one of its requests. The request for the Services to provide their procedures on notation of sex-related offenses in the unrestricted portion of personnel service records was postponed until the September meeting. The Committee received only a partial response to its request from the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO); for the second time, the briefing did not include the requested information on benchmarks and metrics used to assess the effectiveness of the new NDAA provisions.

COL Yarbrough also reported on the Congressional notifications regarding opening additional positions and occupational specialties to women. On May 21<sup>st</sup>, DoD notified Congress that the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and the Department of the Army intend to open approximately 1,348 positions in 56 open occupations in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, DoD notified Congress that the Department of the Navy intends to open 2,285 Active Component positions and 730 Reserve Component positions in the Marine Corps to women in open Military Occupational Specialties. The Navy also intends



to open 215 Active Component and 93 Reserve Component positions in the Navy in open Military Occupational Specialties that support the Marine Corps. On June 9<sup>th</sup>, DoD notified Congress that the Department of the Navy intends to open 24 joint Terminal Attack Controller enlisted positions to women in the Coastal Riverine Force.

Ms. Hemphill explained that DACOWITS had previously recommended that the combat exclusion rule be rescinded, which occurred in January 2013. The Committee has a deep interest in the success of the combat integration initiative and will continue to monitor the release of these notifications by the Services to Congress.

---

### **SAPRO Annual Report, Prevention Strategy, and DoD Equity in the Report from the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault**

President Obama instructed Secretary Hagel to continue efforts to make improvements with regard to sexual assault prevention and response. He asked for a full-scale review of progress. The President added that additional reforms might be necessary. SAPRO is DoD's point of accountability for sexual assault-related matters. DACOWITS requested a briefing from SAPRO on the progress in making improvements in sexual assault prevention and response, as well as any updates on the implementation status of the sexual assault provisions of the NDAA for FY 2014.

#### **Col Alan Metzler, Deputy Director, SAPRO**

Col Metzler reported that the DOD FY 2013 Annual Report on Sexual Assault revealed that sexual assault reporting has increased by 50% overall, which SAPRO believes is a demonstration that the system is working to make reporting more common, rather than a reflection of increases in the number of crimes being committed. About 10% of the reports are coming from incidents that occurred prior to service, as opposed to 4% of such reports in years prior. SAPRO takes action in every case, where it has jurisdiction and sufficient evidence, even when civilian jurisdictions would not. The DoD Annual Report on Sexual Assault is required by law and helps to inform Congress of efforts to improve sexual assault prevention and response. It did not include a prevalence survey, as this is conducted only in even-numbered years.

SAPRO believes that having a strategic approach to the problem is extremely important. SAPRO's current lines of effort include prevention, investigation, accountability, advocacy/victim assistance, and assessment. Among current initiatives are SAPRO research and assessment team visits, which utilize subject matter experts from educational institutions and other locations across the United States to identify proven and successful prevention practices.

Col Metzler said that commanders are taking the issue seriously, illustrated by the increases in court martial rates; 484 out of 707 cases proceeded to court martial (68%), with 76% of perpetrators convicted of at least one charge.

The Committee suggested increased focus on Service member-on-Service member crimes for which the military would maintain jurisdiction. Members also questioned how prevalence is being measured, to which Col Metzler responded by mentioning a forthcoming RAND survey that will provide data in compliance with the biennially mandated reporting procedure. Surveys on prevalence are conducted every 2 years. RAND will administer a survey, including some of the same questions asked by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) in the past to maintain trend data. This survey will now include data from survivors of sexual assault who have



made restricted reports. Prevalence numbers will be made available as part of the report to the President by 1 December 2014.

The Committee asked about the possibility of implementing procedures to identify and screen out perpetrators. Col Metzler cited research demonstrating that a history of committing sexual assault is the only known predictor of future commissions of sexual assault. The Committee also asked about whether Service members who have given restricted reports receive services through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Col Metzler indicated that individuals who submit restricted reports are eligible to receive services at the VA, including documenting Military Sexual Trauma (MST). He said that alcohol is involved in 50–60% of sexual assaults. Col Metzler reported that Special Victims counsel/advocacy programs have been established to aid alleged sexual assault victims. Committee members were hopeful the new procedures for sexual assault survivors would be helpful.

### **Accession of Women**

Outreach and recruiting of women is critical to ensuring that the U.S. military has the strongest possible pool of highly qualified individuals to draw from in meeting its needs for skills and leadership. DACOWITS received briefings from Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies (JAMRS) and Office of Military Personnel Policy, OUSD (P&R) on the recruitment marketplace and accessions of enlisted women.

#### **Ms. Katherine Helland, Director, Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies (JAMRS)**

The core mission of JAMRS is to meet the shared information needs of recruiting commands for all of the Services. JAMRS reported on the results of two studies – the Youth Market Survey, which is a national survey of 16- to 24-year-olds on propensity to join the military, and a survey of new recruits that is conducted at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). This research revealed that fewer women than men have an interest in military service, partially due to women's interests in higher education and professional careers, which women see as incompatible with military service. Women also lack confidence in their ability to be successful in military service, as seen in both the national survey and the survey of new recruits. Women recruits also expressed more concerns than their male counterparts did about leaving family and friends and completing boot camp. The survey showed that women often come to the decision to join the military later in life than men and that recruiters play a particularly important role in sparking women's interest in the military and in influencing their decision to join.

Women also express a low propensity to serve as officers, despite the higher education requirements of the officer corps. Propensity rates for military service are lower for both women and men compared to past decades, and JAMRS believes this is partially the result of the perception of many youth that the military lifestyle is undesirable or unattractive. JAMRS also suggested that a lack of familiarity with the military might also be a factor.

The Committee asked about the effect of rescinding the combat exclusion policy on women's accession, and was told that there has not yet been an apparent effect. Furthermore, they asked whether Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) has deterred women from joining the military, to which the Committee was told younger individuals were not knowledgeable about recent wars.



Mr. Christopher Arendt, Deputy Director, Accession Policy, Military Personnel Policy, OUSD (P&R)

Mr. Arendt presented a slide showing that among prospective recruits, the Air Force is the most desired Service, with the Army and Navy as the next most desired, followed by the Marine Corps. Committee members thought that parents may serve as the strongest reference point for their children and may be inclined to suggest women serve in one Service over another. Committee members also thought targets for the numbers of women might serve as constraints, or ceilings, on the number of women serving. DACOWITS has recommended more effort and resources be placed on finding women candidates for the officer corps. Members suggested more could be done to increase the accession of enlisted women. Mr. Arendt suggested that numbers might reflect a natural ceiling, although more jobs will be available with the end of the combat exclusion policy. Before the onset of the all-volunteer force in 1973, the proportion of women in the military was restricted. After restrictions were lifted, the proportion of women increased, but has been relatively stable, averaging about 17% for the last 20 years. Mr. Arendt said that only 8% of women, compared to 21% of men show a propensity to serve. He did not have data to address what effect draft registration has on male propensity to serve.

**Summary of Installation Visits**

In Spring 2014, Committee members visited sites representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Guard and Reserve to collect data on sexual harassment, military culture, and the accession and career progression of women. DACOWITS conducted 40 focus groups including enlisted personnel and officers, and both women and men. Staff from Insight Policy Research and ICF made written transcripts of the discussions (preserving anonymity of the participants), and compiled and analyzed the resulting data. Ms. Rachel Gaddes and Ms. Ashley Schaad briefed the focus group findings.

Military Culture and the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Assault (Rachel Gaddes, Insight Policy Research)

Positive aspects of military culture mentioned by focus group participants were military-specific characteristics such as cohesion and discipline. Negative aspects included difficulties inherent in adjusting one's lifestyle, moving frequently, and being away from family. Participants observed changes in culture, such as greater acceptance of women and felt that today's recruits are less accepting of structure and discipline. Participants reported the need for women to prove themselves and the need for more women mentors. Participants saw gender integration as beneficial to increasing the accession of women and viewed women's presence in leadership roles in a positive light. Some also saw culture as conducive to sexual harassment and perpetuating a "good old boys" network. Participants believed that leadership is vital to creating a positive atmosphere, there is a stigma against reporting, and that men may avoid interactions with women out of fear that their words or actions may be misinterpreted.

Ms. Gaddes reported that female participants were more likely than male participants to mistrust the system, and that this was common across subgroups. Committee members indicated that focus group participants reported less confidence in the system than suggested by other briefers at the meeting. Furthermore, Committee members observed the big role played by social media and its potential impact on military culture and sexual harassment.



Focus group participants believed that there was underreporting due to lack of confidence that perpetrators will be held accountable and ostracizing of survivors. In addition, there was a belief that reporting has increased while the number of incidents has stayed the same. Participants believed that sexual harassment and assault were similarly prevalent in both the military and civilian worlds. Circumstances cited that increased sexual harassment and assault included alcohol, poor leadership, and situations in which there are too few women. Prevention strategies included establishing boundaries, intervening when an incident is witnessed, and at the systemic level, increasing transparency, reducing fear of reporting, and improving training. Participants perceived double standards based on favoritism and believe there is a lack of accountability.

Accession of Enlisted Women and Career Progression of Women in the Service (Ashley Schaad, ICF International)

Focus groups examining the accession of enlisted women included only enlisted participants, both women and men. Participants reported several factors influencing their decision to enlist in the military. Personal and career factors were prominent, including educational benefits, job opportunities and career skills, seeing the military as an alternative to college, early experiences with the military in JROTC, seeing the military as a way to escape a bad situation, and the ability to travel. Family and friends in the military was often an influencing factor. In making the decision on which Service branch to join, participants often considered the experiences of family members who had served. When asked about the impact of rescinding the combat exclusion policy, most participants reported that it did not directly impact their decision. Most participants had positive experiences with the recruitment process, citing accuracy of information, recruiters' willingness to help recruits get their preferred jobs, the overall ease of the process, and recruiter honesty. A sizable minority of the participants reported negative experiences with the primary factor being dishonest recruiters. Most participants sought out their recruiters rather than being actively recruited, though some had recruiters visit their high schools. To improve the recruitment of women, participants suggested having more women recruiters, emphasizing the variety of jobs available to women, and integrating women into advertising. Participants reported that women's presence in leadership roles is very important, including having women recruiters and women in leadership roles at military training.

Focus groups on career progression included participants who were enlisted and officers, both women and men. Concerning career progression, enlisted participants perceived a lack of availability for professional military education at the unit level. Participants also indicated command's role as gatekeepers in determining who can attend military education often unfairly influenced that process, and said they lacked the time to pursue military education. Furthermore, while civilian education is available, participants felt they lacked the time for it and faced logistical barriers that prevented access to it. Participants largely saw access to both military and civilian education as equal for both women and men. In regard to developmental assignments, participants said the ability to access information on career progression was a key to success while the inability to access such information was a barrier. Participants generally perceived gender equality in ability to obtain developmental assignments, with some women reporting an improvement in this over time and some men reporting that it is easier for women to get developmental assignments due to a need for women in leadership roles. Barriers to women obtaining developmental assignments were reported, however, including berthing issues on ships and men in leadership giving preference to their male friends. Career progression for women was seen as being facilitated by mentorship and supportive senior leadership. When asked about barriers to career progression for women, participants reported that, for the most part, the



institutional barriers have been eliminated, but some women may have internal barriers as a result of work/family issues.

In the section of the focus groups where participants were able to discuss more-general topics, two primary issues were discussed – the biggest challenges for military women and recommendations for the Secretary of Defense. Participants mentioned the transition period while opening new positions to women, the need for equal physical fitness standards, pregnancy and breastfeeding concerns, and a lack of respect from male counterparts as challenges for women. Overall recommendations provided by participants included a need for more women in leadership and combat roles, changes to the physical fitness and height/weight standards, better access to and quality of healthcare, concerns with uniforms, a need for better recruitment and screening procedures for new recruits, and a need for programs for male military spouses.

**13 June 2014**

### **Career Progression with Joint Assignments**

It is DoD policy that officers be educated, trained, and experienced in joint matters to enhance the joint warfighting capability of the United States. Additionally, officers on the active duty list (ADL) must be designated a Level III Joint Qualified Officer before appointment to brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half). Statutory changes in the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (NDAA FY07) directed the Secretary of Defense to establish different levels of joint qualification, as well as criteria for qualification at each level. DACOWITS requested a briefing from the DoD Joint Officer Management (JOM) Program Office and the Services on the program and how assignments to joint positions are managed.

#### **Mr. Timothy Nelson, Joint Officer Management, Joint Staff J1**

Joint qualification is intended to create a cadre of experts, rather than simply being a means of funneling officers into being general officers, as many people mistakenly believe. Due to their expertise, joint-qualified officers (JQOs) can bring together multiple skillsets to develop strategy. Having a joint position does not necessarily mean that someone is on track to be a joint-qualified officer. To qualify as a JQO, an individual must complete benchmarks in joint experience. There are four levels of joint qualification, down two paths: the traditional path, through holding a joint duty assignment, or the experience path, through holding a strategic position during times such as a deployment. Panels of officers review nominations for the positions, with final approval for joint positions coming through the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Duty Assignment List (JDAL) positions are for O4-level officers and above. There are currently 8,854 JDAL positions. JDAL positions are revalidated every five years.

The majority of these positions in the past had come from deployments to OIF/OEF. As the force drawdown continues, a greater proportion of officers will need to take the traditional (i.e., non-experience) path. The last revalidation of the list of approved joint duty assignment positions was completed in February 2014, and there is now a working group assessing these revalidations. The Committee asked if women were being excluded from some of these joint duty assignment positions because they were combat specific, to which the speaker replied that they were not. Many joint positions are “branch immaterial,” which does not exclude women.



LTC Veronica Anteola, Chief, Assignments, Joint Officer Matters and Women in Service Branch, HQ USAF

LTC Anteola briefed the on the Air Force's Joint Officer Management Program. This program helps to manage the flow of officers into joint positions by managing education, training, and experience gained prior to obtaining a joint position. The Committee inquired whether Air Force has information on the number of women and minorities eligible, and this was unclear. Air Force tries to match high-potential officers (O4 and below) to joint assignments. For O6s without joint experience, high-potential officers are matched with joint positions based on a number of criteria. The Committee inquired about the process of selection for joint assignments (called the Colonels' group) and was told that the selection group is comprised of field-grade officers. Committee members expressed the importance of having diversity throughout the process, as diversity does not seem to be factored into the joint assignment process.

Col Mark Schrecker, Officer Assignment Branch, HQ USMC

Col Schrecker briefed on the Marine Corps' procedures for joint assignments. In the Marine Corps, there are monitors assigned for every officer to aid the officer through career progression. Monitors help to select the right people for the positions. Jobs are broken out by MOS and rank. The highest-performing officers are sent to JDAL billets. If more senior officers have not yet gained joint experience, efforts are made to ensure they have the opportunity for joint assignment. The Committee inquired about the number of women on the staff that monitors officer progression: in total, there are four women out of 23 staff.

MAJ Scott Johnson, Joint Policy Integrator, HQ USA

MAJ Johnson supplemented the previous presenters with some Army-specific information. Priority for joint assignments is given to those individuals who have completed command tours. MAJ Johnson stated that there are currently two women colonels in his office.

CAPT Christopher Harris, Director, Distribution Management Allocation, Resources and Procedures at Navy Personnel Command

CAPT Harris briefed the Navy's joint assignment policies. The rates of obtaining joint positions have been consistent over the past 3 years for men and women and did not appear significantly different in FY 2013. Committee members expressed an interest in getting the same information from the other Service components.

**Use of Goals in Recruitment of Women**

DACOWITS requested a briefing to describe any DoD guidance to the Services with respect to establishing goals, targets, or benchmarks for the recruitment of women, and an explanation of the reason for, and the effect of, the different interpretations among the Services. The Committee had previously been told by Air Force briefers that such goals were unconstitutional, despite the fact that some Services use specific goals.

Mr. James Schwenk, Senior Deputy General Counsel, Personnel and Health Policy, OSD Office of General Counsel

Mr. Schwenk briefed the use of "goals" or "targets," as opposed to "quotas." There is no legal interpretation that goals are unconstitutional, including numerical goals. As long as goals are not



tied to specific actions or required results, there is no legal problem with having them. Quotas requiring mandatory representation, on the other hand, are not permissible.

The Committee expressed concern that the number of female enlisted accessions appears to be consistently low as to suggest a ceiling on women recruits. Mr. Schwenk suggested this might be due to the policies that have previously limited positions available to women.

For recruitment, goals can be used because outreach does not necessarily determine whether an individual actually joins the military. The Committee asked if it is possible to grade recruiters based on how many women they contact. A representative from the Air Force mentioned that the Chief of Staff of the Air Force is considering an approach similar to this to improve outreach.

Mr. Christopher Arendt, Deputy Director, Accession Policy, Military Personnel Policy, OUSD (P&R)

Mr. Arendt reiterated the difficulties inherent in having broad goals since commanders could translate them differently. Mr. Arendt cautioned that in the DoD environment, people might not understand that a goal is not an order. The Committee again discussed the use of goals as impediments to higher rates of service by women, and also discussed how current benchmarks may serve as ceilings. Members were assured that there are no objections to targets for recruiting. Mr. Schwenk discussed the importance of conducting a barrier analysis to identify reasons women do not join the military, as well as to identify reasons why they may leave.

### **Public Comment Period**

Mr. Greg Jacob, Policy Director, Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Mr. Jacob informed the Committee on the disparity in how military sexual trauma (MST) claims are processed by the VA. A new GAO report (GAO-14-477, Military Sexual Trauma) was released that demonstrated the complexity of MST claims. The report mirrors much of the work of SWAN over the past several years, including SWAN's *Battle for Benefits* report. Veterans are required to have extensive evidence when filing a claim of assault, but this is difficult to collect. The VA counts sexual harassment as a factor in MST claims, but sexual harassment claims are not processed in the same manner as sexual assault claims. This means that if a Service member develops post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of experiencing sexual harassment, he/she will not have the same evidence for that claim as he/she would have if the PTSD had resulted from sexual assault. The Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active Duty Members (WGRA) reported 18,000 cases of sexual harassment, yet only 1,000 were reported. The Committee asked about the lag time for processing sexual assault cases as it relates to the overall backlog of processing cases in the VA. Only one-third of MST claims are being approved, while PTSD claims are approved at a much higher rate. Mr. Jacob urged the Committee to push for a change in the regulation on how MST claims are processed.

Brig Gen Carol Timmons, National Guard Bureau Representative

Brig Gen Timmons informed the Committee on the lack of joint-qualified positions among Reserve Component (RC) officers in any state or in the District of Columbia, noting that even The Adjutant General (TAG) in each state is not considered a joint-qualified position despite overseeing the Army and Air Force National Guard in the state. There is a need for more joint positions to be available to RC officers. There are current efforts to get four RC positions considered joint-qualified positions and to allow RC officers on Title 32 orders to be exempt



from having to be joint qualified. Many RC officers have civilian jobs and do not have time to become joint qualified for positions.

### **Update on NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives**

The NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) advises NATO leadership and Member Nations on gender-related issues in order to enhance organizational effectiveness in support of Alliance objectives and priorities, including the implementation of relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. COL Sheimo briefed the Committee on the NCGP, which she chairs.


#### **COL Linda Sheimo, Chairperson of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP)**

There are concerns about the representation of women in the military in NATO countries. Proportions of women in the military are between 1–20%, including countries that have had combat positions open to women for years. The NCGP recommended a review of recruiting and retention, increased focus on gender issues impacting retention, and having a gender advisory group for each country. DACOWITS asked whether it is necessary to address sexual violence in the ranks before sexual violence in conflicts can be addressed. This relates to a recent article that said the United States and the United Kingdom need to address internal issues within their militaries, including sexual violence. DACOWITS asked for a copy of the NCGP recommendations once they are finalized.

### **Final Remarks**

Committee Chair Ms. Holly Hemphill thanked the briefers, those who made public comments, and attendees. She announced that the next meeting is scheduled for September 18-19. Designated Federal Officer, COL Betty Yarbrough, made final remarks before officially closing the meeting.

**Meeting was adjourned.**

  
Report Submitted by  
**COL Betty J. Yarbrough, USA**  
**Director, DACOWITS**

  
Report Certified by  
**Ms. Holly Hemphill**  
**DACOWITS Chair**

#### **DACOWITS MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms. Holly Hemphill  
LtGen (Ret) Frances Wilson  
CMSgt (Ret) Bernise F. Belcer  
Ms. Teresa Christenson  
FLTCM (Ret) Jacqueline DiRosa  
Dr. Charlotte Dixon  
CAPT (Ret) Beverly G. Kelley  
Rev. Dr. Cynthia Ramirez Lindenmeyer

MG (Ret) John Macdonald  
FORCM (Ret) Laura A. Martinez  
Ms. Donna M. McAleer  
Ms. Monica Medina  
RADM (Ret) Elizabeth Morris  
Mr. Brian Morrison  
LTC (Ret) Hae-Sue Park  
MG (Ret) Gale S. Pollock